

**The Landscape of Rufford, 1700-1743:
Reconnecting Archives with People and Place**

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Abstract

Despite growing recognition that the early eighteenth century was a period of flux in relation to gardening taste, the landscapes of elite estates of this period (with the exception of a few iconic gardens) have received little focussed attention. Moreover, the scholarship that exists has tended to isolate considerations of the core landscape of pleasure gardens and hall from its broader socio-economic and geographic contexts. This thesis aims to shed light on how more typical early eighteenth-century estate landscapes were understood through a case study of the everyday practices and local and national contexts which underpinned the development of the demesne landscape of the Rufford Estate, Nottinghamshire, during the ownership of Sir George Savile (1700-43).

The principal resource for this study has been the archives of the Savile family, a vast and under-used collection, although fieldwork has contributed to the interpretation of landscape history. The approach to landscape is based in historical and cultural geography and is one which is alert to both human and non-human agency. Successive chapters address different facets of Sir George's landscape engagement – the laying out of pleasure gardens, husbandry of carp, silviculture, the construction of rides, hunting – drawing out both their distinctive contributions to the shaping of the place and their collective comprehension within the management of the demesne estate. Particular attention is paid to questions of authorship and managerial structure, the influence of animals on the development of Rufford's landscape, and the impact of the estate's diverse physical geography on landscape engagement. Rufford Abbey is now a Country Park run by Nottinghamshire County Council. The management and public interpretation of the site has, however, been compromised by a want of primary research. This thesis establishes that both the formal qualities of the site and significant material artefacts within its landscape were the product of activities in the early eighteenth century; the detailed archival findings presented here will feed into future policy.

Acknowledgements

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Much of the desk-based work was undertaken at the Nottinghamshire Archives and in the Bodleian Library, Oxford. I would like to thank the staff of both institutions for their support, and, in particular, acknowledge the assistance of Dr Michael Athanson, Deputy Map Librarian and Geospatial Data Specialist at the Bodleian. Without his skill the GIS work which has been central to my understanding of the site would not have been possible, and our discussions of the data, ever a pleasure, alerted me to lines of enquiry I doubt that I would have arrived at alone.

My special thanks go also to Dr John Langton and Professor Bob Harris at Oxford. John Langton has read and commented on draft chapters, and, whenever called upon, has been a source of support and intellectual stimulus. Bob Harris welcomed me to the weekly Graduate Seminar in History (1680-1850) which he co-convenes, and generously gave time to exploring ideas with me. The intellectual rigour and subject knowledge of both scholars fruitfully challenged my ideas and suggested literature that enriched my understanding of the study's context.

One of the continual pleasures during this research has been the time spent at Rufford. For this I have not only to thank the friendship and enthusiasm of Linda Hardy, but also that of her colleagues, in particular, Gareth Broome and Paul Norton. Many an enjoyable hour has been shared searching for watercourses and teasing out the meanings of archival references. Their collective knowledge of the site has greatly enhanced my own. Moreover, I am enormously grateful for the freedom and encouragement I have been given to engage with the visiting public by giving talks, guided walks and storytelling performances in the grounds, in the organisation of which Dawn Taylor and Gary Joynt played vital and much appreciated parts.

I am also indebted to the present Lord Savile for his interest and support, generously allowing me access to Savile artefacts in his possession. Chancing upon a portrait of the 7th Baronet on the wall of his late uncle's home, Gryce Hall, Yorkshire, and the twin to John Bunting's 1637 Survey of Rufford in the Savile Estate office, Dewsbury, are moments I shall not forget. I am similarly grateful to Lord Scarbrough and Leo Godlewski for their welcomes at Sandbeck Park, Yorkshire, and Shireoaks, Nottinghamshire, respectively.

On a more personal note, I would like to thank my family and the many friends who have helped in so many ways. Their encouragement and critical input has often felt like a lifeline. Dr Malcolm Hill must by now know the thesis almost as well as I do, his contribution has been immeasurable. Dr Nick Safford has ever been at the end of a phone line with a ready solution to technical conundrums. Dr Nicholas Gendle, Professor Seth Kunin, Dr Naomi Garner-Mack, Dr Thomas Palmer and Dr Jill Sudbury have all spent many an hour discussing the research with me, adding insights from their particular fields of expertise. But my final word of thanks goes to my parents. To my father, a Yorkshireman, who first introduced me to the Baronet's sporting haunts, and to my mother, to whom this thesis is dedicated.

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Conventions and Abbreviations

As far as possible, within quoted material the spelling, punctuation, capitalisation and dating system used in original documents has been maintained. When referring to letters and documents, however, the Julian dating system has not been preserved. It is not uncommon in the archival sources used in this thesis to find several alternative spellings used for the name of a person or place. Where an individual can be confidently identified, for example Sir John Vanbrugh, the conventional modern spelling is used, where not, for example George Nailor, the most frequently occurring form is generally fixed upon in the text. Where a place name changed appreciably between 1700 and 1743 – for example, Winkerfield within Sherwood Forest which gradually became known as Inkersall, its modern name – the earlier name is consistently used unless the reference appears within a quotation. Where several forms of a spelling were in current use and one of those spellings corresponds to the modern form – for example Hemsley, Emly, Emsley, Elmsley – the modern form (Elmsley in this case) is adopted, unless a quotation. If there is no modern form then the most frequently used spelling is adopted in the text. The building today called Rufford Abbey was commonly referred to as Rufford Hall in the period of this study. The terms are used interchangeably within the thesis.

Periods of years are generally elided (for example, 1730-6). However, in order to distinguish between account books that cover entire consecutive years (for example 1711 and 1712) and those which fall across years (for example, May 1736 to May 1737), the former interval is specified 1711-12, the latter, as accounting year 1736/1737.

Except for the instances cited below, any abbreviations used are spelled out in full on their first appearance.

Brown, R.A., ed., 1920-3, <i>Manuscripts of the Earl of Egmont: Diary of Viscount Percival Afterwards First Earl of Egmont</i> , London: H.M.S.O., 3 vols.	<i>Egmont Manuscripts</i>
Cambridge University Library: Manuscripts and Special Collections	CUM
Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies	CBS
Nottinghamshire Archives	NA
Oxford Dictionary of National Biography	<i>ODNB</i>
Oxford English Dictionary	<i>OED</i>
Saville, A., ed., 1997, <i>Secret Comment: the Diaries of Gertrude Savile, 1721-1757</i> , Devon: Kingsbridge History Society & Nottingham: Thoroton Society.	<i>Gertrude's Diaries</i>
Sheffield Archives	SA
The National Archives	TNA
University of Nottingham: Manuscripts and Special Collections	NUM
West Sussex Record Office	WSRO

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Thesis Rationale

This thesis examines the landscape of Rufford Abbey, an important East Midlands estate (c.17,000 acres), during the ownership (1700-43) of Sir George Savile, 7th Baronet. It aims to provide insights into the various ways in which elite estate landscapes were understood, managed and enjoyed by their owners in the early eighteenth century and to this end focusses on the Baronet's demesne land at Rufford – the parks, spring woods, gardens, forest ground and more limited areas of meadow and pasture that he retained in-hand and over which he exercised most direct control. But while Savile's priorities provide the organising framework for this study, with successive chapters examining different aspects of his engagement, the focus is by no means confined to the Baronet's contributions. Rather, through a detailed examination of everyday practices this thesis seeks to address the over-arching question: what conjunction of personalities, relationships (both human-human and human-animal), interests, skills, knowledge, environmental factors, infrastructure and chance moulded the landscape that the Baronet bequeathed to his son in 1743?

The approach taken is rooted in an understanding that the meaning of landscape emerges in the process of land use. In the words of cultural anthropologist Ingold, 'meaning is immanent in the relational contexts of people's practical engagement with their lived-in environments'.¹ Furthermore, the landscape is collectively constituted through the interactions of usually many people working together on a range of tasks which at times run in parallel, at times in series, at times overlap and at times are in conflict.² It is a reading of landscape that has influenced the work of contemporary cultural geographers and marks a significant shift from traditional treatments of estate landscape design.

¹ Ingold (2000), 168.

² Ingold (1993), 158.

The present study contributes to a growing body of scholarship alert to the complexity of relationships between landowners and their estates: that land and its exploitation were bound up in complex social, political, economic and aesthetic agendas and that the ornamental and productive elements of an estate were constrained and supported by the same social and economic considerations. What is being challenged here is not only the intellectual basis of traditional garden history narratives, but also the narrow economic focus which has characterised studies of the wider tenanted estate. As Williamson asserts:

Economic historians often write as if all estate owners were motivated by a desire to maximise production. Yet while it is true that great estates were firmly a part of the modern world, their owners evidently had attitudes to land which were at once more complex, and more subtle, than those of a contemporary agribusiness farmer.³

The shortcomings of standard treatments of designed landscapes were cogently summed up by Leslie in an article 'Whither Garden history?' (2007). He inveighs against: 'the hold over garden history of an evolutionary historical paradigm organised fundamentally according to an apparently teleological succession of distinctive periods and national styles that develop formally out of one another and in response to one another'; 'the desire to identify a set of major designers and grant them privileged control over the course of landscaping developments, while paying far less attention both to patrons and to local gardening staffs assigned the task of implementing designs'; 'the belief that the purposes and explanations behind designs will be found in the aesthetic predispositions of elite culture, rather than, for example, thinking about the exigencies of estate management'.⁴ Arguably, the distorting effect of this approach has been compounded by a tendency to focus on renowned landscapes – Stowe, Rousham, Stourhead, the Leasowes, Hagley and Chatsworth are prominent examples in an eighteenth-century context. Such selectivity clearly captures only a miniscule fraction of the estate landscaping undertaken in the period. Moreover, if the

³ Williamson (2007), 5-6.

⁴ Leslie's contribution to Harwood *et al.* (2007), 92.

avant garde claims made for such landscapes are accepted, these estates can hardly be taken as representative.

The Rufford Estate (1700-43) offers an ideal context for the more estate and practice-oriented approach advocated by new garden historians such as Leslie, and increasingly recognised as fundamental to understanding the development of designed landscapes. During the 7th Baronet's ownership his pleasure grounds almost quadrupled in size, and these improvements were designed and realised by individuals whose biographies go unrecorded in landscape history. The core of Savile's estate straddled both well-watered arable clay land to the east of the Hall and prime hunting territory within Sherwood Forest's sand lands to the west, offering a range of contexts for sport and fish husbandry. The estate's wood resources supplied a buoyant local iron industry and hop market, as well as regional and national timber markets. The present case study builds directly on the work of cultural geographers (Seymour, Daniels, Watkins and Cowell) and landscape archaeologists/historians (Williamson and Finch).⁵ Their research underlines the inseparable link between estate design and management, and that the historical context of a specific period and place encompasses a range of geographical and temporal scales. However, while cultural geographers of elite landscapes have focussed primarily on late eighteenth-century developments and landscape archaeologists and historians have favoured a *longue durée* approach, the early eighteenth century, a period characterised by significant flux in landscape taste, remains both under-researched and poorly understood.

The depth of analysis possible in a case study approach to historical research lends it notable strengths, and it is hoped that this examination of Rufford's landscape will, as one exponent of single unit studies contends, 'test ideas and illustrate, and perhaps elaborate existing themes, while suggesting others which may deserve wider investigation'.⁶ It is also intended to contribute significantly to both the conservation and heritage value – historical and communal – of the site. In 1952, the Abbey along with c.130 acres of surrounding estate land were purchased by Nottinghamshire County Council. Though the

⁵ See Chapter 2.

⁶ Broad (1973), 'Abstract'.

Hall, which was partially demolished in 1956, is now under the guardianship of Historic England, the surrounding landscape remains largely the responsibility of the Council. To date, because of the comparative inaccessibility of documentation from the Georgian period (almost exclusively unpublished sources; see Section 1.2.2 for discussion of the Savile Archives) relative to Victorian and Edwardian periods (well represented in photographs, magazine articles, oral testimonies), the importance of the post-Georgian landscape has been over-emphasised in park interpretation work and the evolution of the site poorly understood, with detrimental impact both on its presentation and conservation. In 1991, for example, flood-protection measures were checked by 'the overall difficulty in relating present landscape features to earlier maps and the resulting uncertainties about how the landscaping of Rufford has developed'.⁷ The archival study presented here aims to redress these shortcomings. The ownership of the 7th Baronet was selected as the period for focus in part because during the initial phase of the project it became clear that the estate landscaping carried out at this time had significantly defined the form of the present country park. Moreover, an exceptionally rich and diverse archival resource has survived from these years, in addition to material artefacts and major architectural features in the landscape itself. Taken together, these aspects of the estate's heritage pointed to a portrayal of Rufford's landscape, 1700-43, as an ideal vehicle for enhancing the 'meanings of [the] place for the people who relate to it' and conveying 'the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present'.⁸

1.2 Approaches and Sources

Despite Mills's contention 'that there is no formalised discipline of landscape studies, with its own methodologies and university departments' and Muir's appraisal of the field as one characterised by division rather than mutual

⁷ Letter N.E. Hunt (assistant director of planning) to the assistant director for design (un-named), 20 May 1991. Nottinghamshire County Council Planning Records, County Hall.

⁸ English Heritage (2008), 28, 31.

recognition and exchange,⁹ there is growing consensus amongst scholars of designed landscapes that their field of analysis calls for a multi-disciplinary approach encompassing a context that goes far beyond design, and that ‘our knowledge and understanding of the past are increased exponentially when archaeological and historical approaches are combined’.¹⁰ It is an understanding exemplified, in an eighteenth-century context, by Daniels’s study *Humphry Repton: Landscape Gardening and the Geography of Georgian England* (1999), and one whose merits are concisely articulated by Barnatt (archaeologist) and Williamson (landscape historian) in the opening chapter of their collaborative work, *Chatsworth: a Landscape History* (2005).

The range of evidence recognised by landscape historians (a term used broadly here to encompass scholars engaged in the study of past landscapes) has notably increased over the last few decades, and now routinely includes representations ‘by painting, drawing or engraving; by photography, film and theatrical scenery; by writing, speech, and... even music and other “sound images”’, in addition to the landscape itself, ‘a physical and multisensory medium’.¹¹ One consequence of this expanded resource base is a greater potential for the triangulation of independent data sources. As Barnatt and Williamson point out, ‘documents [be they private correspondence, estate accounts, maps or illustrations] are rarely objective or inclusive but have inherent biases, governed by their author’s preconceptions and place in society’, not to mention the end they were designed to serve.¹² Taigel and Williamson highlight the speciousness of arguments from negative evidence: a tithe map, for example, may record the features relating to its purpose accurately (namely land usage and field boundaries) but omit the finer details of pleasure grounds and service buildings. Conversely, it may have been copied from a previously existing estate map and show features which had ceased to exist. A plan may represent no more than an idea.¹³ Anthropologist Stoler explores the broader implications of archival silences, distinguishing between ‘what was “unwritten” because it

⁹ Mills (1997), 122; Muir (1999), xiii.

¹⁰ Lambert (2006), 255-6 (quotation); Jacques (2000); Pattison, ed. (1998); Finch & Giles, eds (2007).

¹¹ Mitchell (1994), 14 (quotation); Lambert *et al.* (2006).

¹² Barnatt & Williamson (2005), 8; see also Blouin & Rosenberg (2011), 118.

¹³ Taigel & Williamson (1993), 12-13.

could go without saying and “everyone knew it,” what was unwritten because it could not yet be articulated, and what was unwritten because it could not be said.’¹⁴

The Rufford Estate has received only limited scholarly attention to date. The concept of landscape which underpins this thesis and the questions with which it primarily engages – authorship and collaboration; everyday practices; management; animal-human relationships – while informed by a broad and multi-disciplinary engagement with scholarly contributions to the field of landscape study (see Chapter 2), are primarily the result of a comprehensive examination of primary sources (archival documentation and eighteenth-century publications) and experience of the Rufford estate landscape itself. After a brief overview of the main studies of Rufford in circulation, the remainder of this section addresses the sources of primary documentation drawn upon by the present author and the scope of the fieldwork undertaken.

1.2.1 Past studies of the Rufford landscape

Kempson’s doctoral thesis, *The State and the Country House in Nottinghamshire 1937-1967*, documents the break-up of the Rufford Estate and the Hall’s chequered passage from private home to partial ruin at the heart of a public park.¹⁵ In his presentation of the complex debates surrounding country house preservation, and the conflicts between state responsibility and the interests of private owners that arose during estate dissolution, Kempson necessarily traces the impact of policy decisions upon the Rufford site. Tree felling and preservation orders, earthworks and excavations carried out in the period are briefly documented. These, together with the present author’s examination of County Council work reports,¹⁶ and a range of photographic records held at

¹⁴ Stoler (2009), 3.

¹⁵ Kempson (2006). Usage of the term park has changed over time. The early eighteenth century enclosures designated ‘park’ (see **PARKS** in Section 3.3.2) lie outside today’s Country Park.

¹⁶ In particular, Geoff Matthews’s (structural engineer, Nottinghamshire County Council) summary of evidence *re* flooding and land subsidence, January 1987; Binnie & Partners’ (consulting engineers) report ‘Rainworth Water: Study of Flood Alleviation Measures at the May Lodge Drive Housing Estate’, May 1991; Peter Masters’s (Pre-Construct Geophysics) resistivity survey, July 2006; Hannah Armstrong’s (Assistant Heritage Consultant) report, ‘Bilthorpe Energy Centre’, August 2014.

Rufford Abbey and the National Monuments Record (Swindon), have contributed to the field studies carried out during the course of this thesis.

A number of articles focussing specifically on Rufford's pleasure gardens have been published. Jones has drawn on a wide range of sources to present snapshots of the gardens in the Victorian and Edwardian periods: personal accounts of family visitors and estate servants from the nineteenth and early twentieth century; articles published in *Journal of Horticulture and Cottage Gardener* (1877), *Gardener's Chronicle* (1908) and *Gardener's Magazine* (1910); and extant photographic representations of the grounds from the mid-nineteenth century onwards.¹⁷ As with Kempson's work, Jones's material has been instrumental in interpreting the current site, particularly when supplemented by the oral testimonies of members of the public who were familiar with the house and grounds before the Hall's partial demolition. Smith (2009) has presented a chronological account of design interventions in relation to both Hall and gardens during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. His work sheds light on the progression of structural changes to the house in the late seventeenth century, but its treatment of landscaping, which relies almost exclusively on maps and plans of the core estate (many of which are undated and some unattributed), reinforces many of the past confusions about the form, timescale and motivations for landscaping at Rufford.¹⁸

1.2.2 The Savile Archives

The primary source material for this thesis comes from the Savile family archives held in public repositories – Nottinghamshire Archives; Rufford Abbey Country Park; Sheffield Archives; British Library Manuscripts; Cambridge University Manuscripts; National Monuments Record; National Archives; Lambeth Palace Library; Dewsbury Central Library Archives (now transferred to West Yorkshire Archive Service, Kirklees) – and the private collections of Lords Savile and Scarbrough (see Bibliography for addresses). Nottinghamshire

¹⁷ Jones (2007, 2008).

¹⁸ See, 'Rufford Country Park: Historic Landscape Survey and Restoration Management Plan' prepared by Land Use Consultants, November 2002. Smith's approach is representative of the 'old garden history' against which authors such as Leslie and Williamson inveigh. Section 1.1; Williamson (1995), 4-9.

Archives holds the bulk of the documentation relating to the 7th Baronet's ownership and its collection is referenced hereafter, the Savile Archives. Documentation held at Rufford Abbey is referenced hereafter, Rufford Abbey Archives.

The Savile Archives is a vast collection comprising documents from the medieval period into the twentieth century and estate records of properties in some fifteen counties, though principally West Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire. With the exception of the Rufford Charters – medieval charters from the twelfth century onwards which have been edited and published by C.J. Holdsworth – and selected extracts from a number of the diaries of Gertrude Savile, little of the material has been published, and it remains an under-used resource. Incomplete and on occasions unreliable cataloguing has almost certainly contributed to this outcome. The documents were retained at the Hall until the outbreak of World War II, they were then transferred 'in a disordered state' first to the Public Record Office (London) and in the late 1950s to Nottinghamshire Archives. The original catalogue, drawn up in pencil and paper by the national register of archives during the 1940s and 1950s was not typed up by Nottinghamshire archivists until 1996–8, by which time 'the accuracy and sense of the descriptions' could no longer 'be guaranteed'. Moreover, the collection was never systematically referenced, but preserved the 'idiosyncratic' nomenclature of the trunks and bundles in which it had been conveyed from the Hall.¹⁹ Comprehensive study of this resource exposed a wealth of documentation relating to the 7th Baronet's landscaping activities including family correspondence and diaries, the 7th Baronet's personal account books, stewards' correspondence, estate accounts, vouchers and receipts, day-labourers' fortnightly accounts, lease settlements, maps and plans. A major strength of this collection is its diversity, and while no single document type provides a complete record across the four decades of the Baronet's ownership, there is sufficient temporal overlap to allow significant cross-referencing within much of the period. Not only has this helped to mitigate the interpretive distortion

¹⁹ Report on the Savile Archives prepared by Paul Norton (project officer for interpretation, Rufford, retired 2015). Reference 1316: Rufford Abbey Archives, undated (but post-2011).

inherent in over-reliance on a single source type – the detailed estate reports sent to Savile by his successive stewards, for example, while arguably providing the most comprehensive portrait of life at Rufford in the period, were also weighted by their authors' concerns and coloured by their personalities – but the layering of records has on many occasions resolved ambiguities and thus enabled the whole collection to be more effectively understood. That said, there are still significant ambiguities and gaps in the picture, of which the most important are outlined below.

WRITTEN DOCUMENTS

Locations are sometimes only vaguely indicated and terms used for particular areas and features changed over time. Spellings, whether of names or places, are rarely consistent. References to labourers' activities are often ambiguous, and with a few notable exceptions, rarely described in detail. Successive stewards adopted different accounting systems, and the resultant variation in the inclusivity of categorisations creates uncertainties in the cross-comparison of income and expenditure, notably in relation to woodland management (see Chapter 6). While steward correspondence was both detailed and frequent – during periods of intense negotiation as often as twice weekly – it was restricted to periods when Savile was away from the estate, and references to letters sent but no longer extant indicate that even this is incomplete. Moreover, only one side of the exchange – steward to master (or on occasions his mother) – has survived, a fact that has had a crucial impact on interpretation. There are very few occasions on which Savile's intentions are available to us in an unmediated form.

MAPS AND PLANS

With the exception of an estate survey from 1637, none of the surveys of house and grounds from the late seventeenth or first half of the eighteenth century and few of the design plans are either dated or signed. Cross-referencing these documents with independent archival sources, however, has generally allowed both details to be assigned with confidence. In order to facilitate fieldwork and enable detailed map regression work to be carried out, maps and plans have,

wherever possible, been geo-referenced to the 1st edition (1885) 25-inch Ordnance Survey (OS) Map. Furthermore, the co-ordinates of major designed features have been extracted from historic maps using GIS (see Appendix 1.1), downloaded to a GPS, and staked on the ground to assist archaeological assessment of potential surface features (see below).

1.2.3 Other archives consulted

Rufford is located in an area with a marked concentration of large estates and many of the concerns and practices examined in this thesis were held in common by the local landowning elite. To set Rufford practice in its wider local context, both archival material from neighbouring estates and resources concerned with the county more broadly have been consulted. Amongst family archives the most widely (though far from exhaustively) examined were: Portland Archives (held at Nottinghamshire Archives and University of Nottinghamshire: Manuscripts and Special Collections); Molyneux Archives (University of Nottinghamshire: Manuscripts and Special Collections); Foljambe Archives (Nottinghamshire Archives); Lumley-Savile Archives (Sandbeck Park, Yorkshire); Hewett Archives (copies in the private collection of Leo Godlewski, the present occupant of Shireoaks, Nottinghamshire). In addition to tithe, county and OS maps, the key county-level sources consulted were Nottinghamshire Quarterly Sessions (Nottinghamshire Archives), Forest Perambulations (Nottinghamshire Archives and National Archives) and Forest Commissioners' reports. A complete record of the primary sources used in this thesis is provided in footnotes to subsequent chapters and a summary list is given in the bibliography.

1.2.4 Eighteenth-century published sources

While depth of focus is a strength of the case study approach, lack of comparative breadth is a potential weakness. To address this, throughout the thesis empirical work based on the Savile Archives (Rufford practice) is evaluated in relation to published recommendations/reports of practice in the period (theory), the latter gleaned from a broad range of sources – husbandry and gardening treatises, poetry, prose and published correspondence.

1.2.5 Fieldwork

Fieldwork has provided a constant backdrop to the documentary archaeology²⁰ outlined above, and been used extensively to cross-check archival sources, enhance appreciation of the local topography, and identify landscaping challenges and opportunities which might have influenced Savile's design choices. In addition to the GPS work carried out with the assistance of a surveyor, this has involved collaborative exchange with a wide range of specialists – Gareth Broome (Countryside Team Manager, Nottinghamshire County Council; Ursilla Spence (Senior Archaeologist, Nottinghamshire County Council); Norman Lewis (retired Conservation Officer for Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust); Derek Walker (local historian) – during the course of which areas of both the core and wider eighteenth-century estate landscape have been explored. Opportunities have arisen to lead guided walks around the Rufford site, events which have fostered exchange and given me a greater appreciation of Rufford's local geographical context. In addition, visits were made to other estates and key monuments with which the 7th Baronet was familiar – Shireoaks, Thoresby Park, Welbeck Abbey, Newstead Abbey and Kelham in Nottinghamshire; Thornhill, Chatsworth, Sandbeck Park, Wentworth Woodhouse in Yorkshire – and to landscapes which underwent notable development during the period of relevance to this study (for example Bramham Park, Yorkshire).

Several outbuildings remain on the Rufford Abbey site and the garden house has served as a home during extended visits to the Country Park, enabling me to explore the area widely on foot and by bicycle (the closest equivalent to a horse) and in a range of seasons – the latter essential for an appreciation of views. Courtesy of the current Lord Savile, I was also made welcome at Gryce Hall and Heptonstall Hunting Lodge, the West Yorkshire homes of the late 3rd Baron, which until recently housed the family portraiture and material artefacts from the Hall.

²⁰ Beaudry (1993, first published 1988).

1.3 Outline of Thesis Chapters

Chapter two provides the intellectual context for the archival-based case study that follows. It opens with an examination of the multiple ways in which the concept of landscape has been theorised by cultural geographers. The focus then shifts to the specific context of eighteenth-century estates, particular attention being paid to the secondary literature engaged with estate stewardship. A final section deals with scholarship pertinent to the activities focussed on in this thesis – design of the pleasure grounds, silviculture, pisciculture and hunting.

Chapter three provides the biographical background to the Savile family, their employees and the Rufford Estate. The family's socio-economic status is examined; the character and interests of family members who played significant roles in the estate's development; the expertise and responsibilities of estate stewards and gardeners; and the co-ordination and overseeing of the day-labour force who realised improvements on the ground. Exploitation of the Rufford landscape in the first half of the eighteenth century – whether for economic return or amenity value – was unquestionably influenced by the distribution of its acreage, the physical geography of the county, and the antecedent landscape design, all of which are discussed.

Chapter four focusses on the development of the pleasure gardens framing the Hall. Drawing on a broad spectrum of archival material, the analysis aims to establish what changes were made to the landscape, why, how and by whom. Garden treatises from the period are used to place these developments in a broader eighteenth-century context, and an examination of seed and plant provenance identifies some of the wider networks on which the garden depended and to which it contributed.

Chapter five examines water management at Rufford, its exploitation for carp husbandry and ornamental display (the two intimately linked). In the course of this discussion the form, function and management of the extensive range of

dams, pools and canals within Savile's demesne ground are discussed and the benefits of pisciculture to the estate assessed.

Chapter six is concerned with exploitation of the estate's wood resources. The importance of woodland to the Rufford Estate cannot be over-emphasised – it served as ornament, source of status, animal habitat for hunting and shooting, and economic resource. It is on the latter function that the chapter primarily focusses, examining the woodland terrains, their species profile, woodland products and the broad spectrum of markets (both regional and national) which they supplied. In common with other chapters, attention is paid to the individuals engaged in the management of this resource.

Chapter seven investigates the ride network laid out at Rufford, which by the time of the 7th Baronet's death interlinked woodland and warren ground extending to a radius of three miles from the Hall and established associations between the Hall and significant landmarks in the wider landscape. This chapter opens with evidence of the multiple functions of ride networks, gleaned from both the Savile Archives and eighteenth-century published sources, thus setting the historical context for the detailed discussion of the Rufford network which follows. The latter highlights the challenges that orchestrating and laying out such features presented (work often proceeding in incremental steps by a process of trial and correction) and the formal qualities and uses being designed for.

Chapter eight addresses Savile's passion for sport, in particular fox hunting, a subject rarely discussed in the context of the early eighteenth century but which (from the evidence of the Savile Archives) was well-established in the area by this date. After consideration of the resourcing and management of kennels and stables, discussion shifts to the multiple factors – physical and social – necessary for this elite pastime to take place, focussing particularly on the creation of suitable habitat and access to an extensive landscape.

Chapter nine draws together the main findings of the thesis and points towards their translation into practical initiatives aimed at presenting the site to the public and promoting its conservation.

Chapter 2

Landscape and Landed Estates: Literature Review

This chapter provides a broad intellectual framework for the case study of the Rufford estate landscape (1700-43) that follows. It is divided into three sections. The first examines conceptualisations of landscape which have informed cultural geography, drawing particular attention to the temporal shift of focus from concern with class based ideology in the 1980s to the current, more wide-ranging interest in social differences, biography and human/non-human interactions. The chapter then moves to the specific context of eighteenth-century estates: Section 2 examines the body of scholarship concerned with estate management; Section 3, contributions made to the aspects of the estate landscape with which Sir George Savile was most personally concerned – landscape design, woodland management, fish husbandry and sport.

2.1 Conceptualisations of Landscape within Cultural Geography

A cardinal term of human geography, landscape has served as central object of investigation, organizing principle and interpretive lens for several different generations of researchers.¹

As this prefatory statement highlights, the landscape concept has proved a powerful analytic tool within human geography, and one recognised for both its complexity and fluidity. Over the past fifty years, approaches to the subject have proliferated in response to theoretical developments both within and outside the field,² more complex understandings of culture,³ and the challenge of

¹ Gregory *et al.*, eds (2009), 409.

² Landscape has become the object of critical enquiry for individuals in anthropology, Hirsch & O'Hanlon (1995); archaeology, Bender, ed. (1993); art history, Bahn, ed. (2012); cultural history, Schama (1995); garden history, Hunt & Willis, eds (1975); philosophy, Cooper (2006); landscape history, Muir (1999).

³ See Schein (2004); Scott (2004); Barnett (2004).

engaging with an ever changing and increasing range of contexts. 'Landscape' which was once conceived within cultural geography as the unproblematic material substrate which rooted and transformed predominantly rural communities in the course of their everyday life, now embraces elite as well as vernacular terrains, includes urban and industrial contexts, and has been approached from a myriad of conceptual angles whose relative merits continue to attract heated internal debate within the field. As Groth and Wilson contend:

...we can expect no single, unified, rigidly bounded approach to the study of something so essential and yet so complex as the reciprocal relationships between individuals, groups of people, and their everyday surroundings.⁴

This thesis engages with a range of at times overlapping, at times apparently antagonist conceptualisations of the landscape term in order to arrive at a fuller sense of how elite estates were understood in the early eighteenth century. The key theoretical developments within cultural geography that have framed this analysis are identified below and their distinctive contributions and applicability to historical, archive-based research, discussed.

There is a long tradition within cultural geography, particularly its historical sub-section, of interpreting landscape as 'real and tangible' land. Its most notable practitioners – Carl Sauer, H.C. Darby and more recently Muir (1998) and Hooke (1998) – have adopted a markedly empirical methodology focussed on systematic description of the changing form of the physical landscape in response to habitation, and provided rich descriptions of historical change based on the evidence of material artefacts of human settlement and work on the land. But as a comprehensive approach, their work has received considerable criticism since its heyday in the immediate post-war period: Michael Williams (1989) points to a general lack of engagement with symbolic interpretations of landscape; Sauer's reification of culture and denial of individual autonomy was staunchly attacked by Duncan (1980).⁵ But the

⁴ Groth & Wilson (2003), 21.

⁵ For Sauer's perspective see 'Forward to Historical Geography' & 'The Morphology of Landscape', quoted in Leighly, ed. (1963), 358, 343 fn. 42.

approach has had its defenders,⁶ and the understanding that underpins it – that landscape analysis is essentially about sustained community life, local knowledge and know-how, and careful stewardship of nature – is ‘a powerful vision’;⁷ one with arguable relevance to an eighteenth-century regional English context.

Agency became a focus of subsequent landscape interpretation, in particular, the relative contributions of individual and social agency and the interplay between them in shaping the land. Individual choice and creativity are now acknowledged alongside unself-conscious, habitual actions. As Duncan suggests, though individuals do not exercise total freedom of choice, their decisions are constrained by ‘specifiable economic and social conditions’ rather than ‘mysterious suprahuman forces’, and these conditions can be analysed in terms of ‘individual and group activities’ which should be viewed as ‘problematic’ and included as constitutive elements of any landscape analysis.⁸ Further, in any society there is not a single context within which individuals may act, but, dependent upon their access to power and resources, a series of contexts at a variety of scales. Revisionist studies have challenged the traditional tendency to focus locally and treat the landscape under scrutiny in isolation from its broader context: landscapes, concludes Don Mitchell, ‘do not just reflect but also incorporate and reify social processes working at a range of scales... [and consequently] cannot be understood in isolation from other landscapes, other regions and other places’.⁹ Landscapes are formed in relation to one another, a process exemplified in Seymour *et al.*’s (1998) case study of ideational and material exchanges in the co-management of Sir George Cornewall’s Herefordshire and Grenadan estates 1771-1819.

By the late 1980s several new approaches to landscape interpretation had emerged. Duncan fostered a broadly structuralist, literary-based methodology.¹⁰ Premised on the assumption that landscapes are communicative structures that encode and transmit information, he adapted the literary devices

⁶ See Price & Lewis (1993).

⁷ Henderson (2003), 183-4; see also Philo (1998), 56-8.

⁸ Duncan (1980), 196; see also Samuels (1979), 62-82.

⁹ Mitchell, D. (2002), 383.

¹⁰ Duncan & Duncan (1988); Duncan (1990), 11-24; for more general discussion of landscape metaphors see Daniels & Cosgrove (1993).

of 'rhetoric', 'textuality' and 'intertextuality' to analysis of how cultural beliefs are translated into visible motifs in the landscape, and meanings are selectively maintained, invented and contested. While his work has been said to lack reflexive awareness,¹¹ its general insights feed into wider debates surrounding the relationships between landscape, ideology and power.¹² In the context of eighteenth-century England, the landscape-as-text metaphor more loosely applied has productively informed analysis in Pugh's *Garden-Nature-Language* (1988) and the edited collection, *Reading Landscape: Country-City-Capital* (1990).

Duncan's work contributed to a broader contemporary discourse treating landscape as an ideological expression. Underpinning this new cultural geography in the UK was the understanding of culture as a 'signifying system' put forward by literary critique and cultural historian Raymond Williams,¹³ together with the assumptions that a mutually informative relationship exists between physical landscapes and their representations, and that all artefacts – 'from poems to maps to field crops' – should be read as cultural texts and seen as constitutive elements of landscape meaning.¹⁴ 'To understand a built landscape, say an eighteenth-century English park,' assert Daniels and Cosgrove, 'it is usually necessary to understand written and verbal representations of it, not as "illustrations", images standing outside it, but as constituent images of its meaning or meanings.'¹⁵ The approach was strongly influenced by Western Marxist thought on culture, and, to marked extent, focussed on the interpretation of landscape paintings rather than specific landscapes.¹⁶

The dominant argument of this landscape as 'visual-ideology' or 'way-of-seeing' approach is that landscape representations "cover-up" socio-economic realities, yet at the same time admit these realities in the form of characteristic

¹¹ Cosgrove & Domosh (1993), 32.

¹² For example, Mitchell, W.J.T., ed. (1994); Bermingham (1986); Daniels & Cosgrove, eds (1988).

¹³ Williams, R. (1981), 13.

¹⁴ Daniels (1989), 196.

¹⁵ Daniels & Cosgrove (1988), 1.

¹⁶ See Prince (1988); contributions in Mitchell, W.J.T., ed. (1994); Daniels (1992, 1993). Landscape analysts who aligned themselves with new cultural geography were frequently criticised for ignoring the substantive quality of land. But see Daniels (1989, pp. 206-7) on the 'duplicity' of landscape and his work from the late 1990s.

absences in modes of representation':¹⁷ they serve to 'aestheticize power and subjugation'.¹⁸ In an eighteenth-century English rural context, the view being presented in these representations is identified as uniquely patrician, the 'gaze' of an outsider,¹⁹ detached from, rather than physically inhabiting and working the land: 'A working country', states Raymond Williams, 'is hardly ever a landscape, the very idea of landscape implies separation and observation'.²⁰ An historical contextualisation of this reading is presented by Cosgrove (1984). He tracks the landscape idea in Europe and North America to the embrace of capitalist social relations and property rights, a process which in England he locates in the mid-eighteenth century and identifies with the rise of the Palladian country house and its enclosed parkland.²¹

A major strength of ideological approaches, particularly when considered historiographically, is their detailed examination of the socio-economic context of landscape production: that understandings of landscapes are both historicised and politicised. Yet, as critics have pointed out, assertions about the 'power' of landscape as an instrument of social legitimation and control need to be supported by examination of 'the specificity of effects', and, as Cosgrove has since acknowledged, reliance upon a single dominant narrative inevitably excludes other possible motivations and sources of meaning.²² Matless cautions that representations should be regarded as 'highly concrete stuff' 'enacting relationships of power-knowledge', rather than as images 'derivative of, subordinate to, and on occasion distortive of, an underlying and more basic reality'.²³

A range of detailed case studies focussed on Georgian improvement and picturesque aesthetics have explored more fully the multiple ways in which

¹⁷ 'It is the gap between reality and representation which demonstrates the complicity of landscape representation in socio-economic change.' Mayhew (1996a), 9; see also Barrell (1980); Darby (2000), 18.

¹⁸ Henderson (2003), 182.

¹⁹ Terminology emerging from feminist landscape critiques. See Rose (1993); Wylie (2007), 82-91.

²⁰ Williams, R. (1975), 149.

²¹ Cosgrove (1984), 199.

²² Mitchell (1994), 3; Cosgrove (1998), xv.

²³ Matless (1992), 44-6. For Matless 'representations' encompass fields of intellectual enquiry as well as acts of artistic and literary production.

patrician owners might engage with their estates.²⁴ As Daniels and Watkins remark: “‘improvement’ in the eighteenth century reveals a complex overlapping of not just economic and aesthetic issues but moral and political ones too’. Approaching their analysis from a perspective that considers terms like “‘rent” and “estate”... no more eternal, nor less ideological, than terms like “picturesque” and “landscape””, these studies integrate symbolic and substantive dimensions of landscape, providing accounts of Georgian landscaping in which the representational (art, literature and aesthetic theorisations) and material aspects of landscaping (estate management in all its facets) are shown to be inextricably linked.²⁵ ‘Estate portrayal and design’, asserts Daniels in relation to Humphry Repton’s (1752-1818) estate improvements, ‘did not eclipse the gentry’s economic interests; rather they codified these interests in terms of landscape’.²⁶ This understanding of eighteenth-century landscape is substantially supported by Mayhew’s view that the socio-economic and political significance of landscape cannot be understood independent of its broader moral context: ‘the politics and the religion of landscape,’ he argues, are ‘parts of the same discursive framework, reflecting a coherent mentality in eighteenth-century England’.²⁷ Hahn’s case study approach to kinship and exchange relations within the estate economy of Ditchley, Oxfordshire, demonstrates that elements of both moral and market economies operated alongside one another at least until the mid-eighteenth century.²⁸ Building on the work of Daniels, Seymour and Watkins, Ben Cowell’s empirical study of eighteenth-century parklands in Hertfordshire and Nottinghamshire challenges directly the premise that a simple dichotomy existed between a patrician ‘way of seeing’ (landscape) and a more corporeal, plebian ‘way of being’ (land conceived as working countryside). Cowell has demonstrated both that the ‘pleasures of vision and the sensations of “appropriation”’ were by no means confined to patrician

²⁴ Daniels & Watkins (1991); Daniels & Watkins (1994); Daniels *et al.* (1992); Daniels & Seymour (1990); Seymour (1988).

²⁵ Daniels & Watkins (1991), 141.

²⁶ Daniels (1993), 80.

²⁷ Mayhew (1996b), 459.

²⁸ Hahn (1999).

landowners and that landscape parks were 'important spaces of social interactions' and not simply 'views'.²⁹

In the late 1990s Cosgrove highlighted a further problem with the approach: that its subject, 'a largely disembodied mind... endowed with a will to power', has no counterpart in reality.³⁰ Subject embodiment, he concluded, must be integral to any discussion rooted in specific, physical landscapes, even one that adopts detachment from the land as its critical focus.³¹ His statements signal a turn in landscape analysis away from static representations of landscapes towards the everyday practices enacted within them: a move 'to change "landscape" from a noun to verb'.³² Matless's analysis of landscape in terms of 'beliefs, attitudes and everyday practices and performances' – 'cultures of landscapes' – shifts the analytic focus 'from property to *propriety*', and exemplifies one such approach.³³ *Landscape and Englishness* (1998) highlights the unstable heterogeneity of concepts like 'Englishness' and 'landscape' and advocates accounts of meaning centred on social practices, themselves rooted in specific historical and geographical contexts:

...the question of what landscape 'is' or 'means' can always be subsumed in the question of how it works; as a vehicle of social and self identity, as a site for the claiming of a cultural authority, as a generator of profit, as a space for different kinds of living.³⁴

Power is explored through examination of how cultural conventions and codes of conduct operate: how individuals are both governed by impersonal laws, policies and regulations, and self-regulate in response to more personal and locally negotiated codes of conduct. As Foucault argues, power is both productive – of new knowledges, practices, subject positions – and operates in a

²⁹ Cowell, B. (1998), 255.

³⁰ Cosgrove (1998), xvii.

³¹ See also Rose (1993); Fabricant (1979).

³² Mitchell, W.J.T. (1994), 1. See also Barnett's understanding of culture 'as an historically variable range of practices that apply or deploy power to particular effects' rather than a realm that 'reflects, refracts or represents other modes of power' (2001, p. 11).

³³ Wylie (2007), 110, 117. For distinct but related approaches see Mitchell, D. (1996); Olwig (1996, 2002, 2013).

³⁴ Matless (1998), 12.

diverse and dispersed way.³⁵ In any historical context certain forms of visual landscape (rural, picturesque) and certain forms of behaviour and practice in landscape (walking, painting) are taken to be aesthetically valuable and morally and physically uplifting, *not* because ‘some ineffable central “power” coerces or dupes society into accepting such beliefs’, but as ‘a consequence of a much more anonymous and as it were horizontally distributed exercise of power’.³⁶

Contemporaneously with Matless’s publication, a phenomenological approach towards landscape re-asserted itself within cultural geography.³⁷ Here focus centres on bodily contact with the landscape while performing and learning everyday tasks (walking, driving, gardening), again distancing discussion from a largely ‘interpretative and discursive standpoint’ towards a more ‘ethnographic and performative ethos’.³⁸ But unlike the practice-orientated work of Matless, landscape phenomenologists broadly eschew critical engagement with the socio-economic context within which activity takes place, and where power is a critical focus in non-representational approaches, the central concern is ‘to celebrate the ways in which everyday creativity, imagination and play undermine and elude [its] workings’.³⁹

Unsurprisingly, some representational theorists have seen phenomenological work as too individualistic (as opposed to social) in its conception of landscape, too meditative (as opposed to critical) in its analytic methodology, and it is generally accepted that the approach does not provide a wholly viable basis for landscape study within cultural geography, and poses particular problems for historical geographers limited to documentary and archaeological evidence.⁴⁰ But phenomenological work (and non-representational theory more broadly) has drawn attention to the multi-sensory

³⁵ Foucault, M., *The Order of Things*, London, 1977, p. 155 & *The History of Sexuality*, London, 1981 (first published 1984), vol. 1, p. 93, quoted in Wylie (2007), 111. See also Rabinov (1991), 3-7.

³⁶ Wylie (2007), 111.

³⁷ The approach experienced a brief hey-day in the 1970s: Relph’s (1976) study, *Place and Placeness*, being a notable example.

³⁸ Wylie (2013), 58 & (2007), 166.

³⁹ Scott (2004), 27. See also, Thrift (2000), 269 & (1999); de Certeau’s exposition of the everyday acts of defiance which individuals use to ‘reappropriate’ organised space (1988, p. xiv).

⁴⁰ Wylie (2013), 58 & (2007), 185-6; Lorimer (2005), 84; Finch (2013), 144.

nature of landscape engagement. To quote Ingold, a social anthropologist who made a seminal contribution to this subfield:

Landscape... is not a totality that you or anyone else can look *at* it is rather the world in which we stand in taking up a point of view on our surroundings. And it is within the context of this attentive involvement in the landscape that the human imagination gets to work in fashioning ideas about it.⁴¹

Practice is not therefore a secondary outworking of already structured social meaning, rather, landscape meaning emerges in the process of land use. Furthermore, it is collectively constituted:

Every task [Ingold defines tasks as 'constitutive acts of dwelling'] takes its meaning from its position within an ensemble of tasks, performed in series or parallel, and usually by many people working together.⁴²

This understanding has stimulated new forms of historical reconstruction. Lorimer has envisioned a synthesis of representational and non-representational concerns through 'a creative engagement with, and imaginative interpretation of, conventional "representational" sources'. His 'more-than-representational' approach to 'telling' the landscape mobilises a 'distribution of stories and dramatic episodes' – 'repertoires of lived practice' – to explore 'the possibility of crafting a closeness to the style and tone in which events are remembered, located and organised'.⁴³

Another important influence on geographers concerned to 'unbury and describe [the] given-ness' of everyday experiential life, in particular, those engaged in formulating conceptualisations of 'place', has been Heidegger's work on dwelling.⁴⁴ Most notable in relation to the present study are questions of individual and social meaning that have emerged from this writing – can places have universal meanings? Can an authentic meaning be posited from or found

⁴¹ Ingold (1993), 171.

⁴² Ingold (1993), 158.

⁴³ Lorimer (2003), 203 & (2006), 515; Tatlioglu (2010) exemplifies the biographical approach to landscape in archaeology.

⁴⁴ Seaman (1980), 148; Crang (1998), 107-11.

outside the spectrum of individual responses? – and the interdependence of meaning and intention articulated in Ingold's work.⁴⁵ As Crang discusses in response to Heidegger:

A place is a product of how we interact with it – we have different intentions towards a place if we live there, work there or are passing through on a journey. These all produce different 'places' to us.⁴⁶

Crang's reference to movement as a distinctive mode of perception, creating distinct 'senses of place', is now widely acknowledged both within cultural geography and the humanities in general.⁴⁷

Mobility in a more generalised sense has been treated by theorists of space and spatiality writing from Actor-Network Theory (ANT) and Hybrid Geographies perspectives and informs Massey's influential concept of 'place *beyond* place'.⁴⁸ At the heart of this body of work is a topological conceptualisation of the earth's surface in which networks, connections, flows and mobility are understood to provide the creative foundation *by means of which* spaces, places and identities are *created*. This is a radical shift from the topographical understandings characteristic of some of the approaches outlined above in which relational activities emerge *within* and *out of* an *already-given* space. A recognised strength of such relational approaches has been the challenge they offer to the conventional divisions of culture/nature and human/non-human in geographical discourse though an arguable weakness in the context of historical geography is the lack of weight given to the evolution of the landscape: 'In this interpretation, what gives a place its specificity is not

⁴⁵ See also Bender (1993), 2.

⁴⁶ Crang (1998), 109; Short extends this understanding of place to include intrinsic qualities of the physical environment (1992, p. 41).

⁴⁷ 'Journeying through' as an aspect of 'dwelling in' is central to understandings of landscape in Ingold's work (2000, pp. 226, 230), and archaeologist Chris Tilley's *A Phenomenology of Landscape* (1994). See also sociologist Monika Büscher's (2006) reflections on the importance of 'vision in motion' to contemporary landscape architects; Conan (2003) on its neglect *within* but centrality *to* histories of designed landscapes.

⁴⁸ Law (1999); Latour (1999); Whatmore (2002); Massey (2007), 15.

some long internalised history but the fact that it is constructed out of a particular constellation of relations, articulated together as a particular locus'.⁴⁹

Hybrid geographies and ANT constitute but two threads in an increasingly wide-ranging critique of traditional treatments of nature and animals within human geography, and the understanding that 'culture' (theorised as an exclusive product of human agency) is distinct from 'nature' (the domain of the non-human, both animate and inanimate) has now been widely challenged.⁵⁰ Whereas in traditional landscape studies non-human animals (when included) were largely confined to agricultural histories and treated as economic resources rather than distinct objects of study, recent reviews by Wolch, Emel & Wilbert (2003), Johnston (2008) and Urbanik (2012) make evident the breadth of subject matter and range of context and approach that has come to characterise new animal geography. While much of this is focussed on contemporary issues – conservation, animal rights, re-wilding, biodiversity, wildlife management – and the management of public settings – urban, rural and wild – many of the insights offered point to relationships between humans, animals and landscapes with broader historic and geographical relevance.

Ritvo's, *The Animal Estate* (1987), though written a decade before this renaissance, is recognised as having broken new ground. In common with other pre-1990 authors, Ritvo maintains that 'material animals were at the complete disposal of human beings';⁵¹ she differs in focussing *not* therefore on their utilitarian value, but approaching both the animals discussed and people's attitudes towards them in terms of metaphor and rhetoric. While the study focusses perhaps too narrowly on the human side of human-animal relations and on power relations in terms of dominance and exploitation,⁵² it does highlight the symbolic power of animals and the ways in which discourse

⁴⁹ Massey (1993), 66. See also (2005, p. 130) in which she considers 'place' as a collection of 'stories' expressing *both* 'articulations' and 'non-meetings-up' within wider 'power-geometries'.

⁵⁰ Scott (2004), 28. See also Braun (2004); Ingold (1994b, first published 1988), xxiv.

⁵¹ Ritvo (1987), 5. The text focusses on Victorian popular zoology, cattle breeding and dog showing, humanitarian discourse and disease control, zoo keeping and hunting in an imperial context.

⁵² See reviews: Briggs (1989), 178; Greene (2002), 686-7.

surrounding animals was used to produce and reinforce boundaries between social groups. Moreover, Ritvo concludes that in late eighteenth- and nineteenth-century England human-animal relations were 'at the centre of English social and cultural identity' and that no clear distinctions can be made between 'domesticated and wild animals, livestock and pets, animal welfare and animal research, or native and exotic animals'.⁵³ Another work which helped open up new lines of enquiry is Seymour's examination of human-animal relations in the more specific context of elite eighteenth-century landscape parks.⁵⁴ Taking as her analytic framework the Georgian concept of improvement, Seymour discusses the role of deer and improved breeds of sheep and cattle in patrician parks, concluding that the aesthetic, utilitarian and symbolic functions of animals in this period form an inseparable complex tied up with patrician self-fashioning.

Turning to work that engages directly with the intellectual agenda of new animal geography, Philo uses the context of Victorian metropolitan meat markets to question the ways in which discourse about animals can shape socio-spatial practices towards them on an everyday basis. Conceptualising animals as a minority or 'outsider' social group, he suggests that the capacity of animals to 'squeeze' out of the places, or roles, to which they have been consigned, can be usefully discussed in terms of the language of 'transgression' and understood as manifestations of animal agency.⁵⁵ In a paper entitled 'Versions of Animal-Human', Matless engages with the coupled themes of killing and conservation in the post-war landscape of the Norfolk Broads, approaching the subject from a 'cultures of landscape' perspective rather than the conventional telescoping of rights or welfare. A central concern of his study is to explain how 'animal and human become enfolded as subjects and objects'. Matless considers various ways in which humans can be defined through their relationship with animals (sportsman/naturalist, watcher, listener) and shows how humans can act to define a relational animal (animals as 'refractors of cultural-ecological value').

⁵³ Greene (2002), 685-6.

⁵⁴ Seymour (1988), 409-70.

⁵⁵ Philo (2000), 51; for anthropological understandings of how animals become positioned within conceptual frameworks of good and evil, pure and polluted see Douglas (1966) and Tapper (1994); for the source of Philo's terminology see Cresswell (1996), 22-3.

The conclusion drawn is that ‘different versions of the animal-human reflect and shape contesting cultures of nature and region’ and that it is ‘impossible to figure ways of being human outside of relations to the non-human environment’.⁵⁶

Underpinning Matless’s study is Ingold’s view that life (human and animal) entails a ‘becoming-through-environment’. For Ingold, the agency of the non-human is real and vital: grounded in immediacy of practical, tactile engagement rather than thought. Arguing thus for a ‘sentient ecology’ rooted in practical, situational understanding, Ingold contends that the testaments of those who are “with” animals in their day-to-day lives, most notably huntsmen and herdsman, can offer us some of the best possible indications of how we might proceed’.⁵⁷ As Lorimer’s paper ‘Herding memories of humans and animals’ (2006) explores explicitly, such a conceptual framework has methodological implications in terms of content and narrative style.⁵⁸

Both Matless’s Norfolk Broad’s study and subsequent work, in particular a co-authored analysis of late twentieth-century otter hunting and wild-fowling practices in Hertfordshire and Norfolk,⁵⁹ draw attention to the possibility of alternative human subjectivities emerging from relational engagements with animals in a common location. Whatmore (2002) and Lulka (2009) arrive at a similar conclusion, though from the distinctly alternative foundation of hybridity theory, according to which everything is engaged in relationships, the particularity of which need to be recognised: ‘a constellation of identity relations forms when different human-human, human-animal, and animal-animal configurations appear in specific places’.⁶⁰

To conclude, as *Placing Animals* makes eminently clear, ‘The ways in which human-animal relations manifest in the cultural landscape are as myriad

⁵⁶ Matless (2000), 115-6, 122, 137-8. See also Urry & MacNaghten (1998, p. 2): ‘it is specific social practices, especially of people’s dwellings, which produce, reproduce and transform, different natures and different values.’

⁵⁷ Ingold (1994a), 19.

⁵⁸ Notably, biographical accounts, personal and collective memories, myths and folklore are increasingly referred to as sources of empirical evidence within cultural geography.

⁵⁹ Matless *et al.* (2005).

⁶⁰ Urbanik (2012), 42.

as the relations themselves'.⁶¹ An eighteenth-century estate context is arguably a microcosm of many of these. As pets, livestock, means of transportation, quarry, objects of gift exchange and flesh as food for husbanded species, animals (both live and dead) were engaged with by a range of individuals (landowners, estate servants, tenants, poachers) over ground managed and occupied in a variety of ways (tenanted farmland, private pleasure grounds, woodland and watercourses retained in-hand and serving economic, aesthetic, sporting and utilitarian ends). Furthermore, as Naughton-Treves's (2002) study of contemporary gardens illustrates, boundaries are permeable to wildlife and the designed setting of a home (and by extension estate) is an apposite context for exploring both a 'myriad' of inter-species engagements in the landscape and questions of animal transgression and in/out of place-ness.

2.2 Landed Estates in the Eighteenth Century

2.2.1 General considerations

In *Property and Landscape* (1987) Williamson & Bellamy chart the various ways in which wealth distribution, relationships between economically differentiated social groups, and the changing demands of the national economy have influenced the appearance of the English landscape since the fifth century. They examine the evolution of regionally and locally differentiated patterns of enclosure, and identify marked shifts in the ways that the elite engaged with and expressed their power through land. In the middle ages, they contend:

The spatial organisation of the landscape was not used to display status or the distance between social classes, for the social, political and economic structure of the state, as well as its philosophy, emphasized the links between interest groups and classes, rather than their divorcedness.⁶²

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 153.

⁶² Williamson & Bellamy (1987), 49, 70 (quotation).

During the seventeenth century, the formal establishment of private property rights led to a redistribution of land, its concentration in the hands of fewer landowners, and a resultant rise of 'large' and spatially centralised estates.⁶³ In the authors' opinion, this caused a 'fundamental revolution in attitudes to landed property': the social elite began to display their power directly in land that was deliberately and extensively shaped for social and economic purposes, intentionally isolating themselves from the rural community.⁶⁴ Recent publications present a more tempered view, factoring into the discussion emphatically paternalistic, moral and even ecological dimensions. Everett argues that amongst a significant number of eighteenth-century landowners of both Whig and Tory persuasion there existed an attitude towards landscape 'opposed to a narrowly commercial conception of life and associated with a romantic sensibility to the ideas of continuity and tradition felt to be embodied in certain kinds of English landscape'.⁶⁵ Mayhew's analysis of landscape discourse in the long eighteenth century (c.1689-c.1832) has demonstrated the centrality of a religious dimension.⁶⁶ Markley (1999) challenges the central thesis of traditional narratives by exploring tensions between competing ecological and economic models of the land in the context of Andrew Marvell's poem, *Upon Appleton House* (1651). Châtel debates the notion of a 'green' awareness in relation to eighteenth-century landscape gardening, positing that 'the eighteenth-century debate on corruption, luxury, decline and climatic catastrophes' generated 'a re-appropriation of nature' which made nature the 'way to recovery for man'.⁶⁷

Studies of eighteenth-century estates indicate that landowner participation in estate management varied markedly according to the social and economic standing of the landowner and the scale of landholding. The problems of categorising the landowning class have been well aired in the historical literature and alternative hierarchies presented.⁶⁸ In relation to landed estates, Clemenson's framework has been markedly influential, and provides a loosely

⁶³ Habakkuk (1940), 2-6, 15-17. See also Mingay (1963), 50.

⁶⁴ Williamson & Bellamy (1987), 116; an understanding developed in an eighteenth-century context in Williamson (2002).

⁶⁵ Everett (1994), 1.

⁶⁶ Mayhew (1996b).

⁶⁷ Châtel (2013), 247.

⁶⁸ Overviews in Beckett (1986), 26-40, 489-95; Rosenheim (1998), 13-46.

economic definition of status based principally on scale of landholding. 'Large landowners' are defined within this system as those in possession of 3,000 or more acres of land, a group which subdivides into 'greater gentry' (possessors of 3,000-9,900 acres) and 'great landowners' or 'landed aristocrats' (10,000 acres or above).⁶⁹ An alternative approach based more directly on income and economic function (landlords versus freeholders) was elaborated in Mingay (1963). But the interpretative value of such hierarchies has since been challenged. While Mingay maintains that there were 'substantial differences' of a socio-political character between 'great landlords' (annual estate revenue £5,000-£6,000 a year minimum) and the 'gentry' (revenue below £5,000) – the former operating within a national sphere, the latter having horizons limited to the county or parish – Rosenheim concludes from his study of hegemonic power in England 1650-1750 that even squires of limited ambition and contacts were rarely insulated from metropolitan influences.⁷⁰ Moreover, as Williamson points out, 'wealth expressed in acres never had any very close relationship with wealth measured in terms of rental income' and neither rental income nor acreage provides an adequate identifier of a landed property's character: 'a typology of estates, which would recognise their diversity (in Britain and beyond) and allow us to make meaningful comparisons, and identify significant differences, across time and space' awaits production.⁷¹

The term 'ownership' is similarly problematic. In the context of eighteenth-century estates, the legal right of possession might not correspond to an absolute right of control. Following the elaboration of the institution of the strict settlement in the later seventeenth century, an estate, though owned by an individual, was not necessarily his or hers to alienate at will.⁷² This state of affairs had significant implications both for estate aggrandisement and landowner investment, notably in relation to silviculture: the conditions of strict

⁶⁹ Clemenson (1982), 8. Her categorisation draws on Bateman (1883) and has influenced the work of Bettey (1998), Cowel, B. (1998) and Williamson (2007).

⁷⁰ Mingay (1963), 9-10; Rosenheim (1998), 5. For a specific example of cultural percolation see Rowe (2001), lx.

⁷¹ Williamson (2007), 2. For examples of alternative definitions of 'estate' see Bettey (1993), 12; Robinson (1988), 7.

⁷² English & Saville (1983).

settlement often protected trees as part of the capital of the estate.⁷³ A further legislative change which in Hill's opinion made a vital contribution to English agricultural prosperity in the late Stuart period was the abolition of wardship and concomitant termination of feudal tenure: this 'had the effect of freeing big landowners from frequent but irregular death duties, heavy enough to disrupt long-term agricultural investment'.⁷⁴

'Too often,' writes Clemenson, 'component parts of historic estates have been the subject of examination in isolation, and few studies have attempted to look at the landed estate as a whole': a state of affairs which continues to receive scholarly opprobrium.⁷⁵ Clemenson's approach to the problem is characteristic of traditional historical geography. She charts the visual impact of the organisation of the land and buildings of large estates upon the rural landscape, past and present, and traces the evolution and decline of the major physical components that characterised them, and their subsequent adaption to other uses. One of her central conclusions is that 'evidence of the power and prestige of the landed classes created distinctive estate landscapes which, like the ripples of a stone thrown in water, diminished in visual intensity with increasing distance from the estate heartland'.⁷⁶ Recent work adopting a more holistic approach indicates that elite landscaping was more spatially diffuse. Finch, for example, suggests that 'there was no clear line between the "designed" and the "agricultural" landscape'.⁷⁷

Significant scholarly attention has been focussed on the country house and its framing pleasure grounds and parks as public statements of cultural identity and social status. Marcia Pointon describes elite eighteenth-century country houses as 'three-dimensional portraits of their owners';⁷⁸ Richardson asserts that eighteenth-century English gardens can be read as 'autobiographies of their owners' (see Section 2.3.1).⁷⁹ The aerial 'birds-eye' views or 'prospects' which became established as the main genre of estate portraiture in England and

⁷³ Daniels (1988), 44.

⁷⁴ Hill (1990), 14.

⁷⁵ Clemenson (1982), 17; Williamson (2007), 1.

⁷⁶ Clemenson (1982), 1; a similar argument is made by Rawding (1992), 60-1.

⁷⁷ Finch (2007b), 43.

⁷⁸ Pointon (1993), 20. For a specifically architectural critique see Cooper (2002).

⁷⁹ Richardson (2007), 10.

Wales from the late seventeenth century and were prominently displayed in both country houses and London residences for about the next sixty years, were designed for the gaze of both owners *and* visitors.⁸⁰ But though the house lay at the centre of these territorial visions, the prospect genre reflected a comprehensive vision of the landed estate. Harris's study of British country house portraiture 1540-1870 includes numerous representations in which the house is tied into its framework of garden and wider working landscape;⁸¹ eighteenth-century garden treatises highlight these connections through the attention they give to the topographical setting of the house and orientation of landscape features.⁸² Despite such recognition, Everson & Williamson comment on 'the general failure' to address the house 'as part of an integrated assessment', an oversight they consider 'one of the most surprising and disappointing features of work carried out to date'.⁸³ While engagement with vernacular estate buildings was, until recently, similarly under-represented in estate scholarship, increasing interest in interpretation and reception has prompted re-evaluations of these structures alert to their symbolic and aesthetic as well as purely functional purposes, and the need to factor into such studies what might loosely be termed a 'kinetic dimension'.⁸⁴ Williamson emphasises that to understand the impact made by the appearance of buildings (the different treatments given to the different facades) and by extension their social role, 'patterns of movement and access need to be reconstructed', adding the caution that these may have changed radically over time.⁸⁵ Daniels, in his biographical study of the landscape designer Humphry Repton, substantiates the relevance to estate design of a still broader geographical perspective.

Road travel helped define his [Repton's] profession of landscape gardening: networks of commissions, working practices,

⁸⁰ Daniels (1990), 9.

⁸¹ Harris (1979); Daniels (1990) posits that a wider discourse of 'country' or 'nation' informed estate landscape representations in the period.

⁸² See works cited in Section 4.2.

⁸³ Everson & Williamson (1998), 146.

⁸⁴ Longcroft (2007), 38; Robinson (1983); Wade-Martins (2002).

⁸⁵ Williamson, T., 'Vernacular Buildings in Norfolk: Where Next?', *Journal of the Norfolk Historic Buildings Group*, 1, pp. 53-9, p. 58, quoted in Longcroft (2007), 36.

theoretical principles, parkland signs. Moreover roads and travel largely shaped Repton's sensibility...⁸⁶

Daniels's study engages with networks of commissions and commodities, access to goods and personnel, postal communications, exchange of ideas and visits, parliamentary enclosure, emparkment, and, of course, aesthetic experience. No equivalent synthesis has, however, been attempted in relation to early eighteenth-century landscaping.

2.2.2 Estate management

Elite demesne holdings are recognised to have reduced considerably in spatial extent by the early eighteenth century and large landowners of this period are broadly categorised as '*rentiers*' and variously accused of 'retreating from farming', 'leaving risk-taking to tenants', 'acting negatively in terms of entrepreneurialism', and physically absenting themselves from their country seats.⁸⁷ Unsurprisingly therefore, the impact of absenteeism on estate development and changes in landowner attitudes towards agriculture and industry have attracted debate amongst social and economic historians of land management.⁸⁸ Roebuck's study of absentee landownership in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, while supporting the broad conclusion that absenteeism contributed to the widely acknowledged decline in the scale of demesne farming (on some estates at times only an orchard and kitchen garden remained) also concludes that the effects of absenteeism are not easily quantified and that it fostered the emergence of estate stewardship as a profession.⁸⁹ Subsequent case studies lend support to this more equivocal picture. Beckett's Cumbrian study prompted the reflection that 'absenteeism was not necessarily detrimental to the countryside', though perhaps

⁸⁶ Daniels (1999), 27.

⁸⁷ Beckett (1986), 134; Hainsworth (1992), 1. The pernicious effects of absenteeism were also commented upon in the eighteenth-century, see Laurence (1727), 57.

⁸⁸ For discussion of absenteeism in the specific context of late Georgian improvement see Webster (2010); for reflections on the factors contributing to reduced landowner presence see Roebuck (1973), 1-17 and Clay (1968), 504.

⁸⁹ Roebuck (1973), 15. Clearly, this is but one strand in a complex narrative of agrarian change more widely discussed in terms of the depression in agrarian markets, enclosure and engrossment.

disadvantageous to the region and its residents.⁹⁰ Wordie's examination of the administration of the Leveson-Gower estates in the West Midlands led him to a related observation: where an able steward was employed, landowner absence might prove a positive advantage.⁹¹ Furthermore, as Hainsworth's wide-ranging study of late Stuart stewardship has shown, in many cases landowner absenteeism was far from synonymous with landowner indifference.⁹² In short, the impact of absenteeism seems to have been strongly dependent upon the character of the parties concerned.

Roebuck's discussion of stewardship contributes to an academic literature on the role of the steward in the management and development of eighteenth-century estates dating from the late 1940s to which Hughes (1949), Jancey (1957) and Mingay (1967) made notable early contributions. Together they present a broad overview of the responsibilities of this rising profession, Jancey focussing specifically on the early eighteenth century. Mingay highlights the essentially middle class yet heterogeneous background of eighteenth-century stewards to whose ranks lawyers, farmers, merchants, ironmasters, army officers and senior domestic servants were frequently recruited.⁹³

While it is widely accepted that from the seventeenth century estate management became progressively centralised and standardised, the chronology for the professionalization of agents remains unclear: professional training was barely mooted until the end of the eighteenth century.⁹⁴ An increase in the complexity of estate administrative hierarchy may have resulted in a shift in terminology used to denote the men responsible for estate

⁹⁰ Beckett (1983), 106-7.

⁹¹ Wordie (1982), 231. Wordie draws his evidence from economic returns rather than estate improvement more widely conceived, noting that until the 1750s, lease covenants (where they existed) were mainly negative in character and aimed solely at preventing serious dilapidation of tenanted property.

⁹² Hainsworth maintains that the majority of landowners from the nobility and greater gentry shared an 'insatiable curiosity' about the estates from which they were periodically parted. Hainsworth (1992), 1.

⁹³ Mingay (1967), 7.

⁹⁴ Webster (2007), 49. Hughes (1949) traces professionalization back to the great medieval estates, lay and monastic; F.M.L. Thompson (1963) and Beckett (1989) contend that it occurred in the nineteenth century; Mingay (1967) and Clay (1985, p. 215) in the eighteenth. Neither Edward Lawrence in *The Duty of a Steward* (1727) nor William Marshall in *On the Landed Property of England* (1804) went beyond advocating on-the-job training by landowners.

management (from 'bailiff', 'surveyor' or 'steward', to 'land agent') but, as Hughes points out, individuals played the defining role in this development: 'the man first created the office, the precise nomenclature attaching to it came later'.⁹⁵ Even in the early nineteenth century, expectations were far from homogenous across estates.⁹⁶

Estate management was, in Jancey's opinion, 'a partnership between landlord and steward'.⁹⁷ Hainsworth (1992) provides a comprehensive analysis of the nature of this relationship in the late Stuart period.⁹⁸ Drawing on letters exchanged by stewards and their masters concerning estates as widely distributed as Northumberland, Cornwall, Cumberland and Sussex, and including the Savile estates in Nottinghamshire and Yorkshire, he highlights the diversity and range of stewards' responsibilities: mediating between master and tenant and securing rents; exploiting estate timber and mineral resources; acting as 'clerks of the works'; promoting their master's political interests; protecting his property. The distinctively paternalistic character of the relationship is made apparent. The late Stuart steward was considered a subordinate member of his master's family.⁹⁹ While this might inhibit his willingness to act unilaterally it also promoted his security and favoured continuity of service: 'it was as rare for a lord to sack his steward as it was for him to disinherit his eldest son',¹⁰⁰ a situation that arguably facilitated a long-term view of estate development. Wordie's Leveson-Gower study, one of the few alternative micro-studies of stewardship in this period, limits itself, in contrast, to discussion of the financing of mining operations and mineral leasing agreements, and assessment of the mechanisms by which owners could influence the agricultural development of their tenanted land.

Within the hierarchy of eighteenth-century estate servants, the steward occupied the highest echelon. In *The Country Gentleman's Vade Mecum* (1717), Gent positions the steward alongside the master's secretary, his gentleman of

⁹⁵ Hughes (1949), 188.

⁹⁶ Webster (2007), 47.

⁹⁷ Jancey (1957), 41.

⁹⁸ See also Hainsworth (1988).

⁹⁹ For discussion of the very different character of steward/landowner relationships in the late eighteenth century see Horn (1982); Beckett (1986), 139-56.

¹⁰⁰ Hainsworth (1992), 253.

the horse and his waiting gentleman. These were 'superior' servants privileged with direct access to the master, and expected 'to oversee and direct' those of an 'inferior' class – the bailiff, gardener, cook, butler, groom and footmen.¹⁰¹ Recent publications raise questions about such a rigid social ordering, in particular, the status of the gardener. Henrey (1986) presents Thomas Knowlton (1691-1781), gardener at Londesborough, Yorkshire (1726-1781), as a technically skilled, highly literate man raising exotic plants alongside standard horticultural produce, planting on an estate scale, landscaping and stocking waterworks, managing a workforce, acting as a design consultant to neighbouring landowners and taking an intellectual interest in botanical science.¹⁰² O'Halloran's doctoral study of the role of the gardener in England 1630-1730 directly addresses the professionalization of gardeners and gardening and offers a more comprehensive challenge. Her observation that gardeners might engage with the creation of designs from 'conception to implementation' highlights the need for a more broad-based examination of designing practice than is conventionally provided by garden historians. Furthermore, although O'Halloran's study is restricted to a handful of detailed biographies, her conclusions – that gardeners might be involved in negotiation of outdoor workers' wages; that 'The gardener looked directly to the owner for instruction and in general did not recognise the steward as a figure of authority'; that gardeners' responsibilities were prosecuted at the scale of an estate and might encompass such diverse areas of activity as planting, fishing, waterworks, the establishment of nurseries in addition to kitchen garden and pleasure ground maintenance – invite further examination of the interplay between stewards and gardeners and consideration of the fluid nature of roles in an early eighteenth-century context.¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ Gent (1717), 45.

¹⁰² See also O'Halloran's pending publication, 'The Role of Gervase Whitehead at Knole, Sevenoaks in Kent (1718-1739)'; Seymour's presentation 'William Speechly and the Scope of Estate Gardening at Welbeck, Nottinghamshire in the later 18th Century' at the Oxford Maison Française study day 'The Figure in the Estate', November 2013, online podcast: www.mfo.ac.uk.

¹⁰³ O'Halloran (2013), 143, 203 (quotation), 216 (quotation), 218, 275. O'Halloran states that women labourers did not generally form part of the permanent estate staff but were paid to perform basic gardening tasks such as weeding.

From the late seventeenth century, the scale of estate landscaping vastly increased (see Section 2.3). In *Ichnographia Rustica* (1718), Stephen Switzer draws attention to the practice of employing garden designers from London:

...the Method commonly taken in this Affair [laying out of grounds], is, Gentlemen have their Ground survey'd, and perhaps the Levels take, and then 'tis brought to London, where there are a great many Drafts-men, and Paper Engineers, so a regular fine Scheme is made.¹⁰⁴

His observation suggests a want of skilled designers in the country, a reflection that the secondary literature has only recently begun to challenge. Biographical studies of early eighteenth-century designers are focussed on a relatively small collection of major figures – Sir John Vanbrugh (1664-1726),¹⁰⁵ Charles Bridgeman (died 1738),¹⁰⁶ Stephen Switzer (died 1745),¹⁰⁷ William Kent (died 1748),¹⁰⁸ Alexander Pope's (1688-1744)¹⁰⁹ – and the role of elite landowners.¹¹⁰ More recently, though in a predominantly late eighteenth-century context, focus has shifted to less widely acknowledged individuals: Sanderson Miller (1716-1780)¹¹¹ and Richard Woods (c.1715-1793).¹¹² Viewed collectively these monographs highlight the diversity of backgrounds – whether in social status or training – from which designers emerged, and the multiple professional persona individuals might adopt.¹¹³ Broadly speaking, the critical emphasis of such work has been on the evaluation of design features and the contextualisation of design activity in terms of networks of influence, rather than examination of working practices. Cowell's study of Richard Woods, which devotes a chapter to 'Labour

¹⁰⁴ Switzer (1718), xii.

¹⁰⁵ Ridgway & Williams, eds (2000); Dalton (2012).

¹⁰⁶ Willis (2002, first published 1977).

¹⁰⁷ Brogden (1973, 1974).

¹⁰⁸ Hunt (1987); Mowl (2006).

¹⁰⁹ Martin (1984); Brownell (1978).

¹¹⁰ Mowl (2000); Chambers, D. (1993); Lees-Milne (1963).

¹¹¹ Meir (2006).

¹¹² Cowell, F. (2005, 2009).

¹¹³ Vanbrugh was employed as a dramatist, architect and landscape designer; Bridgeman a surveyor, nurseryman, landscape designer and Royal Gardener; Switzer a nurseryman, landscape designer, seedsman and author; Kent an artist, interior designer, architect of garden buildings and landscape designer.

Demand, Supply and Organisation in the Eighteenth-Century Garden', charts new intellectual territory.¹¹⁴

Contracted designers might in turn sub-contract individuals who would temporarily reside on site and oversee the execution of the designer's plans – referred to by the 1690s as 'foremen'.¹¹⁵ Such contractual engagements were commonplace by the second half of the eighteenth century,¹¹⁶ but the managerial framework underpinning early eighteenth-century improvements remains under-researched. Cowell suggests that most garden labourers were essentially farm workers hired on a casual basis and that the labour market was extremely fluid and seasonally dependent, harvest time impacting particularly negatively on the availability of horses and men.¹¹⁷ The work of Hainsworth, Cowell and O'Halloran underlines the importance of considering eighteenth-century landscape design as a collaborative practice conditioned by its geographical context, rather than simply an expression of a landowner and/or designer's cultural preferences.

2.3 Aspects of Estate Landscape Engagement

2.3.1 Early eighteenth-century landscape design

The history of garden/landscape design has traditionally been dominated by a pre-occupation with form. Numerous chronological accounts concerned with the delineation of stylistic typologies, identification of design principles and analysis of their change within specific periods, have been written over the last fifty years.¹¹⁸ As discussed in Chapter 1, since the 1990s considerable criticism has been levelled at this so-called 'art historical approach' with repeated calls being made for more historically contextualised accounts. Amongst the most

¹¹⁴ Cowell, F. (2005), 187-212.

¹¹⁵ O'Halloran (2013), 159. Conclusion based primarily on the practice of nurseryman and designer George London (c.1640-1714). An employment contract for Cholmondeley Hall, Cheshire, 1694, is cited as the first usage of the title.

¹¹⁶ Cowell, F. (2009), 73.

¹¹⁷ Cowell, F. (2005), 87, 191, 195-7.

¹¹⁸ Thacker (1979) exemplifies the style.

comprehensive responses to this challenge are two independent (but to an extent complementary) surveys carried out in 1998 by Williamson and Jacques.

Jacques (1998) charts the development of 358 'fine' English gardens between 1660 and 1735.¹¹⁹ With a view to analysing stylistic variation, he defines a broad range of 'garden elements' in terms of which major phases of garden construction are identified and analysed within his sample group. One of his central conclusions, reinforced through subsequent work, is that 'Garden fashions in this period... were various, and defy any simplistic chronology that claims a linear development from the formal to the "natural"'.¹²⁰ His more complex chronology provides a caution against garden histories based predominantly on literary as opposed to archaeological data and analysis of layout: 'Forest or rural gardening', for example, often presented as the brain child of Stephen Switzer and Charles Bridgeman, is identified by Jacques as already a reality by the time the former began to write or the latter to practice in the mid-1710s.¹²¹ While Jacques's conclusion is a notable challenge to the conventional view that 'the taste in gardening of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries lagged behind that in landscape poetry and painting' and that 'in gardenist matters theory was strangely ahead of practice',¹²² his characterisation of gardening as a highly individual practice has precedents and continues to receive support. In the late 1960s Mack presented Alexander Pope's Twickenham garden, one of the most extensively viewed and documented of the period, as 'a rallying point for his personal values and a focus for his conception of himself'.¹²³ Williamson has repeatedly appealed for an interpretative approach to gardens drawn from the 'lives and lifestyles of their owners', 'their

¹¹⁹ A periodization discussed in the preface to Jacques (1983).

¹²⁰ Ridgeway & Williams (2000), xii. Prefatory appraisal by the editors of Jacques's contribution (chapter: 'The Formal Garden') to the publication.

¹²¹ Jacques (1998), 145-6. Williamson's survey of Norfolk gardens supports a similar conclusion (1998, p. 35); Goodchild's (1991) study of the correspondence of Commonwealth prelate Reverend John Beale (1608-82/3) suggests that ideas of 'rural and extensive' gardening were already being debated within Royal Society circles in the immediate post-Restoration period.

¹²² Hunt (1989, first published 1976), 36.

¹²³ Mack, M., *The Garden and the City: Retirement and Politics in the Later Poetry of Pope 1731-1743*, London, 1969, quoted in Hunt (1989), 29. Similar arguments have been presented in relation to Lord Cobham's landscaping at Stowe and Queen Caroline's at Richmond.

attitudes to friends, neighbours, family and what they hunted'.¹²⁴ The period is recognised as 'the age of the skilled amateur, the connoisseur', and the garden, as 'a suitable *milieu* for personal expression and even dissent'.¹²⁵

Williamson's survey of garden development in Norfolk c.1680-1840 augments Jacques's study both in terms of sample range and through adoption of a more broadly socio-economic interpretative framework. Though more geographically restricted, it encompasses a wider social spectrum of landowners, a central aim being to compare the kinds of fashions evident at the most famous (and often wealthiest) residences with those followed by the local gentry. Like Jacques, Williamson challenges the standard chronology of garden development. Contrary to the much-expressed opinion that formal lay-outs became unfashionable in the first third of the eighteenth century, in Norfolk, 'the gardens of great landowners and local gentry alike... continued into the 1730s (and often far beyond) to be cast in an essentially geometric mould', and productive and aesthetic garden components were retained and intermingled close to the house at all social levels. Williamson observes that the majority of gardens (gentry and elite) retained this essentially geometric frame into the 1760s – serpentine walks and rivers (taken as the hallmarks of naturalism) might be included, but within a linear framework. The gardens of his two broad social groups did begin to develop along significantly different lines after the 1730s. Whereas the size of gentry gardens remained comparatively static those of elite gardens grew immeasurably, a change which in Williamson's opinion prompted a range of broadly pragmatic responses: the functional effectiveness of walled enclosures was compromised and these were increasingly removed, design unity achieved by structuring layouts around vistas; ornamental woodland (wildernesses) became more prominent; sunken ditches or ha-has became the fashionable means of integrating garden and parkland; and, by the 1750s, 'possession of an extensive area of ornamental parkland had... become an indispensable badge of elite status'.¹²⁶

¹²⁴ Williamson (1995), 7 & (1998), 2.

¹²⁵ Richardson (2007), 10. See also Mowl (2000) and Brewer (1997) for a broader context.

¹²⁶ Williamson (1998), 18-96, quotations 18, 90.

Such observations are by no means confined to Williamson's Norfolk survey. Williamson himself develops these ideas in other publications and numerous authors have both commented on the monumental scale of mid-century landscapes and contributed insights into the evolution of specific garden features and stylistic change. Willis characterises Charles Bridgeman as a designer with a 'predisposition to vastness of scale' and 'ingenuity'.¹²⁷ Hunt, in his essay 'The Garden of "Betweenity": Between André Le Nôtre and William Kent', discusses the influence of continental 'tripartite' gardens with their "“graduated” sequence of garden and forest spaces' on the garden aesthetics of Joseph Addison and Stephen Switzer, and the important role of perspective in early eighteenth-century gardens.¹²⁸ Brogden assesses the impact of Switzer's theory and practice of 'extensive' or 'forest' gardening in a range of biographical studies of the designer, author and nurseryman.¹²⁹ Phibbs has centred a series of articles around discussion of the underlying geometry of eighteenth-century design.¹³⁰ Taylor has examined the meaning and development of wildernesses as English garden components prior to the eighteenth century, and van Woudstra extends this discussion into the early eighteenth century with specific reference to the landscaping of Thomas Wentworth's Stainborough Estate, South Yorkshire.¹³¹

In relation to avenue planting, Couch (1992) remains the most widely quoted reference, though Jacques (1998) is another key source. Taken together, these studies present a somewhat ambiguous picture. Couch, for example, draws a marked distinction between avenues ('principal tree-lined walks in the garden, bosquet or wilderness') and rides (passages 'cut through woodland');¹³² Jacques makes no consistent distinction. Couch's paper expressly omits discussion of rides, and even Jacques confines his treatment to a brief review of their most common geometries leaving their precise nature in considerable question. Moreover, Jacques discusses rides within a section of his thesis entitled 'Vistos', a term he uses in relation to any axial landscape feature – canal, avenue, walk,

¹²⁷ Willis (2002), 130. See also Smith (2006); Paulson (1979).

¹²⁸ Hunt (2012), 160-71.

¹²⁹ Brogden (1973, 1974); see also Jacques (1998), ch. 4.

¹³⁰ Phibbs (2006, 2007, 2008).

¹³¹ Taylor (2008); van Woudstra (2004/2005).

¹³² Couch (1992), 173.

ride – which gives rise to a distant view, while Cousin's study of Ditchley Park, Oxfordshire, suggests that terminology might have been regionally specific.¹³³ By the 1770s 'rides' or 'ridings' had broken free of their woodland context and rectilinear geometry. Intended 'to lead from one beauty point to another, and be a pleasure all the way', Williamson has characterised them in this period as 'ornamented drives'.¹³⁴

The development of parkland has received considerable scholarly attention both within garden history and the humanities in general.¹³⁵ That said, with the notable exceptions of Prince's survey of park development in Hertfordshire (2008), Williamson's in Norfolk (1998), Taigel & Williamson's in Hertfordshire (1993), Lasdun's wide-ranging history (1991) and brief discussions in more general garden histories, most academics interested specifically in the history of eighteenth-century park design have focussed on the second half of the century. Moreover, analyses generally centre on charting the evolution and interpreting the meaning of the formal qualities and architectural content of parks, rather than with examining the practices associated with their creation or the uses to which they were put.

A major critique of standard narratives charting the emergence of the English landscape park is their dogged focus on change and limited engagement with historical context.¹³⁶ Continuity and the relationship between the vernacular countryside and the garden have therefore become hallmarks of revisionist work. Thomas draws attention to the sense of moral imperative as well as economic desirability that motivated agricultural propagandists in the early modern period: 'tamed, inhabited and productive' landscapes were

¹³³ In early eighteenth-century Oxfordshire cuttings through woods seem to have been referred to alternatively as 'lights'. Cousin (2011), 148.

¹³⁴ Thomas Whately's *Observations on Modern Gardening* (1770), quoted in Williamson (2007), 7-8.

¹³⁵ For an historical approach see Miles (2009); for a landscape archaeology/ecology perspective see Rotherham (2007); for a more traditionally archaeological approach see Pattison, ed. (1998); for a wide-ranging case study of a heritage site see Roberts (1997).

¹³⁶ Horace Walpole's witty and persuasive essay *The History of the Modern Taste in Gardening* (first published 1780) which portrayed the creation of the English landscape garden as a feat of radical innovation propelled by a few well-connected, visionary individuals, has broadly framed traditional garden history narratives. Hunt's critical introduction to *The History* (facsimile, 1995).

'beautiful'.¹³⁷ Chambers (1993) and Hunt (1986) use this classical coupling of aesthetic (*dulce*) and productive (*utile*) dimensions of landscape to frame their analyses of English gardens and gardening. Citing a wealth of evidence drawn from the publications, correspondence and landscapes of gardeners, nurserymen and amateur botanist-owners, Chambers argues that major themes in Virgil's *Georgics* – rural withdrawal, the alliance of science and imagination, the integration of farming and gardening – provided an aesthetic model for English gardens from the mid-seventeenth century onwards. Hunt's concern is to examine the sustained influence of Italian Renaissance gardens on English taste in the face of an increasing European fashion for the formal French style of André le Nôtre.¹³⁸ He traces the experiences of Italian gardens by English travellers in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, substantiating connections between Italian Renaissance models and major early eighteenth-century garden theorists and designers, concluding that the English experienced a wide variety of different styles, forms and designs during their Italian travels from which they chose eclectically often confusing or compiling ideas of ancient Roman gardens and more modern Italian ones.¹³⁹

Questions surrounding the retention, re-use and re-interpretation of features from earlier phases of design are prominent in Finch's examination of improvements on the Castle Howard Estate, 1699-1880. The standard reading of the 3rd Earl of Carlisle's landscaping of Ray Wood as a seminal moment in a stylistic transition from formality to naturalism, is re-interpreted as Carlisle's desire to minimise felling and preserve the 'natural' character of the antecedent landscape that continued to contribute meaning to the new ornamental grounds.¹⁴⁰ Finch's work is representative of a more widespread archaeological engagement with the impact of 'improvement' on post-medieval landscapes, one of whose central conclusions is that 'the transformation of boundaries, roads

¹³⁷ Thomas (1983), 254-5.

¹³⁸ For the dissemination and translation of French garden ideals through Europe see Gollwitzer (1974).

¹³⁹ Hunt suggests a new typology, 'Palladian gardens', representing 'the final flowering of Italianate gardening in England' (1986, p. 194). Harris (2004) examines this concept in relation to the Chiswick residence of the 3rd Earl of Burlington, concluding, in line with Hunt, that the garden buildings at Chiswick were imaginative reconstructions.

¹⁴⁰ Finch (2007a), 25-6.

and field systems during phases of enclosure... relate to the manipulation and incorporation of antecedent features such as woodland, fishponds, and warrens.¹⁴¹ There is now a convincing body of archaeological data supporting the view that fishponds, dovecots, rabbit warrens and deer parks – landscape features most commonly discussed in relation to medieval landscapes¹⁴² – both proliferated and developed in more obviously ornamental forms adjacent to residential properties in the period c.1660-1750. Williamson expands the straightforward economic argument for such investment, suggesting that it represented ‘the assertion of traditional symbols of privilege after a period of revolutionary upheaval’.¹⁴³ Phibbs (2009) examines the legacy of a range of late medieval garden features in eighteenth-century gardening, including the importance of animal life to the design of pleasure gardens (see Section 2.3.3).

Appreciation of the countryside is another theme which can be traced through various guises from the Elizabethan period onwards.¹⁴⁴ In specifically gardening terms, the delight in distant prospects is generally discussed in relation to mounts, terraces, bastions, grills, avenues, rides and ha-has. While mounts had a tradition of use extending from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century, the ha-ha was an eighteenth-century introduction and signals a privileging of sight over other forms of sensory engagement with landscape.¹⁴⁵ Bony has argued that ‘Sight is at the core of Addison’s aesthetics’.¹⁴⁶ Châtel frames this dominance-of-the-visual in terms of Enlightenment attitudes to enquiry and visual acquisitiveness;¹⁴⁷ de Bolla contends that ‘a public visual culture’ existed by the second quarter of the eighteenth century and proposes two distinctive eighteenth-century ways of seeing, one atemporal and panoramic – a ‘painterly gaze’ – the other more structured in its spatial remit, giving rise to a totality of view constructed sequentially through time – a ‘narrative gaze’. In de Bolla’s opinion, the way viewers looked was fundamental to the way in which

¹⁴¹ Finch & Giles (2007), vii-viii.

¹⁴² Sheail (1971) is a notable exception.

¹⁴³ Williamson (1997), 106.

¹⁴⁴ Thomas (1983), 243-54.

¹⁴⁵ Harris (1979); Hadfield (1985, first published 1960), 163-5; Fletcher (1991).

¹⁴⁶ Bony, A., *Joseph Addison, Richard Steele: the Spectator et L’Essai Périodique*, Paris: Didier Erudition/CNED, 1999, quoted in Châtel (2013), 243.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 249.

taste was constructed, and he is critical of the inattention to this point in garden histories.¹⁴⁸ Fabricant draws attention to the frequent use of words such as ‘scene’, ‘theatre’, ‘platform’ and ‘entertainment’ in eighteenth-century writings on landscape design, and concludes that a major function of ‘nature’ for the owners of estates was ‘to “perform” as if on stage for the benefit of spectators’.¹⁴⁹ For Fabricant this attitude towards garden design was part of a much broader gendered relationship to property – whether in the form of a landscape or woman – which made connections between aesthetic, economic and sexual forms of possession. Until recently ‘An emphasis on design and innovation has tended to cement the associations between large-scale gardens and men’, and interpretations of eighteenth-century gardens have centred around questions of political affiliation and display as a means of naturalising hierarchical status and power relations.¹⁵⁰ Bending’s exploration of the role played by women in shaping garden design through use signals a move towards a more balanced narrative.¹⁵¹

2.3.2 The complex currency of woods: timber and coppice as an estate resource

If, as Watkins remarks, previous generations of geographers and historians have tended to treat woodland as a ‘simple natural category’, and shown less interest in the way trees and woodland were ‘managed, interpreted and valued than in the way in which they were extirpated’, recent scholarship has done much to challenge that understanding.¹⁵² Woodland is now more frequently conceived as a complex type of land use, which has served multiple and often overlapping functions (Seymour, 1988, 1989, 1998; Watkins & Daniels, 1992), been ascribed

¹⁴⁸ De Bolla (2003), 104, 106, 108-28.

¹⁴⁹ Fabricant (1979), 114.

¹⁵⁰ Bending (2013), 8. Paulson (1976-7) reviews political interpretations of early eighteenth-century landscapes; see also Turner (1978). Mukerji (1997) discusses the territorial ideals of the French national style epitomised in Le Nôtre’s work.

¹⁵¹ Bending presents the garden as a site that allowed women to situate themselves in cultural terms ‘whether they be of Eden, Paradise and the Fall, of desire, temptation, and punishment’ and the garden as both ‘private space visited by the public’ and ‘public space shaped by a private individual’ (2013, pp. 3, 93); see also Vickery’s conclusion that for privileged women the home was not ‘in any simple sense a private domestic sphere’ (1998, p. 9).

¹⁵² Watkins (1998b), 1, 8.

a variety of cultural meanings (Daniels, 1988; Davies, 1988; Watkins, 1998a; Rival, 1998; Markley, 1999) and changed in form, species profile and density both geographically and over time (Rackham, 1980, 2000; Peterken, 1981, 1996; Kirkby & Watkins, 1998).

The studies by Seymour (1989) and Watkins & Daniels (1992) both examine woodland management in the context of late Georgian landed estates. Seymour explores the 'spirit of planting' on three of the Dukeries estates (Welbeck, Thoresby, Clumber) in Nottinghamshire and positions planting within broader schemes of agricultural development, arguing that it was promoted as a rational use of poor soil in the period. Planting is shown to have been a means of claiming territory both literally, on surrounding moorlands, and practically through the fencing of new enclosures; of appropriating game from neighbouring parks; and of expressing powerful lineal and patriotic associations through the preservation of individual ancient oaks or the naming of woodlands. Seymour focusses on motives for establishing new timber plantations, a form of land use which only became widely established in Nottinghamshire from the 1750s. Watkins & Daniels, in contrast, focus on the 'complicated linkages' between traditional woodland management (coppice-with-standards and pollarding) and picturesque landscape theory in a study of Uvedale Price's (1747-1829) Herefordshire estate. They show that despite a strong market for traditional wood products in late eighteenth-century Herefordshire, the traditional management of trees was increasingly modified to satisfy the owner's aesthetic demands.

While the above studies highlight the variety of ways in which eighteenth-century woodland was valued, other authors have concentrated on a single dimension. The use of trees and wood as 'social symbols', in particular their role as 'symbols of transgenerational continuity', has been a theme of recent anthropological enquiry.¹⁵³ Such cross-cultural work has substantiated the understanding that trees can be read as a form of cultural representation, constructed from kinds of knowledge specific to place, time and social group, a conclusion well illustrated by Watkins in relation to Sherwood Forest. During the eighteenth and nineteenth century, ancient Sherwood oaks were variously

¹⁵³ Rival (1998), xiii.

'categorized as fuel, timber, picturesque, dead and habitat', 'designated status and power and caused legal disputes'.¹⁵⁴ Carl Griffin's (2008) study of plant maiming fills a lacuna in the study of covert protests in Hanoverian rural England. As a form of social practice, he concludes, malicious attacks on plants (which under the 'Black Act [9 George I c.22]' became a capital offence) 'embodied wider community beliefs regarding the defence of plebeian livelihoods and identities'.¹⁵⁵ Griffin (2010) addresses both the insidious damage to young plantations caused by mice and rabbits and the complex of motives that might drive acts of forest incendiarism – 'fire was frequently used by poachers trying to flush out game or commoners setting fire to gorse and heather to stimulate browse' – in addition to its use as an act of protest against the establishment of new timber enclosures.¹⁵⁶

The several works of Rackham and Peterken, and contributions to the edited volume by Kirkby & Watkins are representative of an alternative approach to woodland history grounded in the ecological dimension of the subject. Rackham's work has had a significant influence on subsequent interdisciplinary scholarship. *Ancient Woodland*, one of his most cited texts, traces the historical ecology of medieval woodlands surviving to the present: their locations, soils, and varieties of tree communities and associated ground cover. Drawing on a broadly East Anglian context, Rackham identifies two dominant forms of traditional management in England – woods (producing timber and coppice products) and wood-pastures (providing trees as well as grazing for livestock and deer or both). Many of the myths surrounding woodland history, in particular that of woodland clearance and dearth, are challenged, and a central feature to emerge from this evolutionary study is the essential continuity and stability of coppiced woodlands in the landscape.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁴ Watkins (1998a), 111.

¹⁵⁵ Though the Act was only infrequently invoked by prosecutors, 'a high proportion of subsequent prosecutions under the Black Act were against plant maimers'. Griffin, C. (2008), 29, 30, 32; Thompson, E.P. (1975).

¹⁵⁶ Griffin, C. (2010), 463. Evidence of N. Jervoise Coleman, regarder, 22 November 1788, in 'The Fifth Report of the Commissioners Appointed to Enquire into the State and Condition of the Woods, Forests and Land Revenues of the Crown' (1789), appendix 15.

¹⁵⁷ Rackham emphasises that the grubbing out of woodland involved heavy capital investment (1980, pp. 16, 105). See also Young's (1984, p. 22) economic study of the woodland of southern England 1770-1914 which concludes that within his time frame

That said, subsequent scholarship has revealed the pitfalls of attempting to categorise traditional management styles too rigidly. To quote Watkins: 'the boundaries between woodland, wood pasture, pasture with trees and arable land are difficult to define with precision'.¹⁵⁸ Watkins himself has contributed to a detailed examination of changing attitudes towards the pollarding of trees (a traditional means of managing hedgerow, parkland and common land trees) in Britain 1600-1900.¹⁵⁹ But as many recent studies of customary practices (the above included) have highlighted, such accounts face two major challenges. Firstly, woodland terminology was neither standardised across the country nor stable locally or even (frequently) within the writing of a given individual.¹⁶⁰ Secondly, the very prevalence and normality of such practices meant that knowledge was often assumed and therefore excluded from commentaries.¹⁶¹

For the woodland economy to thrive, trade and transport were essential.¹⁶² Flinn (1958, 1959), Hammersley (1973) and Collins (1992, 1996) have independently examined demand and supply in relation to the charcoal-iron industry, of which South Derbyshire was one of the main producing centres in the first half of the eighteenth century.¹⁶³ Collins's studies contribute to his broader concern with the impact of the iron industry (which, he contends, in the early eighteenth century consumed approximately one third of the annual wood increment)¹⁶⁴ and the replacement of wood fuel by coal on the economic viability of coppice management in England. He concludes that the rise of coal did not mean that the price of wood collapsed or area under woodland diminished. New markets developed for coppice products. However, 'the geography of change was highly complex'.¹⁶⁵ One of the expanding eighteenth-

there was no wood shortage at the point of production, but that successful supply was crucially dependent upon transportation, and Warde (2006). Regarding supplies to the Royal Navy, James argues that the shortage was one of funds not wood (1981, pp. 119-25, 150); Rackham considers that genuine shortage only arose in the 1780s when shipbuilding had to compete with the tanning industry (2000, p. 92).

¹⁵⁸ Watkins (2014), 9.

¹⁵⁹ Petit & Watkins (2003).

¹⁶⁰ James (1981), 163-4 & (1991); Petit & Watkins (2003), 160.

¹⁶¹ Daniels & Watkins (1991), 154.

¹⁶² Rackham (1980), 137.

¹⁶³ Riden (1991).

¹⁶⁴ Collins (1992), 115.

¹⁶⁵ Collins (1996), 1107 & (1989a&b).

century markets that Collins refers to, and whose importance Lowe highlights in an eighteenth-century Midlands context, was the hop industry,¹⁶⁶ though in comparison with construction and charcoal-iron industries, the impact of this market on woodland management has received little focussed attention.¹⁶⁷ In relation to timber as opposed to coppice products, Clarkson (1974) examines the importance of the English tan-bark industry, and Young (1984) and Hainsworth (1992) provide detailed analyses of supply and demand to the shipbuilding industry, highlighting the entrepreneurial role often played by stewards and/or woodwards in negotiating wood contracts.¹⁶⁸

2.3.3 The amenity value of a rural estate: leisure and sport

Despite wide acceptance that the personal interests of the elite contributed significantly to the design of their estates, there has been comparatively little discussion of the relationship of leisure activities to estate landscapes in the first half of the eighteenth century. In respect to material culture, Felus's work both on the rise of boating and use of garden buildings in the estate landscape (2006, 2009), and studies by Kellerman (2009) and Taylor (2000) on cold baths and bathing practices, stand out as notable exceptions. With regard to field sports in an estate context, hunting and angling have attracted most widespread interest, though again, there is little material addressing practices in the period of this study. Currie (1991) notes the widespread promotion of carp husbandry in agricultural writing from the post-medieval period; Thirsk (1985) states that fishponds were a subject of elite discourse and their creation popular into the eighteenth century.¹⁶⁹ The value of fish to landowners was recognised in legislative acts (from the late 1600s and after) protecting fishponds from vandalism and poaching.¹⁷⁰ However, with the exception of Currie's work on the economic significance of the carp and Williamson's study of 'intermediate forms

¹⁶⁶ Lowe (1794), 33.

¹⁶⁷ Pocock (1965) provides a brief history of the development of the East Midlands hop trade; see Parker (1934) for a more comprehensive treatment.

¹⁶⁸ Hainsworth's discussion of woodland management and policing includes examples of practice on the Savile estates in the late Stuart period.

¹⁶⁹ Thirsk (1985), 576.

¹⁷⁰ Williamson (1997), 100.

of exploitation',¹⁷¹ landscape archaeologists have been more concerned with pre- than post-medieval fish husbandry, and the discussion of angling in an estate context has focussed on puritan quietism and Izaak Walton's *The Complete Angler* (1653).¹⁷² In the post-Restoration period, wild-fowling also gained prominence as a water-related sport. While no significant study of wild-fowling in the eighteenth century has as yet been undertaken,¹⁷³ the capture of these birds might involve significant investment in designed structures and landscape alterations.¹⁷⁴ As Ezban asserts: 'English decoys expanded the functionality and economics of Baroque landscape parks, served as pleasurable retreats for landowners and royals, and have evolved into sites for the study of waterfowl population migrations'.¹⁷⁵

Deer and fox hunting have received more widespread attention, though, as de Belin concludes, 'the hunting of both deer and fox have largely been ignored as a subject of serious study by historians'.¹⁷⁶ Both sports were intimately connected to the landscape: '[they] required there to be suitable habitat for the preservation of the prey animal, plus the terrain to chase it across'.¹⁷⁷ Standard accounts of English hunting history have argued for a watershed in elite hunting preference and style in the mid-eighteenth century with deer and hare replaced by the fox as preferred quarry, and while interest in deer hunting has largely focussed on its medieval context,¹⁷⁸ discussion of fox hunting has concentrated on 'modern' (post-1750) practice.¹⁷⁹ A few authors

¹⁷¹ Williamson defines 'intermediate forms of exploitation' as forms of animal management neither equivalent to the hunting of wild animals nor to the husbandry of domesticated ones. Williamson (1997), 92.

¹⁷² Woodford (2013), 123; Everson (2007), 115; Whittle & Taylor (1994). Walton referred to his work alternatively as 'The Contemplative Man's Recreation'.

¹⁷³ For wild-fowling in a twentieth-century context see Matless *et al.* (2005).

¹⁷⁴ Payne-Gallway (1886); Williamson (1997), 101-2.

¹⁷⁵ Ezban (2013), 193.

¹⁷⁶ De Belin (2010), 16, 16-21 for an overview of the secondary literature.

¹⁷⁷ De Belin (2013), 2.

¹⁷⁸ Recent examples are Cummins (1988); Almond (2003). An on-going debate concerns the use of elite parks for hunting: Mileson considers hunting amongst the park's central functions (2009, pp. 15-44); Birrell (1992) interprets parks as specialized deer farms; Fletcher contends that parks had to provide 'at least the illusion of a private hunting ground', that hunting in parks was from classical times deemed inferior sport by hunters, and that parks may have been in part for the hunting pleasure of women (2011, pp. 104, 116).

¹⁷⁹ Carr (1976); Itzkowitz (1986, first published 1976); Hoyle (2005).

have, however, commented upon the relationship between hunting transitions – whether in style of pursuit or quarry – and the physical structure of the hunting landscape. Francis Thompson suggests that differing forms of territorial dominance were exercised in the eighteenth century: whereas in modern fox hunting each fox-hunting pack was confined to its own exclusive bounded area or ‘country’, prior to this, the relationship between a pack and the territory over which its master habitually hunted it was far more casual.¹⁸⁰ Both de Belin and Bevan (2011) provide comparative studies of early and late fox-hunting styles based on published sources. De Belin’s work informs her broader examination of the role played by landscape change in the transition from deer to fox hunting.¹⁸¹ Bevan’s analysis of the correlation between alterations to the English lowland countryside (1700-1900) and perceptions of an ideal hunting country and an elite quarry, adopts a comparative regional approach. Her conclusion that the development of fox hunting in England was linked to specific physical geographies – ‘the sheep-corn system developed on light land and pre-enclosure open-field clay vales of the East Midlands’ – is clearly relevant to hunting practices at Rufford.¹⁸² Baily’s Fox-Hunting Directory (1898) identifies ‘the Rufford’ hunt as one of the earlier packs.¹⁸³

‘The themes of “access” and “control” weave through the history of fox hunting’.¹⁸⁴ Bevan cites evidence suggesting that the correlation she posits between landscape form and hunting style was linked to the facility with which manorial lords could control their tenants and thus gain free passage across holdings.¹⁸⁵ More generally, the social implications of giving field sports the status of an exclusively elite privilege have been discussed in terms of self-fashioning, game laws and poaching.¹⁸⁶ From a specifically landscape perspective, the Game Act (1671) is widely considered to have elevated land

¹⁸⁰ Thompson, F.M.L. (1963), 145.

¹⁸¹ De Belin (2013), 142-3. For further discussion see Section 8.2.

¹⁸² Bevan (2011), 96.

¹⁸³ Quoted in Bevan (2011), 40.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 8.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 8, 96.

¹⁸⁶ For discussion of personal identity in relation to field sports see Goffman (1959); Howe (1981); Marvin (2000). For poaching and the eighteenth-century game laws see Manning (1993); Munsche (1981); Thompson, E.P. (1975); Hay (1975).

over other forms of property:¹⁸⁷ Everett contends that the physical and legal boundaries of elite hunting privilege were set by emparkment and the game laws.¹⁸⁸ Finch turns this collective understanding into a methodological imperative, emphasising within his own studies of hunting and landscape the essential need both to establish ‘the link between practice and place’¹⁸⁹ and ‘for historic landscape studies to integrate empirical analysis with an awareness of significance based on the use and perceptions of the landscape above and beyond its essential [which in a hunting context equates to agricultural] purpose’.¹⁹⁰

2.4 Conclusion

This chapter opened with discussion of the approaches taken by cultural geographers to the conceptualisation of landscape, approaches which have at times been presented as in opposition to one another: landscape as a physical entity or an interpretative ‘text’; an aesthetic form or a multi-faceted land use; a privileged ‘way of seeing’ or an everyday ‘way of being’. An over-arching objective of this thesis is to draw together such understandings and provide a cultural geography of the Rufford landscape which is at once more-than-representational and more-than-human. The opening section of this chapter established the intellectual framework for this endeavour. Subsequent sections considered the modern literature pertinent to the various aspects of estate landscaping which run as constant themes within the empirical work that follows – estate stewardship, landscape aesthetics and ideologies, woodland management, recreational engagement – airing current understandings and highlighting outstanding questions. While eighteenth-century agricultural and gardening treatises are on occasions cited, comprehensive discussion is postponed to the empirical chapters of the thesis to allow direct comparison to be made between early eighteenth-century landscaping ‘theories’ and ‘practices’.

¹⁸⁷ Landry (2001), 5.

¹⁸⁸ Everett (1994), 39.

¹⁸⁹ Finch (2007c), 363.

¹⁹⁰ Finch (2004), 43.

Chapter 3

The Rufford Estate and Principal Contributors to its Early Eighteenth-Century Development

Rufford Abbey lies in the centre of the county of Nottinghamshire, roughly 20 miles north north east of the town of Nottingham and was founded in the mid-twelfth century as a Cistercian monastery through a grant of lands from Gilbert de Gaunt, Earl of Lincoln. Unlike many monastic estates, it was not sold or gifted piecemeal at the Dissolution, but in 1537 was granted in its entirety to George Talbot, 5th Earl of Shrewsbury and Waterford. The estate passed into the Savile family on the marriage of Mary Talbot (daughter of the 6th Earl of Shrewsbury) to Sir George Savile (created Baronet 1611, died 1622) of Barrowby, and after, of Thornhill. The Rufford and Thornhill estates remained under single ownership and passed by direct descent through the Savile family until 1700 when the 5th Baronet died without issue. In accordance with the terms of the 4th Baronet's Will, the Rufford and Thornhill estates (the baronetcy only in 1704, see Section 3.1) then passed to the 4th Baronet's godson, George Savile (baptised 1678, died 1743), later 7th Baronet.

The intention of this chapter is to examine key factors underpinning the development of Rufford's landscape during the ownership of the 7th Baronet (hereafter referenced alternatively as Savile or Sir George), 1700-43. The opening section addresses the social status of the Savile family, the extent and limitations placed upon the 7th Baronet's inheritance, and the domestic framework within which the Baronet lived. Throughout his ownership Savile took a keen interest in the management of his demesne ground, which he enjoyed during extended annual residences. Factors underpinning the choices he made in relation to its 'improvement' – his temperament, interests and the social *milieu* within which he moved – form the focus of the second section. Attention then turns to the physical geography of Rufford – the environmental potential of the terrain (soil types, availability of water) – and the character of elements

central to this study – house, parks, gardens and mills. While the Baronet retained overall control for the direction in which the estate developed, he relied heavily on the advice and expertise of a broad range of individuals. The final section addresses the role of his mother Madam Barbara Savile, successive stewards, gardeners and day-labourers (both male and female), paying particular attention to the breadth of their expertise and range of their responsibilities.

3.1 The Savile Family and the 7th Baronet's Inheritance

The Saviles are an ancient Yorkshire family and by the eighteenth century had long enjoyed considerable social and political influence in the county. Yorkshire antiquary Thomas Dunham Whitaker (1759-1821) described them as 'distinguished almost above every other in the public concerns of the county of York, as well as by the spirit and genius of its principals in several of the later descents'; William Durant Cooper (1812-1875) considered that by the late seventeenth century 'The family of Savile was one of the most, if not the most, illustrious in the west riding of the county of York'.¹ Modern social historians have corroborated this view, and the extent and wealth of their estates was often cited as justification for social or political preferment.² Brown states the Savile landholdings in 1625 as amounting to approximately 40,000 acres in Yorkshire, 16,800 acres in Nottinghamshire, more modest holdings (less than 7,000 acres) in Derbyshire, Staffordshire, Oxfordshire and Shropshire, and quotes £6,550 as the total annual revenue from all estates in 1651.³

Prior to the mid-seventeenth century, Thornhill Hall, near Wakefield, Yorkshire, was the principal family seat, and Thornhill Church the family's place of burial. During the Civil War, however, Sir William Savile (3rd Baronet) and his wife Anne (daughter of Lord Coventry) were ardent supporters of Charles I and

¹ Whitaker (1820), 310; Cooper (1858), i.

² Sharpe (1987), 156. In 1665 the Duke of York urged Charles II to raise the 4th Baronet to Viscount, Sir George having 'one of the best Fortunes of any Man in *England*, and lived most like a great Man' (Clarendon, 1759, vol. 3, p. 564); see also Lord Rockingham's recommendation of the 8th Baronet as Parliamentary candidate for York (Namier, 1957, first published 1929, pp. 66-9).

³ Brown, *ODNB*.

Thornhill Hall was garrisoned by royalist troops, accidentally destroyed and never rebuilt.⁴ Sir William died in 1644 leaving his eldest son George (1633-1695) still a minor. When in 1654 the 4th Baronet gained his majority, he became the first Savile for whom Rufford was the family's sole country residence.

An eminent restoration politician and courtier, the 4th Baronet was created Baron Savile of Eland and Viscount Halifax (1668), received an earldom (1679) and in 1682 was made 1st Marquis of Halifax. Most of his adult life was based in London and by 1686 Halifax had augmented the Savile estates through purchase of a double plot in St James's Square (future site of Halifax House) and the small (9 acre) estate of Berrymead Priory, in Acton, Middlesex.⁵ At his death in 1695 the Savile estates (with the exception of Halifax House and Berrymead Priory, use of which were bequeathed to his wife throughout her life) passed to his son, William, who became 2nd Marquis of Halifax.⁶ The latter outlived his father by a mere 5 years, dying in 1700 without male issue. The title of Marquis thus came to an end, but the baronetcy passed to the next male heir, a distant cousin, John Savile, who became 6th Baronet.⁷ In 1704 he too died without male issue and the George Savile of the present study, son of the Reverend John Savile, Rector of Thornhill, and his second wife, Barbara, the daughter of Thomas Jenison of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, became 7th Baronet at the age of 25.

Unlike the baronetcy, the terms of the 1st Marquis's Will dictated that the bulk of the Savile landholdings would pass directly to George Savile should the 2nd Marquis die without surviving male issue, a state of affairs anticipated by the 1st Marquis who bequeathed a legacy of £1,000 to the Reverend's son:

...towards his education and support that he may be better qualified to enjoy a considerable part of my Estate to be educated in a manner appropriate to his future status which I have settled upon him by Deed in case my son William Lord Eland should dye without Issue Male.⁸

⁴ Nuttall (1986), 52.

⁵ Dasent (1895), 94; Brown, *ODNB*.

⁶ Will of the 1st Marquis of Halifax, dated 16 November 1693. NA: DD/SR/1D/12/2. From 1700-c.1720 Halifax house (nos 17-18 St James Square) was occupied first by the 2nd Marquis's widow, then his daughters Dorothy and Mary (Brown, 1989, vol. 1, p. xxv); it was demolished in 1725 but immediately rebuilt (Dasent, 1895, p. 94).

⁷ Clay (1920); genealogical data in Dewsbury Library Archives.

⁸ Codicil to the 1st Marquis's Will. NA: DD/SR/1D/12/2.

Estate Accounts indicate that both the Rufford and Yorkshire Estates were under George Savile's management by December 1700.⁹ The full extent of the inheritance, however, remains unclear. The 2nd Marquis's Will made provision for his immediate family which at his death consisted of a daughter, Anne, from his first marriage (died 1717); his second wife Mary, daughter of Daniel Finch, Earl of Nottingham (c.1677-1718); her three daughters Essex (c.1698-c.1715), Mary (1700-1751) and Dorothy (1699-1758).¹⁰ Brown states that at the time of the 2nd Marquis's death the Savile Estates faced obligations amounting to £55,000 for portions and £1,899 for debts, legacies and arrears of annuities, but provides no direct reference for his data. Evidence from court proceedings concerned with disputed settlement obligations (1706-22) and records in the 7th Baronet's personal account books suggest the smaller though still substantial figure of £42,000: £15,000 due to Lady Anne; £2,000 as a jointure to the Marquis's wife; £25,000 the combined sum owing to Lady Essex, Lady Dorothy and Lady Mary.¹¹ Lady Anne's portion became due in 1707 on her marriage to Charles, Lord Bruce, and was raised through sale of part of the Yorkshire Estate – Brierley, Shafton and Hindley.¹² In a memorandum dated May 1720, Sir George recorded the negative (for him) outcome of the extended litigation:

[It was] Decreed [in Chancery on 24 September 1714] that £25,000 [due Essex, Dorothy and Mary] together with ye Costs in the suit Shou'd be Raised out of my Estate in my Possession & out of Barrowby in Lincolnshire, & out of Hallifax House in St James's Square, London... at ye time when Lady Essex Savile attained ye Age of sixteen years.¹³

Until that time Savile paid the girls interest on their inheritance at just under 6.5%.¹⁴ Essex died unmarried soon after the 1714 hearing and the majority of

⁹ NA: DD/SR/225/3/1; DD/SR/211/54; DD/SR/211/178/1.

¹⁰ Dates deduced from litigation proceedings (NA: DD/SR/1/D/1; DD/SR/211/251; DD/SR/225/8); Savile's Personal Account Book, 1715-22 (NA: DD/SR/211/178/1).

¹¹ A codicil (August 1700) to the 2nd Marquis's Will bequeathing each daughter £15,000 on reaching the age of sixteen or at marriage appears to be at variance with this reading. NA: DD/SR/1D/12/3.

¹² Land later repurchased by the 7th Baronet and held 'in Trust for my self'. Savile's Personal Account Book, 1727-32. NA: DD/SR/A4/35.

¹³ Savile's Personal Account Book, 1715-22. NA: DD/SR/211/178/1.

¹⁴ *Ibid.* Figure calculated from recorded interest payments.

her share of the £25,000 passed to Dorothy and Mary. In 1724 Halifax House appears to have been purchased by the 7th Baronet for £6,500 and subsequently resold.¹⁵ In March 1724 Savile mortgaged his Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire estates to Sir Peter Delme to raise the £23,800 owing to Dorothy (married to Richard Boyle, 3rd Earl of Burlington, in 1721) and Mary (married to Sackville Tufton, later 7th Earl of Thanet, in 1722) and on 27 March Savile recorded in his personal accounts 'paid to Burlington and Tufton £23,800 being in full discharge of ye principall sum charged on part of my estate'.¹⁶ In 1728, however, a further mortgage was taken out to raise the £1,901 incurred in legal costs.¹⁷ It would, therefore, appear that although the 7th Baronet's finances were subject to considerable uncertainty during the first 25 years of his ownership, the integrity of the Rufford Estate was not affected by his family obligations.

In 1714 the clear rental value (taxes and tithes deducted) of Savile's landholdings in Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire were £3,365 and £1,315 respectively, and during a prospective marriage negotiation with Sir Ralph Ashton's daughter, the woods and estates in both counties were valued at £8,035 per annum.¹⁸ By 1720, the want of an heir, financial pressure on the estate, and, of particular moment to Sir George's mother, 'dread of sin', combined to make Sir George's bachelorhood a source of family anxiety.¹⁹ Savile seems to have been engaged in several protracted legal disputes in this period: in addition to inheritance claims, Rufford's liability to appoint Parish Officers and have its poor claim a Settlement was being challenged. In June of that year, on receiving notification that a legal decree had gone against Savile, his Rufford steward, Thomas Smith, confided in Madam Savile, 'I hope 'twill induce him to marry and pay off that Incumbrance with part of his Lady's fortune and by her heirs

¹⁵ NA: DD/SR/211/227/104,121. Savile's financial objective remains unclear.

¹⁶ Savile's Personal Account Book, 1722-7. NA: DD/SR/211/192/2.

¹⁷ Savile's Personal Account Book, 1727-32. NA: DD/SR/A4/35.

¹⁸ Figures stated by Thomas Smith (Rufford steward) and William Elmsall (Yorkshire steward) as evidence in the case of Lady Mary & Lady Dorothy Savile versus Sir George, 1720 (hereafter referenced as *1720 Interrogatories*). Elmsall recorded that the wood revenue had been inflated c. £50 in both counties to improve Savile's marriage prospects. NA: DD/SR/225/3/1.

¹⁹ Letters Madam Savile to Savile, 4 (6 on verso) March 1721 (quotation) & 8 March 1721. NA: DD/SR/212/3/1,3.

establish ye estate in his own family'.²⁰ In 1722, the year that Gertrude Savile recorded her 'Brother's Law [suits] of all kinds ended', the 7th Baronet, at the age of 44, met Mary Pratt (c.1706-1747) during a visit to Bath – 'very young, not 16' and sole daughter of John Pratt, Deputy Treasurer of Ireland and Constable of Dublin Castle.²¹ Within a month a match was made. The marriage, which took place in December 1722, granted a jointure of £1,000 to Savile's wife and should have brought a payment of £10,000 to Sir George.²² Pratt, however, appears to have defaulted on the original terms of the agreement and instead the 7th Baronet acquired an Irish Estate in the County of Tyrone, ostensibly of annual rental value £240 Irish pounds, but heavily mortgaged and in arrears of interest at the point of exchange. The first rental income from Tyrone was not received by Savile until 1727.²³

In 1735, Sir George sought to terminate the marriage on the grounds of his wife's adulterous behaviour. Litigation followed, ending in permanent separation. During a court hearing in 1738 the 7th Baronet was required to provide a statement of his wealth. In addition to the Irish Estate, an annual value of £7,000 was recorded. Against this, an annuity was paid to his sister Gertrude of £50, and an annual 5% interest payment of £1285 1s 6d on the mortgage of his Yorkshire estate (referred to above). Besides the mortgage (value £25701 16s 1d), Savile assessed the value of his further personal estate as about £17,000.²⁴ Social historians have variously ranked English landowners on the basis of land holdings or income (see Chapter 2). Judged on either consideration, the Saviles numbered amongst the national elite.

²⁰ Letter Smith to Madam Savile, 4 June 1720 (NA: DD/SR/211/227/41/1); see also Letters Elmsall to Savile, January – March 1721 (NA: DD/SR/211/2).

²¹ Gertrude believed John Pratt worth £3,000 a year. *Gertrude's Diaries*, 24 August – 5 October 1722, p. 33.

²² Savile's Personal Account Book, 1722-7 (NA: DD/SR/211/192/2); *Egmont Manuscripts*, 21 January 1736, vol. 2, p. 223.

²³ In 1725 the security of Lady Mary Savile's marriage portion was also in question. 'Evidence provided to the Arches Court of Canterbury... Dame Mary Savile complainant against Sir George Savile... 1738' (TNA: DEL 1/507); Letters between Madam Savile and Savile, July & August 1725 (NA: DD/SR/212/3).

²⁴ Lady Savile's proxy attributed an annual income c. £9,000 free of all taxes and outgoings and claimed that Savile's personal estate after payment of all debts was worth c. £55,000. TNA: DEL 1/507.

3.2 Sir George Savile, 7th Baronet

3.2.1 A character portrait

George Savile (bap. 1678-1743) was educated at Christ Church, Oxford, matriculating in July 1696 (Figure 3.1).²⁵ In April 1697 he was admitted to the Middle Temple, but his legal studies ended abruptly in 1700 when, at the age of 22, he inherited the Rufford and Thornhill Estates.²⁶ No diaries and, with the exception of a limited and fragmented family correspondence, few documents of a personal nature have survived in Savile's hand and none which identify early friendships, though his sister Gertrude's diaries record the female metropolitan society in which she and her mother, Madam Savile, circulated and on occasions refer to social gatherings at Rufford. Within the latter circle the 1st Duke and Duchess of Kingston (Thoresby Hall), Mr and Mrs Levinz (Grove Hall), and local Justices of the Peace, Mr Digby, Mr Pinkney and Mr Thorney are mentioned; a list to which steward and family correspondence suggest the names Hewett (Shireoaks), Sutton (Kelham), Thornagh (Osberton), Molyneaux (Teversal Manor) and Michell (Rector of Eakring) should be added.²⁷ Further, although a detailed portrait of the 7th Baronet's character is not possible, a general impression can be gleaned from the aforementioned archival sources.

In 1722 Savile appointed Gilbert Michell (c.1688-1760) as Rector of Eakring.²⁸ A close relationship was established between the Savile and Michell families, and Savile in his Will entrusted the future 'guardianship, tuition, care and custody' of his children to the Rector.²⁹ The children in question, born to Savile and his wife Mary, were Arabella (1725-1767), George, later 8th Baronet, (1726-1784), and Barbara (1734-1797) (genealogy detailed in Figure 3.2). Michell, a clergyman of intellectual inclination and trained in both Oxford and Cambridge Universities, has been described by his biographer, McCormmach, as

²⁵ Foster (1892), vol. 4. The 2nd Marquis Halifax had matriculated in 1681.

²⁶ Sturges (1949), vol. 1.

²⁷ *Gertrude's Diaries*, October – December (inclusive) 1721, pp. 12-13; family correspondence (NA: DD/SR/212/3,13,15; DD/SR/221/87); Rufford steward correspondence (NA: DD/SR/211/24,58,227).

²⁸ McCormmach (2012), 6; Savile's Personal Account Book, 1722-7 (NA: DD/SR/211/192/2).

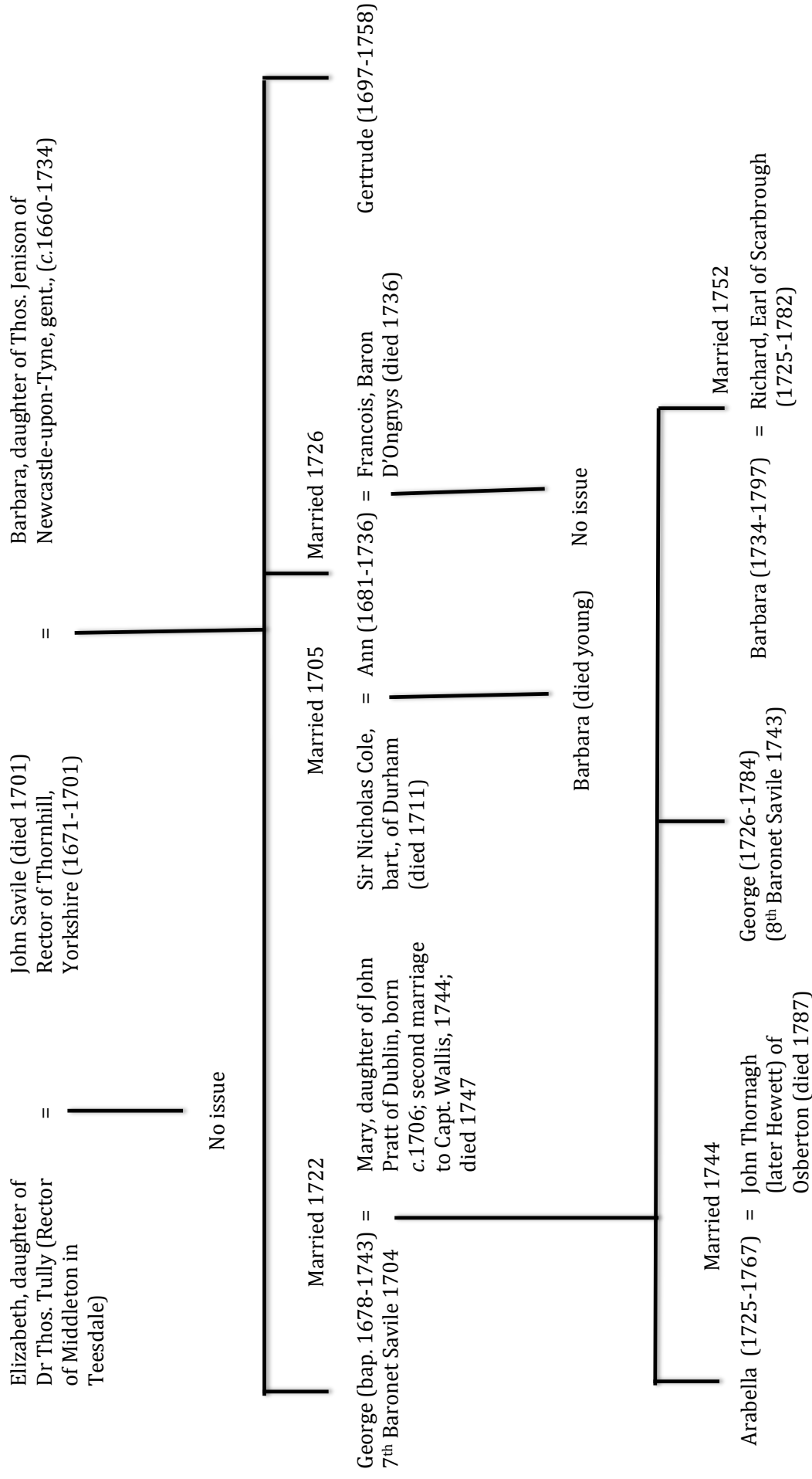
²⁹ Will of the 7th Baronet, stated 9 June 1743. NA: DD/SR/225/24.



Figure 3.1: Sir George Savile, 7th Baronet, unattributed, undated.

Portrait in the possession of the Savile family, photographed in 2009 at Gryce Hall, Yorkshire, home of the late 3rd Baron Savile (died 2008).

Figure 3.2: Genealogical Table of Sir George Savile's Immediate Family



‘a man of observation and reason, who prided himself on his independent judgement’.³⁰ In a letter to Gertrude Savile, 1747, the Rector paid a similar complement to ‘my late good friend’, Sir George.³¹ Commenting on the perspicacity and generosity of the latter’s son, his ward, he reflected that the boy:

...was formed from his Cradle by a good Head & a kinder Hand: By a Father who himself set out with some of the worst of Principles imbibed from one of the worst of our colleges in the most corrupted of our Universities. But he had Understanding to see his Errors, & Honesty to correct them. And when he had with great Care and Labour winnowed the Truth, he knew how to value it the more, & to give it pure & unmixed to his child.³²

The tone and content of Savile’s personal correspondence, particularly letters to his mother from the 1720s onwards, his political activities (see Section 3.2.3), financial and estate dealings, and scientific pursuits (see Section 3.2.4) all support a portrait of Sir George as a man of moral integrity and intellectual curiosity who placed a high value on duty and independence. They also reflect a propensity for self-scrutiny and marked forbearance in situations of social conflict whether in the context of neighbourly disputes over estate matters or personal affairs.³³

Savile’s public sociability was commented upon both by his mother and sister Gertrude, though the latter was often resentful of the treatment she received in private. Madam Savile reminded her son of his ‘cheerfull conversation which ever was a great beauty in you’; Gertrude described her brother as ‘all complisance to strangers’ though fearing ‘his impatience’ and

³⁰ McCormmach (2012), 16.

³¹ Letter Michell to Gertrude Savile, 3 November 1747. NA: DD/SR/221/87.

³² Letter Michell to Gertrude Savile, 18 April 1747. NA: DD/SR/221/87. Michell’s distaste for Oxford, in particular Christ Church, is attributed to its embrace of High-Church Toryism. Cambridge, which the sons of both Michell and Savile attended, was Whig and latitudinarian. Further, Newtonian mathematics and natural philosophy were prominent in its curriculum. McCormmach (2012), 23-4.

³³ See Section 3.4.1; Letters (copies) Savile to Broughton, 20 (quotation) & 29 June 1717 (NA: DD/SR/212/34; DD/SR/211/432) in which the Baronet cites ‘Amity amongst Neighbouring Gentleman’ as of more importance to him than prosecution of a deer poaching offence committed by a tenant and/or possibly estate servant of Broughton’s.

‘arbitrary exactness’ in dealings with herself.³⁴ Whether the latter aspersions were justified or not remains unclear, but Gertrude’s acknowledgement that ‘Tis only this temper [propensity to emotional outbursts] which gives my Brother so ill an opinion of the women Saviles’ supports the conclusion that the 7th Baronet was more reserved in temperament than the female members of his family.³⁵

There appear to have been dissenting sympathies within Savile’s extended household (see Section 3.4.1) and Sir George certainly held vehemently anti-Papist beliefs, excluding from amongst the ‘rationall’ all those who could ‘submitt their Understandings to the Direction of such grovling Sentiments & Tyrannick Arrogance’.³⁶ On the grounds of private conscience he chose against a church burial, though it remains uncertain whether the objection was for denominational reasons or reflected some aspect of free-thinking in his makeup. The character of the final directions he left for his son, however, do indicate that Savile recognised the value of social conformity and was prepared to place consideration for his family’s feelings above personal preference:

Tho’ my dear Father’s private disposition [recalled the 8th Baronet] was against interring in the Church; yet his tender regard to his Family made him earnestly desire that everything might be done in such a manner, that no one shou’d say, why was it thus; (that was his expression;) for which reason I believe we shall conform most to his Inclinations in doing what will be most decent in the Eye of the World.³⁷

The ways in which Savile’s personality influenced his management choices at Rufford will be examined in subsequent chapters.

3.2.2 Domestic arrangements: London and Nottinghamshire

During much of the first 22 years of his inheritance the 7th Baronet, as yet unmarried, shared both his Nottinghamshire and London residences with his

³⁴ Letter Madam Savile to Savile, 4(6) March 1721 (NA: DD/SR/212/3/1); *Gertrude’s Diaries*, 19-22 October 1721, p. 11.

³⁵ *Gertrude’s Diaries*, 8-28 December 1721, p. 18.

³⁶ Letter Savile to Madam Savile, 6 November 1725 (NA: DD/SR/212/3/37); see also TNA: DEL 1/507.

³⁷ Letter 8th Baronet to Gertrude Savile, 22 September 1743. NA: DD/SR/212/15/2. Savile was buried in the family church at Thornhill; see Whitaker (1820, pp. 323-4) for the 8th Baronet’s eulogy inscribed on the tomb.

mother and younger sister Gertrude, a spinster throughout her life (Figure 3.2). A second sister, Ann, had married Sir Nicholas Cole of Brancepeth Castle, County Durham in 1705, thus securing her financial independence.³⁸ Widowed in 1711, however, Lady Cole re-entered the Savile household until her second marriage to the Baron d'Ongneys of Brussels, Brabant in c.1726. The couple separated in 1731 and Ann rejoined her family, remaining until her death in 1736.³⁹

From 1706 the London residence of the Saviles was in the fashionable W1 address, Golden Square.⁴⁰ Designed to contain 'such houses as might accommodate Gentry', it more than fulfilled its architect's pretensions, boasting such residents as James Brydges, later 1st Duke of Chandos (1700-10), Henry St John, 1st Viscount Bolingbroke (1702-14), and Barbara Villiers, Duchess of Cleveland (1705-7).⁴¹ By 1721, however, Sir George was dissatisfied with the domestic arrangements, and after his marriage in 1722, the Golden Square house became the exclusive preserve of Madam Savile and her daughters. Gertrude, who described herself as estranged from Rufford at this time, made London her main residence until 1737,⁴² but Savile's mother continued to visit Rufford throughout her life though after her son's marriage these visits seem to have become less frequent and her role in the Hall's domestic management certainly reduced (see Section 3.4.1). While this seems a natural consequence of the Baronet's marriage, family tensions undoubtedly contributed. Relationships between Madam Savile and her daughter-in-law's close relations, Madam Pratt and the Fitzmaurices, became strained in the mid-1725s and the latter seem to have resided frequently at Rufford.⁴³

³⁸ *Gertrude's Diaries*, 30 October – December 1721, p. 14. Gertrude resented financial dependence upon her brother; marriage would have brought her a portion of £3,000. TNA: DEL 1/507.

³⁹ D'Ongneys was a catholic. For Sir George's response to the marriage see Letter Savile to Madam Savile, 6 November 1725. NA: DD/SR/212/3/37.

⁴⁰ Rented from Savile's aunt on the death of 'Uncle Colonel Savile'. Savile's Personal Account Book, 1703-8. NA: DD/SR/211/193/1.

⁴¹ Weinreb & Hibbert (1983), 312.

⁴² In 1730 an inheritance from her 'Cousin Newton' brought financial independence; in 1737 Gertrude took a house in Farnsfield, Nottinghamshire. *Gertrude's Diaries*, 8-28 December 1721, 25 March 1737, pp. 18, 232. Letters between Savile and Gertrude, 24 August & 3 September 1730. NA: DD/SR/212/13/20-1.

⁴³ Letters between Madam Savile and Savile (NA: DD/SR/212/3); *Gertrude's Diaries*. At times during his marriage Savile carried on a double correspondence with his mother: one discourse open to his wife, the other for his private reflection.

In regard to Sir George's pattern of residence at Rufford, the combined evidence of estate and personal correspondence suggests that after marrying, Rufford was his preferred residence for significant intervals: whereas in October 1722 Smith was berating his master for the latter's extended absences – 'I should be much happier If Either you were pleasd to Reside more here or Lessen ye Expençe of Stables, hounds, servants, and workmen' – by August 1726, it was Savile's prolonged residence that had become the source of financial concern.⁴⁴ Family correspondence supports this picture, and it is probable that at least some of the extended sojourns made to London with his wife – which on occasions might extend to five months – were primarily motivated by Savile's desire to satisfy Lady Savile, a woman almost 30 years his junior and, as Sir George reflected at the time of their separation, given to 'levity and coquetry'.⁴⁵ During the first eight years of his marriage, Sir George, his wife and children occupied rented lodgings whilst in town. The Baronet's preference for 'Country Air' above 'Stinking Astmatick London', as he referred to the capital, is further reflected in the criteria upon which his selection of lodgings was based: any place between Westminster and Lincoln's Inn would do, he informed his mother and sister Gertrude in 1726, 'only wishing most to be near ye River at that Season [May and beyond]... or (next) pretty near ye Park, to walk to it easily, whether we Look into it or no'.⁴⁶

A by-election in 1728 resulted in Sir George becoming Whig MP for Yorkshire (Section 3.2.3) and in 1730 he purchased from Queen Caroline (for £3,000) the house on the north side of Leicester Fields (since demolished) which she and her husband, George II, had lived in prior to the latter's accession.⁴⁷ 'A noble, large and very convenient house, and very pleasant', reported his sister Gertrude in 1729, 'There are 4 Houses lay'd together, one of which Brother designs to pull down to build stables'.⁴⁸ Savile invested significantly in the development of the site. In June 1730 William Lansdowne (variously referred to as 'surveyor' and 'carpenter') was paid £600 to refurbish the house and 'to

⁴⁴ Letters Smith to Savile, 13 October 1722 & 3 April 1726. NA: DD/SR/211/227/8,128.

⁴⁵ *Egmont Manuscripts*, vol. 2, p. 223; Appendix 3.1.

⁴⁶ Letter Savile to Madam Savile, 11 April 1726. NA: DD/SR/212/3/22.

⁴⁷ Savile's Personal Account Book, 1727-32, entry 16 April 1730. NA: DD/SR/A4/35.

⁴⁸ *Gertrude's Diaries*, p. 175.

convert a stable and coach houses'.⁴⁹ By 1733 further improvements were being planned and between 1733 and 1734 James Gibbs (1682-1754), one of the foremost eighteenth-century English architects, was paid £55 13s as 'surveyor', 'in part for drawings and to supervise the work and alterations to be done by Mr John Parker' who by May 1734 had been paid a total of £1,734 for his services.⁵⁰ The extent to which Sir George subsequently enjoyed the property remains uncertain. In 1735 Savile's domestic situation was significantly disrupted. Evidence of an adulterous relationship between Lady Savile and William Levinz (c.1713-1765; Tory MP for Nottinghamshire, 1734-47) resulted in Lady Savile being barred access to her husband's properties. Savile failed in his attempts to achieve a divorce, but the separation was final.⁵¹

In addition to Gibbs's work at Leicester Fields, the style of various architectural elevations (undated, unsigned) of Rufford suggest that the architect was employed there too, though whether by the 7th Baronet or his son is unclear (see Section 3.3.2). Gibbs, though a favourite architect of Tory grandees whose work was largely independent of the Palladianism favoured by the Whigs with whom Savile identified politically, had a broad clientele with several of whom Savile was acquainted. The Pantheon or Pagan Building (erected 1716) in the gardens of Chiswick House, home of the 3rd Earl of Burlington and his wife, Savile's kinswoman, is attributed to Gibbs; John Percival, Earl of Egmont, a trusted friend and confidant of the 7th Baronet, was an early patron of the architect; John Hallam, protégé of Sir Thomas Hewett and employed by Savile in the design of a summer-house at Rufford c.1728 (see Section 4.3.2) subscribed to Gibbs's *A Book of Architecture* (1728).⁵² As with improvements made to the landscape of his Rufford seat, Savile's choice of architect was almost certainly informed by a range of motivations. Amongst

⁴⁹ The project over-ran budget and Lansdowne died before the workmen had been fully paid. By May 1732 Savile had paid an additional £365 11s 5d towards labour costs; outstanding claims were still being disputed in October 1737. Plans described in NA: DD/SR/211/441.

⁵⁰ Savile's Personal Account Book, 1732-8. NA: DD/SR/A4/36.

⁵¹ Initially Lady Savile resided at Loakes in Wycombe, the home of anglo-irish peer and politician Henry Petty, Lord Shelburne (1675-1751), a man rumoured to be her natural father. Savile attributed the case outcome to Tory bias amongst spiritual court lawyers. Sedgwick (1970), vol. 2, p. 409; *Egmont Manuscripts*, 21 January 1736, vol. 2, pp. 223-6.

⁵² Summerson (1993), 325; Mowl (2004), 108; Roberts's preface to *Egmont Manuscripts*, vol. 1, p. viii.

these, personal taste and family connection may well have been stronger considerations than desire for overt political expression.

3.2.3 Public persona local and national: politics and sport

Savile served as Sheriff for the county of Nottinghamshire (1706-7), as Deputy-Lieutenant for Nottinghamshire, Captain of the 2nd Troop of Horse within the Nottinghamshire Militia at the time of the 1st Jacobite Rebellion (1715), and Deputy-Lieutenant for the West-Riding of Yorkshire (1735).⁵³ In a contribution (drafted 1710) to *The Tatler*, Sir George, under the pseudonym 'Greg Simple', mockingly styled himself as 'one of that Rank of men called Country Squires'; men generally more at home on the local than national or international stage.⁵⁴ Though the family identified themselves politically as Whigs, prior to the strongly contested election of 1722 the 7th Baronet seems to have had little interest in playing any significant role in national politics. In 1704 he declined an invitation to stand as the Whig candidate for Nottinghamshire and was unflattered by appeals that he would be ideal.⁵⁵ Even in 1722 his involvement seems to have required persuasion. By January of that year, local electioneering was actively underway in Nottinghamshire and Savile's Rufford steward, Smith (himself an ardent Whig), was urging his master's active support for the county Whig candidates (Sir Robert Sutton and Lord Howe) holding up the 1st Duke of Kingston's vigorous backing as an example:

I hear ye Duke of Kingstons Interest in this Election is more Earnest than any other in this County and that Mr Green [Kingston's steward] Spends a Deal of money; It behooves Every Lover of his Country to Exert himself.⁵⁶

By the end of February Savile was still withholding financial backing to the campaign and Smith's appeal had become more urgent. In the event, Savile agreed to entertain his freeholders to a breakfast at Rufford on the morning of

⁵³ NA: DD/SR/207/113-14; DD/SR/231/8; DD/SR/228/1,2.

⁵⁴ NA: DD/SR/212/26/13. No evidence of publication has been found.

⁵⁵ Foljambe of Osberton (additional deposit): Correspondence re National and Parliamentary Affairs. NA: DD/FJ/11/1/1pt1/10-20. See also Hanham, *ODNB*; Hanham (1992), 266-9.

⁵⁶ Letter Smith to Savile, 17 January 1722. NA: DD/SR/211/227/30.

the election though 'ye meat and drink [were to] be disperced amongst 'em with as much frugality as is consistent with such a design' and Smith's son, Tomy (Thomas, also written Thomy), who was then assisting his father as steward, was released from duty to act as clerk for Sutton at the polls.⁵⁷ Savile himself remained in London throughout the period. Gertrude's record of the event testifies both to the extent of her brother's political influence in the county and his want of political ambition:

Many that never before interested themselves now did, amongst which was my Brother, whose interest was very considerable.⁵⁸

In 1728, however, when urged to stand for Yorkshire – 'Above 10,000 Letters sent (most printed, many writ). All taken care of by his friends. I never heard of any so pressed to stand... 'Tis thought he will scarce have any opposition' recorded Gertrude – Savile did consent, much to the diarist's amazement.⁵⁹ In May 1728, she reported:

To the great surprise of all who knew my Brother, in May he was persuaded to come into Parliament, to stand for the County of York instead of Sir Thomas Wentworth lately made Lord Malton.⁶⁰

The elevation of Savile's friend and kinsman, Sir Thomas Watson Wentworth, to the upper house was the event referred to. In June, Savile was returned unopposed to Parliament with the full backing of the Yorkshire Whig interest led by Lords Malton and Carlisle. The second county seat was held by the Whig Cholmley Turner. Savile's office, however, proved brief. In the lead into the 1734 election Turner refused to openly join Sir George, who, fearing that the lack of a common Whig front would result in a contested election (as it ultimately did), determined not to stand for re-election despite having Malton's support.⁶¹

⁵⁷ Letters Smith to Savile, 26 February & 4 April 1722. NA: DD/SR/211/227/23,19.

⁵⁸ *Gertrude's Diaries*, 26 March – 24 August 1722, p. 27.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 3 June 1728, p. 117.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 30 May & 'Heads of the Year' 1728, pp. 155, 116. Comments of William Elmsall penned to Savile (6 February 1732) add weight to Gertrude's appraisal: 'you against your Enclinacions took upon you that Expence & trouble purely in Compliance to their [gentleman of the county] Request'. NA: DD/SR/211/3/95.

⁶¹ Letter (copy) Cholmley Turner to Lord Carlisle, 1 October 1733. NA: DD/SR/31/5/16.

Savile's reasons for declining were multiple. Firstly, his sense of public duty: the fact that he lived outside the county made him less able to engage fully with the county's concerns. Secondly, that his poor state of health often prevented him from attending the House and would certainly prevent him from adequately contesting an election. Throughout his adult life Savile suffered from crippling gout and considered that his absence at the vote on Walpole's Excise Bill in 1733, which had been necessitated by ill-health, had earned him considerable 'disesteem' in the county. Thirdly, a sense of personal diffidence:

...it was a great mortification when I came into ye House of Commons [he wrote in a draft letter of resignation] to prove my Capacity so unequal to my Desire of being serviceable in That Assembly, as well as my utter Inability to deliver my sentiments There. It was a rebuke to my Vanity to meet such frequent Occurrences to puzzle my weak Judgement, which too often fail'd to Determine upon a Question; & my reasonable & therefore no more than honest Diffidence in It sometimes gave me great Pain in Cases of importance, when I wou'd gladly have Compounded for an Insurance that I was doing no Hurt to ye Publick.⁶²

Savile's personal misgivings are neither reflected in the support he continued to receive from northern Whigs nor, to marked extent, by his actions or achievements when in Parliament.⁶³ They do, however, say something more general about his personal integrity and belief in the importance of independent judgement. When first pressed to stand in 1704 Savile had expressed his distaste for the factionalism which characterised political life and his conviction that over judgements of public interest, abstention was a defensible course of action where no clear personal opinion was held:

Another reason why I declined standing for the County of Nottinghamshire... I earnestly desired not to embroil my self in the

⁶² Letter (draft) from Savile to 'Sir' (possibly Sir William Strickland), undated (NA: DD/SR/31/5/13); see also correspondence between Savile and Lord Malton, Lord Carlisle and William Elmsall, September – December 1733 (NA: DD/SR/31/5/1-55).

⁶³ See draft of Savile's speech to the Commons on 'Report from ye Committe to Mend ye Laws', 22 February 1731 (NA: DD/SR/219/21); *The History and Proceedings of the House of Commons*, London, 1742-4, vol. 7, pp. 82-3, quoted in Sedgwick (1970), vol. 2, p. 409; Hanham, *ODNB*; Letters Elmsall to Savile, 12 April & 14 May 1732 (NA: DD/SR/211/3/89,87a).

Divisions and Animosities areising [*sic*] from thence which I hope need not cast ye odium of a Trimmer⁶⁴ in an ill sense upon me, for I did not think my self obliged to enter ye combat when my conscience did not direct me which side to take...⁶⁵

When in office Savile voted as an independent and frequent references in Lord Egmont's diaries (himself 'a supporter of Robert Walpole, with a bias towards independence')⁶⁶ of dinners shared with Sir George Savile, Robert Walpole, Horace Walpole, Sir William Strickland and George Bubb Dodington, suggest a perceived need to court his vote and point to Savile's political influence.

Not only was Savile held in confidence by leading members of the Government but Gertrude's observations in March 1731 suggest that he became a favourite at Court and established a private sympathy with Queen Caroline (1683-1737):

He [Sir George] came for a very little, being going to Court. That and the Parliament takes up all his time. He has extreordinary obligations. The Queen having been very perticular of late in her regard of him, Lady Savile and his Children. His Boy has been twice with her by her desire, and the Girl once.⁶⁷

In July the same year, the contents of a letter to Sir George from William Elmsall, his Yorkshire steward, imply that the King intended to visit Rufford as part of a northern itinerary. Elmsall wished his master a return to health to enable him:

...in the best manner to receive his Majestie who we are told designs from Nottingham Castle to Rufford from thence to Wentworth where we also hear that Lord Malton is making vast Preparacion.⁶⁸

⁶⁴A term generally applied in a derogatory sense to men who maintained a position of party neutrality, but in the opinion of David Hume (1711-1776) 'more natural to men of integrity than of ambition'. Brown (1989), vol. 1, pp. xx, 41-52.

⁶⁵ Letter Savile to John Thornhagh, 24 February 1704 (NA: DD/FJ/11/1/1pt1/10-20); see also Letters Elmsall to Savile, 2 March & 15 April 1729 (NA: DD/SR/211/6). Elmsall characterised himself as an 'Hannover Tory' and was openly critical of polarised court/country positions.

⁶⁶ Roberts's preface to *Egmont Manuscripts*, vol. 1, p. v.

⁶⁷ *Gertrude's Diaries*, 12 March 1732, pp. 224-5.

⁶⁸ Letter Elmsall to Savile, 12 July 1731. NA: DD/SR/211/3/105.

In addition to residences in London, Savile enjoyed frequent, though shorter, visits to the spas at Bath, Buxton, Tunbridge and Scarborough, and to his Yorkshire estate.⁶⁹ In July 1733, for example, he informed Gertrude of an intended 'Tour with my Wife and Children... to Thornhill, thence to Scarbrough perhaps a Week or 2, & then to York Races; to pay my complements in these Places'.⁷⁰ The same year, he purchased a permanent residence at Thornhill, Lees Moor House (cost £150),⁷¹ and in May 1735 was 'on the Ramble at Thornhill &c for near a month'.⁷² The principal social attractions of the countryside for Savile were almost certainly field sports, and, as his spirited defence of 'ye Diversions of ye Field, Hunting, Shooting, &c.' to *The Tatler* (1710) argued, these were the recreations of a rational man intent on good health:

I confess that I am much taken up with ye Diversions... But worthy Sir I shou'd be very Sorry to be Philosophised out of a real Benefit which I may receive though by a Ridiculous means... For my Part I look at it as a blessing that such Physick will goe down with me; that I can bend my mind with such Alacrity as is requisite to Amusements soe salubrious to it self as well as to It's Partner ye Body.⁷³

The Rufford kennels supported a large pack of fox hounds in addition to greyhounds for hare coursing and setting dogs for shooting. Fly-fishing and grouse shooting seem to have been particular attractions of Savile's Yorkshire estate (see Chapters 5 & 8). The above reference to 'York Races' alludes to another of Savile's sporting pursuits. On 16 August 1728 he recorded giving '21 guineas to be runn' at York races to which he subscribed together with the races at Nottingham, Pontefract and Doncaster, and in the 1730s he acted as steward

⁶⁹ Savile's Personal Account Book, 1703-8 (NA: DD/SR/211/193/1); Letters Savile to Gertrude Savile, 17 June 1723 & 9 July 1733 (NA: DD/SR/212/13/10,26); *Gertrude's Diaries*, pp. 33, 61, 177, 181.

⁷⁰ Letter Savile to Gertrude Savile, 9 July 1733. NA: DD/SR/212/13/26.

⁷¹ Precise location of Lees Moor House (ready for occupation in 1735) remains uncertain. Letters Elmsall to Savile, 21 August 1733, 8 December 1734, 23 May 1735. NA: DD/SR/211/3/65,38,33.

⁷² Letter Savile to Gertrude Savile, 19 May 1735. NA: DD/SR/212/13/31.

⁷³ NA: DD/SR/212/26/13.

for the latter.⁷⁴ Although there is evidence that Savile bred horses for fox hunting (see Chapter 8), there is no suggestion that he owned racehorses.

To conclude, even if the above suggests that Savile, as he asserted to *The Tatler*, was more naturally inclined to the lifestyle of a 'Country Squire' than society figure or political intriguer, he clearly moved with significant ease between metropolitan and county platforms.

3.2.4 Interest in natural philosophy: science and gardening

Sir George's association with Queen Caroline is used here to provide a context for subsequent examination of the Baronet's more intellectual pursuits. Although there are no detailed records of their meetings, the Earl of Egmont, another court confidante, documented his own conversations with the Queen. His diary entries capture the breadth of her cultural engagement and suggest the course such meetings might have taken. For 31 December 1734 he recorded:

The Queen talked with me at least half an hour upon my collection of printed Heads, Dr Couraye [Pierre le Courayer, the exiled French theologian who had defended the validity of Anglican orders], the history of France, gardening, painting, flattery, and divers political and moral subjects.⁷⁵

Queen Caroline's engagement in religious and contemporary philosophical debates, the latter ranging from Newtonian theory to landscape design, is widely acknowledged.⁷⁶ She corresponded with Gottfried William Leibnitz and Samuel Clarke about Newtonian doctrines and the nature of free will; her early encouragement of the style of 'natural' gardening promoted in the writings of Joseph Addison and Alexander Pope (1688-1744) led Egmont to record that 'our best tact' in gardening was due to her. The Queen's response, 'I have introduced that, in helping nature, not losing it in art', testifies both to her assimilation of *avant-garde* ideals and intention to promote them.⁷⁷ To this end Charles Bridgeman (died 1738) was appointed Royal Gardener in 1728, and in 1730

⁷⁴ NA: DD/SR/A4/35; DD/SR/6/1/7; DD/SR/211/3/87a.

⁷⁵ *Egmont Manuscripts*, vol. 2, p. 138.

⁷⁶ Taylor, *ODNB*.

⁷⁷ *Egmont Manuscripts*, 31 December 1734, vol. 2, p. 138; see also Batey (2005), 205.

William Kent (1685-1748) designed for the royal gardens at Richmond an 'Hermitage', described by Mowl as a 'Rococo jewel'. 'Merlin's Cave' followed in 1735: a complex, vaulted grotto vested with political associations and considered to have launched the 'Gothick revival' in British architecture.⁷⁸

The 7th Baronet certainly shared the Queen's interest in natural philosophy and although no direct statements of his landscape tastes have survived, there is much evidence to support the conclusion that Savile was conversant with contemporary design trends. In May 1724 he purchased Giacomo Leoni's translation of Andrea Palladio's works, *The Architecture of A. Palladio, in Four Books*, for £4 14s 6d.⁷⁹ In August 1726 he purchased outright John Harris's 'Lexicon technician [*Lexicon Technicum: or, an universal English dictionary of arts and sciences*] in Two volumes bound' for £10 16s 6d.⁸⁰ He used novel gardening terminology for literary effect. In 1728, for example, angered by what he perceived as the opaque accounting style of his Rufford steward he commented: 'Here you have him and there you have him. Like a HaHa, a Fence and no Fence'.⁸¹ He was an avid reader of *The Tatler*, the literary vehicle first used by Addison to disseminate his vision of estate gardening. As Savile commented in 1710: 'I have always read ye Tatlers with Extasy, & am apt to flatter my own judgement because I think I have a true relish of Them'.⁸² Between 21 June and 3 July 1712 Addison expounded his theory of aesthetics in a series on 'the Pleasures of the Imagination' published in *The Spectator* and in September of that year provided his readers with a more personal view of his gardening tastes. A subsequent Steele/Addison publication, *The Guardian*, aired Pope's early thoughts on gardening.⁸³ All three publications were quoted from in Gertrude's diary (1720 onwards) and entries such as 'read Guardians' (1721) and 'read "London Journal", Court Politicks, and "Universall Spectator", an

⁷⁸ Mowl (2004), 119.

⁷⁹ NA: DD/SR/211/192/2. Leoni's translation was originally published in instalments, 1716-20.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.* Harris's work was first published in 1704.

⁸¹ Letter Savile to Smith, 7 December 1728. NA: DD/SR/211/53. Deployment of the ha-ha in elite English gardens was not appreciable before the 1720s. Williamson (1995), 46.

⁸² NA: DD/SR/212/26/13.

⁸³ *The Guardian*, no. 173, 29 September 1713.

entertaining paper in the manner of Sir R. Steele's [Henry Baker's weekly journal commenced 1728]' (1729) indicate their availability at Golden Square.⁸⁴

Gertrude's diaries record garden visits made with her brother or other family members, and touch upon her admiration for wooded landscapes, open prospects, informality, and a romantic/gothick sensibility to the emotional resonance of ruins. These were all tastes in the vanguard of landscaping developments and although not necessarily shared by the 7th Baronet, would certainly have been familiar to him. On visiting close relatives in Weedon, Buckinghamshire, for example, she admired the 'noble extensive prospect' while lamenting the lack of 'Wood', 'my greatest Country beauty'. Her return journey to London through Hertfordshire and Berkshire rewarded her with views of 'the prettiest Countys I know... all wild irregular Gardens'. On several occasions during 1727, she accompanied her mother to Wimbledon to see the ruins of the Duke of Leeds's House, lately demolished by the combined onslaughts of Sir Theodore Janssen and the Duke of Marlborough. While again lamenting the loss of 'fine woods and plantations' and 'one of the finest and agreeable places' she found wistful solace in experiencing that 'The Ruins of a Stately place has something pleasingly Awefull, like the corps of a great man' and 'may add to the beauty' giving 'them a melancholy, solemn look'. In May 1728, with her brother, mother and aunt Newton, she went 'to see Lord Burlington's Gardens at Chiswick'.⁸⁵ At the time of their visit the new Palladian Villa was nearing completion. William Kent's landscape interventions had not begun, but the geometric structure which formed the basis of the future garden, and is generally attributed to Charles Bridgeman, had already been laid out.⁸⁶

In November 1711 Sir George was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society: Sir Isaac Newton was acting president, Sir Hans Sloane the vice-president. Hanham's contention that the appointment was merely a salute to the heir of the 1st Marquis of Halifax, member during the final twenty years of his life, is

⁸⁴ *Gertrude's Diaries*, pp. 16, 24, 162-3.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 3 October 1721, 10 August 1727, 21 May 1728, pp. 7-8, 50, 116. For context see Dudley (2013), 91; Langley (1728b), xv; Lyssons (1792), vol. 1, pp. 519-40.

⁸⁶ Mowl (2004), 110. In the same year Savile stayed at Castle Howard, Yorkshire and possibly visited Wray Wood, praised by Switzer as 'the highest pitch that Natural and Polite Gardening can possibly arrive at'. Savile's Personal Account Book, 1727-32 (NA: DD/SR/A4/35); Switzer (1718), vol. 2, p. 198.

questionable.⁸⁷ The 7th Baronet took an active interest in scientific advances both before and after his election and in his Will bequeathed a legacy of £50 to the Society.⁸⁸ Attendance of public scientific lectures became a feature of leisured urban society in the reign of Queen Anne and by the 1720s, if not before, Savile had become a regular attendee in London. The instrument maker and scientific demonstrator Francis Hauksbee (1688-1763) is particularly prominent in the Savile Archives as supplier both of scientific instruments and instruction to the 7th Baronet in this period.⁸⁹ In 1718 Savile purchased '2 prisms and a double convex glass' from the maker for 10s, and in March 1720 'a jappon'd fountain (affected by compressed air) with ye syringe pipes' which together with its box cost £9 2s.⁹⁰ In addition, regular purchases of mathematical instruments were made from a range of suppliers: in 1734 to the value of over £11.⁹¹ Hauksbee teamed up with leading scientists of the day to offer experimental lecture courses from his home in Crane Court, adjacent to the Royal Society.⁹² In February 1720 the 7th Baronet paid for a course of anatomy lectures advertised in *The Daily Courant* as – 'chiefly intended for Gentlemen' being designed to contain 'nothing offensive' though omitting only such things as 'are neither Instructive nor Entertaining' – and conducted jointly by Hauksbee and William Cheselden (1688-1752), surgeon to Queen Caroline.⁹³ The following month Sir George purchased from Cheselden 'a double microscope with all ye apperatus and a shapneen case'. Anatomy books were given prominence in Savile's library. The section devoted to 'Sciences and Arts' contained subsections referenced 'Annatomy' and 'Chymistry' and in February 1727 he subscribed (for 2 guineas) to 'the fine Cutts of Humane Bones' that Cheselden was then working on.⁹⁴ The

⁸⁷ Hanham, *ODNB*.

⁸⁸ NA: DD/SR/225/24.

⁸⁹ Savile's personal account books provide the main evidence for his purchases but cover only a limited and discontinuous sequence of years.

⁹⁰ NA: DD/SR/211/178/1.

⁹¹ NA: DD/SR/A4/36. The 1734 payments were made to 'Mr Sipson', with high probability the mathematical instrument maker Jonathan Sisson (1690?-1747), active in the Strand from 1722 and renowned for his surveying instruments. Howse, *ODNB*.

⁹² Rivaling those given at the Royal Society by his uncle, Francis Hauksbee (elder). Stewart, *ODNB*.

⁹³ NA: DD/SR/211/178/1; *The Daily Courant*, 21 March 1721, quoted in Kornell (2011).

⁹⁴ 'Description of Books for a library', May 1728 (NA: DD/SR/215/61); Letter Savile to Madam Savile, 25 February 1727 (NA: DD/SR/212/3/53).

subsequent publication, *Osteographia or the Anatomy of Bones* (1733), was a lavishly illustrated work dedicated to Queen Caroline: in Kornell's opinion 'as much work of art as science' and 'a landmark in the history of anatomical illustration'.⁹⁵

Other branches of Science in which Savile displayed a notable interest were physics, in particular astronomy, and mathematics: both were sufficiently well represented within his library to warrant individual sections although, with the exception of 'Mr Long's System of Astronomy' which he subscribed to in 1731, no record of their contents has been found.⁹⁶ A document dated June 1719 and referenced 'Mr Molineux's directions for a rest for a telescope' implies that Savile owned his own observing instrument by the late 1710s and raises the possibility that he was familiar with the work of astronomer and politician Samuel Molyneux (1689-1728).⁹⁷ In 1724 Savile paid Hauksbee a subscription fee of £1 1s towards construction of 'a Large Reflecting Telescope' in return for which the 7th Baronet was to be granted unprecedented views of the heavens.⁹⁸ Accounts from 1737 record Savile's purchase of a telescope for £4 16s 3d.⁹⁹ Moreover, the Baronet's possession of astronomical tables, and tables comparing the time of the 1715 eclipse according to 'the watches and observations at William Whiston's which were not exact' and the 'exact account of time kept by the Royal Society', all testify to an active engagement with the scientific advances and excitements of the day.¹⁰⁰ In March 1720 Savile paid £5 5s for a course of astronomy lectures delivered jointly by Hauksbee and Whiston, a distinguished natural philosopher and Lucasian Professor of Mathematics at Cambridge (1702-10), who was best known to the educated public as a populariser of Newton's work.¹⁰¹ Expelled from Cambridge for holding heretical views, Whiston formed a lecturing partnership with Hauksbee in 1713 and offered a syllabus covering

⁹⁵ Kornell (2011).

⁹⁶ Possibly Roger Long (1680-1770), master of Pembroke College, Cambridge University (1733-1770), first Lowndean Professor of Astronomy and Geometry (1750). The first part of Long's *Astronomy* (5 vols) was not published until 1742. Taub, *ODNB*.

⁹⁷ NA: DD/SR/218/1. Sir Francis Molyneux (Teversal Manor) and his son were close acquaintances of Savile, suggesting an alternative provenance for the sketch.

⁹⁸ NA: DD/SR/212/26/8.

⁹⁹ NA: DD/SR/A4/36.

¹⁰⁰ NA: DD/SR/212/26/6,14,17.

¹⁰¹ NA: DD/SR/211/178/1.

‘mechanics, hydrostatics, pneumatics and optics’.¹⁰² In 1722 Savile subscribed to ‘Dr Desagulier’s 2 volumes of Experimental Philosophy in French and English’ and six years later purchased ‘[Henry] Pemberton’s View of Sir Isaac Newton’s Philosophy’ for £1 5s.¹⁰³ Further documents in the Savile Archives reveal Sir George’s familiarity with the work of mathematician and future president of the Royal Society, Martin Folkes (1690-1754), and Savilian Professor of Astronomy at Oxford University, James Bradley (1692-1762). One such record, dated December 1728 and referenced ‘Mr Graham’s Invention to Describe Mr Bradley’s new Discovery about Light’, refers to Bradley’s work on annular parallax and discovery of the ‘aberration of light’ and indicates the degree to which Savile kept abreast of scientific advances: the phenomenon was not formally communicated to the Royal Society until January 1729.¹⁰⁴ In 1734 Savile employed Peter Grandey, associate of John Achard, tutor to the 2nd Duke of Portland, as private tutor to teach his children ‘Languages, Writing, Arithmetick, and all Sciences, Arts and Improvements to ye best of his capacity’.¹⁰⁵ Both Grandey and the Reverend Michell would comment subsequently upon the younger George’s passion for the physical sciences – ‘son genie est fort tourné de ce coté là’ – an interest almost certainly inspired by his father’s example.¹⁰⁶

The 7th Baronet’s engagement with natural philosophy was not confined to an intellectual plain but had practical outcomes in the management of his estate. His delight in mathematics and geometry found most direct expression in the highly individual geometry of a cold bath and summer-house constructed adjacent to the Hall. His designs for water features at Rufford on occasions required the application of hydrodynamic principles. In the 1730s, for instance, he directed water flow experiments to ensure that an appropriate force would

¹⁰² Snobelen, *ODNB*.

¹⁰³ NA: DD/SR/211/192/2; DD/SR/A4/35.

¹⁰⁴ NA: DD/SR/212/26/5,11. Savile was conscious of his ancestor’s eminence (c.f. NA: DD/SR/212/3) but there is no evidence that he acted as patron to Bradley; for public dissemination of Bradley’s work see Fisher (2010).

¹⁰⁵ Savile’s Personal Account Book, 1732-8. NA: DD/SR/A4/36. Grandey remained at Rufford until the 8th Baronet’s death in 1784 (NA: DD/FJ/11/1/3/317); a correspondence (in French, 1743-6, 1752-8) has survived between Grandey and the Swiss scholar, Achard (NUM: Pl C 37/1-20; Pw C 369-71).

¹⁰⁶ NUM: Pl C 37/17,18; Letter Michell to Gertrude Savile, 17 November 1746 (NA: DD/SR/221/87).

be available to drive Rufford corn mill which had been re-located to the head of his 'Great Canal' (see Section 4.3.4).

3.3 The Rufford Estate: Geography, Scale and Principal Elements

3.3.1 The physical geography of the Rufford Estate

Nottinghamshire is a county which though lacking topographical drama, is undulating in parts. Moreover, its notably contrastive geology has helped pattern a landscape with 'considerable diversity of types of country'.¹⁰⁷

The Savile Archives contain no complete survey (either in the form of map or field book) or unambiguous record of the landholdings which constituted the Rufford Estate during the 7th Baronet's ownership. A profile of the latter must therefore rely on comparative study of estate rentals, tenancy and contractual agreements, and occasional summary reports submitted at significant moments (principally estate successions and court hearings). Tables 3.1 & 3.2 summarise this data, which when read alongside estate correspondence gives rise to two conclusions pertinent to Sir George's estate improvements. Firstly, although the Baronet's landholdings were broadly contiguous and focussed around his residence, with the exception of Rufford Liberty, land within townships was distributed amongst several landowners.¹⁰⁸ Secondly, with the exception of landholdings in Tuxford, Kirton and Wellow, both the land distribution and scale of the Rufford Estate remained broadly constant during the 7th Baronet's ownership. Rental accounts specify that some of the Wellow land was 'newly purchased' in 1741. Beyond the establishment of a boat house at Fiskerton-on-Trent (c.1715), and two acts of enclosure by private agreement – Cocking Common, Ompton, at the request of local freeholders (1719), and 'Eakring grassfield', a three-way agreement between Savile, the 1st Duke of Kingston and freeholders in the parish of Eakring (1724) –

¹⁰⁷ Edwards (1944), 420.

¹⁰⁸ In the Savile Archives, the terminology used in relation to administrative units is fluid; words 'liberty', 'manor' and 'town' seem on occasions to be used interchangeably, though 'liberty' most frequently describes the extra-parochial ground around Rufford Hall within which Savile was sole Lord of the Manor.

Table 3.1: 'An account of acres of land of late Marquis of Halifax [sic] Estate in Nottinghamshire'

Transcription of one of a collection of similar documents copied in June 1747 and purporting to record the extent of the Rufford Estate in the late seventeenth century, hereafter referenced *c.1700 Acreages*. (NA: DD/SR/227/130. See also NA: DD/SR/227/127; DD/SR/227/129)

Mannors	Town names	Messuages	Acres of Meadows	Acres of pasture	Acres of field & Arable Land	Acres of furse & heath on the forest	<i>No heading in original document.</i> [Some of the figures & comments quoted in this column are almost certainly editorial additions made in 1747. In particular, the scale of the 'Wilderness' in Rufford, which on the basis of other documentary evidence was only a third of this size c.1700.]
Rufford	Rufford	70	806	1641	-	10,000	In New & Old Parks & Lound Wood & Wilderness with Pasture & with a great quantity of wood growing in part of them, they are about 1000 acres. [Other documents in the collection estimate Old Park variously as '80 chains by 80 chains' and '700 acres'; New Park 'with wood and bushes near 200 acres'; Lound Wood, 20 acres most consistently quoted but 40 also occurs; 'Wilderness', 26 or 30 acres.]
Eakring	Eakring	28	128	312	261		In Braile Wood in Eakring which is all over with wood there is 52 acres.
	Ompton	5	109	190	111		
Wellow	Wellow	22	64	143	30		In Wellow Park, being grown over with wood there is 340 acres.
Kirton cum Wailsby [Walesby]	Kirton	3	53	62	34		
	Wailsby [Walesby]	6	19	25			Besides the Tithe [of corn] Let at £37 a year in Wailsby.
	Tuxford	2	72	60			
	Bevercoats	1	2	0			
	Laxton	1	3	3			
	Morton Grange in Babworth & Eaton	1	35	190		800	
	Kersall	1	3	2			
	Boughton	2	12	15			
	Bilsthorp	1	3				
[TOTAL]		143	1309	2643	436	10800	1392 acres of Woods and parks NB. There are two warrens on Rufford Forrest let at the yearly Rent of £94 10s. Besides several sheep walks belonging to the tenants farms.

Table 3.2:

**Valuations of the 7th Baronet's Nottinghamshire
landholdings 1710, 1731 and 1742.**

Rents due half yearly: Lady Day (25 March) and Michaelmas (29 September)

Town	Annual rental in 1710	Annual rental for accounting year 1730/1731	Annual rental for accounting year 1741/1742
	Source: Letter Thomas Smith to Savile viz. data from accounts. 13 December 1712, NA: DD/SR/217/58.	Source: George Holt's full estate accounts. NA: DD/SR/6/1/1.	Source: George Holt's full estate accounts. NA: DD/SR/6/1/12.
Rufford	£836 5s 8d	£1002 2s 8d	£1010 4s 8d
Eakring	£171 0s 4d	£221 0s 4d	£229 5s 4d
Ompton	£99 18s 0d	£129 18s 4d	£128 3s 6d
Wellow	£64 13s 4d	£72 13s 6d	£76 0s 6d £39 1s 0d [land marked 'newly purchased']
Wailsby [Walesby]	£43 16s 8d	£47 16s 8d	£48 18s 4d
Kirton	£100 7s 4d	£102 19s 1d	£64 3s 0d
Kersall	£2 10s 0d	£3 0s 0d	£3 3s 0d
Laxton	£1 10s 0d	£2 0s 0d	£2 2s 0d
Morton Grange	£59 10s 0d	£69 10s 0d	£72 19s 6d
Tuxford			£42 0s 0d
Booton [Boughton]		£1 10s 0d	£9 9s 0d
Bilsthorp			£3 0s 6d
Fiskerton		£1 0s 0d	£1 0s 0d
Bevercoates			£3 0s 0d
Sheep Walks	£11 0s 0d	Not stated	Not stated
Breck Rents	Referenced but value not listed	Not stated	£12 10s 0d

Key

Town Names highlighted are those locations where comparison of the rental accounts indicates change in the total tenanted holdings whether through acquisition, sale or change of status (from 'in hand by Sir George' to 'leased to tenants' or vice versa).

no evidence has been found in estate correspondence (record terminates 16 June 1739) or archival documents (catalogued as of a contractual character) to suggest that the 7th Baronet was party to any significant land exchange or purchase in Nottinghamshire.¹⁰⁹ This implies that changes to Savile's landholdings in Tuxford and Kirton either, like Wellow, occurred towards the end of his ownership, or reflect changes in the balance of demesne/tenanted land as opposed to land acquisition, exchange or sale.

Figure 3.3 shows the areal distribution of the Rufford Estate in 1742 superimposed on a soil map published in Robert Lowe's *General View of the Agriculture of the County of Nottingham* (1794), and highlights the potential impact of underlying geology on the estate. Keuper and Bunter landscapes give rise to soils of fundamentally different character, the former clay, the latter sand. By the early eighteenth century they supported diverse agricultural economies and social structures. As Figure 3.3 and Table 3.1 together indicate, approximately two thirds of Savile's Nottinghamshire acreage in this period lay on light forest sand land (substrata: Bunter sandstone); only a third on the more agriculturally fertile clay (substrata: Keuper rock).

CLAY LANDS: EASTERN SIDE OF THE ESTATE

The Keuper rocks give rise to clay soils of varying quality: the Keuper Waterstones produce a deep, medium-light soil of moderate fertility suitable for arable cultivation; the Keuper marl, a stiffer, heavier, clay soil much harder to work.¹¹⁰ Parliamentary Enclosure in north Nottinghamshire became significant only in the late 1750s.¹¹¹ Prior to this, clay ground north of the Trent was predominantly open arable fields and common land, with mostly well-populated open field villages whose land was divided into multiple strips held in intermixed ownership. This social structure favoured the continuance of traditional farming methods although modest improvements in the economic

¹⁰⁹ NA: DD/SR/211/227/58,88,153. When, in 1732, a well-tenanted neighbouring estate (at Kirklington and Hockerton, worth £1,000 per annum) was for sale, Savile appears to have shown little interest. By 1736 the land had been purchased by 'General Wetham [Thomas Whetham]'. NA: DD/SR/211/24/24,103; Jacks (1882).

¹¹⁰ Edwards (1944), 432-3.

¹¹¹ Though by 1700 probably half the county – land concentrated in the Trent Valley and Vale of Belvoir – was enclosed. Chambers (1966, first published 1932), vii, 148.

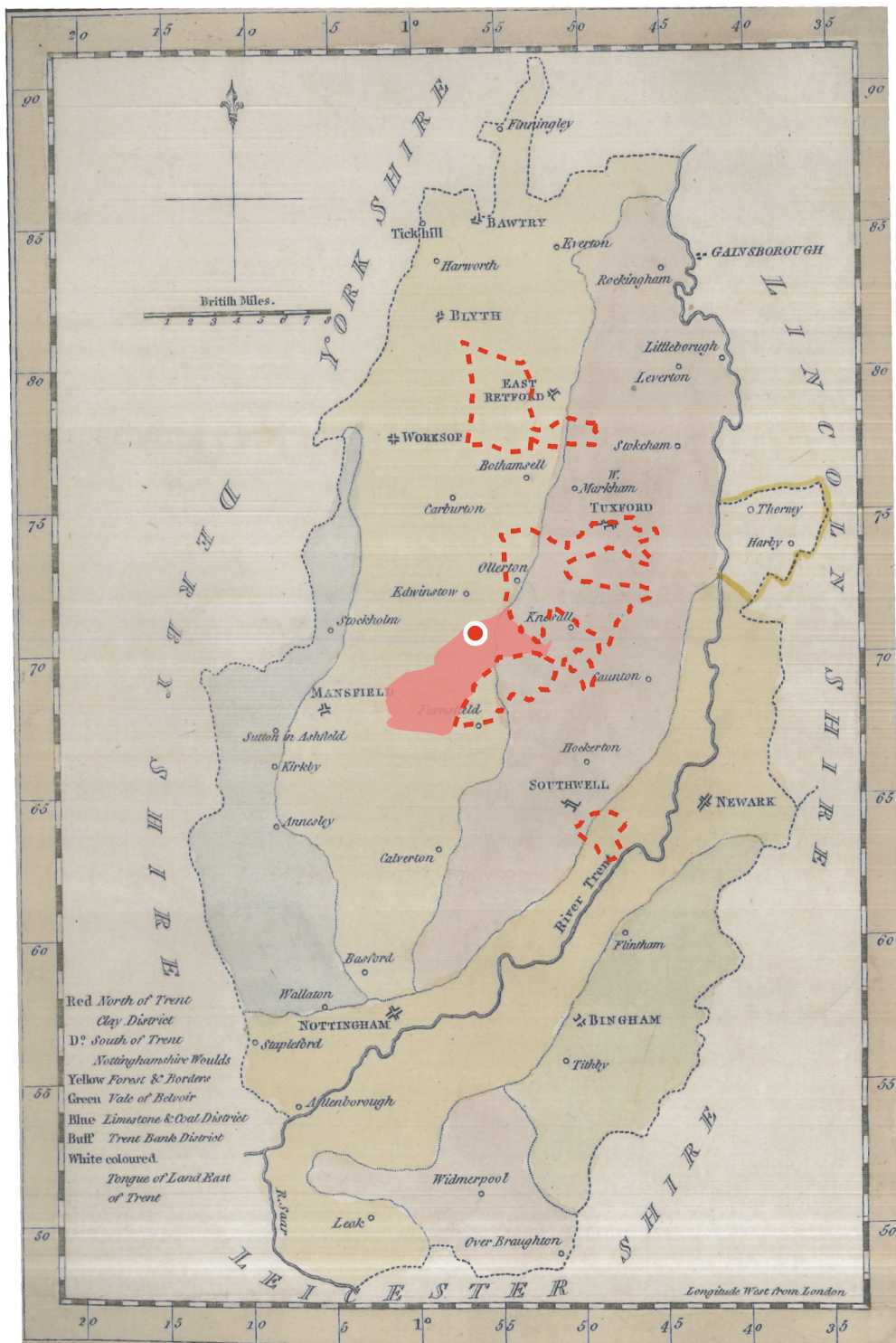


Figure 3.3: Robert Lowe's 1794 Map of the Soils of Nottinghamshire with the areal extent of the Rufford Estate 1700-1743 indicated.

Red dot locates the Hall.

Solid red area indicates Rufford Liberty, an area owned exclusively by Savile; dashed contours enclose areas of the county in mixed ownership, in which Savile owned land.

(Lowe, R., *General View of the Agriculture of the County of Nottingham*, London, 1794; Rufford estate accounts and surveys, Nottinghamshire Archives.)

return might be obtained through the consolidation of strips into larger holdings (giving the tenant farmer greater autonomy) and the introduction of new fodder crops into the rotations to maintain fertility. Grasses such as lucerne, sainfoin and clover, or root crops such as turnips were the most common substitutes for the traditional but more labour-demanding cultivation of peas and beans.¹¹² Intermixed landownership also impacted on an individual landowner's capacity to design on an estate level (see Chapter 7) and on occasions led to disputes about rights to game (see Section 8.4.1). At Rufford it was the c.5,780 acres of land east of the Hall (just over a third of the total estate acreage) that lay within the clay lands – divided between meadowland (23%), pasturage (46%), 'field and arable' (7%), woods and parks (24%) in c.1700.¹¹³

The clay land was well watered: innumerable small rivers, springs and streams ran through it, many of which could be readily dammed (see **WATERCOURSES AND MILLS** below). By the early eighteenth century the northern clay lands (particularly around Retford and Southwell), and the moister eastern margins of the Bunter sand lands (Rufford, Elkesley and Ollerton) supported a profitable brewing industry through the cultivation of a regional strain of hops known as 'North Clay hops'.¹¹⁴ Lowe records annual hop fairs at Retford and Tuxford. Ash, coppiced for hop poles, was increasingly husbanded in the area both as traditional coppice-with-standards (ash underwood amongst oak standards), and, towards the late eighteenth century, in new plantations (see Chapter 6).

SAND LANDS: WESTERN SIDE OF THE ESTATE

Rufford Hall lay on the very border of the east-west, sand-clay division of the Rufford Estate and the c.10,000 acres of Rufford Liberty west of the Hall (almost the entire manor) lay on Sherwood Forest sand land, as did a further 800 acres of estate land in Babworth and Eaton (Table 3.1).

In contrast to the Keuper clay lands on the eastern side of the county, the Bunter sandstone strata in the west defined a more rolling landscape which

¹¹² Chambers (1966), ch. 6; Thirsk (1987), 41. In some areas a system of 'convertible husbandry' was adopted.

¹¹³ Percentiles calculated (and categorisation taken) from acreages stated in Table 3.1.

¹¹⁴ Edwards (1944), 514-5.

suffered from a lack of surface water. Bunter sandstone generates a thin, light, sandy soil of variable quality whose high drainage reduces fertility.¹¹⁵ Lowe references this area as the 'Forest & Borders' (Figure 3.3). At its maximum extent, Sherwood Forest covered 'at least a fourth of the whole county'.¹¹⁶ The precise boundary of the Forest in the early eighteenth century, however, remains uncertain.¹¹⁷ The poor soils and sparse population of this region gave great scope for enclosure, a process that escalated as the century progressed: of the 23,000 acres of private parkland which existed in Nottinghamshire by 1820, a large proportion lay within former Royal hunting ground.¹¹⁸

With the exception of its moister eastern zone on the fringe of the Keuper strata, a significant proportion of Lowe's 'Forest & Borders' land consisted of 'mere heath and shrub' in the early eighteenth century.¹¹⁹ Areas of the forest did, however, possess natural woodland in the period (typically oak and birch), and woodland coverage increased as private plantations became established (see Section 6.1.3). On the forest margins, moreover, it was common for landowners to be granted licence by the crown to make temporary enclosures for pasture or arable cultivation. Known as 'brecks' or 'breaks', such enclosures were generally cultivated for between 3-9 years and collectively farmed, in a manner similar to open arable fields. According to Fowkes, breck cultivation was particularly extensive on the Rufford Estate – 650 acres of breck were periodically utilised by the estate during the eighteenth century.¹²⁰ Although Fowkes's figure seems high for the early eighteenth century, Savile was certainly set on extending Rufford breck land in the 1710s, even at the expense of estate warren ground.¹²¹

¹¹⁵ So-called 'good sands' derived from 'Bunter Pebble Beds', 'bad sands' from the 'Lower Mottled Sandstone'. Pickersgill (1979), vol. 1, ch 3; Edwards (1944), 452-4.

¹¹⁶ Page, ed. (1906), vol. 1, p. 365.

¹¹⁷ In 1663, John Trueman, a forest verderer, described Sherwood as '60 miles about'. Gillott, S., 'The Royal Forest of Sherwood in the Seventeenth Century', quoted in Mastoris (1985-7), 9; Mastoris (1998); Mastoris & Groves (1997).

¹¹⁸ Fowkes (1987), 72.

¹¹⁹ Chambers (1966), 155. A survey of the Forest conducted in 1609 categorised almost 37% as 'waste' (Rooke, 1799, p. 5); Lord Albemarle, ed. (1852), vol. 2, p. 138; Lowe (1794), 22; Gillott (1985), 68.

¹²⁰ Fowkes (1977), 57.

¹²¹ Letters Mr Clay (clerk of Forest and Attachment Courts) to Savile, 17 May 1716, and Savile to Verderers, 14 July 1716. NA: DD/SR/229/13/13,15.

WATERCOURSES AND MILLS SERVING THE CORE ESTATE

The principal watercourse supplying Rufford Abbey and its surrounding landscape was Rainworth Water, shown most clearly on John Chapman's Map of Nottinghamshire, 1774 (hereafter referenced *Chapman's 1774 Map*).¹²² The precise character of the river, its course and feeder streams, have undoubtedly changed over the centuries, though archival evidence suggests that both remained stable within the eighteenth century. The river during this period rose in the sand lands south-west of the Hall, continued on a roughly north-easterly course until just beyond Winkerfield, then turned into a northerly course, flowing east of the Hall and joining the River Maun at Ollerton (Figure 3.4). The valley bottom was shallow and by the late medieval period had been dammed at several points. Of particular relevance to the 7th Baronet's landscape developments was a mill and dam complex at Winkerfield, first referenced in the late thirteenth century as a *stagnum* or reservoir for fish (see Chapter 5),¹²³ and 'The Great Dam and Swing Dam' complex south of the Abbey described on an estate survey commissioned from John Bunting by Sir William Savile in 1637 (hereafter referenced *Bunting's 1637 Survey*, Figures 3.5a & 3.5b). The latter is recorded by Thoroton as having been drained in the late seventeenth century and the river 'confined to its channel, and carried along the top of the Bank or Damm',¹²⁴ and in c.1700 a narrow channel tapped off Rainworth Water ran adjacent to the Nottingham Road along the top of the earlier dam and supplied the Hall, brewery and stew ponds in the kitchen garden (see Chapters 4 & 5).¹²⁵ A further dam along the course of the river due east of the Hall served Rufford Mill until the 1730s (see Section 4.3.4).¹²⁶

¹²² Referenced as the River Idele [Idle] in the thirteenth century, but alternatively as the Rainworth, Rufford Water or Rufford River from the seventeenth century. Holdsworth (1972-81), vol. 2, p. 354.

¹²³ Letters Patent of King Henry III to the Abbot of Rufford, dated 28 March 1268 & Rot. Hund., ii, 26, 303, quoted in Holdsworth (1972-81), vol. 2, pp. 354-5.

¹²⁴ Thoroton (1677), 435.

¹²⁵ For detailed discussion of watercourses in the area see Smith's correspondence, in particular, Letters Smith to Savile, 6 January 1725 & 20 June 1726. NA: DD/SR/211/227/117,133.

¹²⁶ From the mid-seventeenth century at least water supply to Rufford Mill was augmented by Cold Well River, a stream whose course (though absent from the maps, surveys and plans viewed by the present author) is suggested by the locations east of the Hall of 'Cold Well Meadow' on *Bunting's 1637 Survey* and 'Cold Well Spring' on George Sanderson's 1835 map, *Twenty Miles Round Mansfield*. Parliamentary Survey of

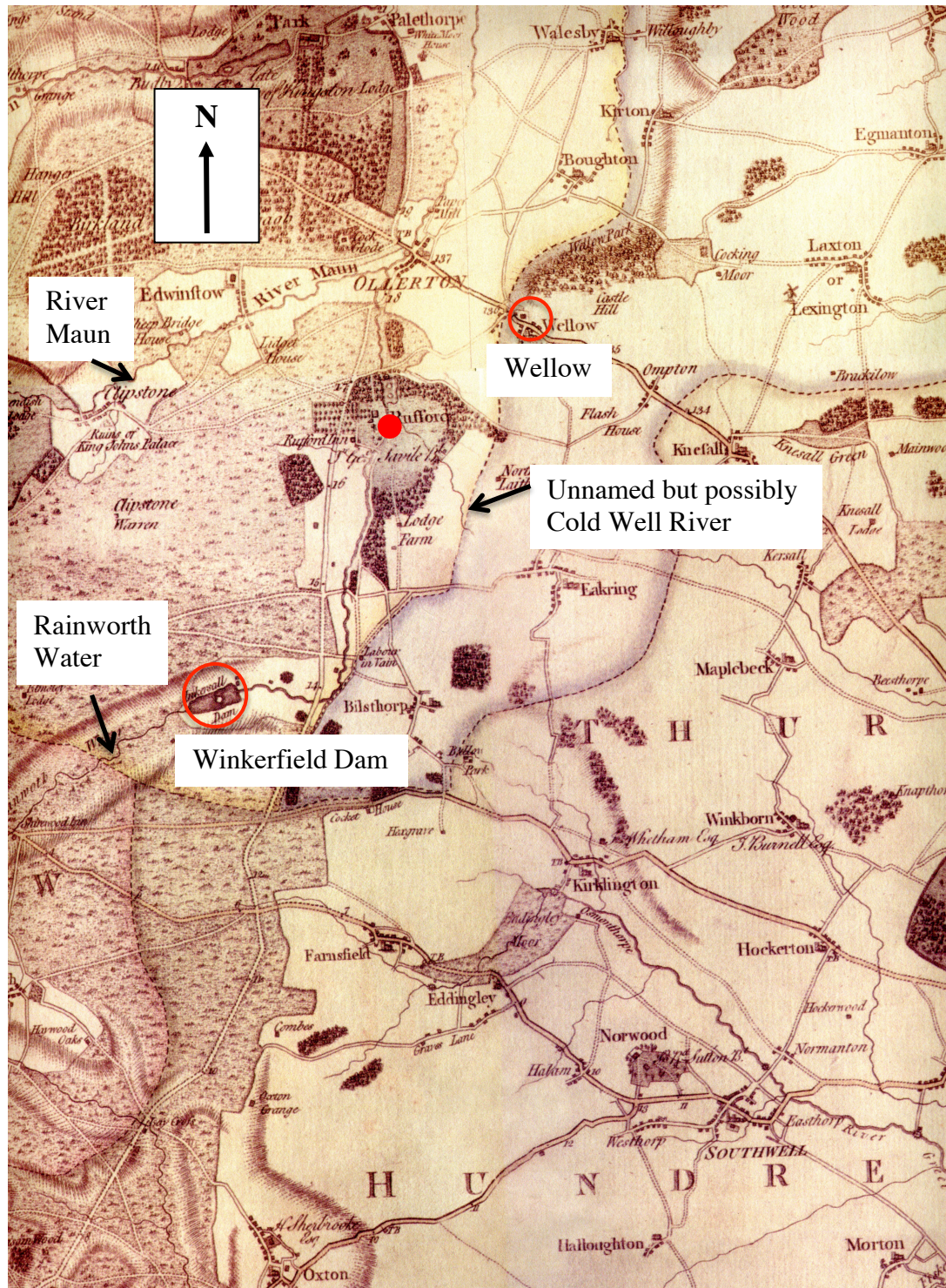


Figure 3.4: Detail from John Chapman's 1774 Map of Nottinghamshire.

Red dot marks the position of Rufford Hall

Red circles locate important fish breeding ponds – Wellow pond north-east of the Hall and Winkerfield Dam (referenced Inkersall Dam, its modern name, on Chapman's Map) to the south-west (see Chapter 5).



Figure 3.5a: John Bunting's 1637 Survey of Rufford Liberty.

This was one of a pair of estate surveys (the other survey being of Thornhill) commissioned by the Saviles in the 1630s. The location of the original Rufford document has not been traced. The Thornhill survey carried out by Edward Rolsonn, 1634, is held in the Savile Estate Office, Dewsbury.

In order to depict an irregular area in a compact and rectangular space, part of the west side of Rufford Liberty (within the Forest of Sherwood) has been displaced and described to the east.

(NA: RF3L)

Figure 3.5b:
Tracing of *Bunting's 1637 Survey*,
author unknown.

(Rufford Abbey Archives)



Welley Beskall

In Beskall

The Hall

Great Dam/Swing Dam Complex

The Parke

Bliton Hills

Cold Well
Meadow

**Western section of liberty
shown displaced.**

Emsley Rayle

Eighteenth-century estate correspondence cites numerous incidences of flooding along the Nottingham Road which throughout the period of the 7th Baronet's ownership followed a course west of the Hall and then dog-legged c.350 yards south of the Hall, skirting the bank of the once Great Dam (see Figures 4.1a & 4.1b; map regression work in Appendix 6.3). In January 1728 Smith referred to 'a great sough which lys under ye Notts Road' intended to alleviate the problem.¹²⁷ Flood damage was not, however, confined to the earlier dam, but seems to have affected ground in the vicinity of Rainworth Water more generally. By 1728, loss to demesne hay crops 'by your Meadows Being flooded in ye Summers' had become a recurrent entry in estate reports.¹²⁸ In January 1729 a 'Town'/'Great' plough was hired 'for drayning ye Park and Medows' and Savile's then steward, William Matthew, recommended investing in one for the estate.¹²⁹ During the 7th Baronet's ownership new watercourses were cut and ponds constructed in the grounds adjacent to the Hall, some of which became features of the pleasure ground design and served as components of the fish management system as well as enhancing drainage for cultivation and planting (see Chapters 4 & 5).

Both Winkerfield Mill and Rufford Mill were corn mills, and active when Sir George inherited in 1700. Early eighteenth-century estate documents, however, reference a third mill and associated dam, Leather Mill. Leather Mill is not cited on either *Bunting's 1637 Survey* or a later estate survey from c.1700 (see Figures 4.1a & 4.1b), but written sources suggest that it occupied a site close to the Nottingham Road on the western periphery of Old Park and that its mill pool – 'Leather Mill Dam' – was associated with the Great Dam. Leather Mill Dam continued into the eighteenth century and was managed as part of an extensive pisciculture system throughout the 7th Baronet's ownership (see Chapter 5). The Mill, however, was demolished in 1711, its bricks used to erect a 'Killn & Chamber' at the site.¹³⁰

the Manors of Rufford within Sherwood Forest, 17 September 1656 (TNA: E317/Notts/22); Letter Smith to Savile, 2 April 1720 (NA: DD/SR/211/227/45).

¹²⁷ Letter Smith to Savile, 22 January 1728. NA: DD/SR/211/227/169.

¹²⁸ Letter Smith to Savile, 10 January 1728. NA: DD/SR/211/227/171.

¹²⁹ Letter Matthew to Savile, 25 January 1729. NA: DD/SR/211/58/22.

¹³⁰ By 1702 it seems to have been in considerable disrepair. Burden's Estate Accounts, 1702 & 1711-12 (NA: DD/SR/A4/26,30); Smith's Estate Accounts, 1714

3.3.2 The core estate: house, gardens and parks

HOUSE AND ADJACENT OUTBUILDINGS

No detailed architectural history of Rufford Hall has yet been written, and, with the exception of the late twelfth century undercroft, outer parlour and lay brother's refectory, which served the monks whilst the buildings functioned as a Cistercian Abbey, the building was almost entirely demolished by Nottinghamshire County Council in 1956 (Figure 3.6 shows areal views of the Hall before and after demolition). The history of the Abbey as domestic residence began in the late sixteenth century and by the 1610s it was both large and grand enough to accommodate royalty.¹³¹ From the point of view of the present study, the most significant modifications to the building's structure were made during the second half of the seventeenth century under the direction of the 1st Marquis of Halifax. There is much to suggest that the Marquis had a strong interest in architecture – his library at Rufford contained significant works of the period: Sebastiano Serlio's *Architecture* (1611) and Robert Pricke's *The Architect's Storehouse* (1674) – and it was during his ownership that the house achieved the scale, and to a large extent external appearance, that defined it during the 7th Baronet's ownership.¹³²

Although rarely resident at Rufford, the Marquis invested substantially in the improvement of both house and gardens. By the 1680s a major extension to the Hall – a new three-storeyed north wing – was almost complete making Rufford the third largest house in the county.¹³³ Both the scale (in particular the extraordinary length of the east and west facades) and the form of the resulting structure would play a major role in determining the character and disposition of the gardens laid out by the Marquis and subsequently modified and extended by the 7th Baronet (see below and Chapter 4). Figures 3.7 and 3.8 reproduce probably the earliest visual records of the Hall subsequent to the Marquis's renovations: architectural elevations of the east and west fronts attributed to

(NA: DD/SR/211/229/4); Letters Smith to Savile, 14 November 1724, 22 January & 8 April 1728 (NA: DD/SR/211/227/155,169,160).

¹³¹ Thoroton (1677) cites visits by James I and Charles I, see Section 8.1.

¹³² 'A Catalogue of the books in the Library of Rufford belonging to My Lord Marquis of Halifax in the year 1693'. CUM: DD-9-51.

¹³³ Largest was Welbeck Abbey; second, Holme Pierrepont Hall. Smith (2009), 152 fn. 31.

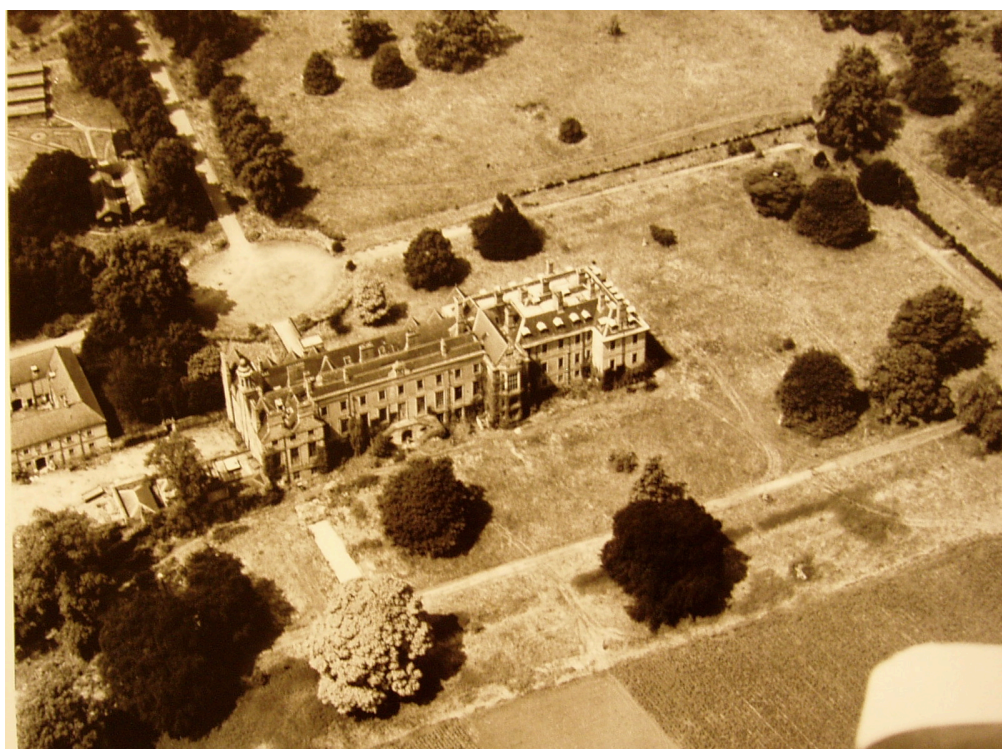
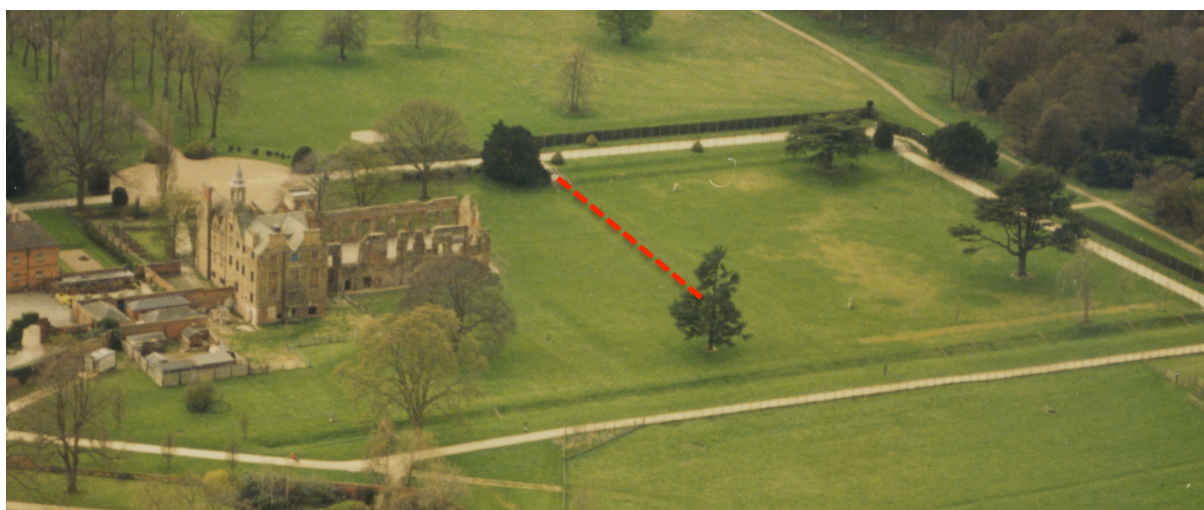


Figure 3.6:
Twentieth-century aerial photographs of Rufford Hall.

Above: Aerial photograph of the Hall, c.1950.
 (Rufford Abbey Archives)

Below: Aerial photograph of the Hall, c.2000.
 (Rufford Abbey Archives)

The Red line indicates the northern perimeter of the former north wing.



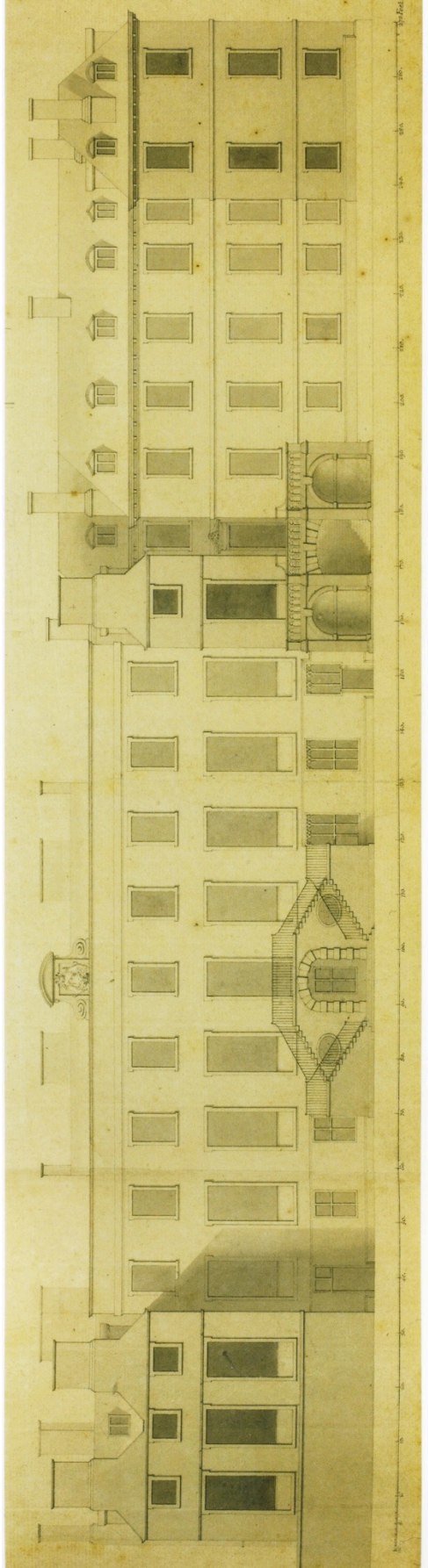
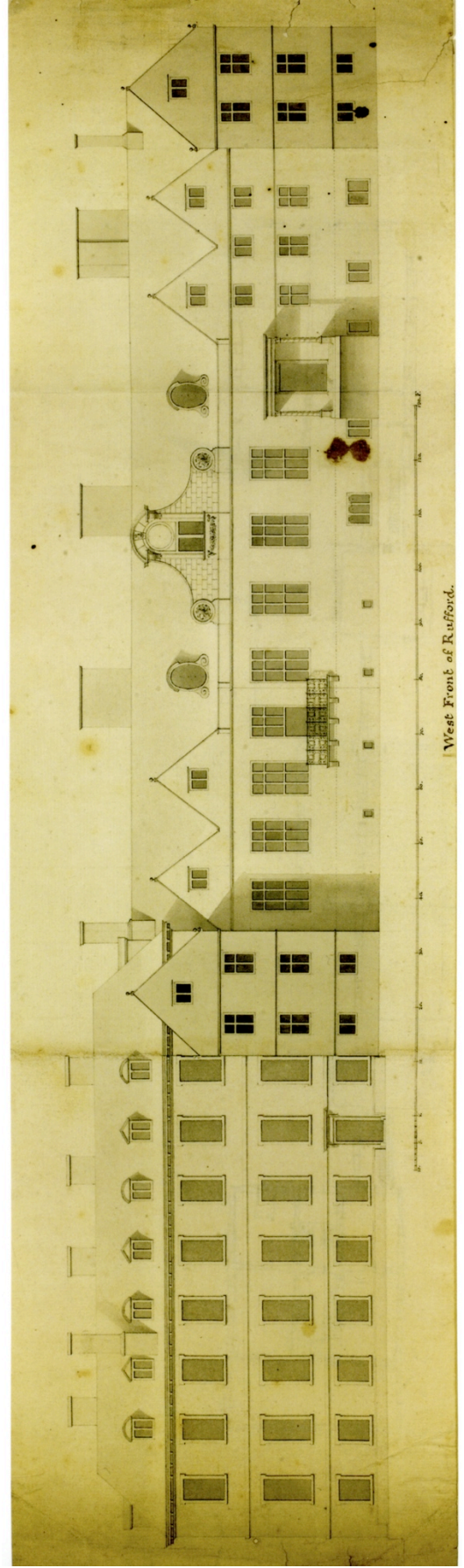


Figure 3.7: Elevations of Rufford Hall, undated, attributed to James Gibbs (died 1754).

(above): East Front (NA: DP/97/1/4)

(below): West Front (NA: DP/97/1/7)



West Front of Rufford.



Figure 3.8: Perspective views of Rufford Hall, attributed to Peter Grandey. Undated, but the second half of the eighteenth century.

(above): 'North East Front of Rufford'. (NA: X/PR/6/13)

(below): 'South West Front of Rufford'. (NA: DP/97/1/12)



James Gibbs and perspective views of the north-east and south-west fronts attributed to the 8th Baronet's tutor, Peter Grandey.¹³⁴ The representations are undated but the biographies of these men support the conclusion that both pre-date the mid-1780s.¹³⁵ No archival evidence has been found to suggest that either the footprint of Rufford Hall or the architectural fabric of the Marquis's north wing were modified prior to Anthony Salvin's interventions in the 1830s, indicating that during the 7th Baronet's ownership both these aspects of the property were as represented in the figures. The north front – a symmetrical façade, nine windows wide with a central door – would have a particularly significant influence on subsequent landscaping initiatives. Figure 3.9 shows a mid-century floor plan in which the Marquis's Long Gallery has been highlighted. The gallery commanded views into the western gardens and forest breck lands beyond.

A large portion of the Hall's medieval fabric seems to have been destroyed during the Marquis's renovations. As Halifax observed to his brother Henry at the time of the work's completion:

...it hath something more to recommend itself to your kindness than when it was so mixt with old ruins of the abby that it look'd like a medley of superstition and sacrilege, and, though I have still left some decay'd part of old building, yet there are none of the rags of Rome remaining. It is now all heresye, which in my mind looketh pretty well, and I have at least as much reverence for it now as I had when it was encumbered with those sanctified ruins. In short, with all the faults that belong to such a mishapen building patch'd up at so many several times... I find something here which pleaseth me...¹³⁶

In December 1692 a serious fire damaged a substantial part of the older southern section of the Hall resulting in further building work (completed by 1696, at an estimated cost of £2,100).¹³⁷ It would appear, therefore, that much of

¹³⁴ See Hewlings (2011).

¹³⁵ See Section 3.2.2 & Section 3.2.4, fn. 105.

¹³⁶ Letter 1st Marquis of Halifax to Henry Savile, 2/12 February 1680, quoted in Cooper (1858), 137-8.

¹³⁷ Chatsworth House Archives: Chatsworth Devonshire MSS, Box 4, Bundle 2, quoted in Smith (2009), 137.

N
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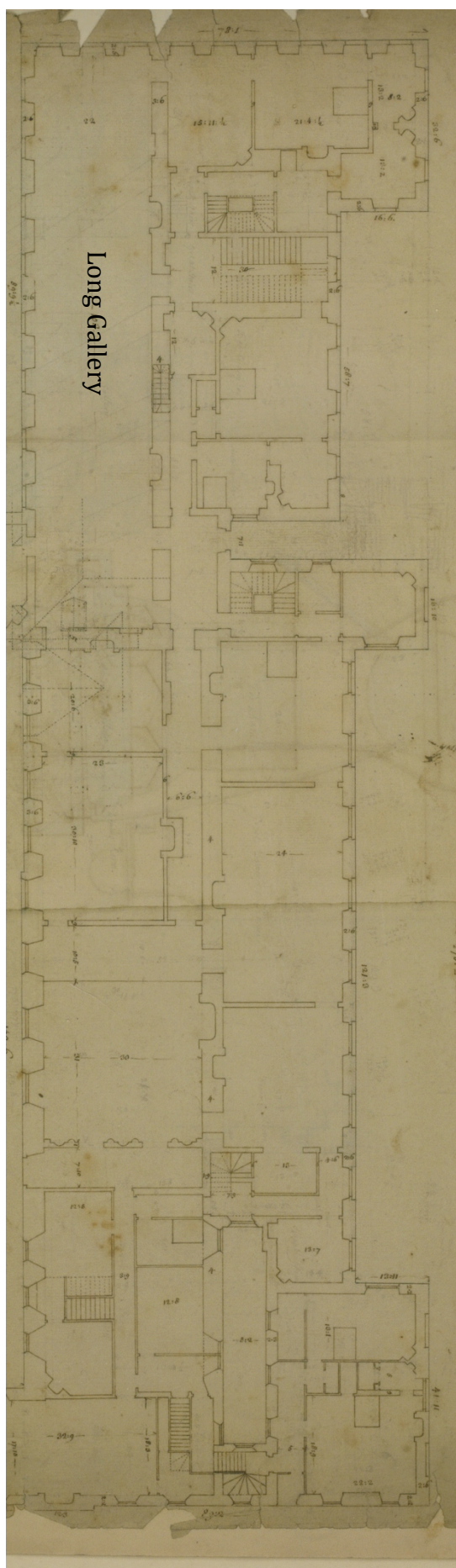


Figure 3.9:

**Second floor ground plan of
Rufford Hall, unattributed,
undated, but considered
c.1750.**

(NA: DP/97/1/2)

Rufford Hall had only recently been refurbished at the time of the 7th Baronet's inheritance. As his sister appraised in 1721: ' 'Tis a fine place'.¹³⁸

The 7th Baronet seems to have made three significant modifications to the Hall's external fabric. All were to the southern wing of the east façade and carried out in the 1730s. In 1734 Savile commissioned Robert Birch, a Mansfield mason regularly employed at Rufford, to record in plan form alterations which were under consideration for the east front (Figure 3.10).¹³⁹ These alterations related to 'Master Savile's Apartment', a suite of rooms on whose construction Sir George expended £797 14s 4½d between April 1735 and June 1736.¹⁴⁰ From the evidence of an individualised bill submitted by Birch at the time of his 'draught', the principal change being proposed to the façade was in the third storey fenestration. Birch's proposal was for five sash windows.¹⁴¹ Estate accounts for 1735, however, record individual payments for a total of nine sash windows ('5 large sashes' in May; '4 sashes' in August), the form described in the Gibbs (attributed) east front elevation (Figure 3.7) and Grandey's (attributed) north-east perspective (Figure 3.8).¹⁴² Although Gibbs served as the 7th Baronet's architect for his Leicester Fields property in 1733/4 and might also have been commissioned to work at Rufford in this period, the Gibbs (attributed) drawings of Rufford appear to be part of a set including Ollerton Hall and Church. In the light of this grouping Hewlings has argued that the plans of Rufford were commissioned by Sir George's son and intended as a record for publication rather than with the aim of modifying the property.¹⁴³

Comparison of Birch's proposal for the east front and the representations of Gibbs and Grandey suggest two further modifications to the east front façade: a first floor balcony above three alcoves and a double-flight garden stair and doorway in the centre of its southern wing. The alcoves were added by the 7th Baronet in 1734; the double flight of steps during 1738. From the 1710s onwards Savile was engaged in major redesign of his inherited gardens. Both

¹³⁸ *Gertrude's Diaries*, 8-28 December 1721, p. 18. Defoe records an identical impression. Defoe (1948, facsimile of 1724-6 edition), vol. 2, p. 149.

¹³⁹ NA: DD/SR/211/227/33; DD/SR/215/13/13.

¹⁴⁰ Holt's Estate Accounts, 1730/1731. NA: DD/SR/6/1/1.

¹⁴¹ NA: DD/SR/215/13/11.

¹⁴² Holt's Estate Accounts, 1734/1735 & 1735/1736. NA: DD/SR/6/1/5-6.

¹⁴³ Hewlings (2011), 89.

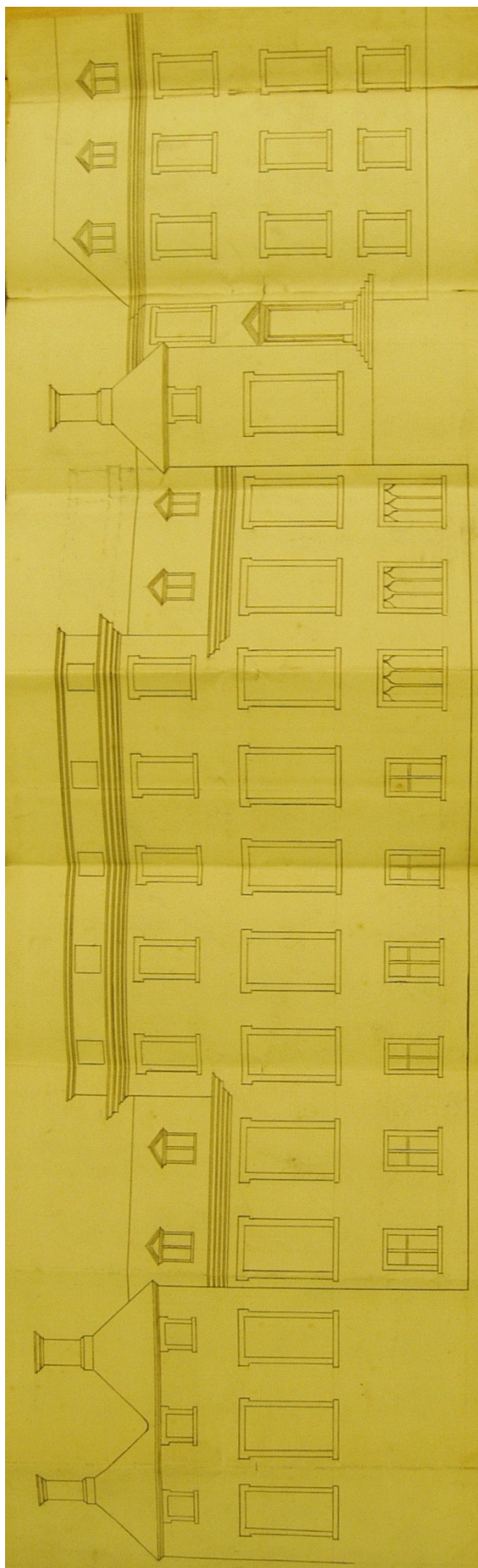


Figure 3.10: 'Draught from Mr Birch of part of East Side of Rufford=House as proposed to be altered', July 1734.

(NA: DD/SR/215/13/13)

additions to the structural fabric of the Hall bore directly upon these changes and are discussed further in relation to the development of Rufford's gardens in Section 4.3.3.

Although Sir George's 'merry Predecessor Baronet' (the 7th Baronet's familial description of his godfather) 'was notoriously deficient in the sporting tastes of the ideal country gentleman', a large, quadrangular stable block (100ft square and reputedly able to accommodate 20 horses) was constructed southwest of the Hall, and a stable yard and separate coach house were added on its east side during his ownership.¹⁴⁴ The stable block is a feature of Rufford Country Park today, and though altered and re-roofed in the late twentieth century it retains much of its original brickwork (Figure 3.11).¹⁴⁵ At the time of the 7th Baronet's inheritance Rufford also had a 'water house',¹⁴⁶ 'brew house' and 'new dairy' close to the Hall (outbuildings on the perimeter of the kitchen garden in Figure 4.1b).¹⁴⁷

GARDENS

Already at the time of the 7th Baronet's inheritance, there was a significant designed landscape surrounding the Hall, laid out in large measure by the 1st Marquis.¹⁴⁸ The latter had been educated on the continent and maintained a frequent correspondence with his brother Henry (Envoy Extraordinary to Louis XIV (1672), Envoy to Paris (1679)).¹⁴⁹ Witticisms exchanged between the

¹⁴⁴ Letter Savile to Madam Savile, 7 December 1725 (NA: DD/SR/212/3/40); Foxcroft (1898), vol. 1, p. 227 fn. 4; Smith (2009), 127.

¹⁴⁵ *Nottinghamshire County Council Historic Buildings Record*, 28 April 1986, listing serial number 3/92; *English Heritage Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest*, 1 January 1986, site reference number 2087.

¹⁴⁶ The 'water house' or 'pump house' as it was alternatively called contained a waterwheel and engine, was fed by a pond (possibly Black Walk Pond) and supplied the brewery and Hall. Between April and September 1734 it was rebuilt at an estimated cost of £120. Letters Smith to Savile, 23 March 1725, 10 December 1718, 30 November 1724 & 6 August 1726 (NA: DD/SR/211/227/88,63,150,127); Letters Holt to Savile, 13 April – 28 October 1734 (NA: DD/SR/211/24,64-76). The water tower south of the Hall today almost certainly relates to this structure.

¹⁴⁷ NA: RF5L. The plan also indicates 'Park Stables' and 'Barns' in the same area.

¹⁴⁸ A plan from 1667 in the Marquis's hand sketches a modified course for the Nottingham Road; the change required enclosure of c.2 acres of forestland which was then incorporated into the Marquis's pleasure grounds. NA: DD/SR/229/14/31.

¹⁴⁹ Brown, *ODNB*; Luke (1958), 142.



Figure 3.11:

The stable block at Rufford Abbey from the north-west, photographed c.2000.

(Image courtesy of Pete Smith)

brothers comparing the virtues of Rufford's 'shades and groves' to the 'fine walks' of Fontainebleau suggest a mutual awareness of contemporary landscape taste which might well have been fostered by contact with gardening luminary and close acquaintance, Sir William Temple.¹⁵⁰ The Marquis's library at Rufford included Nicolas de Bonnefons *The French Gardiner* (1658) and Ralph Austen's *A Treatise of Fruit-Trees* (1653),¹⁵¹ and the gardens inherited by Sir George were set out in the fashionable Franco-Dutch style of the period (see Chapter 4).

PARKS

Sir George inherited three parks at Rufford: Wellow Park, Old Park and New Park. All three lay on clay land east of the Hall, but were diverse in character. Wellow Park, an enclosure of over 300 acres, was situated c.4 miles from Rufford Hall. It was managed as coppice-with-standards in 1700, and though the balance of underwood species cultivated changed during the 7th Baronet's ownership, the style of silviculture practised remained unaltered (see Chapter 6). Moreover, with the exception of a very brief interval when hay scarcity resulted in the admission of horses, grazing animals were prohibited (see Section 7.1.2). One aspect of management that did, however, change markedly during the first four decades of the eighteenth century was the park's accessibility and, what might broadly be termed, 'aesthetic dimension'. By 1743 an elaborate network of rides united Savile's in-hand grounds. Wellow Park was the first site to be developed and, by the time of the Baronet's death, arguably the most designed area of woodland on the estate (see Chapter 7).

In contrast to Wellow Park, the style of silviculture practised in New Park and Old Park in 1700 is more accurately captured by the term 'wood-pasture' (see Chapter 6). The precise dimensions of these parks in 1700 are unknown though by the late 1740s, 700 acres and 200 acres were figures quoted for Old and New Park respectively (see Section 6.1.1). Both parks contained major timber reserves, and although estate accounts from the late eighteenth century suggest that significant stands of ash underwood existed in New Park by the late 1740s, this almost certainly reflects a change in management style during the

¹⁵⁰ Letters exchanged between 1st Marquis of Halifax (Rufford) and Henry Savile (Fontainebleau), 31 May/10 June 1680 & 21 June, quoted in Cooper (1858), 155-6.

¹⁵¹ CUM: DD-9-51.

course of Savile's ownership rather than the character of the parks in the 1710s and 1720s. Steward evidence contributed during family inheritance disputes in 1718 and 1720 (hereafter referenced the *1718 Interrogatories* and *1720 Interrogatories*, respectively) reported the basis of the 7th Baronet's wood revenue, and a clear distinction was made between coppice- and timber-derived income. Neither Old Park nor New Park was ever cited as contributing to the former category. Further, unlike Wellow Park, grazing animals were regularly husbanded within these spaces.

Both parks provided agistment (also referenced 'joyst') revenue to varying degrees (see Table 6.1), and they may have served as pasture ground for Rufford livestock, particularly in the early years of Savile's ownership. Income from in-hand livestock ('beasts' and sheep) and livestock products, while never a significant proportion of the 7th Baronet's annual revenue, fell off dramatically after the mid-1720s, and the stock thereafter seems to have been limited to a modest dairy herd maintained to supply the family (see Chart 6.3).¹⁵² Horses were foddered in New Park, though restricted to a paddock whose construction cost £5 11s 3d in 1707.¹⁵³ At least in 1700 both parks husbanded deer. New Park contained 'deer laths [pens]' intended originally for red deer.¹⁵⁴ In May 1708 Savile's steward, George Burden, recorded fears that '2 or 3 Staggs come out of the forrest into the New Park' would, come the rutting season, 'lead out the Staggs and Hynd' that Savile kept there.¹⁵⁵ Estate correspondence from 1724 records that 'Lord Halifax' was granted a stag and hind as annual fee 'for ye Egress Regress &c of those Deer in wellow park', and suggests that by then the practice had long since been discontinued.¹⁵⁶ Certainly there is no evidence for red deer enclosed at Rufford beyond Burden's stewardship (1700-12). Old Park, in contrast, was intended for fallow deer, and a distinct breed were husbanded in

¹⁵² Butter was sent regularly to London from the 1730s, the dairy being the particular concern of Savile's wife and managed from the 1730s (possibly before) by Mary Glegg. Letters Mann to Savile, 4 January & 10 March 1729 (NA: DD/SR/211/58/31,35); Letters Holt to Savile, in particular 3 & 15 May 1731 (NA: DD/SR/211/24/15,17).

¹⁵³ NA: DD/SR/A4/28; DD/SR/211/227/82. Horses were also foddered in an enclosure called 'Broom Intack' on the border of Old Park.

¹⁵⁴ Letters Smith to Savile, 2 February 1717 & 10 January 1728 (NA: DD/SR/211/227/82,171); 'A rental of Rufford for Michaelmas 1680' (NA: DD/SR/227/2).

¹⁵⁵ Letter Burden to Savile, 30 May 1708. NA: DD/SR/211/435.

¹⁵⁶ Letter Smith to Savile, 30 November 1724. NA: DD/SR/211/227/150.

the park throughout Savile's ownership: in 1728 the stock numbered 150 'of all Sorts Young Old &c'.¹⁵⁷ A Keeper – first William and then George Armstrong – occupied a lodge in the park, and was responsible for culling the animals and managing their husbanding and protection.¹⁵⁸ The gifting of venison was one of several networks of exchange which connected Savile with his local community (see Chapters 4-7). The lists of acquaintance to whom half does were regularly sent include Justices of the Peace (JPs hereafter), country gentlemen, Savile's legal advisor, the apothecary/doctor who attended estate servants and stables, a Gainsborough cousin of Thomas Smith who took care of Savile's sea-going goods (mostly iron and wine), the Rector of Eakring and relations in Newcastle.¹⁵⁹ Optimising the quality of this gift was a major concern and opinions differed as to how the deer should be husbanded. In 1724 Smith advised Savile that 'Tis Good husbandry to spay Yearly' as spayed does 'Exceeds the others both in thick & fine venison as well as Larger'.¹⁶⁰ Five years later, Savile's under-steward, Joshua Mann, proposed a complex system of selective culling considering 'Does is no Ornemant to a Park'.¹⁶¹ Estate accounts, however, indicate that does were being spayed in 1730, long after Mann left Savile's service.

Given the difference in respective scale of Old Park and New Park it is perhaps unsurprising that the agricultural potential of the former was more extensively exploited. Within Old Park, oats were husbanded and milled for the Rufford hounds throughout Savile's ownership: in the accounting year 1732/1733 the yield was 180 quarters.¹⁶² 'Corn' (mostly barley but also wheat and rye) was a source of direct income from the 1730s at least: in 1735, for example, 11 acres of barley were sown and earnings of the order of £48 are not uncommon.¹⁶³ Throughout Savile's ownership bracken was cleared annually from the 'plains in the Old Park' and burned: a bushel of ashes sold for 1s in

¹⁵⁷ Letter Smith to Savile, 6 April 1728. NA: DD/SR/211/227/161.

¹⁵⁸ Smith's estate correspondence (NA: DD/SR/211/227) and Holt's estate accounts (NA: DD/SR/6/1/6-13).

¹⁵⁹ Rufford estate correspondence (in particular, NA: DD/SR/211/24/31,64) and estate accounts. Carriage costs might be significant. To send a buck to Newcastle or London cost 16s in 1708. NA: DD/SR/A4/29.

¹⁶⁰ Letter Smith to Savile, 27 January 1724. NA: DD/SR/211/227/114.

¹⁶¹ Letter Mann to Savile, 5 April 1729. NA: DD/SR/211/58/34.

¹⁶² NA: DD/SR/6/1/3. The yield was insufficient for Savile's stables and kennels and oats were regularly purchased.

¹⁶³ Holt's Estate Accounts, 1735/1736 & 1737/1738. NA: DD/SR/6/1/6,8.

1741; 3 bushels was the approximate yield.¹⁶⁴ In estate accounts from 1733 onwards, payment to the Rufford gardener George Nailor for 'Turnip seed' is a regular item of husbandry expenditure, and 'Turnips sold which grow in the Old Park' (a crop which in accounting year 1731/1732 yielded £1 5s per acre), a regular feature of estate accounts. Ten acres seems to have been the average planting scale, but 1742/1743 accounts record 20 acres.¹⁶⁵ New breeding reservoirs for carp were constructed in the north-eastern section of Old Park (see Chapter 5); in part, perhaps, to alleviate the drainage problem in this area.

Old Park and New Park were separated by no more than a narrow strip of meadowland and already in 1700 they were linked to the garden courts and kitchen garden by private walks and a public lane across intervening meadow and pasture land (see Figure 4.1a and Figure 6.7). Both Parks were visible from the Hall, New Park conspicuously so. Its western perimeter bordered the stretch of Rainworth Water due east of the Hall and east front gardens, and timber felling was influenced by consideration of the impact it would have on prospects from the Hall (see Chapters 4 & 6). Like Wellow Park, both were integrated into Savile's landscaping project through the development of ride networks (Chapter 7). Ease of access would have improved the parks' recreational potential. A 'shooter' was regularly employed by Savile and woodcock are prominent amongst the lists of game sent to London.¹⁶⁶ Wellow Park and New Park are two of the major woodcock habitats cited; by the 1730s partridges and pheasants were being intentionally nurtured in New Park (released perhaps from the Rufford 'mew') and the Baronet almost certainly enjoyed recreational shooting in his parks (see Chapter 8).¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁴ Holt's Estate Accounts, 1700-43, in particular 1731/1732. NA: DD/SR/6/1/2. Fern ashes were used in soap manufacture. Patching (1757), Letter II: 22 July 1755.

¹⁶⁵ Holt's Estate Accounts, 1731/1732 & 1742/1743. NA: DD/SR/6/1/2,13.

¹⁶⁶ The shooter was also responsible for supplying hares, partridges and ducks from the estate. Supply of a number of 'fat capons' every Christmas was a condition of standard Rufford leases, other fowl – geese, turkeys and pullets – were also supplied by Savile's tenants. NA: DD/SR/211/227/154; DD/SR/207/142.

¹⁶⁷ Estate correspondence, in particular NA: DD/SR/211/24/109,154a; for reference to partridges in the mew see NA: DD/SR/211/24/40.

3.4 Management of the Rufford Estate

The extent to which development of the Rufford landscape was a collaborative endeavour is one of the central questions addressed throughout this thesis. Sir George's character and interests were discussed above. This section provides the broader context necessary for such an assessment by introducing other significant personalities (his mother, Madam Barbara Savile, successive stewards, estate gardeners, overseers) who played distinctive roles in the estate's development, and the collective contribution of garden workers and day-labourers.

3.4.1 Madam Barbara Savile

It is generally acknowledged that the estate steward was 'his lord's surrogate... his ambassador to the region in which the estate stood... his master's eyes and ears... his master's voice'.¹⁶⁸ There is strong evidence that at Rufford and Thornhill Sir George's mother, Madam Barbara Savile, might fill this role, a situation not without precedent in an eighteenth-century context but one which, particularly in relation to estate management, has received little sustained academic attention.¹⁶⁹ Personal correspondence between the 7th Baronet and Madam Savile, his sister Gertrude's diaries and the estate correspondence of successive stewards all testify to the strength of the relationship between mother and son, the respect that Sir George paid to his mother's opinions and the competence and readiness with which Barbara Savile acted as her son's proxy in the management of his estates when called upon to do so. 'None to my understanding had greater Reasoning & Parts & none better could apply them', wrote Elmsall to Sir George on learning of Madam Savile's death in July 1734, prefacing his letter with a recognition of the 'great Concerne' he knew it would cause his master: 'I always observed such a mutual affection betwixt your mother & your self'.¹⁷⁰ In a letter of advice from 1716, Madam Savile assured her son that 'your interest has been my cheife consern ever since you were born And

¹⁶⁸ Hainsworth (1992), 108.

¹⁶⁹ Barker & Chalus (1977), 5, 8. McDonagh's case study (2009) of elite Northamptonshire women's engagement with estate improvement is a notable exception but confined to a late eighteenth-century context.

¹⁷⁰ Letter Elmsall to Savile, 9 July 1734. NA: DD/SR/211/3/46a.

I have made it my cheife business to promote your advantage at all times', an assertion supported by Savile's acknowledgement of his mother as 'ye Only Person in ye World I have to Consult with' and the person from whom 'I may reap... Advice & Intelligence of what happens which I am not like to know from others', and amply borne out by the record of her actions.¹⁷¹

Barbara Savile (c.1660-1734) was the second wife of John Savile, rector of Thornhill. Widowed in the first year of her son's inheritance (at the age of about 40), she quickly became a central figure in his household. By 1703 Savile was recording payments for housekeeping expenses to his mother who remained responsible for the domestic management of both Rufford Hall and the London residence in Golden Square until the Baronet's marriage in 1722.¹⁷² Though she continued to visit Rufford after this date – pressed to take advantage of 'Rufford sweet air' to assuage her 'shortness of breath' – her principal home then became Golden Square, which she occupied until her death in 1734.¹⁷³ Barbara Savile was one of the daughters of Thomas Jenison of Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Jenison's profession and the extent of his estates remain uncertain, but in 1721 Gertrude records her mother as being (perhaps through inheritance on the death of 'Grandmother Jenison' in 1706) 'in such circumstances as not to need his [her son's] bounty', and in the late 1720s (if not before) she held property jointly with her sister Isabella Newton in Broadlaw near Kirkleys, Northumberland.¹⁷⁴ The extent to which the sisters personally managed this property remains uncertain; Savile on occasions gave advice relating to its financial administration and Madam Savile received an annual payment of £250 in annuities from her son (perhaps related to her estate) in addition to expenses incurred on Sir George's behalf in the running of Rufford and £100 'for maintenance of ye Coach'.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷¹ Letter Madam Savile to Savile, May 1716 (NA: DD/SR/212/3/2); Letter Savile to Madam Savile, 30 June 1725 (NA: DD/SR/212/3/18).

¹⁷² Savile's Personal Account Book, 1703-8. NA: DD/SR/211/193/1.

¹⁷³ Letters Smith to Savile, 4 & 6 April 1724, 23 July 1726 (NA: DD/SR/211/227/102,101,130); Letter Savile to Madam Savile, 16 September 1726 (NA: DD/SR/212/3/63); *Gertrude's Diaries*.

¹⁷⁴ NA: DD/SR/211/193/1; *Gertrude's Diaries*, October – December 1721, p. 15; Letter Lady Cole to Madam Savile, August 1733 (NA: DD/SR/225/36/1); Letter of Attorney (copy) Barbara Savile to Mrs Isabella Newton, 14 September 1728 (NA: DD/SR/212/3/45).

¹⁷⁵ Letter Savile to Madam Savile, 6 March 1727. NA: DD/SR/212/3/52. Sir George sold property in the north on the Newton family's behalf and the annuity payments referred

Barbara Savile and her children were on intimate terms with their northern relations – the Newtons and, through marriage, Ogles of Kirkley Hall and Weedon, Buckinghamshire. Gertrude's diaries record frequent social contact between the families: Aunt Newton was a regular inmate of the Savile circle at Rufford and London; when 'cousin Newton' died in 1730 bequeathing property to Gertrude, Dr Ogle offered his services as steward; Dr Nathaniel Ogle, army physician under the Duke of Marlborough, was originally named as one of the executors to Sir George's estate and numerous members of the extended family were left bequests by the Baronet.¹⁷⁶

The tone of Barbara Savile's personal correspondence and the content of archival documentation touching upon her biography suggest that she was an energetic and decisive woman, with strong moral convictions, an outspoken nature and the courage to act upon her beliefs when she felt it in the family interest, even at the risk of displeasing her son. Themes of duty (temporal and spiritual), rectitude, public service and self-examination recur in the mother/son correspondence and the Baronet seems to have confided and conversed with his mother upon terms of well-nigh equality and in a manner sustained even during his married life. In a letter of 1721, Madam Savile described herself as the Baronet's 'faithfull Monitor' a service 'which besides my self you have none' and there is evidence to suggest that the temperaments of mother and son were to some extent complementary.¹⁷⁷ Savile's elder sister, Lady Cole, described her brother as having a 'hatred of trouble and busyness' and a willingness to accept considerable financial loss for its avoidance.¹⁷⁸ In several letters to her son Madam Savile urged him against his inclination to challenge the actions of others both in relation to estate affairs and personal relationships: 'Lose not that purchase; be not Supine nor pretend to yourself you want acquaintance' she encouraged him when reluctant to lay himself under obligation, 'Goe on Dear

to were made from his bank account. Letters Savile to Madam Savile, 1 & 7 December 1725. NA: DD/SR/212/3/39-40.

¹⁷⁶ Following Savile's separation from Lady Mary, 'Aunt Newton' was invited to stay at Rufford. Savile's Personal Account Book, 1732-8, entries September 1737 (NA: DD/SR/A4/36); *Gertrude's Diaries*, June 1731 – January 1732, pp. 229-30; Will (copy) of 7th Baronet, dated 1743 (NA: DD/SR/225/24). Nathaniel Ogle died 1739.

¹⁷⁷ Letter Madam Savile to Savile, 4(6) March 1721. NA: DD/SR/212/3/1.

¹⁷⁸ Letter Lady Cole to Madam Savile, August 1733. NA: DD/SR/225/36/1.

Son & prosper; That in your blessing I may yet find comfort'.¹⁷⁹ A further example is provided by correspondence from 1725, the year Savile's father-in-law stood trial for public embezzlement. Madam Savile openly expressed her outrage at what she perceived to be the dishonest and 'treacherous' character of several members of the Pratt family and challenged her son's complaisance about the security of his wife's marriage portion. Her son, though acknowledging the validity of many of her accusations, in particular the 'vanity' of Madam Pratt and her want of 'any Talent to Reflect upon herself', urged that 'if That Cold Ceremony is not kept up, it will be attended with Violent and worse Consequences' and exhorted his mother that 'A fair discharge of our own Duty to whomsoever we have to deal with throwing in a sufficient overpluss of Tenderness into ye Scales of Forbearance and Beneficence will always prove ye Best Policy'.¹⁸⁰

More generally, however, moral advice was delivered in a contrary direction and the 7th Baronet acknowledged the integrity of his mother's 'veneration for Christianity'.¹⁸¹ Like her son's, this seems to have assumed a staunchly protestant character: Gertrude speaks of her mother's positive prejudice towards 'Desenters'.¹⁸² That such beliefs could directly affect estate management is well illustrated by a letter of May 1716 from Barbara Savile to her son, referenced by the latter 'Good Advice & Proposals'.¹⁸³ In this long, closely scripted text Madam Savile enjoined that her son's good fortune – 'a Large Estate' but 'what was yet kinder' that God 'gave you not up to ye temptations of it' 'many prospects of Death... recoverd from' having given 'you remembrances of his power & mercy' – made it incumbent upon him, in 'duty and interest', to 'have God Worshipd in reverence & Truth in your family'. Drawing attention to recent lease renewals which had augmented Savile's total rental income by of order £1,000 she urged that such 'enlargement of your

¹⁷⁹ Letter Madam Savile to Savile, 4(6) March 1721. NA: DD/SR/212/3/1.

¹⁸⁰ Letters exchanged between Madam Savile and Savile, June 1725 – March 1726. NA: DD/SR/212/3.

¹⁸¹ Letter Savile to Madam Savile, 18 February 1726. NA: DD/SR/212/3/27.

¹⁸² *Gertrude's Diaries*, 15 October 1729, p. 189. Savile referred to 'the unnatural disaffection to our Protestant Government' spread amongst the clergy as partly responsible for 'a great weight upon my Spirit' when disposing of an advowson. Letter (draft) Savile to Elmsall, 29 June 1731. NA: DD/SR/211/3/107b.

¹⁸³ Letter Madam Savile to Savile, May 1716. NA: DD/SR/212/3/2.

power pleades for your gratitude... by Works of Charity'; namely, 'to imploy the Tenth part of your encreased Estate in Charitable uses' including the employment of a 'Grave Worthy Clergyman' at Rufford. In 1720 appointment of a 'University Scholar' was being considered and by 1722 there was a regular chaplain, Mr Jackson, reading prayers at Rufford.¹⁸⁴ Numerous instances of small charitable services, particularly of an educational character, are recorded in Sir George's accounts and correspondence;¹⁸⁵ on a larger scale, the Baronet gifted regular support to London's new medical institutions. In 1722, he paid an annual subscription of £2 10s to 'ye Infirmary in Petty France, Westminster', which by 1725 had risen to £10 and was assigned to the 'Infirmary in Chapel Street', its relocated site.¹⁸⁶ Though the records are incomplete, these donations almost certainly continued throughout the Baronet's life and at least from 1732 were also made to St George's Hospital, Lanesborough House near Hyde Park. In his Will, Savile bequeathed £100 to St George's Hospital to carry on 'its charitable designs' and an equivalent sum both to the 'Publick Infirmary in James St Westminster' and the Foundling Hospital, the latter concerned more particularly with the poor and destitute.¹⁸⁷

In her letter of 1716 Madam Savile prefaced the advice given for her son's 'spirituall benefitt' with a recognition of what she had already achieved for his 'temporall benefitt': 'I bless God I have had success in my endeavours to your great profit both in advancing your yearly Income, The Sale of Woods, and other bargaining'. Privileged women of the period were tutored in the exercise of power – 'To manage well a great Family', acknowledged Richard Steele in 1710, 'is as worthy an Instance of Capacity, as to execute a great Employment' – and there is considerable evidence to support the conclusion that Madam Savile's self-assessment was true.¹⁸⁸ The effective government of servants, in particular,

¹⁸⁴ For discussion of potential candidates with reference to Madam Savile's wishes (NA: DD/SR/211/224/47); for subsequent appointment (NA: DD/SR/211/227/13).

¹⁸⁵ Savile expressed 'Charity and Good moralls' as 'the Distinguishing Essence of Christianity' (NA: DD/SR/211/3/107b). Examples include quarterly payments of 12s for 'teaching 6 poor children to read' at Rufford (NA: DD/SR/A4/28); payment of £20 'Bountie' to the School Master at Thornhill (NA: DD/SR/211/4/61); payments to Rufford's 'poor' at Christmastime (NA: DD/SR/211/24).

¹⁸⁶ NA: DD/SR/211/192/2.

¹⁸⁷ NA: DD/SR/A4/38; DD/SR/225/24.

¹⁸⁸ Bond, ed. (1987), vol. 2, p. 444.

had long been seen as an essential female duty and Barbara Savile's skill as a judge of character seems to have been relied upon by her son – it was she, for example, who provided recommendations regarding suitable candidates for the position of steward at Rufford and on occasions interviewed the applicants (see Section 3.4.2).¹⁸⁹ Although not in favour of appointing an attorney as steward, she recognised the importance of legal acumen in estate management. When in 1713 a 'designed cheat' on the Rufford Estate caused county talk, she urged her son to challenge his steward George Burden's 'softness' and encourage him to a more active defence of Savile's rights.¹⁹⁰ The details of the case go unrecorded in the Savile Archives, but in 1718 when Burden was examined upon his 'Depositions' to the court at Wakefield, he subsequently addressed a full account of his answer to Madam Savile.¹⁹¹ The latter praised Thomas Smith's handling of legal disputes and in her son's absence it was to her that Smith looked for authorisation to approach local magistrates on his master's behalf.¹⁹² Though shrewdly reticent concerning her knowledge of estate finances and resources when called upon to give her own evidence at a legal hearing over inheritance dues in 1720, there is evidence that she kept parallel account books for Thornhill and advised Elmsall as to 'ye [recording] METHOD' he should adopt.¹⁹³ Her detailed knowledge of Savile's profit margins in 1716 points to a similar familiarity with Rufford estate accounts and in 1733, when Savile applied to Elmsall for details of a past survey of the Rufford Estate carried out by George Hogg [Yorkshire estate servant] and Thomas Smith [Rufford steward], he was informed that 'Madam Savile had he believe the Field Book [recording the value of 'every individual Close by the Acre'] to pursue'.¹⁹⁴ In the early 1720s it was Madam Savile rather than Elmsall or the Baronet who commissioned Joseph Dickenson of Elmsall to survey in Yorkshire various 'lordships of land for her

¹⁸⁹ Vickery (1998), 128; Letter Madam Savile to Savile, 4(6) March 1721 (NA: DD/SR/212/3/1); *Gertrude's Diaries*, 26 August 1728, p. 132; Barbara Savile's correspondence re seeking servant references (NA: DD/SR/211/440).

¹⁹⁰ Letter Madam Savile to Lady Cole, 21 March 1713. NA: DD/SR/211/227/96.

¹⁹¹ NA: DD/SR/211/54.

¹⁹² Letter Smith to Savile, 9 February 1717. NA: DD/SR/211/227/81.

¹⁹³ NA: DD/SR/225/3/1; Letter Elmsall to Savile, 8 July 1717 (NA: DD/SR/211/2).

¹⁹⁴ Letter Elmsall to Savile, 21 December 1733. NA: DD/SR/211/3/59.

sons use'.¹⁹⁵ The work proved unsatisfactory to the lady and the contents of a subsequent letter to Sir George disputing payments highlights Madam Savile's shrewd, feisty nature. On receiving Dickenson's work she had first directed Smith to check it against prior surveys, and in the light of his comments found fault:

Lady [Madam Barbara] Savile refusing to pay when the maps were given in, by reason the person imployed to draw the maps... had contracted Brearley, Stanton... into a smaller compass than she liked of... [and she] had rather have it done by the same scale that Yealand map was drawn by.¹⁹⁶

The maps were redrafted and again carried to Rufford. This time a downpour on the road resulted in a 'damaged Coat of Arms', and, as Dickenson reported, Madam Savile 'sends them [the carriers] off with angry words'.¹⁹⁷ Barbara Savile's dealings with wood chapmen were equally forthright and yet more extensive (see Section 6.3). Furthermore, Sir George seems to have enlisted his mother's assistance in the negotiation of wood contracts even when his presence at Rufford made it in other respects redundant. In a letter of 1718 Smith made reference to a memory shared by mother and son of when 'Mr Hayford and Mr Watts concluded ye Bargain [for cordwood] at Xmas in ye Dining room at Rufford at about Two o'clock in ye morning' and the subsequent 'caution' both madam and master issued to him not 'to take Down trees that have bark on before ye season of peeling'.¹⁹⁸

Archival documents suggest that Madam Savile's direct engagement in Rufford estate management was most pronounced prior to her son's marriage although evidence extends throughout the duration of Smith's stewardship (1712-28). Barbara Savile held Smith in high esteem and was on close and familiar terms with the family more generally: Madam Savile and Smith exchanged correspondence relating to public affairs (e.g. George I's speech on opening parliament in 1718), personal concerns, as well as estate related

¹⁹⁵ Letter Joseph Dickenson to Savile, 1 July 1728. NA: DD/SR/218/1/34.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁸ NA: DD/SR/211/245.

business; Smith's daughter Mary was Madam Savile's personal maid and confidant, and on occasions scribed her mistress's correspondence. Madam Savile, however, clearly engaged with the estate employees and tenants more widely. In 1712 Burden reported to his master that 'The millers complaine for want of fuel & say Mrs Savile told them they should have some', and that widows from amongst his Wellow tenantry had been to the woodtenter there to ask if Madam Savile had left permission for them to gather sticks.¹⁹⁹ In November 1718 when 'Wellow Damme' was drained it was to Madam Savile that a full account of the carp stock was sent including a detailed list of neighbouring landowners to whom fish were to be gifted (see Section 5.1.4). While the letter from Smith which contained this report is addressed on the envelope to George Savile, it begins 'Madam' and refers to Sir George in the third person until an addendum is reached which is addressed directly to the Baronet. It is the division of contents that is particularly notable: the body of the letter concerns Rufford estate management; the additional note to the Baronet contains no more than an account of the performance of his fox hounds.²⁰⁰ On occasions this complex three way communication between son, mother and steward might lead to conflicting directions and leave the steward in considerable difficulty. In October 1722, for example, when Savile in London delivered instructions for the construction of otter grates, Smith responded in some distress that:

...we have not any more wood for Grates those Great Grates Swallow abundance and Madam Savile has Doubled orders that not a Stick be Cutt on any account any where. Your bridges, park fences, Laths for your buildings &c all want as well as ye wood for your own Designes which Cannot be got without Leave and order.²⁰¹

It seems probable, given the relationship between Smith and Madam Savile, that at the time of responding to Sir George's letter Smith was acting upon prior instructions and Madam Savile was no longer available for direct consultation.

¹⁹⁹ Letter Burden to Savile, 26 January 1712. NA: DD/SR/211/435.

²⁰⁰ Letter Smith to Madam Savile, 26 November 1718. NA: DD/SR/211/227/68.

²⁰¹ NA: DD/SR/221/75.

There is more limited evidence for Madam Savile's engagement with the specifically design dimension of landscaping at Rufford, though sufficient to accord her a minor role in this area of estate improvement, particularly in the early years of her son's inheritance (see Section 4.3.2). While large-scale landscaping has traditionally been presented as a male-dominated world and Rufford may simply reflect this understanding, as Bending has emphasised, women's contributions were often not of a character to be recorded in estate correspondence and opinions and directions may have been directly communicated to those involved in Rufford's pleasure gardens during the course of extended residences.²⁰²

3.4.2 Stewards at Rufford and Thornhill

Savile's estates in Yorkshire, Nottinghamshire and Ireland (acquired, 1722) functioned as independent economic units and though there was some pooling of expertise and resources between Thornhill and Rufford, the estates were administered separately. Table 3.3 lists the names and dates of service of successive stewards employed at Rufford and Thornhill.

The broad spectrum of responsibilities with which these men were invested is well documented in the detailed reports of estate proceedings which they were obliged to prepare during Savile's absences from Rufford and by occasional defensive statements submitted to Savile when chastised for neglect. When, for example, William Matthew's correspondence was judged by the Baronet 'Very Defective and no Answer to my Last',²⁰³ he assured Savile that:

I Employ my time as after every Morning I go Early very Constantly into the Stables & See ye Horses ye yard Garding [garden] & Hop Ground & takne care of then I goe to ye woods or Tenanns which Business calls never omitting... my accounts I keep in as much forwardness as I can possibly posting to my Leager once a week or Fortnight and if I live they shall be Ready by ye first of July as your Honour requires them... Ye last thing I doe before I goe up Stars to Bed I goe to ye Stable & yard to see it allthings are well.²⁰⁴

²⁰² Bending (2013), 3.

²⁰³ *Verso* of Letter Matthew to Savile, 7 April 1729. NA: DD/SR/211/58/11.

²⁰⁴ Letter Matthew to Savile, 19 April 1729. NA: DD/SR/211/58/10.

Table 3.3: Sir George Savile's stewards at Rufford and Thornhill, 1700-1743.

Dates	Steward	References (all NA)
RUFFORD		
1700 – 1712	George Burden (born c.1670)	DD/SR/225/3/1; DD/SR/221/54.
1712 – 1728	Thomas Smith (born c.1673; left Savile's service (undischarged) August 1728, died 6 July 1729)	DD/SR/211/227; DD/SR/225/3/1; DD/SR/211/6; DD/SR/211/58/2.
November 1728 – 1729 (Matthew absconded. Discharged for 'misconduct' Michaelmas 1729)	William Matthew	DD/SR/A4/35; DD/SR/6/1/1; DD/SR/211/440; DD/SR/211/58.
	NB. Joshua Mann was hired as under-steward in September 1728 (a month before Matthew). He had left Savile's service by July 1730.	
October 1729 – July 1730	William Batty	DD/SR/A4/35.
July 1730 – June 1741	George Holt	DD/SR/A4/35; DD/SR/6/1/1-13; DD/SR/211/24.
June 1741 – July 1743	William Webster	DD/SR/6/1/12-13.
July 1743 – 1761+	George Holt returned	DD/SR/6/1/14-29.
THORNHILL		
November 1700 – May 1711	Theophilus Shelton	DD/SR/225/3/1; DD/SR/211/252.
April 1711 – c.1740	William Elmsall (born c.1670; died Nov 1740)	DD/SR/ 211/2; DD/SR/225/3/1; Gertrude Savile diary entry 16-19 November 1740.
c.1740 +	Raph Elmsall	DD/SR/211/333.

And this was during a brief period when an under-steward was employed at Rufford (see Section 3.4.3). That Savile also expected a working knowledge of the law is supported by his wish to appoint an attorney to the Rufford stewardship when in 1720 Smith expressed a wish to step down.²⁰⁵ On this occasion, however, Madam Savile emphatically opposed her son's decision arguing that a London man would be 'ignorant of Country affaires which is necessary knowledge in that post at Rufford'.²⁰⁶ Notably, George Burden and Thomas Smith were Nottinghamshire men – the former came from Mansfield, the latter Worksop – and probably also William Batty who was recruited by Sir George 'in the country'.²⁰⁷ William Matthew was born in Bedfordshire.²⁰⁸ George Holt had family in Essex.²⁰⁹

Of the prior expertise brought by Savile's stewards to the job, direct evidence is limited to Matthew at Rufford and Elmsall at Thornhill. Matthew had been an excise man and in his letter of application (1728) he argued his suitability for the 'Managing an Estate to the Satisfaction of any Gentleman' on the grounds that excise work had made him:

Conversant with Gentlemen's Stewards and Farmers... [had enabled him] to be serviceable... [and given him] Opportunitys of Instructing Persons in Surveying Land and Measuring Timber & Bord &c. & being apploy'd too for my advice in althings belonging to Husbandry.²¹⁰

Sir Rowland Alstons of Odell, Bedfordshire, fully endorsed this view when applied to by Madam Savile for a character reference, adding that Matthew 'writes a good hand, understands accounts well... [and] is sober'.²¹¹ William Elmsall entered Savile's service in 1711 from a similar position held for Lady Frances Leicester at her Tabley Estate, Cheshire, and during his time at Thornhill

²⁰⁵ Rufford steward correspondence references numerous instances of steward-JP exchanges over poaching incidents, distraint for rent and claims of domicile.

²⁰⁶ NA: DD/SR/212/3. Catalogue entries in the Sheffield Archives suggest that Savile's Yorkshire steward, William Elmsall, was trained as an attorney. *Diary of William Elmsall of Thornhill, 1708-40*. SA: BGM/183.

²⁰⁷ NA: DD/SR/225/3/1; DD/SR/211/227/49; *Gertrude's Diaries*, 26 June 1730, p. 203.

²⁰⁸ NA: DD/SR/211/440.

²⁰⁹ NA: DD/SR/211/24/2.

²¹⁰ Letter Matthew to Madam Savile, 21 September 1728. NA: DD/SR/211/440.

²¹¹ Letter Sir Rowland Alstons to Madam Savile, 20 October 1728. NA: DD/SR/211/440.

was also responsible for the Yorkshire affairs (chiefly mining royalties) of successive Dukes of Leeds, and from 1726 the stewardship of Lord Cardigan's Yorkshire estates near Wakefield, six miles from Thornhill.²¹² Indirect evidence strongly suggests that Smith had received prior training as a land surveyor: he worked for Savile in that capacity both at Rufford and Thornhill; was on occasions requested to do so for neighbouring landowners; had wanted to leave Savile's service in 1720 in order to train one of his sons in that profession.²¹³ He also had a marked interest and aptitude for landscaping (see Chapters 4 & 7). Madam Savile highlighted Smith's legal abilities, praising his defence of Savile's interests during complex legal disputes over estate boundaries and rights of settlement.²¹⁴

With regards the social rank of these men, that they were at least of lower gentry status can be inferred from the security of £1,000 they were required to provide on entering service.²¹⁵ Matthew stood to inherit his father's Bedfordshire estate worth £700 or more.²¹⁶ Smith husbanded land in his own right in Worksop but there is no evidence that his holdings were significant. In February 1724 he wrote to Savile expressing uneasiness about his future and dissatisfaction about the discomfort of 'my Living parted from my wife... keeping Two Separate familys', requesting that Savile grant him 'some small farm house or Concern to be in when I am Superannuated paying for it & not have a Settlement To Seek at 60 or 70 Years of Age'.²¹⁷ He died in debt on a farm leased from Savile in Kirton with no more than '6 Mairs [mares] 2 Horses 4 Bease [beasts] in Stall & 5 in ye yards Cattle very good' and various crops including 'the most fine Crop of Corne' on Kirton Field.²¹⁸

²¹² Tabley Papers, Correspondence, John Rylands Library, Manchester, quoted in Hainsworth (1992), 28. Elmsall explained to Savile that his duty for the 1st Duke of Leeds (*d.* 1712) occurred soon after Michaelmas and that his availability to serve the Thornhill Estate would be broadly restricted to spring and summer. Letter Elmsall to Savile, 15 April 1711. NA: DD/SR/211/2.

²¹³ NA: DD/SR/211/227/9,43-4,46-7; DD/SR/218/1; DD/SR/212/3/1.

²¹⁴ Letter Madam Savile to Savile, 4(6) March 1721. NA: DD/SR/212/3/1.

²¹⁵ Detail included in Madam Savile's letter to referees, 12 October 1728. NA: DD/SR/211/440.

²¹⁶ Letter Sir Rowland Alstons to Madam Savile, 20 October 1728. NA: DD/SR/211/440.

²¹⁷ Letter Smith to Savile, 24 February 1724. NA: DD/SR/211/227/109.

²¹⁸ Letters Matthew to Savile, 14 December 1728 & 7 July 1729. NA: DD/SR/211/58/29,2.

In an era dominated by rank, the regional status of estate servants was enhanced, if not determined, by that of their employers and the 'psychic' rewards for serving as steward to a wealthy baronet 'whose estates were as vast as Sir George Savile's, must have been very real'.²¹⁹ When in 1728 a vacant post at Rufford (together with a 'Gentleman of the horse') was advertised in the London 'News', Gertrude Savile recorded astonishment at the level of the response: their London house, Golden Square, where Madam Savile was interviewing the candidates on behalf of her son, was 'like a Fair', 'such a multitude here as was surprizing. I believe there was 30 before I went out'.²²⁰ The economic incentives were, however, less obvious; though not uncompetitive for the period.²²¹ Hainsworth quotes £40 as a common salary c.1700.²²² At Rufford, Burden was paid £30 per annum up to 1712; in 1728 Matthew agreed to £40 per annum plus 5s per week board wage in Savile's absence; Holt's starting salary in 1730 was £50 rising to £60 the following year, a level maintained until after the 7th Baronet's death though by 1760 it had risen to £90.²²³ In addition, Holt was paid 6s per week board wages, and when Elizabeth Holt (possibly his wife) was in residence in 1730/1731, she was paid 3s per week.²²⁴ Burden was not paid a board wage and appears to have resided in Mansfield during his stewardship.²²⁵ Elmsall, who for the management of Savile's Thornhill Estate was paid £62 per annum in 1716, draws attention to an anomaly in Savile's stewardship covenant in this period.²²⁶ He was liable for any loss of bills/money returned (to Savile and his bankers) caused by

²¹⁹ Hainsworth (1992), 31.

²²⁰ *Gertrude's Diaries*, 26 August 1728, p. 132. The newspaper in question is not specified, but in 1715 Savile had a range of London papers regularly sent down to Rufford: *London Gazette*, *Evening Post*, *Flying Post*, *Daily Courant*, *St James Evening Post*. NA: DD/SR/212/6/5.

²²¹ Madame Savile questioned the competence of lawyers drawn to stewarding in the face of the comparatively low financial returns offered. Letter Madam Savile to Savile, 4(6) March 1721. NA: DD/SR/212/3/1.

²²² Hainsworth (1992), 31.

²²³ NA: DD/SR/A4/26,30,35; DD/SR/211/440; DD/SR/6/1/2-14,28a.

²²⁴ NA: DD/SR/6/1/2.

²²⁵ NA: DD/SR/211/54.

²²⁶ By 1737 Elmsall was receiving £80 per annum: £65 for administering Savile's 'inherited estate'; £15 for 'Brierly and new purchased land'. A Bailiff was also employed at Thornhill at an annual salary of £30: £24 10s for 'inherited estate'; £4 10s for new acquisitions. Letters Elmsall to Savile, 29 January 1716 & 12 January 1737. NA: DD/SR/211/6; DD/SR/211/4/61.

‘accident/robbery &c.’, whereas ‘All or most stewards’ in the area were either issued with a ‘Letter of Attorney; exempting them from accidents’ or paid ‘a very considerable Sallary’ – the figure of £150 per annum on a £2,000 rental estate in Stockton was quoted – to cover for any loss incurred through accidents.²²⁷ Given that Savile promptly authorised a letter of exemption for Elmsall, it might be expected that he acted likewise on behalf of his Rufford stewards.

Estate stewardship became increasingly professionalised in the course of the eighteenth century. Edward Laurence’s *The Duty of a Steward* (1727) was arguably the first comprehensive treatise on the subject and by the late 1700s the familial paternalism that characterised master/steward relationships during the century’s opening decades had been replaced by a more narrowly economic basis for employment (see Section 2.2.2). *The Duty* was purchased by the Baronet in April 1728 (cost 7s) and there is a notable difference both in the style of Rufford steward correspondence and in the presentation of estate accounts during the 7th Baronet’s ownership.²²⁸ By 1730 Rufford accounts had acquired a standard form and Holt’s correspondence reflects a business-like clarity which stands in marked contrast to Smith’s inclusion of emotional reflections and advice of a personal nature. The difference might be due as much to personality and competence as professional developments, however, and the paternalism which characterised the late Stuart period is apparent throughout Savile’s dealings with his stewards. Savile and Smith exchanged solicitudes about each other’s health; Smith’s daughter was Madam Savile’s personal maid; two of his sons periodically assisted at Rufford (see Section 3.4.3), and when one precipitately left for London it was the 7th Baronet who assumed responsibility for tracking him down; Smith leased farms at Ompton and Kirton from Savile and jointly held demesne hop ground.²²⁹ Patronage was yet more generously bestowed on the Elmsall family. In 1728 Savile presented Elmsall with engraved silver plate costing over £30 – which the latter recognised as ‘a demonstrative

²²⁷ Letter Elmsall to Savile, 12 January 1737. NA: DD/SR/211/4/61.

²²⁸ Savile’s Personal Account Book, 1727-32. NA: DD/SR/A4/35.

²²⁹ The rental value of Smith’s holdings is not known, but Kirton farm, to which he retired, was substantial enough to have a dovecote, barn and kiln. Smith attributed his son (Robert’s) departure to pursuit of a woman. Smith-Savile correspondence (NA: DD/SR/211/227); *Gertrude’s Diaries*; disputes over hop ground management (NA: DD/SR/211/53).

signall to all my friends and visitors, of the honour I have of your Respects' – and subsequently helped forward the careers of at least three of Elmsall's four sons.²³⁰ In 1729, the Baronet made 'interest for a Searcher's Place' for Edward, Elmsall's eldest son, within the London office in which he worked, and by 1722 the latter was being regularly remunerated for keeping Savile's bank books and managing the Baronet's bills of exchange.²³¹ The third son, Henry, who served as executor to Savile's Will, was made parson at Thornhill in 1732 thanks to Savile's 'so kinde and great Benefaction', and Raph, the youngest, succeeded his father as Thornhill steward.²³² Raph, Edward and Henry were all left legacies of £100 at Savile's death.²³³ Savile's relationship with the Elmsall family draws attention to another feature of stewardship highlighted by Hainsworth: landowners' desire for continuity of service. At Rufford, Smith was retained even when illness caused prolonged periods of absence and Holt served for almost 30 years. The extent to which this paternalistic framework and security of service influenced the manner in which managerial decisions were taken at Rufford is examined in subsequent chapters.

3.4.3 Rufford under-stewards and overseers

Although the position of under-steward is not formally registered in Rufford estate documents before 1728, Smith repeatedly urged upon Savile his sense of being overstretched and in need of a permanent assistant, and intermittently relied upon the aid of his sons: Robert and Tomy. Both seem to have been competent book-keepers. In January 1716, for example, Smith excused

²³⁰ Letter Elmsall to Savile, 4 September 1728 (NA: DD/SR/211/6); Savile's Personal Account Book, 1727-32 (NA: DD/SR/A4/35).

²³¹ Recorded payments vary: in 1722, £5 5s; 1727, £6 5s; 1737, £18. Savile's Personal Account Books, 1722-7 (NA: DD/SR/211/192/2); 1732-8 (NA: DD/SR/A4/36); Letter Elmsall to Savile, 26 April 1729 (NA: DD/SR/211/6). By 1714 Elmsall's second son was also in London, preparing to work alongside his paternal uncle, a merchant in St Petersburg. Letter Elmsall to Savile, 27 April 1714. NA: DD/SR/211/2.

²³² NA: DD/SR/225/24. Henry was educated at Charterhouse and Cambridge before taking orders. Letters Elmsall to Savile, 15 April 1711, 27 June 1731, 28 October 1732 & 13 May 1733. NA: DD/SR/211/2; DD/SR/211/3/107a,78,71. Also NUM: Pl C37/1. In 1728 Elmsall reported that his son Raph was collecting rents for Lord Gower (no details given as to which estate); by 1732 Raph was helping his father in the management of Lord Cardigan's estates and possibly also at Thornhill. Letter Elmsall to Savile, 12 August 1728 (NA: DD/SR/211/6); Wake & Webster, eds (1971), 137.

²³³ NA: DD/SR/225/24.

anticipated delays in presenting accounts, explaining that the sudden departure of Robert had left him 'in very great Distress in Respect of Drawing up ye Last years accounts which he had Just begun & knows readyer than my Self by reason I was So much a broad & those things & papers his Care & Business'.²³⁴ Robert did not return and two years later the situation had not improved, as Smith's letter of July that year indicates:

The wood Going Down, ye Hay and your other Buisness [sic] requires my Constant attendance so much that twill be Michaelmas before I can finish my Last years Accounts which are not yet begun on. Could I sett Constantly to them I Expect they'd be Two months in Drawing so that if you require them sooner than Michaelmas I must Hire some Help...²³⁵

By the early 1720s Tomy was assisting his father, and during the period 1721-8, when recurrent bouts of illness confined Smith to his home in Worksop, Tomy (then 24) assumed his father's responsibilities at Rufford, for which he received 'salary, board, and horse keeping'.²³⁶ The talents of both father and son were well recognised by Elmsall. When, in 1727, Lord Lonsdale sought a young man 'to be under his steward & so qualify such an one to take the charge upon himself at the old ones demise', Elmsall put Tomy's name forward, and the following year, hearing that both father and son were to leave Savile's service, he at first attempted to forestall the event.²³⁷ At the time, Elmsall was unaware of a severe breach in the relationship between Savile and Smith senior: a dispute over the partnership of a hop yard which prompted Smith to leave Rufford 'undischarge both of his Service & debt'.²³⁸ Despite this, Savile harboured no resentment

²³⁴ Letter Smith to Savile, 30 January 1716 (NA: DD/SR/211/227/84); Robert also served the 1st Duke of Kingston in this period (NA: DD/SR/211/227/57,55).

²³⁵ Letter Smith to Savile, 9 July 1718 (NA: DD/SR/211/227/70); in 1720 Smith reported that he had 'above Sixty [people] to Inspect & In Different places'. NA: DD/SR/211/227/40.

²³⁶ Letter Smith to Savile, 10 January 1728 (NA: DD/SR/211/227/171); intermittent estate correspondence during this period is marked from 'Thomas Smith Junior' (NA: DD/SR/211/227/32,17-20).

²³⁷ Letters Elmsall to Savile, 12 August 1728, 12 January 1729 (NA: DD/SR/211/6); for Smith's encouragement of the appointment see Letter Smith to Savile, 10 January 1728 (NA: DD/SR/211/227/171).

²³⁸ Letters Elmsall to Savile, 25 September & 8 December 1728 (NA: DD/SR/211/6); correspondence between Smith and Savile, 4-19 December 1728 (NA: DD/SR/211/53).

against the lad (a mark of his fair-mindedness), and in 1729 urged Elmsall to put Tomy forward to Lonsdale again. The place being already taken, Smith's son was recommended as 'Clark... in respect to Book keeping &c.' to Colonel Lyddal, the brother of a Yorkshire landowner and acquaintance of Savile, Mr Bright (see Chapter 8).²³⁹

Despite Tomy's help, in 1728 Smith was still insistent that 'a proper man be Imployd to Work with & Command & See that ye Labourers keep working' and following the departure of father and son in the summer of that year, Savile sought to divide the duties of stewardship between two people at Rufford: 'a collecting Steward &c.' and an 'Under=steward to overlook [the] Workmen'.²⁴⁰ Elmsall's recommendations led to the appointment of Joshua Mann in September 1728, his responsibilities being 'to give out ye Corn & have the Care of ye Stables &c: To Overlook Workmen, ye Sale of Wood, ye Barns, Out Houses, Waters, & ye Like'.²⁴¹ Mann had trained as a carpenter, was considered by Elmsall to have 'a pretty good notion both in Mechanick & Mathematicks' (ie. 'Decimal or Vulgar Arithmatick, so as to measure anything readily, and no dobt cold keep such Stable accounts & Graynaries &c'), and despite the limitation that 'he writed but a very indifferent hand' had a 'seeming capacity to apprehend readily & go about any directions': 'could make any knick knack' and might even 'take upon him to weare a Livery occasionally'. Furthermore, he was single and 'not too much pretending'. Prior to the Rufford appointment Mann was employed 'Surveying & Vallewing of Woods for Gentleman', work for which he estimated his earnings as at least £20 per annum, a wage below which he refused to be engaged.²⁴² Savile agreed a starting salary of £20, rising to £30 after 3 years.²⁴³ The position proved short-lived and terminated with the appointment of George Holt as steward in July 1730.

Smith was under 'such an establish't Character' that despite speculation concerning the grounds of his leaving Rufford, his services were immediately sought by Lord Camarthen (Peregrine Osborne, 2nd Duke of Leeds) at Kiveton. Letter Elmsall to Savile, 5 March 1721. NA: DD/SR/211/2.

²³⁹ Letters Elmsall to Savile, 12 January, 10 February & 27 July 1729. NA: DD/SR/211/6.

²⁴⁰ Letter Smith to Savile, 10 January 1728 (NA: DD/SR/211/227/171); Letter Elmsall to Savile, 12 August 1728 (NA: DD/SR/211/6).

²⁴¹ Savile's Personal Account Book, 1727-32 (NA: DD/SR/A4/35); see also 'Agreement with Joshua Mann', 20 September 1728 (NA: DD/SR/218/1/8).

²⁴² Letters Elmsall to Savile, 12 & 20 August 1728. NA: DD/SR/211/6.

²⁴³ Savile's Personal Account Book, 1727-32. NA: DD/SR/A4/35.

The managerial structure at Rufford changed again in January 1735 with the appointment of a Mr Johnson as ‘overseer’ at a wage of 7s a week (recorded in 1737 as 5s weekly with 3s 6d board and lodgings), responsible for supervising Rufford day-labourers.²⁴⁴ In July 1737 Johnson left Savile’s service ‘to be Book keeper to a Merchant at Hull’.²⁴⁵ A replacement was immediately sought, though, as Holt observed, finding a ‘proper person... that will take care and Understand that work be done’ – hard landscaping, wood work, construction and water management – was challenging.²⁴⁶ A few weeks later Holt identified ‘a young man at Mansfield who was servant to Mr Mompesson in Lincolnshire’ and seemed willing to fill the post ‘at something Less wages than Johnson had’.²⁴⁷ In August, a Mr Richard Johnson was taken on as Rufford overseer at a daily rate (‘no meat’) of 8d per day.²⁴⁸ He was still in Savile’s service in 1742 when the archival record documenting his services (the labourers’ fortnightly payment books) ends, though by this date his salary had risen to 10d per day.²⁴⁹

During at least part of Savile’s ownership a husbandman was employed at Rufford to oversee male and female day-labourers engaged principally in ‘mowing Grass, making Hay and dressing the Hay ground’. In the accounting year 1731/1732 Joseph Gilbey was paid at an annual rate of £9 for fulfilling this role.²⁵⁰ The labour force employed on this seasonal work consisted of individuals who at other times of the year were employed on ‘sundry improvements’ and are discussed in more detail in Sections 3.4.5 & 3.4.6.

3.4.4 Rufford gardeners

With the exception of a single reference in 1718 to ‘Old West ye Gardiner... who formerly Livd here’, the identity and terms upon which Savile’s head gardener was employed go unrecorded in estate documentation prior to 1729.²⁵¹ An entry

²⁴⁴ Letters Holt to Savile, 13 January 1735 & 18 July 1737. NA: DD/SR/211/24/85,130.

²⁴⁵ Letter Holt to Savile, 25 June 1737. NA: DD/SR/211/24/128.

²⁴⁶ Letter Holt to Savile, 18 July 1737. NA: DD/SR/211/24/130.

²⁴⁷ Letter Holt to Savile, 23 July 1737. NA: DD/SR/211/24/131.

²⁴⁸ NA: DD/SR/211/362.

²⁴⁹ NA: DD/SR/206/1/136.

²⁵⁰ NA: DD/SR/6/1/2.

²⁵¹ Letter Smith to Savile, 10 December 1718. NA: DD/SR/211/227/63. Burden’s estate accounts detail wage payments but not the recipient’s position. Indirect evidence suggests that Henry Turvey held the position 1707-8 (annual wage £10) and that a new

in Savile's personal account book from September of that year, however, records that 'George Nailor [also spelt Naylor] my gardiner [is to be paid] £1 which I had promised to be added Half yearly to his wages'.²⁵² Nailor's wages are recorded as £18 per annum plus a weekly board wage of 3s 6d in estate accounts from 1730/1731 and throughout the remainder of the 7th Baronet's life.²⁵³ In April 1732 John Wood was taken on as 'under gardiner' at an annual starting salary of £10 (risen to £12 by 1740) and with an equivalent weekly board wage of 3s 6d.²⁵⁴ It was common for landowners to apply to nurserymen for suitably trained gardeners. In 1716, William Leeson, nurseryman of Hodsock Woodhouse, Blyth, took a Derbyshire lad by the name of 'George Naylor' as his apprentice.²⁵⁵ Commercial links between the Rufford Estate and Leeson's Nursery had been established by 1722, the year Leeson died, and in December 1721 a 'new gardinar' was taken on at Rufford when the previous gardener 'married out of the house'; evidence which points to Leeson's apprentice as Savile's future gardener.²⁵⁶ Estate accounts record that both Nailor and Wood were still on the estate payroll in 1761, the former then identified as 'Nurseryman' (£20 per annum), the latter 'Gardiner' (£14), providing a further example of the apparent estate preference for continuity of service.²⁵⁷ On the subject of gardeners' wages, author and nurseryman Stephen Switzer comments disparagingly that gentlemen think 'fifteen or twenty Pound per ann. is extraordinary'.²⁵⁸ Although the £18 paid by Sir George does not appear generous on this scale it was clearly competitive, and remained constant until in 1750

appointment was made in 1712: on June 7, Burden 'paid the Gardeners charges from London to Rufford per Mrs Savile [Madam Savile] agreement with him £1 10s'. Burden's Estate Accounts, 1707, 1708, 1711-12. NA: DD/SR/A4/28-30.

²⁵² NA: DD/SR/A4/35. Comprehensive lists of Rufford estate servants are not available prior to 1730 but Matthew's estate correspondence records Nailor directing garden work at Rufford in mid-January 1729. Letter Matthew to Savile, 15/16 January 1729. NA: DD/SR/ 211/58/36.

²⁵³ NA: DD/SR/6/1/1.

²⁵⁴ NA: DD/SR/6/1/2,11.

²⁵⁵ Harvey (1974), 160-1.

²⁵⁶ Leeson's business may have continued for a while after his death, though by 1730 Leeson's son was head gardener to the Duke of Leeds at Kiveton Park. *Gertrude's Diaries*, December 1721, p. 19; NA: DD/SR/211/227/29,111; Harvey (1974), 160-1.

²⁵⁷ NA: DD/SR/6/1/28a.

²⁵⁸ Switzer (1715), xxiii.

Savile's son, the 8th Baronet, raised payment to £19.²⁵⁹ At Rufford the gardener was a high-ranking house servant; only the steward earned higher wages.²⁶⁰

In *A General Treatise of Husbandry and Gardening* (1724), botanist and horticultural author Richard Bradley (1688-1732) expressed his opinion that the would-be gardener, to train himself for the role, should 'take every convenient Opportunity of conversing with Ingenious men, as well on the Art of Husbandry [which for Bradley encompassed management of woods, hops, arable crops, animals including carp, pigeons and rabbits] as Gardening [kitchen gardening], and to view their different Ways of Practice'.²⁶¹ Gardeners should be 'reasonable Men' with 'Judgement enough to remark the different Effects of different Seasons; the Situation of the Lands they are to cultivate; the Depth and Quality of Soils...' and not 'too positively confirm'd by Custom to make new Experiments'.²⁶² To this list of accomplishments Moses Cook, Stephen Switzer and Batty Langley added mathematical competence – a facility with 'a Rule and pair of Compasses' – an expectation shared by at least some landowners.²⁶³ Lord Bingley's gardener at Bramham Park, Yorkshire, was baldly criticised in 1728 for the 'extraordinary expense' he had caused his master, the latter being forced to hire additional staff 'to doe the work of a gardener you was incapable of' which, to Bingley's mind, included 'drawing the Common Lines of a draught or at least the Working one... as well as the bringing up of a Cucumber... your principal Talent as to gardening'.²⁶⁴

There are no extant archival documents recording either Savile's expectations of his gardener or the latter's regular schedule of activities. Further, references in steward estate correspondence of the character 'Gardener's things

²⁵⁹ NA: DD/SR/211/357. Deane & Cole (1993, pp. 18-24) draw attention to the existence of wide regional variations in both wage levels and trends for craftsmen and labourers in eighteenth-century England, though comprehensive data is lacking for the Midlands and East Anglia.

²⁶⁰ From 1729 the annual salary of Savile's Keeper was £17 10s and 'a green coat & capp', but a significant proportion of this wage (Smith considered half in 1720) was expended on the board of Savile's huntsman and wages and board of an assistant. NA: DD/SR/6/1/1; DD/SR/211/227/45.

²⁶¹ Bradley (1724), vol. 1, p. 169.

²⁶² *Ibid.*, 2.

²⁶³ Switzer (1718), vol. 1, pp. xxiii (quotation), xxxi; Cook (1676); Langley (1726).

²⁶⁴ Letter Book of Robert Benson, Lord Bingley, 13 October 1727 – 18 September 1728. West Yorkshire Archive Service (Leeds): Lane Fox Archive 72 Box 134.

is ye Cheif reason of writeing' suggest that successive stewards were the principal conduit of information exchange between the Baronet and his gardener during the former's estate absences (see Chapter 4).²⁶⁵ These letters provide the main documentary evidence for the range of responsibilities assigned to Savile's gardener and the activities he directly engaged in. Relevant extracts are summarised in Table 3.4. Given that much of the gardener's work is likely to have been routine, it is almost certain that his contribution to the Rufford landscape is under-represented by this data. That said, both the range of the gardener's responsibilities and their geographical extent is striking.

The gardener was solely responsible for day-labourers employed in the maintenance (as opposed to construction) of what estate accounts categorise as Rufford's 'garden'.²⁶⁶ Though the area designated by this term when used in accounts goes undefined, it almost certainly extended beyond the kitchen garden. In estate correspondence, the term 'garden' was used to refer both to the kitchen garden and more broadly to the designed landscape framing the Hall which by the 1740s also included extensive ornamental woodland, two major canals, a range of walks, a 'Great Vistoe', planted *parterre* and range of courts adjacent to the house (Chapter 4).²⁶⁷ From estate accounts and receipts it is clear that a regular group of Rufford day-labourers was assigned to this work, for which they were paid on a weekly basis (see Section 3.4.5).²⁶⁸ The numbers involved varied according to the season: in 1730/1731 the number of men employed was 7-8 (8d-10d/day) throughout the year; the number of women ranged from a maximum of 6 (4d/day) in the summer to 0 in the winter.²⁶⁹ Lack of both continuity and consistency in the accounting record prevents comparison of financial outlay on garden labour across the period of Savile's ownership. However, comparison of data for the total expenditure on garden maintenance – labour, seeds, tools etc. – indicates that the outlay roughly trebled

²⁶⁵ Letter Smith to Savile, 29 January 1724. NA: DD/SR/211/227/113.

²⁶⁶ The gardener paid these men directly and was reimbursed by the steward. NA: DD/SR/215/24.

²⁶⁷ Holt's correspondence applies the expression 'New Garden' to the New Wilderness and Great Canal, features defining the outer limits of the landscape designed to frame the Hall. NA: DD/SR/211/24/94.

²⁶⁸ Amongst the male workforce there is no overlap between the names listed within the accounting category 'garden disbursements' and those under 'sundry improvements'.

²⁶⁹ NA: DD/SR/215/24; DD/SR/210/73.

Table 3.4: Principal activities of Rufford gardeners, 1712-1743.

ACTIVITY	REFERENCES (All NA)
<p>In all the following estate work the gardener played a significant role. However, responsibility for many aspects of estate management was shared with the steward and it is rarely possible to establish the precise balance of duties. Furthermore, this changed across the period in relation to the range of works in progress and skills of the individuals concerned. Occasions where the gardener's role seems to have been particularly prominent have been highlighted with an asterix (*).</p> <p>Steward correspondence and full estate accounts form the principal sources of evidence. Although a few letters addressed to Savile by George Burden (in 1708 and 1711) and pre-1712 estate accounts have survived these do not include descriptions of the gardener's responsibilities, details of which begin with Thomas Smith's correspondence in 1712.</p>	<p>Limited to representative examples.</p>
Managing day-labourers:	
(1) In the routine maintenance of the pleasure grounds and kitchen garden	
<p>* The gardener paid (and seems to have been exclusively responsible for) a labour force of, in the summer months, up to 8 men and 6 women, engaged with maintenance (as opposed to construction work) 'in the garden'.</p>	<p>DD/SR/215/24; DD/SR/210/73.</p>
(2) Engaged in 'improvements' across the estate	
<p>Level of responsibility varied. In the summer of 1737, when (briefly) neither overseer nor husbandman were engaged at Rufford, the steward assumed responsibility for the mowers leaving the gardener to direct the activities of the total remaining day-labour force. In this instance (c.29) men engaged in general 'improvements' across the estate in addition to the regular maintenance workers 'in the garden'.</p>	<p>DD/SR/211/24/129; refs cited in Appendix 3.2.</p>
Advising on the development of the pleasure grounds and kitchen garden	
<p>* Horticultural/aesthetic – pruning trees along Black Walk to achieve a whitethorn hedge 'beautifully thick and strong'; sycamores along an avenue to achieve suitably proportioned cone-shaped heads.</p>	<p>DD/SR/211/227/88; DD/SR/211/227/31.</p>
<p>Pragmatic/aesthetic – hard landscaping activities, for example:</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negotiation of the slope of a new east front <i>parterre</i> (designed on two levels), a choice which impinged upon subsequent maintenance. • * The optimum height of walks within ornamental woodland (the 'New Wilderness'); a decision influenced by the condition and preparation of the ground, for which the gardener was responsible. • Construction of the 'Great Canal' trough to adapt the structure for carp husbandry. 	<p>DD/SR/221/227/133. DD/SR/211/227/175. DD/SR/211/24/74.</p>
Arboriculture across the estate	
<p>* Directing sowing, planting and transplanting activities, examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Transplanting young trees from the estate nursery at Snake Ponds to Beech Hill Intack (Old Park) 	<p>DD/SR/211/227/63.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Transplanting semi-mature trees within the estate, for example, limes taken up from Wellow Park on one occasion, on another, limes take from the Old Wilderness to frame a 'Great Vistoe' north from the Hall. More generally, horticultural advice as to the likely viability of such endeavours. ○ Planting and sowing acorns and beech mast in the wildernesses (pleasure grounds), Beech Hill (plantation) and the parks. ○ * Ground preparation for planting 	DD/SR/A4/28; DD/SR/211/227/110; DD/SR/211/227/147a. DD/SR/211/227/63; DD/SR/211/58/29. DD/SR/211/227/175.
*Pruning activities, examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Borders of rides 	DD/SR/211/227/7.
Management of ponds	
Redistribution of fish about the estate and even delivery to neighbouring landowners.	DD/SR/211/58/29; DD/SR/211/227/68; DD/SR/211/24/85.
Design of 'troughs' so that estate water structures would be suitable for carp management.	DD/SR/211/24/74.
With the dogs 'hunting' otters.	DD/SR/211/227/67.
Directing seed and plant purchases to stock both the kitchen garden and wider estate	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • * Purchasing (and on occasions commissioning Sir George or his mother to supply from London) seeds and plant stock for the kitchen garden and pleasure grounds. • Directing the day-labourers (men and women) regularly engaged to gather beech mast and acorns. 	DD/SR/211/227/48; DD/SR/211/227/46; DD/SR/211/227/118. DD/SR/211/227/63.
Specific areas of horticultural expertise related to the kitchen garden	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • * Stocking of melons, cucumbers and fruit (apricots, peaches, nectarines, gooseberries, cherries, pears, figs, plums) are all specifically mentioned. • In 1751 pineapples are recorded as gifted from the Rufford gardens. The date at which production starts is uncertain. 	DD/SR/211/24/157; DD/SR/211/24/1; DD/SR/211/24/79; DD/SR/211/24/150. DD/SR/212/15/56.
Management of game birds	
* Husbanding partridges for release into the estate landscape	DD/SR/211/227/48; DD/SR/211/227/95.
Management of foxes, in particular, landscape requirements	
* Sowing gorse seed (outside advice concerning seed stocks and planting density had to be sought)	DD/SR/211/227/53.
Brewing	
Overseeing the regulation of the water engine supplying Rufford water tower.	DD/SR/211/227/124.

between 1713 and 1743, rising from an average of £35 in the first decade to £108 in the last (Table 3.5). The bulk of the increase reflects an augmented labour force.

In addition to managing garden maintenance and general horticultural work – cucumber and melon grounds, flower displays, fruit and vegetable cultivation, seed stocks – the gardener shared responsibility for ‘improvements’ within the wider estate and was therefore called upon, to varying degree, to direct the activities of groups of general day-labourers. The management of Rufford’s tree nurseries and silvicultural activities – sowing, transplanting and pruning – seem to have fallen almost exclusively to his lot; in the maintenance of Savile’s carp reserves and design of gardens and rides, however, evidence suggests that the gardener’s role was more generally subordinate to the steward. Moreover, despite Bingley’s expectations (referenced above) and O’Halloran’s and Henrey’s contention that gardeners on occasions contributed both to the ‘conception’ as well as ‘implementation’ of designed landscapes (Chapter 2), no documentary evidence has been found to suggest that Nailor surveyed at Rufford or drew up design plans (see Chapters 4-7).

3.4.5 Rufford day-labourers

MALE DAY-LABOURERS EMPLOYED IN ‘SUNDRY IMPROVEMENTS MADE TO RUFFORD SEAT’

Appendix 3.2 presents data extracted from labourers’ fortnightly payment books indicating the scale and range of activities undertaken by the workforce and the identity of the individuals involved. The skills of many of those listed seem to have been recognised on an individual level by both Savile and his steward. When, for example, Charles Taylor of Wellow, ‘a pritty Elderly man’ though ‘one of ye handiest and best Labourers we had at Laying Down ye Trough Cross ye New Cannall by whitewalk’ ‘flatly’ refused to back Sir George’s interest in the 1722 election, Smith recorded indignantly: ‘Your honour always treated [him] with a great deall of Civillity’.²⁷⁰ Christopher Blyton and Joshua Reynolds served successively as Savile’s woodtenters (see Section 6.2.5 for discussion of responsibilities). John Blyton (almost certainly Christopher’s son) was paid at a

²⁷⁰ Letters Smith to Savile, 26 February & 31 March 1722. NA: DD/SR/211/227/23,20.

Table 3.5:

Garden disbursements, 1712-1743.

The figures quoted correspond to the total outlay on day-labourers specifically assigned to the garden, seeds, plants, nails, garden tools etc. The annual wages of estate servants – gardener and under gardener – are therefore excluded.

Year	Garden Disbursements (£ s d)	Average (£)	Reference (all NA)
1713	£26 16s 7d		DD/SR/211/229/3
1714	£31 4s 7d		DD/SR/211/229/4
1715	£38 3s 7d		DD/SR/211/229/5
1716	£31 12s 8d		DD/SR/211/229/6
1717	£36 7s 11d		DD/SR/211/229/7
1718	£33 2s 5d		DD/SR/211/229/8
1719	£34 13s 6d		DD/SR/211/229/9
1720	£39 6s 6d		DD/SR/211/229/10
1721	£34 4s 5d		DD/SR/211/229/11
1722 accounting year changes	£26 7s 8d (6 months)	£35	DD/SR/211/229/12
1722/1723	£56 13s 7d		DD/SR/211/229/13
1723/1724	£65 12s 1d		DD/SR/211/229/14
1724/1725	£81 8s 9d		DD/SR/211/229/15
1725/1726	£80 16s 3d		DD/SR/211/229/16
1726/1727	£98 15s 9d		DD/SR/211/229/1
1727/1728	£94 10s 6d		DD/SR/211/250/1
- - -			
1730/1731	£107 8s 7d		DD/SR/6/1/1
1731/1732	£100 4s 4d		DD/SR/6/1/2
1732/1733	£94 15s 6d		DD/SR/6/1/3
1733/1734	£99 16s 7d	£88	DD/SR/6/1/4
1734/1735	£95 9s 9d		DD/SR/6/1/5
1735/1736	£106 15s 6d		DD/SR/6/1/6
1736/1737	£87 17s 11d		DD/SR/6/1/7
1737/1738	£116 17s 2d		DD/SR/6/1/8
1738/1739	£122 12s 11d		DD/SR/6/1/9
1739/1740	£118 10s 5d		DD/SR/6/1/10
1740/1741	£152 17s 5d		DD/SR/6/1/11
1741/1742	£98 16s 8d		DD/SR/6/1/12
1742/1743 * accounting year changes	£159 14s 7d (14 months)		DD/SR/6/1/13
1743/1744	£95 5s 7d (10 months)	£108	DD/SR/6/1/14

marginally higher rate than other day-labourers and was consistently used when more highly skilled carpentry work was required (see Chapters 4 & 5). Estate accounts suggest a distinction between 'workmen' and 'day-labourers'. Joshua Reynolds and the Blytons, father and son, almost certainly belonged to the former category.²⁷¹

The male day-labour force, which grew from an average of 17 in the period 1730-33 to 47 in the years 1739-42, was composed of men drawn from both within and beyond the Rufford Estate (Rufford, Ollerton, Wellow, Eakring, Kneesall, Farnsfield, Ompton, Clipstone, Edwinstowe) and though the numbers fluctuated, the names in any given period were strikingly constant.²⁷² The record of tasks which these men undertook, even in the summary form in which their activities were documented, reflects an impressive breadth of expertise: pruning; planting and transplanting trees; felling timber; cutting and stubbing underwood; thatching; quarrying; construction of ha-has, bridges, buildings, water cascades and a duck decoy; road laying; levelling ground surfaces; draining meadows; pond and canal sealing; ploughing and mowing. Moreover, at any given time a range of activities were generally being taken forward across a widely dispersed area: in the spring of 1742, for example, a group of men were working at Wellow quarry, another planting in Old Park, another at the Mill Dam, another at general 'woodwork' and another 'serving the masons'. This meant that to a significant degree the work must have been self-directed.

The rate at which Rufford male labourers were paid varied both according to the season and type of work. For example, in October 1731 labourers were paid at 1s a day for ditching, 9d a day for 'other work'.²⁷³ One shilling was the standard summer rate but at other times of the year the daily

²⁷¹ Savile frequently employed family members (sometimes several) drawn from successive generations: John Blyton quoted his father's familiarity with Rufford Hall when laying floors; his wife (or mother) was regularly employed in the gardens and grounds. See also the Gleggs: son succeeded father as under-groom; wife (or mother) served in the dairy and Hall; both women served in the gardens. See present chapter, fns 152, 281.

²⁷² Day-Labourers' Fortnightly Accounts, 1729-42. NA: DD/SR/211/358,360-6,368; DD/SR/A4/49/1; DD/SR/206/1/136.

²⁷³ NA: DD/SR/211/364.

rate might fall to 8d.²⁷⁴ Expenditure on ‘workmen and day labourers on sundry improvements’ was a distinct category of estate outlay, distinguished from ‘wood expenses’, ‘harvest expenses’ and ‘hop expenses’ in estate accounts, though all three of the latter categories drew seasonally on individuals within the regular day-labour force.

Cowell (2009) highlights the negative impact of haymaking and harvest work on the progress of landscaping commissions and Table 3.6 summarises representative annual labour demands made by harvest and hop work at Rufford. That the impact of mowing did, on occasions, significantly hold up construction work is borne out by steward correspondence. In July 1718, for example, Smith reported that work at Winkerfield Dam had had to be suspended as ‘thers no Labourers to be Hired at any price till our Mowers have Done which will yet be a Three weeks’.²⁷⁵ Moreover, given that transporting earth, stone, gravel and other hard landscaping materials played a major part in landscaping activities – reflected by the frequency with which ‘leading’, ‘levelling’ and the resourcing of hard core materials were referenced amongst labouring tasks (Appendix 3.2) – Table 3.6, omitting as it does any mention of the availability of horses for major carting activities, underestimates the impact of harvest work. That said, Savile did, on occasions, increase expenditure on labour during harvest time in order to prevent setbacks to a project’s advance. In March 1735, for example, rather than interrupt construction of the ‘Great Canal’ in the ‘New Garden’ – work which required the constant use of Savile’s team of horses – Holt hired in ‘all the Plowing done this Season’.²⁷⁶ The impact of poor weather conditions is a yet more frequently cited cause for delays to landscaping activities. In particular, the effect of rain and frost (which ‘lightened’ the earth) on the condition of paths, as Holt’s letter of March 1735 exemplifies:

The Labourers are Employ’d at Canal, but the weather being so wet, and the Walks so Soft, that sometimes cannot use the Carts on

²⁷⁴ Based on labourers’ fortnightly payments across the period. Seasonal rate changes are sometimes made explicit, examples in NA: DD/SR/211/365,361.

²⁷⁵ Letter Smith to Savile, 9 July 1718. NA: DD/SR/211/227/70.

²⁷⁶ Letter Holt to Savile, 15 March 1735 (NA: DD/SR/211/24/91); see also Letter Smith to Savile, 8 November 1727 (NA: DD/SR/211/227/181).

Table 3.6:

A summary of male harvest and hop work for the accounting year 1734/1735.

(NA: DD/SR/211/361)

The data, which has been extracted from day-labourers' fortnightly payments books across the period, can provide no more than an indication (and almost certainly an underestimate) of the demands that harvest and hop work made on the day-labour force. Both harvest and hop expenses were frequently itemised as discrete payments and identified in estate accounts as distinct from day-labour outlay. That said, for the accounting year 1734/1735 the labourers' payment book is uncharacteristically thorough in its documentation of harvest activity.

NB. The men employed on harvest work formed part of the regular day-labour force employed at Rufford. However, while about half the men employed during the hop harvest are regular labourers, the remainder appear to have been engaged solely for hop work.

Activity	Season	Average Number	Rate
'Mowers and people to help to lead Hay'	July (22 days)	8	1s
'Mowing corn in Old Park'	Early August (3 ½ days)	9	1s
'Labourers at harvest work'	Mid-August (6 days)	15	1s
'Bingmen' engaged in the hop harvest	Early September (11 days)	10	1s
Other activities (other than wood related work) costed as discrete activities in the labourers' books but drawing on the regular labour force			
'Labourers burning Bracan [bracken] in the plain in the Old Park'	Late July/early August (4 ½ days)	10	1s

the walks, which hinders our going on so fast, as if the weather was good.²⁷⁷

A poor harvest might also impact on estate improvements, lack of adequate fodder weakening the condition of available horsepower. After a bad harvest in 1727, for example, Smith reported that the 'poorness of Tenants horses' made it impossible for him to hire assistance for Savile's team and in consequence 'ye work of Removing & Carrying Earth to ye pater [*parterre*] Stands'.²⁷⁸ At Rufford, however, seasonal woodwork was probably the greatest additional factor affecting the development of the more distinctly ornamental elements of the landscape. Whilst less commented upon in estate correspondence (almost certainly because it impacted upon the internal deployment of the labour force rather than its recruitment), routine woodwork consistently engaged 5-6 men, more during the coppicing and planting seasons. During a major felling or planting year such as the winter of 1736/1737, it might require almost the entire workforce for up to two months.²⁷⁹

FEMALE DAY-LABOURERS

Table 3.7 summarises the activities, periods, daily rates and scale on which a stable workforce of women were employed at Rufford. Though the range of tasks for which they were engaged was more restricted than their male counterparts, women's activities were distributed as extensively across the estate, encompassing demesne woodland, parks, meadows and pleasure gardens. But the role of women, though considerable at harvest time, was markedly seasonal even with reference to garden maintenance, and broadly restricted to the spring and summer months. Furthermore, unlike male day-labourers, women moved between 'garden' work and tasks within the wider estate: in 1730/1731, for example, there is considerable overlap between the lists of women working in the gardens in the summer and those dressing the hay and setting corn in the park in the spring.²⁸⁰ In the garden context, where

²⁷⁷ Letter Holt to Savile, 29 March 1735. NA: DD/SR/211/24/97.

²⁷⁸ Letter Smith to Savile, 8 November 1727. NA: DD/SR/211/227/181.

²⁷⁹ Day-Labourers' Fortnightly Accounts, 1736/1737. NA: DD/SR/211/360.

²⁸⁰ Day-Labourers' Fortnightly Accounts, 1730/1731 (NA: DD/SR/211/366); Receipts & Vouchers, 1729-30 (NA: DD/SR/215/24).

Table 3.7: A summary of women's regular day-labour rates and activities.

N.B. In addition to the activities listed below, women were regularly employed 'in the Garden', presumably on general maintenance work. Numbers varied with the season, might drop to zero in the winter but rise to six in the summer months, paid at 4d per day for on average 6 days in the weekly accounting period. (NA: DD/SR/215/24; DD/SR/210/73; DD/SR/206/1/1-136)

Activity	Season	Average Number	Rate	Reference (all NA)
'Dressing the Hay Ground' / 'Dressing the Meadows'	March & April (one record for late August)	10-13 (27 women)	4d; a few 5d	DD/SR/211/358; DD/SR/211/361; DD/SR/211/363; DD/SR/211/364; DD/SR/211/366; DD/SR/206/1/136.
'Sodders of Corn in the Old Park'	April & June			DD/SR/211/358.
'Gathering Stones'	May		4d	DD/SR/211/363.
'Weeders in the Plantations' / 'Weeders in the New Park and Corn in the Old Park' / 'Weeders of corn in the Plantations'	May & June & July	variable	4d	DD/SR/211/366; DD/SR/211/363.
Haymaking	July & August (2 nd crop once listed Sept)	up to 22 regularly	6d	DD/SR/211/362 (typifies the entry in day-labourers' fortnightly account books).
At 'harvest work' / 'at corn' (on occasions alongside men)	August to early September		10d (men 1s)	DD/SR/211/361; DD/SR/211/363; DD/SR/211/364; DD/SR/206/1/136.
Hop pulling	Generally late August/early September (once early October)	up to c.80 regularly	6d	DD/SR/211/358; DD/SR/211/361; DD/SR/211/363; DD/SR/211/364; DD/SR/206/1/136.
'Labourers burning Bracken [bracken] in the Plain in the Old Park' (alongside men)	Late July & August	6 (10)	8d (1s)	DD/SR/211/363; DD/SR/6/1/3-7.
Gathering acorns and beech mast (location not specified) for planting (alongside 3 men/boys)	November	8	4d	DD/SR/211/360; DD/SR/211/227/63; DD/SR/211/24/104; DD/SR/6/1/6.

women worked alongside men, they were paid at a significantly lower rate. In April 1730, for example, while Charles Glegg received 8d a day for garden work, Mary and Elizabeth Glegg (estate correspondence suggests the wives of himself and his son) received only 4d, suggesting that weeding was their primary task, as seems also to have been the case in the nurseries and new plantations.²⁸¹ The highest rate paid for women – 10d per day – was during the late summer corn harvest.

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter has examined the geographical and economic contexts within which Rufford was developed, the composition and character of the workforce available to both realise and subsequently maintain landscaping projects and the makeup and interests of the central characters directing change. Succeeding chapters will discuss in detail the interplay of these various elements in the context of Sir George's primary modes of landscape engagement.

²⁸¹ NA: DD/SR/215/24. Charles Glegg (senior), Rufford under-groom early in Savile's ownership, assisted in 'ye Gardens' when labourers were scarce (1722) and seems to have maintained that role until 1734 when age and ill-health made it untenable: as Holt informed Savile, 'except Your Honour will be so kind as to Continue his Wages, which is 6d a day, he must be reliev'd by the Liberty'. Glegg's son, Charles, took over as under-groom. Letters Smith to Savile, 17 February & 21 February 1722 (NA: DD/SR/211/227/25,24); Letter Holt to Savile, 30 December 1734 (NA: DD/211/24/84); Holt's Estate Accounts, 1730/1731 (NA: DD/SR/6/1/1).

Chapter 4

The Pleasure Grounds at Rufford

If some men would improve themselves, as much as they do their gardens, they would be pretty fellows. *Marquis of Halifax*¹

This chapter focusses on changes to the character and extent of the grounds framing Rufford Hall during the 7th Baronet's ownership: that area of his demesne land conventionally referred to in the period as the 'garden' or 'pleasure-garden',² and as 'pleasure grounds' by modern scholars.³ As studies by historians of designed landscapes amply demonstrate, 'garden' is not a term which allows any precise definition within an eighteenth-century estate context.⁴ Loosely speaking, and as applied in the period and here, it defines the area of in-hand land designed primarily (though by no means exclusively) for display, hospitality, sensory pleasure (sight, smell, sound) and leisurely activity (strolling, sitting, eating), rather than sport or economic return. By the mid-seventeenth century, as John Evelyn observed, fine gardens had become 'a universal luxury' of the English elite;⁵ and as the Marquis of Halifax's wry maxim which heads this chapter indicates, the attention and expense lavished upon them had given gardening a moral and political dimension.

After a brief overview of the key design principles identified by early eighteenth-century garden theorists, historical evidence in the form of steward correspondence, estate (in particular labourers') accounts, maps, sketches and

¹ Marquis of Halifax, *Miscellanys*, published posthumously, quoted in Brown (1989), vol. 3, p. 151.

² John James entitles his garden treatise of 1712, *The Theory of Gardening Where is Fully Handled All that Relates to Fine Gardens Commonly called Pleasure-Gardens*.

³ In relation to Rufford the earliest usage found of the term 'pleasure grounds' is in a survey of 1796 where it is confined to a small area of designed landscape (4.4.00 acres) around the Hall. 'Rufford Demesne Survey'd by J. Young', 1796. NA: DD2000/4.

⁴ Its imprecision was well recognised in the period: 'the word *garden*,' states Walpole, 'has at all times passed for whatever was understood by that term in different Countries'. Walpole (c.1750; facsimile edition, ed. John Dixon Hunt, 1995), 19.

⁵ De Beer, ed. (1955), vol. 2, entry 31 October 1620, pp. 4-5.

fieldwork will be used to establish the development of Rufford's gardens from the late 1710s (when evidence for the Baronet's interest in the laying out of Rufford's pleasure grounds begins) until his death in 1743.

In the course of this analysis particular attention will be given to the landscape practices underpinning the garden's construction, the various contributions of key individuals – Sir George and his immediate family, successive estate stewards, gardeners, designers, craftsmen and the labour force – to its design, and the wider estate and geographical context in which this design was realised. The activities of Rufford day-labourers, for example, had to be co-ordinated across the estate. The orchestration of sightlines from the Hall and its pleasure grounds might impact on the management of timber falls in the parkland beyond. On a broader scale, desired expansion of the pleasure grounds might involve negotiation with tenants or the regional authorities where roads needed to be moved. When material resources were not available on the estate external suppliers needed to be sought and trade relations established. In the case of seed supplies this might require engagement with both provincial and metropolitan markets, and in the account that follows particular attention is paid to the horticultural networks established by Savile and his gardeners, indicative as they are of the breadth of geographical dependence of the grounds. The concluding section draws these themes together and considers design interventions at Rufford in relation to garden theories of the period.

4.1 The Pleasure Grounds Inherited by the 7th Baronet

By the late seventeenth century Rufford Hall was a vast rectangular structure. Orientated on a north-south axis on ground which sloped gently eastwards towards the Rainworth River valley, a watercourse running due east of the Hall, it was surrounded by gardens with significant outhouses lying to its south. A rental survey of 1680 itemises 'House, garden, wilderness and ground within ye brick wall', 'stable yard', 'red deer park and fallow deer park' as belonging to the demesne land of the 4th Baronet.⁶ The 1680 rental does not appear to have been

⁶ 'A rental of Rufford for Michaelmas 1680'. NA: DD/SR/227/2.

qualified by any mapped representation of the grounds. However, comparison of landscape features included in an undated, unattributed survey of Rufford's gardens and those represented on a survey completed by the Rufford steward, Thomas Smith, in 1725, together with evidence of the garden's development extracted from estate correspondence and accounts, indicate that the undated survey provides a visual record of the pleasure grounds at Rufford prior to the 7th Baronet's improvements. It is hereafter referred to as the *c.1700 Survey* (Figures 4.1a & 4.1b).

This survey shows the Hall framed on all four sides by discrete walled enclosures (see Figure 4.1b): the long gallery in the western range faced out into 'green courts' (almost certainly a reference to ornamental evergreen topiary); 'fountain court' and a 'terras [terrace] walk' bordered the east front; a sunken garden consisting of a quadripartite grass plot (*parterre à l'anglaise*) and identified as 'King's Garden' lay to the north. Beyond King's Garden lay *c.*7 acres of formally planted woodland, the 'Wilderness', and flanking the inner courts and completing the design to the west were a further range of enclosures: a cherry orchard; bowling green; and 'Brick Walls', a *c.*10 acre walled court.⁷ To the south of the hall lay the service buildings and essentially productive areas (fishponds and kitchen garden). Beyond these pleasure grounds lay demesne meadow and pasture land to the east; forest breck land to the north and west; tenanted and demesne land to the south (see Figure 4.1a).

Rainworth Water formed a natural boundary between the core landscape and Savile's parks (Old Park and New Park) to the east. The public highway between Wellow and Mansfield ran along the northern end of the Wilderness; the Nottingham to Doncaster Road bounded the core landscape to west and south. An avenue led up to the west front through 'Brick Walls' and defined the main entrance to the house; less formal walks ran east and south of the garden courts and linked the pleasure grounds with the wider landscape (see Figure 4.1a).

During the opening decade of Savile's occupancy, evidence from George Burden's estate accounts suggests that expenditure on Rufford's gardens was

⁷ Area estimates, unless otherwise indicated, calculated by geo-referencing estate documents (see Appendix 4.1).

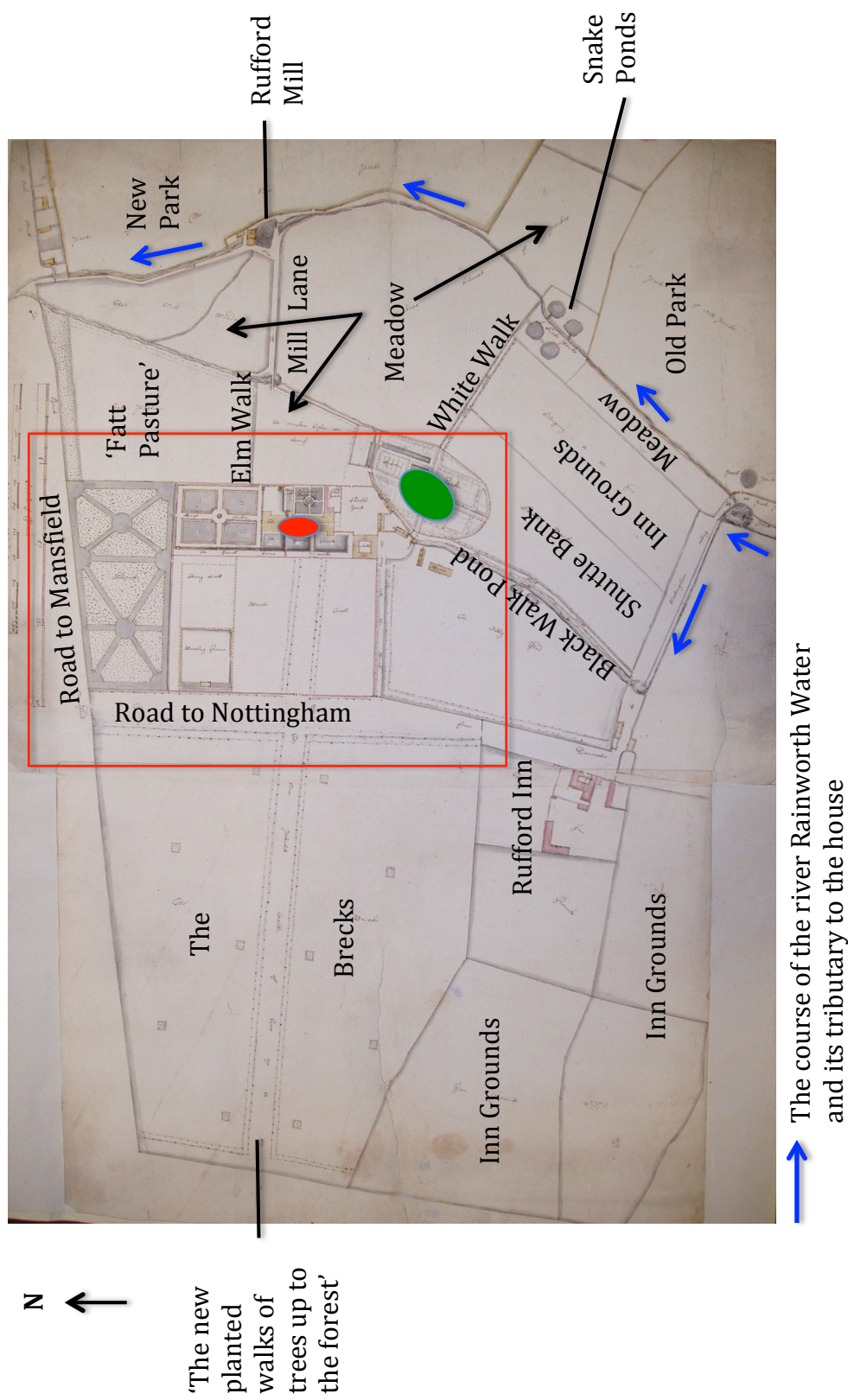


Figure 4.1a: Survey of Rufford, unattributed, undated, but recording the grounds about Rufford Hall as they were when the 7th Baronet inherited in 1700. (NA: RF5L)

The red oval indicates the position of Rufford Hall.

The green oval indicates the kitchen garden.

The red box demarcates the inner grounds annotated in Figure 4.1b.

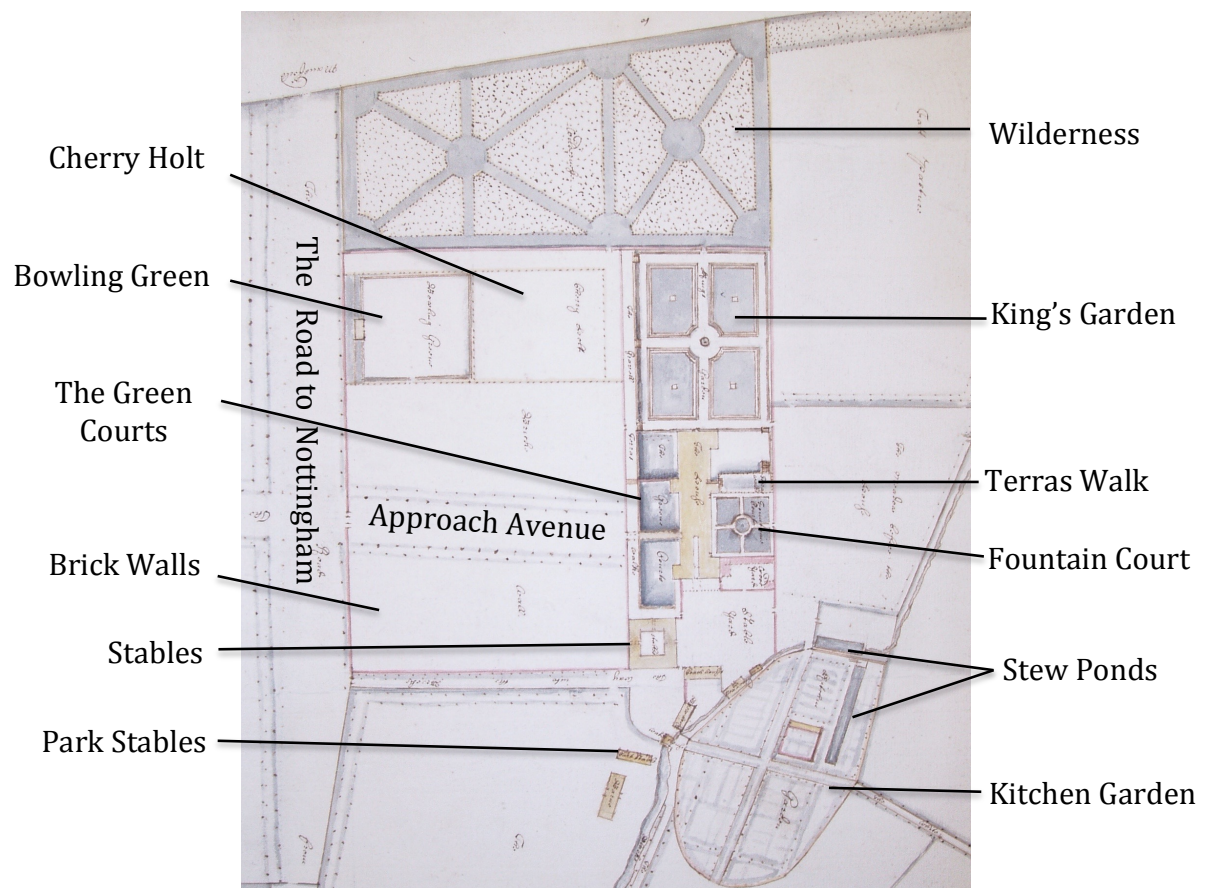


Figure 4.1b: Detail from the *c.1700 Survey* focussed on the pleasure grounds framing the Hall.

(NA: RF5L)

confined to maintenance of the c.1700 design. Between 1702 and 1712, labourers were recorded 'repairing the fence betwixt the Brick Court and the Bowling Green and ye stands about ye lime trees'; 'constructing a Trough for ye Well in Brick Wall Court'; 'helping to remove the Stoop & Raile at the borders before the Fountain Court & Kings Court'; mowing Brick Walls and the Wilderness; mending 'Dial Court Gates' and 'set[ting] the Hall Bridge straight'; mending the 'mellon glasses'; purchasing 'Wall Trees, greens &c for the Gardens'; and painting the garden flower pots with 'oyle and white lead' or 'red colour'.⁸ But by the autumn of 1718, the Baronet was directing the design of rides through his demesne woodland, and in April 1720 the trees along White Walk, a route running south-east from the kitchen garden to a fishpond complex (see Figure 4.1a), were cleared 'for making of a canal': the Baronet's 'delightfull Improvements about the Hous' had begun.⁹ Why Savile turned to landscaping in this period remains unclear, though it is tempting to conclude that the resolution in May 1720 of prolonged litigation with the Earl of Nottingham over inheritance claims was a contributing factor (see Chapter 3).¹⁰ The zeal with which he engaged in the activity is, however, amply supported by the correspondence of his successive stewards, and succinctly captured in his sister Gertrude's terse comment: 'Brother going on with his Cannalls and Rydings in Wellow Park'.¹¹

Savile's 'improvements' would, over the next two decades, extend the c.25 acres of inherited garden north into forest breck and east into meadow and pasture land.¹² Previous garden features would be incorporated into the developing design and new ones introduced. By 1743, Rufford's pleasure gardens, which formed but the inner and most ornamental component of a vastly more extended design linking the core and periphery of the estate (see Chapter 7), would encompass approximately 100 acres.

⁸ Burden's Estate Accounts. NA: DD/SR/A4/26-30.

⁹ Letter Smith to Madam Savile, 26 November 1718 (NA: DD/SR/211/227/68); Letter Smith to Savile, 2 April 1720 (NA: DD/SR/211/227/45); Elmsall's appraisal addressed to Savile, 12 August 1728 (NA: DD/SR/211/6).

¹⁰ Although the case was decided against Savile, his financial situation was thereafter under his control.

¹¹ Gertrude's Diaries, 8-28 December 1721, p. 19.

¹² 'Sundry Improvements made to Rufford Seat' was the category under which such work was classified in Rufford estate accounts from the period.

4.2 Early Eighteenth-Century Taste in Gardening

Taste was hotly contested in the early eighteenth century and gardens alongside poetry and painting fuelled the debate.¹³ The extent to which Savile actively participated in this discourse remains uncertain; that he was conversant with its content is in less doubt (see Chapter 3). Moreover, despite the want of stylistic consensus which the parodies of leading commentators such as Alexander Pope suggest,¹⁴ broad design trends have been identified (see Chapter 2), and were commented upon in the period. In relation to the pleasure grounds of country seats (hereafter referred to also as estate gardens), the most striking are: admiration for fine prospects and magnificence of scale, though the latter tempered by the moral sensibility that 'Tis use alone that sanctifies expense'; an extensive use of woodland and water as 'in Fountains, Cascades, and the like'; variety and contrast achieved without sacrificing an overall sense of design unity.¹⁵ A brief overview of the recommendations made on these elements by the principal garden theorists published between 1700 and 1743 is presented below as a framework for subsequent appraisal of Savile's improvements at Rufford.

4.2.1 Extensive gardening: 'La Grand Manier'¹⁶

In the Business of Designs, you should studiously avoid the Manner that is mean and pitiful, and always aim at that which is great and noble... 'Twere infinitely better to have two or three Things somewhat large, than a dozen small ones, which are no more than very Trifles.¹⁷

¹³ Brewer (1997).

¹⁴ Exemplified by Letter Pope to [Allen, 1st Lord Bathurst], 23 September []. Pope (1737), Letter clxxxi.

¹⁵ Alexander Pope, *Moral Essays: Epistle IV 'of the Use of Riches' to Richard Boyle, Earl of Burlington*, line 179; Switzer (1718), vol. 2, p. 196; Switzer (1715), xi, xiv-xvi.

¹⁶ Switzer (1715), xiii.

¹⁷ James (1712), 20-1.

As far as early eighteenth-century English design treatises were concerned, 'magnificence' was the over-arching objective for the pleasure gardens of a country estate; and the architects of Louis XIV's gardens had come closest to achieving the ideal. John James's *Theory and Practice of Gardening* (1712) translated the essence of French gardening theory, as set out by D  zallier d'Argenville, into English; Philip Miller, who based the design section of his popular *Gardener's Dictionary* (1733)¹⁸ on James's work, disseminated these views to a wider audience. Stephen Switzer in *The Nobleman Gentleman and Gardener's Recreation* (1715) and his subsequent and more developed recommendations for estate gardening in *Ichnographia Rustica* (1718, 1742) directly acknowledged the 'Magnificence which is easily discoverable from the French Designs' as the basis for the 'extensive' 'forest, or in a more easy Stile, Rural Gard'ning' he promoted.¹⁹ Batty Langley, in his *New Principles of Gardening* (1728), though less forthcoming about his sources, cited James and Switzer as the best available texts, and his designs suggest his indebtedness to both.

A recurrent criticism of English gardens of the period was what Langley derisively termed their '*stiff and stuft up*' character and Addison, more generously, their 'Neatness and Elegancy': 'trifling flower Knots' and 'Parterres of Cut-work', 'Clipt Plants' and wildernesses of evergreens, the whole design isolated from the wider estate by 'imprisoning' walls.²⁰ In contrast, what English garden theorists extolled in their French counterparts were 'large prolated Gardens and Plantations, adorn'd with magnificent Statues and Water-works, full of long, extended, shady Walks and Groves... [and] that all the adjacent Country be laid open to View'.²¹ The central problem for English estate owners, as Switzer clearly articulated, was how to achieve such magnificence economically:

...it is necessary that Gardens ought to appear as large as possible, if they were a hundred Acres or more, still the nobler; but how this should be done without the Loss of too much Ground, or how any

¹⁸ 1733 is the date of the 2nd 'corrected' edition.

¹⁹ Switzer (1715), xi-xiii.

²⁰ Langley (1728b), xi; *The Spectator*, no. 414, 25 June 1712; Switzer (1715), xxvi.

²¹ Switzer (1715), xiii-xiv.

Gentleman should be contented to be at so great an Expence, is not obvious to all...²²

The solution, intimated by Addison, praised by Pope, and laid forth in the designs of Switzer and Langley was, in essence, to incorporate the more productive elements of demesne ground into the garden design (largely as concealed features within vast wildernesses of forest trees) and manage the garden's boundaries in a manner that, to quote Pope, 'calls in the country', and, to quote Switzer, would add 'the expansive Volumes of Nature' to the more modest variety of designed features within the pleasure grounds.²³

WOODS EXTENDING 'AS FAR AS LIBERTY OF PLANTING WILL ALLOW'²⁴

But why may not a whole Estate be thrown into a kind of Garden by frequent Plantations, that may turn as much to the Profit, as the Pleasure of the Owner.²⁵

Both Langley and Switzer devote considerable attention to the cultivation of forest trees, 'the Great Beauty and Security' of an early eighteenth-century seat.²⁶ An '*agreeable Mixture of Fruits*', deciduous trees and evergreens would, in Langley's words, yield 'great Variety and Pleasure, as well as Profit'.²⁷ These, rather than the 'exoticks' purchased from commercial nurseries, which purportedly characterised earlier English designs and contributed significantly to a garden's cost, were to form the basis of wildernesses up to 'a quarter or half a Mile long'.²⁸ In their advocacy of planting, English designers were following the French: James described woods as making 'the Chief of a Garden' and providing a necessary '*Relievo*' to its flat parts: *parterres*, terrace walks and bowling-

²² Switzer (1718), vol. 1, p. 335.

²³ Switzer (1718), vol. 1, pp. xxxv-xxxvi; Pope, 'Epistle to Lord Burlington', line 61. See also Pope's admiration for Allen, 1st Lord Bathurst's 'pretty little plain work in the Brobdingnag Style' at his Cirencester Seat, Sherburn, ed. (1956), vol. 1, p. 515; *The Spectator*, nos 411-21, 1712.

²⁴ Switzer (1715), xxvi.

²⁵ Addison, *The Spectator*, no. 414, 25 June 1712.

²⁶ Switzer (1718), vol. 1, p. xiv. In addition to coverage in *New Principles*, Langley published *A Sure Method of Improving Estates by Plantations of Oak, Elm, Ash, Beech, and other Timber-Trees, Coppice-Woods &c.* in 1728.

²⁷ Langley (1728b), xi.

²⁸ Switzer (1715), 254.

greens.²⁹ However, significant differences are apparent in the way garden theorists treated the structuring of these plantations. While James recommended 'to pierce them with Alleys as much as possible' (star, cross and 'Goose-Foot [*patte d'oie*]' formations are suggested), Switzer, though conceding that the inclusion of 'long level Walks' was 'absolutely necessary, in Respect to the Grandeur and general Beauty of a Situation, as the Middle and Side Walk, and a very few Diagonals', considered that their number should be minimised.³⁰ Switzer's argument, and that of Langley who promoted similar designs, rested on a combination of economics and aesthetics. Whereas both men agreed with James that the open parts of the garden needed to be level and 'regular' (symmetrical), they were emphatic that within the ambit of a wood 'one should not strain either the Fancy or the Purse'.³¹ The levelling involved in the construction of complex *allée* systems was 'an unpardonable Fault' not only because it ran the improver into vast expense but also because it signalled a want of appreciation for 'Nature'.³² Hills and valleys were, in the minds of Langley and Switzer, primary amongst the 'great Beauties of Nature', and 'a well-governed Pursuit of Nature' was a tenet of the gardening taste they promoted.³³ 'Regular irregularity' of planting was preferred to planting at equal intervals; unevenness of ground was a positive advantage.³⁴ '[T]he more irregular, the more entertaining and diverting it is', wrote Switzer, 'large Hollows and low Grounds' providing ideal situations for 'little Cabinets and Gardens'.³⁵ Both the designs of Switzer and Langley describe woodland openings of diverse character (orchards, hop-grounds, paddocks, as well as statues, seats, caves, etc.), encountered in the course of meandering walks.³⁶ The objective, as Switzer pointed out, was to ensure that the 'useful Beauties are in some measure hid', and thus the garden's scale enlarged without compromising its utility or

²⁹ James (1712), 18, 48, 20.

³⁰ James (1712), 48-9; Switzer (1718), vol. 2, p. 197.

³¹ Switzer (1718), vol. 2, pp. 23, 188, 198, ch. VI: 'of the *PARTERRE*'; Langley (1728b), v (incorrectly paginated as x).

³² Switzer (1718), vol. 2, p. 197.

³³ Langley (1728b), 194; Switzer (1715), xiv.

³⁴ Langley (1728b), 202.

³⁵ Switzer (1718), vol. 2., pp. 188, 200.

³⁶ Switzer (1715, p. 64) described his serpentine paths as 'Natura-Linear'; Langley (1726, p. 38) used the term 'artificial'.

grandeur.³⁷ Moreover, although the mixing of ‘useful and profitable Parts of Gardening with the pleasurable’ was to be most pronounced within woodland designs, the principle extended more widely. Both Switzer and Langley, for example, highlighted the aesthetic potential of fishponds:

...it’s ten to one but they [fishponds] are in some cunning Hole or other where ’tis impossible to see them... whereas, had it been rightly managed, there should be Walks planted to and round about them: And if they can’t be contain’d within the Limits of the Garden, or in View of the House; yet one wou’d carry some Arm of the Garden to view them, or, if possible, corresponding or projecting over them.³⁸

STIMULATING THE IMAGINATION: VARIETY AND PROSPECT

...in the Opinion of every one, the Gardens that afford greatest Variety are the most valuable and magnificent.³⁹

*...where-ever Liberty will allow, [I] would throw my Garden open to all View, to the unbounded Felicities of distant Prospect, and the expansive Volumes of Nature herself.*⁴⁰

James’s appraisal, which opens this section, is amply supported by the responses of garden visitors in the period. In 1724, for example, John Macky’s description of Postmaster General Frankland’s garden at Sutton Court, Middlesex, registered admiration for ‘the Variety’ which ‘every walk affords... the Hedges, Grottos, Statues, Mounts, and Canals, are so many surprising Beauties’.⁴¹ James’s treatment of variety, however, extends beyond the enumeration of diverse features, focussing instead on the design challenge of creating contrast. ‘You should observe, in placing and distributing the several Parts of a Garden, always to oppose them one to another... the Full against the Void, and Flat-works against the Raised’: a wood, for example, to a bowling green, not a bowling green

³⁷ Switzer (1718), vol. 1, p. 335-6.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, xvii, 346-7 (main quotation); see also Langley (1728b), xii, xiv, 200.

³⁹ James (1712), 15.

⁴⁰ Switzer (1715), xxvi.

⁴¹ Macky (1724, first published 1714), vol. 1, p. 71.

to a *parterre*.⁴² Whereas James considered that ‘gardens on a perfect Level are certainly the best’, the merits of uneven terrain were increasingly valued not only for the intrinsic variety which ‘sudden Rises, Falls, and Turns of ground’ provided, but also for the views that raised ground admitted into ‘the wide Fields of Nature’ where ‘the Sight wanders up and down without Confinement, and is fed with an infinite variety of Images’.⁴³ ‘In laying out a garden,’ stated Pope, ‘the first and chief thing to be considered is the genius of the place’: its strengths and weaknesses.⁴⁴ As Langley directed:

...when the *Levels of Gardens are very flat*, and *good Views are lost* for want of proper Elevations... we must dig *Fish Ponds, Canals, &c.* if the Springs are not too deep; and with their Earth raise *pleasant Mounts, Terrace Walks, &c.* from whence we may enjoy the *pleasant Views* of the distant Countries.⁴⁵

A fine prospect, however, not only gratified the imagination, but, if well managed, might increase the apparent scale of the designed landscape. James referred to the creation of ‘Thorough-Views, call’d *Ah, Ah,...*’: openings in walls, with a large, deep ditch at the foot of them.⁴⁶ Switzer, writing in 1718, suggested that such a form of fencing was hardly known in England at the time. Its development has been associated with the designs of Charles Bridgeman (1690-1738), notable amongst which was Lord Cobham’s garden at Stowe. After visiting Stowe in 1724, Lord Perceval, 1st Earl of Egmont, a close acquaintance of Savile (see Chapter 3), registered the astonishing impact of the device:

What adds to the bewty of this garden, is, that it is not bounded by walls, but by a Ha-hah [a variant spelling], which leaves you the

⁴² James (1712), 20.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 21; Letter Alexander Pope to Martha Blount, 22 June 1724, quoted in Sherburn, ed. (1956), vol. 2, p. 237; *The Spectator*, no. 414, 25 June 1712.

⁴⁴ Pope’s gardening advice recorded by Joseph Spence (1699-1768). Spence no. 609 in Osborn, J.M., ed., *Observations and Anecdotes of Books and Men*, Oxford, 1966, quoted in Charlesworth (1993), vol. 2, pp. 38-9.

⁴⁵ Langley (1728b), xii.

⁴⁶ James (1712), 77.

sight of a bewtiful woody country, and makes you ignorant how far the high planted walks extend.⁴⁷

By 1728, Langley was recommending that '*Hah Ha's* should be made in every part of a Garden from whence good views may be had', and the use of iron gates or grills, hitherto considered 'very necessary Ornaments in the Lines of Walks, to extend the View', were reckoned by Switzer as 'a kind of Artifice, not good, and a whipping Expence in the Bargain'.⁴⁸ However, while the design ideal might be to see the lines of the garden continued into the surrounding countryside (see Chapter 7), Langley suggested that sham ruins, either painted on canvas or constructed from plaster-faced brick, might be used to terminate walks that ended in '*disagreeable Objects*'. On occasions, Langley also recommended the use of architectural features to terminate views within the garden: 'If an extensive Canal terminate at one End in an elegant Piece of Architecture', he pointed out, 'twill have a noble and grand Aspect'.⁴⁹ Though Langley does not mention the character of the building he has in mind, cold baths and banqueting houses were both identified as appropriate elements of a fine garden.⁵⁰

4.2.2 Animating the design: the vital role of water

Fountains and Water-Works are the Life of a Garden; 'tis these make the principal Ornament of it, and which animate and invigorate it... give it new Life and Spirit.⁵¹

But Water is so desirable a Beauty, that if One is extravagant, it ought to be in that...⁵²

The works of James and Switzer devote considerable attention to the aesthetic potential of water within the garden, and the practicalities of sourcing, delivering and exploiting it. Water-works were an aspect of gardening in which

⁴⁷ Letter Lord Percival to Daniel Dering, 1724, quoted in Brownell (1978), 197. See also Egmont's comments on Hall Barn, Buckinghamshire in 1724, quoted in Hunt & Willis, eds (1975), 165.

⁴⁸ Langley (1728b), xii; James (1712), 77; Switzer (1715), 256.

⁴⁹ Langley (1728b), xv, 201.

⁵⁰ James (1712), frontispiece; Langley (1728b), 195.

⁵¹ James (1712), 201.

⁵² Switzer (1718), vol. 1, p. 306.

Switzer considered French practice to be unrivalled in 'Riches', though when ranked according to 'Excellence of Taste', the 'more natural' Italian features took precedence.⁵³ James lists the variety of ways in which water was commonly deployed in the garden - *jets d'eaux*, fountains, canals, basins, cascades - highlighting the challenge of distributing the element and integrating it into a design:

It requires Ingenuity and Industry, to order it so, that a little Quantity shall appear a great deal... and the Walks pierced advantageously for the Water.⁵⁴

Switzer's two volume publication *An Introduction to a General System of Hydrostatics and Hydraulics* (1729), a yet more comprehensive treatment of the 'watering [of] Noblemans and Gentlemans Seats, Buildings, Gardens &c.', devotes entire chapters to topics which situate the garden's water management system firmly within its broader estate context, including the 'properest Methods of raising and distributing Water for the Use of Country Seats'; the 'Method of taking the Levels or Falls of Water from a Spring-head' and of their adjustment; and the mechanics and positioning of mill-wheels and assessment of the 'Impulse or Fluctuation of Water in a Mill-Pond or River'. Notably, Switzer underpins his technical presentation with a discussion of ancient and modern hydraulic and hydrostatic theory, drawing attention to public lectures on the subject given by the instrument maker and scientific demonstrator Francis Hauksbee, a course of which Savile attended in London (see Section 3.2.4).

Despite Switzer's suggestion that extravagance was permissible in this sphere of gardening, as with his directions for woodland design, economy of means and questions of aesthetic taste are inextricably linked in his recommendations. Canals and fountains were to be bordered by 'Grassy, strong Turf' rather than stonework, the former being 'very natural, and of little Expence'; 'Grotts, Caves and Cascades' should be 'rude' rather than 'smooth' in finish, both in the interest of economy and because it was the proportions of the

⁵³ Switzer (1729), vol. 1, 'Dedication'.

⁵⁴ James (1712), 201.

work rather than the beauty of materials that should be appreciated.⁵⁵ Moreover, the coarser a cascade's surface, the more effective the white-water effect produced. Savile was almost certainly familiar with water features created on neighbouring estates, several of which attracted marked praise. Switzer, for example, singled out the 1st Duke of Kingston's gardens at Thoresby, adjacent to Rufford, as indicative of the 'Pitch practical Hydrostacy is arriving to in England', and John Baker, a prosperous London merchant, enthused over the impact of Thoresby's water features after a visit in 1728:

Towrsby where was the most beautifull Cascade I ever saw with six large boullions [and] a pool of water [approximately] 64 acres...⁵⁶

At Worksop Manor, the Duke of Norfolk's Seat, Baker admired the 'canal of six hundred feet'; at Shireoaks, the then seat of Lady Hewett, he found 'the Park well stored with beautifull deer and adjoining to the house well watered with a little rivulet running through which occasions severall small cascades which is very pretty'; at Scofton, the Seat of Brigadier Sutton, he admired 'the most beautiful walks and Canal and Cascades that I ever saw for the bigness and situated on Sherwood Forest'.⁵⁷

4.2.3 Design unity: 'the joint Force and Full Result of all'⁵⁸

*...a noble Elegancy and Decency, a due Proportion and clear Majestic Mien in the several corresponding Parts.*⁵⁹

Where order in Variety we see,
And where, though all things differ, all agree.⁶⁰

⁵⁵ Switzer (1718), vol. 1, p. 305 & (1729), vol. 1, pp. xxvi-xxvii.

⁵⁶ Switzer (1729), vol. 1, p. 14; Diary of John Baker, 1728, entry 1 June, CBS: D/X1069/1/2. See Section 4.3.2 for discussion of the term 'boullion'.

⁵⁷ Diary of John Baker, entries 5 & 7 June. Baker was less impressed by Hewett's 'Tempietto' which at a cost of '[£]1500 or 2000' he considered 'far from answering the expence'. See COLD BATH, SUMMER-HOUSE AND RELATED WATER FEATURES in Section 4.3.2.

⁵⁸ Phrase from Pope's *An Essay on Criticism*, 1711, pt. II, applied to estate gardening by Switzer (1715, p. xvi).

⁵⁹ Switzer (1715), xiv.

⁶⁰ Pope's *Windsor-Forest*, lines 14-15.

Simplex Munditiis, ‘a compendious Theme’ which Switzer adapted to the context of gardening and explained by the quotation which opens this section, was axiomatic to the style of extensive gardening being promoted in the period. Practically, it equated to a concern over the relative scaling of garden features, in particular walks and *parterres*. The former, for example, should not, to quote Langley, have a ‘niggard Breadth’, but, like all garden features, be ‘proportionable’: the breadth of the ‘grand Walk’ leading from the house should be set in relation to both the breadth of the façade from which it led and its length, never being narrower than the breadth of the house front.⁶¹ All garden treatises of the period recognised the importance of geometry to a garden designer; Langley devoted an entire work to its instruction, *Practical Geometry Applied to the Useful Arts of Building, Surveying, Gardening and Mensuration* (1726). Perspectival foreshortening was one of the elements considered: Langley drew attention to the way in which the principal of foreshortening could be applied to make short walks appear longer; Switzer focussed on the dimensions of the *parterre*, ‘that level Division of Ground that, generally speaking, faces the South and best front of an House’.⁶² An oblong with a width equal to the breadth of the front was recommended because it would ‘sink almost to a square’ when viewed from above.⁶³ In Switzer’s designs this comprehensive view was to be taken from a ‘terrace-walk’; for James, in the course of a stepped descent, ‘three Steps at least’, from house to garden.⁶⁴

Pope’s appreciation of ‘order in variety’, the second unifying approach referred to above, was echoed in Switzer’s respect for the ‘harmonious Rules of Symmetry and Variety’, Langley’s recommendation of ‘regular irregularity’ for woodland planting and, most comprehensively, in James’s advocacy of contrast in the garden which concluded:

The same Works should never be repeated on both Sides, but in open Places, where the Eye, by comparing them together, may

⁶¹ Langley (1728b), iv (incorrectly paginated as xi), viii, 195, 201.

⁶² Langley (1726), 104-5 & (1728b), 196; Switzer (1718), vol. 2, p. 184.

⁶³ Switzer (1718), vol. 2, p. 185.

⁶⁴ Switzer considered terrace walks ‘absolutely necessary, both as to Use and Beauty’ and their absence from James’s designs the ‘greatest Fault imaginable’. Switzer (1718), vol. 2, ch. V: ‘of TERRACE-WALKS’; James (1712), 17.

judge of conformity... But in Groves formed of Palisades and tall Trees, the Designs and Out-parts should be always varied; which, tho' different, ought, however, to have such Relation and Agreement with each other in their Lines and Ranges, as to make Openings, Glades, and Vistas, regular and agreeable.⁶⁵

Moreover, it was not the 'Exactness of peculiar Parts' that was to be admired. On the contrary, the 'fussiness' associated with late seventeenth-century Dutch gardening was widely decried and simplicity was encouraged: grass and gravel were 'nobler Embellishments' than 'Interlacings of Box-work'; 'the plainer *Parterres* are, the more *Grandeur*'.⁶⁶ That said, although 'Flowers, Greens, and choice Exoticks' were for Switzer the material of the 'City-Garden' rather than 'Country-Seat', Langley saw them as entirely compatible with extensive gardening, though promoting planting schemes concerned with collective effect rather than individual species:

....all the Trees of your shady Walks and Groves be planted with Sweet-Brier, White Jessemine, and Honey-suckles, environ'd at Bottom with a small Circle of Dwarf-stock, Candy-Turf, and Pinks.⁶⁷

Mezerions (*Daphne mezereum*) were to be planted in open borders; lillies, narcissi, carnations, tube-rose (probably *Hyacinthis orientalis*) and flowering shrubs in wildernesses and groves, the latter in graduated mixtures; furze hedges throughout the garden. Notably, alongside the aesthetic advantages of the latter scheme – 'For during the Season that they are in Blossom, which is a long Time, there's no plant that makes a finer Appearance' – Langley drew attention to the value of hedgerows as wildlife habitat – 'they are an admirable Covert for Game, as well as to draw plenty of Birds (such as Linnets, Bullfinches, &c.) which build their Nests therein' – thus linking the recreational and aesthetic pleasures of the gardens with sporting concerns more broadly associated with the estate landscape as a whole.⁶⁸

⁶⁵ James (1712), 20.

⁶⁶ Switzer (1715), xvi; Langley (1728b), x; Hunt & de Jong (1988), 47.

⁶⁷ Langley (1728b), 196.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 172, 184; Langley (1728a), 35 (quotations). The Seed & Plant Catalogue of William Lucas (Strand Bridge, London, c.1677) includes 'Tuberosus' in the category

4.3 Development of Rufford's Pleasure Grounds, c.1715-1743

4.3.1 An over-arching plan?

There is considerable evidence that Savile had a broad framework of what he hoped to achieve from an early date. In February 1725 Smith completed a plan (6 feet by 5 feet 9 inches) of the core estate (hereafter referenced *Smith's 1725 Survey*): 'though but black lines without houses erected or trees in walks', it was intended to 'prove useful in ye making or altering any design'.⁶⁹ It records improvements already underway, and includes both the area which would subsequently be incorporated into the pleasure grounds and significant sightlines into the wider landscape. In August the same year, Savile recorded paying 'Mr Tonus' 'one Guinea heretofore & this day Ten Guineas for Drawing Plans &c: about 8 weeks at Rufford'.⁷⁰ No further details of Tonus's biography have been traced; but of the aforementioned 'plans', three are identified in a list of garden plans ('A Schedall of Eight Par^{ells} Plans') drawn up by William Matthew when he became steward in 1728, two of which have survived (see Figures 4.12 & 4.19 discussed in Sections 4.3.3 & 4.3.4).⁷¹ They indicate the character and scale, though not the detail, of the major areas of landscaping subsequently undertaken. Moreover, they suggest that Savile's broad intention was to extend rather than replace the garden design that he had inherited.

'flower roots', which Harvey (1972, p. 72) identifies as *Hyacinthis orientalis*. Laird (1999, p. 219) equates 'Tuberoze' in mid-eighteenth plant lists with the liliaceous plant *Polianthes tuberosa*. See also Laird (1999), ch. 1 for Langley's planting schemes.

⁶⁹ NA: DD/SR/202/47; Letter Smith to Savile, 6 February 1725 (NA: DD/SR/211/227/141). Due to the plan's scale and lack of contrast it has not been possible to reproduce it in its entirety, details, however, are shown in Figures 4.2 & 4.22.

⁷⁰ Savile's Personal Account Book, 1722-7. NA: DD/SR/211/192/2. Several spellings of the designer's name appear in Rufford estate documents – Tonis (NA: DD/SR/202/16/7), Thonous (NA: DD/SR/202/7/1), Toansus (NA: DD/SR/215/14/1), Tonus (NA: DD/SR/211/192/2) – the latter is adopted here unless in quotation. Uncertainty surrounding the spelling invites the conjecture that he was the London engraver William Henry Toms (*fl.* 1723-65). While no direct evidence has been found to suggest that Toms worked as a landscape designer, surveyors were often employed as engravers and cartographers and a range of commissions – plates for Langley's *A Sure Method of Improving Estates* (1728), Switzer's *An Introduction to a General System of Hydrostatics and Hydraulics* (1729) and estate portraits in the style of Kipp & Knyff – indicate familiarity with the field. Further, his map of Nottinghamshire for Thomas Badeslade's *Chorographia Britanniae* (1741) references only one estate in the county – Rufford Abbey. Potten, *ODNB*; O'Cionnaith (2011), 22.

⁷¹ NA: DD/SR/215/14/1.

In the account that follows, the various features that came to make up Rufford's pleasure grounds by the mid-1740s are discussed individually, particular attention being given to their form, the skills of those involved in their design and construction, the wider context of estate management within which they were conceived, and the design constraints/challenges which attended Savile's apparent predisposition to maintain substantial elements of his predecessor's gardens. For ease of reference, features have been grouped according to the area of the garden – south, east, north – in which they were located, and within each grouping a loosely chronological ordering has been adopted. That said, work was often in progress simultaneously on a range of features and estate correspondence makes clear that economy of labour – specifically in relation to the shifting of earth, recognised in the period as a major construction expense – was a particular focus of site management at Rufford. Savile neither extended the scale nor significantly changed the form of the gardens west of the Hall. In 1700 the Doncaster to Nottingham Road, a major public by-way, formed the western boundary of the pleasure grounds, a situation that almost certainly contributed to, and possibly explains, the Baronet's decision.

4.3.2 South and south-east of the Hall

BLACK WALK AND WHITE WALK

Black Walk and White Walk, routes which in the late seventeenth-century demesne grounds seem to have been more thoroughfare than garden walks *per se*, were the focus of Savile's earliest improvements (see Figure 4.1a).⁷² While development of White Walk involved a major transformation – the excavation of a canal – and the area was subsequently incorporated into Savile's extended pleasure grounds, the Baronet's directions for Black Walk were limited to horticultural changes and the walk seems to have remained a peripheral feature. Correspondence regarding planting along the walk does, however, make evident the way responsibility was apportioned in the garden and offers an unusually detailed insight into the level of horticultural expertise available at Rufford in

⁷² James (1728, p. 52) describes 'White Walks' as 'no other than those that are all sanded, and kept naked over' suggesting a naming based on surface type.

this period. It is therefore presented in some detail to indicate the context in which subsequent negotiation of garden features should be considered.

BLACK WALK

Black Walk was a shady walk running alongside Black Walk Pond, a stream fed by Rainworth River and supplying the brewery, stew ponds and Hall. By the mid-1710s, the ashes, alders and quicksets planted along its borders no longer provided a serviceable hedge, and in the winter of 1715 Savile issued directions for the sides of the walk to be 'speedily' thickened. Smith, his steward, responded cautiously: it would be 'a work both of time [7 years] and charge' involving selective felling and drastic pruning of the existing trees.⁷³

By December 1718 Savile had become impatient with the walk's progress. Smith was uncertain how to proceed. In a strikingly frank letter to Madam Savile, one of the few pieces of direct evidence for the latter's involvement in garden management, Smith made known his frustration with a situation for the outcome of which he must take overall responsibility, but in which his advice was not being heeded:

My Oppion [*sic*] is that no Care nor Charge can raise a Clever thick hedge on black walk whilst the trees are there. I am loath to Cutt up ye Quicks and plant a Bundance of new ones Except I hop'd of better Success... I shall not be blamed if it Dos not Answer ye End and Charge[.] [I]f my Master please to view any young hedge where thers Trees Espetially ashes he'll perceive what Enemies they are to Quicks Espetially where they Stand so thick as the Ashes and owlers [alders] in Blackwalk Dos...⁷⁴

Smith's letter, while intimating his master's want of horticultural knowledge, continued with a direct reference to the inexperience of the then Rufford gardener in 'planting' matters, and a request that Madam Savile authorise the assistance of her son's Yorkshire woodsman, Mr Hogg:

I have often heard you say Mr Hogg was Understanding in such things I begg he may Come over and Do that, and any thing

⁷³ Letters Smith to Savile, 23 March 1715 & 10 December 1718. NA: DD/SR/211/227/88,63.

⁷⁴ Letter Smith to Madam Savile, 2 December 1718. NA: DD/SR/211/227/65.

Necessary at ye wilderness alsoe in ye new plantation on beech hill... your Gardiners Skill as far as I Can Judge would require Some Assistance. None properer than Mr Hoggs and if he Raises a Clever True hedge on black walk whilst those Iregular Ashes and owlers stand in ye Quicksett rows I am Mistaken.⁷⁵

In the event, Savile's gardener was able to draw on the more local experience of a past incumbent of the post – 'Old West ye Gardiner... who formerly Livd here and planted ye hedge in Blackwalk &c' of whom he had 'a Great Oppinion' – and subsequently expressed himself confident to 'undertake ye planting and setting without any assistance only Labourers', and no help from Hogg beyond a letter of advice, 'he knowing ye Blackwalk'.⁷⁶ Notably, the gardener entrusted these communications to Smith rather than directly to Savile; apparently an accepted state of affairs: '[I] would not delay these particulars of ye Gardiners [Smith assured Savile] which have here read to him and he agrees that tis his and Mr Wests Thoughts'. Reference is, however, made to a single letter directed to the gardener from Savile.⁷⁷

West's recommendations broadly corresponded to Smith's of 1715 and seem to have been finally acted upon. It is suggestive to think that pressure to deliver a contracted cordwood quota in this period influenced the Baronet's decision. In a second exchange between Smith and Madam Savile from late 1718, the former disclosed:

My master talkt of taking Down ye Ashes and owlers on Each Side blackwalk in Order to Raise a thick and Beautifull hedge along Each side of it... you cannot take them Down in a Time of more need...⁷⁸

This incident indicates how garden improvements were comprehended within the broader economic context of estate management.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷⁶ Letter Smith to Savile, 10 December 1718. NA: DD/SR/211/227/63.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

⁷⁸ Letter Smith to Madam Savile, 26 November 1718. NA: DD/SR/211/227/68.

WHITE WALK CANAL

By 1720 Savile was issuing directions for the construction of a canal along the course of White Walk. The first of several major water features introduced into Rufford's Pleasure Grounds, White Walk Canal channelled the water from Black Walk Pond flowing through the kitchen stews back up to Rainworth River, and was intended both as an ornamental feature and as a growth reservoir for carp husbandry (see Chapter 5). The project was ambitious: construction of the canal, whose course is represented on *Smith's 1725 Survey* (detail, Figure 4.2), took over four years; its bordering walks were not reported 'finished' until 1731. Though modified after Savile's death and now empty, the course of White Walk Canal is clearly visible in the contemporary landscape (Figure 4.3).

From the outset, Smith's correspondence registered both the challenging nature of the work, and his master's close supervision. The problem was three-fold: integrating the canal into the existing water system; making it water-tight; and channelling drainage water from the ground south of the walk under the canal.

I [Smith] again Levelled ye Jackpond [kitchen stew containing pike] along by white walk to ye River by Snake ponds & find it will fall into that River but the said Cannall will be so high that ye Surface of it will Cover a Deal of ye bottom of ye Quicksetts which Grow on said white walk... Nay in some places ye Surface of ye water will Cover a pritty Deal of ye side of ye walk... which will make that Edge of ye water Crooket or Irregular as well as make ye white walk narrower in some places than in others. The many ash Roots which Run into ye meadows a Great way from where the Trees Grew and that Earth where we are to make a new bank all on ye north side of ye Cannall from Kitchen Garden to River by Snake ponds Dos not prove so Good as I Expected makes me fear whether we Can make such a bank to hold water with ye Difficulty of securing ye Two Sids [sides] of ye 12 foot Drain [a drain intended to run beneath the canal and channel ground water], and whether ye white walk may Turn water &c makes me wish your honour would once more See and Consider it before tis Done.⁷⁹

Smith's request for his master's presence seems to have been acceded to: the Baronet's arrival was planned for that summer and his steward's reports do not resume again until April the following year. By this time the arch of the drainage

⁷⁹ Letter Smith to Savile, 13 April 1720. NA: DD/SR/211/227/44.

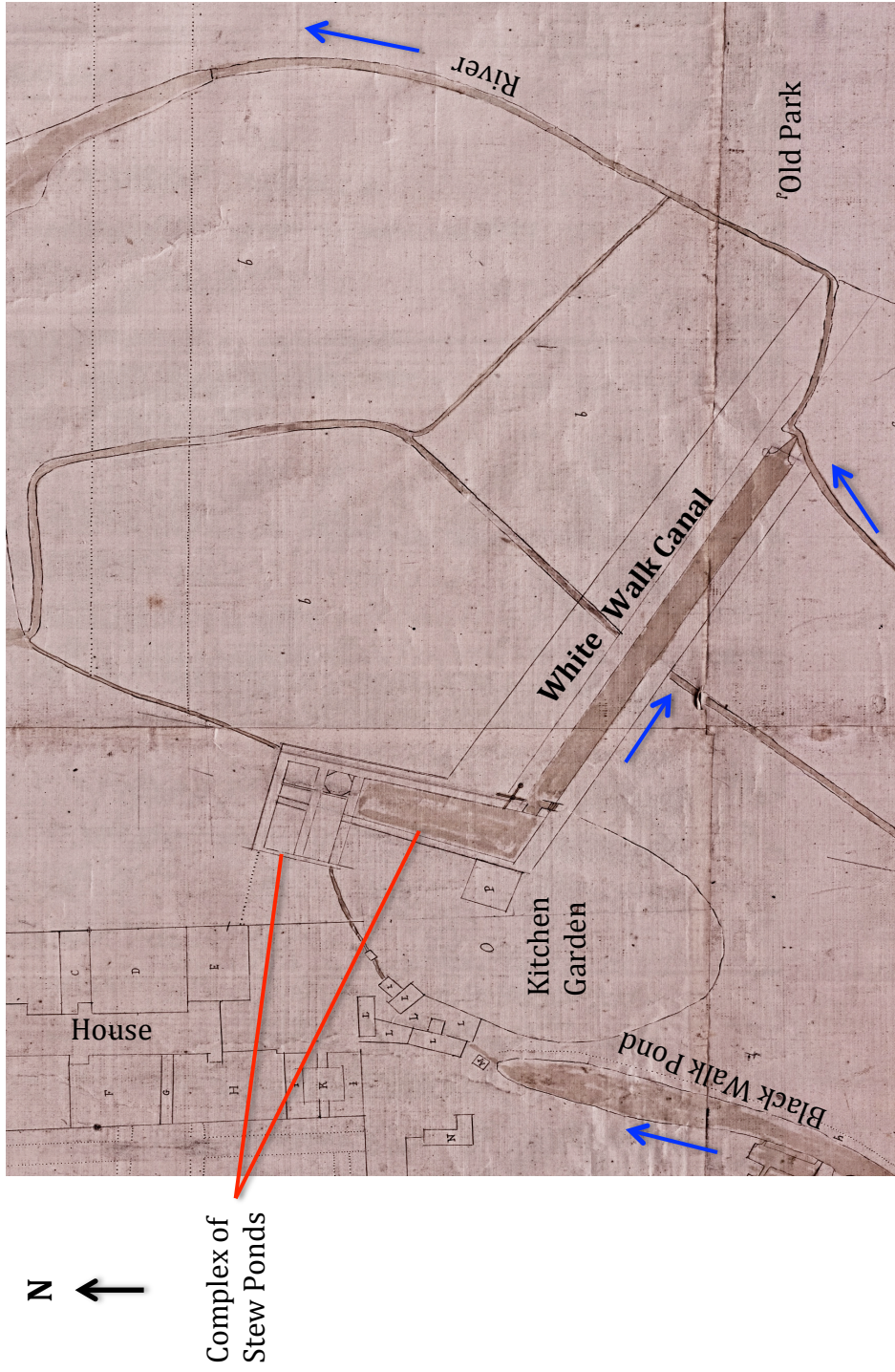


Figure 4.2: Detail from Thomas Smith's Survey of the grounds adjacent to the Hall, 1725.

(NA: DD/SR/202/47)



Figure 4.3: Western section of White Walk Canal as a twentieth-century water feature and as it is today.

(above): A late twentieth-century photograph of the site. (Rufford Abbey Archives)

(below): The feature photographed in 2015. (Present author)



channel, which needed to be of ‘convenient height for a person to go under... when choakt up’, was the focus of Smith’s deliberations. ‘Mansfield mason Robert Birch and another mans advice’ was sought. Both, however, advised, ‘against their own trade’, on a wooden structure; a choice endorsed by Smith though the Baronet’s ruling goes unrecorded.⁸⁰

In the late 1720s construction of a summer-house at the western end of the canal would integrate White Walk more fully into Savile’s developing pleasure gardens (see COLD BATH, SUMMER-HOUSE below). Already in January 1722, however, the trees in the walk and sycamores in the adjacent ground were being pruned to achieve Savile’s dual objective: ‘to spare ye shady part to cover ye walk’ and ‘to clear your sight as desired’.⁸¹ The desired views were from ‘the terrace’ – given the date, almost certainly the ‘Terras Walk’ shown on the *c.1700 Survey* – into Old Park. As with the management of planting along Black Walk, it was Smith, rather than the gardener, who assumed responsibility for the project’s outcome, although on this occasion in response to the latter’s horticultural advice. Most notable is Smith’s elaboration of his master’s directions based on assessment of the perspectival implications of the pruning:

I sent for your Gardiner yesterday to Give him my thoughts how he was to Go about Cutting ye Sycamore Trees into Cones, he says if the Cones be nott a Good height and Every way proportionably Large then all ye budds & hopefull wood for their putting out and thickening will be taken off and they in Danger of Dying. You thought of Cutting ye toppes of all on a True Levile when you Intended to take off ye heads and Keep them flatt on ye topps, would it not be well to Observe ye same Rule in Keeping ye Vertex of Each Cone or top part on ye Same Levile, then because the white walk is near a True Levile if the trees in it are Cutt Levile, from your Terrace ye Topp of ye Cones being Levell will make a Truth to ye Eye, th’o the Cones be higher than those trees in whitewalk, Yet Equally so, but ye Contrary if ye Cones be Cutt Lower towards ye meadow as ye Ground falls and will not ye Narrow tops of ye Cones have a pritty Effect... when ther’l open between Every Cone a beautiful Sceane of Every thing as low as you please.⁸²

⁸⁰ Letters Smith to Savile, 6 & 20 May 1720. NA: DD/SR/211/227/35,33.

⁸¹ Letter Smith to Savile, 17 January 1722. NA: DD/SR/211/227/30.

⁸² Letter Smith to Savile, 8 January 1722. NA: DD/SR/211/227/31.

Such aesthetic judgements were only available to someone on site and possessed with an eye for design: arguably, therefore, invaluable to Savile, directing the work from London. Smith recorded his satisfaction to Savile when, on completion of the work, 'your park pale & a Good part of ye Lawn in ye park' became open to view and the wider demesne landscape had been successfully drawn into the compass of the gardens.⁸³

During December 1723 and January 1724, estate correspondence is dominated by the problems of sealing and testing the canal structure. Flow velocities were measured at different points of the system: 'ye Great Stew pond into Octagon pond'; 'ye Jack pond into ye Cannall'; 'ye Canall into ye River by ye Snake ponds'.⁸⁴ The frequency and level of detail with which the results were communicated to Savile point to both the complexity of the water management and the Baronet's engagement with its technicalities. Another notable feature of the exchange is Smith's concern to organise the labour force and access material resources as cost-effectively as possible. When, in response to continued seepage, Savile suggested 'digging... and claying' a 'very Deep trench in white walk', Smith drew attention to the 'great and expensive' nature of such an undertaking.⁸⁵ His counter-arguments in favour of creating an embankment within Savile's hop grounds and tenanted land south of the walk highlight both the constraints of the site (in particular, difficulties of cart access and tree roots), and the limited clay resources available: 'We have used all the clay that Circular pond you ordered & saw affords; Such a great piece of work as this will Cutt up another Large piece of Meadow'.⁸⁶ Whatever measures were finally determined upon, the structure was sufficiently complete by November 1724 for the labourers to begin levelling the walk on its south side and straightening the walk and bank along its northern border.⁸⁷ During July 1729 White Walk was 'fild up with Plants', and in April 1731, gravelled.⁸⁸

⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴ NA: DD/SR/211/227/114-5.

⁸⁵ NA: DD/SR/211/227/113.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

⁸⁷ NA: DD/SR/211/227/152a.

⁸⁸ Letter Matthew to Savile, 5 July 1729 (NA: DD/SR/211/58/3); Letters Holt to Savile, 12 & 24 April 1731 (NA: DD/SR/211/24/11b,14).

KITCHEN GARDEN

The kitchen garden at Rufford lay south-east of the Hall, close to both the house and a ready supply of water. It is described on both the *c.1700 Survey* and *Smith's 1725 Survey* as an oval-shaped enclosure of *c.3* acres, and remained so throughout the 7th Baronet's lifetime. The character of the site, however, changed appreciably. Whilst retaining its productive function, Savile's kitchen garden became an increasingly eclectic, multifunctional space, designed for leisure as well as utility, and in relation to views to and from the pleasure gardens as a whole. The sections below focus on the most significant features introduced into the kitchen garden at this time and their contribution to this transformation.

WALKS ABOUT THE FISH STEW PONDS

Fish husbandry was conducted at a considerable scale across Savile's demesne ground, and the house stews were concentrated in the northern part of the kitchen garden (Figures 4.1a&b & 4.2). Comparison of the *c.1700* and 1725 surveys suggests that new ponds were added in the first quarter of the century, in particular an 'Octagon pond' (used for carp). Two 'U [Yew] Tree ponds' (used for trout) are described in estate correspondence and may also date from this period.⁸⁹ The design-consciousness evident in the description of these stews suggests that the area was intended to serve as more than a fish larder, a contention strongly supported by additional evidence which indicates an attitude towards fishponds congruent with both the recommendations of Switzer and Langley (see Section 4.2.1). In November 1724 Smith reported that the 'Ground about all ye ponds in Kitchen Garden' had been made 'handsome', 'a great Deal of it' 'Sodded or Turft'.⁹⁰ By 1726 'a new Brickwall' defined the northern perimeter of this area and a terrace walk ran below it and formed one of the banks of a new pond dug the same year. As in the case of White Walk Canal, integrating this new feature into the pre-existing water system involved adjustment of ground levels. Smith's communication on the subject provides a record of the character of the area: 'the walks will not be answerable if we have

⁸⁹ See Tables 5.1 & 5.2.

⁹⁰ Letter Smith to Savile, 23 November 1724. NA: DD/SR/211/227/152a.

not Low and high walks between the U [yew] Tree ponds, & this now making, Equall and Answerable to those of ye Brickwall'.⁹¹ By 1729, the site was being further developed. In May that year Savile's then steward, William Matthew, reported that a hill on the western side of the 'nue [new] pond' was 'Turft as order'd and a yew Arbor Planted on it'.⁹²

OPENING VIEWS INTO THE KITCHEN GARDEN: EASTERN HA-HA

The advantages of designing a kitchen garden on a south-facing slope – improved drainage, a boost to the growth and ripening of fruit, diminished frost damage – were well recognised in the period: Campbell points out that '[i]n some gardens, to prevent the creation of a frost pocket and to help frost escape, the boundary at the bottom of the slope consisted of an open fence or a hedge, rather than a wall'.⁹³ Several lines of evidence indicate a modest south-easterly slope to the kitchen grounds at Rufford in the early eighteenth century,⁹⁴ and during the 7th Baronet's lifetime only the northern perimeter bordering the stews seems to have been walled, the remainder presumably being hedged or fenced.

In December 1727, a period when the English ha-ha was still sufficiently novel to attract admiration from garden *cognoscenti* (see Section 4.2.1), views to and from the kitchen grounds were intentionally promoted when a ha-ha was constructed along a section of the eastern boundary.⁹⁵ Rufford estate correspondence relating to this work again highlights the Baronet's technical competence and his stewards' collaborative involvement in the design-making process. While Smith assured his master that the wall would be 'Set Diping [*sic*] backwards according to your Own Invention and Directions for walls', he questioned the Baronet's choice of stone as the construction material: 'Stronger

⁹¹ Letters Smith to Savile, 20 June (main quotation), 5 & 11 July 1726. NA: DD/SR/211/227/133,131-2.

⁹² Letter Matthew to Savile, 5 July 1729. NA: DD/SR/211/58/3.

⁹³ Campbell (1996), 28.

⁹⁴ In particular, the direction of water flow along White Walk Canal; management of ground levels for the construction of the East Front Parterre; photographs of the area in the late nineteenth century.

⁹⁵ The precise location – 'south of the nether [lower] Gates' – remains uncertain; reference to the ha-ha wall facing east and adjoining a boundary wall, almost certainly that of the stews, suggests the location specified. Letters Smith to Savile 11 November & 2 December 1727, 8 April 1728. NA: DD/SR/211/227/180,178,160.

to Support & hold up the weight of Earth that will Lye against it than any Brick wall', yes, 'But whether as handsome', Smith was doubtful. Further, if stone were to be the choice, should the face be 'Laid in Moss or Lime' or rendered 'Smooth in ye face... but that will be more charge'?⁹⁶ Savile's final directions go unrecorded, but when ha-has were constructed at the northern end of the New Wilderness in the 1730s (see Section 4.3.4) brick was used for the main structural wall, a feature 'seven foot high without the coping', suggesting that Smith's recommendations had been adopted.⁹⁷ It seems unlikely that the kitchen garden ha-ha was coped, a constructional decision which delayed work in the wilderness because (again) of uncertainty over whether to use brick or stone. Savile's choice on this occasion was almost certainly driven by a desire for economy: quotations for the work were sought, in the light of which George Holt, then steward, recommended that 'the Stone Coping will be much better and not much more Charge'.⁹⁸ Contrary to this advice, the Baronet elected for brick, and when the cost came to '4d per yard more than was at first Computed', the work was suspended until Savile was able to appraise it directly.⁹⁹

COLD BATH, SUMMER-HOUSE AND RELATED WATER FEATURES

Cold bathing was considered a cure for many health problems in the early eighteenth century, and by the late 1720s cold baths were a comparatively familiar component of English gardens. Langley included cold baths within his list of features appropriate for estate gardens; Lord Burlington's Palladian Bagnio at Chiswick, which Savile visited in 1728, was a renowned example (see Chapter 3).¹⁰⁰ Savile's personal account books from 1703 onwards record extended visits to spas 'for the perfecting' of his health which throughout the 1710s seems to have been dangerously weak,¹⁰¹ and in the late 1720s construction work began on an ambitious complex of architectural and water

⁹⁶ NA: DD/SR/211/227/180.

⁹⁷ Letter Holt to Savile, 12 April 1731. NA: DD/SR/211/24/11b.

⁹⁸ Letter Holt to Savile, 19 April 1731. NA: DD/SR/211/24/12a.

⁹⁹ Letter Holt to Savile, 15 May 1731. NA: DD/SR/211/24/17.

¹⁰⁰ Also Dugdale (1997), 38; Kellerman (2009).

¹⁰¹ In 1716 Madam Savile remarked upon her son's 'many prospects of Death' and in 1720 Elmsall feared that the Baronet might be in 'soe weake a state of health [he] co'd never see Rufford againe'. Letter Madam Savile to Savile, May 1716 (NA: DD/SR/212/3); Letters Elmsall to Savile 6 & 12 July 1720 (NA: DD/SR/212/3).

features within the kitchen garden: an open air cold bath terminating within a summer-house and supplying a fountain, cascades and series of ornamental streams. While the water features associated with the bath have since been built over and an alternative fountain was installed in the nineteenth century, the basic architectural framework of the bath and summer or bathing house, as it was alternatively known, have survived into the twentieth century. An overlay of *Smith's 1725 Survey* on the 1885 OS Map (Figure 4.4) shows the footprint of the structure in relation to the early eighteenth-century grounds, and is included here to provide a spatial context for the more detailed considerations to follow. Figure 4.5 shows the site before and after restoration work in 1995.

The bathing complex was intended to form an integral part of the wider pleasure ground design, and to this end the axis of the cold bath was aligned so that 'ye midle of ye Bath... if Extended Eastwards... will Run through ye midle of White Walk Canall'.¹⁰² By autumn 1727, the foundations of the cold bath walls had been dug.¹⁰³ Gaps in the record of estate correspondence suggest that Savile was in residence during much of the period when the work almost certainly took place (1726-7) and may therefore have personally directed its progress. By October 1727, however, the Baronet was supervising developments from London and Smith was using detailed plans to communicate the complexities of the situation on the ground (Figure 4.6).¹⁰⁴ These show the bath as a bottle necked structure (a form confirmed by the 1995 restoration) the main body of which was 12 feet wide, about 50 feet long and of graded depth, becoming 'shallower very fast' east of its mid-point.¹⁰⁵ Smith's annotations together with a 'Computation of ye Expense' drawn up in May 1728 reflect the considerable investment of material and financial resources made in the cold bath alone.¹⁰⁶ After lining with tempered clay, 'pavers' were set in the bottom and Mansfield stone (cut on a 'Beville' and 'laid in moss') used to line the walls, which despite

¹⁰² Descriptive detail accompanying a plan drawn up by Smith and included as part of a letter to Savile, 30 October 1727. NA: DD/SR/211/227/182.

¹⁰³ Letter Smith to Savile, 8 November 1727. NA: DD/SR/211/227/181.

¹⁰⁴ At least 5 such plans were drawn up.

¹⁰⁵ Detailed dimensions and distances between all the principal components of the bath/summer-house complex are given on the *verso* of another of Smith's plans. NA: DD/SR/202/16/1.

¹⁰⁶ NA: DD/SR/218/1/32.

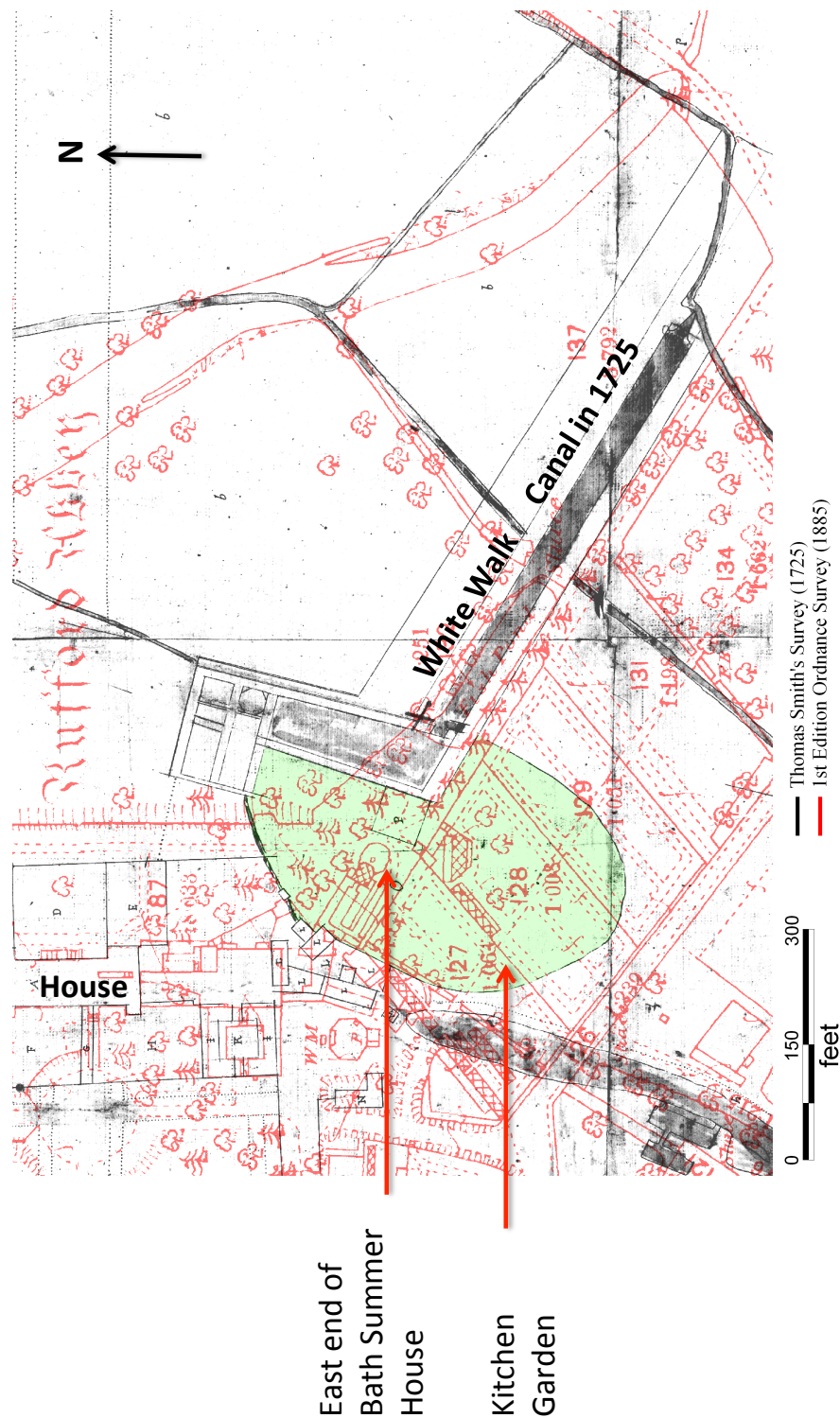


Figure 4.4: Overlay of Thomas Smith's Survey (1725) on the 1st Edition Ordnance Survey (1885)

Detail selected to highlight the alignment of White Walk Canal and the cold-bath/summer-house complex, the relationship of the canal's western end to the house stews, and its eastern end to Rainworth Water. The Snake Pond complex (see *c.1700 Survey*) is not represented on Smith's survey though the ponds were managed for carp husbandry throughout Savile's ownership (see Chapter 5).



Figure 4.5: Twentieth-century restoration of the cold-bath/summer-house complex.

In the late 19th century the cold-bath was covered and the summer-house roofed and converted into an orangery.

(a) The orangery prior to the 1995 restoration programme
(National Monuments Records Centre, Swindon)



(b & c) The site photographed 2015

(b) The aim of the restoration programme was to return to the original design as far as was compatible with use as a display area for sculpture. In its current form the bath is only partially uncovered, and the loggia, which was originally open, is now glazed to provide an exhibition space.

(c) The eastern façade post restoration showing the relationship of the bath complex to the Hall.



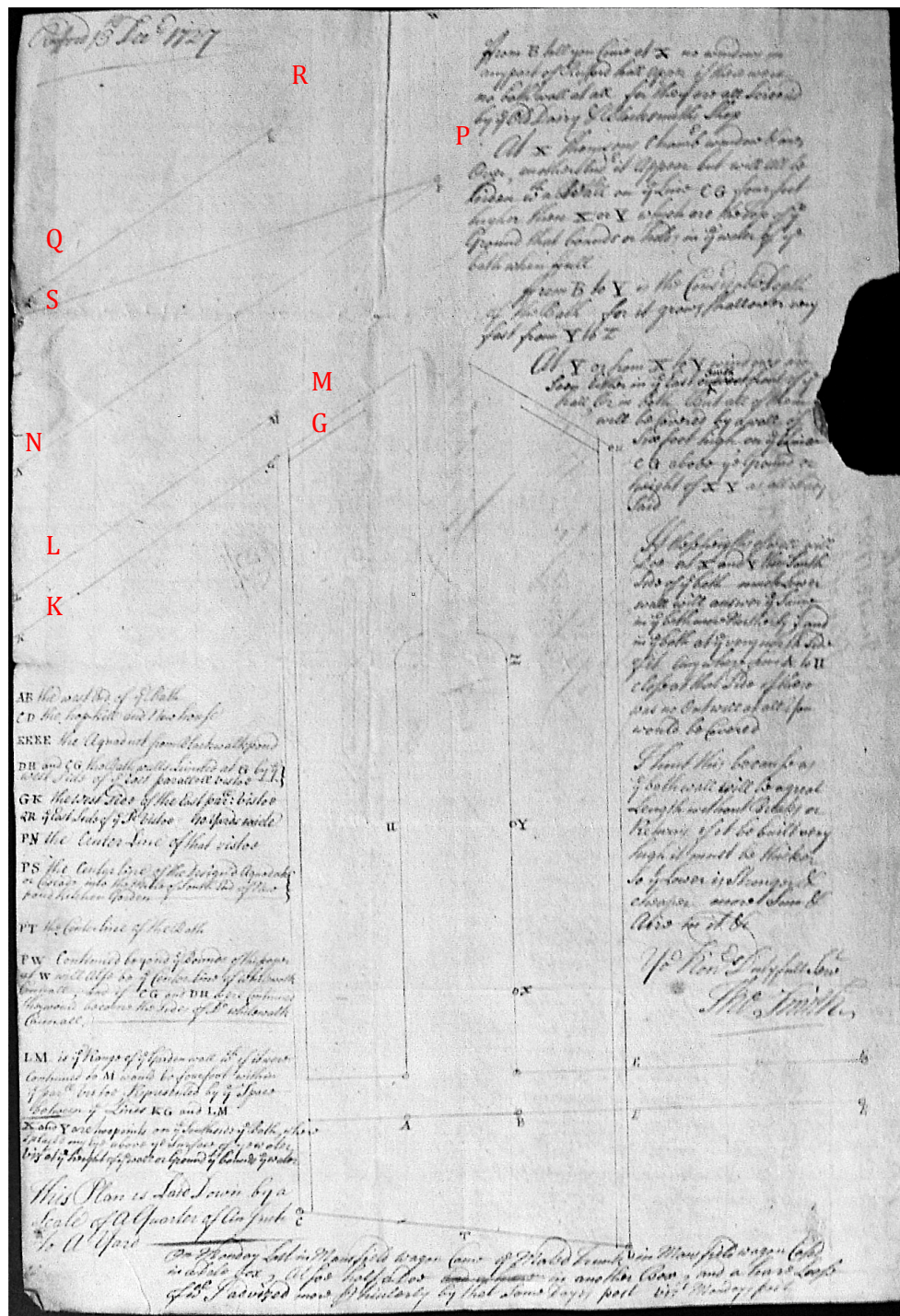


Figure 4.6: Letter from Thomas Smith to Sir George referenced 'Plan of ye Bath & what Height of Wall will Cover it from sight of ye House &c.'

(Letter Smith to Savile, 13 December 1727, NA: DD/SR/211/227/176. See also NA: DD/SR/211/227/182; DD/SR/202/16/1&2; DD/SR/202/10; DD/SR211/227/164)

Sightlines identified from the wider pleasure grounds include:

The east and west sides and centre line of the 'East par= vistoe' from 'ye North End of Thompsons Breck' (QR, KG, NP)

'The Center line of the Designed Aquaduct or Cascade into the middle of south End of Nue Pond Kitchen Garden' (PS)

The 'Range of ye Garden Wall' (LM) and its impact 'if it were continued to M' on 'ye parallel vistoe'.

the considerable gradient of the bath (the 1995 restoration indicates *c.*4 feet) were constructed of stone 'from a foundation full as Deep as ye Deepest part of ye Bath [8 feet]... and made Two foot wide'.¹⁰⁷ Expenditure amounted to around £130.¹⁰⁸

Though cold bathing at Rufford was enjoyed in the open air, privacy was of vital importance to the Baronet and the summer-house formed the eastern end of a walled enclosure. Determination of the form and dimensions of these walls, in particular the flanking walls to north and south, necessitated considerable exchange of correspondence between Smith and Savile, and was the cause, to a large degree, of the annotated plans referred to above. The challenge faced by Smith was two-fold. Firstly, how to satisfy Savile's wish for privacy as cost-effectively as possible? Since the walls would be 'a great length' (26 yards as finally constructed), the lower they were, the 'cheaper and stronger' they would be and the 'more sun and aire' would enter.¹⁰⁹ That said, the walls had to be of a sufficient height that bathers would be invisible from the upper east and west windows of the Hall.¹¹⁰ Smith's most creative solution was a 6 foot wall coupled with 'a pentace or shed to be supported by posts Near ye Edge of ye Bath & tiled that ye water or Rayn might shed outward from ye Bath into ye Garden'; Savile ultimately determined upon brick walls 13 feet high, coped with stone and costing £70.¹¹¹ The second issue was the length of the walls. The fountain basin into which the bath's exit water was to flow and the eastern façade of the summer-house projects, was to be a focal point for views from the wider pleasure grounds, in particular the 'New pond' in the kitchen garden and a flanking walk on the east side of a new wilderness (see Section 4.3.4) then being laid out north of the Hall – the 'East par=vistoe which Comes from ye North End of Thompsons Breck quite into ye Kitchen Garden' in Smith's plans (for example, Figure 4.6).¹¹² Smith's correspondence records that designs for the enclosure

¹⁰⁷ NA: DD/SR/211/227/182.

¹⁰⁸ NA: DD/SR/218/1/32.

¹⁰⁹ Letter Smith to Savile, 13 December 1727. NA: DD/SR/211/227/176.

¹¹⁰ Sightlines from the various windows into the bath enclosure are particularly focused on in plans. NA: DD/SR/211/227/176; DD/SR/202/16/2.

¹¹¹ Letter Smith to Savile, 1 January 1728 (NA: DD/SR/211/227/173); NA: DD/SR/218/1/32.

¹¹² Letter Smith to Savile, 30 October 1727. NA: DD/SR/211/227/182.

had to be adjusted when the details of the new wilderness became finalised.¹¹³ By March 1728, Smith was requesting directions for the positioning of doors into the complex. A plan prepared to clarify his concerns details walks linking the southern side of the bathing enclosure to Black Walk Pond and suggests two doors, one in the western end of each flanking wall.¹¹⁴

Construction of the summer-house, the first of two architecturally significant buildings introduced by the 7th Baronet into Rufford's gardens, was finally begun in the spring of 1729.¹¹⁵ John Hallam has been attributed with the design of what has since been characterised as an 'accomplished and unusual' building with classical elements,¹¹⁶ and undated architectural drawings with 'Mr Hallam's Draught of ye Bath Summer House' penned on the *verso* exist in the Savile Archives (Figure 4.7).¹¹⁷ Hallam seems to have been a local man, and though otherwise unrecognised as an architect and dismissed by Vanbrugh as 'a poor mean Country Joyner', he served under Savile's neighbour, Sir Thomas Hewett of Shireoaks, at the Office of Works, Whitehall, until the latter's death in 1726, and was employed in a subordinate capacity on Hewett's 'Greek Tempietto' at around the same time.¹¹⁸ Another local commission (pre-1731) was at Nottingham Castle, where Hallam was assisted by Savile's carpenter, John Blyton.¹¹⁹ Moreover, there is some evidence that he was known to Savile as early as 1715: during the construction of a boat-house for the Baronet at Fiskerton-upon-Trent that year, Smith recorded the opinion of 'Mr Hallam' over furnishings.¹²⁰

Initial plans for Rufford's summer-house may, however, pre-date Hallam's involvement. Matthew's *Schedall* of 1728, and an unattached fragment

¹¹³ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁴ Letter Smith to Savile, 9 March 1728. NA: DD/SR/211/227/164.

¹¹⁵ Letter Matthew to Savile, 10 March 1729. NA: DD/SR/211/58/16.

¹¹⁶ Dugdale (1997), 37; Anonymous (1995), 12.

¹¹⁷ NA: XBM/8S.

¹¹⁸ Hallam's wife was reputed by Vanbrugh to keep 'an Alehouse in Nottinghamshire'; David Hallam is listed as one of Earl Manvers's tenants on the Eakring Tithe Map of 1738. Webb (1928), 169-70; NA: AT38/2b&2c; Dugdale (1997), 37-8.

¹¹⁹ Letter Holt to Savile, 10 May 1731. NA: DD/SR/211/24/16. The context of Holt's communication suggests that Hallam was laying a new floor. Blyton also assisted in laying a 'large fine floor' at Thoresby.

¹²⁰ See also communication to Smith from 'Mr Hallam' in London re return of the former's son Robert, a deserter from the army. Letters Smith to Savile, 29 February 1715 & 11 April 1724. NA: DD/SR/211/227/83,100.

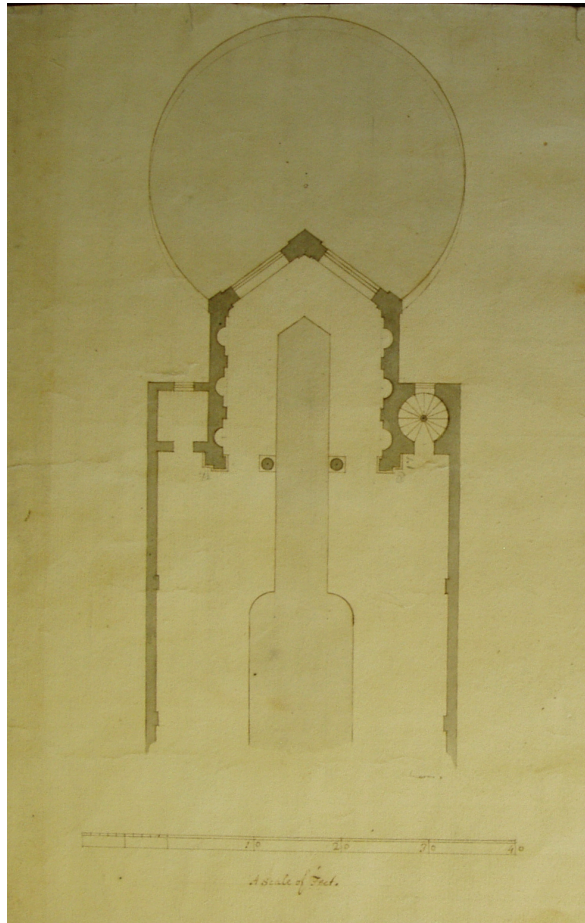
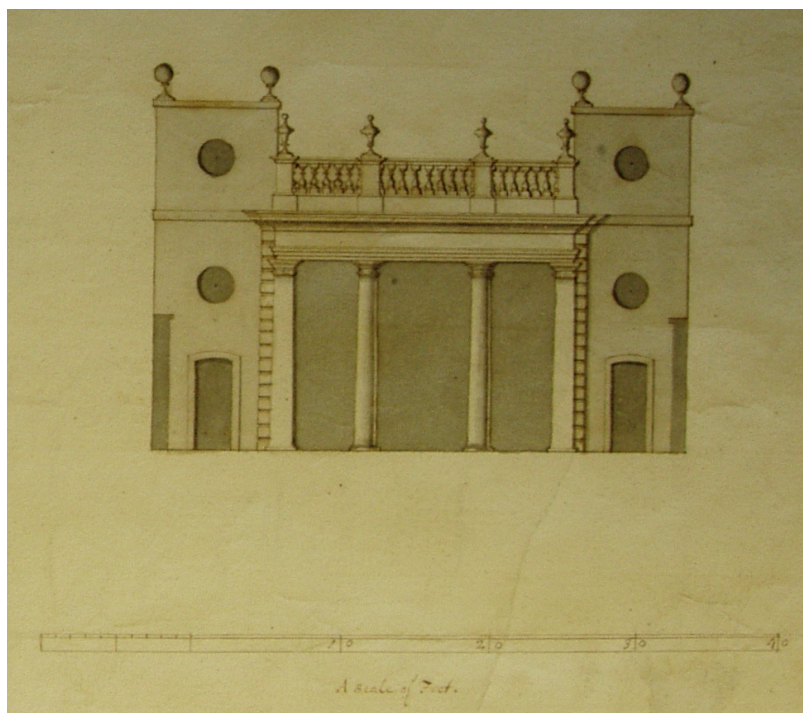


Figure 4.7: Undated plans referenced on verso 'Mr Hallams Draught of ye Bath Summer-House'. (NA: XBM 8S)

(above): Suggested design for the east end of the summer-house, indicating a half-hexagonal form for the bay. A half-octagonal design was used for the final build.

(below): Elevation of the west side of the summer-house.



in handwriting of the period, refer to 'Mr Tonis Plan of Sumer house for Kitchen Garden Terras'.¹²¹ Furthermore, several sketch plans exploring alternative geometries for the structure have survived, which based on their character and the spelling used for annotations were almost certainly prepared by Smith.¹²² There is significant evidence that both the 7th Baronet and Smith shared an interest in complex geometrical forms – in 1722, for example, Smith designed a 'geometrical butter box' for his master in the form of a 'hexadron'¹²³ – and a notable feature of all the extant summer-house designs is their concern with geometry. Those attributed to Hallam describe the structure's eastern façade as a projecting bay in the form of a half hexagon or a half octagon (Figures 4.7 & 4.8); those attributed by the present author to Smith include a dodecahedron (Figure 4.9). The Hallam (attributed) plans also present alternative paving designs: rectangular slabs *versus* a diagonal arrangement of squares for the walks bordering the bath (Figure 4.8). As with other aspects of Savile's pleasure ground design, it seems fair to conclude that the final form which the summer-house took was the product of a distinctly collaborative engagement.

By the time work began on the summer-house Smith had left Savile's service (died July 1729) and Matthew had taken over as Rufford steward. Hallam and Robert Birch of Mansfield, the mason responsible for managing all the significant stonework involved in Savile's improvements about the Hall and grounds, were the men directing work on the ground; Savile, in response to their advice, finalised decisions from London. On 10 March 1729, the Baronet was informed by his steward that:

[O]n Saturday I went to Mr Hallam & he with me to Mansfield to Mr Birch ye Mason which after their Consultation agree'd to begin work on the Bath Summer House, they desire to be Inform'd whether ye Cavities of ye Neaches must be Brick or Wrought Stone ye Latter they say will be much ye Better.¹²⁴

¹²¹ Matthew spells the surveyor's name 'Toansus'. NA: DD/SR/215/14/1; DD/SR/202/16/7.

¹²² None of the summer-house plans are dated, but by late 1727 Smith's correspondence indicates that a working design was in existence. Letter Smith to Savile, 30 October 1727. NA: DD/SR/211/227/182.

¹²³ Letter Smith to Savile, 29 January 1722. NA: DD/SR/211/227/28.

¹²⁴ NA: DD/SR/211/58/16.

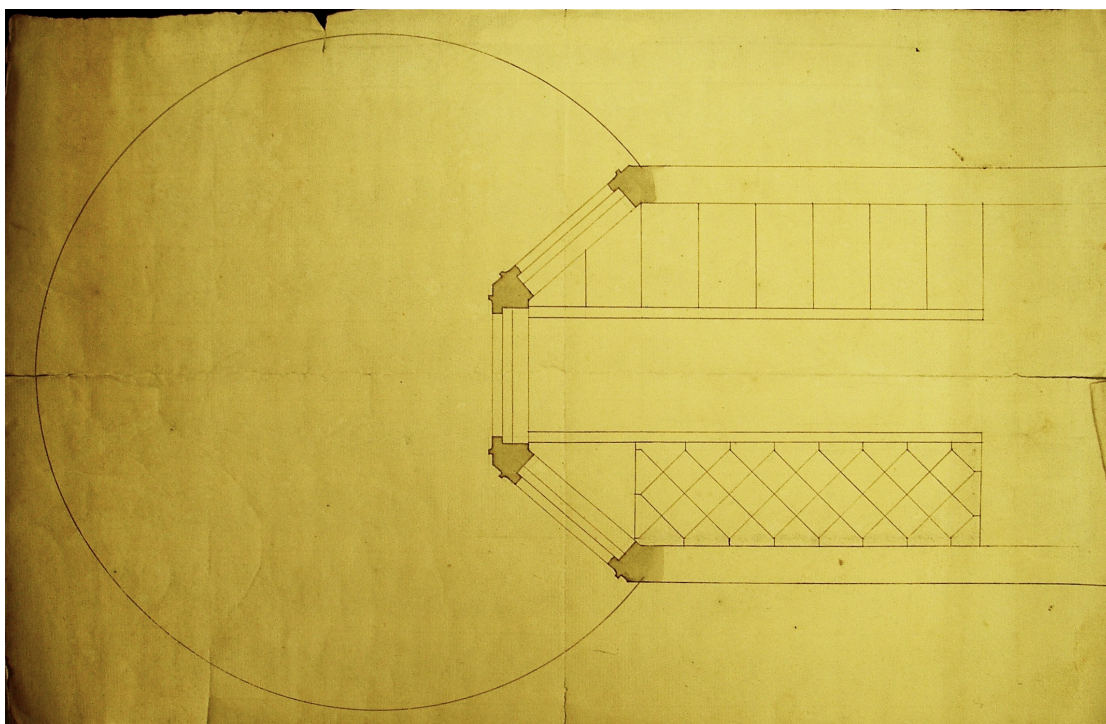


Figure 4.8: Undated draught, attributed to Hallam, of paving designs for the walks bordering the cold bath.

(NA: DD/SR/202/3)

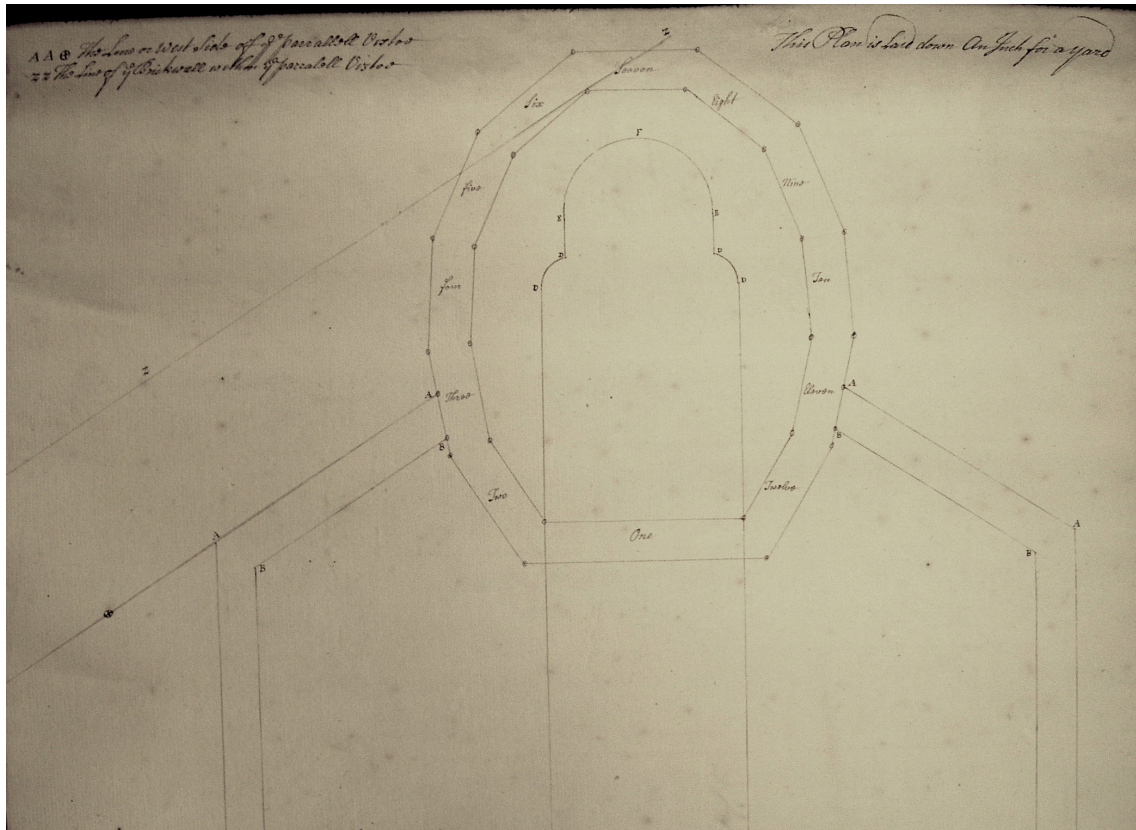


Figure 4.9: Dodecahedral design for the eastern bay of the summerhouse, attributed by the present author to Thomas Smith, c.1728.

(NA: DD/SR/202/10)

By May, Hallam was reporting that ‘they goe on very well with ye Bath Summer house’ and issuing directions to Matthew concerning lead from Southwell for the roof;¹²⁵ in October Birch had received the first of a series of work payments, £4 14s 5d for 51 ½ days work ‘setting the stone at the Bath House’.¹²⁶ Rufford day-labourer and carpenter, John Blyton, was another skilled craftsman involved in the construction. Having confirmed that ‘ye wood is Extreemely good’, Blyton was, by April, preparing the window sashes and frames.¹²⁷ By December Savile was being reminded that urns had still to be chosen for the niches, and in May 1730, a year after the construction work had begun, a local tradesman, Joseph Machin, was painting the ‘tops of ye Sirculer Sashes in ye Bathing House’, marking its completion.¹²⁸ Hallam’s drawing of the west elevation of the summer-house accurately represents the pavilion as it was constructed, but the final design selected for the east elevation was a half-octagonal form with three large sash windows. The bay was framed by square towers, the southernmost of which contained a spiral staircase leading up to a flat lead roof from where views into the wider landscape could be enjoyed. The bath-house complex lay along the sightline of a ride laid out by Savile through Eakring-Brail Wood and might have been glimpsed on first entering the ride by someone on horseback, though given the intervening distance (c.3 miles) and topography, the Hall itself was almost certainly the intended focal point of this vistoe (see Chapter 7).

Savile’s cold bath was fed *via* ‘an aquaduct’ from Black Walk Pond which entered at its western end (see Figure 4.6), the water then flowing through the bath and out of its eastern end into the circular basin which adjoined the summer-house bay. The site was animated by a gravity-fed fountain at the basin’s centre, a feature conceived from the outset as an integral component of the bath summer-house project and constructed to Savile’s specifications,

¹²⁵ Forty-five hundred weight of lead was cast. Letters Matthew to Savile, 24 May & 14 July 1729. NA: DD/SR/211/58/5,1.

¹²⁶ Estate Vouchers & Receipts. NA: DD/SR/215/24.

¹²⁷ Letter Matthew to Savile, 17 (19 on *verso*) April 1729. NA: DD/SR/211/58/10.

¹²⁸ The Machins, father (Joseph) and son, were regularly employed by Holt to carry out painting work on the Rufford Estate. Machin (presumably the son) was son-in-law to one of Savile’s most substantial Rufford tenants. Estate Vouchers & Receipts (NA: DD/SR/215/24,53); Letters Holt to Savile, 9 April 1773 & 2 June 1739 (NA: DD/SR/211/24/49,152); Holt’s Estate Accounts, 1730/1731 (NA: DD/SR/6/1/1).

though the Baronet may not have drawn up the original plans.¹²⁹ As early as July 1726, Smith requested from Savile,

...to know how Great a Compass or what Diameter of a Circle I am to Dig up in Order to make a foundation for the Tower from whence the Cateract of water is to fall.¹³⁰

A more detailed description of the feature is provided on the *verso* of one of the Smith (attributed) summer-house plans. Here the 'tower' is referred to as the 'bullyoung':

The bigness of ye Trough that is to Convey ye water from ye Bath to ye Bullyoung in the Midle of the fountain is 46 Inches Deep... . The Topp of ye Bullyoung where ye water Slobbers off is to be full 22 Inches Diameter in an Octogon takeing or Measured from ye opposite side.¹³¹

Bullyoung is almost certainly a phonetic spelling of the French term *boüillon* which, in *The Theory and Practice of Gardening* (1712), James defines as a term used in relation to water ('Boüillons d'Eau') to describe 'very low Spouts, that rise little higher than a quick spring'.¹³² As with *parterre*, however, in an English gardening context *boüillon* may have acquired a broader, even generic, usage and signified water jets of different types and scale. Notably, a series of 'large boullions' attracted admiration from garden visitors to Thoresby in the period (see Section 4.2.2).

Whatever the scale of Rufford's initial water jet, by the spring of 1732 its impact was being enhanced. Holt reassured Savile in mid-March that 'Mr Birch says he has not forgot any Directions your Honour gave him about the Cascades [north and south of the bath-house]', and estate correspondence records construction of the cascades and play of water over a 'Great Stone'.¹³³ By the time Birch's work was complete this water feature had come to characterise the

¹²⁹ The 1728 *Schedall* includes an entry: 'Planns Belonging to ye Bath Bathhouse Fountaine &c.' Matthew does not attribute these drawings but adds a note suggesting that they were in the keeping of Robert Birch. NA: DD/SR/215/14/1.

¹³⁰ Letter Smith to Savile, 11 July 1726. NA: DD/SR/211/227/131.

¹³¹ Smith (attributed) Plan of basin/bath-house complex. NA: DD/SR/202/16/1.

¹³² James (1712), 202.

¹³³ Letters Holt to Smith, 15, 18 March & 1 April 1732. NA: DD/SR/211/24/24-5,28.

area and would continue to do so throughout the eighteenth century: estate documents reference the 'Bullion Bason'; the 'boulion walk' (a continuation of which ran along the eastern end of Fountain Court); the planting of an 'Espalier Hedge... from the End of the White Walk to the foot of the Bullion Bank'; and 'Bath Bullion, 0.5 acres'.¹³⁴

One of the sightlines included on Smith's 1727 plan of the bath summer-house complex (Figure 4.6) provides the earliest direct reference to a 'wast water canall' associated with the fountain:

The Center Line of ye Designed Aquaduct or Cascade from P [the centre of the basin] in a Line through New Pond Kitchen Garden... twill first meet with ye wast water Canall, 55 yards from P.¹³⁵

The canal in question was almost certainly that referenced in Matthew's 1728 *Schedall* as 'My masters draught for the water from the bath fountaine to ye By water Cannall', an extant draught of which, complete with a detailed description, both clearly in Savile's hand, are shown in Figure 4.10. Of particular note, given early eighteenth-century admiration for contrast and variety in a garden setting, is the use of 'meander' and 'strait' water features. Moreover, in garden theses of the period, the use of serpentine features was discussed principally in relation to woodland walks (see Section 4.2.1), and such conscious naturalism may have been comparatively novel in the context of water. Savile's island motif – a heart – was certainly highly idiosyncratic and would be used by him again for planting beds within the East Front Parterre (see Section 4.3.3). By April 1728, John Blyton was making 'a Grate for the By Water Cannall in Kitchen Garden', and an undated, unattributed design entitled 'Plan for two Arches for a Bridge from the Stables cross the Canal' (Figure 4.11), which from the handwriting is almost certainly from the period, may correspond to the 'Bridge' on Savile's design.¹³⁶

¹³⁴ Letters Holt to Savile, 10 April 1732 & 4 December 1736 (NA: DD/SR/211/24/27,108); 'Memorandum of distances of the ground on the East side of Rufford House', 15 October 1733 (NA: DD/SR/202/13); 'Rufford Demesne Survey'd by J. Young', 1796 (NA: DD2000/4).

¹³⁵ Letter Smith to Savile, 30 October 1727. NA: DD/SR/211/227/182.

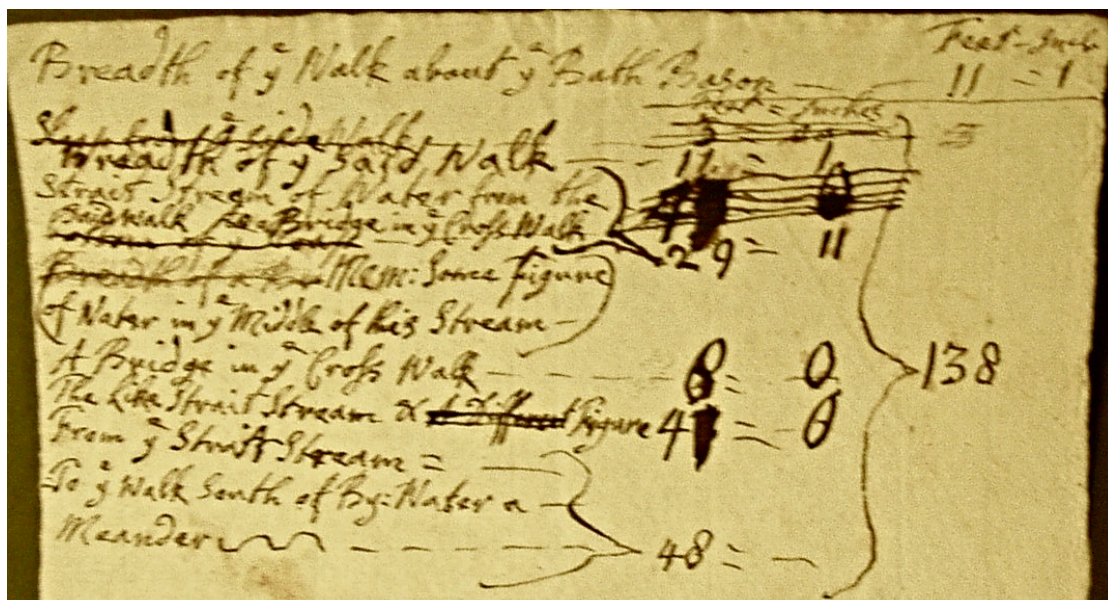
¹³⁶ NA: DD/SR/211/227/160; DD/SR/202/11/2b.



Figure 4.10: Graphic and written directions for the construction of ornamental water channels leading from the cold-bath fountain.

(above): Undated plan in the 7th Baronet's hand, almost certainly the draught referenced by Rufford steward William Matthew in his *Schedall* (1728) as: 'My Masters Draught for the water from the Bath Fountaine to ye by water Cannall'. (NA: DD/SR/215/14/4)

(below): Associated measurements, again in Sir George's hand. (NA: DD/SR/215/14/3)



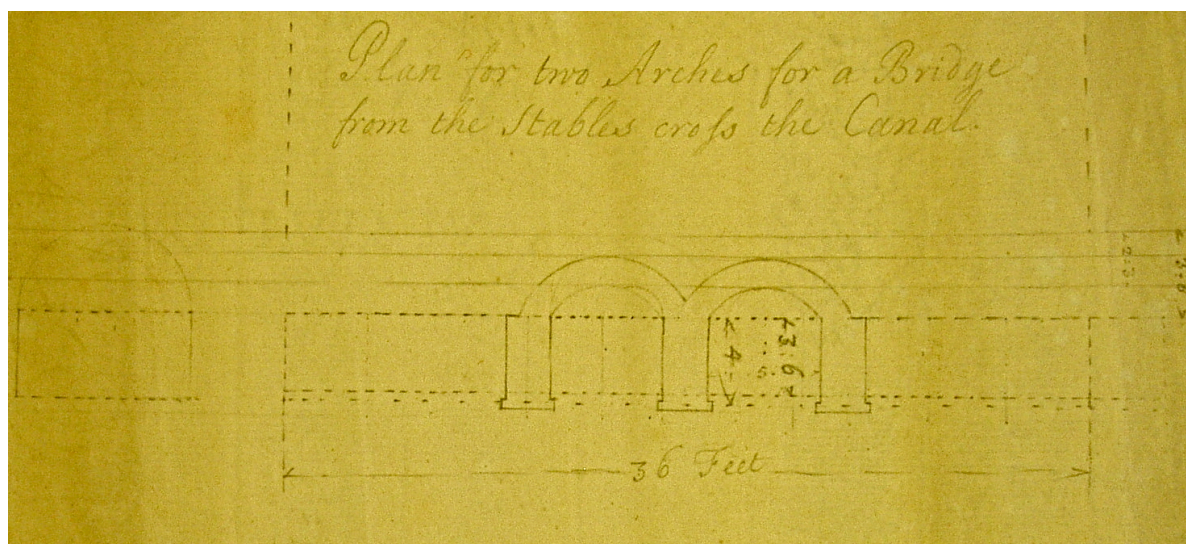


Figure 4.11: Unattributed, undated, 'Plan for two Arches for a Bridge from the Stables cross the Canal'.

(NA: DD/SR/202/11/2B)

4.3.3 East of the Hall

The major expansion of Savile's pleasure grounds took place to the east and north of the house, improvements which as realised by the end of Savile's life added a further c.70 acres to his gardens. Mr Tonus's plans for 'East side of ye House' and 'New Wilderness [north of the Hall]' (see below and Section 4.18), for which he received payment in 1725, present a comprehensive vision for the development of this area and capture a preliminary stage in Savile's thinking. From the late 1720s work proceeded simultaneously across much of the ground represented in Tonus's plans, and from 1734 Savile's 'Workmen and Day Labourers on sundry Improvements made to Rufford Seat' (as distinct from the regular day-labour force managed by the gardener) regularly numbered between 30 and 40 men, their activities supervised by a full-time overseer, though responsibility for co-ordinating the phased progression of improvements was retained by his steward (see Section 3.4).¹³⁷

EAST FRONT PARTERRE

Tonus's design for the east front gardens (Figure 4.12) includes a formal *parterre* of rectangular shape and considerable scale (c.4.75 acres), extending the full width of the Hall's east front and incorporating elements of the gardens' seventeenth-century structure (Figure 4.13). On Tonus's plan a stepped entrance has been added to the Hall's east front within Fountain Court, reminiscent of James's recommendations, and the court redesigned as a turning area for vehicles approaching from Mill Lane to the east; Elm Walk is represented as a shady walk along the northern border of the *parterre*. The entire design appears to have been conceived for a level site.

An alternative design for the *parterre* marked 'My Master's Draught Plan' on its *verso* and accompanied by a detailed memorandum recording the intended dimensions of its features dated October 1733 (*1733 Memorandum*, see Appendix 4.2), was probably drawn up by Savile (Figure 4.14). This shows a *parterre* of comparable dimensions, but in place of Tonus's lozenge-shaped beds, the Baronet's plan consists of an elaborate structure of crescents and hearts, the

¹³⁷ Holt estimated that this cost the estate around £13 a week. Letter Holt to Savile, 15 March 1735 (NA: DD/SR/211/24/91); for day-labourer counts see Appendix 3.2; for classification of labourers see Holt's Estate Accounts (NA: DD/SR/6/1/1-13).



'Fountain Court' on the *c.1700 Survey*. Note the turning circle for vehicles and double-staired entrance on the east front of the Hall proposed by Tonus.

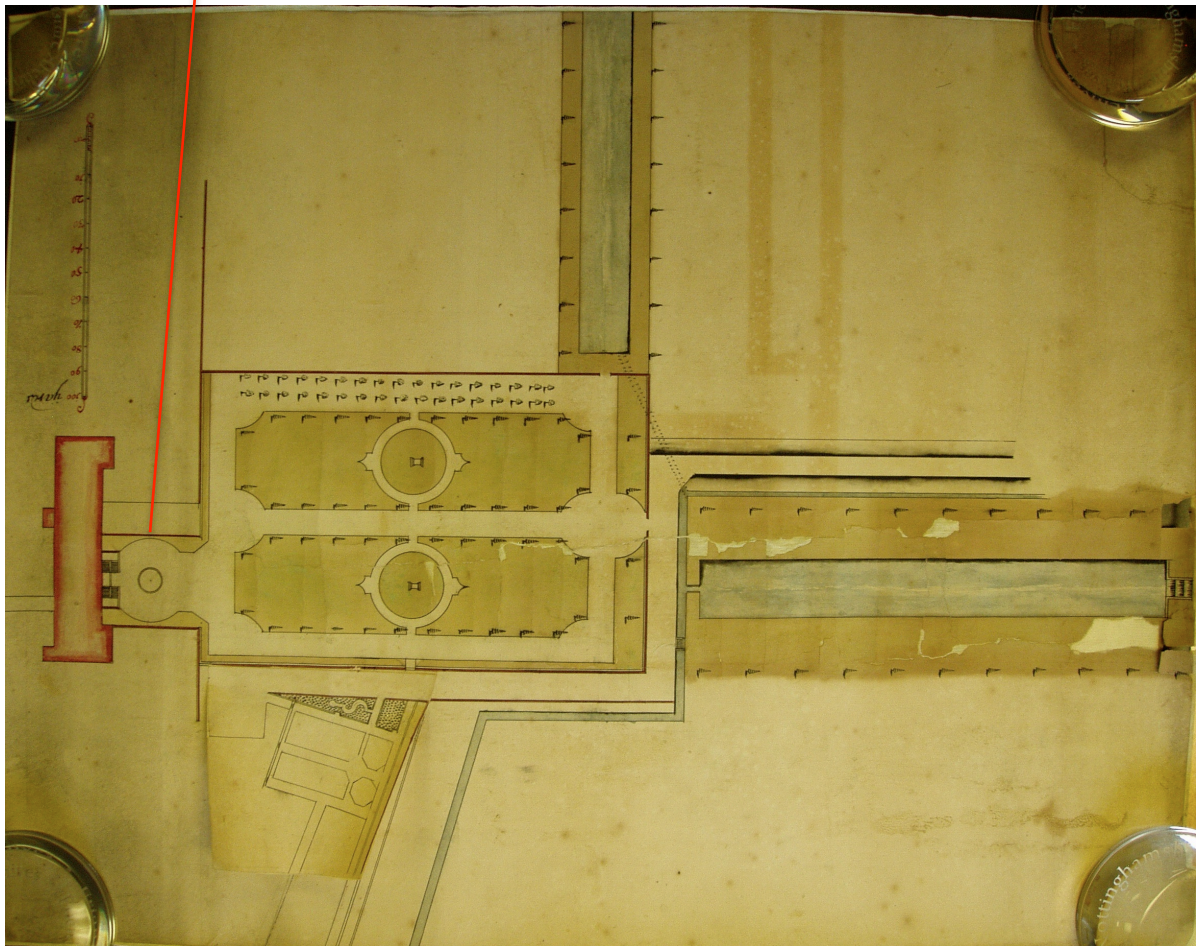


Figure 4.12: 'Mr Thonous's [Tonus's] Plann for East Side of ye House', undated but almost certainly drawn up in 1725, the year in which he received payment for completion of his surveying work at Rufford.

(NA: DD/SR/202/7/1)

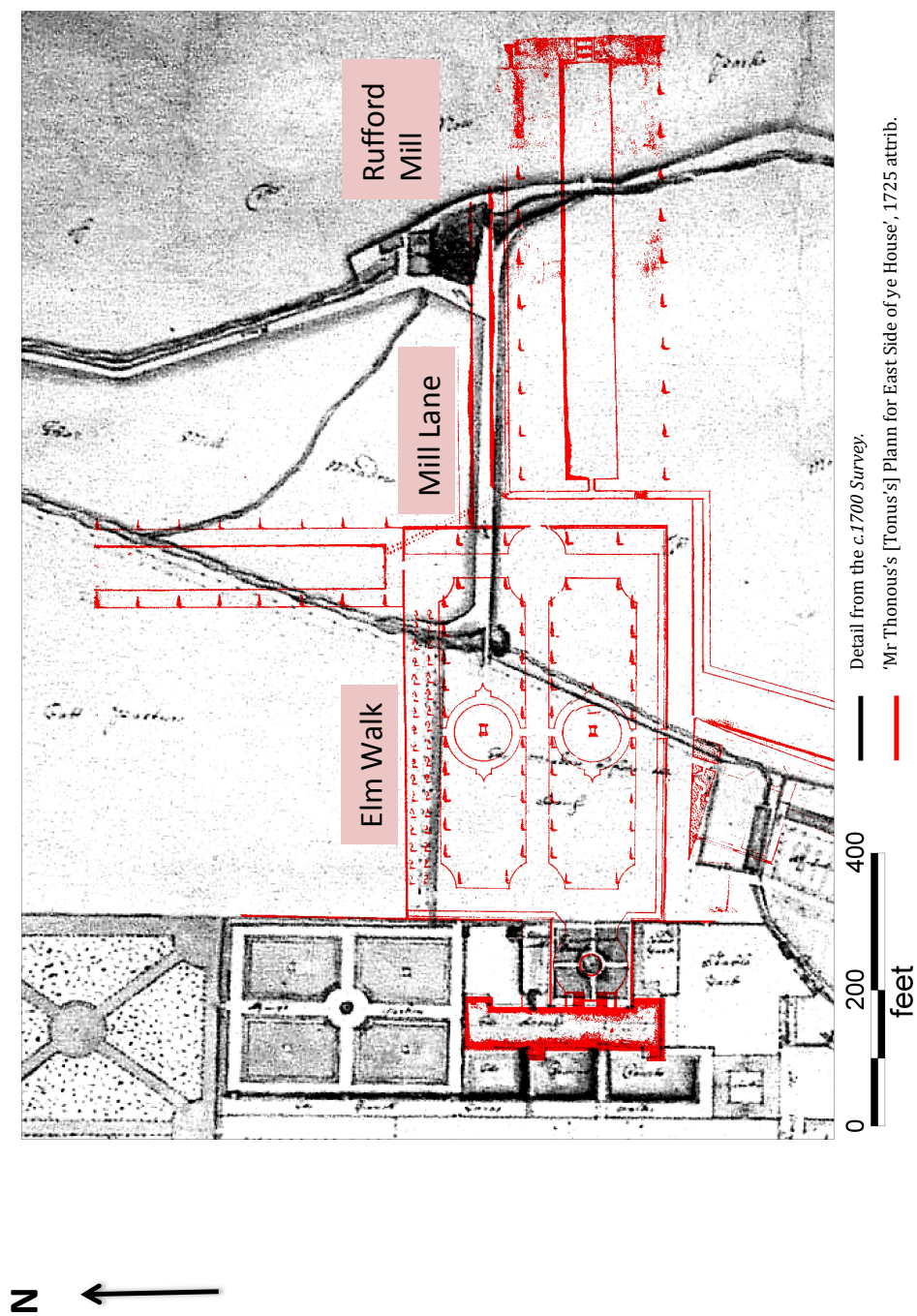


Figure 4.13:

Overlay of 'Mr Thonous's [Tonus's] Plann for East Side of ye House' on a detail from the c.1700 Survey.

(NA: DD/SR/202/7/1; RF5L)

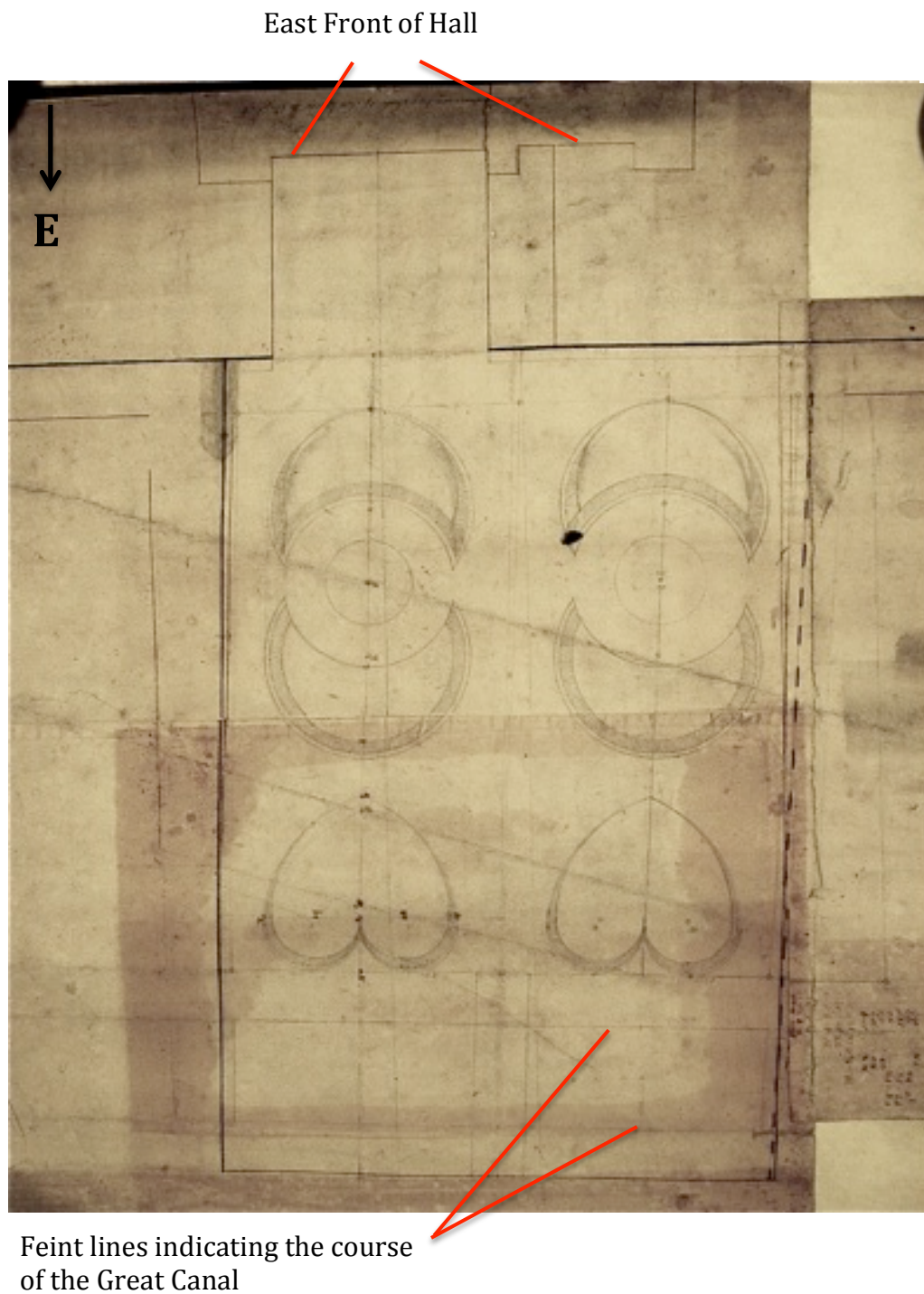


Figure 4.14: Plan referenced on the verso 'My Masters [almost certainly the 7th Baronet] Draught or Plann for the Partear &c. for the East Side of Rufford Hall'.

Described in a 'Memorandum of Distance of the Ground on the East Side of Rufford House' dated 15 October 1733 (NA: DD/SR/202/13, see Appendix 4.2).

(NA: DD/SR/202/14)

latter reminiscent of the island features within the kitchen garden water channels and suggestive of a desire to create visual links between areas of the pleasure grounds. The orthogonal canal structure of Tonus becomes in Savile's design a single north-south canal running along the eastern perimeter of the *parterre* (see **GREAT CANAL** below). As with Tonus's design, Savile's plan appears to be projected on a level site. The design as realised contained elements of both plans, but also deviated from both representations in one fundamental detail: the contour of the ground.

The ground eastwards of Rufford Hall descends towards Rainworth Water and in July 1726 labourers began levelling the site of the future *parterre*. It is clear from estate correspondence in this period that from the outset Savile intended the *parterre* to be staged on at least two levels with a 'Coachway in ye midle' for vehicles approaching from the east, but that the details of this terracing had not been adequately communicated to his steward and gardener. Nevertheless, Smith took responsibility for directing the initial stages of the design according to what he believed would be his master's wishes. His working assumption was that Savile's motive for terracing was principally economic, and therefore that 'the fewer that is the Broader' the levels, the better. To this economic rationale Smith added practical and aesthetic considerations, coming up with a design which entailed levelling the ground for 20 yards east of Fountain Court and then descending to a second level via a gradual slope. For:

...this Graduall slope would not show so shouldering as Gardiners steep slopes and would Extreameely help us Over ye parteer Eastward for Either in this Gradual or in the Gardiners slope we must Continue them Considerably below ye present surface by which means we Get Earth to help to make ye next following Levile piece of Ground, and if ye slope be Large that is $\frac{1}{4}$ $\frac{1}{3}$ or half &c as much as ye Levile Ground wont it Look Easy and Easy to mow and for any to walk on besides Less Trouble & charge in making.¹³⁸

Subsequent correspondence suggests that Savile had a more complex motive for terracing the site, which included creation of 'a shady walk' along the eastern

¹³⁸ Letters Smith to Savile, 20 June (main quotation) & 11 July 1726. NA: DD/SR/211/227/133, 131.

perimeter of Fountain Court ‘answerable to & part of ye East parallell walk from Thompson’s Breck [the site of the New Wilderness]’.¹³⁹ By late 1727 work had begun on the raised beds and paths within the *parterre*. Labourers were reported leading earth to ‘ye north halfmoon’ in November that year, and in May 1734 to the north-east and south ‘hearts’, indicating that Savile’s design was substantially realised.¹⁴⁰ Two years later the ‘small walks’ within the *parterre* were being gravelled, and Elm Walk levelled and planted with fragrant flowering shrubs and climbers in a manner reminiscent of Langley’s recommendations: ‘sweet bays, Laurustinns [*Viburnum tinus*], Honey suckles, sweet bryer Roses[,] Meserions [*Daphne mezereum*], and severall other Flowering Shrubs’.¹⁴¹

There is no evidence that the seventeenth-century design of Fountain Court was significantly modified, rather the contrary: Smith records his master’s intention that the coachway should correspond to a ‘Great walk’, 15 yards wide, leading ‘Coaches &c up to ye fountain Court Gates’.¹⁴² Nevertheless, changes were made to the character of the access route between the eastern courts and to the eastern façade of the Hall. In 1734, Holt recorded that:

All the Great Terras by Fountain Court[,] the two Neeches, and the two Arches for a Passage from Fountain Court to Kings Garden are Finish’d, and all the Steps Laid, only two, and the masons are begining on the Great Arch there.¹⁴³

Stone ‘Paving and Rails’ were subsequently set; further evidence that the architectural feature being described corresponds to that shown on an elevation of the east front attributed to Gibbs c.1750 (Figure 4.15).¹⁴⁴ The double stairway shown on the Gibbs (attributed) elevation and indicated in Tonus’s design was added to the east front in 1738 (see Figures 4.16a&b and Figure 4.12). Its construction was directed by Savile’s mason, Birch, for which he had received payment of the order of £100 by late August 1738; the Nottinghamshire

¹³⁹ The continuation of this walk before the Hall is referred to as ‘Boulion Walk’ in the 1730s. NA: DD/SR/211/227/131; DD/SR/202/13.

¹⁴⁰ Letter Smith to Savile, 11 November 1727 (NA: DD/SR/211/227/180); Letters Holt to Savile, 1 & 24 May 1734 (NA: DD/SR/211/24/67-8).

¹⁴¹ Letters Holt to Savile, 9 February & 28 May 1737. NA: DD/SR/211/24/116,125.

¹⁴² NA: DD/SR/211/227/131.

¹⁴³ Letter Holt to Savile, 30 September 1734. NA: DD/SR/211/24/75.

¹⁴⁴ Letter Holt to Savile, 6 November 1734. NA: DD/SR/211/24/77.

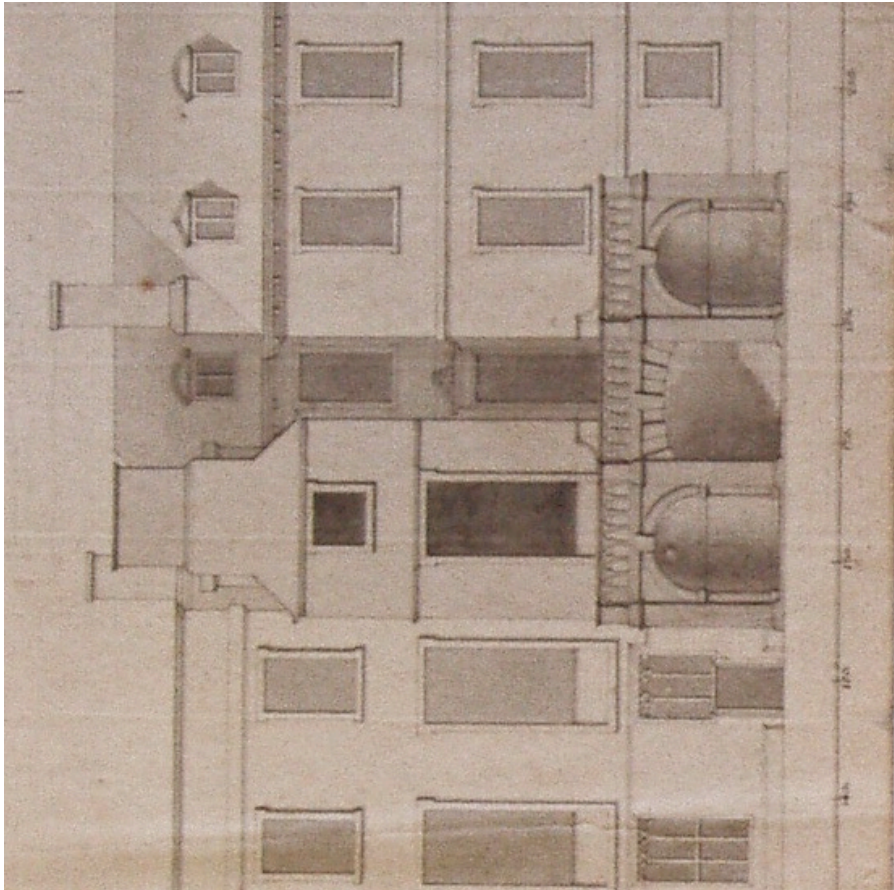
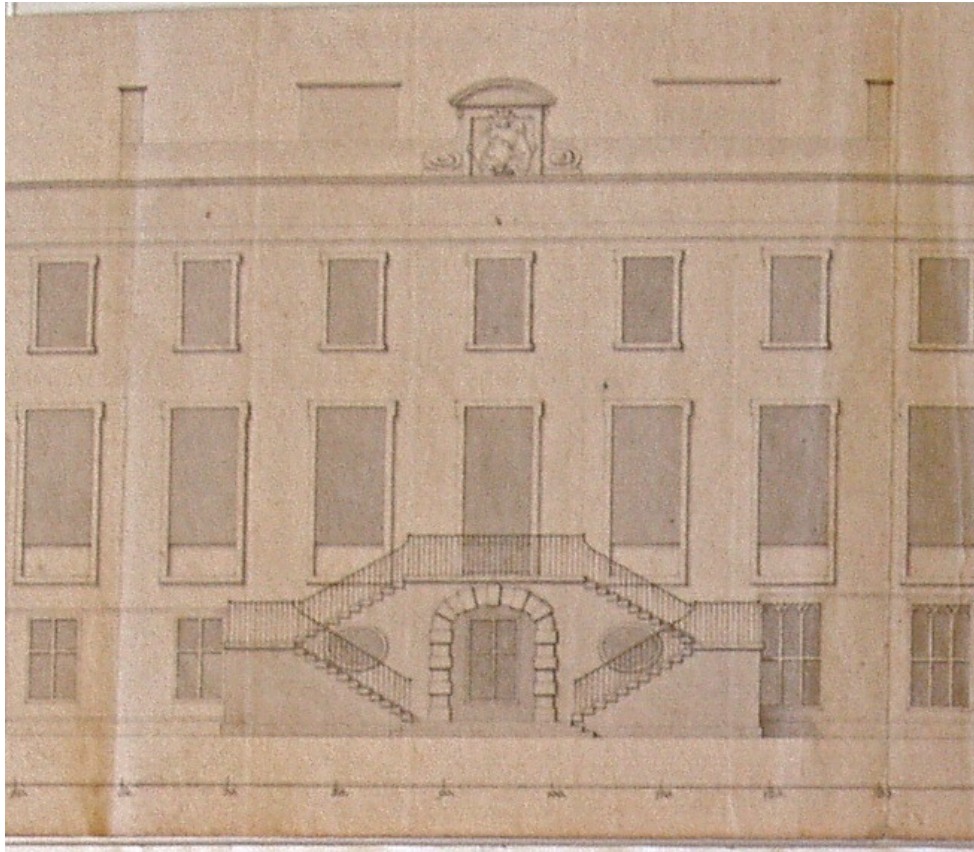
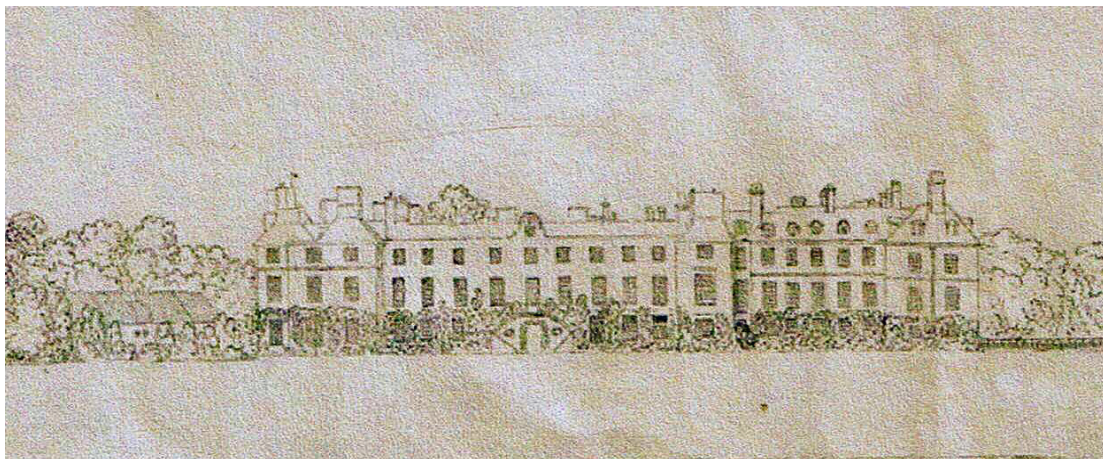


Figure 4.15: Detail from an elevation of the east front of Rufford Hall, attributed to James Gibbs and suggestive of the three-arched passage between Fountain Court and King's Garden constructed in 1734.

(NA: DP/97/1/4)



Figures 4.16a: Detail from an elevation of the east front of Rufford Hall, attributed to James Gibbs, describing the double staircase constructed in 1738. (NA: DP/97/1/4)



Figures 4.16b: Detail from a 'View, in outline, of Rufford Abbey, the seat of the Earl of Scarborough [sic.]' made in 1773 by the Swiss born topographical artist S.H. Grimm.

Grimm's sketch provides the earliest dated representation of this feature.

(British Library: Cartographic Items Additional MS. 15544)

ironsmith, Mr James Foulgham (1712-1770), received £28 17s for the iron rails in July the same year.¹⁴⁵

This was not Foulgham's first commission from Savile. In April 1732, the Baronet had paid the 1st Earl of Cadogan's estate £114 8s 'for the Iron Gates, Palisades, stone Piers and Vases &c.' from Caversham Park, his Berkshire estate.¹⁴⁶ The gates were intended for the northern entrance to the pleasure grounds (see Section 4.3.4), and were to be shipped to Gainsborough then carried by boat to Carlton Ferry, considered the most convenient place for carriage to Rufford with respect to both water and land. The ship, however, sank near Trent Falls and only the 'Large Ornamental Serip over the Doors' was saved.¹⁴⁷ Replacements were commissioned from Foulgham: estate accounts record his receipt of £127 11s in January 1734 for 'Iron Gates, Palisades &c in New Wilderness'.¹⁴⁸ In June the following year Foulgham was contracted for a second pair of related design for the east front (Figure 4.17); a year later he received £150 for 'Gates & Pallisades of the Parterre on the East side of Rufford House'.¹⁴⁹

The 1733 *Memorandum* records the decision to build a wall along the southern border of the *parterre*, work carried out in spring of the following year. By November 1734 Holt was referring to *parterre* walls in the plural: 'The Parterre Walls, where they are not Coped are Cover'd with Sodds to keep from Damage'.¹⁵⁰ The northern boundary of the *parterre* was, however, formed by the great north-south canal discussed below.

¹⁴⁵ Holt's Estate Accounts, 1737/1738 & 1738/1739. NA: DD/SR/6/1/8-9. James Foulgham was the second son of Francis Foulgham, ironsmith of Bridlesmith Gate, Nottingham; his gates and railings were also admired by the Newdigates (examples at Arbury Hall, Warwickshire & Newdigate House, Nottingham). Saunders (2005), 287-8; Holmes (pre-1990), unpublished article in the Rufford Abbey Archives.

¹⁴⁶ Savile's Personal Account Book, 1732-8. NA: DD/SR/A4/36. Presumably payment was made to the late Earl's (*d.* July 1726) trustees who were required to raise £60,000 from the estate. Conveyance document. WSRO: GOODWOOD/E438.

¹⁴⁷ Letters Holt to Savile, 13 & 17 May 1732. NA: DD/SR/211/24/30,32.

¹⁴⁸ Holt's Estate Accounts, 1733/1734. NA: DD/SR/6/1/4. The gates were dismantled in the late twentieth century. F.J.M. Craddock, master Bladesmith, Welbeck Iron Works, commented on the 'excellence' of the workmanship: a quality 'so rare... almost unknown... never seen personally not even on work of such acknowledged masters as Jean Tijou, [André] Montigny, [Robert] Bakewell'. Report to Mr Eyre, 17 August 1990, in the Rufford Abbey Archives.

¹⁴⁹ Holt's Estate Accounts, 1734/1735. NA: DD/SR/6/1/5.

¹⁵⁰ Letter Holt to Savile, 6 November 1734. NA: DD/SR/211/24/77.

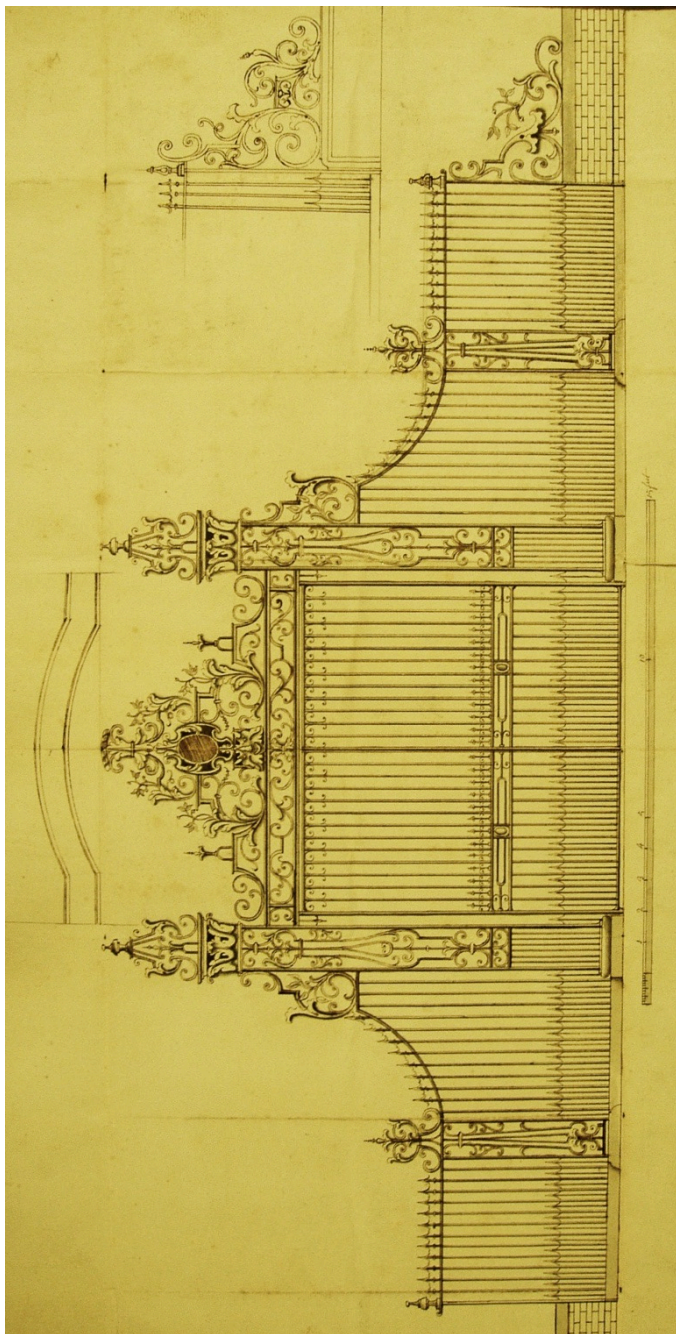


Figure 4.17: 'Draught of Gates, & Palisades for ye East Side of Rufford=House, bespoke of Mr Foulgham this day', 11 June 1734.

(NA: XBM/9S. See also a memorandum of agreement in which the 7th Baronet specified minor amendments to the above design, NA: DD/SR/215/13/6.)

GREAT CANAL

Tonus's design for the 'New Wilderness' shows a north-south canal almost half a mile long, extending from the northern side of the East Front Parterre and defining the eastern perimeter of an extensive area of ornamental woodland (Figure 4.18). The 1733 *Memorandum* associated with the construction of Savile's East Front Parterre refers to an 'intended canal', 60 feet in breadth, bordered by walks of 30 feet breadth, defining the eastern perimeter of the design. As with the east front *parterre* garden, there is convincing evidence that the feature, as realised, incorporated elements of both designs.

Construction work on the 'Great Canal' or, as it was alternatively described 'the Canal in the New Wilderness', began seriously in 1734. In January that year Holt recorded labourers 'Leading Earth out of the Canall to the Parterre' and thereafter, until May 1738, the design's progression was a regular topic within estate correspondence.¹⁵¹ During extended periods expenditure related to the work defined the dominant outlay on estate improvements about the house and might involve over 30 day-labourers.¹⁵²

An overlay of Tonus's design on the 1885 OS Map (Figure 4.19) shows the course of the Great Canal terminating on a 'Saw Mill',¹⁵³ a building constructed under the 7th Baronet's direction in 1741, but for corn rather than timber milling (see **MILL DAM AND MILL** in Section 4.3.4). It is not certain when the idea of using the flow of the Great Canal to drive a mill was first considered or by whom, but evidence from estate correspondence suggests that Smith was instrumental in forwarding the plan and that he was motivated by a desire to rationalise the management of corn milling on the estate and improve the wild-fowl habitat for Savile's recreational enjoyment (see Chapter 5). In the early 1720s Smith began reporting problems with Savile's tenant at Rufford corn mill, 'a Drunken Idle sort'.¹⁵⁴ When in January 1728 it became apparent that the wheel mechanism at Winkerfield corn mill would require substantial investment, Smith, in a letter which Savile registered as 'Proposal to Remove ye mill from Winkerfield to ye

¹⁵¹ Letter Holt to Savile, 26 January 1734. NA: DD/SR/211/24/54a.

¹⁵² Day-Labourers' Fortnightly Accounts, 1734-8. NA: DD/SR/211/360-2,365.

¹⁵³ During the ownership of Savile's son, the 8th Baronet, the Great Canal was naturalised: its northern section was further excavated to create a lake, the southern section modified to become a gently serpentine feeder stream.

¹⁵⁴ Letter Smith to Savile, 24 February 1724. NA: DD/SR/211/227/109.



Figure 4.18: Plan entitled 'New Wilderness', attributed to Mr Tonus, undated but almost certainly drawn up in 1725, the year in which Tonus received payment for completion of his surveying work at Rufford. (NA: DD/SR/202/6)

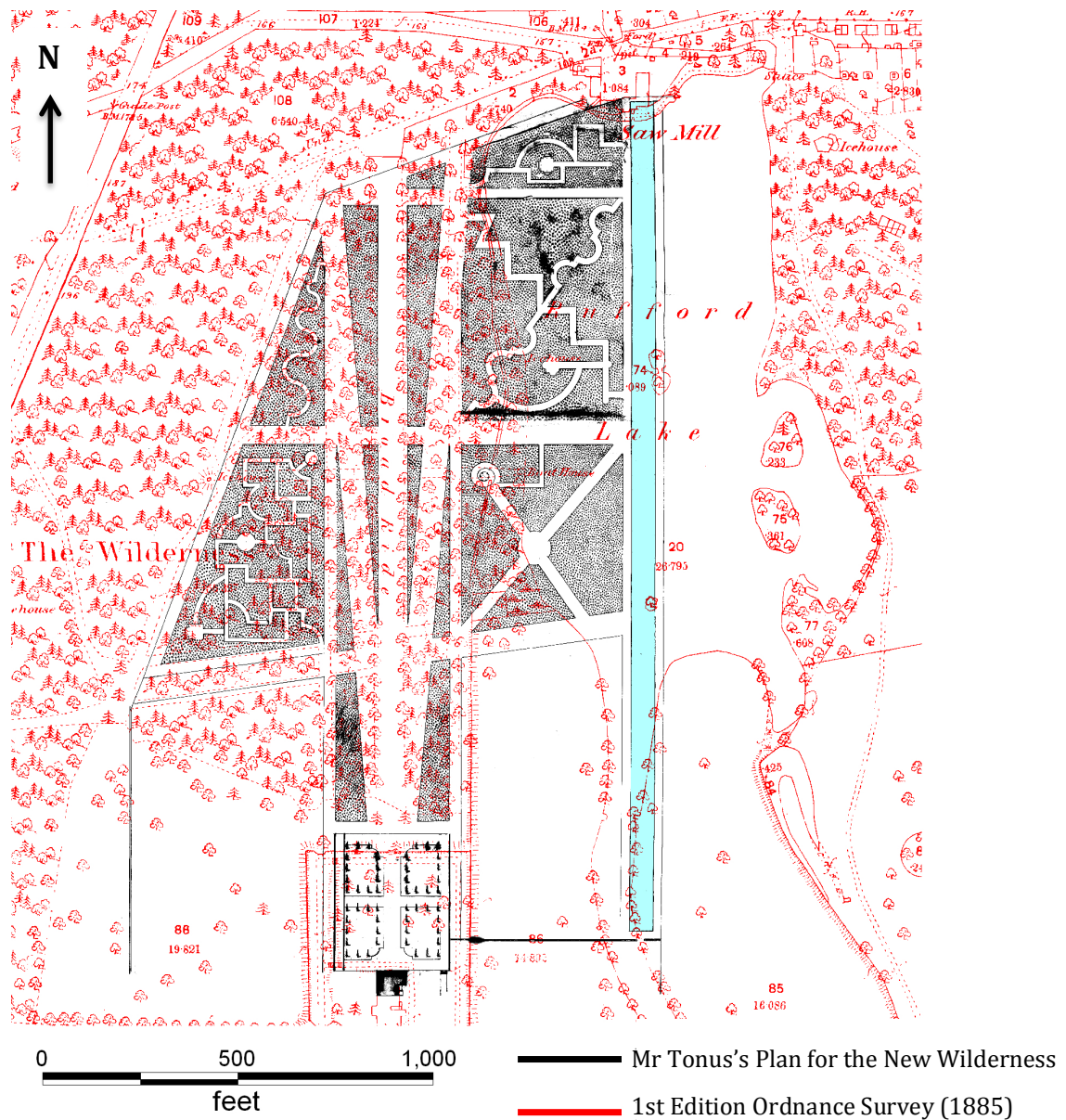


Figure 4.19: Overlay of Mr Tonus's design for the New Wilderness (1725 attributed) on a detail from the 1885 OS Map.

The course of the Great Canal has been highlighted in blue to draw attention to its termination on Rufford Mill, which by 1885 was the 'Saw Mill'.

New Wilderness Canal designed', recommended closing Rufford Mill and relocating Winkerfield Mill to the northern end of the New Wilderness, where it might 'be employed in some part with the New Designd cannall that is to Run North and South Through the meadows & fat pasture'. Smith's letter continued by suggesting that such a move would largely obviate the need for a mill dam: 'a Comon water Course to Grind off the Low water which would Come under the Levile of that canall' would, in his opinion, be sufficient.¹⁵⁵ Although the relationship between the northern section of the Great Canal and the mill dam which subsequently served the new Rufford Mill remains obscure, Smith's comments provide a further example of the way in which broader estate considerations might influence landscaping practice. They also underline the reality that, although Savile may have had an initial over-arching design concept for Rufford's pleasure grounds, the detailed form of the grounds evolved in stages and in response to a wide range of factors, some, for example the behaviour of a tenant, apparently extrinsic to the design process. Moreover, the north-south canal and mill complex provides a strong example of how aesthetic considerations and practical utility could be complementary influences on design.

The Great Canal clearly stood proud of the eastern meadow and pasture ground: by August 1734 Holt was able to report that 'The terras on the East Side of the Canal is Levil'd, and they [day-labourers] are near finishing the Slope on the West Terras'.¹⁵⁶ The water, however, seems not to have been visible from the house: in 1752 Savile's son assured his aunt, Gertrude, that he had 'mended' his father's design 'for the better' by having the Great Canal 'widen'd before the house and the ground level'd so as to shew it'.¹⁵⁷ The 8th Baronet's 'improvement' suggests that the canal, as originally excavated, never achieved the 60 foot breadth stipulated in the 1733 *Memorandum*, a conclusion supported by the dimensions specified in a 'Draught for a bridge from the East side of Rufford House over a Designed Canal', dated January 1734, two copies of which exist, one in Savile's hand (Figure 4.20). The bridge was to be capable of

¹⁵⁵ Letter Smith to Savile, 1 January 1728. NA: DD/SR/211/227/173.

¹⁵⁶ Letter Holt to Savile, 8 August 1734. NA: DD/SR/211/24/63.

¹⁵⁷ Letter 8th Baronet to Gertrude Savile, 20 July 1752. NA: DD/SR/212/15/56.

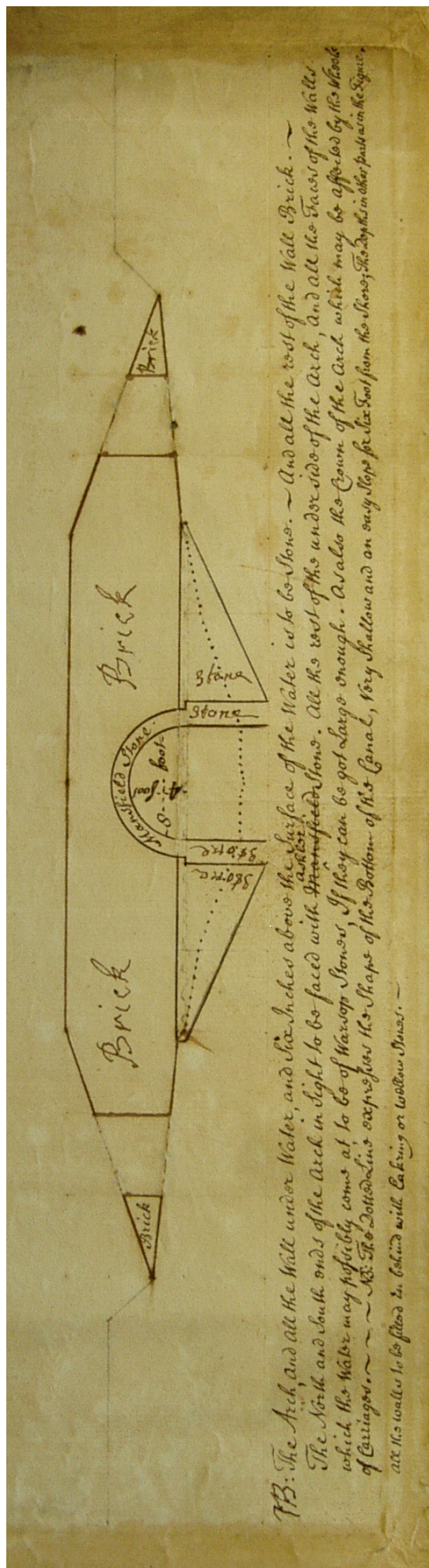


Figure 4.20: 'Plan of the Bridge over the great Canal at Rufford', annotations in the 7th Baronet's hand.
 An almost identical document exists, referenced 'Draught for a Bridge from the East Side of Rufford House over a Designed Canal' and dated 2 January 1734.

Transcription of the descriptive note:

NB. The Arch, and all the Wall under Water, and Six Inches above the Surface of the Water is to be Stone – and all the rest of the Wall Brick. The North and South ends of the arch in Sight to be faced with ashlar ['Mansfield' deleted] Stone. All the rest of the underside of the arch, and all the Faces of the Walls which the Water may possibly come at to be of Warsop Stones, If they can be got Large enough. As also the Crown of the arch which may be affected by the Wheels of Carriages. - - NB: The Dotted Line expresses the Shape of the Bottom of the Canal, Very Shallow and an easy Slope for Six Foot from the Shore; The Depths in other parts and in the Figure, all the walls to be filled with Eakring or Willow Stones.

(NA: DD/SR/202/11/1a. Additional draught, NA: DD/SR/202/12)

withstanding 'the wheels of carriages', a reference which almost certainly locates it to the eastern end of the *parterre*, and the dimensions specified on the plan indicate that the southern section of the canal was no more than 20 feet broad. By April 1734 'masons', under the direction of Birch, had begun to turn the arch of the bridge, and the structure was almost complete.¹⁵⁸

As with White Walk Canal and New Canal Old Park (see Chapter 5), one of the functions of Great Canal was to serve as a carp growth reservoir and the shallow profile and water depth of c.5 feet indicated in the aforementioned draught are significant in this context. More notable from a design perspective, however, was the elaborate and highly idiosyncratic 'Plan of Sluces – Flood=Gutters – Catarack – Aquaduct, &c: from Wilderness=Canal', draughted in the Baronet's hand in June 1735 (Figure 4.21) and detailed in written 'Directions for a Fish Grate, a Wash, and a Cataract of Water from the Great Canal over against the Cave Walk in the Wilderness' (the *1735 Directions*, transcribed in Appendix 4.3). The structure was to define the northern termination of the Great Canal, and, as the word 'cataract' implies, to create a dramatic white water effect. Water leaving the canal would first fall 13 inches, its descent broken by a series of staged sluices. A fall of 15 inches to a stone pavement would then receive 'the cataract of water in its parabolick descent', the pavement angled 'to rebound the dash of water outward from the wall'. From the pavement, the water was to flow down to the eastern edge of a rose-shaped basin, and then across the basin and out along a level aquaduct following the course of the figure '1735' until it reached a 'design'd lake' 30 inches below the surface of the canal water. The structure as draughted covers approximately 75 yards and runs in an east-west direction. Many aspects of this design remain obscure: the nature and location of the 'design'd lake'; the significance of the date 1735 beyond the obvious association with the year of construction; the precise location of this sluice complex within the pleasure grounds and its relation to the adjacent mill dam. There is, however, strong evidence that at least elements of Savile's draught

¹⁵⁸ Warsop stone was selected for its strength (in preference to the more commonly used local stone quarried directly at Wellow or purchased at Mansfield). Holt's Estate Accounts (1733/1734) record payment of £9 3s for '43 tons 7 hundred of stone and leading from Warsop'. NA: DD/SR/6/1/4; DD/SR/202/12; DD/SR/202/11/1a; DD/SR/211/24/62.

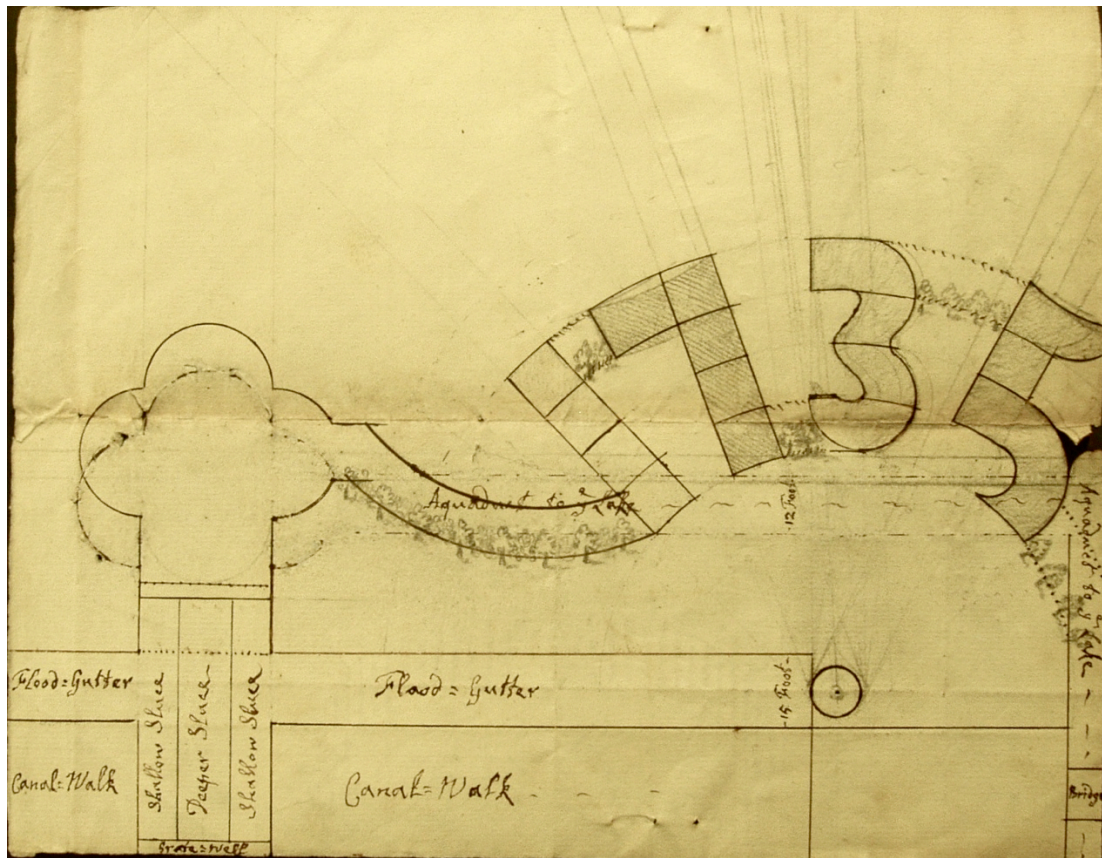


Figure 4.21:

'Plan of Sluces – Flood Gutters – Catarack – Aquaduct, &c from Wilderness=Canal', 25 June 1735, annotations in the 7th Baronet's hand.

(NA: DD/SR/215/13/1. Details of the design draughted in the Baronet's hand have also survived, NA: DD/SR/215/13/1-6.)

were realised and that the feature was constructed upstream of the future corn mill. Between January 1736 and April 1738, Robert Birch received over £194 for his work 'at Canal and the [Wellow] stone quarry'.¹⁵⁹ Across the same period Holt recorded Rufford day-labourers 'finishing Pitching the wash in the first fall of water over against the Cave walk', a walk in the northern gardens linking the New Wilderness and Great Canal (see Section 4.3.4); making 'the Walls North and South from the new wash Over against Cave Walk'; finishing 'the North Side of the Wash (over against the Cave Walk) with Paving and pilching [pitching] with Boulders' and commencing the south side.¹⁶⁰ In a plan draughted by Holt to clarify Savile's directions for a series of islands in the mill dam in January 1736 (see below), reference to the 'by-water from the figures running East' suggests Savile's commemorative aquaduct; in February 1737, day-labourers were reported set 'to Plant and Sow Ash keys near the Rose Bason by the Great Canal' and in May, 'Leading Gravel Out of the Mill Dam to the Walks about the Rose Bason'.¹⁶¹ On a theoretical level, Savile's interest in hydrostatics and hydraulics is well-attested by his engagement with the teachings of Hauksbee and Desaguliers (see Section 3.2.4), and the Baronet's technical competence has already been highlighted in relation to the testing of White Water Canal. The sluice complex at Rufford provides further support for this practical engagement and signifies a highly individual approach to developing the aesthetic potential of functional structures. Notably, in this case, the feature was situated close to, possibly within, an extended wilderness.

In Tonus's plan for the east side of the house (Figure 4.12), the Great Canal is shown in relation to a second, shorter canal of similar dimensions set along an east-west axis. Connecting, as it does, the *parterre* to the parkland beyond, the east-west canal suggests an interest in the inter-relationship between these areas. That said, Tonus's plans contain no further reference to the relationship of the pleasure gardens with the ground east of the *parterre* and Great Canal. In contrast, there is considerable evidence, particularly from the

¹⁵⁹ Holt's Estate Accounts, 1735/1736, 1736/1737 & 1737/1738. NA: DD/SR/6/1/6-8.

¹⁶⁰ The breadth of the walk (30ft) was to correspond to that of the fish grate in the canal. Letters Holt to Savile, 10 & 19 January 1736, 19 November 1737 (NA: DD/SR/211/24/96,94,132); NA: DD/SR/215/13/10.

¹⁶¹ Letters Holt to Savile, 31 January 1736, 9 January, 26 March & 14 May 1737. NA: DD/SR/211/24/93,116,120,124.

late 1730s, that Savile was directing improvements which both integrated estate meadow and pasture land into his expanding pleasure gardens, and, as in the south-eastern area of the gardens, opened and enhanced views between Rufford's parks and pleasure grounds. There is no record of work on Tonus's east-west canal. Rather, Holt's reports of improvements made in this period testify more fully to the Baronet's preference for contrast and variety in his gardens and indicate a landscaping approach responsive to the topography of the site, or, in eighteenth-century words, 'the genius of the place' (see Section 4.2.1). In the eastern meadows, as in the kitchen garden, white water features were set against still surfaces, serpentine against straight water channels, hills established to add variety and improve the prospects offered by an essentially flat terrain. In the winter of 1736 Savile's steward began to report that the eastern meadows were being levelled and a 'Meandes' or 'Serpentine River' cut.¹⁶² Whether the latter described a new watercourse or a rechanneling of Rainworth Water or Fat Pasture River is uncertain.¹⁶³ The serpentine river would certainly have provided a contrast to the Great Canal. Holt's correspondence indicates that the excavation of the two features proceeded in parallel and that Holt, like Smith, managed Savile's improvements with conscious economy. In May 1737, Savile was informed that the Great Canal was 'finished, Only there is some Gravel left in one side of It which we think not to carry out till you come because there will be some us'd in the Serpentine River, and it will be less Charge to Remove it Once than twice.'¹⁶⁴ Concurrent with the excavation of this new watercourse was the construction of a mount located either in or near the Great Canal and towards its southern end. In February 1737 day-labourers were recorded planting 'the Arbour upon the Mount at [the] South End of the Canal... with Elms, and Lauristinns [*Viburnum tinus*] at the Bottom', and during May 'sodding the Steps about the Mount', while the masons were 'Laying with stone the Edges about the Moat Round the Mount'.¹⁶⁵ The mount

¹⁶² Letters Holt to Savile, 17 November & 13 December 1736. NA: DD/SR/211/24/99,109.

¹⁶³ A description of the area included on a c.1750 Survey of Perlethorpe-cum-Budby (detail Figure 4.25) represents the northern section of Rainworth Water as serpentine, in marked contrast to the straight course represented on *Smith's 1725 Survey*.

¹⁶⁴ Letter Holt to Savile, 28 May 1737. NA: DD/SR/211/24/125.

¹⁶⁵ Letters Holt to Savile, 9 February, 14 & 28 May 1737. NA: DD/SR/211/24/116,124-5.

seems to have been intended to serve, in part, as a viewing platform for a water feature on the western perimeter of New Park. A memorandum dated September 1738 records the 'Distances from the Mount in the canal to the Design'd Cascade in the New Park',¹⁶⁶ and in December 1738 Mr Birch was paid £38 18s for 'stone and work at the Cascade by the Old Mill Dam &c.'¹⁶⁷ More general references to landscaping in the meadows include the nurturing of a grove of walnut trees and the setting of trees on 'Hills in the mill meadows'.¹⁶⁸

The 'cascade' in New Park was almost certainly part of a more extensive programme of landscaping at the dam site east of the Hall (see Figure 4.1a) concomitant with closure of the mill (see Chapter 5). While evidence for the introduction of primarily ornamental features into the parkland is limited to this intervention, the recreational and aesthetic potential of Rufford's parkland was certainly appreciated in the period, and parkland management influenced by a desire to enhance sightlines to and from the pleasure grounds. Gertrude Savile identified 'walking alone or sitting under a tree in my Brother's park' as 'my only felicities at Rufford',¹⁶⁹ and the 7th Baronet's network of rides encompassed Old and New Parks (see Chapter 7). Elements of this system would certainly have been visible from the gardens – one of the vistles composing a star-shaped ride configuration in New Park was focussed on Rufford Hall – and prior to a significant timber sale from New Park in 1738, Holt assured Savile that he had:

...taken Mr Sandford [a frequent member of the Rufford household in this period, occasionally consulted by Holt, but whose status remains uncertain]¹⁷⁰ John Blyton, and the Gardiner

¹⁶⁶ Measurements are specified in relation to a gravel walk running through the meadows. NA: DD/SR/211/13/7.

¹⁶⁷ Holt's Estate Accounts, 1738/1739. NA: DD/SR/6/1/9.

¹⁶⁸ Letter Holt to Savile, 23 April 1733. NA: DD/SR/211/24/50.

¹⁶⁹ *Gertrude's Diaries*, 11-19 October 1721, p. 10.

¹⁷⁰ In 1721, Madam Savile advised her son to consult 'your Landlord Sandford' about a steward for Rufford; in 1723 Savile directed his sister Gertrude to pay the rent due on the Golden Square House to 'Mr Sandford the landlord in Fenchurch Street'. November 1736 – April 1739, a Mr Sandford, perhaps the same man, resided at Rufford between visits to Shropshire and Cambridge; was gifted wine by Savile; exchanged compliments and correspondence with the Baronet; received a 'salary', though his name does not appear in estate servant wage lists. Letter Madam Savile to Savile, 4 March 1721 (NA: DD/SR/212/3); Letters Savile to Gertrude, 23 March & 8 April 1723 (NA: DD/SR/212/13/6-7); Letters from Holt to Savile, 17 March 1736 – 27 March 1739 (NA: DD/SR/211/24/99-149).

to mark out (to be left) some of those Trees that are pretty fresh
(as we think) that will appear to an Eye at the House a Row or
Rank of Trees across the House...¹⁷¹

A further indication that for Savile design of Rufford's pleasure gardens was comprehended within the broader compass of demesne husbandry is provided by the Baronet's decision to retain the agricultural use of the grounds adjacent to the Great Canal. Fencing, with 'three Rails (for a Paddock)', kept cattle in Fat Pasture from the canal walk; stoups and rails of a similar design but about a foot lower were planned for the eastern walk.¹⁷² However, estate correspondence from the period conveys no sense that the livestock was valued in design terms.

From both Savile's sluice design and Smith's suggestion that the Great Canal might supply a mill, it is clear that this feature was intended to channel a continuous flow of water. The water's source remains uncertain. Overlaying the *c.1700 Survey* on Tonus's design (Figure 4.13), however, suggests that the watercourse described as 'Fat Pasture River' in estate correspondence was originally intended. By 1725 this 'river' channelled outflow from the Rainworth Water tributary supplying Black Walk Pond, the Hall and stews, together with the drainage water from a catchment area south of the Nottingham Road (see detail from *1725 Survey*, Figure 4.22). By the early nineteenth century Cold Well River, a watercourse which in the late 1730s flowed close to the south-east corner of New Park, had become the main feeder stream of the then naturalised canal, and may have augmented the flow at an earlier date.¹⁷³

4.3.4 North of the Hall

Congruent with the recommendations of early eighteenth-century garden theorists, it was primarily through extension of Rufford's wilderness area that Savile increased the scale of his pleasure grounds, and by 1736 this area of planting was being referred to as the 'new Garden'.

¹⁷¹ Letter Holt to Savile, 21 January 1738. NA: DD/SR/211/24/136.

¹⁷² Letters Holt to Savile, 21 January & 6 March 1738. NA: DD/SR/211/24/136,140.

¹⁷³ Letter Holt to Savile, 12 March 1739 (NA: DD/SR/211/24/148); Rufford Estate Accounts, 1838/1839 (NA: DD/SR/235/1). In September 1774 de Quincey described it as 'a fine strong stream'. De Quincey (1775), 87.

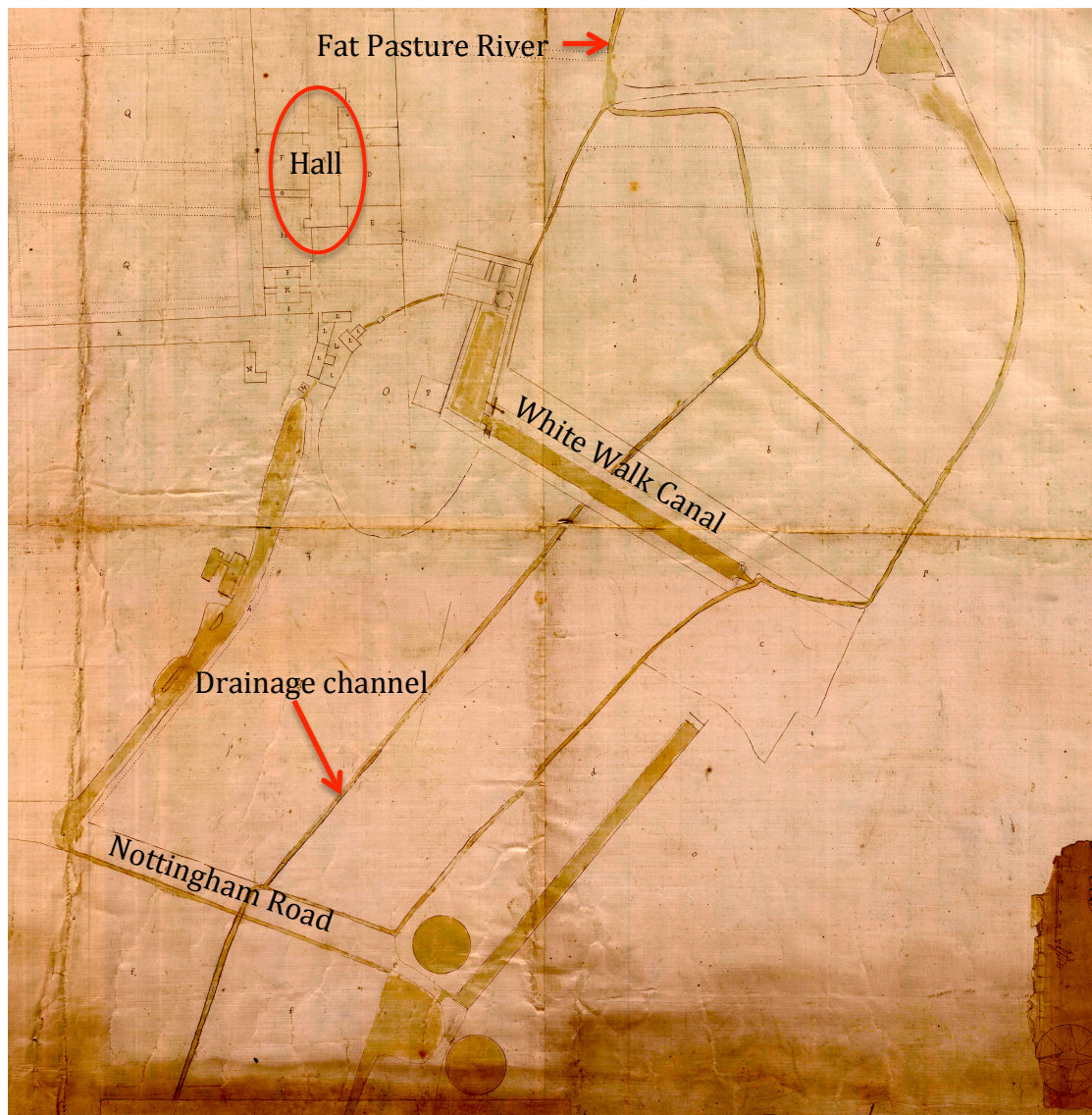


Figure 4.22: Detail from *Smith's 1725 Survey* showing the course of the drainage channel beneath the Nottingham Road and White Walk Canal.

By the late eighteenth century this channel fed Rufford Lake.

(NA: DD/SR/202/47)

Tonus's plan for the New Wilderness – a c.30 acre extension of the ornamental woodland north of the Hall, structured into compartments by a *patte d'oie* (goose foot) formation of *allées* centred on the Hall and traversed by lateral walks – provides the most comprehensive available representation of developments envisaged by Savile for this area of the gardens (Figure 4.18). But it was neither the earliest nor the only projection for the northern grounds. The 1728 *Schedall* records the existence of three additional, though unattributed, designs – 'A plan of the out bounds of ye New Wilderness'; 'Plan of the New Wilderness'; 'Maise in the New Wilderness' – of which the latter has survived (Figure 4.23a; Figure 4.23b shows a much praised contemporary design for comparison). Smith's correspondence between January and February 1724, a period which in high probability predated Tonus's involvement, records the first stages in laying out a 'new vistoe' from the northern end of the Hall.¹⁷⁴ This feature, which by the 1730s was being referred to as the 'Great Vistoe', and on one occasion as 'a Ride', corresponds to the central *allée* of Tonus's *patte d'oie*, suggesting that the latter's plan represented a development of Savile's preliminary ideas.

THE 'GREAT VISTOE' AND 'NEW WILDERNESS'

As Smith's correspondence from early 1724 outlines, Savile intended the great north vistoe to be centred on the north front of the Hall, defined by a cut through the Old Wilderness and continued within 'Thompson's Breck' (the adjacent area of ground to the north) as an avenue equal in breadth to the width of the north front, the view focussed northwards upon Bilhagh Wood. The progress of its construction reflects not only the desirability of orchestrating distant prospects from the garden and an appreciation of woodland prospects in particular, but also illustrates the challenge of adapting Rufford's late seventeenth-century garden structure to a new design conception (a recurrent aspect of Savile's approach), and situates garden woodland within the economic framework of estate woodland management as a whole.

¹⁷⁴ Tonus received payment in August 1725. Evidence drawn from a broad range of sources indicates that Savile was prompt with bill payment: he referred to '[being] impatient with those who do not Dunn me for their dues' as 'among my other oddities'. Letter Savile to Gertrude, 19 May 1735. NA: DD/SR/212/13/31.

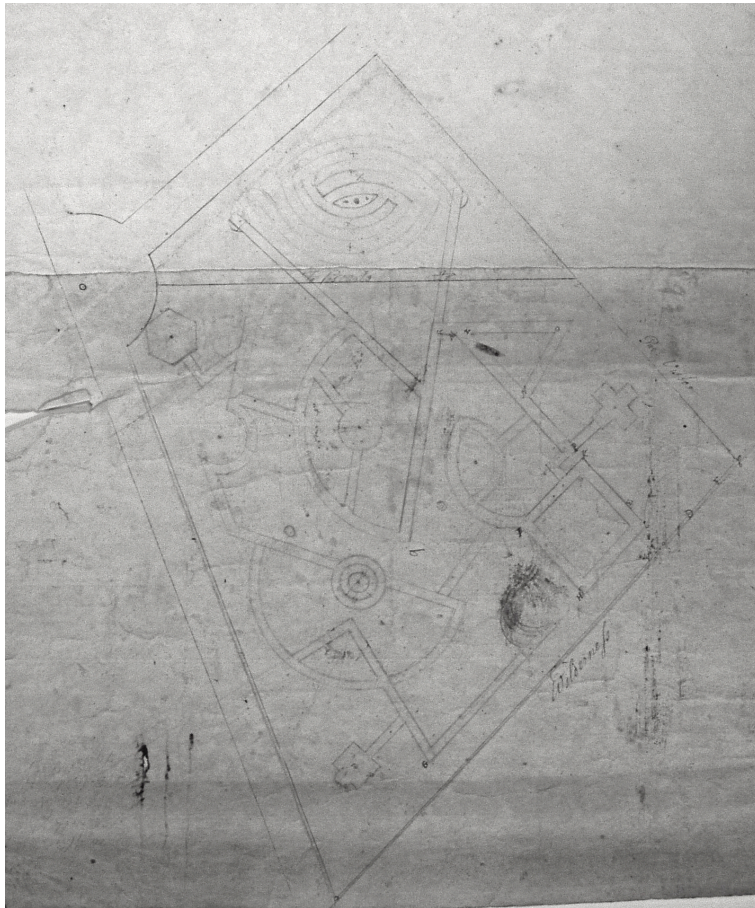


Figure 4.23a: Plan, undated and unattributed, but probably the 'Maise in the New Wilderness' catalogued in William Matthew's *Schedall* of 1728.
(NA: DD/SR/202/9; DD/SR/215/14/1)

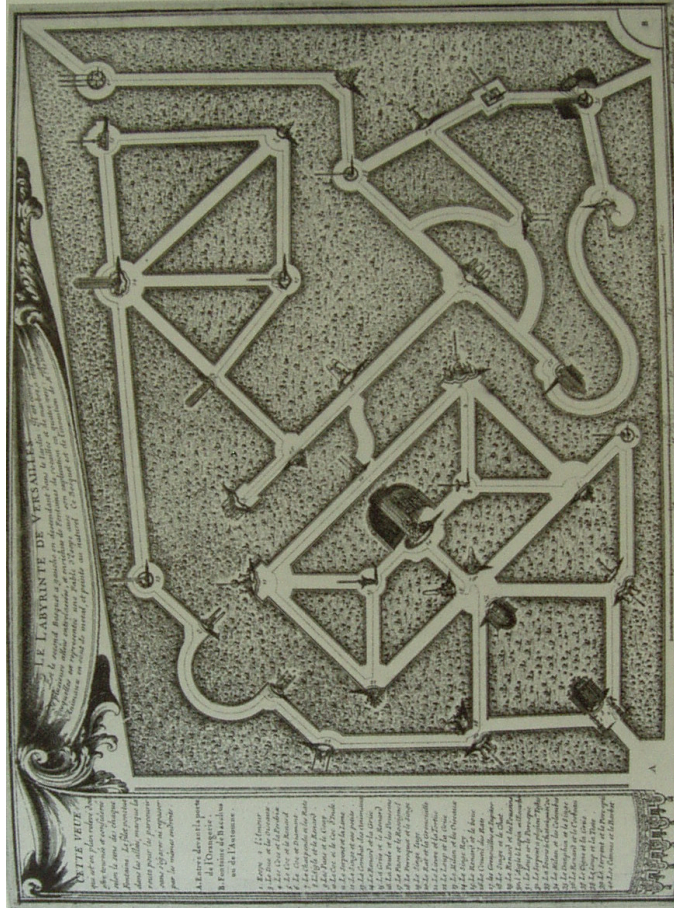


Figure 4.23b: Charles Perrault's reproduction of André Le Nôtre's Labyrinth at Versailles, 1661.

A reproduction of this design was included in Stephen Switzer's *Ichnographia Rustica* (1718) and commented on by the latter as: 'allow'd by all to be the noblest of its Kind in the World'.

(Perrault, C., *Le Labyrinte de Versailles*, 1677, quoted in Lodari, R., *I Giardini di André Le Nôtre*, Torino: Allemandi, 2000, p. 51; Switzer, S., *Ichnographia Rustica*, London, 1718, vol. 2, p. 220.)

By January 1724, day-labourers had begun 'to Cutt ye vistoe from ye north End of ye house through ye wilderness'. Work was temporarily interrupted when 'Finding ye Center Line from ye North End of your house to make Cross work both in the Kings Garden & Wilderness... that it will Require 3 foot to besett of at ye End of ye Kings Garden which joyns on ye Wilderness... To make ye Vistoe parrallell to The Garden walks' (Figures 4.24a&b). Smith both urgently reminded Savile of the need for prompt resolution on account of loss of hop pole revenue – 'the season spends for falling ash and thers several ash poles [in the vistoe]' – and reassured him that the misalignment would only be perceptible if a decision were taken to 'pull down ye King's Garden wall by [the] wilderness' at a future date. Notably, Smith decided on a compromise, proceeding with the felling but cutting a narrower course 'so it may hereafter be Capable of Swerving a Little from ye Truth'.¹⁷⁵ During the progress of this work lime trees at a suitable maturity for transplanting were found to lie in the course of the vistoe. Smith's subsequent proposal for an extension to the vistoe seems more a product of serendipity than advanced planning:

Ther's young Linne [lime] Trees in ye wilderness walks that falls in the New vistoe from ye house theyr not too Large to move now with safety your Gardiner says. If we know that you Designd them in Thompsons ground to continue that visto & Th'o you Do or Do not hereafter plant an Ever Green between Each of them¹⁷⁶ they may now be planted at such convenient Double Distances as to Admit of a Tree of what sort you shall hereafter think fitt between Each. If you please to Let us know how much of a side wider than ye North front of ye house for ye Trees spreading they should be planted, Or whether they must be Lopt Dugg round & Stand (in ye vistoe) till another year, where they'l obstruct ye sight and Eclips ye present beauty or clearness of ye said vistoe.¹⁷⁷

A few weeks later, 14 limes were removed to Thompson's Breck and planted: '4 yds on Each Side wider than ye North front of Rufford house to allow for

¹⁷⁵ Letters Smith to Savile, 13 January, 1 & 10 February 1724. NA: DD/SR/211/227/116,112,111.

¹⁷⁶ Scotch firs were sought for the borders of '2 ridings in the New Park' the same year (see **RIDE BREADTH AND BORDER COMPOSITION** in Section 7.2.2). Letter Smith to Savile, 14 December 1724. NA: DD/SR/211/227/147a.

¹⁷⁷ Letter Smith to Savile, 17 February 1724. NA: DD/SR/211/227/110.

N ←

Central doorway in the Hall's north front façade

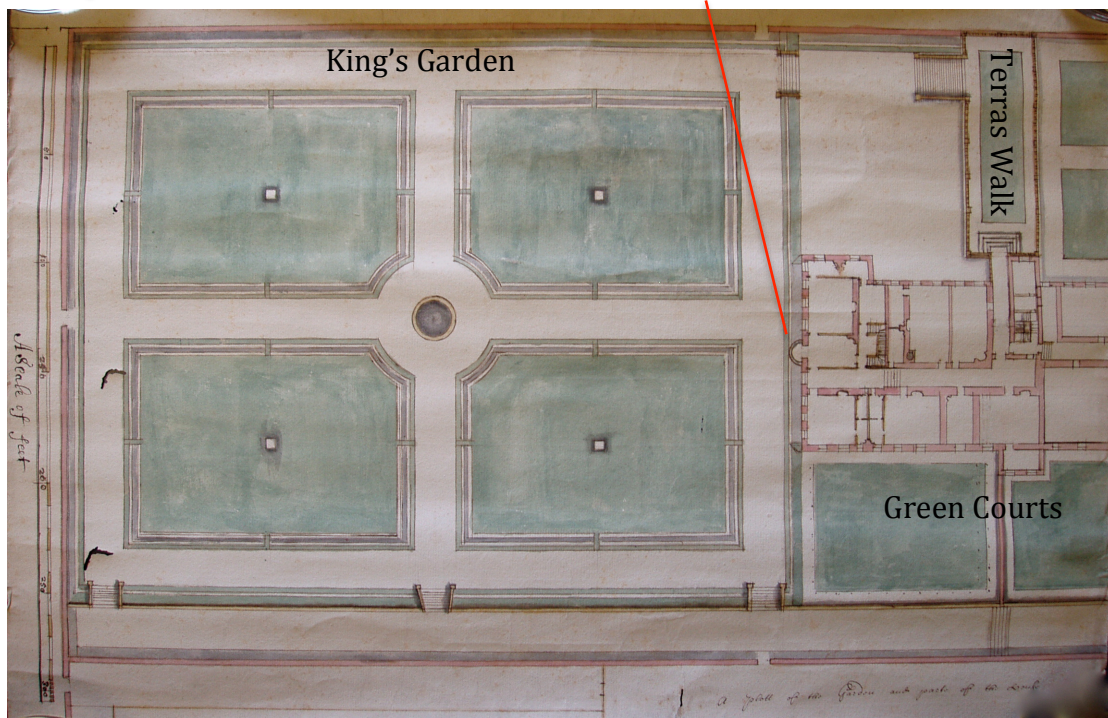


Figure 4.24a: 'A Plot of the Garden and part of the House' showing, in particular, King's Garden and the Terrace Walk by fountain Court, c.1700. (NA: DD/SR/202/23)

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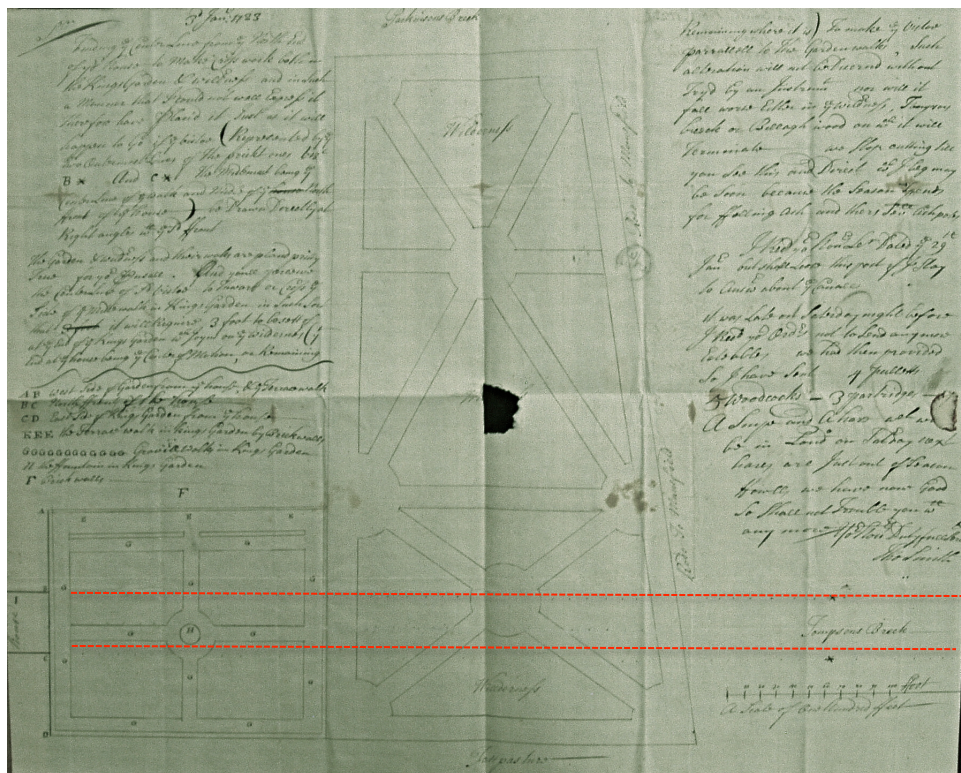


Figure 4.24b: Letter from Thomas Smith to Sir George plotting the intended course of the 'Great Vistoe'.

Dashed lines included on the original but emphasised above.

(Letter Smith to Savile, 1 February 1724, NA: DD/SR/211/227/112.)

Spreading'.¹⁷⁸ In Spring 1731 labourers were recorded 'planting Firrs in New Wilderness': whether along the Great Vistoe remains uncertain.¹⁷⁹

Subsequent development of the northern gardens was clearly influenced by Tonus's plan for the area, though, as with the east front gardens, Tonus's design seems to have been used by Savile primarily to provide a structure within which to develop his own ideas.

By late 1727 areas of Thompson's Breck were already planted up. The eastern section, however, was still no more than 'Rushes... Long Spiry Grass... Ling, and hassocks and extreame Tuff all over and shallow Soile lying on a Gravill Botham' and Savile's gardener was adamant that there would be no hope of successful planting without a year's ground preparation:

Viz. to be Dug this next Spring and Summer and ye Lands for planting heightened & a Depth of Soyle aded to ye present Soyle by trenching or Cutting up one part into a hollow & Laying that Earth on to ye other part or Border where you are to plant, Alsoe ye Ground wants Draining (which Can be Done) and he thinks ye walks should be Raised.¹⁸⁰

By early April 1729 the first phase of the subsequent planting, which was carried out under the direction of George Nailor, then gardener, was nearing completion.¹⁸¹ The combined evidence of steward correspondence and labourers' fortnightly account books testify to at least two further significant campaigns: February – March 1731 and December 1734 – February 1735.

This extension of the northern gardens required the enclosure of a stretch of public highway: the 'Road to Mansfield' (see Figure 4.1a). In January 1733 Holt mapped out a diversion compatible with Savile's improvements, and by early the next year permission had been obtained to enclose c.1 mile 6 chains of public road and work was underway on a public highway suitable for 'horses, carts, and carriages' bordering the northern end of the New Wilderness.¹⁸² In

¹⁷⁸ Letter Smith to Savile, 2 March 1724. NA: DD/SR/211/227/107.

¹⁷⁹ Day-Labourers' Fortnightly Accounts, 1731/1732. NA: DD/SR/211/358.

¹⁸⁰ Letter Smith to Savile, 10 December 1727. NA: DD/SR/211/227/175.

¹⁸¹ Letter Matthew to Savile, 29 March 1729. NA: DD/SR/211/58/14.

¹⁸² Holt's 'Description and Draught of the Road between the Two Wildernesses and of the new designed one', 10 January 1732 (NA: DD/SR/211/24/38a); Nottingham Quarter Sessions, July 1731 – May 1736 (NA: QSM/1/25).

February 1735 Holt reported 'labourers still planting, pruning, leviling and leading earth (to bare gravil) to make up the walks in the New Wilderness where the Old Road was'.¹⁸³

The relationship of the new public highway to Savile's pleasure grounds is described on a Survey of Perlethorpe-cum-Budby commissioned c.1750 from John Reynolds by the 2nd Duke of Kingston (hereafter referenced *Reynolds's c.1750 Survey*, detail Figure 4.25). Though Reynolds's description of the Rufford Estate contains several inaccuracies, it does provide the earliest visual record that Savile's Great Vistoe generated a sightline linking the north front of the Hall to Bilhagh Grove and formed the central axis of a *patte d'oie* configuration of *allées* bounded by flanking parallels, as projected by Tonus. In Rufford estate documents, the terms 'alay', 'vistoe' and 'walk' are all used in the context of the northern pleasure grounds in this period and the distinction seems broadly to depend on scale.¹⁸⁴ While the term 'walk' is occasionally used generically, more frequently, 'vistoe' and 'alay' (less commonly in a garden context 'ride') are the terms used (almost interchangeably) for the axial routes within the New Wilderness; 'walks' for the shorter, transverse or internal passages, even when these are aligned with features in the wider garden. Between 1730 and 1738 work relating to these structures was regularly recorded in day-labourers' fortnightly account books. In autumn 1730, for example, 11 labourers were at work in the 'wash in Nottingham Road and Alay's in Wilderness'; and that winter two men were employed 12 days 'cutting a ride in Old Wilderness', possibly a reference to the broadening of Smith's cutting of 1725. 'Leviling in New Wilderness' is a recurrent activity throughout the period. By September 1734 labourers were 'mowing Vistoes in the Wildernesses'; by spring 1737, 'mowing new Garden [the northern area of the pleasure grounds] and Wilderness Walks'.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸³ Letter Holt to Savile, 1 February 1735. NA: DD/SR/211/24/89.

¹⁸⁴ The terms 'vistoe', 'visto' and 'avenue' were used interchangeably by Savile's Yorkshire steward. Letters Elmsall to Savile, 21 & 29 May 1733. NA: DD/SR/211/3/70,68.

¹⁸⁵ Day-Labourers' Fortnightly Accounts, 1730/1731 & 1736/1737 (NA: DD/SR/211/366,360); Letter Holt to Savile, 2 September 1734 (NA: DD/SR/211/24/69).

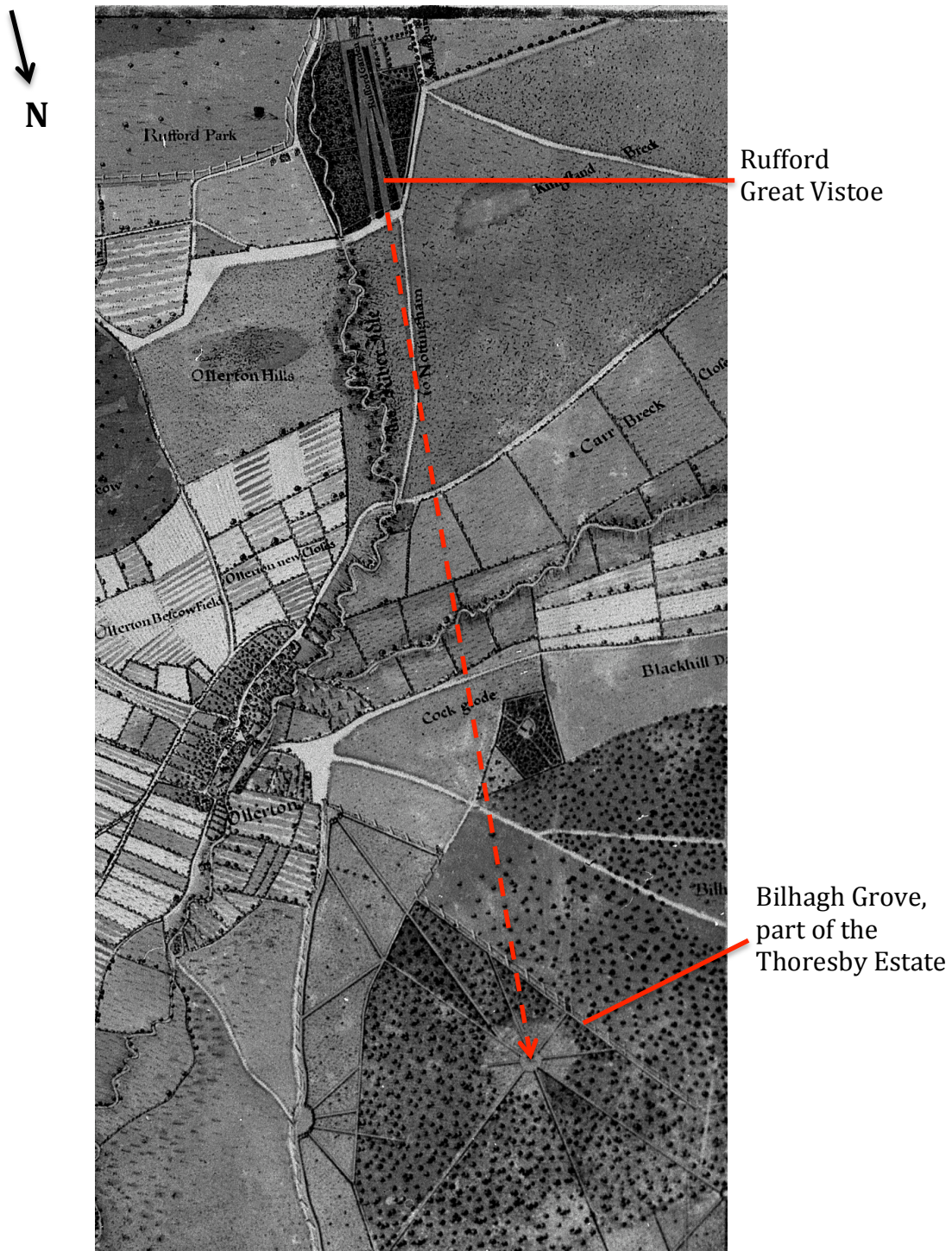


Figure 4.25: Detail from John Reynolds's Survey of Perlethorpe-cum-Budby, c.1750.

(NUM: Ma 4P 20)

Despite the absence of transverse wilderness walks on Reynolds's representation of the area, Holt's reports indicate that the woodland planting was divided into compartments according to Tonus's plan. In January 1736, for example, Holt suggested an amendment to a design then being developed for a string of 'peninsulas and islands' in the mill dam east of the wilderness such that the spacing of the islands would allow 'the water in the Damm to shew it self from the 'farthest Wilderness Walk Leading westwards' (see **MILL DAM AND MILL** below).¹⁸⁶ With regard to the character of the compartments and woodland as a whole, reference in November 1737 to labourers 'Planting in the New Wilderness to fill up the Hedges by the Walks where wanting' suggests concern to establish internal structure and control the walker's visual encounter.¹⁸⁷ Evidence for the intricate walk conformations within Tonus's cabinets,¹⁸⁸ however, is limited to a possible allusion to the serpentine walk in his north-western enclosure. In August 1734 Holt recorded that 'The Convex and Concaves on the North west Corner are finish'd',¹⁸⁹ a description suggestive of the 'Natura-Linear' and 'Artinatural' geometries of private woodland walks recommended by Switzer and Langley respectively (see Section 4.2.1). There is one further walk in the new garden whose construction is documented, but for which there is no extant design plan: the so-called 'cave walk'. Thirty feet in breadth and orientated, at least at its eastern end, in an east-west direction, this walk seems to have served as a linking route between the wilderness and northern end of the Great Canal. The nature of the 'cave' remains obscure: description of its character is limited to Holt's report in January 1733 of labourers 'Throwing up Earth upon the Cave in the New Wilderness where the Carts have left it uneven' and to its being subsequently 'Cover'd with Earth'.¹⁹⁰ In the eighteenth century the term was used both in reference to grottoes and ice-houses. Association of the walk with the Great Canal's cataract and sluice system suggests the former.

Holt's progress report of August 1734 continued: 'The Walks near the Iron Gates in the new Wilderness are all Levil'd, and the Great Vistoe there

¹⁸⁶ Letters Holt to Savile, 19 & 31 January 1736. NA: DD/SR/211/24/94,93.

¹⁸⁷ Letter Holt to Savile, 19 November 1737. NA: DD/SR/211/24/132.

¹⁸⁸ An expression used in the period to describe structured recesses within garden plantations.

¹⁸⁹ Letter Holt to Savile, 8 August 1734. NA: DD/SR/211/24/63.

¹⁹⁰ Letter Holt to Savile, 20 January 1733. NA: DD/SR/211/24/39.

Rouled'.¹⁹¹ The gates in question were those delivered by Foulgham in January 1734. They opened onto the new public highway at the northern end of the Great Vistoe (Figure 4.26).¹⁹² Grill-like in structure and bearing the Savile 'Creast upon the Frontispiece' they would both have permitted views out from the garden and provided a powerful statement of status and ownership to those looking in.¹⁹³ Similarly, views were opened at the southern end of the new garden. In March 1733, Blyton was preparing 'Stoups and Rails... for the Pallisades' to replace the northern walls of King's Garden.¹⁹⁴ Construction work on ha-has in both the Old and New Wilderness was regularly documented in labourers' fortnightly account books between the winters of 1730 and 1731, those defining the boundary of the garden against the new public road being seven foot high sunken brick walls coped with stone (see **EAST FRONT PARTERRE** in Section 4.3.3).

MILL DAM AND MILL

In January 1736, almost a decade after Smith's proposal for the rationalisation of Rufford's corn mills, Holt reported that 'the Labourers are going on with making a slope and walk on the west side [of the mill dam] where the Mill Dam is to be made Joyning to the new Wilderness'.¹⁹⁵ Two years later he was budgeting £300 (in the event a considerable underestimate) for the construction of 'the Corn Mill at the end of the Great Canal'.¹⁹⁶ But while Holt's correspondence draws attention to the proximity of the mill dam (otherwise known as the 'Wilderness Damm') to the New Wilderness and suggests a direct connection between the dam and Great Canal, the plans for Savile's sluice/rose basin complex at the canal's northern end (see **GREAT CANAL** in Section 4.3.3), and other design proposals discussed in this period, point to a more complex arrangement of water channels and levels. In response to a letter dated 31 January 1736, for example, the Baronet noted: 'Viz: Answer to my Letter of Directions about the

¹⁹¹ Letter Holt to Savile, 8 August 1734. NA: DD/SR/211/24/63.

¹⁹² Delivered in January, they were immediately installed, the site having been prepared two years earlier in anticipation of the Caversham Park gates. Letter Holt to Savile, 13 May 1732. NA: DD/SR/211/24/30.

¹⁹³ Letter Holt to Savile, 26 January 1734. NA: DD/SR/211/24/54a.

¹⁹⁴ Letter Holt to Savile, 19 March 1733. NA: DD/SR/211/24/48.

¹⁹⁵ Letter Holt to Savile, 10 January 1736. NA: DD/SR/211/24/96.

¹⁹⁶ Letter Holt to Savile, 1 February 1738. NA: DD/SR/211/24/137.



Figure 4.26: The iron gates commissioned from James Foulgham for the northern entrance to the New Wilderness and Great Vistoe from the Nottingham to Doncaster Road. Photographed *in situ* in the late twentieth century.

(Rufford Abbey Archives)

string of Peninsulas for the East side of the Lower Canal or Canal in the Damm And Plann of it.’¹⁹⁷

The aforementioned plan – a design for a series of six regularly spaced islands (ten yards square) separated by walks, each twenty yards long and two yards broad – is reproduced in Figure 4.27. It both describes a significant aesthetic (and possibly recreational) addition to the northern gardens, and, together with Holt’s accompanying correspondence, provides further insight into the character of design collaborations at Rufford in this period. Holt’s letter of 31 January began by providing a practical assessment of his master’s directions:

I [received] your Letter of the 24th and we [a group almost certainly including Savile’s overseer, Johnson; possibly also the gardener, Nailor]¹⁹⁸ have perus’d it and view’d the Ground where the Islands &c are to be made in the Damm, And we find the Islands, and two yards Walk (from Island to Island) must be rais’d near four foot to answer the West Walk...¹⁹⁹

There followed an estimation of the earth and gravel requirements, the implications of this for the design, and the translation of Savile’s proposal into a plan based on measurements appropriate to the site. During the course of the ensuing correspondence discrepancies arose, in particular regarding the number of islands, and the freedom with which Holt proffered advice suggests that Savile both invited and respected his judgements.

The number of islands finally determined upon goes unrecorded. In late March 1737 Holt reported that ‘The two Islands in the Canal are Planted and finish’d’, but construction work continued into August. In late May labourers were ‘making the Peninsula’s in the Mill Dam’; during July an average of 15 day-

¹⁹⁷ Letter Holt to Savile, 31 January 1736 (NA: DD/SR/211/24/93); see also Holt’s correspondence from February & March 1738 concerning the water supply to the new mill (NA: DD/SR/211/24/139-40,142-44).

¹⁹⁸ Nailor was involved with work at the mill dam in June 1737, though by then Johnson, who left Savile’s service less than a month later, would almost certainly have given notice. When, a year later, Holt was directed by Savile to measure the volume and rate of water throughput to the mill, however, it was to Mr Michell, Rector of Eakring, and Mr Sandford that he turned for assistance. Letters Holt to Savile, 8 June 1737, 15 February & 8 March 1738. NA: DD/SR/211/24/127,139,141.

¹⁹⁹ NA: DD/SR/211/24/93.

'NB. The South End of the first Island will begin on the Edge of the north Side of the by water coming from the figures running East.'

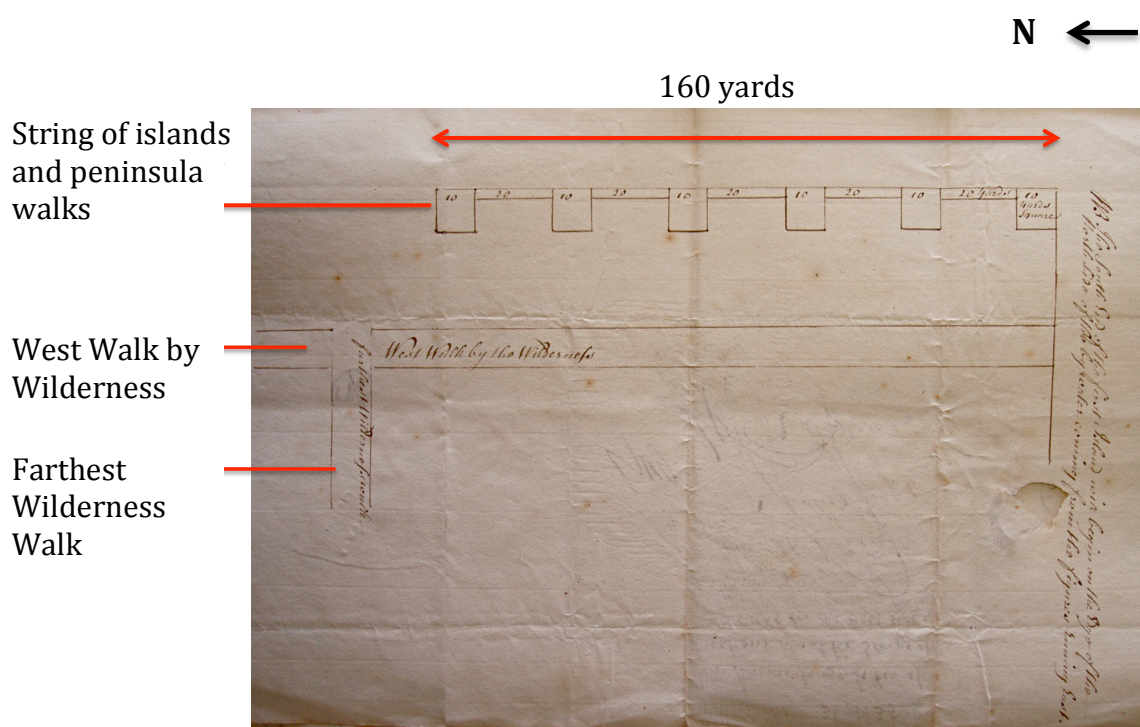


Figure 4.27: George Holt's draught for a 'String of peninsulas for the East side of the Lower Canal or Canal in the damm'.

(Letter Holt to Savile, 31 January 1736, NA: DD/SR/211/24/93.)

labourers were employed 'making Islands'. In May 1739 ducks were observed to be nesting on the planted islands, an observation suggesting that Savile might have intended the island/peninsula structure to promote wild-fowling.²⁰⁰ In September 1774 de Quincey wrote admiringly of the area, which by then had been flooded to form a lake: 'two or three little islands covered with shrubs and trees add prodigiously to the charms of the place'.²⁰¹ An etching published by John Throsby in 1790 suggests that the islands in question were the product of Savile's earlier design (Figure 4.28).²⁰²

Construction of the new corn mill itself was scheduled for the summer of 1738, but it was late autumn 1739 before day-labourers were recorded 'Serving Mason [Robert Birch] at the Mill... at Wellow Quarry... also Ladeing Water ['in Nights and Sundays'] at the Mill Foundation'.²⁰³ Though both Birch and the bricklayer, James Roberts, were still receiving payments for mill-related expenses in spring 1744, by late 1741 construction work seems to have been nearing completion.²⁰⁴ In October that year, John Mason 'Plumber & Glazier' supplied crown glass 'for Sir George's room at the New Mill' and received his final payment (of a series amounting to £118 17s) for sheet lead and work principally at the 'new mill' and 'the mill cupola'.²⁰⁵ The total outlay on materials and specialist workmen alone totalled in the order of £700, around two thirds of which was received by Birch for stone and work.²⁰⁶

Eighteenth-century views of the south front of Rufford's new mill (Figures 4.28 & 4.29) show a two-storied, brick building of classical design with

²⁰⁰ Letters Holt to Savile, 27 March 1736, 28 May 1737, 12 May 1739 (NA: DD/SR/211/24/101,125,154a); Day-Labourers' Fortnightly Accounts, 1737/1738 (NA: DD/SR/211/360).

²⁰¹ De Quincey (1775), 87.

²⁰² Thoroton (1790, first published 1677).

²⁰³ Day-Labourers' Fortnightly Accounts, 1739/1740. NA: DD/SR/A4/49/1.

²⁰⁴ Holt's Estate Accounts, 1740/1741 & 1743/1744. NA: DD/SR/6/1/11,14.

²⁰⁵ Itemised bill dated 16 October 1741 (NA: DD/SR/211/262/8); Holt's Estate Accounts, 1740/1741 (NA: DD/SR/211/6/1/11).

²⁰⁶ Note, however, estate accounts provide only an incomplete record of the intended purpose of materials and labour, and expenditure at the dam and mill is not always differentiated. While bricks were sourced on site from the 'mill kiln', stone was often purchased: in 1740/1741, Mansfield stone was supplied at 8s per load, Wellow stone at 1s 6d. Holt's Estate Accounts, 1738-44 (NA: DD/SR/6/1/10-14); Day-Labourers' Fortnightly Accounts, 1739-42 (NA: DD/SR/A4/49/1; DD/SR/211/363; DD/SR/206/1/136).



Figure 4.28: 1790 engraving showing Rufford Corn Mill at the northern end of what had been the Great Canal, but was then a lake.

Note the planted islands aligned with the mill; features possibly retained from the 7th Baronet's earlier peninsula structure.

(Thoroton, R., *Thoroton's History of Nottinghamshire: republished, with large additions, by John Throsby, and embellished with picturesque and select views of seats of the nobility and gentry, towns, village churches and ruins*, Nottingham: Burbage, 1790.)

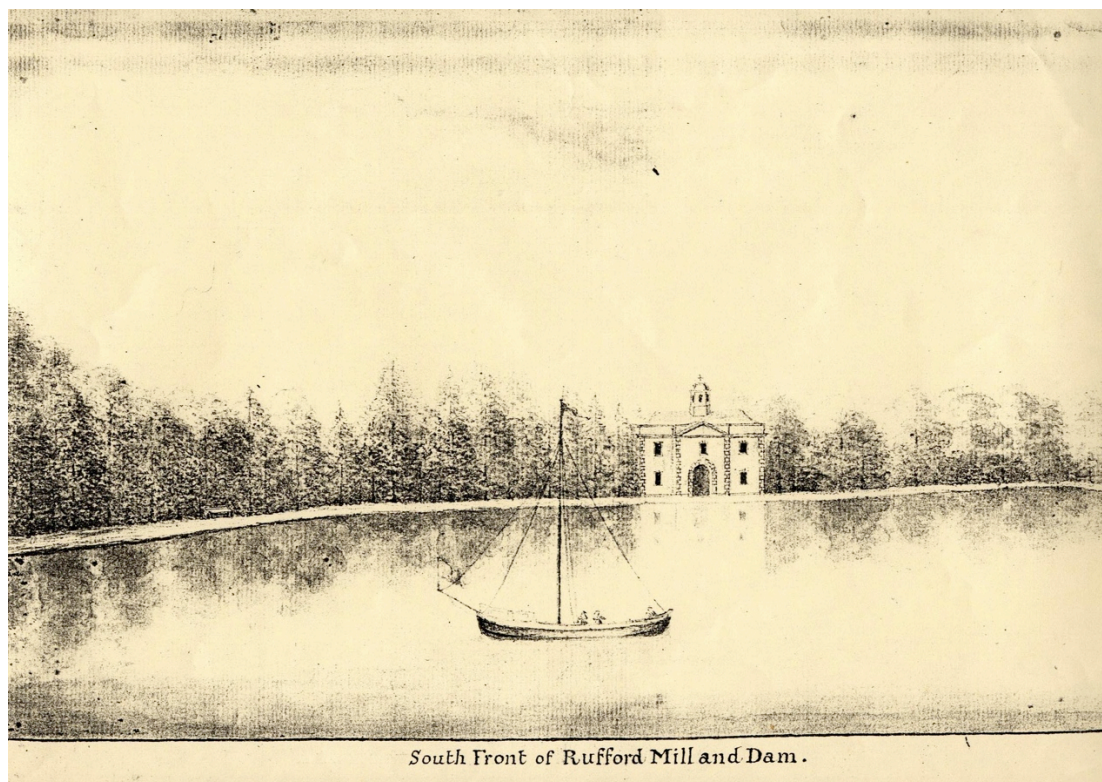


Figure 4.29:

(above): View of the 'South Front of Rufford Mill and Dam', attributed to Peter Grandey, second half of the eighteenth century. (NA: X/PR/6/15; for a wider perspective view of the lake attributed to Grandey see DP/97/1/13.)

(below): Detail showing Rufford Corn Mill as constructed in 1738.



an octagonal lantern and three bays, the central bay, which houses the water wheel, ornamented with a pediment. Though modified in the 19th century, the fabric of the building has retained much of its original form (Figure 4.30). It was clearly intended to serve as more than simply a replacement for Rufford's earlier corn mill east of the Hall. The 8th Baronet, in a letter to his aunt Gertrude in 1748, included it as part of a garden circuit walk:

When I talk'd of going no further than the mill, I mentioned it in particular as being the furthestmost place from the house within the limits of the Gardens; and I meant that without some inducement to get on horseback I shou'd go no further than the wilderness and the alcove in the mill being the general end of those Walks and indeed it is even at this time of year near as warm at noon of a [...] day as any room in the house.²⁰⁷

Its construction signifies completion of the final major landscaping project undertaken by the 7th Baronet in Rufford's pleasure grounds for which documentary evidence has survived.²⁰⁸

4.4 Stocking the Garden

How Whimsical is the Florist in his Choice! Sometimes the Tulip, sometimes the Auricula, and at other times the Carnation shall engross his Esteem, and every year a new Flower in his Judgement beats all the old ones...²⁰⁹

As Bernard Mandeville's choice of floristry for the subject of his wry observations on the fashion-preoccupied society in which he lived suggests, flowers, and garden plants in general, were the focus of an expanding and highly competitive retail trade in early eighteenth-century England. Plantsman and

²⁰⁷ Letter 8th Baronet to Gertrude Savile, 21 December 1748. NA: DD/SR/212/15/35.

²⁰⁸ The record of steward correspondence, a principal source, is interrupted from June 1739 until late in the eighteenth century.

²⁰⁹ Mandeville (1729, first published 1714), 121.



Figure 4.30: Rufford Mill photographed c.2010.

(above): Rufford Mill, south front. (Present author)

(below): Rufford Mill, north front. (Courtesy of Pete Smith)

In the 1860s the building was enlarged and converted into a sawmill but the north façade survived substantially unmodified.



author, Philip Miller, a central protagonist of this botanising trend, estimated in 1765 that the number of 'exotick trees, shrubs, and plants' introduced into England during the previous half century were 'nearly equal to those before known here'.²¹⁰ The Strand, Pall Mall and Westminster Hall, neighbourhoods frequented by the landowning elite, became the trading centre of the country's seed/nursery retailers;²¹¹ while plant/seed catalogues and horticultural advertisements in newspapers brought their swelling stocks to the attention of a society intent on novelty and variety.²¹² Although Rufford had dedicated nursery ground throughout the period of Savile's improvements, this seems to have been oriented to the cultivation of forest trees. The planting and maintenance of Rufford's gardens depended upon local and metropolitan seed and plant suppliers. While these trading links indicate sources of influence on the gardens' development and the wider geographical networks on which its maintenance depended, the range of purchases made reflect the extent of the Baronet's botanical interests and his gardener's expertise.

Major London stockists were patronised by the Baronet, his mother and sister Gertrude.²¹³ Table 4.1, a summary of seed/plant suppliers to whom payments were made, includes seed purchases from the prestigious Brompton Park Nursery of George London (died 1714) and Henry Wise (died 1738), John Turner (1695-1734) of the Strand and Mr Garraway of Fleet Street.²¹⁴ Savile's preference for Turner's establishment is notable. Seed quality was hard to control at a commercial level, particularly given the trade's dependence on foreign suppliers.²¹⁵ Even informed purchasers found it hard to assess seed

²¹⁰ Miller (1765), vii.

²¹¹ Thick includes the New Exchange in his list. Distinction, in terms of retail sales, between seedsmen and nurserymen became increasingly blurred in the eighteenth century. Thick (1990b), 109, 113.

²¹² Newspaper advertising exemplified by Thomas Overton's 'Just Imported' list in *Evening Post*, 24 February 1722, a paper received by Savile. 'An Account of News sent down to Rufford, 5 April – 16 July 1715' (NA: DD/SR/212/6/5); Thick (1990b), 113; Harvey (1972).

²¹³ Letter Smith to Savile, 12 March 1720, reported 'Gardiner Desires Madam Savile to send him Two Duzon of Red Tube Rose Roots' (NA: DD/SR/211/227/46); in June 1723, Savile asked his sister to pay outstanding debts to Mr Turner (NA: DD/SR/212/13/10).

²¹⁴ For trading details of Turner and Garraway (also spelt Garroway) see Harvey (1973), 9, 21.

²¹⁵ Thick (1990a), 62-3; Switzer, S., *The Country Gentleman's Companion*, London, 1732, pp. 2, 48-52, quoted in Thick (1990b), 114.

Table 4.1:
Seed and plant purchases, 1712-1743.

Colour coding: details classified in estate accounts as 'seed' purchases (red); as 'plant' purchases (green); as 'seeds & plants' (blue).

Date + Reference (E) = Estate accounts (P) = Savile's account books (B) = Bill.	Supplier NB. Suppliers of quicksets and forest trees (seeds and firs) not included.	Expenditure Seeds not intended for the pleasure gardens or kitchen garden are bracketed.
April 1703 NA: DD/SR/A4/27. (E)	John Lockwood	£1 8s 6d
Feb & Oct 1707; May, May & Nov 1707 NA: DD/SR/A4/28. (E)	John Colton John Kirk¹ George Turpin Thomas Raynor John Lockwood	6s for '6 young apple trees' £4 12s 'for for wall trees, greens &c. for the gardens' (£1 10s - 'clover seed' 4½ d per lb: 80 lbs) (£3 1s 6d - 'clover seed' 6 d per lb: 120 lbs) £1 14s
Nov 1708 NA: DD/SR/A4/29. (E)	John Lockwood	£1 19s
March 1711; Dec 1711 NA: DD/SR/A4/30. (E)	Henry Turvey (Rufford estate servant)² John Lockwood	9s 10d for 'fruit trees' £2 1s
Nov 1712 NA: DD/SR/A4/30. (E)	John Lockwood	£3 1s
Feb 1712; NA: DD/SR/211/319. (P)	Mr John Turner (London)	£2 3s seeds sent
March 1713 NA. DD/SR/211/319. (P)	Mr London (London)	£5 6s seeds sent

March 1720 NA: DD/SR/211/178/2. (P)	Mr Turner	(£9 5s for 'Gorse seed to sow on Forest')
March 1721 NA: DD/SR/211/178/2. (P)	Mr Turner	12s seeds sent
Dec 1722 NA: DD/SR/218/2/16. (B)	John Turner	£6 8s 9d seeds sent
Jan & Feb 1724 NA: DD/SR/211/192/2. (P)	Mr Garroway (at ye Raven in Fleet Street)	Two orders £116s and £3 17s: total £5 13s seeds sent
Jan 1728 NA: DD/SR/211/A4/35. (P)	Mr Garroway	(£6 5s for 'Gorse seed to sow on Forest' + sack)
Dec 1729; March & April 1729 NA: DD/SR/215/24. (B)	Edmund Hodgkinson (Mansfield) 'Journey[s] to Hodsock Park for trees' ³	£4 14s 2 s. Cost of purchase not stated.
Feb 1731; Feb 1731 NA: DD/SR/210/73. (B) NA: DD/SR/6/1/1. (E)	Edmund Hodgkinson John Cowlshaw	£3 0s 2d £1 1s for 'Beech and Apricocks'
Feb 1732 NA: DD/SR/6/1/2. (E)	Edmund Hodgkinson	£4 4s
Jan 1733; Oct 1732 & March 1733 NA: DD/SR/6/1/3. (E)	Edmund Hodgkinson Henry Cowlshaw (Carlton in Lindrick)	£2 19s 6d 8s 10d for 'Hollies and Peeches'; 10s 10d for 'A Nectarine'
Feb & April 1734; March 1734 NA: DD/SR/6/1/4. (E)	Edmund Hodgkinson George Nailor (Rufford gardener) Henry Cowlshaw	£2 16s 6d (Turnip seeds) 10s
Feb 1735 NA: DD/SR/6/1/5. (E)	Edmund Hodgkinson	£3 1s
Jan & April 1736; April & August 1736 NA: DD/SR/6/1/6-7. (E)	Edmund Hodgkinson Thomas Shipton (Rufford day-labourer) Henry Cowlshaw (Mr Thorney's gardener) George Nailor	£3 12s 11d 1s £2 6s 6d for 'Abeles, Poplers, Peaches, Nectarines &c.' (2s 6d for 'when we sent for poplar setts') £2 4s 8d for 'fruit for the house'
March 1737; Feb & March 1737 NA: DD/SR/6/1/7. (E)	Edmund Hodgkinson George Nailor Francis Noble (Newark.upon. Trent) Henry Cowlshaw Mr White 'Gardiner'	£5.08.00 (Turnip seeds) 17s for 'Flowering Shrubs' £3 9s 2s 6d 'Honeysuckle Plants'

June 1738 [?]; Feb 1738 & Dec 1738 [?] NA: DD/SR/ 6/1/8 (E)	Edmund Hodgkinson Francis Noble Henry Cowlshaw	£2 18s £1 3s £3 17s
June 1738 & Feb 1739, Feb & April 1739 NA: DD/SR/6/1/9. (E)	Francis Noble Edmund Hodgkinson Mr [Francis] Noble Mr [Henry] Cowlshaw	(6s for gorse) £3 13s £1 4s 2d for 'Plants & matts [sic]' £4 14s 6d for 'Plants for Thompson's Hill'
Jan, March, & April 1740 NA: DD/SR/6/1/10. (E)	Edmund Hodgkinson Francis Noble George Naylor	£4 3s Two orders 16s + 12s 6d; total £1 8s 6d (Turnip seeds)
April 1741 NA: DD/SR/6/1/11. (E)	Francis Noble	£6
Jan & March 1742 NA: DD/SR/206/1. (B) NA: DD/SR/6/1/11. (E)	Francis Noble	Two orders £9 7s 9d + 5s; £9 12s 9d
July 1742 & April 1743; Jan 1743 NA: DD/SR/6/1/13. (E)	George Naylor Francis Noble Thomas Shelton (Rufford groom & huntsman)	(18s 3d for turnip seeds) £7 6s 9f 5s for '4 yew trees'

Notes

1. Henry Turvey, recorded in Burden's accounts as receiving a salary of £10 per annum in 1707 and 1708, was probably Savile's gardener. NA: DD/SR/A4/28; DD/SR/A4/29.
2. Kirk of Brompton, Middlesex, is registered in a list of nursery gardeners by John Abercrombie in 1785, quoted in Taylor, M. & Hill, C., *Hardy Plants Introduced to Britain Before 1799*, compiled for Hatfield House; a Mr Kirk managed Lord Carmarthen's affairs at Kiveton from 1728 and was known to William Elmsall, Savile's Yorkshire steward. Letters Elmsall to Savile, September – January 1728. NA: DD/SR/211/6.
3. Almost certainly a reference to the Cowlshaw family nursery. Rufford estate servants began to visit William Leeson's nursery for fir trees in 1722 but William Leeson (older) died 1722 and Leeson (younger) was gardener at Kiveton Park by 1724.

viability – only ‘proved by their coming up out of ye Ground’ as Savile’s gardener dryly observed to the Baronet – and poor seed might result in the loss of a growing season in addition to wasted time and money.²¹⁶ An extant list of the Baronet’s purchases from Turner in 1722 (transcript in Appendix 4.4) provides clear evidence of the competitive range of vegetable seeds, flower seeds and bulbs on offer there. The employment in 1713 of Ralph Turner as gardener for Golden Square, Savile’s London residence (1706-22), and the Baronet’s support of him in this role until 1723, suggests a more extensive family enterprise.²¹⁷ A broader dependence on the Baronet’s patronage might have helped foster trust. Rufford estate correspondence from early 1724, the season in which seeds were generally bought at Rufford, testifies to Savile’s initial apprehension about purchasing from Garraway’s: Smith was charged to inform his master immediately of the quality of the first consignment of garden seeds sent down by wagon to Mansfield, and, when it subsequently transpired that the Baronet had been unable to settle a price, to advise on payment. The latter uncertainty reflects another significant characteristic of seed retail in this period: market volatility. The reluctance of retailers in Nottingham and Newark ‘to sett him [Savile’s gardener] a price’ for the seed consignments they had ‘coming by sea’ was one of the reasons that Savile was requested by his gardener to purchase from London.²¹⁸ After consulting Lord Carmarthen’s gardener at Kiveton Park, South Yorkshire, and Mr Thorney’s gardener without obtaining any ‘servisable’ information, Smith pointed out that such guidance would in any case have been ‘uncertaintys to ye Enquirys Mr Winchester [presumably one of Savile’s men servants] or some friend of him might Easily make in several seed shoppes in Town pretending a friend of Theires wanted a parcell of Right good if they know ye Lowest prices for ye best sorts &c.’²¹⁹

Savile’s reservations turned out to be well-founded. The following January, Smith’s correspondence relayed the communication: ‘Gardiner says his Last years Seeds from London were but Indifferent and that he can be well fitted

²¹⁶ Letter Smith to Savile, 27 January 1724. NA: DD/SR/211/227/114.

²¹⁷ Savile’s Personal Account Books, 1715-22 & 1722-7. NA: DD/SR/211/178/1; DD/SR/211/192/2.

²¹⁸ Letter Smith to Savile, 6 January 1724. NA: DD/SR/211/227/118.

²¹⁹ Letter Smith to Savile, 10 February 1724. NA: DD/SR/211/227/111.

at Newark and Bawtrey [Bawtry] and choose what he wants'.²²⁰ The suppliers utilised over the next five years go unrecorded. By 1729, however, Edmund Hodgkinson of Mansfield had become established as George Nailor's (then gardener) preferred source of vegetable seeds, a relationship maintained without interruption for over a decade. It is possible that Nailor was familiar with Hodgkinson from his apprenticeship at William Leeson's nursery in Hodsock, near Worksop (see Section 3.4.4): Hodgkinson was amongst the signatories to an appraisal of Leeson's inventory after his death in 1722.²²¹ A further relationship which may have been established in this period, and which would prove significant for Rufford, was with the Cowlshaw family. From 1731, John then Henry (died 1777) Cowlshaw supplied 'plants' to the estate, especially fruit and forest trees, and continued to do so after the 7th Baronet's death.²²² Harvey records that by the mid-1740s their nursery was at Carlton-in-Lindrick near Hodsock.²²³ Sales to Rufford in the same period suggest that the nursery was by then well-established,²²⁴ and it seems reasonable to assume that the family business was centred near Hodsock in the 1730s and that exchange would therefore have taken place between the Leeson and Cowlshaw concerns. By 1737, however, Nailor was beginning to purchase 'plants' from the Newark nursery of Francis Noble (died 1756, Mayor of Newark 1739 and 1752), and by 1741 Noble had become the main supplier of garden seeds and plants to the estate, a relationship which would again continue after the 7th Baronet's death.²²⁵ Harvey records that Noble was trading in 1720; by the time Nailor began to rely on the future Mayor for supplies, his reputation would therefore have been established. Whatever the provenance of Rufford's 'plants', by the 1740s the gardens certainly supplied a great variety of fruit. Apricots, peaches,

²²⁰ Letter Smith to Savile, 11 January 1725. NA: DD/SR/211/227/143.

²²¹ Harvey (1974), 161.

²²² William Cowlshaw, possibly another family member, rented a farm at Ompton. Letter Holt to Savile, 14 December 1734. NA: DD/SR/211/24/81.

²²³ Harvey (1974), 68.

²²⁴ Holt's estate accounts from the 1750s record significant purchases of fir trees: to the value £64 17s in March 1755. NA: DD/SR/6/1/23a.

²²⁵ Holt's Estate Accounts, 1743-54. NA: DD/SR/6/1/14-23a.

nectarines, gooseberries, pears, figs, plums, apples, melons and cucumbers were all cultivated.²²⁶

As remarked in the discussion of Black Walk (Section 4.3.2), when the Baronet was away from Rufford communication with his gardener seems to have been confined to summary exchanges made via the third party of the steward. Furthermore, there are no extant planting calendars or gardener's planting plans from the period. While purchase lists might suggest spring and summer displays in the gardens – '100 Best Tulips'; '100 Best Junquills [*Narcissus jonquilla*]; 'Fine Double Stock'; 'Fine Dutch July Flower seed'; 'Marvele of Perue [*Mirabilis jalapa*]; and 'Italian Tubyroseroots' all feature in Savile's 1722 bill (see Appendix 4.4) – their precise locations and forms remain a matter of speculation. Of more certainty is the considerable degree of autonomy which the Baronet allowed his gardener over such choices. In 1728, for example, Smith reported to Savile that the gardener requested that purchases of gorse seed be delayed for a year because he was 'so Buysy & his Gardens not so Entire nor his places Resolved on for flower Seeds'.²²⁷ Extant seed and plant lists (Appendix 4.4), though indicative that a wide range of vegetable produce was cultivated at Rufford, are, in species-terms, conventional for the period, and suggest no marked botanical interest on the part of Savile or his gardener.

4.5 Conclusion

Eighteenth-century gardens have long been recognised as 'a suitable milieu for personal expression'.²²⁸ The pleasure grounds laid out at Rufford under the direction of the 7th Baronet were no exception. Savile's engagement with the progress of construction, both at the level of design and technical management, is notable in itself, and though water was one of the primary elements with

²²⁶ Letters Holt to Savile, 10 January 1736, 2 April 1739. NA: DD/SR/211/24/96,150. In accounting year 1735/1736, John Mason (glazier) was paid £2 15s 8d for renewing garden frames and by the early 1750s pineapples were being gifted from the estate. NA: DD/SR/6/1/6; Letter 8th Baronet to Gertrude Savile, 20 July 1752 (NA: DD/SR/212/15/56).

²²⁷ Letter Smith to Savile, 1 January 1728. NA: DD/SR/211/227/173.

²²⁸ Richardson (2007), 10.

which eighteenth-century designers worked, it is suggestive to attribute the elaborate and extensive use of water at Rufford to the Baronet's marked interest in mechanical structures and hydraulics in particular. Moreover, the Baronet's designs for white water features (exemplified by the sluice and aquaduct structure in the northern gardens), and his repeated use of heart motifs in contrasting areas of the garden (*parterre* and by-water streams), were distinctly idiosyncratic. Despite this personal dimension, Savile's apparent design ethos and the general form of his improvements at Rufford were broadly representative of the style of forest or extensive gardening being advocated for country seats in the period. Under his directions the scale of Rufford's pleasure grounds was massively increased. The area directly landscaped about the Hall was augmented by c.70 acres (a quadrupling in size), almost half of which was landscaped plantation of forest trees, and, if the ride structure linking Savile's demesne woodlands is included (see Chapter 7), the Baronet's improvements extended to a radius of over 3 miles from the Hall. Garden features, for example the Great Vistoe and East Front Parterre, were proportioned on a scale appropriate to the Hall; axial geometry in the form of walks and sightlines within the garden, repeated garden elements and motifs, drew the design together; mounts, terrace walks and ha-has extended views into the parkland beyond and 'called in the country' more generally. Savile's conscious introduction of variety to the grounds is well exemplified by his use of artfully 'natural' serpentine features (both as walks and water courses) to complement those of an axial form. Arguably, a still more potent indicator of the Baronet's embrace of rural gardening was the interdependence of productivity and beauty which seems to have underpinned the development and maintenance of design improvements at Rufford. The management of forest trees within the New Wilderness might yield a regular supply of small wood products; canals, stew ponds, a cold bath and corn mill all provided prominent garden features while at the same time serving utilitarian ends. '[F]rugality in the Management and Performance' of gardening, a gradual progressing of plans coherently conceived and attuned to the seasonal rhythms of estate husbandry, was a related aspect of Switzer's ideal.²²⁹ The 'Pleasure of Gard'ning', he encouraged, derived from engagement with the

²²⁹ Switzer (1715), xiii.

process: 'not in Finishing them in too great Haste; but after a general Scheme is laid, to make Annual Advances 'till the Whole is compleated'.²³⁰ At Rufford, work on the pleasure grounds proceeded in stages throughout Savile's ownership and was integrated into the management of the estate as a whole, while the construction of individual features was co-ordinated and managed in a labour-efficient manner.

The overall responsibility for directing the day-labourers employed on improvements fell principally to Savile's stewards. That this managerial responsibility was accorded to successive stewards rather than gardeners is perhaps unsurprising. But the degree to which one of those stewards, Thomas Smith, contributed to the design process was significant enough to be remarked upon at the time. When in August 1728 Elmsall was asked by Savile to recommend a replacement for Smith, the Yorkshire steward expressed profound misgivings, principally on account of the latter's contribution to the development of the gardens:

I am very much concern'd to finde that you part with Mr Smith & his Son I so much admiring both of them in their busyness.... especially the old Man... it wil be & you wil finde it (I dobt) a great difficulty to bring another into the Apprehensions of such your directions as wil save your owne attendance & be easy to you, I mean if your Honour go on in those delightfull Improvemts about the House...²³¹

To Elmsall's list of commendatory attributes – ready comprehension of Savile's intentions; managerial/financial competence – should be added Smith's surveying skills and sensibility to prevailing landscape fashions. Despite Elmsall's misgivings, by 1730 Savile had found a replacement who, in his sister Gertrude's opinion at least, was 'ye best steward Sir George has had': George Holt.²³² Estate documents provide strong evidence for Holt's managerial competence, and, in relation to landscape design, indicate that Savile valued his judgements and technical expertise. Estate correspondence, however, suggests

²³⁰ Switzer (1718), vol. 1, p. xxxii.

²³¹ Letter Elmsall to Savile, 12 August 1728 (NA: DD/SR/ 211/6); see also Letter Elmsall to Savile, 5 March 1721 (NA: DD/SR/ 211/2).

²³² *Gertrude's Diaries*, July 1743. Lord Savile's Private Collection.

that in design terms Holt played a more passive role than his predecessor and that subsidiary factors may have contributed to a change in the dynamics of design collaboration at Rufford after 1730. The gardener and ex-nurseryman, George Nailor, who was by then employed at Rufford, seems to have supervised a broad range of demesne activities, and in 1734 an overseer was hired, spreading responsibility for the workforce still further.

In addition to regular estate employees, skilled tradesmen were on occasions contracted in by Savile: Robert Birch, John Hallam and Mr Tonus are all referenced in this capacity. The value Savile placed on longstanding trading relationships has been noted in relation to choice of horticultural suppliers, and, in this context, the benefits such continuity of service brought in terms of mutual trust almost certainly led to a preference for local horticultural suppliers above London stockists. Savile seems to have adopted a similar attitude to the hiring of specialist workmen: Hallam and Birch were both well known in Nottinghamshire; John Blyton succeeded his father as Rufford carpenter. The employment of Mr Tonus, a man for whom no prior association with the Baronet or his estate servants has been found, therefore strikes an anomalous note. Furthermore, unlike Hallam and Birch, who to varying degrees supervised the construction of features for whose design they were in large part responsible, Tonus's engagement at Rufford seems to have been limited to the drawing up of proposal plans. The value of these plans to Savile and their subsequent influence on the development of Rufford's pleasure grounds remains uncertain. The evidence set out in this chapter suggests that they served primarily as a framework within which the Baronet and his estate servants developed a form for Rufford's gardens both more innovative in design terms and in sympathy with 'the Genius of the Place'.

Chapter 5

The Landscape of ‘Phinny Animals’:¹ Carp Husbandry at Rufford

Where harmless fish monastique silence keepe. *John Donne*²

From 1702 onwards Savile directed improvements to Rufford’s pre-existing fish habitat and its significant expansion, demonstrating a keen interest in the more scientific and pragmatic aspects of pisciculture and water management coupled with a designer’s desire to exploit the aesthetic potential of water on his estate. Even those water features most closely associated with the ornamental dimension of the Rufford landscape, White Walk and Great Canal (see Chapter 4), were designed with a view to their integration within the fish management-system. Significant early eighteenth-century landscape theorists were united in the view that ‘it is impossible to have a fine and profitable *Garden* without the Command of good *Water*’, and although the benefits of fish might not be explicitly highlighted in their writings, most treatises on estate husbandry between 1550 and 1760 discuss fish husbandry at some length.³ The following chapter sets Rufford practice within the context of this literature, addressing preferred fish species and their requirements, and the construction and maintenance of water systems designed, in part, to promote their cultivation.

¹ An expression used in correspondence between Savile and his Yorkshire steward. Letter Elmsall to Savile, 23 March 1716. NA: DD/SR/211/2.

² John Donne (1572-1631), *Elegy on Mistress Bulstrode*, line 14.

³ Bradley (1718a, first published 1717), 174.

5.1 Fish Husbandry

5.1.1 The pond system at Rufford

THE POND SYSTEM INHERITED BY THE 7TH BARONET

It is widely acknowledged that medieval ecclesiastical houses, prompted by the combined motivations of ‘protein, penance, and prestige’, invested significantly in pond structures adapted to fish husbandry.⁴ Further, that ‘the most impressive examples of water engineering from anywhere in the medieval British Isles were those undertaken by the Cistercian order during the twelfth century and after’.⁵ Archaeological evidence has been found for groupings of ponds, often in a chain, and sophisticated systems of water management in which fishponds were an integral part of a larger complex incorporating mill leats and ponds.⁶ Accurate dating of such structures, however, poses a major challenge. Dams and pond systems are ephemeral landscape features requiring continual renovation if they are to survive. Further, within a British medieval context, no clearly defined pond typology has been identified.⁷

Medieval fish-keeping was characterised by two distinct types of pond: the *vivarium* or breeding pond and the *servatorium* or holding pond.⁸ The *vivarium*, a large irregular feature often formed by damming the valley of a stream, could be several acres in extent and exploited the underwater feeding naturally available. Holding ponds were generally smaller and geometric in shape, conventionally square or rectangular.⁹ Intended to serve as fish larders for domestic consumption, they were located close to the house or abbey. The *Rufford Charters* include evidence that the Abbey’s Cistercian community was granted the right to construct a *vivarium* for fish husbandry at Winkerfield in 1268.¹⁰ By 1277 the pool existed and is referred to in the *Hundred Rolls* as a

⁴ Hoffman (2000), 337.

⁵ Holt (2000), 88; also Bond (1988), 92-3.

⁶ Bond (1988) cites a range of archaeological evidence; for the influence of mill technology on fish husbandry see Fagan (2006), 129-33.

⁷ Aston (1988), 3-4; Hoffman (2002), 17. In Rufford estate documents from the first half of the eighteenth century the words ‘dam’ (also spelt ‘damm’) and ‘pond’ are often used interchangeably.

⁸ Currie (1988), 195-6.

⁹ Currie (1990), 22-3.

¹⁰ Holdsworth, ed. (1972-81), vol. 2, no. 696, p. 354.

'*stagnum*'.¹¹ South of the Abbey, along the shallow Rainworth River valley, there was a chain of dams – Robin Dam,¹² Great Dam and Swing Dam – which from documentary evidence can be confidently dated to before 1637 (see Section 3.3.1), and reference to a *Stagnum de Rufford* in Forest proceedings from 1335 indicates that at least one was of medieval origin.¹³ While medieval fisheries might achieve an enormous scale – the estate of the Bishop of Winchester totalled around 150 hectares in the thirteenth century with individual ponds of almost 40 hectares¹⁴ – without further archival evidence, the form and function of the medieval water management system at Rufford will remain highly speculative.¹⁵

The situation in the later Stuart period is better documented. From a synthesis of estate surveys and early eighteenth-century estate accounts and correspondence in the Savile Archives, supported to a limited extent by archaeological evidence, it has been possible to identify and on occasions locate the major water features which were being managed for fish cultivation by 1700 and subsequently contributed to the 7th Baronet's pisciculture system. Table 5.1 summarises the data whose key elements are located on the *c.1700 Survey* and *Chapman's 1774 Map* (Figures 4.1a&b and 3.5, respectively).

THE POND SYSTEM DEVELOPED BY THE 7TH BARONET

Although full estate accounts have only survived from limited intervals during the 7th Baronet's ownership of Rufford, the period of George Burden's stewardship (1700-12) is sufficiently well represented to conclude that Savile gave high priority to water management and pisciculture from the outset of his inheritance, and to suggest that the system he inherited had been poorly maintained. During 1702 and 1703 around £65 was spent on water-related

¹¹ *Rot. Hund.*, ii, 26, 303, quoted in Holdsworth, ed. (1972-81), vol. 2, p. 355. Usage of medieval pond terminology is not clearly understood and may have been fluid even at the time. *Stagnum* ('slow flowing') was also used to describe a medieval millpond. Steane (1988), 39-40.

¹² Also spelt Robyn; referred to alternatively as 'Rufford Dam'. Copnall, ed. (1915), 78; TNA: E317/Notts/22.

¹³ Gover *et al.* (1940), 96.

¹⁴ Hoffman (2000), 389.

¹⁵ For changing attitudes towards estate fishpond construction see Currie (1990); for customary habits of fish consumption during the early modern period, see Thirsk (2007), 159-60.

Table 5.1:
Summary of evidence for the pisciculture system inherited by the 7th Baronet in 1700.

Name(s) of Water Feature	Earliest References	Source of Reference
Winkerfield Dam Complex	Grant for a <i>vivarium</i> 1268; 'Winkerfield little Dam' & 'Winkerfield Mill Dam' cited in 1703 Map: <i>Chapman's 1774 Map</i> .	<i>Rufford Charters</i> (no.696) Estate accounts. NA: DD/SR/A4/27
Willow Dam / Willow Pond	1708 (reference to sorting its fish stock) Map: Survey of Willow for Lord Savile, 1813; shown on Willow Green	Estate accounts. NA: DD/SR/A4/29 Survey. NA: DD/SR/212/43
Leather Mill Dam	1702	Estate accounts. NA: DD/SR/A4/26
Park Pond/ Round Pond in Old Park	1703 Map: <i>c.1700 Survey</i>	Estate accounts. NA: DD/SR/A4/27 Survey. NA: RF5L
Eell [eel] Pond	1703	Estate accounts. NA: DD/SR/A4/27
Snake Ponds	1702 Map: <i>c.1700 Survey</i>	Estate accounts. NA: DD/SR/A4/26 Survey. NA: RF5L
Stew Pond(s)	1702: reference in estate accounts to 'ye stew' Map: <i>c.1700 Survey</i> shows 2 rectangular ponds within the kitchen garden.	Estate accounts. NA: DD/SR/A4/26 Survey. NA: RF5L
Features which might have been used for fish husbandry		
Kitchen Garden Pond	1702	Estate accounts. NA: DD/SR/A4/26
Ponds in the Abby [Abbey] Yard	1702: cost of 20 days labour 'at the ponds' cited in estate accounts.	Estate accounts. NA: DD/SR/A4/26

labour costs.¹⁶ Though the figure reflects a small percentage of total estate outlay in the period, with the exception of wood management it is the area of estate improvement most consistently referenced in estate documents from the opening years of Savile's ownership. Furthermore, when in January 1712 Burden was withdrawing from Savile's service and expressed himself unable to be at Rufford 'altogether so much as I used to be', it is striking that the sole aspect of estate management upon which he explicitly chose to reassure Savile related to pisciculture: 'I did take care to have the Ice broke during the late frost in all the fish Ponds & shall do the same for the future upon the like occasion.'¹⁷

Throughout the first four decades of the eighteenth century the water system that supported fish management at Rufford was constantly being renovated and expanded under the direction of Sir George, his successive stewards, the estate carpenter, John Blyton, and, particularly after the appointment of George Nailor in the late 1720s, the estate gardener. Estate correspondence and accounts document dam, canal and pond construction; grate and sluice design; the cutting of new watercourses and construction of culverts to improve drainage; and the maintenance and on occasions re-direction of existing watercourses. A combination of practical, economic and aesthetic factors influenced this investment of labour. Watercourses needed to be regularly 'scoured' of mud, breaches along their banks patched with 'sods and clay' to control flooding, a recurrent problem on the clay grounds east of the Hall.¹⁸ Quick springs threatened the integrity of Winkerfield Dam on the sand lands west of the Hall and to a lesser extent affected water regulation within the stews and ponds in the vicinity of the kitchen garden.¹⁹ They required vigilant management. In the interests of design unity, water features needed to answer to walks and other garden features, which influenced their form and location (see Chapter 4). The high premium Savile placed on an ample and regular supply of freshwater fish influenced directly the acreage of in-hand land managed as

¹⁶ Burden's Estate Accounts, 1702 & 1703. NA: DD/SR/A4/26-7.

¹⁷ Letter Burden to Savile, 7 January 171[2]. NA: DD/SR/211/435.

¹⁸ Renovation/cleaning of watercourses is a recurring item in Rufford estate correspondence and accounts.

¹⁹ Letter Burden to Savile, 10 May 1708 (NA: DD/SR/211/435); Letter Smith to Savile, 23 December 1723 (NA: DD/SR/211/227/120).

pond, the channelling of water within the vicinity of the Hall, and the depth, shape and location of individual water features.²⁰

By the early eighteenth century there was a clear understanding that for a continual supply of fresh fish on any scale, a landowner needed a multiple pond system with special purpose ponds for spawning fish, fry, etc.²¹ Roger North's *A Discourse on Fish and Fish Ponds* (1713) recommended:

Your method must be, to have some great waters, which are the head-quarters of the fish, from whence you may take, or wherein you may put, any ordinary quantity of fish. Then to have stews, and other proper auxiliary waters, so as to lead the fish from one to the other, whereby you never shall want, and need not abound; and, which is more, lose no time in the growth of the fish, but employ the water, as you do your land, to the best advantage.²²

Bradley drew attention to the constructional implications of separating breeding and fattening ponds, an imperative, in his opinion, if fish were to 'thrive and grow Large':

...if we would prevent their breeding, it is necessary to let the Sides of the Canal be cut downright, and fenc'd up with Plank, so that there be not any Part of the Canal less than two Foot deep in Water at least; for a Water of that depth will never hatch any Spawn of Pond Fish.²³

To maintain the nutrient level within these canals he advised the design of a system that would channel river water.²⁴ John Taverner, in his seminal work *Certaine Experiments Concerning Fish and Fruite* (1600), placed considerable

²⁰ Shallow waters are ideal for spawning carp in the summer; fry require deeper water to protect them from cold in winter (Hoffman, 2000, pp. 377-8, 385). The geometry of the pool affected the ease with which it could be trawled (Chambers & Grey, 1988, p. 120). See Hale (1758, first published 1756), vol. 2, pp. 109-10, for eighteenth century understanding.

²¹ Hoffman (2002), 7.

²² North (1713), 2. 'Stew', a term used for a breeding pond/*vivarium* in the medieval period, indicated a holding pond/*servatorium* by the eighteenth century. Currie (1990), 43 fn. 3.

²³ Bradley (1724), vol. 2, p. 342.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 343.

emphasis on the need for by-pass channels and ‘good grates’ so that a pond’s water level could be regulated without accidental loss or introduction of fish.²⁵

Table 5.2 records archival evidence for the various water features used for fish husbandry at Rufford by 1743: names; character (whether principally breeding, growth or holding pool); fish species held; relationship to estate river courses. The materials used and constructional challenges presented by these features varied considerably according to local geology, topology, and the complexity of the system within which the added water feature was to be integrated. Three canals of significant length were constructed at Rufford: ‘Old Park New Canal’ or ‘Long Pond’;²⁶ ‘White Walk Canal’;²⁷ ‘Great Canal’.²⁸ All channelled river water and all were intended to be serviceable as growth ponds for carp husbandry. But whereas the construction of ‘Long Pond’ across open parkland was achieved within six months and, apart from the dam at its southern head, seems to have required no internal reinforcement, the canal adjacent to White Walk took several years. Its construction was fraught with structural challenges resulting from the complexity of the site. The problems of negotiating flow gradients, tree roots and transverse drainage channels, and of resourcing a sufficiency of clay to line the canal (which at a depth of 7 feet sustained over 200-300 yards was subject to considerable water pressure and prone to leakage),²⁹ are detailed at length in estate correspondence (see Section 4.3.2). The depth of White Walk Canal was that recommended for carp growth ponds in the period.³⁰ There is no available data on the profile of either White Walk Canal or Long Pond, and scant information regarding this aspect of other new water features, suggesting that it was either tacit knowledge or considered of little importance.³¹

²⁵ Taverner (1600), 8. Taverner focusses on river valley systems.

²⁶ Burden’s Estate Accounts, 1702. NA: DD/SR/A4/26.

²⁷ Smith’s Estate Correspondence, 1720 & 1721. NA: DD/SR/211/227.

²⁸ Holt’s Estate Correspondence, 1734-7. NA: DD/SR/211/24.

²⁹ Approximate dimensions specified by Smith during construction (Letter Smith to Savile, 9 December 1723. NA: DD/SR/211/227/122). Length of feature on *Smith’s 1725 Survey*, c.210 yards.

³⁰ Hale (1758), vol. 2, p. 108.

³¹ Winkerfield and Wellow were breeding ponds; given their scale and age they almost certainly had graduated bases. Letter Smith to Savile, 5 November 1722 (NA: DD/SR/211/227/6); Letter Holt to Savile, 13 January 1735 (NA: DD/SR/211/24/85).

Table 5.2: Summary of evidence for the pisciculture system managed by the 7th Baronet.

Water Features 1700-1743	Character: breeding/ growth/stew	Species * indicates dominant species	Comments o indicates water features close to the Hall and kitchen garden linked by a supply tapped from Rainworth Water	Reference (all NA) Confined to principal references
FEATURES IN THE LANDSCAPE IN 1700				
Winkerfield Dam	Breeding and growth	Carp*, Tench; Eels	Water source: Springs & Rainworth Water	DD/SR/211/435; DD/SR/211/227/6
Wellow Dam/Pond	Breeding and growth		Water source: Springs?	DD/SR/211/227/119; DD/SR/211/24/81
Leather Mill Dam/Pond	Growth	Carp*, perch, trout, dace	Water source: Rainworth Water	DD/SR/211/227/155
Park Pond/ Round Pond Old Park	Growth	Carp		RF5L; DD/SR/211/227/120; DD/SR/211/227/88
Eel Pond	Storage	Eels	Water source: Rainworth Water o	DD/SR/A4/27; DD/SR/211/24/50
Snake Ponds	Growth		On the c.1700 Survey indicated as a complex of four; in 1702 one pond was deepened to receive water from 'New Canal' in Old Park; after 1718 only three ponds referenced: 'Owler [alder] Snake Pond' and 'two lesser ponds'.	RF5L; DD/SR/211/227/68
Stew Pond(s) See below				
FEATURES IN THE LANDSCAPE BY 1743				
Long Pond/ New Canal in Old Park also referred to as Swimming Pond/ Pool/ Canal	Growth	Carp	Constructed 1702: cost of construction over £20. Channelled Rainworth Water from Leather Mill Dam to one of the Snake Ponds.	DD/SR/A4/1702; DD/SR/211/227/155; DD/SR/202/47; DD/SR/211/227/152a

Close Yard pond; Pond in ye Dry Close	Growth	Carp	Constructed 1703 Location uncertain but south-east of the Hall and close to the area indicated 'Shuttle Bank/Belonging to the Inne/The meadow' on <i>c.1700 Survey</i> . Water source: a grate laid during construction implies connection to flowing water.	DD/SR/A4/27; DD/SR/211/227/169; DD/SR/211/227/95; DD/SR/211/227/68
Winding Pool/Winding Stew Pond	Growth	*Carp, tench	Water source: Rainworth Water	DD/SR/211/227/122; DD/SR/211/227/120; DD/SR/211/227/6
Island Stew Pond	Growth	Carp		DD/SR/211/227/69
Great Stew Pond/ Large Stew Pond	Growth and storage	*Carp, trout	Water source: Rainworth Water Circuit of flow from 'out of ye great stew pond into ye octagon pond'.	DD/SR/202/47; DD/SR/211/227/115; DD/SR/211/227/119
Octagon Pond	Storage	Carp	Water source: Rainworth Water	DD/SR/202/47; DD/SR/211/227/120; DD/SR/211/227/119
Jack Pond		Pike	Water source: Rainworth Water Circuit of flow from 'out of ye Jack pond into ye canal [White Walk Canal]'.	DD/SR/211/227/122; DD/SR/211/227/114
White Walk Canal			Complete 1724 Water source: Rainworth Water	DD/SR/211/227/102
Circular Pond			Dug 1723 to source clay for White Walk Canal.	DD/SR/211/227/113; DD/SR/202/47
U [Yew] Tree Ponds (two)		Trout	In the kitchen garden.	DD/SR/211/227/133; DD/SR/211/58/3
Great Canal	Growth	Carp	Complete 1734 Water Source: Cold Well River (possibly augmented by other sources).	DD/SR/211/24/81

More detail has survived regarding sluices, drainage channels and grates: features extensively deployed across the estate. Sluices, in particular, were sometimes highly elaborate structures at Rufford, in the design of which Savile played a significant role, though their construction was the responsibility of John Blyton. The skilled nature of this work was commented on in the period – ‘tho’ very ordinarily us’d, yet require an experienc’d Carpenter’, cautioned North³² – and Smith’s estate correspondence from April 1728 intimates the scope of Blyton’s contribution at Rufford:

John Blyton has altered the Bywash & Raced the Triangle belonging to the Trough in the fatt pasture. Has made a Grate for ye Bath, Built the Bath house, made a pallasade fence Cross the Blackwalk & its pond[,] made a Grate for ye New River where it Gos Out of the meadows into the Old park & a park fence Over it and the River and a Grate for the By water Cannall in Kitchen Garden, and by Mr Hallams Directions a pare of Gates north Into the Kitchen Garden &c[.] [I]f the water were down we should Lay Down the Other Trough North of the presant One in the fat pasture but that work requires the waters to be very Low and Cannot be Done yet Nor the Trap South of Gascoins [Gascoigne’s] Orchard In the padock & Mill Race.³³

The collaborative lines along which such work proceeded, and Savile’s engagement with the technical aspects of water management, are well illustrated in estate correspondence discussing the final construction phase of the garden canals. By December 1723, Blyton had laid down 9-inch square drainage troughs at either end of White Walk Canal, intended to channel water in from the stew ponds and out to Rainworth River. Smith was eager that Savile should have ‘ye Benefit of putting fish into it speedilly’, yet found himself unable to proceed because, as he pointedly informed the Baronet, ‘John Blyton Tells me you said they [the fish grates] were not to be made til ye returned.’ A week later communication from Savile had been received: ‘your directions and proportions will be right for our Rule and J Blyton is Beginning to make the Grates &c

³² North (1713), 12.

³³ Letters Smith to Savile, 8 April 1728. NA: DD/SR/211/227/160.

accordingly'.³⁴ The water supply to Great Canal is less well documented, but in 1734 the northern end was fitted with a trough made of Wellow stone, 22 feet long, and with a triangular base 6 feet deep. Again, Savile was assured by his steward (on this occasion George Holt) that the trough was being made 'as Your Honour Order'd', but now Blyton was being assisted in his work by the head gardener, George Nailor.³⁵

In addition to their practical function, some of the sluice systems at Rufford seem to have been designed for visual impact as white water features in the garden: Savile's detailed directions for a system of 'Sluces, flood gutters, cataract, aquaduct &c.' at the northern end of the Great Canal is the best-documented example (see **GREAT CANAL** in Section 4.3.3); a so-called 'Step Cascade' leading into the western end of White Walk Canal, is probably another.³⁶ Rough water helps to aerate a pond and improve its fish holding capacity.³⁷ It seems likely that this was an additional motive informing both design of the above sluices and of 'washes' in general. An example of the latter was the wash channelling water from New Canal Old Park into the Snake Pond complex constructed in 1702.³⁸

Dams were another common component of Rufford's water management system: constructed or significantly modified at Long Pond and four mill sites (Winkerfield Mill, Leather Mill, Rufford Old Mill, Rufford New Mill) between 1700 and 1743 (see **WATERCOURSES AND MILLS** in Section 3.3.1). In 1708 a major breach ruptured Winkerfield Dam. Burden's records of the subsequent reparation work shed light on the level of financial investment such structures entailed, and on the local expertise required for their construction.³⁹ On 5 April 1708 Burden informed Savile of the devastation caused by a near 20 yard breach

³⁴ Letters Smith to Savile, 23 December 1723 & 6 January 1724. NA: DD/SR/211/227/120,117.

³⁵ Letter John Blyton to Savile, 12 October 1734 (NA: DD/SR/211/24/74); Letter Holt to Savile, 19 October 1734 (DD/SR/211/24/80).

³⁶ Letter Smith to Savile, 27 January 1724. NA: DD/SR/211/227/114.

³⁷ A pond's capacity to support fish is primarily determined by its level of dissolved oxygen and thus surface area, water depth has no direct influence. Chambers & Gray (1988), 120.

³⁸ Burden's Estate Accounts, 1702. NA: DD/SR/A4/26.

³⁹ The dam's repair is the principal subject of Burden's correspondence 5 April – 30 May 1708 (NA: DD/SR/211/435) and documented in estate accounts from 1708 (NA: DD/SR/A4/29).

in the head of the dam: the 'top of the ends of the wall' were 'shattered by the dashing of the Waves'; the wash 'that was thatch with Ling, & some of the Bank on each side of it' was destroyed, along with 'most of the fences for a mile or more from the dam' and the property of several tenants. In Burden's opinion the damage had been caused by quick springs eroding the dam head, and these needed to be 'choaked' in order to provide a firm foundation for the new head's construction. The operation required considerable labour – two carts leading clay and gravel 'from morning till night' for over a week – but was one, Burden congratulated himself, for which he had devised an efficient working strategy:

...our carriages came in at one side of the breach & went out at the other so that when a load of Gravell was seemed the next load drove over it, which I think will ad much to it's firmness.⁴⁰

Savile's steward seems to have been in continual attendance at the dam, and had clear views about how the work should proceed:

I believe the best way of making it up again will be to work it with sods before & behinde, with sand and Gravell in the midle & cover the face 2 or 3 yards thick with good Gravell.⁴¹

Decisions, however, were undoubtedly collective: a 'chief Engineer', Rob Johnson, was engaged for 3 days (at the rate of 1s a day) to supervise; Savile was kept minutely informed of progress and his opinion constantly sought. On occasions unsolicited advice was also proffered. In May 1708, John Holles, 1st Duke of Newcastle interrupted his morning's stag hunting, 'walk't over the dam head to vei w it', and condemned it as 'too slender throughout'.⁴² Newcastle's assessment is borne out by reports of a new breach in 1711; his interest helps put Sir George's practical engagement in a broader social context and is easily comprehensible at an economic level. In April 1708 Burden's estimate for repair costs was £20. By December 1708, over £51 had been invested directly in the reconstruction; damage costs were accruing to tenants (from July 1708, John

⁴⁰ Letter Burden to Savile, 10 May 1708. NA: DD/SR/211/435.

⁴¹ Letter Burden to Savile, 5 April 1708. NA: DD/SR/211/435.

⁴² Letter Burden to Savile, 30 May 1708. NA: DD/SR/211/435.

Warsop was paid 10s per annum for 'loss of Ground by enlarging Winkerfield Dam head'; in 1712, Ed Shean received a lump sum of £3 13s 8d 'for the loss he sustained'); £1 7s 8d had been expended on 'gathering Fish'.⁴³ Notably, given Savile's subsequent focus on enlarging the estate's fish habitat, Burden was forced to create two small, temporary, storage dams above Winkerfield for rescued fish, the head of the only carp stew then existing being considered 'but weake' to hold the volume of water necessary to support a further 1,400 carp.⁴⁴

Not all dam construction at Rufford was as costly or technically demanding as that at Winkerfield, though even the raising of Long Pond's head – a structure required to support far less weight of water and a task that proceeded along conventional lines – involved 21 days labour to cart clay to the site, dig and fill the trench used to reinforce its base.⁴⁵

5.1.2 The eighteenth-century preference for carp

The *carp* is allowed to be the *queen* of fresh water fish, as the salmon is the *king*...⁴⁶

By the end of the sixteenth century carp (*Cyprinus carpio*), a species of fish first introduced into England in the late fourteenth century,⁴⁷ was receiving marked attention from contemporary authors: John Taverner (1600), Gervase Markham (1633), Izaak Walton (1653, final author-revised version 1676), John Worlidge (1669) and John Mortimer (1707) all record methods of keeping carp or fishing for them.⁴⁸ By the early eighteenth century North was addressing his advice on pisciculture almost exclusively to the subject of carp:

⁴³ Burden's Estate Accounts, 1708 & 1711-12. NA: DD/SR/A4/29-30.

⁴⁴ Letters Burden to Savile, 5 & 10 April 1708 (NA: DD/SR/211/435); North (1713, p. 44) asserts that a pond of 4 acres could feed up 1,600 carp to a size fit for the table or sale in two years, suggesting an order of magnitude for Winkerfield Dam.

⁴⁵ Burden's Estate Accounts, 1702 (NA: DD/SR/A4/26); Switzer (1715), 228, 231.

⁴⁶ Best (1787), 30. Salmon, trout and grayling were prized by anglers rather than husbandmen.

⁴⁷ Currie (1991), 101-3; Hickling (1971), 120-1.

⁴⁸ English authors drew heavily on the mid-sixteenth century work of Bohemian cleric, Janus Dubravius, first published in English as *A New Book of Good Husbandry* (1599). Wratislav (1881), 148-9.

My concerns are in a Clay-Country, where are neither fresh Springs, nor Rivers; and *Carp*s being the most proper Fish for the Waters of the Soil, I have made the advancing them chiefly my Care...⁴⁹

It was not pleasantness to the palate that recommended carp above other freshwater fish such as bream and pike. Bradley in *The Country Housewife and Lady's Director* (1728), a book which devoted considerable space to fish recipes, expressed ambivalence towards its culinary merits:

...commonly much admir'd if it be well stew'd; otherwise I think it makes but an indifferent Dish, being a Fish full of Cross-bones... given to taste of the Mud...⁵⁰

Hale, writing in the same period, agreed, observing wryly: 'tis not the pleasant but the fashionable dish, that brings the money'.⁵¹ Carp were fashionable, and hence profitable, because they leant themselves to husbandry. They spawn frequently and mature fast. Bream, the most popular fish for the royal table in the thirteenth century, and in Hale's opinion a far tastier variety, might take 15-20 years to reach perfection (North and Taverner quote a more optimistic 6-7 years in a large pool).⁵² Carp, however, if 'ordered by transplanting', might be fit for a gentleman's table in under five years.⁵³ Furthermore, of all commonly cultivated freshwater fish, carp were believed to best withstand frost and transportation, and their shyness made them harder to poach:

...no fish is more difficult to be taken by the common methods of stealing. They will not bite at the hook when grown to a size, in rich ponds; and even the casting net rarely surprises them.⁵⁴

⁴⁹ North (1713), 'Introduction'.

⁵⁰ Bradley (1728, part 1 first published 1727), 32.

⁵¹ Hale (1758), vol. 2, p. 111.

⁵² Currie (1991), 105; Hale (1758), vol. 2, p. 110; North (1713), 53; Taverner (1600), 8.

⁵³ Carp of 15-16 inches were considered the sweetest and therefore most 'fit' for a gentleman's table 'tho' greater are more ostentacious'. North (1713), 42-3, 48.

⁵⁴ Hale (1758), vol. 2, p. 116. Taverner (1600, p. 24) considered that in winter carp could survive for 5-6 hours on wet hay; transport distances of 35 miles and journeys which by cart would have taken 8-12 hours are quoted for the medieval period by Dyer (1988, p. 32) and Bond (1988, p. 95).

Pike are another fish on which both Hale and North lavish praise and in North's opinion, recent scarcity had added to their prestige:

As for *Pike*, which are inferior to no fresh-water Fish, and now more esteem'd than ever, being less plentiful upon draining the Fens...⁵⁵

However, Hale, while acknowledging their merits and marketability, still considered carp the more profitable species:

...when pikes grow to a good size, it bears a large price, but the constant and marketable fish is the carp. On this the person who intends to make advantage of fish ponds, should principally rely.⁵⁶

Robert May's *The Accomplisht Cook* (1660), a work that went into five editions, gave carp pride of place: its preparation was the subject of both his first fish dish and the recipes on the subsequent seventeen pages, followed by a few for pike.⁵⁷

By the end of the sixteenth century carp had become the most widely husbanded freshwater fish in England.⁵⁸ Entries in John Evelyn's diaries from the late seventeenth century highlight fishponds and canals as features of garden design around which elite social practice had developed. In 1677 he admired the canal 'running under my Ladys dressing chamber window' at Euston Hall, Suffolk, 'full of Carps, & fowle', and in 1685 at Swallowfield, Berkshire, he expressed delight at seeing hundreds of carp 'taken in the drag', out of which, 'the Cooke standing by, we pointed what we had most mind to, & had Carps every meale, that had ben worth at London twenty shill a piece'.⁵⁹ Despite the popularity of carp in the period, they were not, however, the exclusive occupants of estate fish enclosures. At Swallowfield the 'Canale, and fishponds' were well stocked with pike, bream and tench, as well as carp, and the 1st Duke of Newcastle, during his inspection of Winkerfield Dam in 1708, was curious to

⁵⁵ North (1713), 46.

⁵⁶ Hale (1758), vol. 2, p. 116.

⁵⁷ Quoted in Thirsk (2007), 269.

⁵⁸ Currie (1991), 103.

⁵⁹ De Beer, ed. (1955), vol. 4, entries 10 September 1677 & 22 October 1685, pp. 117, 481-2.

know 'what sort of fish it was stock't with', suggesting that carp were not a foregone conclusion.⁶⁰

At Rufford there was a 'Jack [pike] Pond' which formed part of the stew complex close to the Hall;⁶¹ trout (though a freshwater fish which 'will not thrive in standing waters') were stored in 'ye South yew tree ponds' in the kitchen garden;⁶² eels (creatures that, again, 'never breed in perfect standing Waters, and without Springs') were generally held in an 'Eell [eel] Pond' in the kitchen garden, though from the 1730s, small eels were husbanded in a stretch of Fat River above a dam at the bottom of Elm Walk (see Figure 4.1a);⁶³ tench, in small numbers, were variously distributed amongst a wide range of ponds and stews and husbanded alongside carp.⁶⁴ But it was carp that preponderated in Rufford's ponds, canals and stews throughout the 7th Baronet's ownership, and it was for the benefit of this species that Savile's pisciculture system was extended and managed. Furthermore, though the evidence is less direct, carp appear to have been an important, if not the dominant, species husbanded at Rufford by 1700. Burden's account of the fish retrieved from Winkerfield Dam in 1708, for example, refers to a high proportion of mature carp, and implies that these were introduced before his stewardship:

We have taken 1400 Carp I believe none of them bred since they were put into the Dam [1703 is indicated in estate accounts], for near half of them may be 17 inches & upwards long; & few under a foot; all very well fed: have also taken 160 Tench severall of them small might be Bred there...⁶⁵

⁶⁰ Letter Burden to Savile, 30 May 1708. NA: DD/SR/211/435.

⁶¹ Pike were husbanded separately (being fish of prey) and generally stocked by purchasing young fish (jacks); Burden's estate accounts from autumn 1702 record the purchase of 10 ½ brace of jacks for 12s. NA: DD/SR/A4/26; North (1713), 46; Hale (1758), vol. 2, p. 112.

⁶² Hale (1758), vol. 2, p. 110; Letter Matthew to Savile, 5 July 1729 (NA: DD/SR/211/58/3). Trout were occasionally fished from Rufford waters during maintenance work but not actively husbanded.

⁶³ North (1713), 41; Burden's Estate Accounts, 1703 (NA: DD/SR/A4/27); Letter Holt to Savile, 23 April 1733 (NA: DD/SR/211/24/50).

⁶⁴ The practice of husbanding tench and carp in the same ponds was broadly approved. Hale (1758), vol. 2, pp. 111, 113.

⁶⁵ Letter Burden to Savile, 17 April 1708 (NA: DD/SR/211/435); in 1703 Burden recorded 'Digging a Trench & carrying fish at Winkerfield Dam when drained' (NA: DD/SR/A4/27).

The importance Savile gave to these ‘Phinny Annimals’ is evident from the lengths taken to protect them from poachers and natural predators. As Burden reported during the 1708 reparation of Winkerfield:

I caused stakes to be drove down [into the two temporary holding dams], & a great many thorns to be thrown in, which I hope will effectually prevent pochers [poachers], & be some hindrance to the Herns [Heron] in taking their prey.⁶⁶

When ‘Rabbel flans’⁶⁷ similar to Savile’s landing nets were discovered on poles close to the site, men were paid to watch the dam at night, and, as a further incentive to vigilance, a monetary reward equivalent to almost a week’s labour wages (and in excess of that allowed by Law)⁶⁸ was offered for any poacher informed against:

I offer’d 5s to any that would convict any fishermen either in the River or new Ponds above besides the benefit of the Act of Parliament for that purpose & this I did so soon as the Dam was broke & when I received your last I told them I had orders to give 10s & further to prevent Rascalds [rascals].⁶⁹

5.1.3 Carp management at Rufford

Promoters of eighteenth-century pisciculture were in widespread agreement that ‘fish will grow much more upon transplanting’.⁷⁰ It was not overstocking that was the principal danger, but inequality of fish size: large fish starved

⁶⁶ Letter Burden to Savile, 17 April 1708. NA: DD/SR/211/435.

⁶⁷ ‘Rabble fish’ were the least valuable fish of a catch (*OED*); flans were nets used in ferreting rabbits (*OED*). Burden describes those found at Winkerfield as being slightly larger than landing nets and with a wider mesh. Letter Burden to Savile, 10 May 1708. NA: DD/SR/211/435.

⁶⁸ 5 Eliz., c.21 provided that the offender should suffer imprisonment for three months and pay the injured party treble damages; after expiration of his sentence find sureties for his good behaviour for another seven years. Elmsall records an informant being awarded half the fine imposed on the offender by the courts. Radzinowicz (1948), vol. 1, p. 61; Letter Elmsall to Savile, 23 November 1736 (NA: DD/SR/211/4/66). See also King (2000), ch. 3.

⁶⁹ Letter Burden to Savile, 10 May 1708. NA: DD/SR/211/435.

⁷⁰ North (1713), 33.

smaller ones.⁷¹ Hale considered that 'Once in three years every pond should be drained, and the fish taken out and sorted';⁷² North advocated even greater frequency.

Table 5.3 summarises the archival evidence relating to Rufford pond drainage and fish redistribution. The record is incomplete: there are significant gaps in estate correspondence (the principal source), which only ever covered periods when Savile was away. Furthermore, given the range and diversity of water features within Rufford's pisciculture system and its constant expansion, a regular drainage pattern is perhaps not to be expected. None is found. Wellow Dam is the only feature known to have been emptied twice over the course of Savile's ownership and the interval between events was 16 years. There was, however, a definite seasonal pattern to fish redistribution. By Savile's time it was well-established that 'The colder the weather is when you handle your fish, the better'.⁷³ February was most frequently quoted as the 'best' month, though Bradley observed that 'some people choose to store ponds with fish' in September.⁷⁴ The majority of Savile's carp were 'transplanted' between October and December, a choice perhaps influenced by the competing demands on his labour force (see Chapter 6). Regarding carriage of fish, in Bradley's opinion 'the way to carry them is to lay your Carps, Tench or Jacks, upon clean dry Wheat Straw, and the Time of doing that Work should be in the Evenings after Sun-set, or before the Sun rise'.⁷⁵ North considered this old-fashioned and hazardous since it damaged a fish's slimy coating. His preference was to transport carp in water using hogsheads for distances up to 20 miles, tuns for more extended journeys.⁷⁶ In September 1703 Burden recorded payment of 8s to two men for 'a week wth ye Cart fetching fish from Winkerfield Dam &c'.⁷⁷ Their destination goes unrecorded but in October 1718 Smith reported the use of Savile's chaise to transport '14 brace small size [about 3 ½ inches] and 30 brace ye others [10-18

⁷¹ Hale (1758), vol. 2, p. 112.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 115.

⁷³ Taverner (1600), 6.

⁷⁴ Bradley (1726), 18, 111.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 37-8.

⁷⁶ North (1713), 62-3. In the early seventeenth century a family in Cumberland regularly sent salmon to London in barrels. Thirsk (2007), 268.

⁷⁷ Burden's Estate Accounts, 1703. NA: DD/SR/A4/27.

Table 5.3:
Summary of evidence for the sorting and redistribution of fish at Rufford, 1700-1743.

Date fish sorted (Reference, all NA)	Pond emptied	Fish extracted	Sites to which fish transferred
29 October 1718 (DD/SR/211/227/69)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wellow Pond 	658 Carp: 28 (about 3 ½" long) 620 (10"-18" long) 6 eels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Winkerfield Dam: 28 small 60 middling/large Island Stew Pond 560 middling/large (this was Savile's intention but a few carp were mistakenly put into Winding Pond)
26 November 1718 (DD/SR/211/227/68)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Winding Pond and Island pond 	716 Carp	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Winkerfield Dam 264 returned to Island Stew Pond 60 returned to Winding Stew Pond 40 Great Stew Pond 50 Owler Snake Pond 16 'two lesser' Snake Ponds 8 Dry Close Pond 16 gifted to neighbouring landowners 192 gifted to major tenants 66 two big bellied women at Wellow 2 brought to the house 2 small injured fish
Date of transfer pre-November 1722 (DD/SR/211/227/6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Winkerfield Dam 	96 carp 4 tench	Meadow Snake Pond

5 November 1722 (DD/SR/211/227/6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meadow Snake Pond Winding Pond 	<p>42 carp 1 tench + young bred in pond</p> <p>24 (or 48)* carp (6"-9" long, 'fine fed ones and ye largest of them so full as if they had spawn for breeding') 3 (or 6)* tench *unclear counted in brace</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Island Stew Pond 12 Great Stew Pond 26 Winding Pond: 4 of the 'worst' carp; 1 tench Winkerfield Dam
16 December 1723 (DD/SR/211/227/121)	Directions sought for transplanting the fish in Owl Snake Pond and Swimming Pond		
30 December 1723 (DD/SR/211/227/119)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Great Stew Pond 	<p>136 carp: (66 large; 70 small) 23 trout 1 tench</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Octagon Pond: 14 large carp Large Stew Pond: 36 large carp; 48 small carp Wellow Pond: 6 large carp; 24 small carp Great Stew Pond: 23 trout
14 November 1724 (DD/SR/211/227/155)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Old Park New Canal Leather Mill Dam 	<p>no fish found</p> <p>46 carp mostly large 2 large perch + few small small tench and dace</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One of the 'little' Stew Ponds: 48 carp Other 'little' Stew Pond: perch and tench
5 July 1729 (DD/SR/211/58/3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A drainage course close to the Hall 	34 trout	One of the Yew Tree Ponds
23 April 1733 (DD/SR/211/24/50)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extracted while 'cleansing' Fat Pasture River White Walk Canal 	<p>4 large eel and several small 2 middling carp 2 trout chubb carp</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eel Pond: 4 large eel Dam created below Fat Bridge: small eels Stew Ponds

	• Stew Ponds	30 eels	Eel Pond
14 December 1734 (DD/SR/211/24/81)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willow Pond 	<p>Carp: 2 large 1520 small: under 4 yrs or 6"</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great Dam:¹ 2 large carp • Great Canal: 1520 small carp
13 January 1735 (DD/SR/211/24/85)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swimming Pond • Round Pond • SW Snake Pond • NW Snake Pond 	<p>440 Carp: 'great and small'</p> <p>260 middling carp (reference to stocking the pond previously with 600 carp)²</p> <p>130 carp mostly middling (reference to stocking the pond previously with 300 carp)²</p> <p>150 middling carp (reference to stocking the pond previously with 300 carp)²</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stew Ponds: 30 of the largest carp • Wellow Dam: 10 breeders & 20 'of lesser sort' • White Walk Canal & [Kitchen?] Garden Pond: 380 'middling size'. • Returned to Round Pond • Stew Ponds: largest carp (though being too small for house to remain only 'till further orders') • Swimming Canal: smallest carp • Stew Ponds: largest carp, until further orders

Notes

1. 'Great Dam' is a feature identified on *Bunting's 1637 Survey*. However, evidence from the *c.1700 Survey* suggests that the Great Dam had been drained by that date. 'Great Dam' is a term used rarely in estate documents (1700-43) (only two occasions found and one in relation to fish husbandry). It seems likely that by 1700 the term was being applied to distinguish one of the several estate mill dams.
2. These events are not documented in extant estate correspondence or accounts.

inches]’ from Wellow Dam to Winkerfield Dam. When, in November 1722, drainage of Meadow Snake Pond yielded ‘24 carp and 3 tench from 6 to 9 inches long... ye largest of them so full as if they had spawn for breeding’, these particularly valuable fish were ‘Caryed in Two Sows [pig skin buckets] on mens Shoulders to Winkerfield Damm’ – presumably the smoothest form of carriage available.⁷⁸ Archival data regarding how longer journeys were achieved is more limited, though the labour was well-rewarded: in November 1718, for example, Robert Sutton, 2nd Baron Lexington gave Savile’s gardener a guinea (and the two labourers who accompanied him a crown each) when he ‘caryed ye fish’ to stock the Baron’s ponds, presumably at Kelham (c.13 miles away).⁷⁹

During the first three decades of Savile’s ownership responsibility for carp management fell almost exclusively to his successive stewards – George Burden then Thomas Smith – and a high level of vigilance was expected. Despite innumerable calls on his time, Smith was present at Winkerfield when the breeders arrived, and even felt it necessary to assure Savile that he had ‘put them all in with my own hands and when they and I parted they were all as brisk as when in ye snake pond’.⁸⁰ In 1728 Smith left Savile’s service, an event which catalysed significant changes in the management structure at Rufford. For a brief interval an under-steward was employed, in part ‘To Overlook... Waters’.⁸¹ The specific responsibility for managing Rufford’s carp, however, seems to have been given not to Smith’s successor as steward, William Matthew, but to the head gardener. In December 1728, for example, it is ‘the Gardner’ (almost certainly George Nailor) who ‘promises Care & Diligence’ in ‘ye Removales of ye Fish’,⁸² and subsequent estate correspondence suggests that Nailor’s role as fish husbandman continued during the remainder of Savile’s life.

⁷⁸ Letters Smith to Savile, 29 October 1718 & 5 November 1722. NA: DD/SR/211/227/69,6.

⁷⁹ Letter Smith to Savile, 26 November 1718. NA: DD/SR/211/227/68.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

⁸¹ Savile’s Personal Account Book, 1727-32. NA: DD/SR/A4/35.

⁸² Letter Matthew to Savile, 14 December 1728. NA: DD/SR/211/58/29. Although Matthew does not identify the gardener by name in this letter, he references Nailor a month later and no evidence has been found to suggest that a new appointment was made in the interim.

At Rufford, these ‘removals’ were variously achieved. Estate accounts from 1703 record an outlay of 5s 10d on ‘4 landing netts & a Trammel nett’.⁸³ Landing nets on poles were used for lifting fish at Winkerfield, a description resembling the ‘Hoop-Nets fix’d upon staves’ recommended by North.⁸⁴ Trammel nets, whose triple-layered mesh acted like a net wall when suspended in the water, have a record of use extending back to medieval fish husbandry.⁸⁵ In 1737, Savile invested in more specialised equipment: the considerable sum of £5 was paid to Mr Garraway (see Section 4.4) for a ‘large Mash [*sic*] Carp Net 7 foot Dee[p] 70 yds long’.⁸⁶ Alternatively, ponds might be drained using temporary channels. In 1703, Savile paid 4s 8d (2 men for a total of 8 days labour) for ‘cutting a trench in one of ye Snake Ponds to take out the fish & making it up again & trenching one side of ye Closeyard Pond’.⁸⁷ Snake Ponds, and probably also Close Yard Pond, lay adjacent to Rainworth Water: trenching was therefore likely to have offered an efficient method of emptying and filling them (see Figure 4.1a). The method was, however, also used at Wellow Pond, a spring-fed feature.⁸⁸ In contrast, all three newly designed canals – Great Canal, White Walk Canal, New Canal – channelled river water and were equipped with permanent drainage channels and sluices or shuttles.

Carp nurtured in ‘great Waters’ not only needed regular sorting, but the nutrient level of their water needed to be maintained. Such an outcome was best achieved, as authors of the period agreed, by letting a pond lie dry for 6 to 12 months:

...both to kill the water-weeds, as *Water-Lillies*, *Candocks*, *Reate* and *Bull-rushes* that breed there; and also that as these die for want of water, so grass may grow on the Ponds bottom, which *Carps* will eat greedily in all the hot months.⁸⁹

⁸³ NA: DD/SR/A4/27.

⁸⁴ North (1713), 61.

⁸⁵ Hoffman (2000), 357. North (1713, p. 49) describes the use of ‘Trammels or Flews’ to fish from ‘your great Waters, to recruit the Stews’.

⁸⁶ Savile’s Personal Account Book, 1732-8. NA: DD/SR/A4/36.

⁸⁷ Burden’s Estate Accounts, 1703. NA: DD/SR/A4/27.

⁸⁸ Letter Holt to Savile, 6 October 1734 (NA: DD/SR/211/24/73); Letter John Blyton to Savile, 12 October 1734 (NA: DD/SR/211/24/74); Barley (1957), 83.

⁸⁹ Walton (1676, first published 1653), 255.

A landowner might benefit further by sowing oats in the bottom: for then ‘the fish feed the faster’, and he gained an additional ‘Profit of the Soil’.⁹⁰ Moreover, as Walton pointed out, this practice encouraged efficiency – an empirical approach to what was a largely unpredictable art – since ‘being sometime let dry, you may observe what kind of Fish either increases or thrives best in that Water’.⁹¹ The removal of mud from a pond’s base was another routine task associated with drainage, but one about which authors’ advice is less consistent. While all agreed that carp ‘delight in fat and black waters’ (North even suggesting that mud could be allowed to collect until a yard thick), Hale cautioned that frost damage was greater in ‘foul’ ponds (a designation that for him included muddy) than clean ones.⁹²

References to Rufford labourers ‘leading mud out of’ the estate’s ponds and river system – besides ‘cleaning’, ‘cleansing’ or ‘scouring’ – occur routinely throughout Savile’s ownership. But the frequency with which these activities took place varied widely amongst its components. Whereas Long Pond in Old Park was prone to becoming ‘Sludged up’, there is no evidence for removal of mud from either Wellow or Winkerfield dams during Savile’s ownership, even when, as in the case of Wellow in 1718, the depth of its deposition made the carp vulnerable to predation by herons:

Ye Depth of mud & shallowness of ye water (people say) has Let ye
Herns [Heron] Drain Wellow Dam of a many fish & that they have
been seen to walk all over ye Damm & frequent in it.⁹³

The value of pond mud as a soil-improver was promoted in fish treatises and recognised at Rufford. When ‘Fat River’ was cleaned in 1733, for example, Holt recorded: ‘most part of it [the mud] is Laid to the Roots of the Wallnut [walnut]

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*; North (1713), 35.

⁹¹ For Walton’s attention to natural history, in particular the works of Francis Bacon (*Sylva Sylvarum or a Natural History* and *The History Naturall and Experimental of Life*, published in a single volume in 1650) see Swann, ed. (2014), xvii-xxi; Bevan, ed. (1983), 25.

⁹² Bradley (1726), 18; North (1713), 36; Hale (1758), vol. 2, pp. 106, 114.

⁹³ Letters Smith to Savile, 29 October 1718 (main quotation) & 14 November 1724. NA: DD/SR/211/227/69,155.

Trees in Fat Pasture, and on Hills in the mill meadow where the Trees are to be Set.’⁹⁴

Burden, Smith and Holt all refer to the practice of sowing hay seeds in fallow ponds: Winkerfield (1708); Round Pond Old Park (two successive crops in 1715); Snake Ponds (1735).⁹⁵ As Holt’s correspondence of January 1735 exemplifies, the practice was customary at Rufford, though carried out on Savile’s initiative:

In your Letter you mention’d the two West Stew Ponds shou’d be left as dry as they can to lye Fallow. But we think you mean the two West Snake Ponds to lye Fallow, and the Weeds to be destroy’d and Hay Seeds to be Sown in a proper Season.⁹⁶

Further, Holt’s letter implies that Rufford’s ponds were monitored for productivity along the lines recommended by Walton. Drainage of the western Snake Ponds was part of a larger sorting campaign which involved the contents of the two Snake Ponds, Wellow Dam, Swimming Pond and Round Pond in Old Park and led Holt to conclude that:

Round pond in the Old Park improv’d the Fish best and the two West Snake Ponds the worst; The Fish were Grown to be some ten Inches long and a many nine Inches, from thence to six, and five at least...⁹⁷

Fish treatises commonly refer to the benefits of regularly supplementing the carps’ food during the summer months. Mown grass, soft grain from brewing and peas are variously mentioned together with the ‘Wash of Commons’ grazed by sheep and the dung of cattle grazing in nearby pastures.⁹⁸ No evidence has been found to suggest that Savile’s carp were fed ‘by hand’. But the locations of many of Rufford’s ponds suggest dung-enriched run-off as an important nutrient

⁹⁴ Letter Holt to Savile, 23 April 1733 (NA: DD/SR/211/24/50); Hale considered the resource more than offset the cost of cleaning.

⁹⁵ Letter Burden to Savile, 17 April 1708 (NA: DD/SR/211/435); Letter Smith to Savile, 23 March 1715 (NA: DD/SR/211/227/88); Letter Holt to Savile, 22 January 1735 (NA: DD/SR/211/24/86).

⁹⁶ NA: DD/SR 211/24/86.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

⁹⁸ North (1713), 50-3.

source. Livestock grazed in the pasture land east of the Hall, Old Park was stocked with deer and joyst cattle, and much of the ground surrounding Winkerfield Dam was rabbit warren and sheep walk. Moreover, as Smith's estate correspondence from 1726 makes clear, Savile intended his stew ponds to be fed with the household's waste water:

You ordered that Two Troughs should be Laid in ye Old Sough that Coms from the house[.] One to take ye wash from ye house into the Stew ponds the other Into ye New Sough that so the wash from the house might Go Either way according as you pleased...⁹⁹

Hale was particularly keen to promote this approach: 'washings of sinks, or the foulness of great houses... [the husbandmen] may be sure... will fatten [carp and tench] in a surprizing manner'.¹⁰⁰

5.1.4 The value of fish husbandry to the 7th Baronet

Eighteenth-century authors intent on promoting fish husbandry as a component of estate improvement presented an holistic vision of its benefits, ranging from revenue earned through sales and social cachet from gifting a valued commodity, to the indirect advantages of improved drainage and the recreational pleasures to which a well-managed estate water system might give rise. Evidence from the Savile Archives, considered below, provides qualified support for their contentions and at the same time points to further sporting activities, for example fowling, seemingly compatible with the management of fish.

ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

He who has water, and leaves it unoccupied, defrauds himself of a part of his natural advantages.¹⁰¹

Fish husbandry, its advocates argued, was the most profitable means of improving low boggy ground, in particular clay land considered too heavy for agriculture. North quoted a return of 12d on a carp of between 13 and 16 inches

⁹⁹ Letter Smith to Savile, 20 June 1726. NA: DD/SR/211/227/133.

¹⁰⁰ Hale (1758), vol. 2, pp. 115-6.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 105.

and calculated that carp ponds could be expected to yield in excess of £6 5d per acre per annum, a competitive sum even when set against meadowland close to London: £2 per acre per annum at best.¹⁰² Moreover, fishponds could help drain land or 'water the Grass-Grounds upon occasion'; they might double as watering holes for cattle; a side planting of 'oziers, willows, alders' might be cropped; and the value of a ready supply of fish at table was 'a great article' to any gentleman.¹⁰³ Consequently, as North enthusiastically assured future pisciculturists, fish, like venison, offered a prestigious gift:

...you may oblige your Friends and Neighbours, by making Presents of them, which, from the Countryman to the King, is well taken; for many that have Waters, not being in a Method of husbanding them, as well as others that have none, want and desire Fish, and look upon such a Present, as of a Rarity...¹⁰⁴

That Nottinghamshire provided ready and lucrative markets for freshwater fish in the early eighteenth century is indicated by reports of fish poaching from Rufford's ponds and rivers. Winkerfield Dam was the site most frequently targeted, and not only with nets (see Section 5.1.2). In June 1717 Savile accused a Bilsthorpe gang of 'cutting and letting' the dam in order to steal carp. The offenders were at the time standing prosecution for 'breaking and robbing' the pond of local JP, Mr Digby and implicated in an earlier poaching incident at Rufford: the theft of 'all ye carps' from 'out of ye little Stew pond' only yards from the Hall.¹⁰⁵ 'Groping Trout' in Savile's rivers was a recurrent offence to which Richard Shent and four fellow poachers confessed in 1725. Their targeted stretch of water was near Rainworth and the markets cited for their catch – '3 ½

¹⁰² North (1713), 71-2, 75.

¹⁰³ Bradley (1726), xvii-viii, 37-8; Bradley (1727), 129; Hale (1758), vol. 2, p. 105; North (1713), 76-8.

¹⁰⁴ North (1713), 56. See Hainsworth (2000, p. 122) for reciprocal nature of gifting; Whyman (1999, pp. 14-37) for venison gifting.

¹⁰⁵ Letter Savile to Sir Bryan Broughton, 20 June 1717 (NA: DD/SR/212/34); 'Unlawfully and maliciously breaking down the mound of any fishpond whereby the fish shall be (a) lost, or (b) destroyed' was by the Black Act (1723) punishable by death without benefit of clergy, irrespective of whether the offender was either armed or disguised (Radzinowicz, 1948, vol. 1, p. 60).

brace trout... sold to Dean of Kerkby [Kirkby]¹⁰⁶ ... 2 ½ brace sold to Mrs Dawson at Swan in Mansfield’ – indicate that public houses and perhaps even high-ranking clergymen were willing to pay for illicit trout.¹⁰⁷

No evidence has been found to suggest that either carp husbandry at Rufford or the policing of its river fish were motivated by economic return during the early eighteenth century.¹⁰⁸ The 7th Baronet’s stew ponds were principally ‘for House use’, as Holt recorded, though carp might be gifted to neighbouring landowners, substantial Rufford tenants, and even, on one occasion, ‘Two Big Belly’d women who would not be Denyd’.¹⁰⁹ When the contents of Wellow Pond was sorted in October 1718, for example, of the 658 carp (between 10 and 18 inches long) transplanted to Savile’s stew ponds, 106 were subsequently gifted to stock the ponds of Lord Lexington; 46 to Sir Hardolph Wasteneys; 40 each to Esq Thornagh¹¹⁰ and Mr Burnell-Markham; and a further 26 to three of Savile’s principal tenants, amongst whom was Mr Parkinson of Rufford Inn who had expressly requested breeders (see Table 5.3).¹¹¹ Savile’s own carp management seems to have been sufficiently well-established to generate continual stock: only a single reference has been found to the acquisition of carp from outside Rufford waters during his ownership, and this was in the mid-1720s when the system was being significantly enlarged.¹¹² The River Trent was the source and, as Smith’s communication to Savile in March 1725 suggests, a fisherman was being paid for the supply:

We have not Got any fish from ye Trent the man sent me word ye weather is yet too Cold as soon as he Can take any Carp... he will

¹⁰⁶ Possibly a reference to Matthew Brailsford, Rector of Kirkby and Dean of Wells, though a well-recognised family name cannot be ruled out.

¹⁰⁷ NA: DD/SR/218/1/35.

¹⁰⁸ A history of Wellow Pond, however, states that income was earned from Rufford’s ‘fish ponds’ during the 4th Baronet’s ownership. *Wellow and Wellow Dam – a Fine Heritage*, Local Heritage Initiative Archive – East Midlands, item no. EMO0110.

¹⁰⁹ Letter Holt to Savile, 13 January 1735 (NA: DD/SR/211/24/85); Letter Smith to Savile, 29 October 1718 (NA: DD/SR/211/227/69).

¹¹⁰ Also spelt Thorney in Smith’s reports of the event.

¹¹¹ Letters Smith to Savile, 29 October & 26 November 1718. NA: DD/SR/211/227/69,68.

¹¹² Stretches of Rufford’s rivers were, however, fished for stock: accounts for July 1703 record payment of 3s 2d for five days ‘fishing’ of Fat River; 2d each to 2 men for fishing the ditch by Hargate Bridge (at the top of Rufford Mill Lane). NA: DD/SR/A4/27.

bring them to Rufford and then Treat for bringing more and alsoe of other Sorts.¹¹³

Charles Deering in *Nottinghamia Vetus et Nova* (1751) observed that the River ‘abounds in variety of good fish’, listing 34 species commonly found amongst which were salmon, trout, grayling, flounder, barbell and roach, as well as bream, pike, carp, eel and tench.¹¹⁴ Whether the ‘other sorts’ of Smith’s letter were intended for Savile’s table or ponds, however, remains an open question, though the former is more likely. Savile and his family would almost certainly have been accustomed to a variety of fresh fish in all seasons at London, and no doubt expected similar provision whilst at Rufford.¹¹⁵

Flood damage and inadequate land drainage were problems discussed at length in Rufford estate correspondence. Old Park, Rufford meadows, Savile’s hop ground south-east of the Hall and ground leased to Rufford Inn were all repeatedly affected (see Section 3.3.1); even the breck land north of the Hall had to be drained before planting of the New Wilderness could commence (see Section 4.3.4).¹¹⁶ The financial incentive for remediation was considerable: in 1727 Savile expended £130 on hay purchased from his steward and tenants because in-hand meadowland east of the Hall had been damaged by summer floods.¹¹⁷ Investment in canal and pond construction within the pleasure gardens east of Rufford Hall may have been motivated with this in mind, and even if not a conscious objective, improved drainage would have been an indirect benefit of Rufford pisciculture. Conversely, the improvement of boggy ground was advantageous to carp husbandry since, as Smith’s correspondence from late 1718 made clear, it diminished the habitat of otters, one of their main predators. In October and November of that year, a period when otters were causing ‘such havock’ in Savile’s ponds that the help of Lord Lexington’s otter hounds was enlisted to kill them,¹¹⁸ Smith was sufficiently convinced of this

¹¹³ Letter Smith to Savile, 27 March 1725. NA: DD/SR/211/227/139.

¹¹⁴ Deering (1751), 163.

¹¹⁵ Robert Smith in *Court Cookery: or the Compleat English Cook* (1723) describes recipes with ‘carp, eels, pike, barbells, plaice, tench, salmon, flanders, turbot, halibut, roach, smelts, lampreys, and mullet’. Thirsk (2007), 185.

¹¹⁶ Letter Smith to Savile, 20 December 1727. NA: DD/SR/211/227/175.

¹¹⁷ Letter Smith to Savile, 10 January 1728. NA: DD/SR/211/227/171.

¹¹⁸ Letter Smith to Savile, 29 October 1718. NA: DD/SR/211/227/69.

benefit that he wished his master to persuade Thomas Pelham-Holles, 1st Duke of Newcastle to ‘make dry ground or a good pond’ a 10 acre area of marshy, weed-infested ground within his Haughton Estate (c.5 miles north of Rufford):

...for no question but this Nursery for Otters is very Destructive to his Graces fish so nigh at hand, when they are so to yours at such a Distance.¹¹⁹

Smith concluded his letter to Savile with an appreciation of the aesthetic advantages of such an initiative: ‘it would be an advantage to his Grace as well as a Conveniency & Ornament’.¹²⁰

A complex of motivations – economic, pragmatic, aesthetic and even sporting – may likewise have influenced waterside planting at Rufford. Irregular banks were understood to be of benefit to fish, providing hiding places and shade. Hale advised pond designers:

...to leave here and there a little island... and in other places to hollow away the banks underneath, and to plant willows, and other watery trees, that their roots may bulge out into the water.¹²¹

In the winter of 1714 willow boles were transplanted from an avenue east of Rufford Hall to Winkerfield Dam. Alders were a distinguishing characteristic of one of the Snake Ponds (‘Owler Snake Pond’) and several of Savile’s fishponds had islands. There was a ‘Sallow Holt’ in New Park, which was coppiced to supply the hop pole market (see Chapter 6), and sallows and alders were a feature of the island in Black Walk Pond and probably others.¹²² Island construction and planting also enlarged the estate’s waterfowl habitat (see below), and the locations and/or names of several of Rufford’s fishponds – for

¹¹⁹ Letter Smith to Savile, 29 November 1718. NA: DD/SR/211/227/67. Location of Haughton derived from Barley (1957), 88.

¹²⁰ Letter Smith to Savile, 29 November 1718. NA: DD/SR/211/227/67.

¹²¹ Hale (1758), vol. 2, p. 110.

¹²² Letters Smith to Savile, 23 March 1715, 29 November 1718 & 31 January 1719 (NA: DD/SR/211/227/88,67,61); Letter Holt to Savile, 4 December 1736 (NA: DD/SR/211/24/108).

example, Swimming Pond in Old Park – suggest that these features were enjoyed and intended for animal use more generally.¹²³

RECREATIONAL VALUE

But lay aside Profit, and consider how a Gentleman should entertain himself and his Family... there is Advantage enough in the Mastery of Fish, from the Diversion, not to speak of the Employment that it brings to a Family. Young People love Angling extreamly; then there is a Boat, which gives Pleasure enough in Summer, frequent fishing with Nets, the very making of Nets, seeing the Waters, much Discourse of them... with many other incident Entertainments, are the Result of Waters...¹²⁴

Savile was a committed angler. The most direct evidence of his interest comes from Yorkshire estate correspondence (1711-39). William Elmsall's letters contain detailed references to the protection of Thornhill's waters against poachers and the Baronet's delight in fly-fishing.¹²⁵ March and April were the 'chief season' for Savile's 'diversion in our rivers', as Elmsall referred to the motive around which many of Savile's trips to Yorkshire seem to have been organised. Grayling and salmon were the most documented catch, though 'Large Pyke... large Trout, and Charr' would also 'take the flye' and might provide 'excellent sport' along Westmorland's Mears.¹²⁶ Savile undoubtedly fished whilst in Nottinghamshire: his personal account book of 1712 includes payment of a gratuity of £1 5s 6d to the Duchess of Newcastle's secretary for 'Drawing her Deputation for me to Angle', and a detailed memorandum in his hand entitled 'Mr Thornay's [Thornagh] Fly's' indicates that fishing was a subject of local

¹²³ Location descriptions suggest that 'Swimming Pond'/'Swimming Canal'/'Swimming Pool' in Smith's and Holt's correspondence, was described as 'Long Pond'/'New Canal' during its construction phase (1702). While no direct reference has been found to who/what was 'swimming', Savile's hounds and/or fallow deer (both housed in Old Park) are the most probable contenders. NA: DD/SR/A4/26; DD/SR/211/227/145,152a; DD/SR/211/24/81. See Section 4.3.2 for human bathing.

¹²⁴ North (1713), 72-3.

¹²⁵ Elmsall provided regular updates on the fishing conditions in Yorkshire; personally directed the construction of Savile's 'Angle Rodd'; together with his son Raph advised about the design of flies. Letters Elmsall to Savile, 22 December – 16 February 1713 (NA: DD/SR/211/2) & 8 April 1727 (NA: DD/SR/211/6).

¹²⁶ Letters Elmsall to Savile, 31 March 1718 (NA: DD/SR/211/2) & 22 August 1725 (NA: DD/SR/211/6).

gentlemanly discourse.¹²⁷ But the extent to which Rufford's rivers and major ponds provided their owner with sport remains uncertain.

There is, however, significant evidence that Rufford's water system was managed and designed with wild-fowling as well as carp husbandry in mind. As early as 1704, references to fowling guns appear in Savile's personal account books (£3 5s 6d for an 'Old Fowling Piece' in December of that year; £3 9s 6d 'for a Fowling piece being an Italian barrel' in March 1705), and estate accounts from 1703 record payment of 15s to a man invited 'to advise about a Decoy'.¹²⁸ Whether the consultation led to immediate construction work is uncertain. However, in 1739 a decoy was being created on the western perimeter of New Park at the site of Rufford's old corn mill.¹²⁹ In December that year labourers were recorded 'digging and wheeling earth at the decoy and levelling in the Mill Meadow',¹³⁰ work that coincided with the relocation of the mill site to the northern end of the Great Canal (see Sections 4.3.3 & 4.3.4). Moreover, both the 'string of peninsulas' designed by Sir George for the new mill dam and the island in Winkerfield Dam were sites where the nesting of waterfowl was encouraged, and they were possibly even planted and managed primarily for that purpose. When, in January 1728, for example, the idea of moving Rufford corn mill was first being explored, Smith recommended that Winkerfield corn mill should be similarly relocated, reasoning that: 'ye Dam would be much more Quiet & fowl Undisturbed than can be when a Mill there to which all people have free liberty to come.'¹³¹

By the mid-eighteenth century, boating had become a fashionable recreational activity on elite estates.¹³² While no direct evidence has been found

¹²⁷ Savile's Personal Account Book, 1708-15 (NA: DD/SR/211/319); NA: DD/SR/218/9/1.

¹²⁸ NA: DD/SR/211/193/1; NA: DD/SR/A4/27.

¹²⁹ Burden's Estate Accounts, 1703 (NA: DD/SR/A4/27); Holt's Estate Accounts, 1739/1740 (NA: DD/SR/6/1/10); Day-Labourers' Fortnightly Accounts, 1740/1741 (NA: DD/SR/211/63).

¹³⁰ Day-Labourers' Fortnightly Accounts, 1739/1740. NA: DD/SR/A4/39/1.

¹³¹ Letter Smith to Savile, 1 January 1728. NA: DD/SR/211/227/173.

¹³² The popularity was linked to changes in landscape aesthetic, in particular, the late eighteenth-century enthusiasm for naturalised water expanses in a garden context: according to Felus, boating increasingly supplanted fish husbandry as the primary purpose for water management within pleasure grounds in this period. Felus (2006), 22; Currie (1990), 41-2.

for either Savile or his family boating for pleasure on Rufford's waters, there was a boathouse at Winkerfield Dam, and by 1721 the Baronet possessed a 'yatch or pleasure boat on the Trent'.¹³³

5.3 Conclusion

The considerable scale on which the 7th Baronet invested in a water management system adapted to carp husbandry at Rufford amply testifies to the value which he placed on this resource throughout his ownership.¹³⁴ Moreover, records of stocking neighbouring estate ponds with Rufford carp suggest that Savile's interest was one shared by other landowners. Major components of Rufford's pisciculture system – White Walk Canal, Great Canal, New Canal Old Park, Kitchen Garden Stews and Ponds – were sited in areas of the estate which might broadly be described as the 'garden', and were certainly managed with aesthetic as well as utilitarian dimensions in mind. Currie concludes his study of garden fishponds in the period 1550-1750 with the reflection:

...fresh water fish came increasingly to be a feature of ornament within a larger overall concept of the formal garden... [and] as the period progressed, the original purpose of the fishpond, to supply fish, became secondary.¹³⁵

Developments at Rufford point to a more extended timeframe than Currie suggests. There is considerable evidence that the 'garden' Savile envisaged for Rufford was one in which productivity, display and recreation were inseparably linked (see Chapter 4). Working fishponds were clearly compatible with this Georgic appreciation and it is notable that Savile's head gardener played a significant role in the management of carp ponds (even those several miles from the Hall) during the final 15 years of the Baronet's ownership. Overall responsibility, however, fell to successive stewards and descriptions of their

¹³³ Letter Holt to Savile, 6 March 1738 (NA: DD/SR/211/24/140); Letter Smith to Savile, 17 April 1721 (NA: DD/SR 211/227/37).

¹³⁴ When Savile wished to invest capital in mortgage purchases, Elmsall advised upon suitable estates. '[W]ell stocked ponds' was amongst the recommendations cited. Letter Elmsall to Savile, 27 January 1739. NA: DD/SR/211/4/15.

¹³⁵ Currie (1990), 41-2.

management practices – for example, the use of pond mud as fertiliser, or the sowing of hay seeds in fallow ponds – link pond maintenance into the broad context of demesne husbandry.

Chapter 6

Rufford's Wood Resources: Their Distribution, Management and Sale

Wood, the great Beauty and Security of their Villa. *Stephen Switzer*¹

Woodland management in the early eighteenth century was motivated by 'a complex mixture of social assertiveness, aesthetic sense, patriotism and long-term profit'.² It was also constrained and influenced by local ecology, customary practice, available expertise and, above all, access to markets. The amenity value of woodland and its contribution to Rufford's gardens are evaluated at length elsewhere in the thesis. Here, the primary intention is to examine the economic and social implications of its management as a sustainable estate resource. The geographical location of Rufford placed a range of markets at its disposal. In addition to the regular demands on wood for agricultural tools and fencing, repairs and domestic fuel, North Nottinghamshire supported a flourishing charcoal-iron industry and expanding hop industry in the period.³ The River Trent provided access to the shipbuilding trade of Hull and via the port of Hull to London's naval timber markets, while Nottingham itself was an expanding town with a concomitant requirement for construction timber.

After a review of the distribution and character of woodland on the Rufford Estate, this chapter looks at the various approaches taken to silviculture at Rufford with reference to customary eighteenth-century practice, local expertise and local market demands. Attention then turns to consideration of the economic importance of a sustainable wood resource to the estate – various

¹ Switzer (1715), x-xi.

² Thomas (1983), 209.

³ By the eighteenth century, coal was well-established as a domestic fuel amongst the wealthier members of Nottinghamshire's society. The extent to which wood, furze and bracken supplied the fuel needs of forest dwellers and the lower social ranks in general, remains uncertain. Page, ed. (1906), vol. 2, p. 327; Deering (1751), 87-91; Neeson (1993), 159-62.

products sold, the negotiation of sales and factors influencing their form – placing the Rufford Estate in its wider socio-economic context and, where possible, drawing conclusions about the impact of wood markets upon the management of Rufford’s wood resources. The husbandry and sale of wood involved a wide range of individuals at Rufford, from the Baronet and his mother, Madam Savile, who determined policy, to the woodtenters and day-labourers who planted and maintained the sites. As with other areas of estate management the role of successive stewards was pivotal. Throughout the chapter particular attention is given to highlighting the respective contributions of these people.

6.1 The Distribution of Woodland on the Rufford Estate

Rackham identifies four broad traditions of land use in which trees formed a part: ‘spring woods’⁴ or ‘coppice-with-standards’ in which regularly cropped ‘underwood’ was husbanded alongside mature ‘overwood’ intended for timber;⁵ wood-pasture, *silva pastilis*, where the growing of trees was combined with the grazing of animals; plantations, or deliberately planted areas of single age and often species; trees grown in hedgerows, fields, gardens and orchards.⁶ Trees on the Rufford Estate were cultivated in all these four contexts and, with the general exception of the garden and orchard, primarily with a view to their economic return. The present section addresses the distribution of this woodland and draws attention to the level of control which Savile exercised over its management.

⁴ Expression appears in Arthur Standish, *New Directions of Experience by the Author for the Planting of Timber* (1613), and was widely adopted in Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire throughout the eighteenth century.

⁵ ‘Timber’ traditionally referenced a legal as well as practical and social category of wood product. Defined by tithe laws from the period as ‘oak, ash, elm and all wood that is us’d for Building’ and of 20 years growth, the trunks, branches and bark of timber trees were free of tithe. Note re ‘Law of Tithes’. NA: DD/SR/222/44.

⁶ Rackham (1980), 3.

6.1.1 Woodland retained in-hand by the estate

Savile's demesne land contained two areas of wood-pasture land, New Park and Old Park, and three spring woods, Wellow Park, Eakring-Brail Wood and Lound Wood (see **PARKS** in Section 3.3.2). The earliest map on which all these wooded areas can be seen in relation to each other and the Hall is George Sanderson's *Twenty Miles Round Mansfield* of 1835 (hereafter referenced *Sanderson's 1835 Map*).⁷ Figure 6.1 uses this map to highlight their geographical distribution together with other wood grounds discussed in the present chapter.

SPRING WOODS

'Coppice-with-standards' was the most common form of tree husbandry on the disafforested clay lands north of the Trent,⁸ and all three of Savile's spring woods lay on the clay lands east of the Hall: Wellow Park in the Manor of Wellow; Eakring-Brail Wood in the Manor of Eakring; Lound Wood within Rufford Liberty.

An undated document entitled 'an old draught had from Mr Medhurst' and referenced hereafter as *Medhurst's Survey* (Figure 6.2) provides the most complete representation of Savile's spring woods c.1700. Thomas Medhurst was employed by the 1st Marquis of Halifax in the 1690s and was signatory to the 2nd Marquis's Will, and seems likely to have served as an attorney and/or private secretary.⁹ Although the survey is undated, both its form and the non-standard spelling of wood names adopted suggest a late seventeenth/eighteenth-century provenance.

The *Medhurst Survey* describes Lound Wood as c.24 acres, Eakring-Brail, c.51 acres, and the evidence of acreages published in Lowe (1794) suggests that the areas of Lound and Eakring-Brail continued unchanged into the nineteenth

⁷ There is no extant pre-twentieth-century survey of the Rufford Estate encompassing all these wood grounds and the first detailed county map – John Chapman's *Map of Nottinghamshire* (1774) – provides only a general representation of wood coverage.

⁸ Lowe (1794), 33.

⁹ Foxcroft (1898), vol. 2, p. 133; Will (copy) of William Savile, 2nd Marquis of Halifax, dated 21 August 1700 (NA: DD/SR/1D/12/3); Letter Burden to Savile, 20 December 1718, which cites Medhurst's name in relation to remittances to Lady Halifax's daughters (NA: DD/SR/211/54).

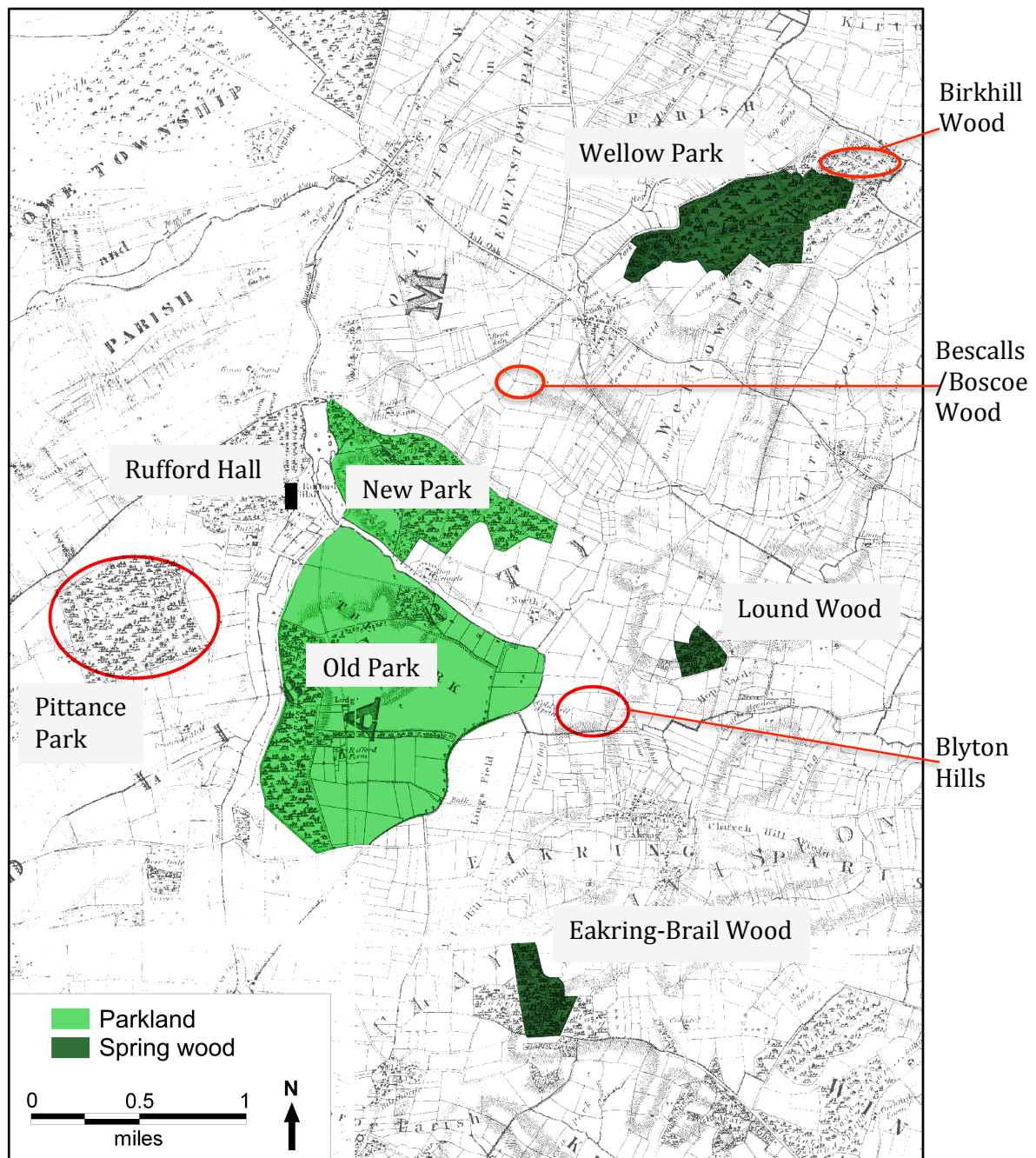


Figure 6.1:

Distribution of the 7th Baronet's principal wood grounds and key sites referenced in the text in relation to eighteenth-century plantations.

The areas highlighted in shades of green indicate the dimensions of wood pasture ground ('parkland') and spring woods by 1743. The red circles provide more approximate indications of important wooded sites and, in the case of Pittance Park, warren ground that by the late eighteenth century was an established plantation.

(Base map George Sanderson's *Twenty Miles Round Mansfield*, 1835.)

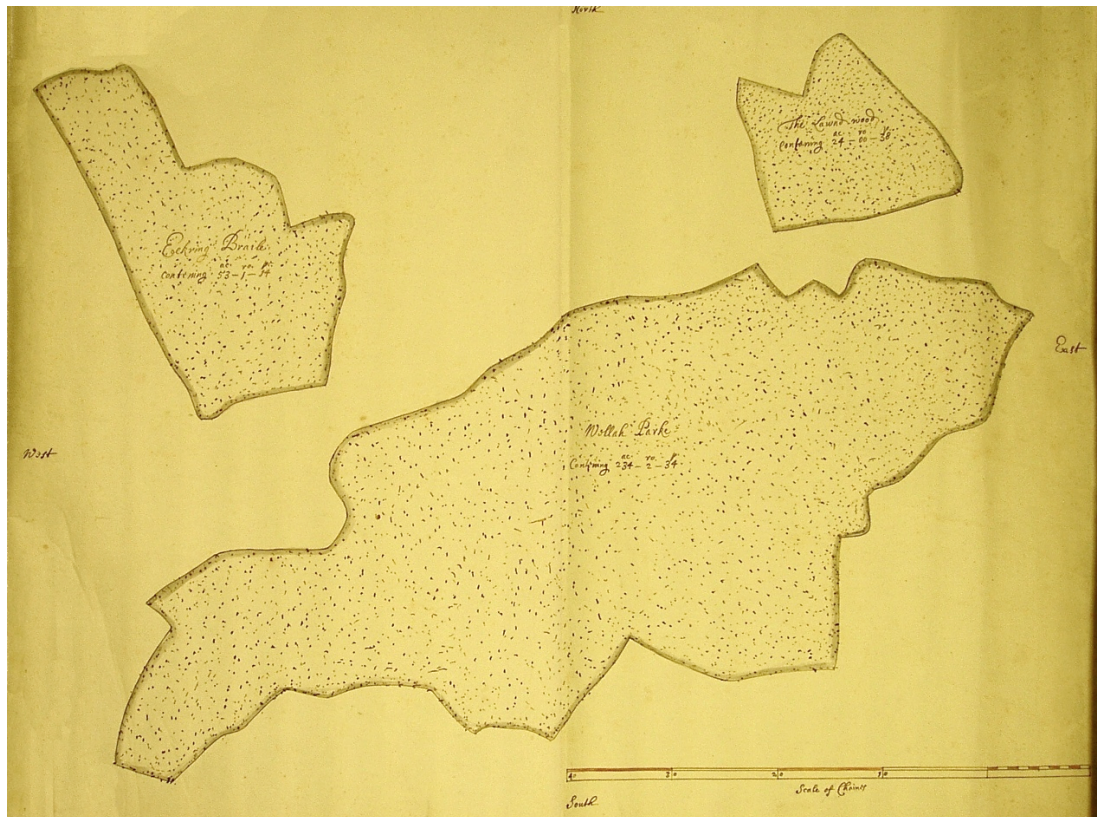


Figure 6.2:

Survey of 'Eakring Braile', 'Wellah Park' and 'The Lawnd Wood', undated and unattributed but almost certainly the work of Mr Medhurst, c.1700.

(NA: DD/SR/202/28)

century.¹⁰ The latter enclosure was sandwiched between two smaller wood holdings appertaining to the Thoresby Estate (see Figure 6.3). Medhurst's mensuration of Wellow Park (c.234 acres) is consistent with a survey carried out in 1720 by Savile's steward, Thomas Smith (referenced hereafter as *Smith's 1720 Survey*, see Figure 7.3). Smith identifies an adjoining enclosure, 'Thorney Ruff Closes' (c.49 acres), on the southern perimeter of the park. Reference in a timber valuation (1720) to trees within '3 closes adjoining Wellow Park' suggests that this may also have been wood ground owned by the 7th Baronet.¹¹ By 1749 Birkhill Wood (c.29 acres) on the northern perimeter of Wellow Park had become part of the Rufford Estate (see map regression work Appendix 6.2).¹²

Details included on *Smith's 1720 Survey* suggest that it was carried out with a theodolite and that the woodland density and distribution was not uniform; a conjecture supported by the fact that the tree coverage is represented as fragmented.¹³ The survey's purpose was to facilitate the construction of rides, however, and the representation of tree cover might therefore refer exclusively to standards.

WOOD-PASTURE

There is no unambiguous record of either the scale or boundary of Rufford Old Park during the 7th Baronet's ownership. *Bunting's 1637 Survey* provides the first accurate description and shows 'The Parke' as a wooded area of c.445 acres lying south-east of Rufford Hall (see Figures 3.5a&b). Map regression work (Appendix 6.3) indicates that the park had already been extended by c.1700 and by 1774 Old Park had absorbed c.280 acres of the ground lying west of its 1637 boundary and computed c.725 acres. Independent documentary evidence lends qualified

¹⁰ An overlay of *Bunting's 1637 Survey* on *Sanderson's 1835 Map* indicates that Lound Wood had approximately doubled in size during the course of the seventeenth century (see map regression work Appendix 6.1).

¹¹ *1720 Interrogatories*. NA: DD/SR/225/3/1.

¹² Birkhill wood, established and held under lease by William Cutts from 1739, had previously been part of the Markham Estate. Lease: Thomas Markham to William Cutts, 1739 (NA: DD/SR/207/320/2); Valuation of Markham Estate, 1744 (NA: DD/SR/211/256); Surrender of lease: William Cutts & Edward Wilson to Sir George Savile (8th Baronet), 1749 (NA: DD/SR/207/322); Purchase of Birkhill lease by Sir George Savile (8th Baronet), 1749 (NA: DD/SR/211/432).

¹³ Survey stations are indicated in the interior of the park enclosure; a draught of the survey includes measured survey angles.



Figure 6.3: John Colbeck's *A Map of the Manor of Eakring in the County of Nottingham*, surveyed for Sir George Savile in 1737.

Ownership is coded by colour: Green (Savile); Blue (Duke of Kingston); Yellow (Freeholders); Crimson (Glebe Land); Orange (Common Land).

(NA: EA/1R; a twin map by Colbeck for the Duke of Kingston is held at Nottingham University Manuscripts: MA P1.)

Detail showing Sir George Savile's woodland sandwiched between two areas belonging to the Duke of Kingston.



Savile's
wood ground

support to this conclusion: copies of late seventeenth-century surveys drawn up and annotated in 1747 (*c.1700 Acreages*, see Table 3.1) estimate Old Park as 700 acres.¹⁴ A more conservative estimate of 400-500 acres was given as evidence to the *1720 Interrogatories*.¹⁵ Possible explanations for the apparent discrepancy are: the chronology of park expansion; the very different purposes the respective documents were intended for; the nature of the parkland additions. *Sanderson's 1835 Map* (detail Figure 6.4) identifies two significant plantations on the western perimeter of Old Park: 'Beech Hill Woods' and 'Cutts Plantation'. From 1718 the establishment of 'a new plantation on Beech Hill' was under discussion at Rufford and planting campaigns 'In Beech Hill Intack, Old Park' are recorded in 1724/1725 and 1727/1728.¹⁶ 'Cutt's Plantation' almost certainly dates from mid-century: between 1754 and 1757 William and Mary Cutts received a total of £180 for planting 'the plantation' in Old Park.¹⁷

By the beginning of the eighteenth century New Park was an area of enclosed wood-pasture visible from the east front of Rufford Hall, though precisely when the land acquired this status is uncertain.¹⁸ The map regression work in Appendix 6.3 indicates that by the eighteenth century the boundaries of New Park corresponded roughly to that of a heavily wooded area referenced as 'In Beskall' on *Bunting's 1637 Survey* and specified as *c.205* acres in a written survey of Rufford attributed to the mid/late seventeenth century.¹⁹ In the late seventeenth century this area was under forest jurisdiction though the Rufford Estate held all rights to the woodland contained both within In Beskall and the adjacent 'Welley Beskall' (*c.194* acres).²⁰ Independent archival evidence supports the conclusions drawn from this map work: the area of New Park was

¹⁴ Many Rufford Estate documents became separated from the principal muniments at the 2nd Marquis's death and the Savile Archives contain eighteenth-century copies of documents held within the library at Halifax House, London. The provenance of annotations is not always clear. See Brown (1989), vol. 1, p. xxv.

¹⁵ NA: DD/SR/225/3/1.

¹⁶ Letters Smith to Savile, 14 December 1724, 8 November & 2 December 1727. NA: DD/SR/211/227/147a,181,178.

¹⁷ Holt's Estate Accounts, 1754-7. NA: DD/SR/6/1/23a,24-5.

¹⁸ Before 1680, a rental survey from that year lists two deer parks at Rufford. NA: DD/SR/227/2.

¹⁹ NA: DD/SR/227/70.

²⁰ 'An Abstract of ye Clames of Rufford. Allowed Feb 25th 1662. Chiefly relating to Wood and Houses' (NA: DD/SR/229/13/1); NA: DD/SR/227/70.

cited as 150 acres in the *1720 Interrogatories* and 'New Park with wood and bushes' as 'near 200 acres' in the *c.1700 Acreages*.

Wood-pasture ground was traditionally managed to support the cultivation of trees and the grazing of animals and a balance needed to be struck between grass and wood.²¹ Throughout his ownership of Rufford, Savile maintained a herd of fallow deer in Old Park, and in both Old and New parks agistment was a regular source of revenue. Table 6.1 documents agistment income between 1702 and 1743. Notably, although the revenue could be substantial – £68 in 1711 earned from 215 grazing animals – it varied appreciably. Fluctuation in the quality of grass may have been partiality responsible, but more likely, a flexible approach to parkland management. In Old Park, particularly, the ground was put to a range of agricultural uses. Varying acreages of oats, wheat, barley, rye and turnips were regularly husbanded during the 7th Baronet's ownership and either sold or used to feed the family, horses, hunting hounds and hens (see **PARKS** in Section 3.3.2).

Chapman's 1774 Map provides the earliest representation of timber coverage in the parks (detail in Figure 6.5). It suggests that the woodland was concentrated on the western perimeter of Old Park and eastern perimeter of New Park, and that about half the space in both was given over to pasture or agricultural use. While the evidence of early eighteenth-century ride networks (see Chapter 7) and planting campaigns support Chapman's description, pre-1750 wood sales and timber valuation data indicate that the tree coverage was more extensive in the opening decades of the century. Abraham Hewett, a cooper from Warsop and Savile's 'woodward' (1713-17), was one of the witnesses at the *1720 Interrogatories*.²² Table 6.2 summarises his evidence. It describes the woodland in Old Park as focussed around an east-west axis with discrete enclosures or 'intacks' in the south-east and south-west of the Park. No detailed profile is provided for New Park, but sales recorded from its 'North

²¹ See Smout (1997, p. 20), Smout & Watson (1997, p. 96) for the grazing impact of cattle, sheep and deer.

²² A 'woodward' was responsible for managing a private wood in a forest. Hewett described his life's work as variously 'viewing and vallueing' Savile's woods, and 'vallueing and felling of Timber and other Woods for diverse Gentlemen'. *1720 Interrogatories*. NA: DD/SR/225/3/1.

Table 6.1

**Revenue from agistment in Rufford Old Park
and New Park, 1702-1743.**

Reference (all NA)	Year summer	Old Park	New Park	Total
DD/SR/A4/26	1702	£51 5s 6d	£15 9s 0d	£66 14s 6d
DD/SR/A4/27	1703			£61 6s 3d
DD/SR/A4/28	1707			Ambiguity in accounts but revenue earned
DD/SR/A4/29	1708			£42 1s 3d
DD/SR/A4/30	1711			£68 3s 7d
DD/SR/A4/30	1712			£66 17s 10d
DD/SR/211/229/3	1713	£36 11s 4d	£13 6s 0d	£49 17s 4d
DD/SR/211/229/4	1714	£21 14s 8d	£16 16s 6d	£38 12s 1d
DD/SR/211/229/5	1715	£49 5s 6d	£15 17s 9½d	£65 3s 3½d
DD/SR/211/229/5	1716	£28 5s 0d	£15 15s 4d	£44 0s 4d
DD/SR/211/229/17	1717	£31 4s 0d	£11 6s 6d	£42 10s 6d
DD/SR/211/229/18	1718	£36 0s 0d	£19 19s 0d	£55 19s 0d
DD/SR/211/229/19	1719	£34 0s 0d	£9 16s 0d	£43 16s 0d
DD/SR/211/229/10	1720			£22 15s 0d
DD/SR/211/229/11	1721			£25 0s 0d
DD/SR/211/229/12	1722			£17 3s 0d
DD/SR/211/229/13	1723			£21 8s 0d
DD/SR/211/229/14	1724			£20 2s 0d
DD/SR/211/229/15	1725			£13 8s 6d
DD/SR/211/229/16	1726			£18 7s 0d
DD/SR/211/229/1	1727			£31 5s 6d
DD/SR/211/250/1	1728			£20 4s 0d
	1729			No data available
DD/SR/211/442/1	1730			£11 18s 0d
DD/SR/6/1/1	1731			£14 8s 0d
DD/SR/6/1/2	1732			£15 2s 0d
DD/SR/6/1/3	1733			£18 2s 0d
DD/SR/6/1/4	1734			£8 17s 0d
DD/SR/6/1/5	1735			£10 8s 0d
DD/SR/6/1/6	1736			£13 5s 0d
DD/SR/6/1/7	1737			Zero
DD/SR/6/1/8	1738			£9 16s 0d
DD/SR/6/1/9	1739			£8 0s 0d
DD/SR/6/1/10	1740			£8 4 0d
DD/SR/6/1/11	1741			£48 17 0d
DD/SR/6/1/12	1742			£28 18 0d
DD/SR/6/1/13	1743			£65 12 0d

Table 6.2:

Abraham Hewett's summary of Rufford's timber resources given in response to the *1720 Interrogatories*.

(NA: DD/SR/225/3/1)

Location	Description	Net value after costs
New Park		> £2,000
Old Park	East wing	£3,500
	East centre	£2,300
	West wing	£3,600
	West centre	£3,250
	Part of Old Park called Eakring Holt	£1,800
	Part of Old Park called Billstropp [Bilsthorp] Holt	£1,300
	A Ryeding [riding] set out but not yet cut	£750
Wellow Park	Spring wood	£1,000
3 closes adjoining Wellow Park		£240
2 closes called 'Bestow [probably Bescalls/Boscoe]' between Wellow and New Park	In possession of William Thompson [Rufford Tenant]	£420
4 other closes called 'Chassaude closes' near New Park	In possession of John Vessey [Rufford Tenant]	£100
'Large close parcel of inclosed ground called Blyton Hills'		£740
Lound Wood		£150
Brail Wood		£50
TOTAL:		£21,200

Wing', 'North Centre', 'South Centre' and 'South Wing', suggest a more north-south concentration of timber than implied by Chapman's Map.²³

Hewett referenced two further timber holdings on the estate: closes adjoining Wellow Park and Blyton Hills. The latter, a wooded enclosure of c.39 acres in the mid/late seventeenth century,²⁴ played a major role in Savile's estate landscaping (see Section 7.3.1).

6.1.2 Woodland on tenanted ground

As was customary for an eighteenth-century landowner, Savile reserved the unqualified right to 'all manner of Woods, Underwoods, and Trees' growing upon his estate and to enter upon leased ground 'to cut down, fell, work, rank and convert into charcoal' the said wood.²⁵ Moreover, his standard 21 year lease gave specific instructions about how such wood stocks were to be maintained and replenished. Each lessee was to plant annually upon his ground a commensurate number of 'young Trees or Plants of Oak, Ash or Elm'. In the case of John Vessey, whose landholding in 1717 was over 400 acres, 15 was the specified number.²⁶ Furthermore, within the first ten years of occupancy any 'dead Fences' were to be replaced with 'Quicksetts of White Thorn or Crab-Tree' and the whole protected from theft.

Estovers, the rights of tenants to wood for the maintenance of their properties, were not cited explicitly in such leases. That major tenants had some rights to hedgewood, however, is indicated in estate accounts. In 1741, for example, Mr Hunt (a lessee of holdings valued at £100 per annum) was granted 4s per annum *in lieu* of an allowance of 3 loads of hedgewood.²⁷

6.1.3 Estate woods under forest jurisdiction

Approximately two-thirds of the Rufford Estate lay within Sherwood Forest's bounds in 1700, though the extent to which this ground was wooded remains uncertain, extant forest surveys providing only minimal indication of woodland

²³ For sale details see Table 6.11 in TIMBER SALE BY WHOLESALE in Section 6.3.1.

²⁴ NA: DD/SR/227/70.

²⁵ Quoted from Savile's standard 21 year lease. Leases (Rufford, Eakring, Wellow, Ompton) 1711-19. NA: DD/SR/207/142.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ Holt's Estate Accounts, 1740/1741. NA: DD/SR/6/1/11.

coverage (see Section 3.3.1 & Figure 6.6). That the Rufford Estate held claims to wood resources within the forest is clear from a range of forest documents.²⁸ In 1702, for example, a petition was addressed by the 7th Baronet to the Lord Chief Justice in Eyre of the Forest, North of the Trent for ‘Licence to cutt downe divers old Trees, decayd wood and dead Trunks’, and in the following year wood sales designated ‘In the Forrest’ amounted to £394 16s 7d.²⁹ The areas from which the trees were to be felled are identified as ‘Rufford Woods’ and ‘Emley [Elmsley] Rayle’.³⁰ ‘Emly [Elmsley] Lodge’ is indicated on the survey of Sherwood Forest reproduced in Figure 6.6; an estate perambulation suggests that ‘Rufford Woods’ lay south of this, but the evidence is inconclusive.³¹

In addition to felling rights, Savile applied for licence to ‘encoppice about an hundred acres or some reasonable part of the said Woodland ground [Rufford Woods and Elmsley Rayle]’.³² Permission was given to establish two areas of coppice ground each of ‘forty or fifty acres Forest measure’ subject to the condition that on each piece of newly enclosed land ‘one hundred of ye youngest & most flourishing trees now standing’ would be left, ‘as an ornament on ye forest & for ye present advantage to ye Deer & other Game’.³³ Although by April 1708 Edward Collingham was being paid 4s a month ‘for looking to the coppice in the Forrest’,³⁴ no reference to income derived from these woods has been found either in estate accounts or the *1720 Interrogatories*, suggesting either that they did not flourish or that the wood was reserved for estate use.

²⁸ See ‘Catalogue of Papers titled Writings of Consequence No:1’, compiled 3 October 1743, and documents (mostly sixteenth and seventeenth century) to which the catalogue relates. NA: DD/SR/229/13.

²⁹ The Duke of Devonshire’s Licence concerning Savile’s ‘Old Wood upon ye Forrest of Sherwood’, 15 April 1702 (NA: DD/SR/229/13/19); Burden’s Estate Accounts, 1703 (NA: DD/SR/A4/27).

³⁰ NA: DD/SR/229/13/19; see also Verderer’s Certificate (signed John Digby & John Neale) concerning Savile’s ‘Old Wood upon ye Forrest of Sherwood’, 30 March 1702 (NA: DD/SR/229/13/4).

³¹ Perambulation of the Forest of Sherwood, undated. NA: DD/SR/229/14/30.

³² NA: DD/SR/229/13/19.

³³ NA: DD/SR/229/13/4.

³⁴ Burden’s Estate Accounts, 1708. NA: DD/SR/A4/29.

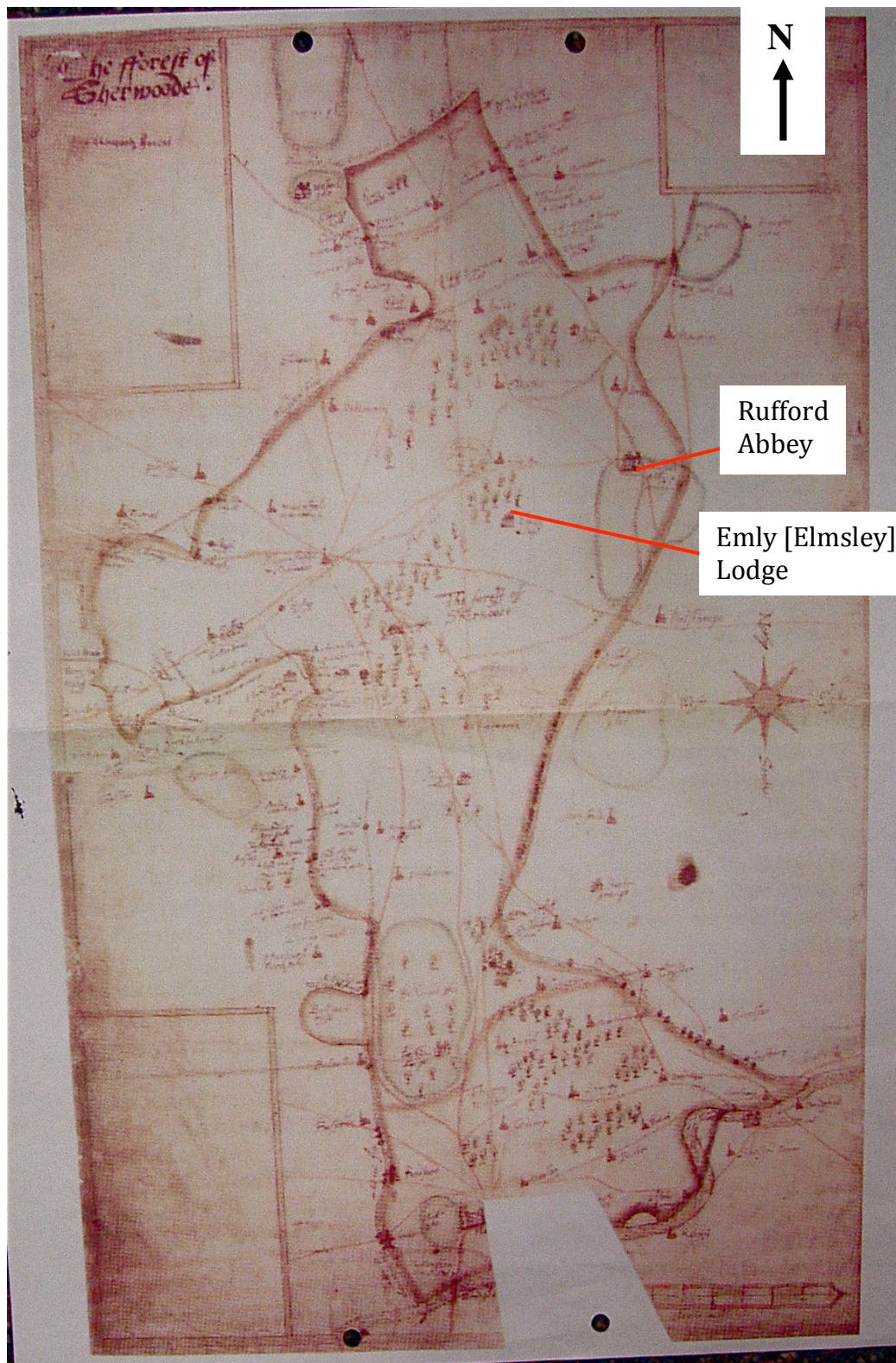


Figure 6.6: Manuscript map of Sherwood Forest (early seventeenth century) showing the course of the forest boundary and perambulation reference points.

(British Library: Add. MS. 74, 219)

6.2 The Management of Woodland on the Rufford Estate

The following account of woodland policy is derived principally from estate reports of successive Rufford stewards, estate accounts and accounts of day-labourers' fortnightly payments. In addition, there is a single wood book, entitled 'Brail Fall', recording sales of 'Round poles, Hop poles & Hedgewood' from Eakring-Brail and dated January 1713 (referenced hereafter as the *1713/14 Eakring-Brail Wood Book*).³⁵ Although much of the archival material is rich in detail, variations in dating convention, accounting style across the period, and a degree of fluidity in the usage of key woodland terminology – 'timber', 'wood', 'springwood', 'underwood' – introduces an unavoidable ambiguity into the evaluation of separate woodland products (Table 6.3).

6.2.1 Spring wood management

The 7th Baronet's principal spring woods – Wellow Park, Eakring-Brail and Lound – were well-established by the time of his inheritance. Their composition, however, varied significantly both in the range of tree species grown and the balance of underwood to standards. Furthermore, neither aspect was static during Savile's ownership.

John Evelyn, in his final edition of *Sylva* [spelt *Silva* in this and subsequent editions], 1706, recorded that 'Our Ordinary *Copp'ces* are chiefly upon *Hasle*, or the *Birch*', but considered that the inclusion of a 'store of *Ash* (which I most prefer, a speedy and erect Growth), *Chestnut*, *Sallow*, and *Sycomor*' would result in considerable improvement.³⁶ Oak was the most common species grown during the first half of the eighteenth century both as a standard within spring woods and on wood-pasture grounds, though ash, beech, elm and sometimes sweet portugal chestnut and cherry were also husbanded for timber.³⁷ Although there are no extant records of planting profiles in any of Savile's spring woods, evidence from Rufford estate accounts and correspondence indicates that though oak was the principal timber tree cultivated, a range of broad-leaf species were also husbanded. Modest sales of ash, elm and beech are recorded

³⁵ NA: DD/SR/211/116.

³⁶ Evelyn (1706, first published 1664), 202.

³⁷ Ellis favoured chestnut and oak as standards in an ash coppice arguing that their contrasting root formations minimised competition. Ellis (1738), 52-3, 94.

Table 6.3: Summary of steward accounting styles at Rufford, 1702-1761.

Steward (name & accounting period)	Character of wood accounts (summary or complete)	Categorisation of estate woodland adopted	Comments on categorisation and implications thereof	Uncertainties raised by categorisation adopted
George Burden 1702, 1703, 1707, 1708, 1711-12 (NA: DD/SR/A4/26-30)	Full	By location.		Rich in detail – each purchase itemised. But categorisation of woodland products is left open to interpretation.
1700 – 1712 (NA: DD/SR/211/54)	Summary: In answer to 1718 <i>Interrogatories</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘timber, bark and cooperware &c.’ • ‘cordwood’ • ‘springwood ye underwood’ 	For Burden ‘springwood’ and ‘underwood’ would appear to be synonymous	No indication is given as to which category the small trees felled as a routine part of woodland management are being assigned.
Thomas Smith Two accounting styles adopted during stewardship: (a) 1712 – July 1726 (NA: DD/SR/211/229/3-16) (b) July 1726 – Nov 1728 (NA: DD/SR/211/229/1-2)	Summary	<p>Estate woodland is subdivided according to land usage. Income from trees within Savile’s spring woods (Wellow Park, Eaking-Brail and Lound Wood) is treated separately from income from trees harvested across the rest of the estate.</p> <p>In both accounting periods (a) and (b) woodland products from trees across</p>	<p>Significantly, in the light of Rackham (1980, p. 3), Smith uses the word ‘wood’ to include the products of both mature (timber) and small trees.</p> <p>‘Spring wood’, on occasions, is used to describe all wood products – whether coppice or standard – harvested within locations subject</p>	<p>In accounting style (a) it is unclear as to which category the small trees felled during the course of routine thinnings are being assigned.</p> <p>In accounting style (b) it is impossible to extract a value for the underwood alone.</p>

		<p>the estate (except spring woods) are categorised as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'wood' • 'cooperware' • 'rotten wood' • 'bark' <p>In accounting period (a) the woodland products from spring woods are categorised as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'underwood' • 'oakwood' <p>In accounting period (b) only a collective income is given, referenced</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'springwood' 	to a distinct style of management.	
<p>William Batty (1729/1730); George Holt (1730 – 1741, 1743 – 1761); William Webster (1741 – 1743).</p> <p>Rufford accounts take on a standard form from 1730 until at least 1761, when records of Holt's stewardship end. (NA: DD/SR/211/442/1; DD/SR/6/1/1-28; DD/SR/211/356-7)</p>	Both summary and complete accounts.	<p>Categories adopted in summary accounts are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'wood' • 'spring wood' • 'cordwood' • 'bark' 	From the complete accounts it is clear that 'spring wood' refers exclusively to coppiced poles and hedgewood.	The term 'wood' is being used to signify 'timber' and small trees.

from Eakring-Brail and Wellow Park, the latter also producing 'Linn [lime]', hazel, 'Crab [crab apple]', 'Asp [aspen]' and maple.³⁸ Ash and oak, cultivated to supply regional markets for hop and husbandry poles, were the dominant underwood species grown in Wellow Park and Eakring-Brail. Lound Wood, by contrast, was chiefly hazel coppice in the opening decades of the eighteenth century and only suitable for poor quality fencing. By the late 1730s, however, an effort was being made to shift Lound's underwood profile towards more profitable ash coppice.

Despite a statute of 1543 specifying the minimum standard-to-coppice ratio permissible per acre of woodland and enforcing the exclusion of grazing cattle within four years of cropping,³⁹ horticultural literature suggests that by the late seventeenth century woodland management was guided more by pragmatism than legal constraint. Evelyn advocated a common sense approach to the admission of grazing animals;⁴⁰ Cook considered that standard-to-coppice ratios should reflect market forces:

The Statute saith, you are to leave twelve score Oaks at every Fall, on an Acre; for want of them, so many Elms, Ashes, Beeches, &c. But leave according to the thinness of your wood, and where underwood sells well, there let your Timber-trees stand the thinner; and in such Countreys where Coals are cheap, and Timber sells well, there let your Timber-trees stand thick...⁴¹

Lowe refers to the practice in Nottinghamshire of overplanting standards within spring woods so that competition for light would promote straight timber, then selectively thinning to create space and light for the underwood.⁴² Although during the 7th Baronet's ownership it was customary at Rufford 'to take Down [young standards] Discretionally... both to make money & Encourage ye underwood', ⁴³ descriptions of wood husbandry in Rufford estate correspondence reflect a flexible approach, responsive to local markets, ecology and even aesthetics. In January 1724, for example, Smith judged Lound Wood

³⁸ Burden's Estate Accounts, 1702, 1703, 1707, 1708, 1711-12. NA: DD/SR/A4/26-30.

³⁹ 35 Hen. 8, c.17, quoted in James (1981), 125-6.

⁴⁰ Evelyn (1706), 206.

⁴¹ Cook (1676), 125-6.

⁴² Lowe (1794), 87.

⁴³ Letter Smith to Savile, 29 January 1724. NA: DD/SR/211/227/113.

‘very full of fine kind Young Oak Trees’ but the underwood ‘not worth preserving 20 years’.⁴⁴ While he initially recommended sacrificing the underwood by letting the oaks ‘all stand’, two months later he was advising that small oaks that ‘Stand near to An oak of a better or bigger Sort So that ye branches of ye Larger Damages ye Lesser’ should be felled both for the ‘beauty of ye wood’ and to supply a pressing estate need for fence rails.⁴⁵ Hewett’s evidence to the 1720 *Interrogatories* yields values for the timber per acre in Lound, Eakring-Brail and Wellow of the order of £6, £3 and £4 respectively, suggesting very different planting densities.

The duration of the coppice cycle was another aspect of woodland management acknowledged to be both market and ecology dependent in the period. As Evelyn summed up:

...it be almost impossible for us to prescribe at what *Age* it were best *Husbandry* to Fell *Copp’ces*... that is, for most and greatest Gain; since the *Markets*, and the *kinds* of *Wood*, and emergent *uses* do so much govern...⁴⁶

An ash pole suitable for supporting hops might require 11-14 years growth whereas a hazel pole destined for use as a barrel hoop only 7-10.⁴⁷ Evelyn quoted cycles ranging between 8 and 20 years though considered 12-15 most common.⁴⁸ An additional factor affecting the choice of coppice cycle was the well recognised fact that coppice and timber were, in a sense, incompatible crops, competing as they did for the same nutrients and light. As Cook and Evelyn pointed out: frequent felling improved the underwood ‘for the oftener you fell your under-wood, the thicker it will be’ but ‘the seldom Fall yields the more Timber’.⁴⁹ Savile’s steward, George Burden, records Rufford underwood being cut ‘at different Growths, often about 20 years than under’.⁵⁰ The duration of the cycle seems long when set against the 15 year interval adopted on the

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ Letter Smith to Savile, 6 April 1724. NA: DD/SR 211/227/101.

⁴⁶ Evelyn (1706), 203.

⁴⁷ Collins (1992), 118.

⁴⁸ Evelyn (1706), 203.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*; Cook (1676), 119.

⁵⁰ Letter Burden to Savile, 21 October 1718 (NA: DD/SR/211/54); Smith quoted 20 years to the 1720 *Interrogatories*.

neighbouring Thoresby Estate,⁵¹ but might be explained by a range of factors: quality of ground cultivated; total area of spring wood holding; preferred markets. A less regional possibility is what might loosely be termed ‘customary estate policy’. There was a significant exchange of expertise between Savile’s Nottinghamshire and Yorkshire estates during the 7th Baronet’s ownership (see Chapter 8) and on the latter a 20 year cycle was adopted.⁵²

Unlike the duration of the coppice cycle, the organisation of coppice falls varied appreciable both during the first half of the eighteenth century and across Savile’s holdings. Rackham identifies three traditional methods of organising underwood falls: a wood might be divided into sections which were cut in rotation on an annual basis; the entire underwood crop might be felled and allowed to regenerate; the area cut yearly might be allowed to fluctuate according to variations in growth rate and market.⁵³ The approach taken at Rufford seems to have contained elements of all three. Table 6.4 records the years in which coppice products were sold and, where available, the value and location of the fall. The data is based principally on figures extracted from estate accounts and does not therefore include the value of coppice wood used for in-hand husbandry.⁵⁴ Ambiguity surrounding the inclusivity of the category ‘underwood’ was discussed above. Notwithstanding, the figures permit a number of qualitative observations. Firstly, although there was significant variation in annual spring wood income during the period of the 7th Baronet’s ownership – ranging from a few years in which no sales were made to a maximum of £187 5s 11d stated in the 1731/1732 accounts – the average annual sales during each of the principal stewardships were roughly equivalent, suggesting continuity in the fall management. The second observation is that the pattern of felling differed appreciably in all three woods. It was almost an annual event in the largest spring wood, Wellow Park, an extremely rare event in Lound,

⁵¹ Lowe (1794), 90.

⁵² Letter (copy) Mr Spencer Stanhope to Raph Elmsall, 22 December 1781. NA: DD/SR/211/93.

⁵³ Rackham (1980), 137.

⁵⁴ Tithe payments suggest that in-hand usage could be significant: in accounting year 1733/1734 the value of in-hand wood from Eakring-Brail (Wellow Park wood was exempted from tithe) was £17 16s 3d. Holt’s Estate Accounts 1733/1734 (NA: DD/SR/6/1/4); Note re ‘Law of Tithes’ (NA: DD/SR/222/44).

Table 6.4: Underwood/spring wood revenue, 1701-1750.

Date	Wellow Park	Eaking-Brail Wood	Lound Wood	Other sites	Sale of 'Underwood'/'Spring wood' (expenses not deducted) NB: Ambiguity in accounts as to inclusivity of terms.	Comments in accounts + Reference (all NA)
George Burden Steward						
1701	? = unknown	?	?		£51 4s 2d	DD/SR/211/54
1702	Sale	?	?		£82 5s 2d	DD/SR/211/54; DD/SR/A4/26
1703	Sale	Sale	No sale		£73 18s 1d	DD/SR/211/54; DD/SR/A4/27
1704	?	?	?		£74 12s 4d	DD/SR/211/54
1705	?	?	?		£99 4s 4d	DD/SR/211/54
1706	?	?	?		£92 6s 9d	DD/SR/211/54
1707	Sale	Sale	No sale		£64 16s 2d	DD/SR/211/54; DD/SR/A4/28
1708	Sale	No sale	No sale		£49 4s 11d	DD/SR/211/54; DD/SR/A4/29
1709	?	?	?		£33 15s 3d	DD/SR/211/54
1710	?	?	?		£46 1s 7d	DD/SR/211/54
1711-12	Sale	No Sale	No Sale		£47 8s 3d	DD/SR/211/54; A4/30
Thomas Smith Steward						
1713	Sale	No sale	No sale		£144 1s 3d	DD/SR/211/229/3
1714	No sale	Sale	No sale		£147 0s 3d	DD/SR/211/229/4
					£162 8s 10d	DD/SR/211/116 (1713/14 Wood Book)
1715	No sale	Sale	No sale		£51 9s 9¼d	DD/SR/211/229/5
1716	Sale	No sale	No sale		£80 7s 9d	DD/SR/211/229/6
1717	No sale	No sale	No sale		No sale	DD/SR/211/229/7
1718	Sale	No sale	No sale		£177 15s 2½d	DD/SR/211/229/8
1719	Sale	No sale	No sale		£19 9s 0d	DD/SR/211/229/9
1720	No sale	No sale	No sale		No sale	DD/SR/211/229/10
1721	Sale	No sale	No sale		£23 0s 9d	DD/SR/211/229/11
Jan 1722 – 24 Jun 1722	No sale	No sale	No sale		No sale	DD/SR/211/229/12
July 1722 – July 1723	No sale	No sale	No sale		No sale	DD/SR/211/229/13
July 1723 – July 1724	Sale	No sale	Sale		£51 0s 9d	DD/SR/211/229/14
July 1724 – July 1725	Sale	Sale	No sale		£3 10s 0d	DD/SR/211/229/15
July 1725 – July 1726	Sale	No sale	No sale		£46 3s 6d	DD/SR/211/229/16
July 1726 – July 1727	?	?	?		Not available	DD/SR/211/229/1
July 1727 – July 1728	?	?	?		Not available	DD/SR/211/250/1
July 1728 – Nov 1728	?	?	?		Not available	DD/SR/211/250/2
William Batty Steward						
Nov 1729 – July 1730	?	?	?		£36 5s 11½d	DD/SR/211/442/1

and apparently cyclical in Eakring-Brail. Estate correspondence coupled with the *1713/14 Eakring-Brail Wood Book* augment these observations. Although Eakring-Brail was divided into hags,⁵⁵ in the year to which the record relates, underwood was cut from within all 20 of these, that is, across the entire enclosure. In contrast, a policy of sectional felling was adopted in Wellow Park. Sales records frequently specify the area cut: in January 1731, for example, George Holt reported 'Eight acres and three Roods of Underwood cut in Wellow Park'.⁵⁶

One of the great advantages of coppicing as a style of wood husbandry is its flexibility. The marked annual variation in total spring wood revenue at Rufford, and numerous occasions cited in estate correspondence where coppice falls were conditioned by estate requirements or requests from Rufford tenants and local husbandmen indicate that this flexibility was to a high degree market driven. In April 1724, for example, Smith sought Savile's permission to have 'Small and Crooked Trees & Undercowrings' felled in Lound because 'We want Rayles for your park and other fences &c'.⁵⁷ In January 1728, a selective fall from Wellow Park was influenced by both tenants' needs and a low market demand for poles: 'no demand for Poles so have order'd the men to cutt a small Parsell of underwood in wellow Park for Hedging as is wanted by some Tenants'.⁵⁸ It is also noteworthy that at the time of the 1731 sale, Holt intended to extend the felled area in Wellow Park – 'for some people who have occasion' – even though hedgewood and husbandry poles remained from the Brail sale. It is possible that a specific demand (for example for hop poles) needed to be met, but the more likely interpretation of Holt's behaviour is that underwood sales were strongly local and the cost of carriage over even such short distances as the c.5 miles that separated Wellow Park and Eakring-Brail Wood were significant in the context of a sale.

With regard to the seasonality of coppice felling, Evelyn allowed for two periods: January to mid-March or April; mid-September to late November.⁵⁹ In

⁵⁵ Term used for a rotation section of a coppiced wood.

⁵⁶ Letter Holt to Savile, 27 January 1731. NA: DD/SR/211/24/6.

⁵⁷ Letter Smith to Savile, 6 April 1724. NA: DD/SR/211/227/101.

⁵⁸ Letter Matthew to Savile, 25 January 1729. NA: DD/SR/211/58/22.

⁵⁹ Evelyn (1706), 205.

relation to standards, the season recommended was species dependent: ‘*December and January is the best time to fell Timber,*’ advised Cook, ‘but the Oak in *April*’.⁶⁰ The differential treatment of oak arose from the desire to profit from the tanners’ market for oak bark. As Ellis explained: ‘The Sap of Trees stirs at three Seasons of the Year; in *April*, at *Midsummer*, and at *Autumn*: At the two first the Bark will peel, but it won’t between them Times.’⁶¹ Oaks were generally peeled after felling, as the above statements indicate, though on occasions they might be peeled standing and felled as much as three years later.⁶² At Rufford the seasonality of the coppice fall seems principally to have been constrained by species biology and the practical necessity of clearing (or at least protecting) the underwood before the heavier timber was felled. The former constraint appears to have been the stronger. Oak was almost always peeled after felling, and both young trees (selectively thinned to promote the underwood) and mature timber were felled as and when the bark would peel; Smith records April to mid-June as the peeling season.⁶³ Coppicing was therefore a winter activity though, on occasions, felling continued into early March (Table 6.5). For coppice poles and hedgewood, felling was carried out before the sap began to rise: late November to mid-January was the preferred season; the start of February was already considered too late for ash.⁶⁴ Where there was risk of damage to the underwood from a subsequent timber fall, the timber trees in question might be pruned. Holt’s accounts from the period 1738-41 itemise expenditure of 2s 6d both in ‘cutting boughs out of trees to save the Spring’ and ‘cutting boughs in trees before felled’.⁶⁵ On occasions the desire to maximise underwood profits by cutting poles in season could place pressure on other aspects of estate management. In late March 1725, for example, negotiations over the course of an intended ride to link Wellow Park and Eakring-Brail Wood were given impetus by the desire to avoid undue loss from cutting the underwood within the ride

⁶⁰ Cook (1676), 125.

⁶¹ Ellis (1738), 9.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 17.

⁶³ A single reference has been found to a standing peel (see TANNING TRADE in Section 6.3.1); Letters Smith to Savile, 2 March 1724 & 31 March 1725 (NA: DD/SR/211/227/107,137).

⁶⁴ Letter Smith to Savile, 3 January (on verso 1 February) 1724. NA: DD/SR/211/227/112.

⁶⁵ Holt’s Estate Accounts, 1738/1739 & 1740/1741. NA: DD/SR/6/1/9,11.

Table 6.5:
Seasonality of coppicing at Rufford, 1731-1740.

Year	Wellow Park	Eakring-Brail Wood	Lound Wood	Reference (all NA)
1731	February & March	February	-	DD/SR/6/1/1
1732	December	January	-	DD/SR/6/1/2
1733	January	January	-	DD/SR/6/1/3
1734	December	January	-	DD/SR/6/1/4
1735	January	December	-	DD/SR/6/1/5
1736	December	-	January	DD/SR/6/1/6
1737	December & January	-	January	DD/SR/6/1/7
1738	January & February	-	-	DD/SR/6/1/8
1739	January, February & March		January, February & March	DD/SR/6/1/9
1740	Uncertain		February	DD/SR/6/1/10

out of season (see Section 7.3.1). Smith, anxious about delays, alerted Savile of the potential consequences:

...there will be a Loss in ye hop poles and hedgewood not being
Cutt before ye Sapp Rises and ye Season is So far Spent that Every
Day adds to that... I mean in a week may be Three or 4 pound...⁶⁶

6.2.2 Timber management

Pollarding is a traditional form of timber management associated with *silva pastilis*. Though pollarding of holly to provide winter fodder for deer and domestic livestock remained the norm on forest ground,⁶⁷ by the late seventeenth century the pollarding of estate timber had become a controversial practice. Cook considered there should be ‘as strict a Law as could be made, to punish those that do presume to head an Oak, the King of Woods, though it be on their own Land’ because, as Ellis explained, ‘while its Shoots are growing, the body of the Tree is rotting’.⁶⁸ The trees grown within Savile’s wood-pasture grounds, Old Park and New Park, were intended primarily for timber. With the exception of occasional references to heading trees set along ornamental walks within the pleasure grounds (see Section 4.3.2), no documentary references have been found to pollarding trees within hedgerows or parkland on the Rufford Estate, and although absence from the archival record cannot be taken as proof against the practice, there is little modern field evidence to support it.

The pruning of forest trees was another contentious issue in the early eighteenth century. Cook, while acknowledging that many were against the practice (considering that it caused knotty timber and hastened a tree’s decay), was strongly in favour himself, arguing that it could improve the shape, growth, longevity and quality of the timber if judiciously practiced. Broadly speaking, this meant frequent summer pruning during the first 2-4 years of a tree’s growth, though the same effect might be achieved naturally where trees were

⁶⁶ Letter Smith to Savile, 29 March 1725. NA: DD/SR 211/227/138.

⁶⁷ Manwood (1615), 4; Strutt & Cox (1903), 202; 9 Geo. III c.41 (1769) protected ‘all Hollies, Thorns, and Quicksets growing upon his Majesty’s Forests and Chases’ for the benefit of the ‘Deer and other Game therein’.

⁶⁸ Cook (1676), 42; Ellis (1738), 18. In some parts of the country pollarding Oaks generated a profitable source of fuel. Langley (1728a), 212; Petit & Watkins (1992).

planted sufficiently thickly that ‘one draws up another, smothering the side-boughs’ or even ‘beating them off... by their Motion in great Winds’.⁶⁹ At Rufford, evidence for wide-scale pruning within woodland beyond the Hall’s pleasure grounds is almost entirely confined to new plantations, though in the latter it could be considerable. Between early January and mid-March 1730, an average of 16 day-labourers were regularly employed as ‘pruners and planters’ or ‘pruners and diggers’ in New Park. Pruning was undertaken in the newly established wood ground, Beech Hill Intack, in January 1732, and again in New Park during planting campaigns in the winters of 1735 and 1736.⁷⁰

Records of wood sales indicate that during the 7th Baronet’s ownership the majority of timber trees were oak (see Table 6.11 in *TIMBER SALE BY WHOLESALE*, Section 6.3.1). The sale in 1724 of 20 beech good for little more than cordwood – a common use for old and faulty wood – from a prospective ride linking the centre of Old Park to Wellow Park, and of nine beech in the ‘south rideing of Old Park’ for the substantial sum of £27, suggests that there were also mature beech growing on the estate.⁷¹ Unlike oak, beech is not indigenous to the area. Its existence therefore implies an active planting policy in the seventeenth century, possibly directed by the 1st Marquis of Halifax (1633-1695) or his father, Sir William Savile (1612-1644). Both beech and ash were certainly being established as plantation species alongside oak by 1719. All three species are recorded as having been sown in Beech Hill Intack in December that year.⁷² The evidence of estate accounts and correspondence, however, suggests that late seventeenth- and eighteenth-century plantations were considerably more species rich than this: 383 oak, ash, beech, lime and maple were recorded as sold from New Park in accounting year 1734/1735 and a further 497 in 1735/1736;

⁶⁹ Cook (1676), 40-5. John Mortimer devoted a chapter of *The Whole Art of Husbandry* (1707) to ‘of Pruning Forest-Trees’. While acknowledging that most husbandmen were against the practice, he recommended it for rectifying crooked growth.

⁷⁰ Day-Labourers’ Fortnightly Accounts, 1729/1730, 1731/1732, 1734/1735, 1735/1736. NA: DD/SR/211/368,358,361,365.

⁷¹ Letter Smith to Savile, 25 March 1724 (NA: DD/SR/211/227/103); Burden’s Estate Accounts, 1711-12 (NA: DD/SR/A4/30).

⁷² Letters Smith to Savile, 10 December 1719 & 8 November 1727. NA: DD/SR/211/227/63,181.

1,167 oak, ash and beech from Old Park in 1749/1750.⁷³ Birch twigs were harvested in Old Park, birch ‘seeds and setts’ and ‘true [sweet]’ chestnuts were regularly sought for planting, poplars (in particular white poplars, abeles) were purchased from Henry Cowlshaw’s Hodsock nursery in 1736 (see Section 4.4), and poplar sets planted alongside oak and beech in new plantations in New Park.⁷⁴ The establishment of evergreen plantations at Rufford is a notable feature of estate silviculture in the second half of the eighteenth century.⁷⁵ During the 7th Baronet’s ownership, however, their predominant use seems to have been aesthetic – to border walks and rides – and possibly as nurse trees to draw up deciduous woodland. In 1724 Scotch firs were planned for the border of one of New Park’s rides, and in March 1730, 16 men were recorded as planting firs in New Park as part of a major planting campaign.⁷⁶ Further evidence for the planting of firs is obtained from nursery receipts: in 1741 fir seed was purchased from the Newark nursery of Francis Noble.⁷⁷ Notably, when conifer husbandry became more widely established from the late 1740s, the first plantations were not monocultures, but sown ‘with the seeds of different sorts of Forest evergreen’ together with oak and beech.⁷⁸

The method used to fell timber – whether root balls were removed or simply left to rot down – impacted upon both the ease with which wood ground could be re-planted and the value of a wood sale. ‘Stubbing’ is the verb commonly associated with timber felling at Rufford, and though no detailed explication of the term has been found, evidence from eighteenth-century wood contracts indicates that it signified the removal (at least partially) of the tree’s root ball. In 1739, for example, a contract drawn up by the Earl of Oxford for a major timber sale from Welbeck Park, a few miles north of Rufford, specified

⁷³ Holt’s Estate Accounts, 1734/1735 & 1735/1736 (NA: DD/SR/6/1/5-6); Day-Labourers’ Fortnightly Accounts, 1749/1750 (NA: DD/SR/211/356).

⁷⁴ NA: DD/SR/6/1/6; Letters Smith to Savile, 10 December 1718, 24 October & 14 November 1724 (NA: DD/SR/211/227/63,153,155); Day-Labourers’ Fortnightly Accounts, 1729/1730 & 1736/1737 (NA: DD/SR/211/368,360).

⁷⁵ ‘Mr Cowlshaw agreement [5 March 1754] with Sir George for Firrs &c.’ & bills from 1758 for ‘Cutts Firrs’ & ‘Naylor’s Firrs’ (NA: DD/SR/211/432); Holt’s Estate Accounts, 1757/1758 (NA: DD/SR/6/1/26); Lowe (1794), 87; de Quincey (1775), 87.

⁷⁶ Letter Smith to Savile, 14 December 1724 (NA: DD/SR/211/227/147a); Day-Labourers’ Fortnightly Accounts, 1729/1730 (NA: DD/SR/211/368).

⁷⁷ Seed bill, 12 January 1741. NA: DD/SR/206/1/49.

⁷⁸ Letter 8th Baronet to Gertrude Savile, 22 June 1748. NA: DD/SR/212/15/28.

that labourers were to 'Stub up cutt down and Sett' the trees and 'fill in the Earth into the holes wherein the said Trees grew'.⁷⁹

6.2.3 Restocking woodland

Consideration of felling raises the question of woodland stability and, relatedly, by what methods and to what extent Rufford woodland was restocked or new wood ground established. The establishment of a new timber ground at Beech Hill on the western perimeter of Old Park in the 1720s was mentioned in Section 6.1. In January and February of 1742 there was a further major planting campaign employing on average 38 labourers at another site within the park.⁸⁰ Whether this involved the replanting of old wood ground or the establishment of new remains uncertain. In New Park, planting campaigns are documented for the winters of 1720, 1729, 1730, 1736, 1737, 1738 and 1739 and here the evidence suggests that fresh ground was being colonised.⁸¹ It was customary practice in some parts of the country to sow corn alongside acorns in new plantations so that the ground could earn income while saplings became established and cattle were excluded from grazing.⁸² In 1720, Rufford labourers were recorded 'pareing and Burning up Land in New park the more speedilly & Effectually to prepare it for Corn and a plantation'; in February 1737, 43 men were recorded 'planting in new Park and cutting up rubbish and sallows out of the way'.⁸³ In relation to spring woods, new coppice-with-standards ground was

⁷⁹ Articles of agreement re Welbeck Estate wood sale, 9 May 1739. NA: DD/4P/84/23. Uncertainty re partial or total removal stems from another customary term, 'grub felling', distinguished from 'stub felling' but at the same time leaving holes to be filled. In a sales contract drawn up for Sir George Nevile of Thorney, east Nottinghamshire, 'Stubb felling' was specified for the timber stands and 'Grub felling' for the hedgerow wood. Counterpart articles of agreement re Thorney Estate wood sale, 14 May 1765. NA: DD/N/195/23.

⁸⁰ Day-Labourers' Fortnightly Accounts, 1741/1742. NA: DD/SR/206/1/136.

⁸¹ Letter Smith to Savile, 7 May 1720 (NA: DD/SR/211/227/43); Letter Matthew to Savile, 13 January 1729 (NA: DD/SR/211/58/23); Letters Holt to Savile, 8 March 1736 & 12 February 1739 (NA: DD/SR/211/24/103,146); Day-labourers' Fortnightly Accounts, 1729/1730, 1736/1737 & 1737/1738 (NA: DD/SR/211/368,360,362).

⁸² Evelyn recommended that where oaks were large and sufficiently well spaced within 'his *Majesty's Forests, Woods and Parks*, the spreading *Oak &c....* be cherish'd, by plowing and sowing *Barley, Rye, &c.*' Evelyn (1706), 294. Ellis (1738, p.10) extends the advice to private estates.

⁸³ Letter Smith to Savile, 7 May 1720 (NA: DD/SR/211/227/43); Holt's Estate Accounts, 1736/1737 (NA: DD/SR/6/1/7). A bill for 'planting' specifies 'digging holes', 'taking up',

established on the forest in 1702, and though the scale of Savile's inherited spring woods seems to have remained unchanged during his ownership, there is evidence both for renewal and change in species profile. Between 1731 and 1740 frequent references are made in estate correspondence to restocking Wellow Park with ash and oak.⁸⁴ During the winters of 1737 and 1742 replanting was underway in Lound Wood, substantially changing the profile of this hitherto hazel coppice.⁸⁵ Estate accounts for 1736/1737 record an outlay of £13 1s 3d on 65,340 ash setts.⁸⁶ Stock seems to have been readily available. Payment was made to Abraham Revile and Joseph Handley, men regularly employed on the estate for specialist wood-related work but not included amongst lists of regular day-labourers: Revile valued Savile's timber; Handley also supplied quicksets and was paid for hedging work.⁸⁷

Though discussion of tree planting in the horticultural literature of the period indicates considerable diversity in English practice – cited examples range from broadcast sowing of acorns upon the plantation ground, through the planting of clusters of seeds into regularly placed holes, to the transplantation of young oaks 5-8 feet high⁸⁸ – the establishment of estate nurseries was widely promoted by early eighteenth-century horticulturalists. Switzer believed them essential for the restocking of estate wood grounds and the establishment of new plantations, and John James argued that an *in situ* nursery had considerable advantages over its commercial counterpart:

When any Tree dies in a Garden, you may pick one out of your own Ground to supply its Place, without being obliged to seek Abroad, sometimes a great way off, and withal to buy dear; besides Trees take better and grow more beautifully when they are raised in the

'taking up', 'dressing plants', 'setting', 'cleaning' and 'carriage' as integral to the process. 'William Cutts cost for 3000 plants on 1 acre', 1 November 1755. NA: DD/SR/211/317.

⁸⁴ Letters Holt to Savile, 3 January 1732, 7 March 1733, 9 February 1737 (NA: DD/SR/211/24/23,158,116); Day-Labourers' Fortnightly Accounts, 1739/1740 (NA: DD/SR/ A4/49/1).

⁸⁵ Letter Holt to Savile, 9 February 1737 (NA: DD/SR/211/24/116); Day-Labourers' Fortnightly Accounts, 1741/1742 (NA: DD/SR/206/1/136).

⁸⁶ Holt's Estate Accounts, 1736/1737 (NA: DD/SR/6/1/7); while the sum might refer to either purchase or planting, the former is more probable (see fn. 83).

⁸⁷ Letter Smith to Savile, 23 March 1724 (NA: DD/SR/211/227/104); Holt's Estate Accounts, 1730/1731, 1735/1736, 1736/1737, 1738/1739 (NA: DD/SR/6/1/1,6-7,9).

⁸⁸ Ellis (1738), 5-25.

same Ground, the Roots not having time to take Air and dry in the Space that a Tree is taking up and replanting, when done so immediately.⁸⁹

Frequent transplantation, it was argued, produced trees with a compact root ball which could be planted out at optimum size: for Cook and Ellis, 6-7 feet; for Switzer, 7-8 years old.⁹⁰

At Rufford, 'planting' might refer to young trees and/or seeds, though the relative prevalence of the two approaches, and the basis for selecting between them, remain uncertain. That self-sufficiency in terms of stock supply was favoured, is, however, beyond doubt. Payments to labourers, mostly women, for gathering beech mast, acorns and ash keys in November, are regularly recorded in labourers' and estate accounts.⁹¹ Two estate nurseries were maintained on clay land east of the Hall. The earlier nursery, first mentioned in the 1710s, was situated between the parks, by Rainworth Water at Snake Ponds (Figure 6.7).⁹² In 1739, a second nursery (22 acres 2 perch) was dug. References to the location of this feature are slightly ambiguous but suggest a site in the south-east corner of New Park close to Cold Well River (Figure 6.4).⁹³ The range of species husbanded within the nurseries is a further uncertainty. According to the 8th Baronet, it was customary in Nottinghamshire during his father's lifetime to sow evergreens in nurseries or boxes rather than the open ground.⁹⁴ Ash keys were regularly sown in the Rufford nurseries: in 1727, for example, the gardener was 'taking up Ashes in ye Nurseryes & planting them in Beech hill Intack old park'.⁹⁵ Ash keys were also sown *in situ*, though in February 1737 labourers were

⁸⁹ James (1712), 177. Bradley (1718b) includes the 'Nursery' as one of the six areas that a gardener was required to manage.

⁹⁰ Cook (1676), 35-6; Ellis (1738), 23; Switzer (1715), 179, 185.

⁹¹ Day-Labourers' Fortnightly Accounts, 1729/1730, 1736/1737, 1735/1736 (NA: DD/SR/211/368,360,365); Holt's Estate Accounts, 1735/1736 & 1736/1737 (NA: DD/SR/6/1/6-7).

⁹² Letter Smith to Savile, 10 December 1719. NA: DD/SR/211/227/63. Geoff Matthews, in his January 1987 site report (Rufford Abbey Archives), recorded that ground adjacent to Snake Ponds on the *c.1700 Survey* (Figure 4.1a) had been known as 'the Old Tree Nursery'. To assist water management two lagoons were constructed in the area in 1981.

⁹³ Holt's Estate Accounts, 1738/1739 (NA: DD/SR/6/1/9); Letters Holt to Savile, 12 & 26 February 1739 (NA: DD/SR/211/24/146-7).

⁹⁴ Letter 8th Baronet to Gertrude Savile, 22 June 1748. NA: DD/SR/211/15/28.

⁹⁵ Letter Smith to Savile, 8 November 1727. NA: DD/SR/211/227/181.

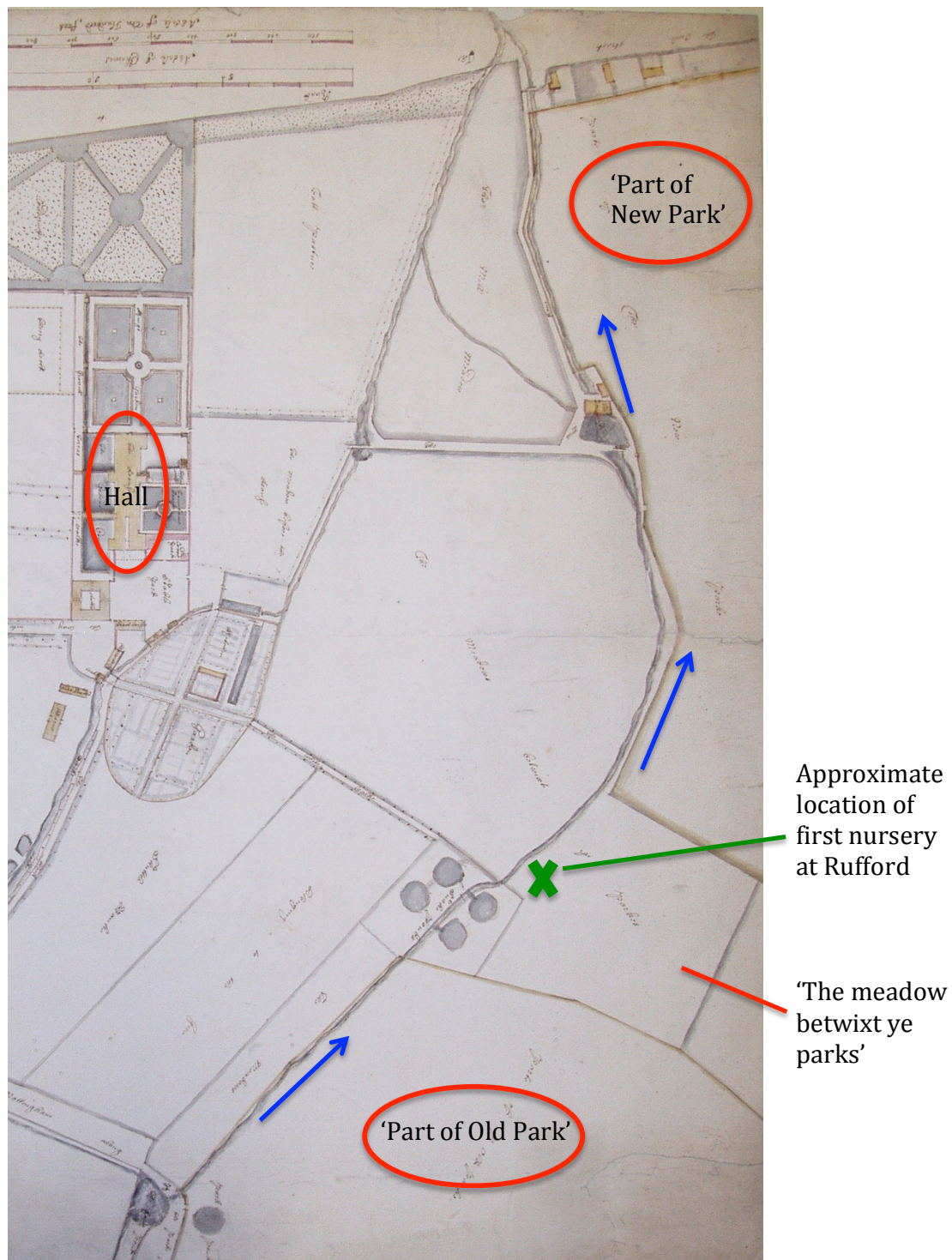


Figure 6.7: Detail from the *c.1700 Survey*.

- The course of Rainworth Water, which defined part of the western boundary of both Old Park and New Park, is indicated with blue arrows.
- The green cross shows the approximate location of the earliest recorded nursery at Rufford, close to the river and within the meadowland that separated the parks.

(NA: RF5L)

instructed to 'digg and sow Ash keys and Acorns (which are already prepared) in Wellow Park and Laund wood'.⁹⁶ The reference here to 'prepared' seed might allude to the custom of 'cleaning... so well known to every Rustick', or alternatively, the planting out of stored and pre-germinated seed.⁹⁷

Mast collection at Rufford generally occurred in November, whereas planting was a winter activity and might continue into March. One factor that undoubtedly influenced planting strategy was the facility with which seed could be obtained. Well-stocked provincial nurseries were rare in the early eighteenth century, and even though Nottinghamshire was comparatively well served with suppliers in Hodsock and Newark (see Section 4.4 & Table 4.1), difficulty in obtaining adequate seed supplies was frequently reported in estate correspondence. In 1719, for example, a dearth of beech nuts and acorns on the Rufford Estate forced Smith to source the latter from the 1st Duke of Kingston's woods in Birkland and Bilhagh at significant expense.⁹⁸ A complete absence of local birch seed in the same year led him to suggest that Savile buy Dutch seed in London.⁹⁹ In 1724 the London market was again looked to for seed, this time of 'true [sweet]' chestnut, as neither Rufford, 'welbank [Welbeck]', Kiveton, haughton nor any of these parks' could supply it.¹⁰⁰ The husbanding of reserves in nurseries was one way in which such market vicissitudes could be counteracted. Landowner co-operation was another. Rufford was an active participant in a commercial network of exchange between neighbouring estates involving both tree seeds and young plants.¹⁰¹ In September 1734, for example, Holt reported that 'Lord Galloway sent to Rufford... to desire Your Honour to give him some Beech Nuts, and he will be at the Expençe of Gathering them'.¹⁰² In 1724, Smith applied to one of the Duke of Kingston's estate servants for

⁹⁶ Letter Holt to Savile, 9 February 1737. NA: DD/SR 211/24/116.

⁹⁷ Switzer (1715), 157; Cook (1676), 34-5.

⁹⁸ Letter Smith to Savile, 10 December 1719. NA: DD/SR/211/227/63. Estates often found it hard to build up adequate beech stock plants because the trees do not produce viable seed every year. O'Halloran (publication pending).

⁹⁹ Letter Smith to Savile, 10 December 1719. NA: DD/SR/211/227/63.

¹⁰⁰ Letter Smith to Savile, 24 October 1724. NA: DD/SR/211/227/153.

¹⁰¹ A similar network operated around the Knole Estate, Kent. O'Halloran (publication pending).

¹⁰² Letter Holt to Savile, 23 September 1734. NA: DD/SR/211/24/72.

permission to gather birch setts in Birkland, a neighbouring wood, and in 1737, Holt paid Mr Thorney's gardener 2s 6d 'when we sent for Poplar setts'.¹⁰³

6.2.4 Protecting young woodland

A variety of techniques were employed at Rufford to protect young tree growth from grazing animals. In present-day forestry the term 'plashing' refers to regeneration of old coppice ground through the layering of shoots.¹⁰⁴ In the eighteenth century, however, the verb 'to plash' was used synonymously with 'to pleach' and customarily referred to the practice of manipulating plants to form a fence or hedge by interweaving partially cut stems.¹⁰⁵ Between 1732 and 1736, Joshua Handley was paid £8 9s 9d for plashing over 144 acres of Wellow Park at a rate of 1s 2d per acre, and in 1737, a further 10s 6d for plashing 8 acres 11 yards in New Park.¹⁰⁶ While, as above, details of location and/or coverage are on occasions recorded, more often, estate documents simply record that 'quicksetts' have been purchased and planted, or that hedging/fencing has been carried out. Such work was paid at the standard day-labourer's rate of 8d in 1702, rising to 9d by the 1730s.¹⁰⁷ A style of temporary fencing common at Rufford for the enclosure of arable ground and used generally within Sherwood Forest estates for the confinement of sheep consisted of wooden 'fleaks' or 'flakes' (stakes made from coppiced poles) interwoven with thorns. Although the making of such stakes is a frequently cited expense in Rufford accounts, and Handley and other labourers were employed to set such fencing around the oat grounds in the Old Park, no direct references have been found to the use of this technique for the protection of young woodland.¹⁰⁸

Both ditching and hedging were commonly used to demarcate the boundaries of Rufford's spring woods: in April 1712, £1 1s was paid for creating

¹⁰³ Letter Smith to Savile, 14 November 1724 (NA: DD/SR/211/227/155); Holt's Estate Accounts, 1736/1737 (NA: DD/SR/6/1/7).

¹⁰⁴ Peterken (1993, first published 1981), 22.

¹⁰⁵ *OED*.

¹⁰⁶ Holt's Estate Accounts, 1732/1733, 1733/1734, 1735/1736, 1736/1737 (NA: DD/SR/6/1/3-4,6-7); comparable expenditure is recorded in Burden's Estate Accounts, 1702 (NA: DD/SR/A4/26).

¹⁰⁷ Burden's Estate Accounts, 1702 (NA: DD/SR/A4/26); Day-Labourers' Fortnightly Accounts, 1731/1732 (NA: DD/SR/211/358).

¹⁰⁸ Burden's Estate Accounts, 1702 & 1703. NA: DD/SR/A4/26-7.

‘23 ½ acres of ditching betwixt the Marquess of Dorchester’s Brail and my Master’s at 1s 4d per acre’.¹⁰⁹ Savile’s wood-pasture grounds (Old Park and New Park) on the other hand, were enclosed by stoops and rails: a decision which entailed considerable outlay in wood, labour, and judging from the frequent references to renewal, maintenance. In 1703, three labourers were paid at the rate of 3s 10d per acre for renewing 48 acres of Old Park fence; in 1719 the fencing of Beech Hill Intack on the park’s perimeter cost the estate £29 10s 5¾d.¹¹⁰

6.2.5 The woodland labour force and its management

‘Tenting and fencing spring woods’ was recorded by Burden as one of the regular expenses of woodland management.¹¹¹ ‘Tenting’ in this period meant ‘overseeing’: policing the woods, protecting the game, and directing ‘woodwork’ and weeding.¹¹² During Burden’s stewardship (1700-12) three woodtenters were employed: William Cowper for Eakring-Brail and Lound at an annual salary of £1 10s; John Bullivant for Wellow at £7 4s; from April 1708, Edward Collingham for the forest enclosures, initially at £2 8s, but £3 by 1711.¹¹³ On occasions these men are also recorded felling coppice and hedging etc., but were paid additional sums for such tasks. Labour organisation during Smith’s stewardship (1712-28) is less well-documented in the Savile Archives. A payment dispute from 1727, however, indicates that by this date, Ned Brocklehurst was employed both as Savile’s woodtenter for Eakring-Brail and by the Duke of Kingston in his adjacent wood grounds. The terms of the dispute strongly imply that policing the woods and hedging were by then integral parts of the job: Smith expressed outrage on Brocklehurst’s behalf when the Duke of Kingston’s steward would agree to pay Brocklehurst no more than £1 10s per annum for ‘looking to the Dukes part of Brail, game &c’, despite the fact that he

¹⁰⁹ Burden’s Estate Accounts, 1711-12. NA: DD/SR/A4/30. Evelyn Pierrepont of Thoresby Hall was made Marquis of Dorchester (1706) and Duke of Kingston (1715).

¹¹⁰ Burden’s Estate Accounts, 1703 (NA: DD/SR/A4/27); Smith’s (summary) Estate Accounts, 1718 (NA: DD/SR/211/229/8).

¹¹¹ Letters Burden to Savile & Madame Savile, 1718. NA: DD/SR/211/54.

¹¹² The term ‘Woodwork’ is used in Rufford estate accounts and payment books (and hereafter) to categorise a broad range of woodland-related tasks.

¹¹³ Letters Burden to Savile & Madame Savile, 1718 (NA: DD/SR/211/54); Burden’s Estate Accounts, 1702, 1703, 1707, 1708, 1711-12 (NA: DD/SR/A4/26-30).

had ‘Treble as much hedging for ye Duke as for you [Savile]’.¹¹⁴ Sir George, it would appear, placed a high value on the maintenance of his woods. By the 1730s, and until the end of the 7th Baronet’s ownership, the daily work of tending the woods seems to have been shared between Caleb Townsend (an estate servant on a regular annual wage of £8) and one of Savile’s day-labourers, James Reynolds.¹¹⁵ The latter was paid 10d per day for ‘looking after woods and parks’.¹¹⁶ Both were left legacies of £10 in Savile’s Will.

Evidence extracted from day-labourers’ fortnightly accounts suggests that the workforce employed on specifically woodland tasks was relatively stable in composition. Wages were task specific: in 1740, the daily rate for male labourers engaged in woodwork varied between 9d and 1s 2d; for planting, 9d was the norm.¹¹⁷ Women’s woodwork was largely confined to weeding the nurseries and new plantations, gathering mast, and raking the bracken that was regularly mown in Old Park’s plains.¹¹⁸ In 1736, 4d a day was the rate for gathering acorns; in 1737, 8d a day for raking bracken in Old Park (see Section 3.4.5 & Table 3.7).¹¹⁹ Numbers employed in woodland tasks fluctuated according to the season: in the period 1739-42, for example, four or five men were regularly engaged, but during felling and planting, numbers rose into the 30s, and in some years might involve almost the entire labour force (peaking at 52 in 1740).¹²⁰ From 1728-30, Savile’s under-steward, Joshua Mann, was supervising the workmen, and from the mid-1730s, an overseer, Mr Johnson, was employed to fulfil the role (see Sections 3.4.3 & 3.4.5). Throughout Savile’s ownership, however, the overall management of the woodland labour force rested with his steward and head gardener: the former taking care of wood sales (see Section 6.3), the latter concerned with the horticultural dimension of the business –

¹¹⁴ Letter Smith to Savile, 8 November 1727. NA: DD/SR/211/227/181. Evelyn Pierrepont, 1st Duke of Kingston, died in 1726 when his son was a minor. In 1727 Thoresby Estate management was subject to the directions of the 2nd Duke’s guardians.

¹¹⁵ Holt’s Estate Accounts, 1730-42. NA: DD/SR/6/1/1-12.

¹¹⁶ Day-Labourers’ Fortnightly Accounts, 1732/1733. NA: DD/SR/211/364.

¹¹⁷ Day-Labourers’ Fortnightly Accounts, 1739/1740, 1740/1741. NA: DD/SR/A4/49/1; DD/SR/211/363.

¹¹⁸ Holt’s Estate Accounts, 1734/1735, 1735/1736. NA: DD/SR/6/1/5-6.

¹¹⁹ Day-Labourers’ Fortnightly Accounts, 1735/1736, 1737/1738. NA: DD/SR/211/360,362.

¹²⁰ Day-Labourers’ Fortnightly Accounts, 1739/1740, 1740/1741, 1741/1742. NA: DD/SR/A4/49/1; DD/SR/211/363; DD/SR/206/1/136.

running the nurseries, ensuring adequate seed stock, preparing the planting ground etc. (see Table 3.4). In the early years of Savile's inheritance, the assistance of his Yorkshire wood salesman, George Hogg, might also be sought (see BLACK WALK in Section 4.3.2).¹²¹

6.3 Wood Sales

Of all the assets on an estate which a lord could profitably exploit...
none was more common, and scarcely any more rewarding, than
its trees.¹²²

Hainsworth's view of the economic importance of wood to the early modern estate is amply born out at Rufford. Chart 6.1 displays the annual value of wood sales – timber, springwood, cordwood, cooper ware and bark – to the Rufford Estate during Savile's ownership and the wood expenses incurred, together with the average annual estate rental where data is available. Chart 6.2 provides a comparison of wood sales with all other major non-wood products husbanded on the 7th Baronet's demesne land; Chart 6.3, an annual breakdown of the latter. In the first half of the eighteenth century there is no evidence for mineral wealth at Rufford, and with the exception of a category 'cash received of Sir George Savile', no other significant revenue sources are mentioned in estate accounts.¹²³

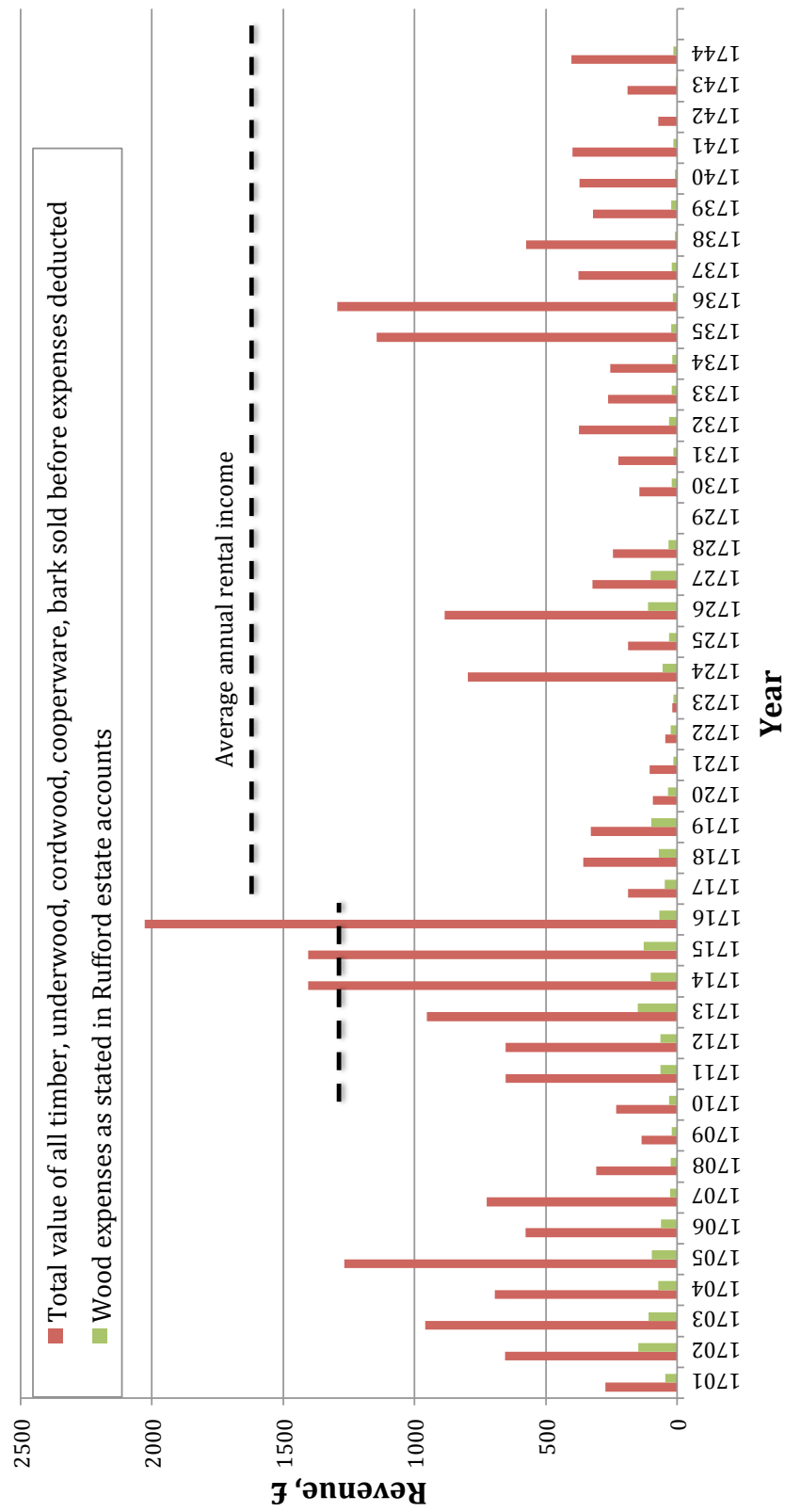
It should be noted that the figures quoted in all categories correspond to sales values rather than realised annual income: rent, wood and non-wood sales were routinely subject to arrears, and payments for major timber sales, though quoted in accounts for the year in which a transaction was made, were generally spread over several years. Further, the comparisons are based on data from which management expenses have not been subtracted, primarily because of the difficulty in assessing these in a comprehensive and consistent manner across

¹²¹ Letter Smith to Madam Savile, 2 December 1718. NA: DD/SR/211/227/65.

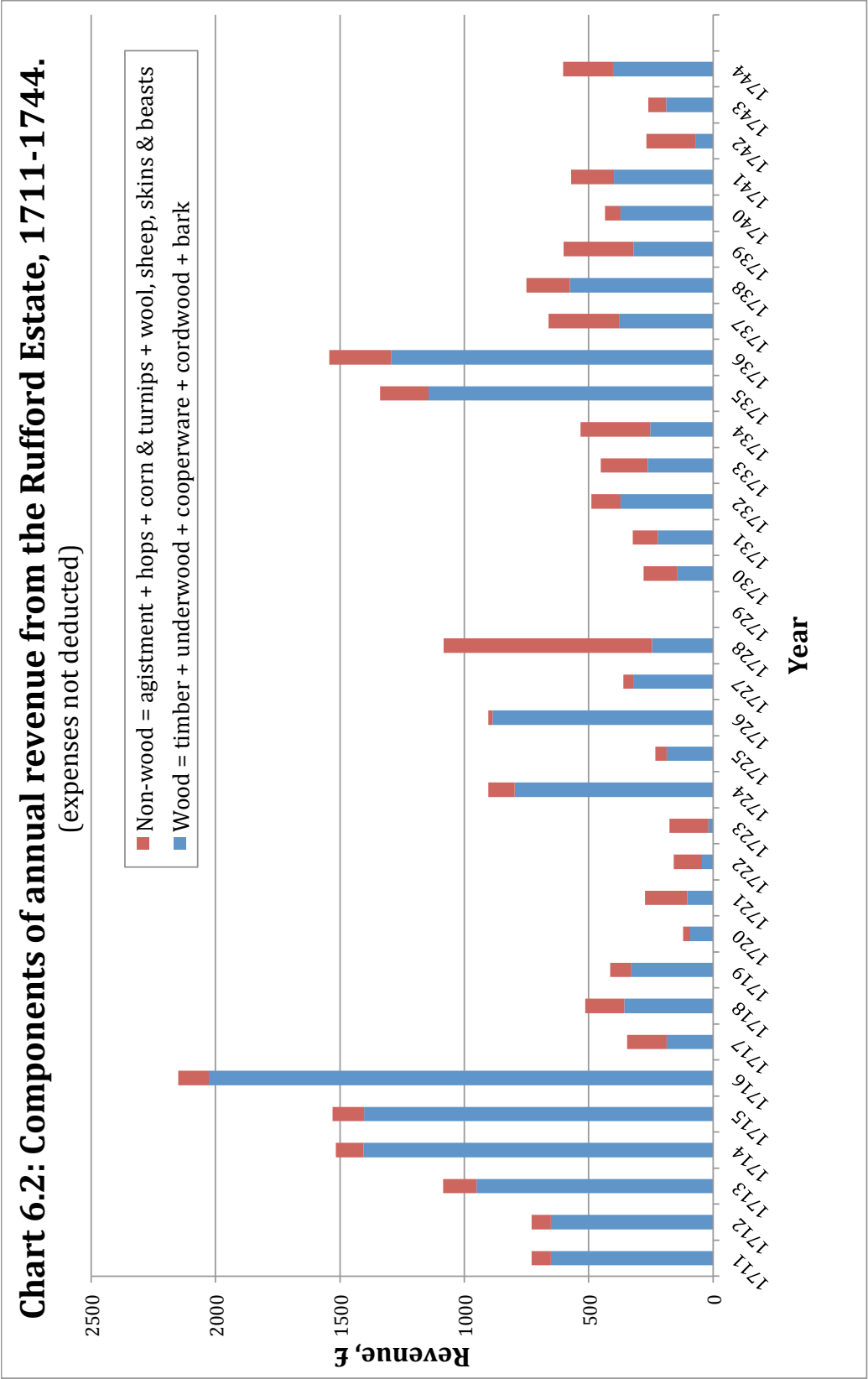
¹²² Hainsworth (1992), 222.

¹²³ Cash was sometimes received from Savile's Thornhill Estate, but there is no evidence that such payments were regular.

Chart 6.1: Annual woodland revenue from the Rufford Estate, 1701-1744.

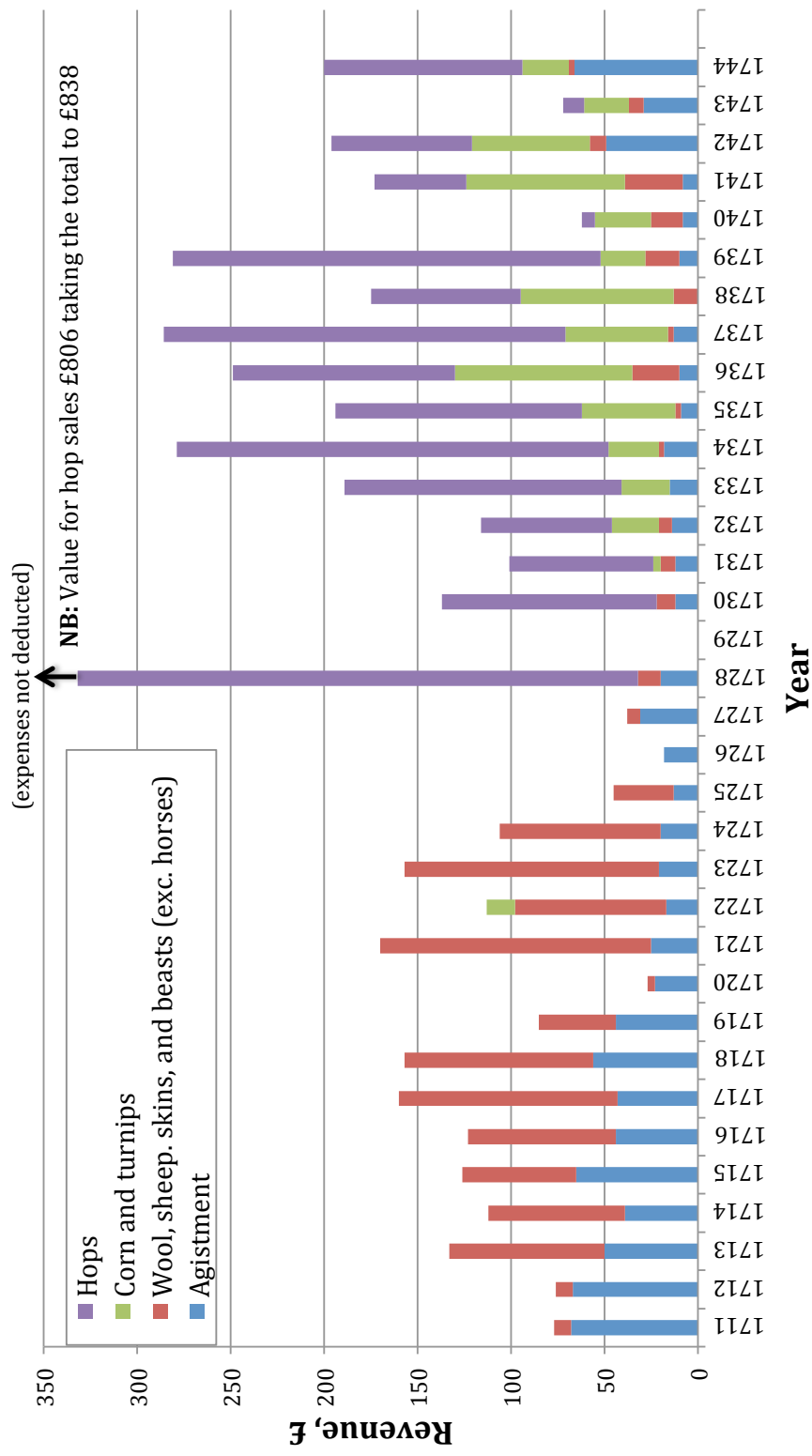


Information extracted from estate accounts during successive stewardships and the 1718 Interrogatories.
 NA: DD/SR/A4/26-30; DD/SR/211/229/1-16; DD/SR/211/250/1-2; DD/SR/6/1/1-14; DD/SR/211/54.



Information extracted from estate accounts during successive stewardships and the 1718 Interrogatories.
NA: DD/SR/A4/30; DD/SR/211/229/1-16; DD/SR/211/250/1-2; DD/SR/6/1/1-14; DD/SR/211/54.

Chart 6.3: Components of non-woodland revenue from the Rufford Estate, 1711-1744.



Information extracted from estate accounts during successive stewardships and the 1718 *Interrogatories*.
 NA: DD/SR/A4/30; DD/SR/211/229/1-16; DD/SR/211/250/1-2; DD/SR/6/1/1-14; DD/SR/211/54.

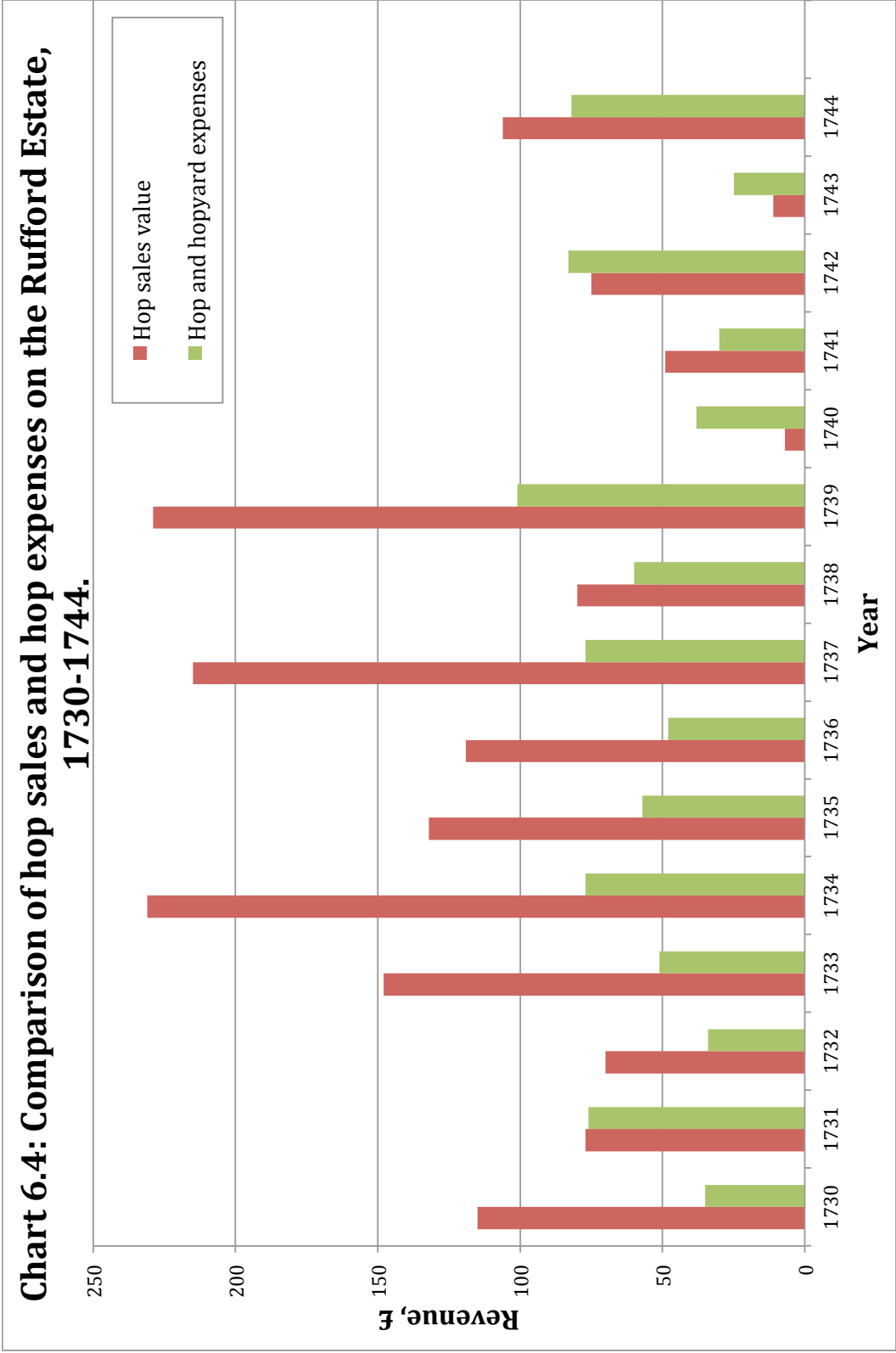
NB. The anomalously high value quoted for hop sales (£806) in 1728 (Smith's final accounts, which survive only in summary form), is almost certainly a cumulative sum. By 1720 demesne hop grounds were being jointly managed by Savile and Smith and the latter was accused of embezzlement in relation to the hop revenue. The figure quoted was perhaps a response to Savile's accusations. NA: DD/DR/225/3/1; DD/SR/211/53.

the period.¹²⁴ Despite these limitations, the data provide clear indication of the enormous economic importance of woodland to the Rufford Estate. The average annual value of wood sales during Savile's ownership was £532, just over a third of the average annual estate rental in the same period (£1,548) and over four times the combined average annual value of all other major estate resources (£123). The analysis of non-wood revenue (Chart 6.3) indicates a definite shift in husbandry practice from sheep in the early years to hop cultivation by the late 1720s. Hop cultivation, however, incurred considerable expense (Chart 6.4), and, were net profit rather than sales values to have been compared in Chart 6.2, it is likely that the proportional contribution made by wood products to the total estate revenue would be still higher. Moreover, stewards' accounts do not include the value of wood used in the maintenance and improvement of the estate itself, further indicating that the wood revenue figures quoted above underestimate the total value of the product to the estate. Unfortunately, no comparable data from the first half of the eighteenth century has yet been published for other Nottinghamshire estates, and little comprehensive data for England as a whole. Isolated figures are, however, available. Hainsworth states that wood sales in 1686 from Lord Cholmondley's estates in Cheshire, £566, amounted to 10% of the gross yield of the estate.¹²⁵ Unqualified statements regarding income can be ambiguous. However, assuming that Hainsworth identified a representative year and that the 'gross yield' he quotes corresponds to the total annual estate receipts, a comparable statistic for Rufford (based on average yield and average wood sales during the 7th Baronet's ownership) would be 20%, suggesting that woodland management at Rufford had a particularly significant impact on estate finances.

Turning to the management of wood sales, Hainsworth's observations again provide a useful context for discussing Rufford practice:

¹²⁴ A category 'Wood Expenses' appears in both full and summary estate accounts but in the former it is generally limited to the costs of timber valuation, felling spring woods and occasional hedging. Planting, maintenance, seed purchase etc. regularly appear under the categories 'Promiscuous work on Sundry Improvements' and 'Garden Disbursements'. No breakdown is given in summary accounts and since accounting categorisation varied across the period (see Table 6.3), content cannot be assumed by analogy.

¹²⁵ Hainsworth (1992), 222.



Information extracted from estate accounts of George Holt and William Webster. NA: DD/SR/6/1/1-14.

...while a landowner might employ a forester to develop this [woodland] valuable asset and keepers to defend it from fuel-hungry tenants and outside woodthieves, it was the steward who bore the responsibility for turning wood to profit.¹²⁶

Although all managerial decisions at Rufford rested ultimately with Sir George, the responsibility for realising the market value of the estate's wood reserves was indeed borne by his successive stewards. They were involved in every stage of a wood sale: valuing timber holdings and coppice yields; finding markets and assessing the creditworthiness and reliability of potential purchasers; negotiating the terms of sales and on occasions the delivery of the merchandise. The extent and importance of these responsibilities is reflected in the attention given to all but the most routine decisions in estate correspondence, and is well exemplified in the discussion of wood transactions below. There was, however, a further individual who had significant managerial influence at Rufford – Sir George's mother, Madam Barbara Savile. As she herself pointed out in 1716, 'The Sale of Woods, and other bargaining' lay at the heart of her concerns (see Section 3.4.1).¹²⁷ Three instances of Madam Savile's involvement have been selected to indicate the extent of her contribution.

Between 1715 and 1719 the 7th Baronet was bound by contract to supply a specific volume of charcoal-grade wood to the iron forge at Carburton (see CHARCOAL-IRON INDUSTRY in Section 6.3.1). In 1718, when problems arose in sourcing this wood, Madam Savile dictated the nature of the steward's correspondence with the forge men and was looked to for advice as to where the pre-requisite wood might be obtained.¹²⁸ On another occasion she dealt directly with wood chapmen (generic term used for dealers in the period), as detailed in the report of her negotiations with the Yorkshire chapman, Mr Cotton, submitted to the 7th Baronet by Smith in May 1721. It is noteworthy that in this case Madam Savile was acting from Rufford, highlighting the traffic of personnel between the two estates (see Sections 4.3.2 & 8.3.1). Smith wrote:

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 223.

¹²⁷ Letter Madam Savile to Savile, May 1716. NA: DD/SR/212/3.

¹²⁸ Letters Smith to Madam Savile, 26 November & 2 December 1718. NA: DD/SR/211/227/68,65.

This day about Three of ye Clock Mr Cotton came to Rufford & after some time spent in Discourse with Madam Savile tis Resolved that ye Article which George Hogg Likewise brought with him to Day... be Returned to him to have Engrossed & that we Get a bond Drawn for all ye persons mentioned in ye former agreement to Signe... Mr Cotton is very willing to Comply to any thing that may make you & Madam Savile easy... Madam Savile & my Self are perfectly Satisfied all will be as Safe & Right as is possible without ye Least appearance of Danger or hazard.¹²⁹

The third example captures still more fully Barbara Savile's practical and assured manner of engagement with her son's business affairs. In a letter sent from Rufford in March 1711 concerned with a large intended fall of timber in New Park, Madam Savile informed (and cautioned) the 7th Baronet about a potential new partnership of wood chapmen, suggested a strategic approach to the sale, and offered advice as to how the felling might proceed without jeopardy to the aesthetics of the estate. It is quoted here at length both for the evidence it provides of her managerial input, and by way of introducing the issues related to wood transactions which will subsequently be discussed: preferred style of sale; range of markets available; creditworthiness of purchaser; market volatility; and time constraints on felling.

Sir Thomas Willobey [Willoughby of Wollaton Hall, Nottinghamshire] who is now in Town has some while since sold £1800 in Wood to one Sheperdson & partners here[.] they have lately been to enquire after your wood; Tis fitt you ask Sir Thomas whether they be good paymasters & what he knows of them & hasten to send me word because time is already lost in waiteing for an account of Dible [Dibble, dealer for the Royal Navy]¹³⁰ & you know but one Chapman can be in the Park at once: In this days Letter to Mr Burden [Savile's steward] I have desired him to speak to Sir Thomas Willobey about it to Ease you. But if you are not sure that he speaks to Sir Thomas tis fitt you doe as soon as possible that those men may be dispatched to make way for other Chapmen. Mr Ball [employed by Savile to value Rufford timber] still adviseth that you sell some part at Least by cutting it first down & so sell each tree in your new park to different trades, as

¹²⁹ Letter Smith to Savile, 15 May 1721 (NA:DD/SR/211/227/34); see also NA:DD/SR/212/3.

¹³⁰ In *The House of Commons, 1690-1715*, John Dibble (*d.* 1728) is included as a member whose 'principal trade was in timber for the navy'. Cruickshanks *et al.*, eds (2002), vol. 3, pp. 875-6.

the bark to taners the Cordwood to forge men &c: yet pray enquire as soon as may be after Sir Thomas Willobeyes Chapmen for they wud either buy the whole or by parcels, forget it not.

I think you said you would look over the south Wing of the new park again ere they were took down haveing an aprehention they wud be Left too thin: from which reason, & because twill be most out of sight, Why may not the Trees far back in that park be first sold pray say.¹³¹

Madam Savile's closing reflection on the visual impact of felling draws attention to the part that outlying woodland on occasions played in Savile's estate landscaping (see Chapter 7). Large areas of New Park were visible from both house and pleasure grounds, and, as estate correspondence addressed to Savile in 1738 regarding a timber fall in New Park underlines more strongly, 'the **Appearance** [word emphasised in original] of them [the remaining trees] to an Eye at the House' was deemed of considerable importance (see **GREAT CANAL** in Section 4.3.3).¹³²

6.3.1 Types of wood sale and markets for wood products

As Barbara Savile's March 1711 letter indicates, two sales strategies were used at Rufford: by retail directly to the user or bulk sales of standing woodland to middlemen. There were advantages and disadvantages to both. Since buyers only purchased to satisfy their needs, direct sales were necessarily piecemeal. Moreover, they regularly incurred significant payment arrears, small purchasers and tradesmen often needing to sell their products before they could pay for the pre-requisite raw materials.¹³³ Bulk sales to middlemen, on the other hand, were determined by felling contracts with clauses guaranteeing payment dates and prices. Direct sales, however, were potentially more profitable. As Hainsworth points out, 'the consumer was accustomed to paying a high price to the middleman for timber which the merchant had bought cheaply from the

¹³¹ Letter Madam Savile to Savile, 3 March 1711. NA: DD/SR/211/435.

¹³² On this occasion 36 trees were left distributed so that they would appear as a row from the house. Letter Holt to Savile, 21 January 1738. NA: DD/SR/211/24/136.

¹³³ In a letter to Savile, August 1728, Smith railed at augmenting expenditure: all might be well if rents and wood revenue could be got without arrears, but, he underlined, 'they cannot'. NA: DD/SR/211/227/128.

landowners'; and there was necessarily a fall in price if the buyer shouldered the labour and transport costs of preparing and extracting wood products.¹³⁴

UNDERWOOD SALE BY RETAIL

Underwood from Wellow Park, Lound Wood and Eakring-Brail was sold almost entirely in 'Countrey sale[s]' amongst 'farmers & Countrey people'/'Tenants and Neighbours', and intended for a range of predominantly agricultural purposes.¹³⁵ There was nothing unusual in this. Comparatively high labour costs coupled with the low bulk-to-value ratios of underwood products (poles and small trees) made transportation over anything more than a few miles uneconomic.¹³⁶ However, given that there was a strong regional charcoal-based iron industry (see CHARCOAL-IRON INDUSTRY below), Savile's choice of purchaser argues both for a relatively high level of local agricultural demand and the more lucrative nature of this market. Coppice falls from Savile's Yorkshire estate, in contrast, were sold directly to the iron industry.¹³⁷

The market value of underwood varied appreciably both in response to local demand and the quality of the product: there was, for example, a range in the quality of both husbandry poles, and ash poles judged suitable for hop supports. Figures from Burden's accounts (covering intervals between 1700 and 1712, and particularly detailed in their recording of wood sales) do, however, provide an indication of relative values. Young trees were considered 'very proper' for fencing rails, and their trimmings yielded a range of carefully graded small wood products: larger pieces, referred to as 'rammell', were sold by the acre (approximately 6s) or load (8d); bundles of finer sticks, known as 'kids', were used for ovens and sold by the hundred (2s 6d); hedgewood or

¹³⁴ Hainsworth (1992), 225.

¹³⁵ Letters Smith to Savile, 2 March 1724 & 8 April 1728. NA: DD/SR/211/227/109,160. From 1736, estate accounts also record sales of underwood felled in New Park.

¹³⁶ Rackham locates the economically viable purchase radius as 'two parishes away'; Warde provides the more conservative estimate of 3 miles. Rackham (1980), 144; Warde (2006), 39.

¹³⁷ Articles (copy) for the sale of Coppitt Woods, 7 May 1703 (NA: DD/SR/30/63); Letters Raph Elmsall to Savile, March 1742 (NA: DD/SR/211/333). For discussion of the regional specificity of the coppice market see Collins (1989b).

'brushwood' was sold by the load (approximately 4d) or the acre.¹³⁸ Coppice products supplied an equally diverse range of uses, and again, were finely graded. Broom staves were sold variously: by the footage, the hundred (6d), or a volumetric measure known as a cord (10s). Stakes were sold by the hundred (1s). Hazel poles were sold on occasions for hop poles (500 for 3s 6d), but more commonly for hoops (1,500 for £1 2s 6d). Accounts distinguish hop poles (sold by the hundred or thousand), round poles, husbandry poles and oak poles (sold by the score or hundred). Their prices varied widely, though husbandry and round poles generally fetched more than hop poles: in 1703, a hundred hop poles cost 8s 9d; a score of round poles, 4s 10d; a score of husbandry poles, 3s 6d – 6s 3d. But although individual hop poles were comparatively cheap in 1703, large numbers were required to stock relatively modest hop grounds – individual hop pole purchases routinely exceeded a thousand.

It was customary to set hop poles on small hills within the hop ground, two or three (but no more) hop stalks supported on each pole.¹³⁹ Collins states that hop poles were set four to the hill, and computes that 3,500 were therefore required to establish an acre of hop ground.¹⁴⁰ This figure probably overestimates usage in Nottinghamshire. At least by the close of the eighteenth century, and probably before, 'the best managers' were setting two poles per hill, corresponding to 1,750 poles per acre.¹⁴¹ That said, poles had to be replaced fairly regularly: Thomas Tusser asserted that 'the yearly supply of two loades of Poales will maintayne one acre continually'; Collins estimates a necessary 15% annual replacement rate.¹⁴² The net value of hop pole sales to the Rufford Estate was significant throughout the eighteenth century. During the first decade, they averaged at £40 per annum and accounted for between 44% and 86% of total

¹³⁸ In 1738 (the only year for which data is available) an acre of hedgewood sold for 6-10s. 'Underwood sold in part of the Duke's [Duke of Kingston] Wood in Braile', January 1738. NA: DD/SR/211/118.

¹³⁹ Tusser, T., *Five Hundredth Pointes of Good Husbandrie*, Edinburgh, 1573, quoted in Parker (1934), 10.

¹⁴⁰ Collins (1989b), 488.

¹⁴¹ Estimated cost of poling an acre of new hop ground in Nottinghamshire in 1794 was £25. Lowe (1794), 110.

¹⁴² Tusser (1573), quoted in Parker (1934), 10; Collins (1989b), 488.

underwood revenue.¹⁴³ Moreover, all the available evidence points to a steady increase in this market share as the century progressed.¹⁴⁴ Table 6.6 records the variation in hop pole sale price at Rufford across the first four decades of Savile's ownership. The marked rise from 9s in 1702 to just over three times that value (28s) by 1740, suggests an appreciable growth in demand.

By 1720, an estimated 41 acres of Rufford Liberty were leased for hop cultivation and Savile himself held a further 9 acres jointly with his steward, Smith.¹⁴⁵ Seventeenth-century agricultural treatises present hop cultivation as a labour intensive and (due mainly to the climatic sensitivity of the crop) precarious business.¹⁴⁶ This characterisation is borne out by the high costs expended on maintaining Savile's hop grounds (Chart 6.4). Against this, hop cultivation was considered a way of improving boggy land, and promoted as such on the Rufford Estate.¹⁴⁷ Lowe's 1794 report to the Board of Agriculture testifies to the expansion of the hop trade on Nottinghamshire's clay land north of the Trent as the century progressed: by this date the Savile estate alone held 80 acres within Rufford Liberty, 30 in Ollerton and 30-40 in Elkesley.¹⁴⁸ The *1713/14 Eakring-Brail Wood Book* provides the most comprehensive available record of the names and provenances of Savile's hop pole buyers.¹⁴⁹ Entries cover a geographic area extending almost to Retford – 14 miles north of Rufford and the regional centre for the eighteenth-century Nottinghamshire hop trade – and include purchasers from Rufford, Eakring, Ollerton, Tuxford, Great Markham, Wellow, Eaton, Milton and Willowby [Willoughby in the parish of

¹⁴³ Percentages based on hop pole sales revenues extracted from estate accounts for years 1702, 1703, 1707, 1708 (NA: DD/SR/A4/26-9), and on Burden's responses to the *1718 Interrogatories* (NA: DD/SR/211/54).

¹⁴⁴ Lowe (1794, p. 34) observed for Nottinghamshire: 'In general... the principal value of Spring Woods... arise from the ash for hop poles; and the stakes, and bindings, flakes, &c. for farmer's use.' See also Pocock (1965).

¹⁴⁵ *1720 Interrogatories*. NA: DD/SR/225/3/1.

¹⁴⁶ See Worlidge (1669); Blith (1652, first published 1649). A 'vegetable lottery' was the characterisation offered by one eighteenth-century Nottinghamshire gentleman. Lowe (1794), 96.

¹⁴⁷ Letter Holt to Savile, 28 December 1737 (NA: DD/SR/211/24/134); see also Pocock (1965), 20.

¹⁴⁸ Lowe (1794), 15.

¹⁴⁹ Full estate accounts list principal purchasers but omit their provenance.

Table 6.6:**Variation in the price of Rufford hop poles, 1702-1744.**

Year	Price 'best' poles per hundred	Price 'second' poles per hundred	Comments + Reference (all NA)
1702	9s		Only single grade indicated. DD/SR/A4/26
1703	8s 9d		Ditto. DD/SR/A4/27
1707	10s	4s	DD/SR/A4/28
1708	15s	7s 6d	DD/SR/A4/29
1711 & 1712	15s	7s 6d	DD/SR/A4/30
July 1731-July 1732	21s in Wellow Park 18s in Eakring-Brail	10s 6d in Wellow Park 8s 6d in Eakring-Brail	DD/SR/6/1/2
July 1732-July 1733	22s in Wellow Park 19s in Eakring-Brail	11s in Wellow Park 9s 6d in Eakring-Brail	DD/SR/6/1/3
July 1733-July 1734	22s in Wellow Park 19s in Eakring-Brail	11s in Wellow Park 9s 6d in Eakring-Brail	DD/SR/6/1/4
July 1734-July 1735	26s in Wellow Park 23s in Eakring-Brail	13s in Wellow Park 11s 6d in Eakring-Brail	DD/SR/6/1/5
July 1735-July 1736	27s in Wellow Park	13s 6d in Wellow Park	DD/SR/6/1/6
July 1736-May 1737	35 s in Wellow Park No best sort in Lound 32s 6d in New Park	17s 6d in Wellow Park 17s in Lound 16s 3d in New Park	Hazel hop poles in Wellow 5s per 100; in Lound 6s. DD/SR/6/1/7
May 1737-May 1738	27s in Wellow Park	36s 6d in Wellow Park	Hazel hop poles 5s per 100 in Wellow Park. DD/SR/6/1/8
May 1738-May 1739	28s 6d in Wellow Park 28s 6d in Lound	14s 3d in Wellow Park 14s in Lound	Hazel hop poles 5s per 100 in Wellow Park and Lound. DD/SR/6/1/9
May 1739-May 1740	28s in Wellow Park Lound best reserved for estate	13s in Wellow Park 13s in Lound	Hazel hop poles 5s per 100 in Wellow Park and Lound. DD/SR/6/1/10
May 1740-24 June 1741	28s in Wellow Park	14s in Wellow Park	Hazel hop poles 5s per 100 in Wellow Park. DD/SR/6/11/11
24 June 1741- May 1742	No sale		Only 'ramil' [ramell]. DD/SR/6/1/12
May 1742-July 1743	13s in Wellow Park	7s in Wellow Park	No reference is made to felling underwood in this account year and the anomalously low retail price might correspond to the sale of poles cut the previous year but surplus to demand. DD/SR/6/1/13.
July 1743-May 1744	21s in Wellow Park 21s in Old Wilderness	10s 6d in Wellow Park 10s 6d in Old Wilderness	Hazel hop poles 5s per 100 in Wellow Park; 4s per 100 in Old Wilderness. DD/SR/6/1/14

Walesby].¹⁵⁰ Few of the men listed can be identified as Rufford tenants.¹⁵¹ Those that can are often significant landholders, reflecting the substantial capital investment and high risks involved: Mr Hunt, for example, a regular purchaser from Wellow and Brail with an annual rental of £100.¹⁵² Hop cultivation was a gentleman farmer's trade.

TIMBER SALE BY RETAIL

Whereas Rufford's underwood was sold exclusively by retail, two strategies were used for the sale of timber. Either the wood was sold after felling, the various products retailed directly to the trades that required them; or it was sold as standing wood to middle men, who then worked up the timber etc. and sold it on. During the 7th Baronet's ownership there seems to have been a preference for selling timber wholesale where large sales were involved. That said, finding reliable chapmen on a timescale acceptable to the estate was not always easy, and when problems arose, retail sales were often proposed as a more flexible solution. Furthermore, since sale by retail meant that the wood was worked up by the estate, it could (potentially) be cleared more quickly and with less disturbance to the site. Both factors are well illustrated by the following example.

In 1724, work was underway on a major landscaping programme at Rufford, intended to link demesne woodlands through the construction of rides (see Chapter 7). By March, the underwood within two of the rides had been felled, and Savile was eager for the work to proceed. A large sale from the neighbouring Welbeck Estate had saturated the wood market, however, and, as Smith warned, chapmen were unlikely to be found regionally:

I am... taking Down ye Ashes in Vesseys [John Vessey was a major Rufford tenant] Bushes that are in those Two Rides[,] the Oakes in Each I will Mark Number & Vallue as fast as I can in Order for Sale this pilling Season... but cannot be shure of your Seeing through them this year because almost all wellbeck wood is now Sold by

¹⁵⁰ 1713/14 *Eakring-Brail Wood Book* (NA: DD/SR/211/116); Jackson (1971), 35; Holt's Estate Accounts often record costs incurred selling hops at Retford (NA: DD/SR/6/1/2,4-5).

¹⁵¹ Hop grounds were often sublet. 1720 *Interrogatories*. NA: DD/SR/225/3/1.

¹⁵² Holt's Estate Accounts, 1732-5. NA: DD/SR/6/1/1-5.

Lord Harley to them that are to Sell it again which Glutts the Countrey here in Bark, Timber, Cord wood, & Cooperware, I shall be Loath to Sell yours at an Under Rate & yet perchance twill be ye Same another Year; If it can be Sold this year It will be August if not Michaelmas before ye Buyer will have felld it So as to See through...¹⁵³

Sale by retail offered the possibility of a wider market: the Navy, in particular, bought in huge quantities. Despite reservations (see SHIPBUILDING below), Smith suggested that Savile approach the Navy Office in London and negotiate sale of the tree boles; local markets could be found for the other main products, cordwood and bark. In parallel, however, he continued in his efforts to interest regional dealers in a wholesale purchase. By April he had found two Nottinghamshire chapmen prepared to buy, but delayed closing the deal because he had learnt, in the meantime, that the 1st Duke of Kingston on the neighbouring Thoresby Estate required timber 'for building his Mews or Stables'. Smith was strongly tempted to sell to Kingston. In a letter to Savile excusing the mounting delay, he presented further arguments for a retail sale:

I had Two Inducements that he should have it viz. one to Oblige him your Neighbour, And the other that had they [Thoresby Estate] bought it the Ground would a been cleard of it all or most by Next Martlemas without Diging Sawpitts or working it up in your Park.¹⁵⁴

But even the possibility of minimising site disruption and fostering bonds of mutual landowner co-operation were not sufficient to outweigh economic considerations. Kingston failed to offer an acceptable price for the wood and Smith settled in favour of a standing wood sale to the Nottinghamshire chapmen.

SHIPBUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION WORK

In the example above, two potential timber markets were mentioned: shipbuilding and construction. Eighteenth-century landowners were constantly being reminded of their duty to supply the navy with timber for ships: 'the Walls

¹⁵³ Letter Smith to Savile, 7 March 1724. NA: DD/SR/211/227/106.

¹⁵⁴ Letter Smith to Savile, 4 April 1724. NA: DD/SR/211/227/102.

and chief Foundations of this Kingdom'.¹⁵⁵ But while this seemingly insatiable appetite for wood made the naval market attractive to landowners, the way in which the Royal Navy transacted sales was complex and particular to itself, and the disadvantages could be considerable.¹⁵⁶

There are very few references in the Savile Archives to direct dealings with the Royal Navy. The earliest is in March 1711, when Burden recorded postage of 'a letter to Mr Robinson to enquire after Chapmen for ship Timber' and Madam Savile warned her son of time being 'lost in waiteing for an account of Dible'.¹⁵⁷ There is no record of whether a deal was struck with Dibble on this occasion, but by the 1720s the latter's reputation for malpractice was legendary in the Sherwood area, and certainly influenced the style (if not the frequency) of approaches made to the navy by Rufford. When, in 1724, Smith suggested sale to the Royal Navy, he qualified his recommendation with the caution:

But pray Sir Remember how Esquire Dibble cheated this Countrey & Ran a way Great Sums in their Debt and be well Secured that whats a greed on will be paid for, My thinks the best way with South countrey Dealers is to pay ye whole Summs Down before a Tree be Removed out of your park.¹⁵⁸

The next reference to potential dealings with naval markets is not until 1755, in which year an advertisement placed in a Nottinghamshire newspaper announced the sale of:

A large Parcel of Timber, in Rufford Park, Nottinghamshire; consisting chiefly of Oak, and some Beech, valued at about 5000l. The Oak is large, and as fit for Ship-Timber as most is in England; and also for other large Work, such as Forge Beams, Fire-Engine Beams &c.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁵ Ellis (1738), 1; origin of expression, Lord Coventry's speech to the Judges of England, 1635 (Rushworth, 1721).

¹⁵⁶ Hainsworth (1992), 226-30.

¹⁵⁷ Burden's Estate Accounts, 1711-12 (NA: DD/SR/A4/30); Letter Madam Savile to Savile, 3 March 1711 (NA: DD/SR/211/435).

¹⁵⁸ Letter Smith to Savile, 7 March 1724. NA: DD/SR/211/227/106.

¹⁵⁹ Newspaper cutting dated 1755. NA: DP/97/5/1.

With the exception of the Duke of Kingston's stables, there are no references to sale of timber for the construction of buildings *per se*. However, the identification of forge and fire-engine beams in the 1755 advertisement highlights specialist timber markets within the construction trade, and individual timber trees were regularly sold from all areas of the estate. Notable examples are from a New Park sale in 1703 in which four trees fetched £38 19s (just under £10 per tree), two trees fetched £16 8s (just over £8 per tree), and a tree was sold to Mr Neale (a family name associated with both the management of local iron forges and forest office) for £12 6s for use as 'a Hamer beame'.¹⁶⁰

CHARCOAL-IRON INDUSTRY

Until the second half of the eighteenth century, British iron production depended upon charcoal for both the smelting and refining of the crude ironstone ore.¹⁶¹ Hammersley estimates that 2 ½ loads of charcoal (800 cubic feet of wood) were required to smelt 1 ton of pig iron, and a further 3 loads (960 cubic feet) were needed to convert this into a ton of bar iron.¹⁶² Forge output was extremely variable, but an annual output in the early eighteenth century of c.150 tons has been quoted for Carburton Forge, the iron works with which the Rufford Estate had the closest dealings.¹⁶³

Charcoal grade wood was referred to in the period as cordwood, a cord being the volumetric measure used to quantify the cut wood product. It was a regional rather than national standard, but in Derbyshire (and almost certainly Nottinghamshire too) defined a stack 4 feet x 4 feet x 8 feet.¹⁶⁴ The source of wood for cording was no less regionally determined than its measure.

¹⁶⁰ Burden's Estate Accounts, 1703 (NA: DD/SR/A4/27); Lease Contracts re forges owned by successive Dukes of Newcastle (NA: 157/DD/2P/28/44; DD/P/5/83); Letter Francis Knight of Clipstone Forge to Lord Harley, 28 November 1728 (NA: DD/4P/80/15); Duke of Devonshire's Licence re wood upon Sherwood Forest, 15 April 1702 (NA: DD/SR/229/13/19).

¹⁶¹ In the East Midlands, transition to coke-fuelled iron works did not occur until 1764. Riden (1991), 74; Schubert (1957).

¹⁶² Hammersley (1973), 606.

¹⁶³ Raistrick & Allen (1939), 172; see also Hammersley (1973), 599-602.

¹⁶⁴ Contract of sale from the Derbyshire woods of John Holles, 1st Duke of Newcastle (NA: 157/DD/P/42/68); Lease for Carburton Forge (1704), contracting a cordwood quota for either Carburton Forge (Nottinghamshire) or Staveley ironworks (Derbyshire) (NA: DD/2P/28/18-19).

Depending on the competing market demands in different parts of the country, it was variously supplied by coppice poles, the 'Lop, or Boughs and Branches of trees... about the Thickness of a Man's Arm', and 'good oak' cut into three foot lengths.¹⁶⁵

The East Midlands supported a significant iron industry in the early eighteenth century: ironstone reserves found in the coal measures of east Derbyshire and South Yorkshire were responsible for about a tenth of total British iron production.¹⁶⁶ Whereas smelting furnaces were sited close to these reserves and tended to be concentrated in the Rother Valley, forges were more scattered and gravitated towards sites offering easy access to centres of iron consumption and a ready supply of wood.¹⁶⁷ The wood resources of the Sherwood estates and navigable water both of the Trent River and Idle at Bawtry, made north Nottinghamshire an attractive location.¹⁶⁸ In the early eighteenth century there were five active forges within about 14 miles of Rufford – Cuckney, Pleasley, Clipstone, Carburton and Kirkby-in-Ashfield – and smelting furnaces were located at Kirkby and Whaley (Figure 6.8).¹⁶⁹ Furthermore, the propensity of iron masters to form geographically wide-ranging partnerships fostered a tightly integrated industry: Nottinghamshire sites were connected through shared management with forges and furnaces in Derbyshire and South Yorkshire.¹⁷⁰ Both Savile's Nottinghamshire and Yorkshire estates were well placed for supplying the iron trade. Particularly pertinent to the 7th Baronet's wood dealings was the association between Carburton Forge (about 7 miles north of Rufford) and the forge and furnace at Staveley, near

¹⁶⁵ Flinn (1958), 148; 'The Third Report of the Commissioners Appointed to Enquire into the State and Condition of the Woods, Forests and Land Revenues of the Crown' (1788), 29; Evelyn (1706), 267.

¹⁶⁶ Riden (1991), 69, 73.

¹⁶⁷ De Quincey (1775), 88-9; Riden, ed. (1985), xii.

¹⁶⁸ In the early eighteenth century the Idle was restricted to small craft, making trans-shipment necessary for carriage to London. Bawtry was the traditional shipment place for industrial products of north Derbyshire and north Nottinghamshire. Goods were loaded directly onto seagoing vessels at Gainsborough and Stockwith on the Trent. Riden (1985), xxi-xxii; Holland (1976, first published 1964); Letter to Mr Foljambe (Osberton, Nottinghamshire), 29 May 1728, detailing freight costs for wood (NA:DD/FJ/11/1/2/178-9).

¹⁶⁹ Contracts detailing forge leases within the Portland Family Archives (NA); Riden (1985).

¹⁷⁰ Raistrick & Allen (1939).

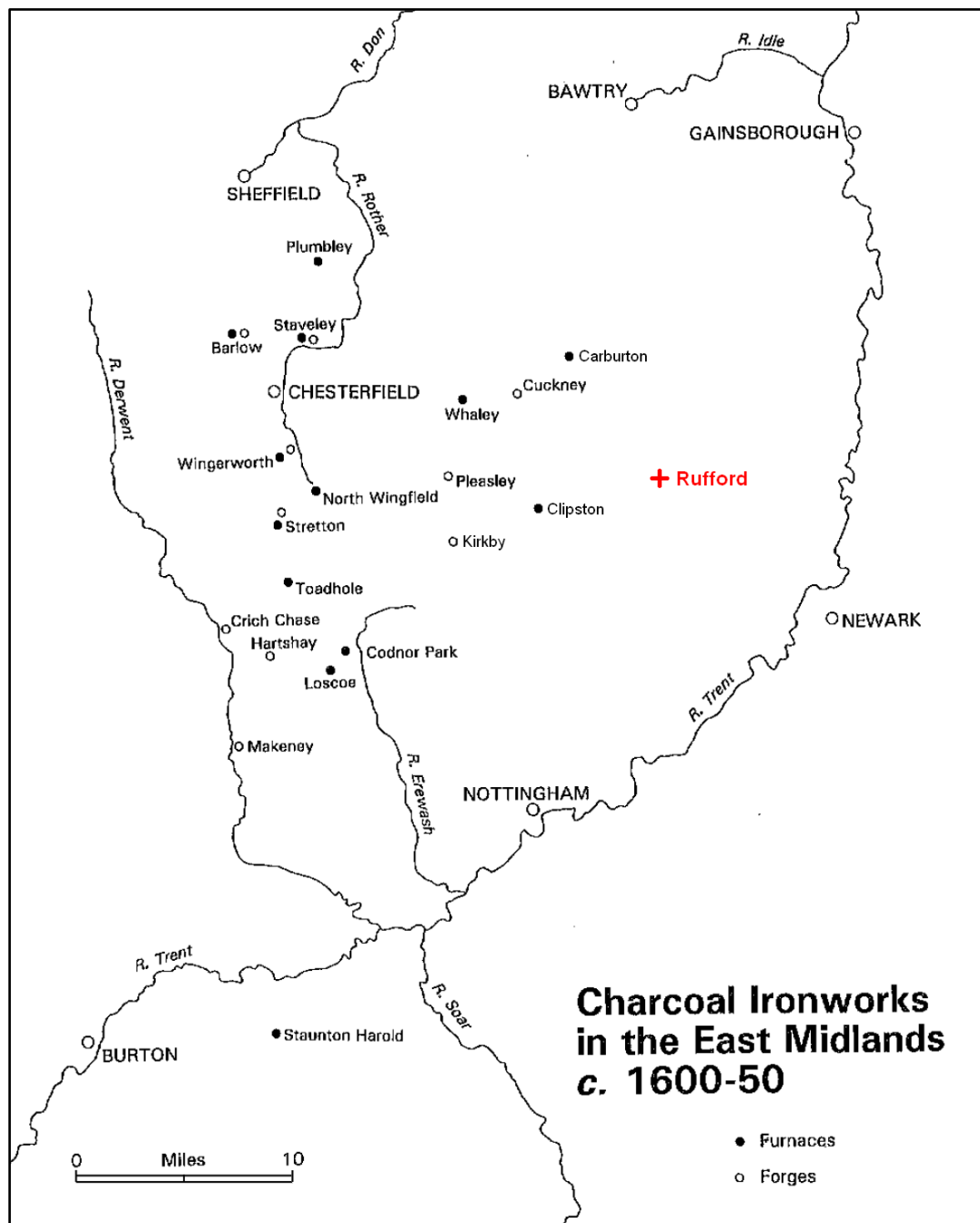


Figure 6.8: North Nottinghamshire iron works.

(Johnson, B.L.C., 'The Foley Partnerships: the Iron Industry at the End of the Charcoal Era', *The Economic History Review*, New Series, 4(3), 1952, pp. 322-40, p. 323; Riden, P., 'The Charcoal Iron Industry in the East Midlands, 1580-1780', *Derbyshire Archaeological Journal*, 111, 1991, pp. 64-84, p. 66.)

Chesterfield in Derbyshire. Savile entered into contracts with Denis Hayford, a joint partner in both concerns, for ironstone and cordwood from his Thornhill Estate and cordwood from his Nottinghamshire Estate.¹⁷¹

Table 6.7 summarises Savile's cordwood dealings at Rufford in the years for which data is available. Significant uncertainties surround some of these figures, but they permit several general conclusions, which will be discussed in turn together with the issues regarding cordwood practice that they raise. Firstly, cordwood sales as a percentage of total wood revenue were significantly higher in the years 1701-6 than afterwards. The licence granted to Savile by the Forest authorities in 1702 (see Section 6.1.3) undoubtedly accounts for a large part of this uncharacteristically high cordwood yield. In October 1702 and November 1703, Robert Johnson & partners were paid the considerable sums of £94 6s 8d and £72 13s 11d respectively for 'cutting cordwood and cowper [cooper] ware &c in the Forest'.¹⁷² Cordwood at Rufford, and on the Sherwood estates more generally, was mainly sourced from the upper branches of healthy timber trees and 'old trees', though decayed/unsound wood was considered unsuitable for coaling.¹⁷³ The roots of stubbed or wind-fallen trees might also be used where the cost of labour and transport did not diminish their profitability too greatly. In 1719, for example, Savile's steward, though pressed to meet a cordwood quota, hesitated about their inclusion because:

I am not able to Estimate ye Charge of Getting old Stumps &c into
Cord wood & delivering it in ye Compas of wheeling till I take a
Generall view & find ye stumps for if very Straggling ye Leading

¹⁷¹ Hayford's interest in Carburton seems to have persisted until 1720 when Lord Harley (Welbeck Estate) leased Kirkby, Carburton and Clipstone forges to Richard Knight (Bringwood, Herefordshire) & William Westley (Haigh, Yorkshire). In 1727, Carburton was leased to Millington Hayford (Romeley, Derbyshire). Raistrick & Allen (1939); Johnson (1952), 322-40; NA: DD/P/6/1/16/95; NA: DD/2P/28/19; NA: DD/P/6/1/17/82; NA: DD/4P/80/15; SA: SpSt/60495/17. For Thornhill ironstone agreements and dealings with Hayford see NA: DD/SR/30/65,63; William Elmsall's evidence to *1720 Interrogatories* (NA: DD/SR /225/3/1); Letter Raph Elmsall to Savile, 12 March 1743 (NA: DD/SR/211/333). For Rufford cordwood contract see Letter Smith to Madam Savile, 2 December 1718. NA: DD/SR/211/227/65.

¹⁷² Burden's Estate Accounts, 1702 & 1703. NA: DD/SR/A4/26-7.

¹⁷³ Burden's evidence to the *1718 Interrogatories* (NA: DD/SR/211/54); wood valuations and contracts (NA: DD/4P/84/28); Letters Smith to Savile, 20 December 1718, 10 December 1719 & 25 March 1724 (NA: DD/SR/211/245; DD/SR/211/227/63,103).

Table 6.7: Cordwood revenue, 1701-1744.

Date	Revenue from cordwood (£ s d)	Revenue from all wood sold (£ s d)	Cordwood revenue as % of wood revenue	Names of purchasers where known; Comments; Reference (all NA)
George Burden's Stewardship	Totals stated by steward in answer to 1718 <i>Interrogatories</i>	Totals stated by steward in answer to 1718 <i>Interrogatories</i>		DD/SR/211/54
1701	£100 11s 6d	£273 13s 5d	37	
1702	£356 2s 0d	£656 8s 6d	54	Neale: £158 4s. Hayford (ironmaster): £198 2s. (DD/SR/A4/26; DD/P/6/1/19/15)
1703	£264 6s 1d	£958 14s 4½d	28	Neale: £84 5s 7d. Hayford: £180 0s 6d. Nb. Hayford also purchased: '14 th & 15 th parcell's' in the forest £112 15s. (DD/SR/A4/27)
1704	£150 6s 11d	£693 16s 7d	22	
1705	£242 2s 3d	£1267 0s 1d	19	
1706	£152 5s 0d	£576 13s 7½d	26	Hayford > £146 0s 10d. (DD/SR/A4/28)
1707	£16 5s 0d	£723 10s 0d	2	Hayford: total. (DD/SR/A4/28)
1708	£29 0s 0d	£308 1s 5d	9	Hayford: total. Nb. Hayford also purchased: 2 trees 13s 6d. (DD/SR/A4/29)
1709	£14 3s 4d	£135 8s 6d	10	
1710	£19 6s 9d	£230 19s 0d	8	
1711-12	£241 13s 0d	£1305 14s 1d	18	Neale: £240 1s 0d. Nb. Neale also purchased: 19 trees £40. (DD/SR/A4/30)
Thomas Smith Steward 1712-1728				Nb. Smith's summary accounts do not state cordwood revenue explicitly.
June 1715 – Aug 1715				Contractual agreement with Hayford for all

						cordwood cut on the estate until August 1715 and for the next 4 years not under 300 cord or over 1,000 cord at 7s per cord. (DD/SR/211/227/65)
Aug 1715 – Aug 1716	at least £105					Hayford
Aug 1716 – Aug 1717	at least £105					Hayford
Aug 1717 – Aug 1718	at least £105					Hayford
Aug 1718 – Aug 1719	at least £105					Hayford
1721	at least £68 8s 0d					Knight (ironmaster) £68 8s 0d purchase. (DD/SR/211/227/27; DD/4P/80/15)
George Holt and, very briefly, William Webster Stewards						Holt and Webster both itemise cordwood revenue. (DD/SR/6/1/1-14)
July 1730–July 1731	£8 10s 11d				4	Mr Walter Ashley of Mansfield Woodhouse. (DD/SR/6/1/1)
July 1731 – July 1732	£42 18s 6d				12	Mr Walter Ashley (DD/SR/6/1/2)
July 1732 – July 1733	£35 11s 0d				13	Mr Walter Ashley (DD/SR/6/1/3)
July 1733 – July 1734	£25 4s 0d				10	Mr Walter Ashley (DD/SR/6/1/4)
July 1734 – July 1735	£94 10s 0d				8	Mr Millington Hayford of Romely (ironmaster). (DD/SR/6/1/5; DD/4P/80/15/16)
July 1735 – July 1736	£14 7s 0d				1	Mr Millington Hayford of Romely. (DD/SR/6/1/6)
July 1736 – May 1737	£39 17s 0d				10	Nb. Further 100 cord cut but unsold from year's fall. Mr Millington Hayford (Romely) 102 ½ cord; Mr Mather (Poplewick) 11 cord 3ft. (DD/SR/6/1/7)
May 1737 – May 1738	£38 2s 1½d				7	Nb. Further 60 cord cut but unsold from year's fall. Mr Millington Hayford (Romely). (DD/SR/6/1/8)
May 1738 – May 1739	£49 19s 3d				16	Nb. Further 70 cord cut but unsold from year's fall. Mr Millington Hayford (Romely). (DD/SR/6/1/9)
May 1739 – May 1740	£27 7s 9d				7	Nb. Further 50 cord cut but unsold from year's fall. Mr Millington Hayford (Romely). (DD/SR/6/1/10)
May 1740 – 24 Jun 1741	£86 6s 6d				22	Nb. Further 60 cord cut but unsold from year's fall. Mr Millington Hayford (Romely). (DD/SR/6/1/11)
24 Jun 1741 – May 1742	None sold				0	DD/SR/6/1/12
May 1742 – July 1743	£48 0s 0d				25	DD/SR/6/1/13
July 1743 – May 1744	None sold				0	DD/SR/6/1/14

will be very Chargeable and so is Generally ye Stubbing of such as well as ye bursting into Cord wood.¹⁷⁴

The reference to a 'Compas of wheeling' leads to the next observation, that Savile's main cordwood markets were the two Nottinghamshire iron works situated closest to Rufford's principal wood ground – Carburton and (but to a lesser extent) Clipstone Forge, both lying within c.8 miles of the Hall. Clearly, it was far more economic to transport charcoal than the heavier, bulkier cordwood from which it was made: sales contracts involving cordwood generally contained clauses giving the colliers liberty to 'Digg sod and Dust for ye covering and coaling of ye said coardwood' at specified places on the estate, and on occasions even granted permission 'to build cabins there for Colliers imployed for coaling'.¹⁷⁵ The friability of charcoal meant that these sites had to be close to the ironworks. Hammersley quotes 3-5 miles as the supply radius normally accepted by British ironmasters, but his figures seem low for Nottinghamshire.¹⁷⁶ In a draft lease for Carburton forge (1703) between John Holles, 1st Duke of Newcastle and the ironmasters Thomas Barlow of Middlethorpe (Yorkshire) & Dennis Hayford of Staveley (Derbyshire), the Duke covenanted to fell and deliver his contracted 4,200 cords of wood 'within 10 miles' of the forge or Staveley furnace, another of the partners' concerns.¹⁷⁷ The custom at Rufford was to wheel the cordwood to within 60 yards of the centre of the intended coaling pit, the latter being situated 'where ye wood shall be Cutt and Ranked or upon other Adjacent Grounds'.¹⁷⁸ The cost of carting cordwood that was out of the agreed range could be significant. In 1702, for example, Burden paid 4s 6d for 'Wheeling Wood in ye Forrest that was out of distance to ye Collier', a sum equivalent to

¹⁷⁴ Letter Smith to Savile, 10 December 1719. NA: DD/SR 211/227/63. A representation from the verderers of Sherwood Forest to the Lords of the Treasury (1716) regarding sale of wind-fallen trees refers to 'the Cordwood arising from the Roots and Tops of them'. 'The Fourteenth Report of the Commissioners...' (1793), 506. See also NA: DD/SR/211/245.

¹⁷⁵ Draft lease for Carburton Forge by John Holles, 1st Duke of Newcastle, 1703. NA: DD/P/5/83. Preference was for regularly used sites (the ground beneath was progressively levelled) and light rather than clay soils (cold ground lengthened burn times). Kelley (1986), 5.

¹⁷⁶ Hammersley (1973), 606.

¹⁷⁷ Draft Articles of Agreement for the lease of Carburton Forge by John Holles, 1st Duke of Newcastle, 1703 (NA: DD/2P/28/18); in a roughly contemporary (unratified) contract the Duke proposed 12 miles (NA: DD/P/5/83).

¹⁷⁸ Letter Smith to Madam Savile, 2 December 1718. NA: DD/SR/211/227/65.

over 4 days labour;¹⁷⁹ in September 1736, £1 was paid for wheeling cordwood that was out of compass for coaling in Wellow Park together with a further 3s 6d 'given collier to drink when he took up that wood'.¹⁸⁰ In all Rufford dealings with the Nottinghamshire iron industry, the cost of preparing and delivering cordwood was met by the estate, whereas the cost of coaling was met by the iron works.¹⁸¹ The latter was not inconsiderable. In February 1711, Burden records a payment of £1 1s for 'coaling a pitt of charcoal for my Master's use': a sum equivalent to almost 3 cords of cordwood at 8s per cord, the quoted rate for that year.¹⁸²

The market value of cordwood could vary appreciably over quite short time intervals (see Table 6.8). In 1707, for example, the market rate was 6s 8d, it peaked at 12s in the 1720s, then dropped to 6s in the 1740s. Even this range did not encompass the full market fluctuation, as root derived cordwood (perhaps because of its greater irregularity of form) sold at less than the standard branch derived product – 5s rather than 7s in 1718.¹⁸³ To protect against such market volatility, Sherwood estate owners regularly entered into contracts with ironmasters specifying the supply quota and price to be paid per cord over several years: 'peace of mind for both landlord [landowner] and tenant [ironmaster],' concludes Riden, 'may have counted for more than any desire to seek short-term advantages from change in the price of charcoal from year to year'.¹⁸⁴ This statement is not quite borne out by the example of Rufford.

In 1715, Savile contracted (for a period of four years) to supply Carburton Forge with 'not under 300 cord nor exceeding 1000 cord' of the cordwood cut 'in Rufford Parks, Wellow Park, Boscoe [probable part of the wooded ground referred to as 'Bescalls' or 'In Bescall' and 'Welley Bescall' in the seventeenth century], Eakring Brail, Lawnd [Lound] Wood, Blyton Hills and any

¹⁷⁹ Burden's Estate Accounts, 1702. NA: DD/SR/A4/26.

¹⁸⁰ Burden's Estate Accounts, 1702 (NA: DD/SR/A4/26); Holt's Estate Accounts, 1736/1737 (NA: DD/SR/6/1/7).

¹⁸¹ In 1712, for example, Burden paid Rufford labourers (Robert Johnson, John Jones, Charles Blyton) to work up ironmaster Neale's cordwood purchase; Neale employed Jeremy Wyldsmith to coal it. Burden's Estate Accounts, 1711-12. NA: DD/SR/A4/30.

¹⁸² *Ibid.* Estate accounts for 1749/1750 (NA: DD/SR/211/356) record £1 5s for burning 100 cord, suggesting that a 'pit of charcoal' approximated to this measure.

¹⁸³ Letter Smith to Savile, 20 December 1718. NA: DD/SR/211/245.

¹⁸⁴ Riden (1991), 76.

Table 6.8:**North Nottinghamshire cordwood retail prices, 1702-1744.**

Year	Price per cord achieved by Rufford	Comments on Rufford sales and prices achieved by neighbouring estates for comparison	Reference all NA
1702	7s		DD/SR/A4/26
1703	7s 3d		DD/SR/A4/27
1704		Price of 8s contracted by Welbeck Estate to supply Carburton Forge with minimum of 300 cord per year for 7 years.	DD/2P/28/19
1707	6s 8d	8s Welbeck-Carburton contract	DD/SR/A4/28; DD/2P/28/19
1708	6s 8d	8s Welbeck-Carburton contract	DD/SR/A4/29; DD/2P/28/19
1711 & 1712	8s	8s Welbeck-Carburton contract	DD/SR/A4/30; DD/2P/28/19
June 1715 – Aug 1719	7s	Price contracted by Rufford Estate to supply Carburton Forge with minimum of 300 cord per year. Price to rise to reflect price of sales from Welbeck, Birkland or Bilhagh Woods if these prices rose above 7s 9d.	DD/SR/211/267
1721	12s	Rufford non-contracted rate; Welbeck Estate also contracted to buy from wood dealers at this price.	DD/SR/211/227/27; DD/P/35/1
July 1724 – June 1730		Price of 12s contracted by Welbeck Estate for purchase from wood dealers.	DD/4P/84/22
July 1730 – July 1731	8s 6d	Rufford non-contracted rate	DD/SR/6/1/1
July 1731 – July 1732	8s 6d	ditto	DD/SR/6/1/2
July 1732 – July 1733	9s	ditto	DD/SR/6/1/3
July 1733 – July 1734	9s	ditto	DD/SR/6/1/4
July 1734 – July 1735	9s	ditto	DD/SR/6/1/5
July 1735 – July 1736	7s	ditto	DD/SR/6/1/6
July 1736 – May 1737	7s	ditto	DD/SR/6/1/7
May 1737 – May 1738	7s	ditto	DD/SR/6/1/8
May 1738 – May 1739	7s	ditto	DD/SR/6/1/9
May 1739 – May 1740	7s	ditto	DD/SR/6/1/10
May 1739 – Sept 1745		Price of 12s contracted by Welbeck Estate for purchase from wood dealers.	DD/4P/84/23
May 1740–24 June 1741	6s	Rufford non-contracted rate	DD/SR/6/1/11
24 June 1741–May 1742	No stated	Ditto	DD/SR/6/1/12
May 1742 – 11 July 1743	6s	Ditto	DD/SR/6/1/13
11 July 1743 – May 1744	No sale		

other place in Rufford, Eakring, Wellow and Ompton Libertys' at 7s per cord. Smith, however, added a memorandum to the agreement in order to safeguard Savile's interests should the market value of cordwood rise. It agreed that if the price of cordwood sold from either the Welbeck Estate or Birkland and Bilhagh Woods exceeded 7s 6d within the contracted period, then the price received for Rufford cordwood would rise in step with the increase.¹⁸⁵ But even with this addition, the contract does not seem to have brought the Baronet 'peace of mind'. Since the bulk of cordwood supplied to the Nottinghamshire iron industry came from timber trees sold wholesale, in order to ensure their capacity to meet contracted cordwood quotas, landowners frequently included a clause in their timber contracts obliging the wood merchants to sell any cordwood obtained from the trees back to the estate at a fixed price. There are numerous early eighteenth-century examples of this practice on the Welbeck Estate, and although Rufford wood contracts from this period have not survived, estate accounts detail several instances in which part-payments for trees were made in cordwood.¹⁸⁶ Unfortunately, in 1718, insufficient wood was felled on the Rufford Estate to meet the contracted quota (short by 20 cord 7 feet) and an even greater shortfall was predicted for the following year.¹⁸⁷ It remains uncertain how the situation was finally resolved, though it seems unlikely that Savile would have risked his reputation as a supplier by reneging on a contract. As the agreed terms specified that the cordwood must originate on the estate, there was no chance of buying in, and it is possible that Savile had to sacrifice wood intended for more lucrative markets.¹⁸⁸

Regarding the seasonal constraints on supply and coaling, Kelley, in his history of charcoal burning, states that coaling customarily took place between April and November, and in some places occurred purely in the summer and

¹⁸⁵ Memo re sale of wood, 1715 (NA: DD/SR/211/267); Letter Smith to Madam Savile, 2 December 1718 (NA: DD/SR 211/227/65).

¹⁸⁶ Articles re Welbeck wood sales, 1703-24 (NA: DD/P/42/68; DD/P/35/1; DD/4P/84/22); Burden's Estate Accounts, 1702, 1711-12 (NA: DD/SR/A4/26,30).

¹⁸⁷ Letter Smith to Savile, 20 December 1718. NA: DD/SR/211/245.

¹⁸⁸ Though good timber was on occasions sold as cordwood in Yorkshire (NA: DD/SR/211/333), 27 Eliz. 1 c.19 (see James, 1981, p. 127) forbade the cording of timber one foot square to the stub and growing within 14 miles of 'any part of the rivers... Trent... by which carriage is commonly used... to any part of the sea'. Rufford Hall lay within 17 miles of Newark-upon-Trent and Fiskerton, 19 of Bawtry, 31 of Gainsborough.

autumn. Further, that in order to achieve adequate carbonisation, cordwood needed to be thoroughly dry, and it was therefore customary to leave the wood stacked for at least six months before coaling.¹⁸⁹ Seasonal factors seem also to have affected the productivity of forges, confining output to the early part of the year: bellows and forge hammers depended upon adequate water power in the early eighteenth century, a less reliable resource in the summer months.¹⁹⁰ The poor condition of roads in winter added to the difficulty and cost of transporting both raw and processed materials. Charcoaling in Nottinghamshire began in June – ‘the Fence Month [being] the proper time to burn Charcole’, as Sir Thomas Hewett (Surveyor General of Woods, Forests, Parks and Chases in 1701 and 1714) pointed out when challenged on the subject by Sherwood Forest verderers. It continued until early Autumn.¹⁹¹ Savile’s 1715 contract with Hayford specified that the cordwood be delivered by the twentieth of August in any year and Welbeck wood contracts frequently specify the twenty-fourth of June as the date by which cordwood should be supplied.¹⁹²

TANNING TRADE

In the eighteenth century, oak bark was used for tanning leather. Regional demand for bark therefore depended upon both the availability of animal hides and the demand for leather goods. The latter was the more critical factor, though relatively stable during the first half of the century. Despite the fact that bark is extremely friable and therefore difficult to transport over long distances, tanneries tended to be located close to the supply of the bulkier and perishable hides: urban meat-consuming markets and livestock-rearing districts. Further, as bark was only a by-product of timber production, supply was determined by the market for wood rather than the needs of tanners, making the bark market highly inelastic. To alleviate supply uncertainty, it was common for tanners and landowners to establish long-term trading relationships.¹⁹³ As Table 6.9 summarises, in the first two decades of Savile’s ownership, bark buyers were

¹⁸⁹ Kelley (1986), 8.

¹⁹⁰ Flinn (1958), 150-1.

¹⁹¹ NA: DD/FJ/11/1/2/140-2.

¹⁹² NA: DD/4P/84/22; DD/4P/84/23; DD/2P/28/20 (12 June stated); DD/P/42/68 (24 June & 24 September).

¹⁹³ Clarkson (1974), 137-9, 144, 150.

Table 6.9:
Rufford bark revenue, 1702-1745.

Date	Revenue from Bark (£ s d)	Purchaser	Comments and Reference (all NA)
1702	£7 3s 0d	William Green	DD/SR/A4/26
1703	£9 4s 0d	John Hetton, Henry Alvey & partners	DD/SR/A4/27
1707	£9 6s 8d	Henry Alvey & partners	DD/SR/A4/28
1708	£13 12s 0d	Francis Broadhurst & partners	DD/SR/A4/29
1711-12	No figure stated	Tanners at Newark and Nottingham approached	In June 1711, £9 6s 3d paid for peeling bark in New Park & £3 13s 8d for stacking & transporting it. DD/SR/A4/30
1713	£12 10s 0d	Mr Noyse of Newark	Bark expenses £21 15s 2d. DD/SR/211/229/3
1714	£67 18s 0d		Bark expenses £16 6s 10½d. DD/SR/211/229/4
1715	£80 15s 0d		Bark expenses £13 4s 6d. DD/SR/211/229/5
1716	£26 10s 0d		DD/SR/211/229/6
1717	£6 15s 0d		DD/SR/211/229/7
1718	£13 10s 0d		DD/SR/211/229/8
1719	£20 16s 0d		DD/SR/211/229/9
1720	£5 5s 0d		DD/SR/211/229/10
1721	£12 5s 0d		DD/SR/211/229/11
Jan 1722 – June 1722	None		DD/SR/211/229/12
July 1722 – July 1723	None		DD/SR/211/229/13
July 1723 – July 1724	£19 6s 3d		DD/SR/211/229/14
July 1724 – July 1725	None		DD/SR/211/229/15
July 1725 – July 1726	£4 10s 0d		DD/SR/211/229/16
July 1726 – July 1727	£10 10s 0d		DD/SR/211/229/1
July 1727 – July 1728	£8 8s 0d		DD/SR/211/250/1
July 1728 – Nov 1728	None		DD/SR/211/250/2
Nov 1729 – July 1730	£25 11s 6d		DD/SR/211/442/1
July 1730 – July 1731	£9 18s 0d	John Alvey of Mansfield	DD/SR/6/1/1
July 1731 – July 1732	£7 0s 1½d	John Alvey of Mansfield	DD/SR/6/1/2
July 1732 – July 1733	£5 4s 3d	John Alvey of Mansfield	DD/SR/6/1/3
July 1733 – July 1734	£11 11s 5d	John Alvey of Mansfield	DD/SR/6/1/4
July 1734 – July 1735	£15 1s 4d	John Alvey of Mansfield	DD/SR/6/1/5
July 1735 – July 1736	£4 16s 8d	John Alvey of Mansfield	DD/SR/6/1/6
July 1736 – May 1737	None	John Alvey of Mansfield	DD/SR/6/1/7
May 1737 – May 1738	£8 8s 0d	John Alvey of Mansfield	DD/SR/6/1/8
May 1738 – May 1739	£11 12s 9d	John Alvey of Mansfield	DD/SR/6/1/9
May 1739 – May 1740	£10 9s 9d	John Alvey of Mansfield	DD/SR/6/1/10
May 1740–24 June 1741	£10 16s 0d	John Alvey of Mansfield	DD/SR/6/1/11
24 June 1741–May 1742	£6 9s 0d	John Alvey of Mansfield & partners	DD/SR/6/1/12
May 1742 – 11 July 1743	£7 6s 3d	John Alvey of Mansfield & partners	DD/SR/6/1/13
11 July 1743 – May 1744	No sale		DD/SR/6/1/14
May 1744 – May 1745	£0 6s 0d	John Alvey of Mansfield	DD/SR/6/1/15a

sought (both in person and by letter) in Nottingham and Newark prior to a retail sale.¹⁹⁴ Between 1730 and 1745, strong trading links were established with John Alvey of Mansfield: Alvey purchased both the Rufford bark and (on occasions) hides, and sold hair to the estate for plastering work.¹⁹⁵

Table 6.9 raises several questions. Firstly, to what extent do the income values stated reflect the total value of bark to the Rufford Estate? In this context, the anomalously high figures for 1714 and 1715 – £67 18s and £80 15s respectively – are particularly pertinent. When timber was sold standing, chapmen might contract to sell the cordwood yield back to an estate, no evidence has been found for similar agreements relating to bark. This suggests that Rufford accounts underestimate the product's value. There is little available data (none for Rufford) correlating average bark yields with numbers of oaks peeled.¹⁹⁶ An early eighteenth-century valuation of 1,831 oaks on the Welbeck Estate, however, records that an average of 7 trees (of girth ranging from 15-40 inches in diameter at 4 feet from the ground) was expected to yield one load of bark (a load in Nottinghamshire corresponding to 70 yards or 63 cwt).¹⁹⁷ Table 6.10 details the price per load achieved by Rufford bark 1708-50. Applying the Welbeck statistic and the peak bark rate during Savile's ownership (£2 11s) to the anomalous Rufford sales figures yields (as most conservative estimates) Rufford felling quotas in 1714 and 1715 respectively, of 186 and 222 trees. In these years it would seem, therefore, that significant timber sales were made by retail rather than wholesale, suggesting that they present a more complete picture of the value of bark to the estate.

A second and related uncertainty is whether the bark revenue figures include the costs of peeling and transport. Such expenses could be significant. In 1735, for example, bark peelers were paid 11s a load by the estate – over one

¹⁹⁴ In 1707, 21 tanners are recorded operating in Nottingham alone. Page (1906), 45.

¹⁹⁵ Holt's Estate Accounts, 1730-43. NA: DD/SR/6/1/1-13. No formal contract has been found.

¹⁹⁶ A figure which in any case would be highly dependent upon the age and size of the trees felled.

¹⁹⁷ Survey of Oaks in Frith Wood, 1700. NA: DD/4P/84/28. The 'load' was a volumetric measure which like the 'cord' varied regionally; for the Nottinghamshire standard see Holt's Estate Accounts, 1749/1750 (NA: DD/SR/211/356); conversion based on late eighteenth-century standardization: 50 yards = 45 cwt (Clarkson, 1974, p. 140).

Table 6.10:
Rufford bark prices, 1708-1750.

Year	Price per load (£ s d)	Volume sold (70 yds = 1 load)	Reference (all NA)
1708	£1 14s 0d	8 loads	DD/SR/A4/29
July 1730 – July 1731	£2 10s 0d	3 loads 60 yds	DD/SR/6/1/1
July 1731 – July 1732	£2 10s 0d	2 loads 27 yds	DD/SR/6/1/2
July 1732 – July 1733	£2 10s 0d	2 loads 6 yds	DD/SR/6/1/3
July 1733 – July 1734	£2 5s 0d	5 loads 10 yds	DD/SR/6/1/4
July 1734 – July 1735	£2 11s 0d	7 loads 6 yds	DD/SR/6/1/5
July 1735 – July 1736	£2 7s 0d	2 loads 4 yds	DD/SR/6/1/6
July 1736 – May 1737	–	None sold	DD/SR/6/1/7
May 1737 – May 1738	£2 8s 0d	3 ½ loads	DD/SR/6/1/8
May 1738 – May 1739	£2 9s 0d	4 ¾ loads	DD/SR/6/1/9
May 1739 – May 1740	£2 8s 0d	4 loads 26 yds	DD/SR/6/1/10
May 1740 – 24 June 1741	£2 8s 0d	4 ½ loads	DD/SR/6/1/11
24 June 1741 – May 1742	£2 3s 0d	3 loads	DD/SR/6/1/12
May 1742 – 11 July 1743	£2 5s 0d & £2 2s 0d	3 loads 7 poles (20 poles to a load)	DD/SR/6/1/13
11 July 1743 – May 1744	–	None sold	DD/SR/6/1/14
May 1744 – May 1748	–	minimal	DD/SR/6/1/15
May 1745 – May 1746	Not stated	38 yds	DD/SR/6/1/16a
May 1746 – May 1747	Not stated	21 yds	DD/SR/6/1/17
May 1747 – May 1748	Not stated	1 load 8 yds	DD/SR/6/1/18
May 1748 – May 1749	£1 10s 0d	4 loads 31 yds	DD/SR/6/1/19a
May 1749 – May 1750	£2 16s 6d	2 loads 27 yards	DD/SR/211/356

fifth of the retail value.¹⁹⁸ Between 1713 and 1715, when a total of £161 3s was earned from bark, the expenses amounted to £51 6s 6½d – over 30% of the sale value.¹⁹⁹ The fact that in certain years bark expenses were itemised independently of bark revenue, suggests that the costs of peeling and transport were not included in the income category ‘Bark Sold’. However, estate accounts vary in the degree to which outlay was itemised, and the greater frequency with which bark expenses are quoted in the pre-1715 accounts may reflect a change in accounting style rather than policy. From the expense descriptions available, it is clear that they included leading and stacking as well as peeling: in June 1711, for example, labourers were paid for ‘pilling the bark in the North Wing of ye New Park’ (£9 6s 3d) and ‘for leading it together and stacking it per bill’ (£3 13s 8d).²⁰⁰

In Nottinghamshire (and according to Clarkson, most of England) trees were customarily stripped of bark once felled, though in Derbyshire and Staffordshire the practice was to peel standing.²⁰¹ This meant that felling generally took place when the sap was running and bark would peel (spring and early summer), irrespective of the market status of wood products and the understanding that winter-felled timber was more durable.²⁰² Rufford felling decisions seem to have been strongly influenced by the desire to maximise bark returns. In 1718, for example, though under pressure to fell promptly in order to meet a contracted cordwood quota, Smith reassured his master: ‘I should not Acted so Unjust and Madly as to take Down Trees that have bark on before ye season of pilling’.²⁰³ When, in March 1724, the wood market was glutted and chapmen difficult to find, Smith suggested seeking peelers in Derbyshire in order to postpone felling and secure a more profitable timber market without loss of

¹⁹⁸ Holt’s Estate Accounts, 1734/1735. NA: DD/SR/6/1/5.

¹⁹⁹ Smith’s (summary) Estate Accounts, 1713-15. NA: DD/SR/211/229/3-5.

²⁰⁰ Burden’s Estate Accounts, 1711-12. NA: DD/SR/A4/30.

²⁰¹ Clarkson (1974), 145; Dr Robert Plott, ‘A Discourse concerning the most seasonable time of Felling Timber’ (1687), quoted in James (1981), 157; Letter Smith to Savile, 25 March 1724 (NA: DD/SR/211/227/103).

²⁰² Ellis (1738), 9; Plott (1687); ‘The Eleventh Report of the Commissioners...’ (1792), 81.

²⁰³ Letter Smith to Savile, 20 December 1718 (NA: DD/SR/211/245); see also Holt’s correspondence (NA: DD/SR/211/24/60,150).

bark.²⁰⁴ Notably, it was Smith who was hiring peelers rather than the bark buyers; further evidence that peeling charges were met by the estate.

Finally, the bark income stated in accounts records only the bulk revenue and provides no indication of its source or quality. But bark quality, and hence economic value, varied according to the age and conditions under which the oak was grown. Small coppice oaks of 20 years growth yielded the most tannin rich bark; the gnarled and often desiccated bark of octogenarian trees, least.²⁰⁵ Given the preference at Rufford for conducting large timber sales by wholesale rather than retail (see below), Table 6.9 probably records bark revenue from primarily country sales of small trees within coppice woods, trees scattered across tenanted land and in hedgerows.

TIMBER SALE BY WHOLESALE

Although there are no extant eighteenth-century wood contracts from the Rufford Estate prior to 1752, numerous references in estate correspondence to dealings with wood merchants and to the subsequent negotiation of ‘agreements’, suggest that for large timber sales this was the preferred style of transaction. Table 6.11 provides a summary of recorded timber sales of £16 and above.

Major timber sales on the Sherwood estates could involve financial transactions of hundreds and even thousands of pounds. In 1724, for example, oak in Welbeck Park to the value of £18,525 was sold to Richard Porter of Arnold, gent. & John Johnson senior of Nottingham, wheelwright; in 1739, a sale of £8,700 was negotiated by the Welbeck Estate, this time with Richard Porter of Arnold & Edward Hodgson of Kingston-upon-Hull, timber merchant.²⁰⁶ On the Rufford Estate during the 7th Baronet’s ownership the total revenue from wood sales in any year rarely exceeded £1,000 (Chart 6.1). However, although timber sales were more modest from Rufford than Welbeck, individual sales from the former regularly exceeded £100, and in 1716, 1735 and 1736 respectively, individual transactions to the values £700, £902 and £1,178 were negotiated for wood standing principally in New Park. Large timber sales from Savile’s other

²⁰⁴ Letters Smith to Savile, 23 & 25 March 1724. NA: DD/SR/211/227/104,103.

²⁰⁵ Clarkson (1974), 139.

²⁰⁶ Articles re wood sale, 1724 & 1739. NA: DD/4P/84/22-3.

Table 6.11: Rufford timber sales, 1702-1752.

Note: Complete data only exists for the years in which full estate accounts are available – 1702-3, 1707-8, 1711-12, 1730-50. Information relating to timber sales in other years is reliant upon references in alternative estate documents (principally correspondence from Rufford stewards to the 7th Baronet) a situation which has almost certainly led to an under estimate of sales activity. Furthermore, the documentation rarely mentions the age of the trees, and sales referenced below might therefore include young trees as well as timber.

Year	Revenue from timber sales over £16 (£ s d)	Purchaser	Details and Reference (all NA)
1702	£2 17s 6d	Mr Bellamy (Edwinstowe)	43 trees in the forest + 7 old trees in Bescallls. Cooperware worth £17 4s 3d also purchased. DD/SR/A4/26.
1703	£242 13s 0d	Mr Bellamy (Edwinstowe)	9 th , 10 th , 11 th & 17 th 'parcellls' [divisions] in Savile's forest and part of 13 th . Also purchased 100 pales at 8s 6d. DD/SR/A4/27.
	£112 15s 0d	Mr Hayford (Staveley, Derbyshire)	14 th and 15 th divisions in the forest. DD/SR/A4/27.
	£38 19s 0d	John Hay	4 trees in New Park, plus cooperware worth £72 16s 9d. DD/SR/A4/27.
1707	£402 0s 0d	William Gunthorp, William Slater & Thomas Dodsley	2 ridings in New Park. DD/SR/A4/28.
	£5 5s 0d	William Gunthorp & William Slater	10 dead oaks. DD/SR/A4/28.
	£24 12s 0d	William Gunthorp	Oaks and ashes in Snape Grange + half poundage. DD/SR/A4/28
	£16 8s 0d	John Walters	2 trees in New Park. DD/SR/A4/28.
1708	£16 0s 0d	William Gunthorp & William Slater	22 decayed oaks and 5 old beeches. (William Gunthorp also purchased 7 decayed oaks – £9 – in a separate transaction). DD/SR/A4/29.
	£18 0s 0d	William Slater and Thomas Dodsley	26 decayed oaks in New Park. DD/SR/A4/29.
	£20 10s 0d	Charles Pawson senior	52 oaks on tenanted land in Kirton with poundage + 5 decayed beeches and 3 wind fallen oaks. (Charles Pawson junior purchased 20 decayed oaks for £10 10s). DD/SR/A4/29.
1711 & 1712	£399 14s 9d	Mr Hodgson (Hull) & Mr Arnold	Timber felled in the south riding Old Park – £38 1s of payment made in cordwood. DD/SR/A4/30.
	£50 0s 0d	Chapier of Southwell	10 trees in Old Park. DD/SR/A4/30.
	£47 0s 0d	John Cam	9 beeches in the south riding of Old Park and 2 trees in the north wing of New Park – £7 11s of payment made in cordwood. DD/SR/A4/30.
	£26 0s 0d	John Stocks and William Baker	6 trees in the north wing of New Park – £3 10s of payment made in cordwood. DD/SR/A4/30.
	£36 4s 10d	Mr Bellamy (Edwinstowe)	6 trees in the south centre of New Park and 9 trees in the north wing of New Park –

				£5 8s of payment made in cordwood. Also purchased 24 cord 6ft clefts and '2030 poling' totalling £65 11s 9d. DD/SR/A4/30.
	£25 0s 0d		Mr Hodgson (Hull)	26 trees in the north wing of New Park. DD/SR/A4/30.
	£41 13s 10d		Mr Neale (Sherwood Forest Verderer)	19 trees in the north wing of New Park and part of an ash and oak. Also purchased £240 1s cordwood. DD/SR/A4/30; DD/SR/A4/26.
1716	£700 0s 0d		John Walters senior, John Walters junior & Joseph Clark	Trees in the north centre of New Park. DD/SR/211/227/83.
1724	£350 0s 0d		Mr Porter (Arnold) and Mr Johnson (Nottingham)	120 oaks in a ride linking Old and Wellow Parks + £50 poundage. DD/SR/211/227/102.
	£38 0s 0d		John Pawson (Clipstone)	16 beech trees in a ride linking Old and Wellow Parks + 4 others. DD/SR/211/227/103.
1725	£150 0s 0d		Mr Johnson (Nottingham)	Oaks in Wellow Park. DD/SR/211/227/141.
1728	£130 0s 0d		Mr Johnson (Nottingham)	Oaks in Wellow Park. DD/SR/211/227/160.
Accounting year changes				
1730/1731	£93 0s 0d		Mr Robert Birch (Mansfield) & Mr John Bristowe (Clumber)	'180 oaks in Wellow Park £86 and some maples, crab trees, lins [limes] and others there £5, for cordwood and some crooked pieces in Royse Brig Lane £2'. DD/SR/6/1/1; DD/SR/211/24/9.
1731/1732	£105 10s 0d		Mr Robert Birch (Mansfield) & Mr John Bristowe (Clumber)	208 oaks in Wellow Park and Brail £90; also 23 oaks in James Smith's Close in Ompton Parish £15 10s 0d. DD/SR/6/1/2; DD/SR/211/24/27; DD/SR/211/24/30.
1732 /1733	£78 15s 0d		Mr Robert Birch (Mansfield) & Mr John Bristowe (Clumber)	'133 Oaks in Wellow Park and three hedgerows in John Whitworth and Mr Leverton Farms £75, also some Linns [limes] & Maples in Wellow Park £3 15s'. DD/SR/6/1/3; DD/SR/211/24/52.
1733/1734	£138 10s 0d		Mr Robert Birch (Mansfield) & Mr John Bristowe (Clumber)	'7 Elms, 7 Linns [limes] in Wellow Park £7; 12 Elms and some Maples &c. in Brail £8; 93 Oaks in New Park, Wellow Park &c. £120'. DD/SR/6/1/4; DD/SR/211/24/62.
1734/1735	£902 5s 0d		Mr Robert Birch (Mansfield) & Mr John Bristowe (Clumber) & Bartholomew Wragg (Pleasley)	'383 Trees viz: Oaks, Beeches, Lynns [limes], Ashes & Maples in the New Park £860; one Ash and some Maples & Thorns in the New Park for Cordwood £12 10s; one oak more in the New Park £3; 45 Oaks in Wellow Park £26 15s'. DD/SR/6/1/5.
1735/1736	£47 0s 0d		William Cutts (Clipston)	'58 Small Lynns [limes] in Wellow Park £7; 61 Oak, Ash, Lynns in a Hedge Joining to Eakring Field £30; 14 Elms, 2 Ashes one Lynn in Wellow Park £10'. DD/SR/6/1/6.
	£21 0s 0d		Mr Robert Birch (Mansfield) & Mr John Bristowe (Clumber) & Bartholomew Wragg (Pleasley)	6 oaks in the New Park. DD/SR/6/1/6.
	£1178 10s 0d		Joseph Grafton (Wingerworth, Derbyshire) Robert Bellfitt (Whittington, Derbyshire) Mr George Burden (Mansfield)	'497 Oak, Ash, Beech & Lynns [limes] in New Park £960; some underwood in New Park £8; 216 Trees in Wellow Park £124.12.00; 90 Trees in the Forrest Lane £36 10s; 44 Trees in Ricebrigg and Brickilln Lane £17 18s; 44 Trees in Lound Wood £31 10s'. DD/SR/6/1/6.
1736/1737	£210 0s 0d		Mr Burden (Mansfield)	'114 Trees in Wellow Park; 54 Trees in Mr Leverton Farme; 48 Trees in Ompton

		Thomas Johnson (Eakring)	Closes; 72 Trees in Lound Wood; 108 Trees in John Dickenson Haythorn Closes; 71 Trees in John Vesseys Close'. DD/SR/6/1/7.
1737/1738	£430 0s 0d	Joseph Gratton (Wingerworth, Derbyshire) Henry Green (Whittington, Derbyshire)	'356 Oaks, Beech, Linns & Ashes in the New Park', described by Holt as being old and most very decayed. DD/SR/6/1/8; DD/SR/211/24/135; DD/SR/211/24/143.
	£28 8s 0d	Robert Bellfitt (Dronfield, Derbyshire)	'68 Oaks, Ash, and Beech in the Smithy Closes'. DD/SR/6/1/8.
1738/1739	£15 10s 0d	Mr Burden (Mansfield) Thomas Johnson (Eakring)	'64 Oaks and Ash in Fra: Hill Close in Ompton'. DD/SR/6/1/9.
	£21 0s 0d	Mr Hunt (Rufford)	'For wood out of Wellow Park and Old Park for his stables'. DD/SR/6/1/9.
	£19 0s 0d	Joseph Gratton (Wingerworth, Derbyshire) Henry Green (Whittington, Derbyshire)	'14 Old Oaks and Beech in Broad Oak Break'. DD/SR/6/1/9.
	£55 0s 0d	Mr Birch (Mansfield)	'115 Oaks, Ash, and Linns [limes] in Wellow Park'. DD/SR/6/1/9.
	£83 0s 0d	Mr Joseph Wilson (Welbeck)	'84 Oaks in Lound Wood'. DD/SR/6/1/9.
1739/1740	£220 0s 0d	Mr Joseph Wilson (Welbeck)	'252 Oak, Elm and Ash in Lound Wood'. DD/SR/6/1/10.
	£60 0s 0d	Joseph Stocks (Budby)	'156 Oak, Elm, Ash in Wellow Park'. DD/SR/6/1/10.
1740/1741	£26 0s 0d	Mr Joseph Wilson (Welbeck)	'15 Trees in a vistoe in Dickenson's Hills'. DD/SR/6/1/11.
	£18 5s 0d	Nicholas Taylor (Kneesall)	'35 Oaks in Chappells close in Ompton £17 10s; and one small oak in a Vistoe in Boscoe 15s'. DD/SR/6/1/11.
	£190 0s 0d	Mr Molyneux (Oxton)	'218 Trees in Wellow Park'. DD/SR/6/1/11.
1741/1742	£53 9s 0d	Mr Birch (Mansfield)	'58 Oaks in Wellow Park £47 5s and 5 out of John Whitworth's Hedgerow £6 4s'. DD/SR/6/1/12.
1742/1743	£86 0s 0d	John Wyer (Southwell) Rowland Heathan (Southwell)	'162 Trees in Wellow Park £84 and one Beach in ye Old Park £2'. DD/SR/6/1/13.
1743/1744	£39 0s 0d	William Peel	'168 ash trees in Vessey Bushes'. DD/SR/6/1/14.
	£44 3s 0d	John Wyer (Southwell) Rowland Heathan (Southwell)	'90 oaks and ashes in Wellow Park and in a hedge in Eliz Fox Close joining to it.' DD/SR/6/1/14.
	£24 10s 0d	Job Booth (Nottingham)	92 ash trees in Vessey Bushes. DD/SR/6/1/14.
	£365 0s 0d	Mr Joseph Wilson (Workop)	551 Oaks in Vessey Bushes. DD/SR/6/1/14.
1744 - 1749			For details of sales see DD/SR/6/1/15-19.
1749/1750	£3710 0s 0d	Thomas Lamb, gentleman, of Nottingham & partners	1167 Oak, Ash and Beech in Old Park + 'Oaks, Linns [limes], Asps [aspens], and Maples' in Wellow Park, on tenanted ground and in the hedges of Ompton and Eakring. DD/SR/211/356.
1752	£4081 19s 0d	Thomas Lamb (gentleman) of Nottingham; John Wilson (Yeoman) of Heynor, Derbyshire; Joseph Wilson (timber merchant) and Daniel Hurst (woodman), both of Workop, Nottinghamshire.	1565 Oak, Beech and Ash in Old Park. DD/SR/207/469.

major reserve, Old Park, were made in the mid-eighteenth century soon after the 7th Baronet's death: estate accounts for 1749/1750 record a timber sale of £3,710; a wood contract of 1752 agreed a sale valued at £4,082.²⁰⁷ No evidence has yet been found to suggest that the 8th Baronet was in financial difficulty in this period, a common reason for extensive felling. Given the prestige associated with timber reserves, a more likely explanation is that the wood had reached maturity.

So who were the timber dealers operating in north Nottinghamshire and how were standing wood sales managed? Table 6.11 identifies the known individuals and partnerships making major wood purchases from the Rufford Estate and the financial value and source of wood sold. Although biographical details for these men are limited, the Rufford data, when supplemented with that from other Nottinghamshire estates, allows some qualified conclusions regarding the structure of the regional wood trade to be drawn. Firstly, only some of the men involved, for example Edward Hodgson of Hull and Joseph Wilson of Worksop, were solely 'timber merchants' or, in the case of Daniel Hurst of Worksop, 'woodmen'. Others appear either to have been local 'gentlemen' or men with more than one trade who dealt in wood as a sideline. John Bellamy, gentleman of Edwinstowe, owned land in Edwinstowe and Mansfield.²⁰⁸ He died in 1719, but a member of the family, possibly his son, followed him in the wood trade, and his grandson, Charles, was a Nottingham tanner in the 1740s.²⁰⁹ Richard Porter is referred to as a gentleman from Arnold, the extent of his property is not known, but included significant landholdings in Car Colston near Bingham.²¹⁰ Robert Birch, 'stonecutter', was from Mansfield and regularly employed by the Rufford Estate to direct masonry work.²¹¹ John

²⁰⁷ Holt's Estate Accounts, 1749/1750 (NA: DD/SR/211/356); articles of agreement between the 8th Baronet and Thomas Lamb re sale of oaks in Rufford, 1752 (NA: DD/SR/207/469).

²⁰⁸ Letter Smith to Savile, 11 April 1724 (NA: DD/SR 211/227/100); Will (copy) of John Bellamy (senior) of Edwinstowe, gent., 12 June 1719 – 23 November 1724 (NA: DD/2197/2/61).

²⁰⁹ Bond, 1 August 1743. NA: DD/2197/2/102.

²¹⁰ Will (copy) of Henry Porter of Nottingham, gent., 1723 (NA: DD/SK/165/4); extract from Will of Henry Sherbrook of Arnold, 1714 (NA: DD/SK/128/7); Mortgage indentures involving Richard Porter, 1729 (NA: DD/SK/128/15-16).

²¹¹ Letter Smith to Savile, 20 May 1721 (NA: DD/SR/211/227/33); Bill submitted to Savile by Robert Birch, 30 December 1729 (NA: DD/SR/215/53/2).

Johnson senior was a quaker wheelwright from Nottingham.²¹² Thomas Johnson is regularly listed in post-1730 estate accounts as Savile's wheelwright and might well be related; a Thomas Johnson of Eakring both purchased timber from Rufford in the 1730s and was regularly employed in the valuation of timber and, on occasions, specialist woodwork.²¹³ Charles Pawson senior was 'agent' to Sir Thomas Hewett, Surveyor of His Majesty's Forests Trent North, and employed by the latter to direct the working up of forest timber; John Pawson was a Clipstone warrener and tenant of the Welbeck Estate.²¹⁴

Secondly, although many of those purchasing wood from Rufford were Nottinghamshire men, Savile regularly used wood dealers from as far afield as Hull and Derbyshire, no doubt reflecting the buoyancy of the wood markets in both locations. The importance of east Derbyshire as a centre of the iron industry has already been discussed (see CHARCOAL-IRON INDUSTRY, above). Hull was a rapidly growing port throughout the eighteenth century and shipbuilding the most important industry: shipbuilding in and around Hull provided vessels not only for Hull and other Yorkshire ship owners, but also for the Admiralty.²¹⁵

A third observation based on Table 6.11 is that in the early eighteenth century, wood dealing partnerships could be extremely fluid and might link widely dispersed centres of operation. In 1724, for example, Richard Porter from Arnold & John Johnson from Nottingham jointly contracted to both fell and work up wood in Welbeck Park over a period of ten years, and to purchase 120 oaks within an intended ride on the Rufford Estate.²¹⁶ In 1734 the names of Porter (Arnold) & Holchin (Hull) were coupled in dealings over a major sale of 'Oaks,

²¹² Articles re wood sale, 1724 (NA: DD/4P/84/22); Letter Smith to Savile, 23 March 1724 (NA: DD/SR/211/227/104).

²¹³ Holt's Estate Accounts, 1730-44 (NA: DD/SR/6/1/1-14); Letter Smith to Savile, 8 April 1728 (NA: DD/SR/211/227/160); Letters Holt to Savile, 23 September 1734 & 9 January 1738 (NA: DD/SR/211/24/72,135). Early modern wheelwrights were often engaged in a broad spectrum of wood-related trades. Roberts (1981).

²¹⁴ Letter Thomas Hewett to Joseph Astley, 26 July 1711 (NA: DD/FJ/11/1/2/140-1); 'The Fourteenth Report of the Commissioners...' (1793), 506; Letter Smith to Savile, 11 January 1725 (NA: DD/SR/211/227/143); Lease contracted between Lord and Lady Harley & John Pawson, 15 November 1717 (NA: DD/2P/28/76).

²¹⁵ Allison, ed. (1969), vol. 1, pp. 174-89. The name Hodgson is cited by Allison (p. 188) in relation to various eighteenth-century shipbuilding partnerships engaged in Admiralty contracts and active until the end of the Napoleonic Wars (1799-1815).

²¹⁶ Articles re wood sale, 1724 (NA: DD/4P/84/22); Letter Smith to Savile, 4 April 1724 (NA: DD/SR/211/227/102).

Beeches, Lynns [limes], Ashes and Maples' in Rufford New Park valued by the estate at £950.²¹⁷ In 1739, Porter contracted for a further purchase from the Welbeck Estate, this time partnered with Edward Hodgson from Hull and extending over 6 years.²¹⁸

The dealings of Porter, Johnson and Hodgson show that dealers regularly purchased from a range of landowners.²¹⁹ As with retail sales, this led to a highly competitive market in which the timing of a sale could have a significant impact on its profitability, whether to landowner or purchaser. One way in which dealers were able to secure limited protection from a future glut in the wood market (and concomitant fall in market value) was by including a clause in their wood contract forbidding the seller from further sale of timber during the period of the agreement. In 1724, for example, the Earl of Oxford and his wife, then owners of Welbeck Abbey, promised Porter & Johnson that no wood would be sold in the manor of Welbeck or any adjacent estates belonging to them of greater value than £300 before 24 June 1730, and if any were sold, then Johnson & Porter would be offered first refusal and a discounted rate of 5%.²²⁰ Similarly, when the 8th Baronet contracted to sell timber in Old Park in 1752, he submitted to the condition that he would not sell from Old Park any wood amounting to the value of £100, 'except windfalls, bark and cordwood of those trees he takes down for his own use', before 11 November 1754.²²¹ Landowners, on the other hand, were subject to the full impact of market forces. This could both delay a sale and reduce its value, as is clearly illustrated by the 1734 Rufford timber sale, discussed in more detail below.

Significant timber sales could be drawn-out proceedings. The trees in question had first to be marked and then valued by the estate. Given the large sums of money exchanged in these transactions and the degree of personal judgement involved in valuations of standing wood, it is unsurprising that two or

²¹⁷ Letter Holt to Savile, 7 December 1734 (NA: DD/SR/211/24/82); Holt's Estate Accounts, 1734/1735 (NA: DD/SR/6/1/5). Sold ultimately to Birch, Bristowe & Wragg (Table 6.11).

²¹⁸ NA: DD/4P/84/23.

²¹⁹ Note also the policy of Sheperdson & Partners referred to by Madam Savile in 1711. NA: DD/SR/211/435.

²²⁰ NA: DD/4P/84/22.

²²¹ NA: DD/SR/207/469.

even three independent valuations were regularly sought at Rufford.²²² The wage scale for such work suggests that it was considered highly skilled labour. At Rufford in March 1711, for example, Mr Ball was paid at the rate of 6s 8d a day (over 6 times the average day-labourer's wage) for valuing wood in the Parks.²²³ On other Nottinghamshire estates, payment was made as a percentage of the sale value: 6d in the £1 in 1777.²²⁴ Savile's steward, Smith, was a skilled surveyor (see Section 3.4.2). There is no evidence, however, that other Rufford stewards had such competence, and even Smith regularly sought the assistance of local men such as Thomas Johnson of Eakring, Joseph Wilson of Welbeck, William Cutts of Clipstone and Samuel Calton.²²⁵ With the exception of Joseph Wilson, who described himself as a 'timber merchant',²²⁶ all these men had a range of wood-related responsibilities at Rufford. Those of William Cutts and Thomas Johnson have already been discussed; Calton was Savile's cooper in the 1720s.²²⁷ Once valuations had been made by the estate, bids were invited from wood chapmen, another drawn-out process since in the interests of a closed bidding system no two parties could be in the woodland at the same time.²²⁸ In the 1734 Rufford sale (valued by the estate at £950) Holchin & Porter were the last in a line of dealers who had viewed the timber. When they declined to bid, considering it 'bad and decay'd', Holt returned to earlier chapmen. To his chagrin, in the time elapsed these men had reduced their offers, since, as Holt explained to Savile: 'it is now talk'd, there will be a Large Sale of Wood Soon at Welbeck'.²²⁹ This strengthened dealer bargaining power and more purchaser-

²²² Valuations often varied appreciably, recorded offers ranging up to 8% from the average bid. Letters Holt to Savile, 23 September & 7 December 1734, 9 January 1738 (NA: DD/SR/211/24/72,82,135).

²²³ The number of trees goes unrecorded; estate sales suggest a value of c. £650. Madam Savile appointed a second man to assist Ball (paid in total 8s 2d); work took 10½ days, total bill was £3 18s 2d. Burden's Estate Accounts, 1711-12. NA: DD/SR/A4/30.

²²⁴ Extracted from a valuation of Lowdham Wood belonging to the Edge family's Nottinghamshire estate. NA: DD/E/171/74.

²²⁵ Letters Smith to Savile, 25 March & 8 April 1728 (NA: DD/SR/211/227/162,160); Letters Holt to Savile, 23 September & 7 December 1734, 9 January 1738 (NA: DD/SR/211/24/72,82,135).

²²⁶ Articles of agreement between the 8th Baronet and Thomas Lamb, 1752. NA: DD/SR/207/469.

²²⁷ Letter Smith to Savile, 8 April 1728. NA: DD/SR/211/227/160.

²²⁸ Letter Madam Savile to Savile, 3 March 1711. NA: DD/SR/211/435.

²²⁹ Letter Holt to Savile, 7 December 1734. NA: DD/SR/211/24/82.

friendly contract terms were demanded. Mr Burden, for example, who had initially bid £815 now offered only £700 and further insisted that he be given three years to work the wood up and pay, during which time no wood was to be sold from the Rufford Estate. Such a lengthy felling time, disproportionate to the value of the wood being sold, was extremely disadvantageous to the estate. Not only would it 'hinder the other part of the Wood Going down', as Holt pointed out, but it would 'also prolong [the] time and hinder the Growth of Young Wood where the Old Timber now Grows'.²³⁰

The 1734 sale exemplifies the complexity of transacting a profitable wood sale and the onerous nature of the steward's responsibility. Judgements needed to be made regarding timing; the activities of a range of geographically dispersed individuals had to be co-ordinated; contractual details had to be negotiated; finally, and of paramount importance, the reliability of the potential purchaser had to be assessed. By reliability is meant not only their creditworthiness and ability to honour payment schedules, but also their professional conduct when working in the woods. Contracts generally allowed access to the woodland 'at all times and in all seasons',²³¹ and, as illustrated above, over timescales often extending to several years. During such periods the purchaser contracted labourers to work up the wood. Clearly, there was a risk that unmarked timber might be damaged if the marked wood was carelessly felled; a further risk to unmarked timber if charcoal pits were sited too close to growing trees. Environmental degradation of the site would ensue if the ground were not suitably restored: by the filling of sawpits, charcoal pits, and holes where root balls had been grubbed up. Finally, and of paramount importance to Savile, a keen sportsman, was the minimisation of disturbance to the game. Rufford estate correspondence testifies to anxieties on all these fronts, but in particular, the well-being of the deer and other game, as the reassuring tone of Holt's letter to Savile upon closure of the 1734 deal highlights:

[W]hen I sold the Wood, the Buyers all promis'd, they will not (if they know it) Employ any person that will Disturb the Game, and if

²³⁰ Letter Holt to Savile, 14 December 1734. NA: DD/SR/211/24/81.

²³¹ A standard clause in Welbeck wood contracts.

after they are Employ'd they do not behave well, then any of them are to be turn'd off.²³²

6.4 Conclusion

The importance of wood to the cultural identity of the Rufford Estate cannot be overestimated. Woodland provided an aesthetic framework for the Hall and estate as a whole, reflecting Savile's cultural credentials and identifying him as among the 'greater sort of Men... that love their Country';²³³ it offered a context for social patronage; and habitat for hunting and shooting. However, though felling was often directed with an eye to its impact on the estate landscape, and might even be influenced by a desire to oblige a neighbouring landowner, economic return was arguably the most important determinant of woodland policy. Timber reserves were a capital resource worth over £21,000 to the 7th Baronet. Annual spring wood falls together with more intermittent timber fellings brought in an average annual income of £532, equivalent to just over a third of the estate's rental value. Moreover, by servicing local husbandry needs, Rufford woodland enhanced the profitability of the estate indirectly as well as directly.

Although neither the 7th Baronet nor his successive stewards can be described as 'agricultural innovators', the management style adopted at Rufford reflected the silvicultural practices being advocated by the most informed contemporary authors. It emphasised sustainability: renewal and expansion. Rufford boasted two nurseries, and there is substantial evidence that the estate's timber grounds were maintained both through replanting after felling and the establishment of new wooded areas on forest heathland and within the estate's parkland. Although there is some evidence for fir planting in New Park, oak, beech and ash were by far the most common species established on timber grounds during Savile's lifetime, and within his spring woods there was a species

²³² Letter Holt to Savile, 9 January 1738. NA:DD/SR 211/24/84. Even high ranking landowners, for example the 2nd Duke of Kingston, might be denied sporting access to Rufford woodland for fear of disturbing game birds. See Section 7.1.2.

²³³ Cook (1676), 89.

shift towards ash. Such choices reflected both contemporary silvicultural knowledge and the buoyant markets for hop poles, construction timber and oak bark in Nottinghamshire. The Rufford Estate actively supplied all three markets. Moreover, the upper branches and roots of timber trees, and old trees unfit for construction, found a lucrative market in the charcoal-iron industry. With the exception of the charcoal-iron market, which shrank and ultimately disappeared before the close of the century, the other Nottinghamshire wood markets, if anything, expanded as the century progressed.

As with other areas of estate management, decisions regarding wood management rested ultimately with the Baronet. That said, his mother, Madam Savile, seems to have played a particularly influential role in this area of estate management, and on occasions negotiated sale transactions directly. In the foreground at all times, however, were successive Rufford stewards, who with the assistance of a wide range of estate employees – gardener, woodtenters, valuers etc. – ensured the maintenance at Rufford of a profitable and sustainable woodland resource.

Chapter 7

Rides: Their Design, Construction and Use

Some there are that esteem nothing well in Design, but long, large, wide, regular Ridings and Walks; and this, in Truth, is right in an open Park or Forest, where the Owner rides and hunts... *Stephen Switzer*¹

The network of 'Ridings' laid out by the 7th Baronet during his lifetime provides the focus of this chapter. It formed a vast and finely orchestrated system of long, straight passageways cut through woodland, extending into the countryside beyond, and creating a web of connections (in part physical and in part visual) linking warren ground on the forest sands west of the hall, demesne parks and spring woods on the more fertile clay to the east, the hall itself, and, in the wider landscape, church steeples and the seats of neighbouring landowners. By the early eighteenth century such networks were familiar features of estate landscapes, as Stephen Switzer's observation quoted above records and the 'bird's eye' estate views reproduced in *Britannia Illustrata* (1707) and *Vitruvius Britannicus* (vol. 3, 1725) portray. That said, gardening treatises of the period are sparing in their discussion of rides, and contemporary usage of landscaping terminology seems to have been more fluid, and possibly regional, than Switzer's distinction between 'Riding' and 'Walk' suggests. In Rufford estate documents the words riding/rideing/ride/vistoe/visto are used interchangeably in the period, and applied both to cuttings through woodland and the various forms such passageways took when they emerged into open ground. In the analysis that follows, a similarly broad and flexible usage is adopted; one of the aims of this chapter is to arrive at a clearer sense of how Savile and his neighbours understood this aspect of landscaping through examination of the range of contexts in which these terms were applied.

Archival evidence in the form of estate correspondence and survey plans, together with topographical mapping, will be used to identify the character of

¹ Switzer (1718), vol. 2, p. 197.

Rufford's ride system, the objectives informing its development, and the landscaping practices involved in its construction. Even a cursory examination of this data draws attention to the ambitious nature of Savile's landscaping programme. In some areas it involved the co-ordination of features several miles apart across strongly contoured terrain held under multiple ownership. Moreover, the felling, pruning and, on occasions, planting involved in ride construction were seasonal activities and imposed a time frame according to which work had to proceed if income were not to be lost. The responsibility for managing this activity, advising on and setting out Rufford's rides, fell primarily to Savile's stewards. Particular attention will be paid to their contributions, shedding further light on the collaborative nature of landscape design at Rufford.

7.1 Rides as an Aspect of Early Eighteenth-Century English Estate Design

7.1.1 Rides in pre-1743 horticultural publications

By the mid-seventeenth century the management of working woodlands was being written about with a view to developing its amenity as well as purely economic potential. Walter Blith's *The English Improver Improved* (1649) marks a radical departure in English agricultural literature by its concern with the planting, accessing and division of spring wood for subsequent felling. Blith suggested that the management, utility and recreational value of woodland could be improved by the judicious orchestration of cuttings made through the trees. Referred to synonymously as 'Cart-ways', 'Passages' or 'Walkes', these were to be laid out in a radial structure.² The central meeting area of the 'passages' was awarded particularly detailed attention, indicating its importance within the design:

...having cast thy Land [woodland] into any of the Plots aforesaid...
if thou cast it into a Square, or Triangle, or Ovall way, then having
found the middle of it, thou mayst if thou please, cast out a Circular

² Before the middle ages woodland access was obtained by 'irregular tracks winding among the stools'. Rackham (1990, first published 1976), 48.

round Plot or Ovall containing either a ninth part, or a seventeenth part, or but a fifth part, And that Incompasse in with a little Ditch, well quicksetted with thorne, and here and ther an Ash, Oake, Elme or Witchazell reserving a Grasse-Plot to walke round about, of twelve or fifteen Foot wide, and then equally divide the rest into so many parts as thou intendest severall falls therein, and every Division separate with a walke, or Grasse Plot betwixt them, containing twelve or fifteen Foot widenesse, which will serve as a Cart-way, or Passage, to fetch out thy Wood at every fall, as well as for walkes for thy recreation, because in this manner of Planting, thou canst not Cart along thy Wood, as thou dost along thy usual spring Woods, but only along the borders.³

By the eighteenth century, woodland ride networks reminiscent of Blith's system of passageways had become an established feature of English estate landscapes, though one that is more generally attributed to the assimilation of French landscaping practices into post-Restoration England.⁴ John James's *The Theory and Practice of Gardening* (1712), a book intended to promote French gardening practices (see Section 4.2), included rides as part of a broader programme of estate landscaping. James distinguished six types of wood: 'Forests, or great Woods of high Trees; Coppice-Woods; Groves of a middle Height, with tall palisades; Groves opened in Compartments, Groves planted in Quincunx, or in Squares, and Woods of Ever-Greens'.⁵ It was the first two forms, 'proper only in an open Country, or in a Park of six or eight Miles over', that he considered an appropriate setting for rides: 'These Woods are wild and rural; as the Forest of *S. Germain en Laye*, that of *Fontainebleau*, of *Senlis*, the *Bois de Vincennes*, de *Boulogne* &c.,' without 'Palisades ['fine Hedges'], nor rolled Walks in them, only Ridings cut for Hunting'.⁶ James included few directions pertinent to the construction of these ridings, and while observing that ride networks generally conformed to a regular design – 'They are usually planted in a Star, with a great Circle [*rond point*] in the Middle where all the Ridings meet' – suggested that their distance from the house made their dimensions (an aspect discussed at length in relation to walks within the pleasure gardens) of practical

³ Blith (1649), 126.

⁴ In particular, the cutting of straight hunting tracks through forests surrounding châteaux in the north of France. Hussey (1967), 27.

⁵ James (1712), 49.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 49-50; James (2nd ed., 1728), 64 (explanatory insert).

rather than aesthetic importance.⁷ In speaking of the 'Agreeableness and Convenience' afforded by 'Walks, Counter-Walks, and Palisades', for example, he stated that the beauty of such features lay in an appropriate proportioning of breadth to length (60-72 feet for a half mile walk), while

As to the Alleys of Groves that are far distant, as upon the Extremity of a Park, or the like, which have no Vista, nor answer any principal Line, it is no way necessary to make them so wide, being in Places less frequented, and more rarely exposed to Sight.⁸

James's suggestion that rides were not intentionally designed to command views is striking in the light of the ride network laid out by Savile for Rufford (see Section 7.2.2) and, more broadly, the apparently interchangeable usage of the terms *visto*/*vistoe* and *ride* in England by the 1720s. John Macky, in his *A Journey through England* (1714), for example, drew attention to 'vistos cut through woods', and Batty Langley devoted a section of *Practical Geometry* (1726) to explaining and correcting for the 'diminution of the breadths of long walks, avenues, visto's, &c.', a listing indicative of concern for the sightlines created by rides.⁹

James was not alone in considering a 'regular scheme' of rides appropriate for the treatment of outlying demesne woodland. For Switzer, the art of designing on the scale of an estate consisted in achieving:

...a just Agreement of the several Parts one with another; and the adapting the whole to the Nature and Uses of the Place, for which your Design is formed.¹⁰

While 'irregular' walks were ideal for woodland 'plac'd near the House' and intended for 'Walking, to be as private as is consistent with its own Nature', 'open spacious Wood, where the Owner is to ride, hunt, &c.' – 'an open Level

⁷ James (1712), 49-50.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 40-7, 44 (quotation).

⁹ Macky (1724, first published 1714), vol. 1, pp. 53, 64; Langley (1726), Section vi (problem v), p. 104. While Langley draws a distinction here between 'avenue' and 'visto', the terms were used interchangeably by Savile's Yorkshire steward. See Chapter 4, fn. 184.

¹⁰ Switzer (1742, first published 1718), vol. 1, p. 12.

Park' or, if near the house, 'on the North side, where Gardens and Walking-Places are not so absolutely requir'd' – was the proper domain of the 'regular' as opposed to 'natural Gardener'.¹¹ In such situations, Switzer observed, 'long large, wide regular Ridings... add Magnificence' to an estate's landscape.¹² Though generally a conserver of woodland, he judged that the views which such cuttings opened into the countryside were ample justification for the significant felling which their construction generally entailed:

Wood is of so charming a Nature, as well as Use, that no Man would cut any of it down except he could not possibly help it, and would only clear it away, that he may have an open Breathing-Place before him, with Ridings thro' it.¹³

Nothing, can be more delightful than to entertain ourselves with Prospects of our own making, and to walk under those Shades, which our Industry has rais'd.¹⁴

A defining objective of Switzer's gardening treatises was to promote a style of English landscaping which could compete with 'La Grand Manier' of France in point of scale and magnificence, though not extravagance (see Section 4.2.1). Walks and ridings could contribute to this goal both directly – by continuing 'Garden-Lines' beyond the pleasure grounds 'as it were *ad infinitum* without changing the scene'¹⁵ – and indirectly, as a display of the nation's resources and natural horticultural advantages. '[O]ur Grass and Gravel,' asserted Switzer, 'is so much handsomer than theirs [the French], in which respect our Parks and common Ridings excel them by Nature'.¹⁶ That said, while Switzer envisaged an estate's pleasure gardens within the broader context of the surrounding countryside, his discussion of ridings is largely confined to their form within enclosed ground: demesne wood and parkland. An approach to encompassing the wider, tenanted landscape within the embrace of rural gardening is, however, suggested by a passage Switzer quoted from one of Joseph Addison's

¹¹ Switzer (1718), vol. 2, pp. 199-201.

¹² *Ibid.*, 197.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 149.

¹⁴ Switzer (1715), 214.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 255.

¹⁶ Switzer (1718), vol. 1, p. 336.

essays on 'The Pleasures of the Imagination' (first published in *The Spectator*, 1712). Addison considered that modest attention to the forms of common agricultural features, in particular hedgerows, would be sufficient to appropriate them to an owner's landscaping scheme:

...Fields of corn, make a pleasant prospect and if the walks *were a little taken care of* that lie between them, if the natural embroidery of the meadows *were helped and improved by some small additions of Art* and the several rows of hedges set off by trees and flowers that the soil was capable of receiving, a man might make a pretty landskip of his own possessions.¹⁷

Fifty years later, related attitudes were being applied to the specific context of ridings. In *Observations on Gardening* (1770), Thomas Whately stated that 'any appearance of *design* is a mark of improvement... a few trees standing out from a hedgerow raise it to an elegance above common rusticity'.¹⁸ Once the character of a riding had been 'strongly impressed', 'very slight means' – small intermittent attentions 'borrowed from a garden' – would be sufficient to 'preserve the idea' and thus distinguish an estate riding from 'a common road'. This for Whately achieved what was one of its defining properties: 'to extend the idea of a seat, and appropriate a whole country to the mansion'.¹⁹

7.1.2 The value of rides to estate owners

In a letter dated 22 March 1751 to Lord Burlington's London agent from his gardener at Londesborough, Thomas Knowlton, the latter recounts his landscaping activities on this Yorkshire estate. Knowlton's description points to the multiplicity of functions – utilitarian, economic, aesthetic, sporting – which rides might perform in an estate landscape:

I have long since finished the Ox Close affair all but a Riding or Walk Leading from the small Iron Gate... which will have a good appearance from the Garden besides conveniency for the leading of the Hay out of the same a nigher way and save the other Closes much from the Damage in Carting: I likewise intend to cut another

¹⁷ *The Spectator*, no. 414, 25 June 1712, quoted in Switzer (1718), vol. 1, p. 342.

¹⁸ Whately (1770), 228.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 227.

small way from the upper Court Flat Gate which opens near the Mill houses into the Ox Close which will cross the other walk by which it will be a pleasant Ride down that way to the Closes to shew the Game with much advantage and will cost nothing, for I'll make the Tenants do it who want Thorns to fence wood bridge...²⁰

That the sighting of game facilitated by rides, besides its sporting utility, was considered a visual pleasure is further highlighted by a description of changing attitudes towards avenue construction published by Philip Miller in his *Gardeners' Dictionary*, 1739. Miller recorded and recommended the planting of trees in 'Clumps or platoons' rather than continuous lines:

...for as a Person rides thro' the Avenue, the Openings between the Trees to the Turf where the Deer are feeding, are much more agreeable, than in passing between Strait Rows of Trees.²¹

But the primary aesthetic motivation for the construction of rides was almost certainly the creation of vistas. Estate correspondence of Lord Cardigan's steward, Daniel Eaton, makes explicit that achievement of an unimpeded prospect was a functional imperative for rides on his master's Northamptonshire estate. In May 1727, after seeking permission of Lord Hatton (owner of neighbouring land) to have five saplings cut down which would 'spoil the prospect', Eaton reported to his master: 'I told him [Hatton's agent] it was very plain that his Lordship [Cardigan] intend[ed] all the trees to be cut down as well as the shrubbs, or the riding would not answer the end'.²² The importance given to the aesthetic dimensions of rides on the Rufford Estate – choice of focal points, attention given to the appearance of ride borders and intersections etc. – is discussed in detail in the sections that follow. But the frequency with which Savile (in common with other estate owners) chose to terminate the sightlines which these woodland cuttings gave rise to upon readily identifiable monuments, suggests that focal points were intended to serve more than purely aesthetic ends. In a letter to Savile from February 1719, Rufford steward,

²⁰ Henrey (1986), 213.

²¹ Miller (1739, first published 1731), vol. 2, entry 'Avenues'.

²² Wake & Webster, eds (1971), 120.

Thomas Smith, alluded to the potentially disorientating experience of traversing Sherwood Forest in poor weather conditions:

Robert ye Groom Got to Rufford on Sunday Evening... Saturday before being a very Stormy Day & snowed very fast he Tells me he was Lost on ye forest and Rambled Down to Ansley [Annesley] where he staid all Night it was a very Ruff Day that perhaps he might Realy be Lost...²³

Church steeples and residences several storeys high would have been visible from a distance of several miles, even in an undulating landscape such as Rufford's. As familiar landmarks, they would have provided a means of orientation. Furthermore, such choices would have promoted associative links conducive to an impression of co-ordinated power, and, as has frequently been argued by scholars interpreting eighteenth-century estate landscapes, were, on occasions, used to make social statements or assert political alignment.²⁴

Though the creation of a ride had costs attached (felling, stubbing, levelling etc. were labour intensive activities) woodland clearance on the scale such features frequently achieved could generate significant revenue. A broad riding of around 2 miles long cut through Crown woodland in Sherwood Forest in 1709 yielded timber to the value £1,500 at a cost of £118 17s 2d; construction of a ride linking Rufford Old Park and Savile's principal spring wood enclosure, Wellow Park, involved the felling of 120 oaks which were sold by Smith in 1724 for £300.²⁵ That said, although the clearance of Rufford's rides was comprehended within the broader framework of estate woodland management and often timed to maximise bark/timber/coppice profits (see Section 7.3 & Chapter 6), no evidence has been found to suggest that their design was directly influenced by economic considerations. When, in November 1718, Savile was in danger of defaulting on a contracted cordwood quota for Carburton Forge (see CHARCOAL-IRON INDUSTRY in Section 6.3.1), Madam Savile, acting on her son's behalf, charged Smith to assess the contribution that a ride he was setting out in

²³ Letter Smith to Savile, 9 February 1719. NA: DD/SR/211/227/60.

²⁴ Cf. Queen Anne's Column in Cirencester Park, the erection of which Lees-Milne (1962, p. 52) attributes to Lord Bathurst's Jacobite sympathies.

²⁵ 'The Fourteenth Report of the Commissioners...' (1793), 473; Letter Smith to Savile, 4 April 1724. NA: DD/SR/211/227/102.

Wellow Park would make. His answer – ‘[it] will have but a Little in it’ – did not result in the cutting of an alternative or, at the time, additional route, despite acute anxiety over sourcing the quota.²⁶ Once created, a ride’s sward might serve as fodder for estate animals or be used for *in situ* grazing. Mowing rides for hay was a regular part of summer harvest work at Rufford. In July 1746, for example, four women day-labourers were paid 5s 6d for 11 days haymaking in New Park vistles,²⁷ and in March 1724, when the resource was in short supply – ‘grass none yet and hay never scarcer’ – Smith advised that:

If wellow park were mine I would put horses in it for Six weeks this and Every Spring Th’o we Cannot Say that a fresh hungry horse will not Crop a hasel [hazel] bough &c... yet all say that horses which pasture there will not Do any harm... in ye Ridings & Thorney Closes [adjacent ground] the horses would get a Good Living but as its against ye wood tenters Interest to be Troubled with them & for to Devour the Grass I can Suppose he will Cry a Loud Damage.²⁸

As Smith intimated, the admission of grazing animals into spring wood was not uncontroversial and although horses, including those of Savile’s woodtenter, Caleb Townsend, were admitted to Wellow Park throughout the remainder of Smith’s stewardship, the practice was abruptly discontinued after Joshua Mann was appointed under-steward (September 1728) and made responsible for wood sales.²⁹ But financial benefits aside, the construction of wide, straight, even passageways through coppice or timber ground would have facilitated the carting of wood products and hence management of wood sales more generally.³⁰ Moreover, improvement to the accessibility of estate woodland meant improvement of its recreational potential.

²⁶ Letter Smith to Madam Savile, 26 November 1718. NA: DD/SR/211/227/68.

²⁷ Day-Labourers’ Fortnightly Accounts, 1746/1747 (NA: DD/SR/206/2/8); for an earlier example see Letter Matthew to Savile, 14 July 1729 (NA: DD/SR/211/58/1).

²⁸ Letter Smith to Savile, 7 March 1724. NA: DD/SR/211/227/106.

²⁹ Letter Mann to Savile, 5 April 1729 (NA: DD/SR/211/58/34); Letters Matthew to Savile, 19 March, 7 & 19 April 1729 (NA: DD/SR/211/58/15,11,10).

³⁰ As de Quincey (1775, p. 86) observed, the woodlands had been ‘laid out, originally, in a pretty convenient manner; for several vistas (or ridings, as the people term them), intended for roads, are cut through each and meet in the centre’.

While authors of gardening treatises identify hunting and riding as the primary motivations for constructing rides, these features receive scant attention in sporting literature, whether of the period or since. That said, Miles on concludes from his study of parks in Medieval England that *trenchea*, clearings through woodland which in his opinion resembled rides, served as ‘a suitable arena for [deer] hunting (either coursing or the drive)’, in addition to their primary function as transport routes for felled timber.³¹ De Belin, in her analysis of elite hunting preferences between 1600 and 1850, draws attention to the use of rides through coppice woods as ‘grazing for both deer and commonable beasts’.³² But though the pursuit and maintenance of deer arguably influenced the design of rides in the early modern period, by the 1700s English hunting tastes were in transition and foxes increasingly displacing deer as the sporting gentleman’s preferred quarry. While deer hunting continued in Sherwood Forest, this was certainly the case for Savile (see Chapter 8). An enthusiastic sportsman, the Baronet maintained a pack of hounds selected and reared for the pursuit of foxes (see Section 8.3.1), and though fallow deer were bred in Rufford Old Park, this was for venison not hunting: Savile openly encouraged his woodtenterers and tenants to expel forest deer that strayed onto Rufford ground.³³ Fox hunting treatises from the late eighteenth century onwards attest that straight rides cut through woodland aided the sighting of quarry and casting of the hounds.

...if the cover has any ridings cut in it, and the fox be often seen, your huntsman, by keeping some hounds at his horse’s heels, at the first halloo that he hears, may throw them in close at him.³⁴
 ...when watching a ride never take your eyes off it, as the fox will probably cross at the very moment you do so.³⁵

³¹ Miles on (2009), 32.

³² De Belin (2010), 93. Conclusions are based on Morton (1712), 11.

³³ Letters Holt to Savile, 23 April & 25 May 1737. NA: DD/SR/211/24/121,126. For friction between the Rufford Estate and the 1st Duke of Newcastle (3rd creation) and 2nd Duke of Kingston over the release of deer from Clumber and Thoresby parks see Letters Holt to Savile, 22 February 1736 & 23 April 1737. NA: DD/SR/211/24/105,122.

³⁴ Beckford (1781), 207.

³⁵ Hobson (1911), 11.

By the 1770s, an association of fox hunting landowners, the ‘Confederate Hunt’, had been formed in Nottinghamshire, amongst whom the then owner of Rufford, Richard Lumley Savile, numbered.³⁶ Correspondence exchanged between Lumley Savile and Lord Bathurst attests to the concern of the confederacy to both maintain and add to the pre-existing ride networks of members’ estates, underlining the utility of these features to the sportsman. In 1795, for example, Lumley Savile’s huntsman was authorised to direct Bathurst’s woodman ‘to do whatever I [Lumley Savile] may think necessary’ regarding ‘Ridings in Warsop Woods, Langworth Woods, and Scartliff [Park] (which are almost grown up)’ and ‘the cutting any fresh Riding which may appear Eligible’.³⁷

As well as hunting fox, Savile was a keen shot, ‘Tender of Game & fond to preserve all Sorts in his Libertys’.³⁸ While woodcock seem to have been his favoured quarry at Rufford, an instruction from the Baronet to his steward in December 1736 to deny the 2nd Duke of Kingston access to shoot woodcock in New Park ‘for fear of [his dogs] destroying the Pheasants’,³⁹ suggests that pheasants were a valued alternative. Given that such birds collect at the fringes of woodland, a well functioning ride system would have extended their habitat.

Though hunting, riding and the sheer pleasure of designing a vast wooded landscape were the recreational pleasures most closely associated with ride networks, these were predominantly male activities. Accounts of Lady Savile’s recreational pursuits at Rufford, testified to during divorce proceedings – Sir George versus Lady Mary, 1738 (see Section 3.1) – described how she was ‘frequently’ to be found ‘taking the air in... [her] coach in Thoresby Park Wood’, and together with ‘other gentlewomen’ took pleasure in walking ‘up and down the walks’ in ‘Beckland [Birkland, see below] Wood in Sherwood Forest’ and on

³⁶ Accounts & Receipts for ‘the Noblemen of the Confederate Hunt’, 1 March 1777 – 31 August 1778. NA: DD/P4/76/11/1-123.

³⁷ Letter Richard Lumley Savile to Mr Dowland of Mansfield-Woodhouse, 20 August 1795. NA: DD/SR/212/33/11; for a related example see Smart (1841).

³⁸ Letter Smith to Savile, 24 October 1724. NA: DD/SR/211/227/153. Words quoted from Savile’s standard letter to unsanctioned middle ranking sportsmen prohibiting ‘Courseing, Shooting &c. in any part of Rufford Liberty, or other places belonging to Sir George’.

³⁹ Letter Holt to Savile, 13 December 1736. NA: DD/SR/211/24/109. Savile referenced this incident as ‘Improper Demand from Thoresby to shoot in my New Park’.

occasions 'sate down upon a bench there'.⁴⁰ References suggesting that the uses to which rides were put, and for which they might even have been intended, included a more leisurely dimension than hunting.

7.1.3 Ride networks in the vicinity of Rufford

By the first quarter of the eighteenth century, long, straight rides were a common feature within the Crown woodland of Sherwood Forest and neighbouring private estates and would have provided models familiar to the Rufford household. In 1703, Queen Anne authorised the cutting of a 'small Ryding' through Birkland and Bilhagh Woods just north of Rufford, initiating a system of rides through this Crown holding.⁴¹ In 1706, a second riding of 105 feet breadth cut from Thoresby House through Bilhagh Wood was added, and in 1709, a third and 'very broad Riding [80 yards] was cut through the whole of Birkland Wood from one End to the other [east to west, c.2 miles]'.⁴² This new riding intersected the 'small Ryding', which was then 'enlarged and made of ye same width... with the new Ryding' in a manner mindful of both the financial and aesthetic advantages of the scheme. As would be 'most ornamental to the said Ryding, and of least Prejudice of her Majesties Woods' were the directions given.⁴³ In 1683 and 1684 the 'undisputed Right' to c.440 acres of 'Soil in the Hays of Birkland and Bilhagh' was sold to the 1st Duke of Kingston, and an estate map of Thoresby (1690) indicates that half a decade later a modest ride system had been laid out in the area.⁴⁴ A subsequent estate plan, published in *Vitruvius Britannicus* (vol. 3, 1725), depicts an elaborate and extensive development of this scheme (Figure 7.1). Bilhagh Grove, now part of a vastly enlarged private park, is shown divided into sections by a constellation of evenly spaced rides radiating from a *rond point* and extending as avenues into the surrounding open parkland; the northern section of the park (represented in a scaled inset) is traversed by an even denser network of woodland cuttings. The degree to which

⁴⁰ TNA: DEL 1/507.

⁴¹ The Fourteenth Report of the Commissioners... (1793), 498.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 473, 498; Accounts of Thomas Hewett (Surveyor General of her Majesty's Woods in the North Side of the Trent) for 1703-14 submitted by warrant from Sidney, Earl of Godolphin (late Lord High Treasurer) in February 1710. NA: DD/FJ/10/9/11-13.

⁴³ The Fourteenth Report of the Commissioners... (1793), 498.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*; Seymour (1988), 156; Lemmon (18 September 1986), 876.

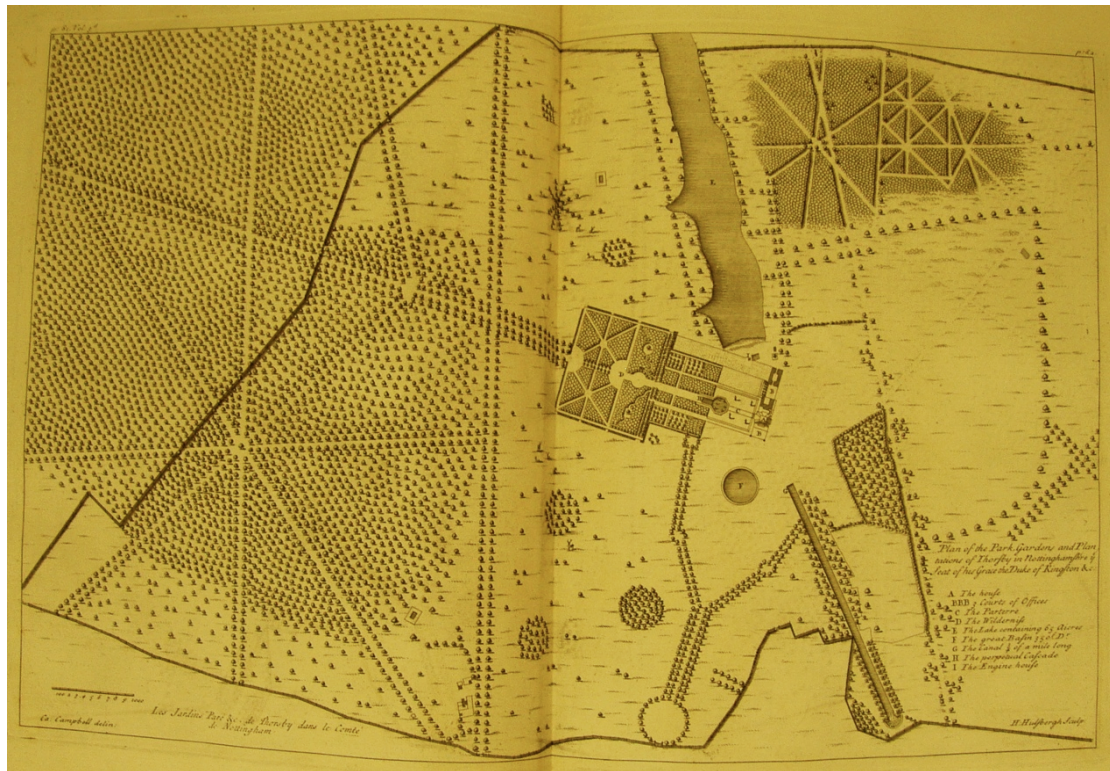


Figure 7.1:

Engraving of the Pierrepont family's Thoresby Estate produced during the lifetime of Evelyn Pierrepont, 1st Duke of Kingston.

(Campbell, C., *Vitruvius Britannicus*, London, 1715-25, 3 vols, vol. 3, 1725.)

Campbell's engraving represents an intended (as opposed to realised) design is uncertain, but the further evidence of *Reynolds's c.1750 Survey* of the Thoresby Estate indicates that it was in place by mid-century.⁴⁵ Two further estate landscapes displaying significant ride systems, and with which Savile and his estate servants were in regular contact (whether through hunting the area or visits on account of estate business), were the Chaworth Estate at Annesley and the Duke of Norfolk's Seat, Worksop Manor. Annesley Park, which was enclosed in 1661, is described in Robert Thoroton's *The Antiquities of Nottinghamshire* (1677) as containing a star-shaped configuration of rides, and a survey of the grounds of Worksop Manor in 1737 shows woodland close to the house pierced by openings arranged in a similar manner.⁴⁶

7.2 Rides in the Rufford Landscape

7.2.1 The principal rides set out at Rufford, 1718-1739

Documentary evidence for the construction of the 7th Baronet's ride network comes principally from the estate reports sent by successive stewards to Savile in London and supporting surveys and sketches. Although the steward correspondence ends in 1739, development of the network almost certainly continued until and beyond Savile's death in 1743. A limited number of rides on the Rufford Estate pre-date Savile's ownership. The earliest evidence that the 7th Baronet intended to develop this inherited framework into an extended, more coherent and distinctly designed network, is found in estate correspondence from the winter of 1718. In a letter from December 1718, for example, Smith excused delay in setting out rides in Wellow Park to 'very wet weather': 'Or I should a been in ye parks [presumably New and Old parks]... In Order to answer your [Savile's] Comands of my Seeing how Such Lines would fall towards wellow park &c'.⁴⁷ Over the course of the next 25 years, the network of rides was added

⁴⁵ NUM: Ma 4P 20.

⁴⁶ Gillott (1985), 65; Plan of 'the house, park and gardens [of Worksop Manor] as they now are... taken by William Dickinson, 1737' reproduced in Binney (15 March 1973), 675.

⁴⁷ Letter Smith to Savile, 10 December 1718. NA: DD/SR/211/227/63.

to incrementally. By the time of Savile's death it linked his demesne spring woods and parks east of the Hall visually (and to a degree physically) with the core pleasure grounds and house, his tenanted warren land within forest ground to the west, and significant landmarks in the surrounding countryside. Though established primarily upon the eastern clay lands, Savile's network had by 1743 extended the designed landscape radiating out from Rufford Hall to c.3 miles both east and west. Figure 7.2 shows the spatial distribution of the principal areas within the estate which were integrated by the design.

Wellow Park was the first site to be developed. A survey of the park carried out by Smith in 1720 (hereafter referenced *Smith's 1720 Survey*, Figure 7.3) suggests that two rides – Clipstone Ride (running E–W across the widest dimension of the park) and a transverse thoroughfare running NW–SE – pre-date the 7th Baronet's interventions.⁴⁸ A reference in 1737 to ploughing rides in Wellow Park, a preliminary stage in the production of level sward, suggests that the Wellow section of the network was still under development over ten years later, although the possibility that the rides were periodically used to cultivate crops cannot be ruled out (see Section 7.3).⁴⁹ *Smith's 1720 Survey* seems to have been intended as a reference plan by means of which Savile, when off-site, could develop his ideas (see Section 7.3). It mapped sightlines from the park focussed on distant landmarks: Kirton Church, Kirton House, Booton [Boughton] Church, Boothamsall [Bothamsall] Church, Rufford Park Lodge and an oblique view of the Hall itself. Vistos terminating on Kneesall Steeple, Kirton and Edwinstowe are cited in Smith's correspondence from January 1722.⁵⁰ In the same year, trees were felled on the Thoresby Estate to obtain a clear sightline from Wellow Park through Thoresby Park to Thoresby Hall (see Section 7.2.2), while in correspondence from 1724 the Markham family residence, Ollerton Hall, was identified as another ride's focal point.⁵¹ The final design for the area contained a star-shaped ride configuration which incorporated the older Clipstone Ride as

⁴⁸ NA: DD/SR/202/46. A conclusion supported by the manner of referencing Clipstone Ride in estate correspondence and what appears to be a preliminary draught of *Smith's 1720 Survey*. NA: DD/SR/202/44.

⁴⁹ Letter Holt to Savile, 17 January 1737. NA: DD/SR/211/24/111.

⁵⁰ Letters Smith to Savile, 29 January & 20 August 1722. NA: DD/SR/211/227/29,9.

⁵¹ Letters Smith to Savile, 17 & 29 January 1722, 26 February 1724. NA: DD/SR/211/227/30,29,108.

Figure 7.2: Major features retained in-hand by the 7th Baronet and integrated through the network of rides created during his lifetime.

- The areas in shades of green indicate the dimensions of Savile's wood pasture ground (parkland) and spring woods in 1743 (see Chapter 6).
- The area within the polygonal enclosure identifies land in Rufford Liberty – warren sand lands to the west of the Hall and the clays to the east. Rufford was not a nuclear estate and the predominantly arable landscape east of the polygonal enclosure was divided amongst a range of owners amongst whom Savile numbered.

(Base map, George Sanderson's *Twenty Miles Round Mansfield*, 1835.)



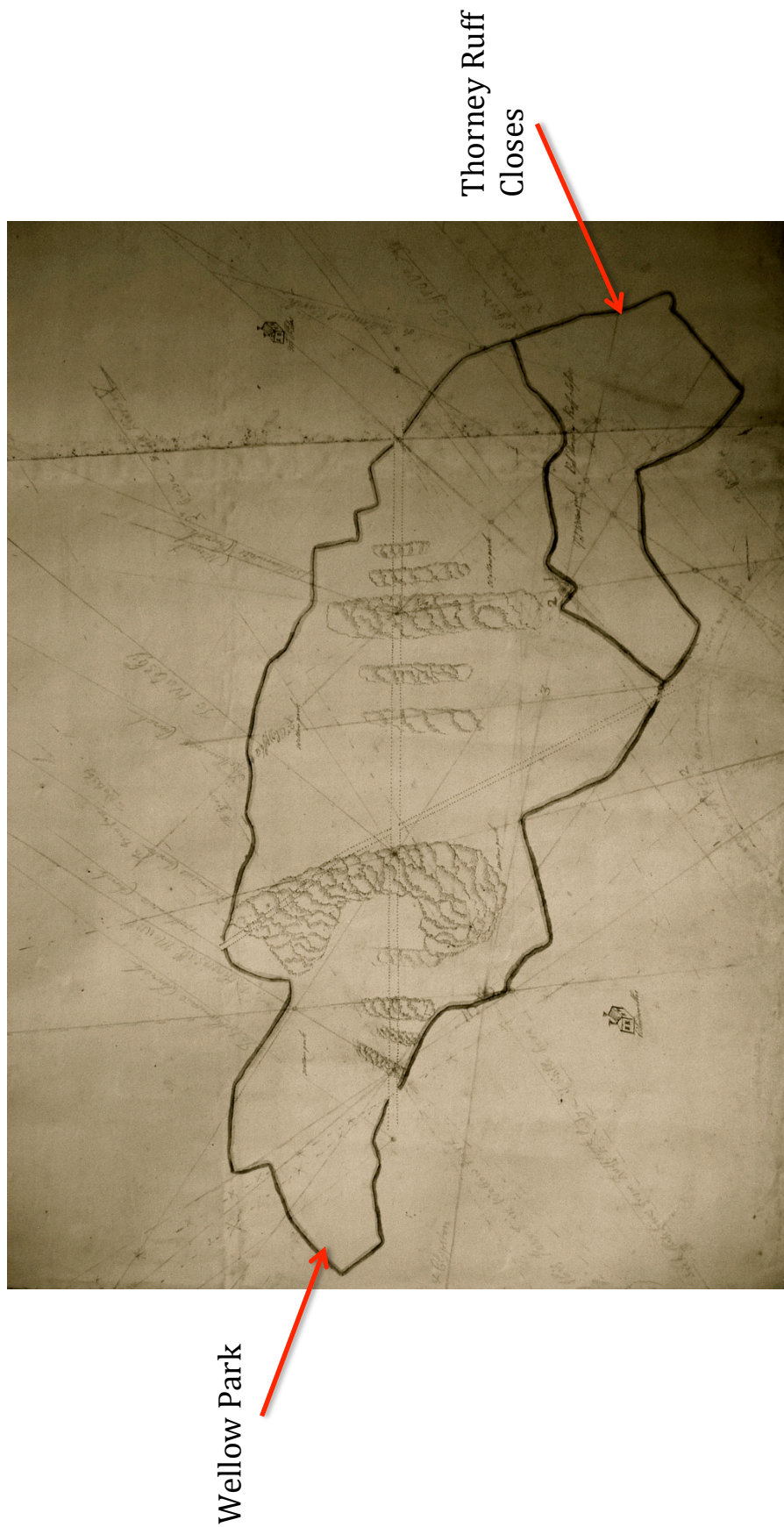


Figure 7.3: Detail from a Survey of Wellow Park carried out by Thomas Smith, 1720. The sightlines shown lead to a range of prominent architectural features in the wider landscape, including an oblique view of Rufford Hall. An additional draught records angle measurements within the park, suggesting internal survey stations.

(NA: DD/SR/202/46. Additional draught, NA: DD/SR/202/44.)

one of its radiating cuts. *Reynolds's c.1750 Survey*, which includes a small northern section of Rufford Liberty, indicates an eight-fold configuration by this date (Figure 7.4).

A second major star configuration was established within a wooded area of New Park. The earliest reference to this section of the network comes in a letter from Smith (March 1724) in which he enquired of Savile: 'Must I this Season Open ye vistow [*sic*] from New park to Kneesall Steeple'.⁵² An undated sketch plan, almost certainly in Savile's hand, indicates an eight-fold star configuration with rides focussed on Edwinstowe [Church], Kneesall [steeple], Thoresby Lodge [belonging to Bayley, the Keeper], Kellam, Eakring, House [Rufford Hall], [E] Lodge [probably within one of Savile's parks] and one unspecified (Figure 7.5).⁵³ Rides in the park were still being levelled in June 1739 when George Holt's estate correspondence ends, and *Sanderson's 1835 Map* shows both the star configuration and a range of further rides traversing the enclosure. Whether these had been created by the mid-eighteenth century remains uncertain. Ride networks were being maintained and even extended across estate landscapes long after overtly geometric pleasure ground designs had fallen out of fashion (see Section 7.1.2).

Other rides whose construction can be unambiguously attributed to the 7th Baronet's improvements linked features in Old Park and Wellow Park;⁵⁴ Eakring-Brail Wood, Wellow Park and Blyton Hills (see Section 7.3.1); and traversed Savile's warren grounds west of the Hall.⁵⁵

7.2.2 The principal design elements of a ride

END POINTS: 'CALLING IN THE COUNTRY'⁵⁶

Creation of 'fine' prospects – whether of countryside or architectural features – from vantage points in Rufford's wider demesne landscape was, unquestionably,

⁵² Letter Smith to Savile, 7 March 1724. NA: DD/SR/211/227/106.

⁵³ NA: DD/SR/237/5/9. Savile's sketch plan has been cross-referenced against steward correspondence to clarify landmark identity.

⁵⁴ Letter Smith to Savile, 10 February 1724, signals initiation of section. NA: DD/SR/211/227/111.

⁵⁵ Letter Smith to Savile, 6 January 1724, signals initiation of section. NA: DD/SR/211/227/117.

⁵⁶ Pope, 'Epistle to Lord Burlington', line 61.

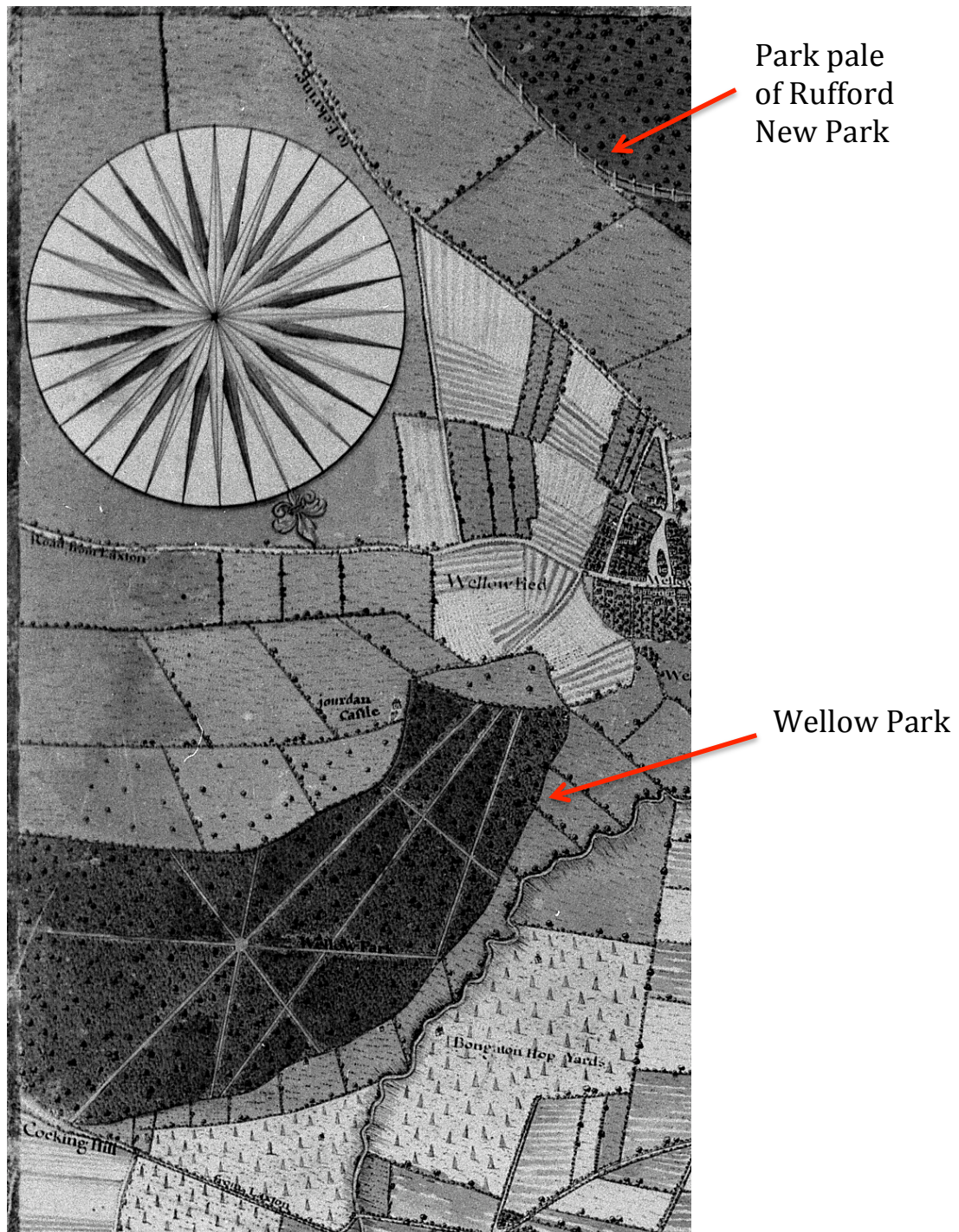


Figure 7.4:

Detail from *Reynolds's c.1750 Survey* showing the network of rides traversing Wellow Park by the mid-eighteenth century.

(NUM: Ma 4P)

a defining objective of Savile's ride system.⁵⁷ Landscape theorists of the period were in broad agreement that 'Wood plac'd at a Distance and upon a Rising is, besides its Use, one of the noblest and most pleasing Views in Nature'.⁵⁸ At Rufford, the course of a ride was frequently defined by the location of a particular tree or wooded hill, whether chosen to terminate its sightline, characterise one or both of its entry points, or as the meeting area where several rides crossed. 'Lodge Tree', an old lime in Wellow Park, was the start of one ride; Blyton Hills, a timber stand on high ground in Rufford Liberty, was the end point of rides from Old Park and the warren ground, and the desired site for a ride intersection.⁵⁹ Smith openly congratulated himself in February 1724 on setting a new ride east of the Hall 'at Great advantage with that to Mr Markhams [Ollerton House]' and favourably in relation to a pre-existing ride: 'I think a very beautifull Tree fall just where they Cross'.⁶⁰ Estate correspondence provides numerous examples of work undertaken to secure unimpeded views from Rufford's ride network to prominent buildings. In April 1739, for example, when rides were being cut through a plantation on the eastern side of New Park, Holt sought Savile's permission to fell timber spotted around the park and wider estate which obstructed sightlines to Edwinstowe Church and a Lodge on the Thoresby Estate:

There are Several Oaks &c Stands in the Vistoe (at the South west Corner of Boscoe) that goes from the Center in the New Park to Bayley's Lodge also there are Several in the Vistoe in the New Grass Park that goes from the said Center to Edwinstowe Church; I shall be glad if your Honour will let me know (when you write) if they must be taken down at a proper Season when the Bark will peel.⁶¹

⁵⁷ James (1712, p. 13) speaks of the desirability of a 'fine View, and the Prospect of a noble Country'.

⁵⁸ Switzer (1718), vol. 2, p. 204; see also Langley (1728b), 201.

⁵⁹ Letters Smith to Savile, 26 February & 23 March 1724, 27 March 1725. NA: DD/SR/211/227/108,104,139.

⁶⁰ NA: DD/SR/211/227/108.

⁶¹ Letter Holt to Savile, 2 April 1739. NA: DD/SR/211/24/150. Earliest known reference to a 'new grass park' is in February 1739; combined evidence of felling data (see Table 6.11), Holt's correspondence from 1739 and *Sanderson's 1835 Map* suggest that the phrase was used to distinguish the bulk of New Park from an area of increasingly dense planting on its eastern side.

On the occasion cited above, the obstructions lay within Rufford demesne land. Achievement of desired vistas might, however, depend upon the support of a neighbouring landowner. Before work could begin on the Wellow Park ride which was to terminate on Thoresby Hall, permission for the clearance of Thoresby Park trees standing within the sightline had to be sought by Smith from the 1st Duke of Kingston. On 20 January 1722, after several unsuccessful attempts to engage the attention of Kingston's steward, Mr Green – excused by Smith as 'by his Lords Order so Continuously abroad making Interest for [Whig candidates] Lord How[e] & Sir Robert' – Smith reassured Savile that 'Mr Green and their Surveyour Mr Higgs have viewd the Trees in Thoresby Park that are in W:P:vistoe and have written to my Lord, as soon as his order comes it shall be Executed'.⁶² Nine days later the trees had been felled, a rapidity of response indicative both of landowner interests held in common and the Duke's willingness to oblige Sir George.⁶³

The desire to improve a ride's prospect might lead to significant and, on occasions, costly landscaping. In August 1722, the hedge-and-ditch system which marked the boundary between Wellow Park and 'Thorney Ruff Closes' and 'obstructed ye Sight of Keesall [Kneesall] Steeple from ye Grand Centre' of the star-shaped ride configuration was replaced with a ha-ha: an investment more commonly associated with the pleasure gardens than estate periphery in this period (see Chapter 4).⁶⁴ Two years later, when constructing the ride linking Keeper's Lodge Old Park and Wellow Park, Smith recommended that the Keeper's Lodge in Old Park be re-roofed at more than customary expense in order to enhance the visto:

Entry Lodge you ordered me to Repair the keepers house and they suffer its so ill thack't [thatched] it must be Done all new Straw Scarce to be Got at any price You have tiles which will not be much Deerer Durable & ad much to ye prospect from wellow park in this new vistoe.⁶⁵

⁶² Letters Smith to Savile, 17 & 20 January 1722. NA: DD/SR/211/227/30,29.

⁶³ Letter Smith to Savile, 29 January 1722. NA: DD/SR/211/227/28.

⁶⁴ Letter Smith to Savile, 20 August 1722. NA: DD/SR/211/227/9.

⁶⁵ Letter Smith to Savile, 4 April 1724. NA: DD/SR/211/227/102.

RIDE INTERSECTIONS

Ride intersections punctuated Savile's network, and the design of the network as a whole was influenced by the range of views these nodal points commanded and their suitability as areas where riders could congregate. A scaled 'Plan of ye Intended Vistos from Keeper's Lodge & from Old=Center Old Park to Wellow Park. Also from Wellow Park to Olerton House; & how they Cross Each Other, & ye Vistos that are already' was drawn up by Smith in February 1724 (*Smith's 1724 Plan*) and intended, in part, to identify which inter-relationship of rides would produce the most advantageous meeting points (Figure 7.6). When, a year later, it was believed (mistakenly as it turned out) that the preferred course for a new route between Savile's major spring woods would intersect a pre-existing ride on ground outside the Rufford Estate, alternative routes were explored (see Section 7.3.1).

The ha-ha set along the eastern boundary of Wellow Park was intended to improve visibility from the centre of the star-shaped ride configuration on its south-eastern margin, and the earth removed was 'Led... to heighten ye Center' and presumably improve the viewing potential still further.⁶⁶ A notable feature of the principal wood grounds around which Savile's design hinged was that they were located on sloping terrain. Moreover, in Wellow Park, Eakring Brail and the high density of planting established on the eastern side of New Park (on *Sanderson's 1835 Map* referred to as 'New Park Wood') the combined evidence of estate correspondence, *Sanderson's 1835 Map*, the six-inch OS Map (1884) and modern Environment Agency LIDAR data indicate that these woodlands did not straddle any local topographical crests. Rather, in all three locations the highest ground lay at the woodland margin. The constraints this placed on Savile's design are discussed at length in relation to the Eakring-Brail Wood-Blyton Hills-Wellow Park section of the network (see Section 7.3.1), but arguably the particularly rapid gradient in Wellow Park (a drop in elevation from south to north of 120 feet over less than half a mile) accounts for Savile having located the 'Great Center' close to the park's southern crest. Modern topographical data indicates a plateau of locally high ground in this area, but whether this was

⁶⁶ Letter Smith to Savile, 20 August 1722. NA: DD/SR/211/227/9.

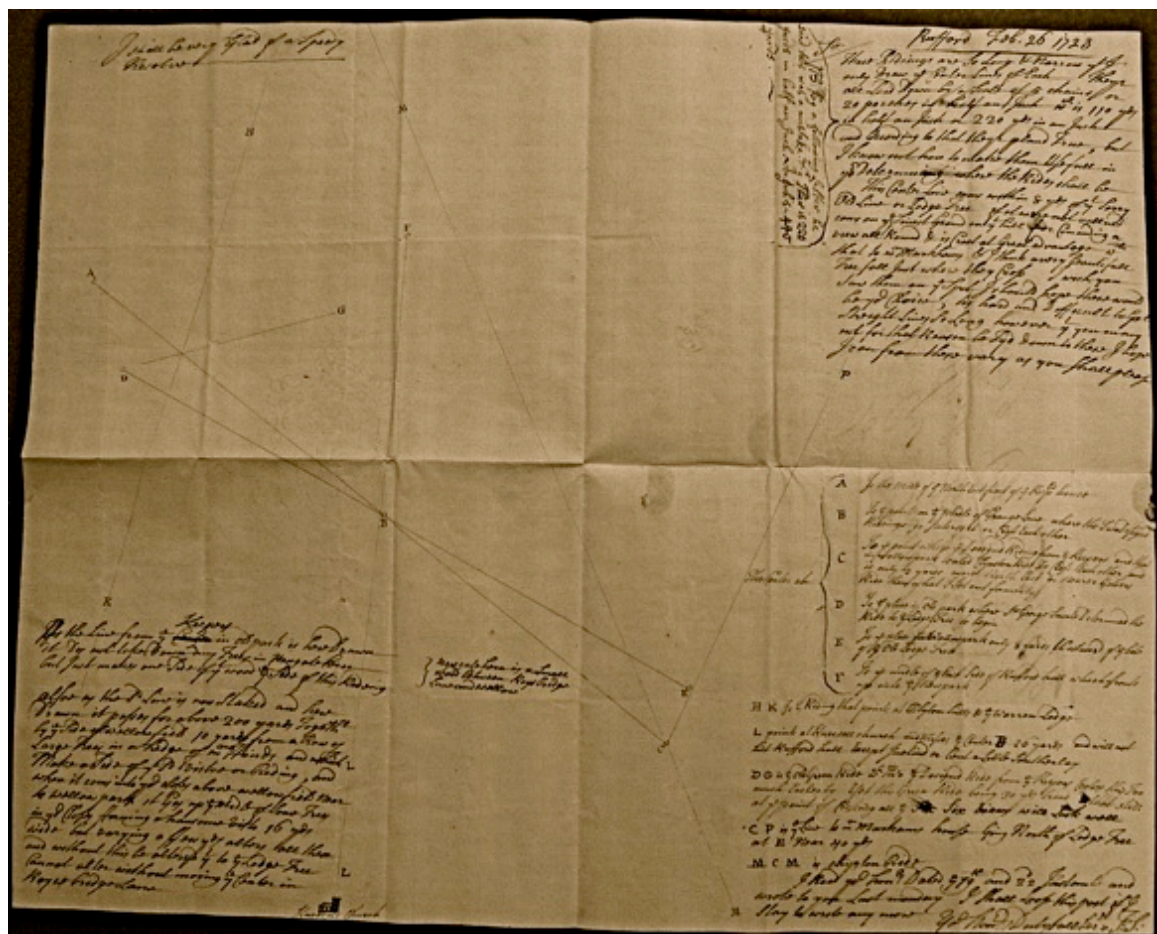


Figure 7.6:

'Plan of ye Intended Vistos from Keeper's Lodge & from Old=Center Old Park to Wellow Park. Also from Wellow Park to Olerton House; & how they Cross Each Other, & ye Vistos that are already', 1724.

(Letter Smith to Savile, 26 February 1724. NA: DD/SR/211/227/108)

mainly a result of the earth-shifting activities of Rufford day-labourers in the early 1720s remains uncertain.

The ground of New Park slopes gently westwards towards Rainworth Water and Rufford Hall, and, as in the case of Wellow Park, Savile located the centre point of his ride constellation on the higher ground and artificially elevated the area. For two months in the spring of 1739, day-labourers were reported 'leading earth out of the vistles to the centre in the New Park'; though a significant motive on this occasion, as Holt's correspondence recorded, was to improve the ground for planting.⁶⁷

The scale and geometry of ride intersections were other aspects clearly pertinent to their design. Though subjects barely touched upon in the gardening treatises of James, Switzer and Langley, they receive some attention in earlier writing. In *The Manner of Raising, Ordering and Improving Forest Trees* (1676), Moses Cook advised that where one walk 'doe fall into another walk' 'especially in Parks' 'there should be a Circle to receive them [as opposed to 'Segment of a Circle, Oval, Triangle', figures appropriate for the end of a walk] or else they seem much defective' and designers were to 'Let the Circle be three times the Breadth of your Walk, if conveniently you can, or bigger if you have room'.⁶⁸ With regard to scale, Rufford estate correspondence highlights the practical difficulty of achieving a common focus for the meeting of sightlines perhaps several miles long, and the constraint this placed on the form of their intersection. Wide rides and a generous circumference for the meeting area provided greater flexibility at the construction phase, as Smith's account of the crossing of two rides – from Wellow Park focussed on Ollerton House, and from Old Park to Wellow Park – suggests:

DG is ye old Green Ride which th'o ye Designd Ride from ye
Keepers Crosses this Too much Easterly Yet this Green Ride being

⁶⁷ Letters Holt to Savile, 27 March – 21 May 1739. NA: DD/SR/211/24/149,155,154b,154a,153. Elements of Savile's ride networks in Wellow Park and New Park, in particular the *rond points*, are still identifiable in the landscape, though the topography of the surrounding area has changed (New Park has since been developed into a golf course) so that views now available to and from the parks should be interpreted with caution.

⁶⁸ Cook (1676), 137, 139.

30 yards broad shall still at ye point of Crossing all ye Six views
will Look well.⁶⁹

On the question of geometry, Smith's personal preference was for a circle, though alternative forms seem to have been considered by himself and possibly Savile. In January 1722, when the meeting point in Wellow Park was under construction, his estate reports highlight both the practical and aesthetic advantages of this form:

...if you please to Give orders for opening in a Circular or other form (but by reason of ye Ireguallarity of ye Quarters a Circle my thinks will Look best) the Great Center I mean that Center where Edwinstow [Edwinstowe], Clipston [Clipstone], Kneesall, & Kirton Rides Cross, which will not Look ill till Least 20 yards from ye Center and more may be hereafter as you think fitt when you see it.⁷⁰

Given the priority assigned to prospect in setting the course of rides, 'irregularity' in their spacing must have been a common outcome. Although Smith's final comment is open to interpretation, the diameter of Wellow Park *rond point* seems to have been at least twice the average breadth of its rides.

RIDE BREADTH AND BORDER COMPOSITION

In early eighteenth-century gardening treatises discussion of the breadth of walks and vistas is focussed predominantly on questions of design aesthetics (see Section 4.2.1). Rufford estate correspondence, in contrast, draws attention to the horticultural implications of such choices. In a letter to Savile from October 1722, for example, Smith expressed concern that the narrowness of the rides in Wellow Park would jeopardise the quality of their turf:

Your Rideings in Wellow park are so very Narrow that it will be hard to make them Swarth [sward] and be Good for Little Sun or Wind Gets into them.⁷¹

⁶⁹ Letter Smith to Savile, 26 February 1724. NA: DD/SR/211/227/108.

⁷⁰ Letter Smith to Savile, 20 January 1722. NA: DD/SR/211/227/29.

⁷¹ Letter Smith to Savile, 22 October 1722. NA: DD/SR/211/227/7.

During a subsequent phase of the network's development he recommended: the breadths of vistles 'I think cannot be Less than 20 yards Espetially in ye parks'.⁷² Of the rides whose dimensions are recorded, most seem to have been of 20 yards breadth, although the ride from the centre of Old Park was only 12 yards and 'ye old Green Ride' was 30 yards.⁷³

Rufford estate correspondence records several examples of rides being widened long after their initial construction date.⁷⁴ James, in his *Theory and Practice of Gardening*, cautioned designers 'to consider what their Walks will be hereafter when they are grown up, rather than what they are at present' and make 'Allowance of a little more Breadth at first'.⁷⁵ In the light of James's comments, the desire to broaden Rufford's rides might have been as much a response to the encroachment of mature woodland as to the deterioration of the turf. Pruning offered another means of addressing such issues, and at Rufford may well have been a seasonal activity aimed at improving both the quality of the border and ease of passage along the ride.⁷⁶ Smith's letter of October 1722 continued with the recommendation:

I wish your honour would be pleasd now ye Season of Cutting is here to Order ye Gardiner to help others to take off ye boughs that hang in and Trim ye Edges upright which will both open and thicken them.⁷⁷

In January 1736, Holt reported that day-labourers were again 'opening the Rides in Wellow Park'.⁷⁸

That the borders of the ridings were densely wooded seems also to have been important. When, in 1722, it was necessary to broaden Clipstone Ride in order to improve ground drainage, Smith reassured his master that this might be

⁷² Letter Smith to Savile, 2 March 1724. NA: DD/SR/211/227/107.

⁷³ Letters Smith to Savile, 17 February, 26 February, 2 March 1724 & 27 March 1725. NA: DD/SR/211/227/110,108,107,139.

⁷⁴ Edwinstowe and Clipstone Rides in Wellow Park are clearly identified in estate correspondence (NA: DD/SR/211/227/7; DD/SR/211/24/39,46); day-labourers' fortnightly account books include more general references to widening rides.

⁷⁵ James (1712), 43.

⁷⁶ Daniel Eaton recorded plashing the borders of one of Lord Cardigan's estate rides. Wake & Webster, eds (1971), 63.

⁷⁷ Letter Smith to Savile, 22 October 1722. NA: DD/SR/211/227/7.

⁷⁸ Letter Holt to Savile, 31 January 1736. NA: DD/SR/211/24/93.

achieved without ‘thining ye wood or breaking Uniformity’.⁷⁹ In late January the same year Smith reassured Savile that he would ‘send Tomy [Smith’s son] to see that the workmen do fill up all vacant sides in ye Rides Thorney closes as far as they can Get Stuff and ye Season will permit’.⁸⁰ In the context of Savile’s ride network, very open ground seems generally to have been disliked, whether it characterised the course of the riding or the views to which it gave rise (see Section 7.3.1).

In the early eighteenth century, the merits of mixed evergreen/deciduous planting were commented on, particular with reference to walks. In relation to silver and Scotch firs, Switzer considered:

...there is nothing that looks nobler, either in separate Squares or Walks, as well as promiscuous Plantations, where the dark and lively Greens of each make an agreeable Mixture and Variety.⁸¹

At Rufford, in December 1724, Scotch firs were sought to thicken and add distinction to the borders of rides in New Park, and when suitable local stock proved unavailable Savile seems to have been prepared to take on the trouble and expense of procuring them from London. As Smith recorded:

We [steward and gardener] Cannot Get any Scotch firrs in these parts above Six foot high which we fear youll think too Low to plant in ye Two Ridings in the New park that are to be filled up... The Gardiner fears that if you buy Larger at London & be at the Charge of their Coming Down The Time of their Coming Down will Endanger their not Growing, or at Least, not Thriveing kindly and fast So that we wait your further Orders on that particular[.] Those firrs are best planted in March So that Tis yet time Enough.⁸²

7.2.3 The form of a ride when traversing open country

Estate portraits in *Britannia Illustrata* (1707) and *Vitruvius Britannicus* (vol. 3, 1725) show rides extending as tree-lined routes beyond the borders of

⁷⁹ NA: DD/SR/211/227/7.

⁸⁰ NA: DD/SR/211/227/28.

⁸¹ Switzer (1715), 199.

⁸² Letter Smith to Savile, 14 December 1724. NA: DD/SR/211/227/147a.

woodland: a form of design usually indicative of private property. In contrast, Rufford's network traversed considerable areas of unenclosed ground. Much of the sand land to the west of the Hall was under forest jurisdiction; the more fertile clay land to the east, and across which the network was most extensively developed, was characterised by open field farming subject to multiple ownership (see Figure 6.3). The fact that Savile did not own considerable sections of this land raises questions about the material expression of a ride within open country. In particular, what form did these rides take when traversing unenclosed ground?

One of the first things to note is that while the borders of Savile's rides might be thickened within demesne woodland, and planting density increased around a central meeting area, there is no suggestion, either in day-labourers fortnightly account books or estate correspondence, of trees being planted in order to define the course of a ride outside a wooded enclosure. This is particularly apparent in relation to a riding set out across warren ground west of the Hall in the winter of 1724. On 9 January Smith reported his assessment of the terrain, a description from which woodland is notably absent:

I have viewd from ye Topp of ye hill near Joshua Smiths [tenant of Savile's warrens at Winkerfield and Elmsley]⁸³ Southward Since I Received your honours Last and find a Tree at agreed Distance which once was mentioned for ye Line of ye walk but more on ye Right hand is a Blew Distant hill or Riseing Ground... If it [the ride] Lines to the Tree Twill I think be nearer ye Riding from ye Ellboe to ye hillock where Mr Winchester was Left then it will be to that Cross Ride which points into that Southern Countrey and Lyes West of ye said hill[.] On ye contrary I think if it Line from ye said hill near Joshuas to ye said Blewhill twill be nearer to ye Riding westward of ye said hill... since it is not far out of the medle [middle] to Line or point to Either it may be best any where between them where Twill fall on ye Evenest & best Ground & freest from Bourogh [rabbit burrow] &c.⁸⁴

In under a fortnight the ride had been 'sett out' and work on its construction was only delayed by 'ye parers' being occupied elsewhere:⁸⁵ where trees were

⁸³ Letter Holt to Savile, 27 January 1731. NA: DD/SR/211/24/6.

⁸⁴ Letter Smith to Savile, 6 January 1724. NA: DD/SR/211/227/117.

⁸⁵ A reference suggesting that preparation involved paring, burning then re-seeding.

involved the process of construction was considerably more protracted (see Section 7.3). The final course of the riding co-ordinated local high points: ‘from the hill near Joshuas Poynting from thence to the middle of a Distant hill or highest part of ye Riseing ground you [Savile] Mentioned’.⁸⁶ But beyond such topographical features, it seems to have been defined primarily by the quality of its surface.

Where the course of a ride linked areas separated by open field arable ground, even the construction of a continuous grass thoroughfare would, presumably, have been extremely unlikely, and no evidence has been found for such a practice. But there is convincing evidence that the rides connecting Savile’s demesne woodlands east of the Hall were not merely woodland cuttings connected by sightlines, but had a material presence across the intervening arable ground. When, during the planning phase of the Eakring-Brail Wood-Blyton Hills-Wellow Park section of the network, it was discovered that an important meeting point would fall on a neighbouring landowner’s ground, Smith began to negotiate land exchange (see Section 7.3.1). In a footnote to *Smith’s 1724 Plan*, the advantages of a potential ride between Old Park and Wellow Park were articulated with an attention to topographical detail more appropriate to a focussed course than a wide-angle view:

As the Line from ye Keepers in old park is here Drawn it Dos not take Down any Trees in Newgate hern... a small wood between Roys [alternatively spelt Royce or Rise] Bridge Lane and Wellow... but Just makes one Side of that wood ye Side of this Riding[.] [A]lsoe as the said Line is now Staked and here Drawn it passes for above 200 yards Together by ye side of wellow field 10 yards from a Row of Large Trees in a hedge of Mr Hinds [an Eakring tenant]. and which Make a side of ye said vistoe or Riding, and when it comes into your closes above wellow field near to wellow park it Gos up ye midle of some Trees in your Closes forming a handsome visto 16 yds wide but varying a few yds alters all these and without this be altered that to ye Lodge Tree cannot alter without moving ye Center in Royce Bridge Lane.⁸⁷

⁸⁶ Letter Smith to Savile, 20 January 1724. NA: DD/SR/211/227/115.

⁸⁷ Letter Smith to Savile, 26 February 1724 (NA: DD/SR/211/227/108); a letter from John & William Hind[s] to Savile, 18 March 1732, referred to several years remaining on their father’s (presumably 21 year) lease (NA: DD/SR/211/24/26).

Smith's description draws particular attention to the association of woodland with this *visto*, and while no evidence has been found for the introduction of those '*small additions of Art*' which Addison and Whately considered helpful in appropriating the working landscape to a design (see Section 7.1.1), that such improvements were made cannot be ruled out. Even without 'improvement', bordering trees would have helped 'preserve the idea' of a riding in the intervals between woodland cuttings.

7.3 Construction of the Rufford Ride Network

While it seems likely that Savile had settled upon the spatial coverage he wished his network to achieve by an early date, available evidence points overwhelmingly to the conclusion that his decisions were taken incrementally in response to judgements made *in situ*; that sections of the design were progressively added; and that the precise lines of many of the rides were finalised only at the time of their construction. Furthermore, though the importance Savile attributed to the coherent expansion of his ride network, and his personal engagement in its development, cannot be doubted – steward correspondence is notably detailed on the subject, survey plans were prepared to facilitate planning off-site, and references within estate correspondence strongly suggest that Savile assessed many interventions on the spot – the role played by his successive stewards, in particular Smith, was both critical and significant. Not only were these men accorded responsibility for managing the practical details of the programme – co-ordinating the labour force, negotiating the felling, stubbing and sale of coppice wood and timber, and the peeling and sale of bark – but they required the ability to comprehend Savile's intentions, at times only vaguely communicated, and effectively communicate developments on the ground whether in written, graphic or verbal form.

In general, development of a given section of the network proceeded in distinct stages. The first involved detailed topographical survey aimed at identifying the relative merits of potential routes. Smith's correspondence draws attention both to the challenge of making such assessments and of communicating their outcome to Savile in London. When setting out the ride on

forest ground 'from Joshua Smith's Hill in ye Warren Southward' in 1724, for example, Smith, though sufficiently confident that he had both understood and realised the Baronet's intentions to close his letter of 6 January with 'I shall consider ye above Circumstances & set it out to ye best of my Judgement', felt it necessary to reassure his master a fortnight later that 'I took John Shelton with me & he thinks it falls conveniently'.⁸⁸ Shelton was Savile's huntsman, and his involvement points both to Smith's perceived need for a second opinion, and the sporting use for which the network was almost certainly intended. Where the configuration of vistas within a section was particularly complex a range of graphic forms were used to communicate the situation on the ground. The most detailed and ambitious was *Smith's 1720 Survey* (Figure 7.3), a plan of Wellow Park which mapped a range of sightlines available from the park's interior, took over four months to prepare, and was drafted on a scale comparable to *Smith's 1725 Survey* for the development of Rufford's pleasure grounds: 'a box about four foot long and four Inches square' was required to convey the Wellow plan by wagon to London.⁸⁹ Despite Smith's professional competence as a surveyor, his progress reports draw attention to the shortcomings of his endeavours. In February 1720 he confided his anxieties to Madam Savile – '[it] will not I think be sufficient without his [Sir George] being on ye spott to Determine & Cutt any Rideings' – and on 7 May, 10 days prior to sending it, informed the Baronet 'I am Baffled and can not Describe anything of wellow park & its objects to purpose which made me slow to send'.⁹⁰ In his *1724 Plan* (Figure 7.6), Smith adopted a more schematic format – 'These Rideings are so Long & narrow that I only Draw ye Center Lines of Each... Laid Down by a Scale of 5 chains or 20 perches in half an inch' – but again, prefaced his draft with reservations about its ability to represent the complexity on the ground: 'theyr pland True, but I know not how to make them Useful in your Determining where the Rides shall be'.⁹¹ More qualitative representations have also survived. A sketch in Smith's hand from

⁸⁸ Letter Smith to Savile, 20 January 1724. NA: DD/SR/211/227/115.

⁸⁹ Letter Smith to Savile, 18 May 1720. NA: DD/SR/211/227/42. The final map measured 6 feet x 3 feet 10 inches.

⁹⁰ Letter Smith to Madam Savile, 1 February 1720 (NA: DD/SR/211/227/52); Letter Smith to Savile, 7 May 1720 (NA: DD/SR/211/227/43).

⁹¹ Letter Smith to Savile, 26 February 1724 (NA: DD/SR/211/227/108); the quoted scale is equivalent to 440 yds to the inch.

1725 intended to convey his personal recommendations for the section linking Wellow Park and Eakring-Brail Wood (see Section 7.3.1), and one in Savile's hand (undated) indicating the configuration of desired vistas from a *rond point* in New Park (Figure 7.5).

Once the terrain had been evaluated, the next stage was to stake the routes of the rides which were to traverse it. Though Smith highlighted the difficulty of achieving this even on open ground – 'I wish you saw them on ye Spot', he wrote to Savile in February 1724 during the development of the network's western section, 'tis hard and Difficult to Get Straight Lines so Long' – he omitted from his correspondence any discussion of the process.⁹² In *The Manner*, Cook put forward a range of methods for setting out a 'Walk without the Walls' and clearing a 'Walk or Line through a Wood'.⁹³ For the latter, either the alignment of lanterns hung along the walk's mid-line 'in a clear calm night (but not too light)', or a series of stakes topped with 'large whites, all of a bigness, as half a sheet of white Paper' was recommended.⁹⁴ Where large obstacles – for example hills – occluded even a flagged pole, then an iterative process of trial and adjustment could be applied until the set end points had been successfully achieved. How standard such techniques were in the early eighteenth century remains uncertain.

A related aspect of the process (on which both Smith and Holt *do* comment) was the advantage in terms of design flexibility and, where the felling of woodland was involved, revenue optimisation, of clearing the course of a ride in phases. *Smith's 1724 Plan* describing the projected linkage between warren ground west of the Hall and elements of the ride system on the eastern clay, included a note assuring Savile that the various elements had been staked and laid out such that it would still be possible to 'from these vary as you shall please', and that the Baronet should not 'for that Reason be Ty'd Down'.⁹⁵ During the planning of the ride section linking the spring woods of Eakring-Brail and Wellow Park, provisional lines were cut to only a fraction of their final breadth, and only the coppice cleared: 'My first Line is Cutt and Stubbd... 2 yds wide

⁹² *Ibid.*

⁹³ Cook (1676), Chapter 38: 'Of Making Walks, Avenues, or Lawns'.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 188.

⁹⁵ Letter Smith to Savile, 26 February 1724. NA: DD/SR/211/227/108.

Except ye oakes stand', reported Smith on 29 March 1725, 'my 2nd Line... is Cutt I mean ye Underwood for about 3 or 4 yds wide but not Stubbd'.⁹⁶ However, there were time constraints on ride construction imposed both by the seasonal nature of wood management, and, particularly in the case of timber, the need to value and find markets for the products (see Section 6.3). Smith concluded his letter of 29 March with the warning that unless a prompt decision were taken 'there will be a Loss in ye hop poles and hedgewood not being Cutt before ye Sapp Rises', adding that 'ye Season is So far Spent that Every Day adds to that... I mean in a week may be Three or 4 pound'. In March 1734, Holt excused construction delays in New Park:

There is not much done in the Vistoe's in new Park since you [Savile] left Rufford, only remov'd the young Plants that were Growing therein, for the Oaks are not Sold nor can they be Cut down before the Bark will Pill.⁹⁷

On this occasion, the sale was rapidly concluded and by the end of May Holt was able to report that 'The wood I sold in the new Vistoe's in New Park is most of it cut up, and Carry'd away'.⁹⁸ Clearance was not always expedited so rapidly and might lead to significant ground disturbance. When the 120 oaks standing in the visto from Keeper's Lodge (Old Park) to Wellow Park were sold to Mr Porter and Mr Johnson in early April 1724 (see Section 7.1.3), the terms of contract specified an 18 month completion period:

...the whole to be felld I mean Stubbd between now & July next and the Ground to be cleard by Michaelmas 1725.⁹⁹

In May 1721, during the cutting of vistoes through Wellow Park, Smith was anxious to delay Savile's arrival on site, fearing the latter's reaction to the disruption which the process involved:

⁹⁶ Letter Smith to Savile, 29 March 1725. NA: DD/SR/211/227/138.

⁹⁷ Letter Holt to Savile, 18 March 1734. NA: DD/SR/211/24/60.

⁹⁸ Letter Holt to Savile, 25 May 1734. NA: DD/SR/211/24/68.

⁹⁹ Letter Smith to Savile, 4 April 1724. NA: DD/SR/211/227/102.

We are now falling ye Oakes in ye Cutts of wellow park which Disorders ye whole so much that I wish your honour may not See it till we have felld yon all Cutt up ye Cordwood & Cleard all.¹⁰⁰

The final phase of a ride's construction involved the production of a thick, level sward, a process which in turn might involve elaborate and prolonged ground preparation. In relation to a ride across Old Park, which was under construction in March 1732, Holt observed to Savile:

The Large Rideing towards the Lodge is so Rough, and so many Rushes in it, that it cannot be made smooth and Levil for Sowing this Spring, for I intend to have it pared, and the Rush=roots burnt (before it be plowed) and then I think we can bring it into good order, and make it Levil.¹⁰¹

Ploughing ground within rides seems to have been a standard practice at Rufford and more generally. Daniel Eaton's correspondence (1727) both refers to the practice and indicates that its value was two-fold: achievement of a level ground surface and the side-benefit of an economic crop by planting corn and grass seed simultaneously:

Your Lordship [Lord Cardigan] once proposed to sow the new road with oats, but I think it will not be worth the while for it is level enough without plowing, so if I have not your Lordship's positive commands for it, I shall provide some ray grass seed to sow upon it, which will be a strong sword [*sic*] in one year.¹⁰²

In late March 1732, Holt reported that he had 'Bought French Wheat and we are now preparing part of the Vistoe in Beech Hill Intack to sow it there on',¹⁰³ and once established, grass in the ridings might be cropped for fodder and even used for *in situ* grazing (see Section 7.1.2).

With regards the maintenance of rides, beyond occasional references to pruning borders, widening vistas and improving drainage, the labour and cost of routine management goes largely undocumented in the Savile Archives from this

¹⁰⁰ Letter Smith to Savile, 20 May 1721. NA: DD/SR/211/227/33.

¹⁰¹ Letter Holt to Savile, 25 March 1732. NA: DD/SR/211/24/29.

¹⁰² Wake & Webster, eds (1971), 92.

¹⁰³ Letter Holt to Savile, 25 March 1732. NA: DD/SR/211/24/29.

period. One notable exception, however, is a brief synopsis sent to Savile of a new lease contract (Lady Day 1731) for Inkersall (formerly Winkerfield) rabbit warren, in which Holt recorded that Edward Warren, the tenant-to-be, had agreed to ‘keep the Rides Clear’.¹⁰⁴ That Holt singled out this duty for comment further highlights the importance Savile accorded to this aspect of his estate landscape. But the challenges of ride construction are nowhere better illustrated than in the development of the Eakring-Brail Wood–Blyton Hills–Wellow Park section of the network in 1725.

7.3.1 Eakring-Brail Wood – Blyton Hills – Wellow Park

The topographical challenges of landscaping on the clay east of the Hall were considerable. The three demesne woodlands involved in this section of the network were all strongly contoured, as were crucial areas of the intervening territory, making prospects along a ride acutely sensitive to selected entry points. New rides were being integrated into a pre-existing system so that routes needed to be evaluated in relation to intersections. Only disconnected areas of the intervening ground pertained to the Rufford Estate. The first phase of the section’s development involved 7 weeks (late February to early April 1725) of trial and re-assessment: Savile directing progress from London; Smith evaluating the feasibility of the Baronet’s objectives on the ground, feeding back judgements, directing construction work, and urging a time frame that would maximise economic return from ride clearance.

On 15 February, Smith reported his intention to ‘now Sett out the Rideing from W Park to Brail’.¹⁰⁵ By 27 March it had been ‘Cutt & Stubbd 2 yds wide’, found unsatisfactory, and an alternative route set out. The new line, though intersecting a pre-existing ride from Old Park more advantageously, did so at the expense of the prospect on entering Brail Wood:

[I] have Since Sett Out the Riding from Clipston Ride, Wellow park, through Blyton Hills [demesne timber ground] To & Through Brail wood So as that the Center or middle Lines of that said Rideing & ye Riding which is already Cutt through ye Old park to Blyton hills

¹⁰⁴ Letter Holt to Savile, 1 March 1731. NA: DD/SR/211/24/8a.

¹⁰⁵ Letter Smith to Savile, 15 February 1724. NA: DD/SR/211/227/140.

Just meet in Blyton hills Liberty before we Go over ye hedge into ye Eakring Liberty as your Last Letter Ordered which Throws the said Rideing more up ye hill on ye Brailwood about 25 yards & may have an Advantage as you are in ye said Riding in Brail & perhaps show the Tops of Trees in Blyton hills pritty soon after you Enter into ye said Brail Riding at that End next Eakring but at ye very Entrance you cannot See them for a great hill in Eakring field Directly in this Line Nor will it according to your Orders which I both understand and Observe allow of Going any higher in ye Brail.¹⁰⁶

Influenced, almost certainly, by the negative impact further delay would have on coppice income – ‘ye Season is So far Spent’ – Smith closed his report decisively: ‘I am setting on A many hands to Cutt & [stub] this Riding 20 yards wide so that any fresh orders will be too Late’. Two days later, however, the situation was in flux again, Smith believing that the ride intersection would encompass ground owned by the 1st Duke of Kingston:

The little close between Blyton hills & Eakring field is not yours But the Duke of Kingstons and So is ye 4 next Lands to that close in Eakring field; ye 5th & 6th Lands from ye hedge in Eakring field is ye first next Land you have to ye Blyton hills Towards Brail, and ye Riding that comes already through ye old park and Blyton hills gos so far into Eakring field before it comes to your said 5th & 6th Lands that ye Ground is so fallen you Cannot see ye Brick Lodge on ye forest. Besides where this said Ride hitts your said 5th & 6th Lands is so much Towards ye Lownd wood that the Vistoe from wellow park to Brail would Almost if not Quite Miss Blyton hills; so that Except youll be Content to Let ye Centers of ye said Two Ridings Cross or Intersect in ye Dukes Land it Cannot be any better or other than One of ye Two I have allready Sett Out.¹⁰⁷

The letter continued with a detailed comparison of the merits and shortcomings of the lines already partially cleared.

During the course of the next nine days Smith wrote three further letters to Savile on the subject, two of which document his reflections in great detail. The character and contents of these reports (31 March and 7 April) make evident both Smith’s zeal for landscaping and his commitment to the development of Savile’s programme. In a style bordering on stream-of-

¹⁰⁶ Letter Smith to Savile, 27 March 1725. NA: DD/SR/211/227/139.

¹⁰⁷ Letter Smith to Savile, 29 March 1725. NA: DD/SR/211/227/138.

consciousness, he re-assessed the Baronet's objectives and explored fresh optimisations. One such proposal countered the negative impact of locating the meeting ground within Rufford terrain (the 5th and 6th lands in the above quotation) – 'you Loose ye Beauty of ye [Old Park] Ride or vistoe' – with a prescient view of developments within Rufford's pleasure grounds (see below). Particularly striking is the holistic approach which Smith adopted in relation to estate landscaping. Rufford's rides were considered in relation to the design of the pleasure gardens and management of the working estate landscape, and the immediate benefits their construction offered were evaluated with reference to the area's future potential:

It is not a Little Matter at Blyton hills that will Do to hitt ye Brail where you wish I Gues it may Require at Blyton hills a hundred yards more towards Kneesall or ye Lownd wood than Either of those Ridings or Lines which I have Drawn already and ye more it gos towards Kneesall or Lownd wood the more ye Line falls from Blyton hills to Rufford hall over ye Midle or Bulk of ye flatt or Even Low part of ye Meadows and should you Ever Lay them Into a Lake Or make a Grand Cannall in them If it Could point both at ye hall and at the place where the vistoe through Old park & that from Wellow park to Brail wood Cross Each other Such a thing would Ad to ye beauty of ye sceen which allready is ye best In my thoughts by far that can be had To Rufford hall from any Line or Poynt of view whatever whether Direct against any of its fronts or in any other Oblique Possition[.] So that though you Do not Destroy the meadows now Yet it may be proper for ye sake of Posterity to make it Capable of Such an Advantage but for ye Sake of Not Only your hay Ground but alsoe ye Grass it affords before and after ye hay I hope you will not Drownd them speedilly.¹⁰⁸

By early April it had become clear that Smith was in error regarding the distribution of open field landownership: the initially favoured meeting ground belonged to a freeholder rather than the Duke of Kingston, land exchange was therefore possible and Savile was assured that 'a verbal swop' would be sought if desired.¹⁰⁹ By this stage, however, Smith's thinking on the subject had clearly moved on. In his letter of 7 April he revisited past assessments and put forward a fresh solution:

¹⁰⁸ Letter Smith to Savile, 31 March 1725. NA: DD/SR/211/227/137.

¹⁰⁹ Letter Smith to Savile, 7 April 1725. NA: DD/SR/211/227/135.

...my thinks that Desired high Ridge at Brail Over Looks ye wood in Blyton hills so much that it makes it Look very mean & shows ye Nakedness of wellow field & ye Emptyness of wood in this vistoe too much: If you have ye vistoe AEH [see Figure 7.7] then from G ye Desired Ridge through E you'l have another vistoe but Narrower Either to B or Some part of wellow park[.] So One Gap in Blyton hills will form Two vistroes through ye brail if you please.¹¹⁰

The format of the letter is notable in itself – its text embedded in the spaces of a sketched representation of the idea being conveyed (Figure 7.7) – but of more wide-ranging significance is the further light it sheds on ride aesthetics and the collaborative nature of landscaping at Rufford. Smith's observations testify to his intimate knowledge of the terrain, a knowledge revised and augmented through landscaping the site, and arguably essential to the success of Savile's ride programme given the latter's extended absences from Rufford. The final form those rides would take was, however, determined by the Baronet.

On the 31 March Smith had appealed to Savile: 'I Rather wish you would view ye place On ye Spott Turn it into all ye varietys it will admit of and Pitch on that which pleases your honour best'.¹¹¹ His letter of 7 April reported that horses had been sent to London to collect Sir George and his family. Smith's correspondence does not resume until late May 1726 by which time the Eakring-Brail to Wellow Park section of the network had been completed. Despite the absence of estate correspondence, limited evidence of the Baronet's choices have survived in the form of a survey of Eakring commissioned from John Colbeck in 1737 (Figure 6.3).

The ride configuration described by Colbeck maps accurately on to that shown on the 25-inch 1885 OS Map (Figures 7.8a&b) and the latter has been used to indicate the sightlines that Savile finally determined upon. Three rides (marked a, b, c in Figure 7.9) are recorded. The route cut through Eakring-Brail Wood, passing through Blyton Hills and intersecting Clipstone Ride in Wellow Park – ride (a) – corresponds closely to one of the courses cut by Smith in March 1725. The other two routes are not discussed in Smith's letters: ride (b) seems intended to link Eakring-Brail wood with Lound Wood, another demesne spring

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹¹ Letter Smith to Savile, 31 March 1725. NA: DD/SR/211/227/137.

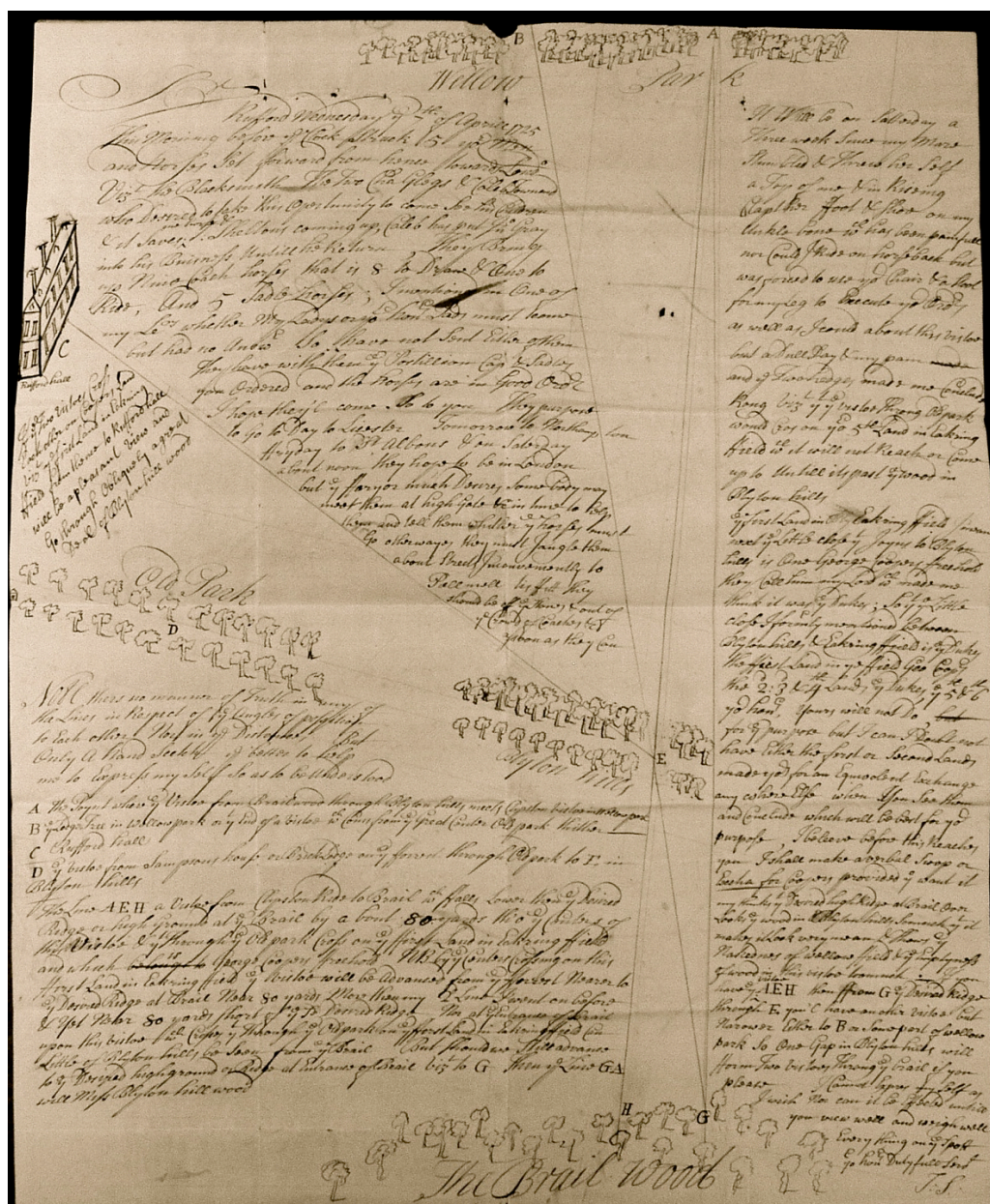


Figure 7.7:

Thomas Smith's sketch, 7 April 1725, detailing his proposals for a pair of rides to link Wellow Park and Eakring-Brail Wood.

(Letter Smith to Savile, 7 April 1725. NA: DD/SR/211/227/135)



Figure 7.8a:
Detail of Eakring-Brail Wood from Colbeck's 1737 Survey. (NA: EA/1R)

The survey has been tonally modified to increase the prominence of the rides which are highlighted in red.

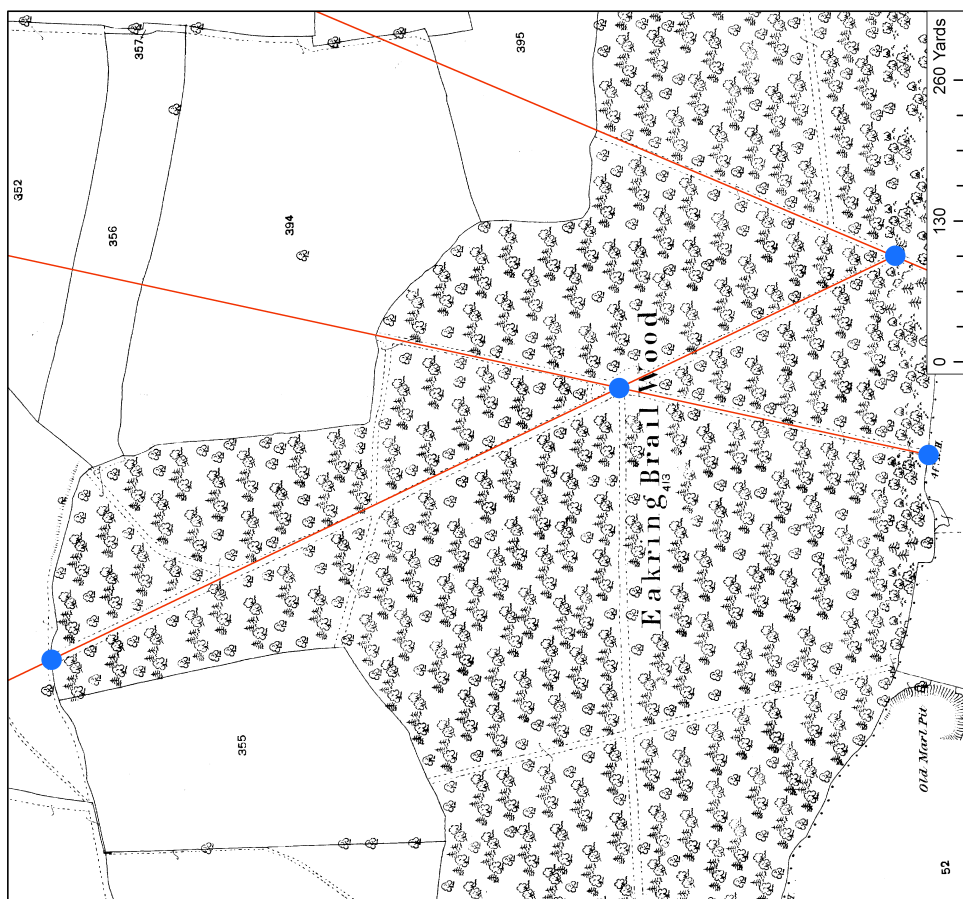


Figure 7.8b:
Detail of Eakring-Brail Wood from the 1885 OS Map.

Though by 1885 Eakring-Brail wood was under single ownership and new rides had been cut, comparison of the 1885 OS and Colbeck evidence indicates that Savile's rides were preserved.

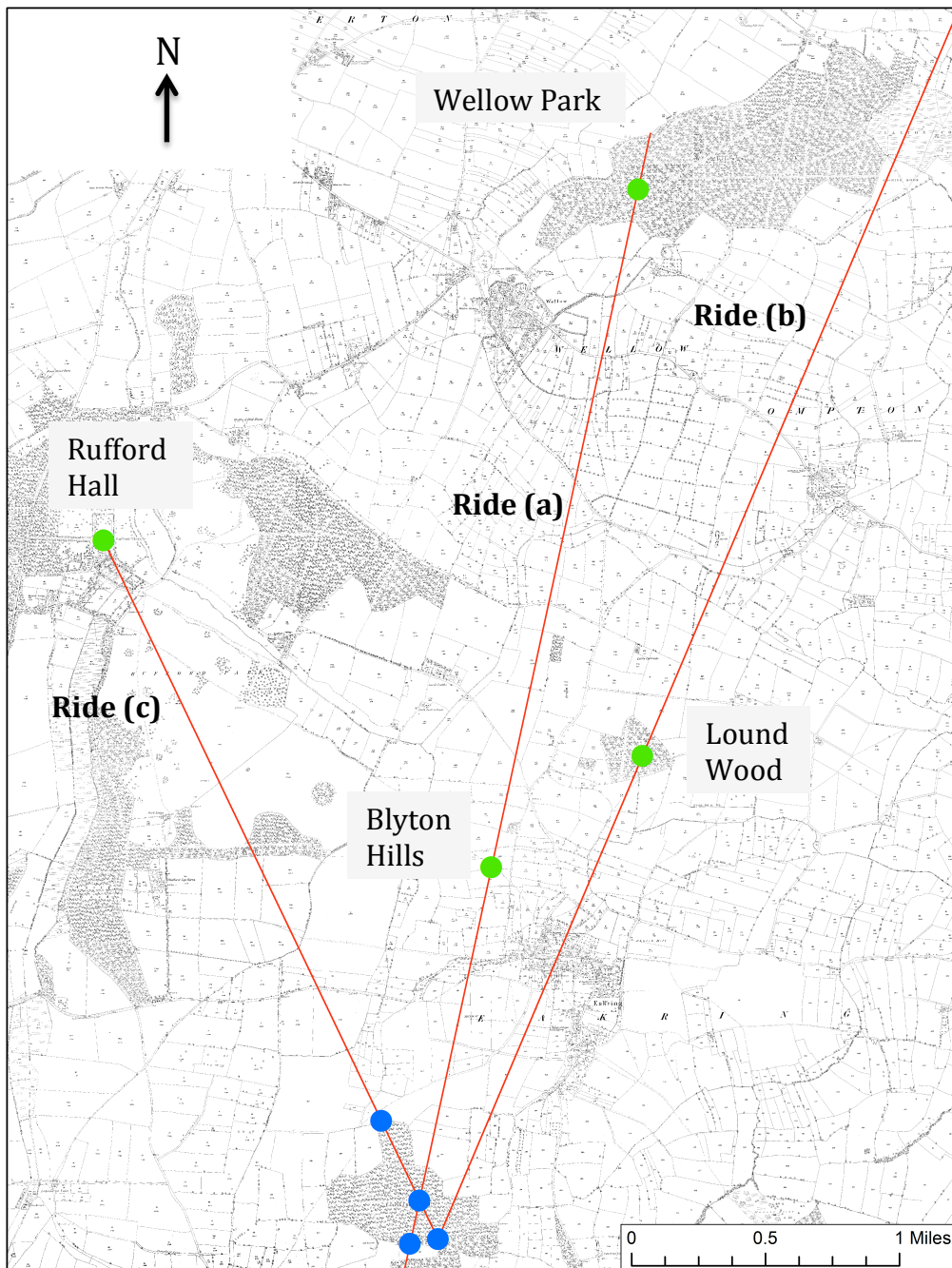


Figure 7.9: Sightlines created by the rides in Eakring-Brail Wood in 1737.

The blue spots reference significant points along the courses of these rides (entry, exit and intersection points) for which visibility studies have been carried out by the present author based on modern topographical data (see Figures 7.10, 7.11 & 7.12). The green spots locate significant focal points.

Rides have been labelled (a, b and c) for ease of reference. Base map, 1st Edition Ordnance Survey (1885).

wood enclosure east of the Hall; ride (c), which from its entry point on ride (b) was clearly a later construction, linked the woodland with Rufford Hall. The latter conclusion is supported by visibility studies using modern Environment Agency LIDAR data (Figure 7.10). These studies indicate that both the Hall and possibly also the cold-bath/summer-house complex in the kitchen garden would have been clearly visible from Eakring-Brail on entering ride (c) from the south, and that the Hall would still have been visible at the intersection of rides (c) and (b). Further, while the current topography of the area suggests that the Hall would no longer have been visible on exiting ride (c) at the northern side of the wood, visibility from this point along the line of sight to the Hall was considerably diminished in the twentieth century by the introduction of the Bilsthorpe Colliery spoil heap. Figure 7.11 shows the impact of this obstruction on the view and it seems likely that when the ride was first constructed at least part of the roofline of Rufford would still have been visible to a rider on horseback on exiting the wood. An elevation map of Eakring-Brail woodland today (Figure 7.12) shows the entry points to rides (a) and (b) located on a comparatively narrow ridge of high ground which lay close to the south-eastern boundary of Savile's Eakring-Brail holding, illustrating graphically one of the major design constraints discussed by Smith in his correspondence and further underlining the considerable technical challenge that construction of this network entailed.

7.4 Conclusion

Development of Rufford's ride network formed a major component of Savile's landscaping project, one to which he attributed considerable importance, and which presented diverse and considerable challenges, both topographical and managerial. By the time of Savile's death in 1743, it connected his parks and demesne woodlands both to each other, the Hall, neighbouring country seats and churches. The precise form these 'connections' took outside wooded areas remains uncertain. On open warren ground and parkland within the estate they seem to have been defined by the quality of their turf and surface; across arable ground east of the Hall, more probably by the appropriation of incidental

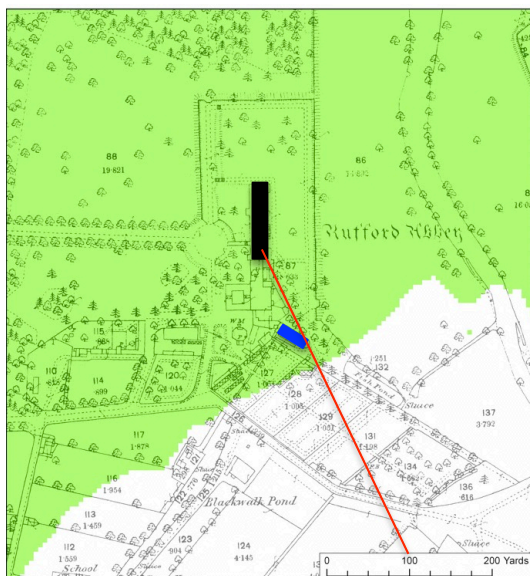
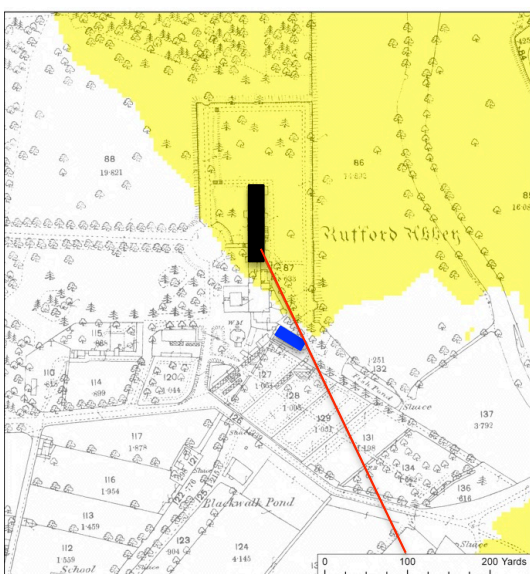


Figure 7.10:
Visibility study for ride (c).
 Hall shown in black;
 Bath-House shown in blue.

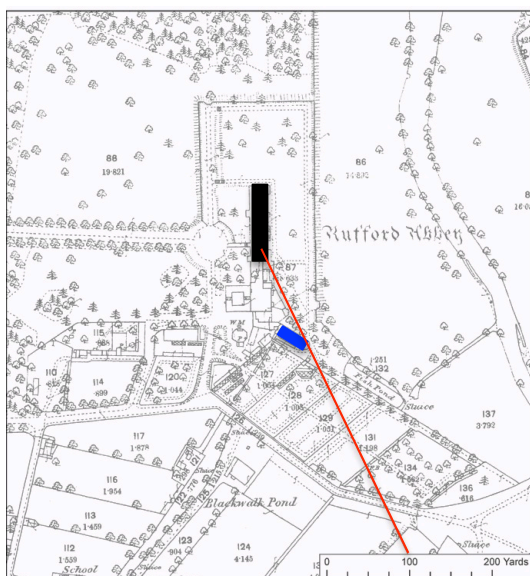
View towards Rufford Hall on entering the ride in Eakring-Brail from the south.

Green highlights the area across which features higher than 1.5m would be visible. This includes the entire Hall and the Cold-Bath/Summer-House complex.



View towards Rufford Hall from the intersection point of rides (b) and (c) within Eakring-Brail.

Visibility diminished.
 Yellow indicates the area across which features higher than 10m would be visible. This includes the entire Hall, but the northern section to greatest extent.



View towards Rufford Hall from ride (c) on leaving Eakring-Brail Wood.

Visibility has reduced significantly. The programme was set to test for visibility up to 19m above the ground. The absence of any shading indicates that from this view point no part of the Hall would be visible today.

(Source: Environment Agency LIDAR)

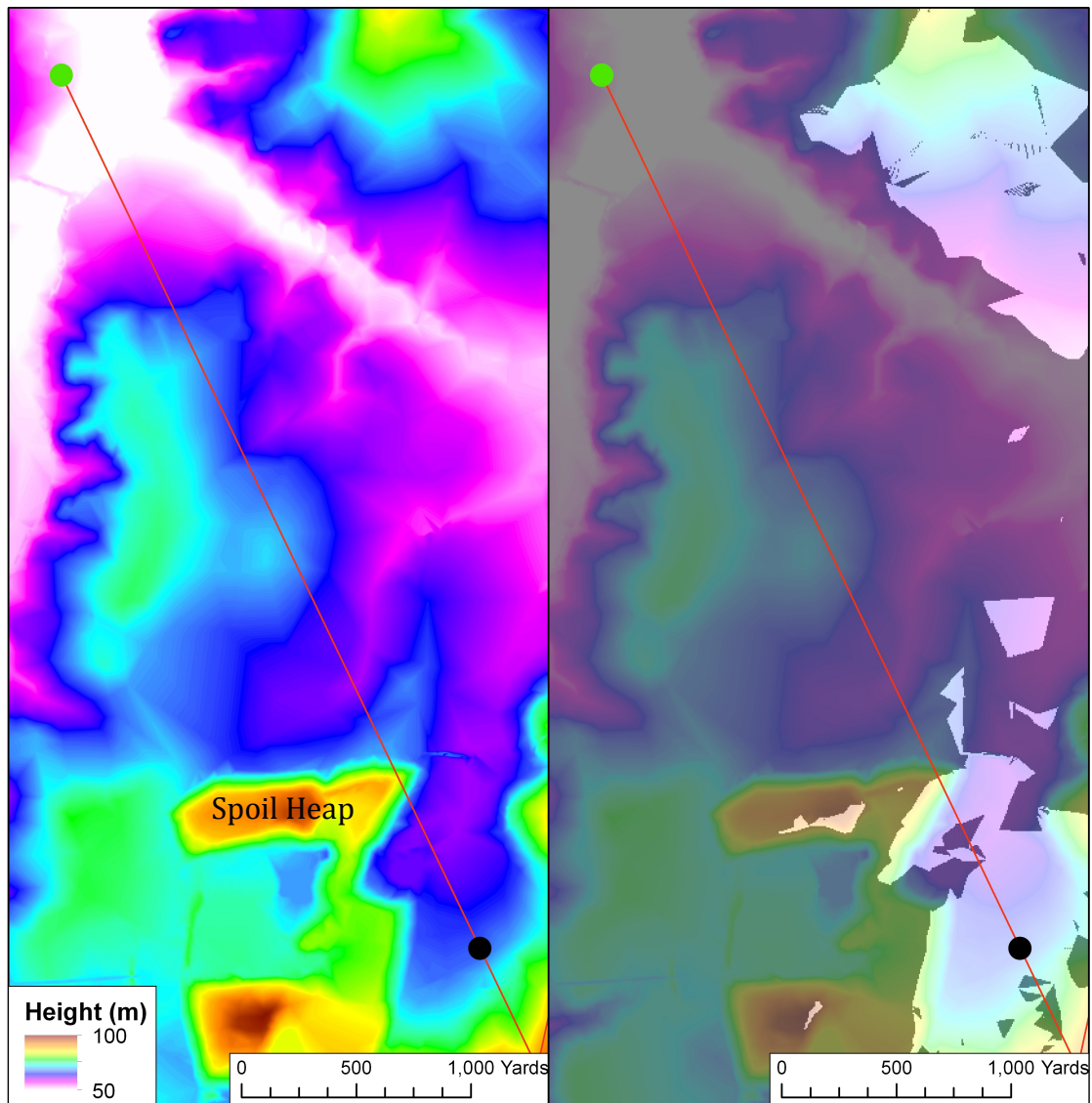


Figure 7.11: Evaluation of the impact of a twentieth-century spoil heap on the line of sight to Rufford Hall on exiting Eakring-Brail Wood along ride (c).

(Left) Elevation map of the terrain north-west of Savile's Eakring-Brail Wood. The blue spot locates the woodland exit point along ride (c); the green spot locates Rufford Hall.

(Right) Visibility assessment from the woodland exit point. The white shading describes the area of visibility based on present day topography and shows that the spoil heap defines the horizon along the sightline to the Hall.

(Source: Environment Agency LIDAR)

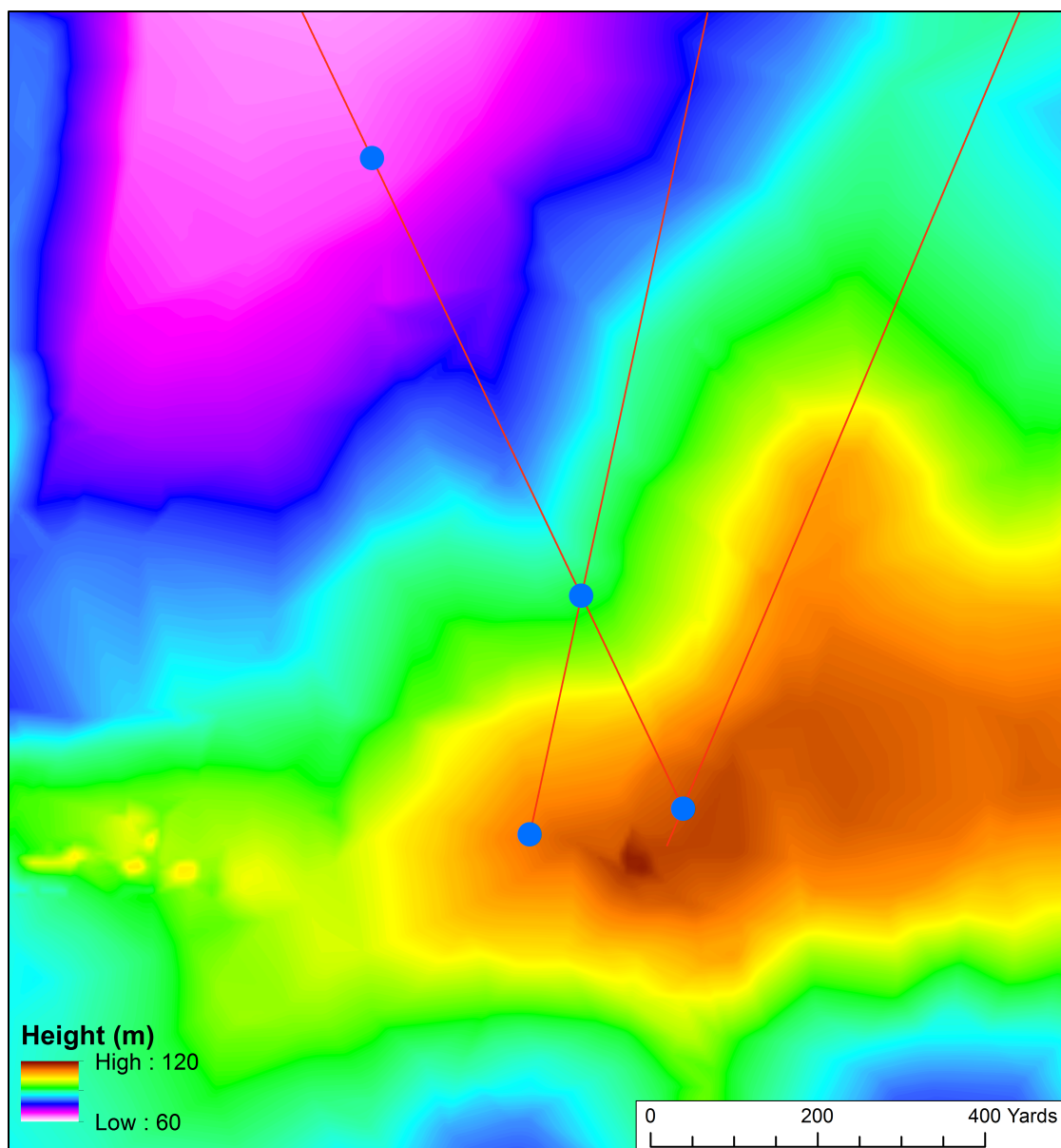


Figure 7.12:

Elevation map of Eakring-Brail Wood and the surrounding area based on modern topographical data.

The blue spots mark the entry, exit and crossing points identified in Figures 7.8 and 7.9.

(Source: Environment Agency LIDAR)

features within the working landscape. Hedgerow trees and woodland borders may have been sufficient to preserve the sense of design (through associative links) until the next area of clear definition was reached, be it woodland cutting or intersection point. Within neighbouring estate land 'vistoe' rather than 'ride' is probably the more apt descriptor, suggesting as it does a sightline rather than a material structure.

While the Baronet retained overall control for the design of these vistles/ridings, even, on some occasions, directing developments on the ground, the successful accomplishment of the project relied heavily on the abilities of his stewards, in particular Smith, steward throughout the decade (1718-28) when the bulk of the network was set out. Smith's versatility as a landscaper has been considered already in relation to the laying out of Rufford's pleasure grounds. Arguably, though, it was in relation to Savile's ride network that his peculiar blend of abilities – as a surveyor, designer, practical manager and competent communicator – were most crucial.

To the question of Savile's motivation for investment in a ride network, there is probably no single answer. The perception of rides as an expression of the authority of a country house – they 'put a whole country into a nobleman's livery' – is now commonplace.¹¹² However, though Savile's network would undoubtedly both have achieved this goal and encouraged associative links between himself, the church and the county elite, that this was Savile's sole, even primary, objective is unlikely. The Baronet's active engagement in the landscaping of his wider estate suggests that he took pleasure both in designing and realising his designs. For a zealous sportsman, and a man conscious of the benefits of exercise to his health (see Section 3.2.3), a well-designed system for navigating the landscape must have been of enormous benefit and provided a regular source of recreational pleasure.

¹¹² Letter William Wordsworth to Sir George Beaumont, 17 October 1805, in de Selincourt, ed. (1967, first published 1935), vol. 1, p. 625.

Chapter 8

Hunting at Rufford

'Tis a plain Case that Gentlemen of Fortunes and Estates to maintain them will not work, and equally certain that if they will not work, they must play vigorously or die miserably. *Anonymous 1733*¹

For the anonymous author of these words written in 1733 (hereafter referenced *Anonymous 1733*), vigorous play meant hunting, a word which could be used in the period to reference any field sport – whether the pursuit of deer, fox, hare, otter or fowl² – that entailed the use of hounds, though the term ‘shooting’ was widely used where guns were involved, particularly in the taking of birds.³ Within contemporary scholarships hunting has been discussed most fully by anthropologists in relation to their understanding of ritual, entertainment, performance and play – hunting as ‘a game involving hunters, the prey, and the environment: based on past experience told, retold, and learnt’.⁴ While such readings have informed the following account, the central concern here is to examine the ways in which the landscape of the Rufford Estate both influenced and was modified in response to Savile’s hunting (and to a lesser extent shooting) practices, and, through consideration of the infrastructure necessary for this elite pastime to take place, to shed light on the broader socio-geographical dimensions of the sport. Rufford hounds chased far beyond the estate’s boundaries and the pursuit and protection of quarry drew Savile and his stewards into a complex network of social engagement involving neighbouring landowners, JPs, forest officials and estate tenants. Horses and hounds suitable for the varied Nottinghamshire terrain had to be acquired and trained, activities which not only involved Savile, his Rufford estate servants and a network of

¹ *An Essay on Hunting by a Country Squire* (1733), 13.

² The term ‘fowl’ encompassed land and water birds; ‘fowling’, the capture by whatever means of game birds (pheasant, partridge, grouse etc.), waterfowl and birds not protected by Statutory Law (woodcocks etc.). Giles (1718), 1; Blome (1686), part 2, pp. 119-20.

³ Almond (2003), 3; Whitehead (1982), 13.

⁴ Schechner (2002), 621. See also Huizinga (1970); Borsay (2006), 6-8.

local sporting landowners, but also depended heavily on the skills and contacts of his Yorkshire steward.

After a brief examination of hunting preferences in the area around Sherwood Forest, this chapter focusses on fox hunting, the sport favoured by Savile when in Nottinghamshire, examining its management and character both at an estate and county level, drawing attention to the relationship between Savile's Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire estates, and concluding with a section addressing issues of access and fox preservation.

8.1 Sherwood Forest, Rufford and their Quarry

Hunting is a Game and Recreation commendable not only for *Kings, Princes*, and the *Nobility*, but likewise for private Gentlemen... *Hunting* trains up Youth to the use of manly Exercises in their riper age, being encouraged thereto by the pleasure they take in hunting the *Statelystag*, the *Generous Buck*, the *Wild Boar*, the *Cunning Otter*, the *Crafty Fox*, and the *Fearful Hare*...⁵

In the early eighteenth century all this various quarry, with the exception of the boar, was either hunted or trapped within Sherwood Forest, its purlieu and adjacent manors.⁶ The 2nd Duke of Kingston, for example, kept 'a Pack of Hare Hounds' and 'a Pack of Buck Hounds' at Thoresby, briefly owned a pack of fox hounds purchased from Lord Byron and kennelled at Newstead Abbey at the Duke's expense, and, from 1737, had 'the Liberty of the [Royal] Stag Hounds to Hunt' (previously the right of General Richard Sutton of Scofton, died 1737).⁷

⁵ Cox (1706, first published 1674), 1-2.

⁶ John Cowell's *The Interpreter* (1607) defines purlieu as ground near to and once part of any forest which had 'by reperambulations granted by *Henry* the third' been 'severed again from the same... [and] exempted from the servitude or thralldom, that was formerly laid upon it'; Langton (2010, p. 19) makes clear that the situation was in reality far more complex.

⁷ Letters Holt to Savile, 8 March 1736, 17 January & 8 June 1737 (NA: DD/SR/211/24/103,111,127); Shaw, ed. (1990). William Byron, 4th Baron Byron died in August 1736, his eldest son (Master of the Stag hounds 1763-5) was then only 14.

The 2nd Baron Lexington of Averham Park and Kelham Hall kept otter hounds in 1718.⁸

Rufford Abbey, whose best hunting grounds lay within the Royal Forest of Sherwood had by the late seventeenth century achieved renown for the quality of its hunting. Thoroton in 1677 recorded that the Abbey's hospitality was extended to both James I and Charles I, 'being very pleasant and commodious for hunting in the forest of Sherwood'.⁹ The principal royal quarry at that time was almost certainly the forest's red deer: Cox's 'stately stag'. By the early eighteenth century, however, stag hunting was in widespread decline.¹⁰ Noble but too costly was the opinion most frequently voiced in the sporting publications circulating for gentleman of the period.¹¹ Blome, Cox, Somervile and Anonymous 1733 were unanimous in prizing the hare above all other beasts of venery or chase. It was the hare's great cunning which, it was considered, set it apart from other quarry and made it the supreme test of the skill of both men and dogs. Further, since, as Blome remarked, the hunted hare usually remained in sight, 'her Subtilties and cuning [*sic*] Shifts to avoid the *Hounds* are for the most part seen'.¹² But hares, by the nature of their flight, gave slow sport. 'For those youthful Heroes who glory in breaking the Hearts of their Horses, and venturing their own necks', and for whom the expense of 'a Large Pack of Dogs' and 'the very best of Horses' prohibited stag hunting, there was the fox.¹³

That Savile was passionate about field sports cannot be doubted. The evidence of steward correspondence from both his Nottinghamshire and Yorkshire estates, his personal account books and Rufford estate accounts all indicate that he hunted, shot and was a keen angler.¹⁴ Savile's favoured period of residence at Rufford overlapped both the fox and hare hunting seasons and the shooting season for certain fowl.¹⁵ In 1721 he attended a 'Course of Gunnery'

⁸ Letter Smith to Savile, 29 October 1718. NA: DD/SR/211/227/69.

⁹ Thoroton (1677), 435.

¹⁰ Carr (1976), 22-3.

¹¹ Anonymous (1733), 28; Blome (1686), part 2, p. 91.

¹² Blome (1686), part 2, p. 92.

¹³ Anonymous (1733), 28.

¹⁴ For evidence of Savile's angling see **RECREATIONAL VALUE** in Section 5.1.4.

¹⁵ See Appendix 3.1 for Savile's pattern of residence at Rufford. Foxes were 'most wild and strong' about Christmas time; hares were typically hunted mid-September – February. Beckford (1781), 238; Giles (1718), 1-32; Cox (1706), 9.

delivered by Francis Hawksbee and the purchase of guns features prominently in the Baronet's personal account books.¹⁶ The Rufford Estate supported a dedicated hunting stable and a considerable pack of hounds. As Rufford steward, Thomas Smith, lamented in 1726 during a time of high grain prices, the maintenance of Savile's horses and kennels ate up considerable funds:

I Now make bold to Remind you of what you find Growing Or Swelling Greater in Every Account of Mine I mean My Disbursements which are Like to Do So when you Reside almost Constantly here And have the Greatest Number of horses I believe in any One Seat in Nottinghamshire your Pack of hounds Large & all that they & ye horses Live on at high prices.¹⁷

In December 1727 Savile's pack contained 25 couple of hunting hounds in the Rufford kennels and 11 couple of whelps, 6 of which were quartered amongst his Yorkshire tenants.¹⁸ In January 1728 Savile kept 47 horses 'old and young' at Rufford, including six hunting horses for his servants to ride and two for himself.¹⁹ Smith estimated that the supply of oats for the horses and hounds would cost £500 a year at 1728 prices. In addition, there was hay and straw to be purchased, demesne production being insufficient to support the estate's stables, kennels, deer, cows and asses.²⁰

All the available evidence points to the fox as Savile's favoured quarry whilst at Rufford. The 7th Baronet maintained a pack of fox hounds throughout his life, despite a brief period in 1727 when poor health coupled to the temporary loss of a huntsman prompted him to consider instead 'slow Harriers which require less fateague and less attendance'.²¹ In addition to dedicated fox hounds, the Rufford kennels contained greyhounds for coursing hares and spaniels used to hunt for the net or gun (see Section 8.3.1). Archival evidence for

¹⁶ Savile's Personal Account Book, 1715-22. NA: DD/SR/211/178/1. See also **RECREATIONAL VALUE** in Section 5.1.4.

¹⁷ Letter Smith to Savile, 3 August 1726. NA: DD/SR/211/227/128.

¹⁸ Letter Smith to Savile, 2 December 1727. NA: DD/SR/211/227/178. Beckford (1781, pp. 37, 139, 164) states that 25 couple was the optimum size for a fox-hunting pack in the field (hunting style/terrain influenced the optimum kennel size); 20 for harriers.

¹⁹ Letter Joshua Mann to Savile, 4 January 1729. NA: DD/SR/211/58/31.

²⁰ In 1727 the outlay on hay was £131 1s 8d. Letters Smith to Savile, 25 March & 10 January 1728. NA: DD/SR/211/227/71,162.

²¹ Letter Elmsall to Savile, 17 December 1727. NA: DD/SR/211/6. The size of the Rufford pack, however, does seem to have diminished by the 1730s.

the Baronet's engagement with stag and buck hunting is far more limited and restricted to the first two decades of his ownership of Rufford: in April 1708 George Burden enquired as to whether the 'Ward mare' was to be prepared 'for Stagg hunting this Summer'; in March 1719, Smith requested knowledge of whether 'ye Gray Nagg that was at London last with ye Mennage horse is to Buck hunt next Season'.²² Furthermore, when the Baronet did hunt deer, it was almost certainly with the assistance of neighbouring packs rather than the Rufford hounds (see Sections 8.3.1 & 8.4.1). Gentleman often hunted together. In July 1717, for example, Smith's correspondence recorded estate business conducted with Mr Digby whilst the latter was stag hunting 'with Lord Lexington, Lord Granby &c... on ye forest'.²³ It is not clear to whom responsibility for the maintenance of the royal stag hounds fell in this period,²⁴ but irrespective of whose principal charge a pack of hounds was under, the dogs might be loaned to neighbouring sportsmen and Rufford estate correspondence records the stag hounds being moved between kennels on several occasions. When, for example, in July 1719 the return of the 1st Duke of Newcastle (Thomas Pelham-Holles) to his Nottinghamshire seat, Haughton, was imminent, Smith reported: 'The Pack of Stagg hounds that were at Mr Digbys & Mr Palmers are Taken from them and placed at Haughton; Old Mr Palmer is not Concernd with Them but his son Charles palmer hunts them at present'.²⁵

Hunting literature circulating in the first half of the eighteenth century is notably silent on the relationship of women to hunting, whether as participants in the field or spectators. James Thomson's poem, *The Seasons* (1730), though a notable exception, refers to female participation only to pronounce the 'spirit of the chace', its 'horrid joy', prerequisite courage and skill 'to spring the fence, to reign the prancing steed' as unbecoming.²⁶ Drawing on the evidence of paintings, engravings, prints and tapestries of the late Middle Ages and Renaissance,

²² Letter Burden to Savile, 10 April 1708 (NA: DD/SR/2111/435); Letter Smith to Savile, 2 March 1719 (NA: DD/SR/211/227/58).

²³ Letter Smith to Savile, 3 July 1717. NA: DD/SR/211/227/77. John Manners (1696-1779) was styled Marquis of Granby from 1711, a title previously held by his father, the 2nd Duke of Rutland.

²⁴ By the 1730s it was General Sutton.

²⁵ Letter Smith to Savile, 6 July 1719. NA: DD/SR/211/227/56.

²⁶ 'Autumn', lines 565-572.

Almond nevertheless concludes that 'without doubt, hunting gave pleasure to both sexes, all ages and every social level' into the early modern period.²⁷ Rizzo's study of eighteenth-century sporting women, however, emphasises restriction rather than inclusion: walking and riding, yes, but hunting (with the possible exception of foreign visitors) only to be enjoyed by the 'privileged maverick', and shooting, emphatically no.²⁸

That women, both local and foreign, did enjoy hunting and even shooting in Nottinghamshire and the Rufford area during the first half of the eighteenth century is indisputable. In January 1737, the 'Two Mrs Willowby's [Willoughby] from Nottingham' were staying at Ollerton Hall with 'a Pack of Hare Hounds' and hunting twice or three times weekly, raising the apprehension in Savile's steward that they would pursue their quarry within Rufford Liberty, in particular the New Park and Wilderness.²⁹ Earlier the same month the 2nd Duke of Kingston and a 'French Lady' were reported going 'together a shooting or hunting', and in June, the Duke was hunting almost daily 'with his own Buck Hounds or the King's Hounds' and frequently alongside 'Madame Le Touch and Lady Vane' who were staying at Thoresby.³⁰

Both Savile's sisters owned their own horses and Madam Savile recorded in 1719 that her younger daughter, Gertrude, was an enthusiastic horsewoman: 'Getty rejoyceth at goeing to Rufford chiefly in hopes of riding'.³¹ Riding, however, unlike hunting, was sometimes encouraged in eighteenth-century conduct books as a route to female 'vigour and bloom'.³² No evidence has been found for the participation in the chase of either Savile's sisters, wife or mother, though Madam Savile was certainly cognisant, and on occasions directed, the management of Rufford kennels and stables, and was consulted by her son's stewards over the prosecution of poaching offences within both the Thornhill and Rufford Estates.

²⁷ Almond (2009), 2.

²⁸ Rizzo (2002), 72, 87; Almond (2009), 7.

²⁹ Letters Holt to Savile, 17 & 29 January 1737. NA: DD/SR/211/24/111-12.

³⁰ Letters Holt to Savile, 3 January & 25 June 1737. NA: DD/SR/211/24/110,128. Lady Vane was probably Viscountess Frances Anne Vane (1715-1788).

³¹ Letter Madam Savile to Savile, 9 July 1719. NA: DD/SR/227/57.

³² Rizzo (2002), 80.

8.2 The Rise of Fox Hunting in Nottinghamshire

By the early eighteenth century, foxes – which through much of the seventeenth century had been netted or coursed on foot by farmers and low ranking country people intent on protecting their poultry as much, perhaps, as for sport – were gaining status as animals of the chase.³³ Bryden considers that ‘By the reign of Queen Ann fox-hunters pure and simple were as well-known and recognised in the social system as they are at the present day’.³⁴ Meyer adopts both a more conventional and conservative position, dating the transition to the 1730s and quoting in evidence a letter of 1730 written by Sir Robert Walpole offering the Earl of Carlisle Mastership of the Royal Harriers. Carlisle had clearly raised objections to the proposed title to which Walpole responded:

If your Lordship thinks it more agreeable to be Master of the Foxhounds, the King has no objection to the style or name of the office; but as the Master of the Harriers is an ancient and known office, thinks it may be better if... the office be called Master of the Foxhounds and Harriers.³⁵

As Cuming comments ‘presumably Carlisle would not have sought Master of the Fox Hounds if Master of the Harriers carried greater consideration’.³⁶

Fox hunting across the sandy terrain of Sherwood Forest and more intensively farmed clay ground that lay beyond its borders was certainly not considered below the dignity of either Nottinghamshire’s resident elite or their neighbours by the 1720s. In addition to the Rufford pack, and those owned by Lord Byron and purchased by the 2nd Duke of Kingston, there was Mr Patricius Chaworth’s pack of Annesley Hall. ‘Accounted ye best in these parts’, as Smith informed Savile in 1720, Chaworth’s hounds were valued at 200 guineas by Lord Howe of Langar Hall, who purchased them soon after Chaworth’s death (1719).³⁷ In 1737, Savile’s steward, George Holt, reported rumours that the Duke

³³ Blome (1686), part 2, p. 87.

³⁴ Bryden (1904), 215.

³⁵ Hist. Mss. Comm., ‘Letters of Sir Robert Walpole’, quoted in Meyer (1984), 40; Stringer (1714, p. 138) considered the fox ‘a more noble Chace than the Hare’.

³⁶ Cuming (1909), 2.

³⁷ Letters Smith to Savile, 2 April & 15 February 1720. NA: DD/SR/211/227/45,49. The Lord Howe cited was Emanuel Scrope Howe (c.1699-1735), 2nd Viscount Howe.

of Kingston's pack had left Thoresby, and was now under the joint ownership of 'Mr Levins' (almost certainly William Levinz of Grove and Bilby; MP for Nottinghamshire, 1734-47) and 'Mr Chaworth'.³⁸ Rufford estate correspondence also references visiting fox hunters. In March 1736, 'Mr Newby with some gentlemen' was at Mansfield Woodhouse with his fox hounds, and subsequently out hunting at Pleasley Park and 'on the forest' towards Newstead Park.³⁹ In June 1737 Sir Robert Burdet (subsequently owner of Formarke Hall, Derbyshire; High Sheriff of Derby, 1738) took a house in Kirkby expressly, as Holt reported, 'to bring his Fox Hounds there for the Hunting Season, To Hunt in Late Lord Byron's Hunt'.⁴⁰

Most histories of fox hunting attribute its rise as an elite sport to a fall in the availability of red deer in the wild caused by increasing neglect and destruction of their habitat within the royal forests.⁴¹ De Belin's recent study of deer numbers and habitat in the forests of Northamptonshire, however, challenges this generalisation by providing strong evidence that both forest habitat and deer populations were adequately maintained within one of England's most significant hunting counties at least until the end of the eighteenth century: 'if the will to hunt deer remained,' she writes, 'there were certainly still deer to hunt'.⁴² Archival evidence pertaining to Nottinghamshire provides qualified support for this revisionist view. A survey carried out in December 1708 of the red deer of 'all sorts and kinds' present in the Forest of Sherwood and its purlieus tallied '652', and in June 1720, Smith informed Madam Savile that there was 'no Country talk but of ye Duke of Newcastle and a Great Deall of Quallity hunting on ye forest next month'.⁴³ Given the season, stag or buck were almost certainly the quarry in question. On the other hand, about 80% of the aforementioned deer were sighted within the Duke of Newcastle's

³⁸ Letter Holt to Savile 17 January 1737. NA: DD/SR/211/24/111. The Chaworth and Levinz families were linked through marriage (Patricius Chaworth of Annesley (1700-1731) and Anne Levinz), but it is unclear to which Mr Chaworth Holt refers. NUM: 'The Chaworth-Musters Family: a Brief History'.

³⁹ Letters Holt to Savile, 8 & 13 March 1736. NA: DD/SR/211/24/103,102.

⁴⁰ Letter Holt to Savile, 8 June 1737. NA: DD/SR/211/24/127.

⁴¹ Carr (1976), 22-3; Griffin, E. (2008), 108-10; Landry (2001), 5-6.

⁴² De Belin (2013), 4.

⁴³ 'A copy of ye Account of the Deer of ye Forest of Sherwood taken ye 19th January 1707' (NA: DD/4P/76/8-9); Letter Smith to Madam Savile, 4 June 1720 (NA: DD/SR/211/227/41/1).

lands (both within the forest and its purlieu, and manors beyond its borders) and only 67 of the animals counted were stags, the remainder being young deer (brockets and staggarads) or females. Furthermore, reference to the 2nd Duke of Kingston releasing 12 brace of bucks from Thoresby Park into Kneesall and Brail woods in 1737 suggests a dearth of suitable quarry and in 1793 a commission appointed by the House of Commons to enquire into the state of Sherwood Forest reported that 'there were no Deer in the Forest, except in *Thorney Woods*', a division claimed by the Earl of Chesterfield as Hereditary Keeper.⁴⁴ That the forest habitat of these creatures had diminished is supported by records of the damage caused by free-ranging deer in Sherwood's purlieu: 'there is noe harbour nor shelter left for the deer,' complained one interested landowner, Isaac Knight, 'and that they are soe numerous that in hard weather they break into barns to get hay and that they eating and destroy all poore peoples cabbiges and carrat that live neare the forrest'.⁴⁵ In 1707, the threat to farming interests that these animals posed was sufficient to prompt a group of private landowners to propose the submission of a Parliamentary Bill intended to restrict forest jurisdiction within the purlieu and give private landowners independent control over the forest deer roaming at large on their estates.⁴⁶

Less contentious than the impact of deer population on sporting preferences is the view that the calibre of hounds and horses available to sportsmen contributed significantly to the character of fox hunting. By the late eighteenth century, writes Carr, breeding programmes aimed at generating faster race horses had produced an arab-native cross-breed of horse that combined both speed and stamina.⁴⁷ De Belin cites the work of early nineteenth-century authors – Lawrence (1809), Cook (1826), Nimrod (1837) – to substantiate her conclusion that 'the popularity of horse racing and the breeding

⁴⁴ Letter Holt to Savile, 23 April 1737. NA: DD/SR/211/24/122; 'The Fourteenth Report of the Commissioners...' (1793), 468-9.

⁴⁵ Letter Isaac Knight to John Thornagh, 10 December 1707. NA: DD/FJ/11/1/1pt1/19-20. Knight was the son of Sir Ralph Knight of Langold on the Yorkshire-Nottinghamshire border. The family had landholdings proximate to Rufford. Dugdale (1859).

⁴⁶ The bill was opposed locally by powerful sporting interests. Letter Sir Francis Molyneux to John Holles, 1st Duke of Newcastle, 31 January 1709. NA: DD/4P/75/70.

⁴⁷ Carr (1976), 34-5.

of the thoroughbred' completed this process of improvement.⁴⁸ Gilbey and Bryden refer to a similar upgrading in the performance of hounds.⁴⁹ Taken together, these changes are said to have spearheaded a 'modern style' of fox chase, emergent in the enclosed grasslands of Leicestershire in the 1750s, experiencing its 'golden age' as a 'national sport' in the immediate post-Waterloo period, and in which speed, horses and athletic daring – the so-called 'flying leap' over the fences of the enclosed shire grasslands where it was most particularly enjoyed – were of more significance than dogs and hunting.⁵⁰ Modern-style fox hunting involved large social gatherings, both urban and rural in character. Riders would set off late in the morning on a short hard gallop after a fox which, with its meal long-since digested, ran at its fastest. As one sportsman commentator observed in nostalgic vein already in 1750: 'but for the Name of Fox-hunting, a Man might as well mount at his Stable-Door, and determine to gallop twenty Miles an End into another County'.⁵¹

Hunting practices at Rufford in the early eighteenth century both shed light on the roots of this so-called modern style of fox hunting and raise questions about the chronology of its development.

8.3 Fox Hunting at Rufford

...the profession of fox-hunting is much altered since the time of Sir John Vanburgh [Vanbrugh, 1664-1726]; and the intemperance, clownishness, and ignorance of the old fox-hunter, is quite worn out...⁵²

Hunting practices at Rufford would suggest that Beckford overstated the contrast; Savile and his huntsmen appear neither to have differed significantly from their illustrious successor in knowledge of a fox's habits nor in the preferred style of its pursuit. There is much evidence to suggest that it was the

⁴⁸ De Belin (2013), 142.

⁴⁹ Gilbey (1913), 25; Bryden (1904), 130.

⁵⁰ Bovill (1959); Carr (1976).

⁵¹ Gardiner (1750), 2.

⁵² Beckford (1781), 176.

performance of early eighteenth-century horses and hounds rather than any want of predatory zeal, or predilection for hunting (dogs) over riding (horses) that determined what differences of pace and form there were.

8.3.1 The composition and management of Rufford's kennels and stables

There are several kind of Hounds, endued with Qualities suitable to the Country where they are bred; and therefore consult his Country, and you will soon understand his Nature and Use.⁵³

A diff'rent hound, for ev'ry diff'rent Chace
Select with judgement...⁵⁴

Publications addressed to gentleman sportsmen which circulated in the early eighteenth century discuss two main breeds of hunting hound: southern and northern. The former were comparatively large, noted for their sense of smell, voice and strength, but wanted 'Speed and Vigor to push forward'.⁵⁵ They were considered by Blome 'most proper for such as delight to follow them on Foot' and for 'Woodlands and Hilly-Countreys', though, as Somerville observed, 'in the thick-woven Covert/ Painfully tugs'.⁵⁶ The Northern hound, or the north country beagle which it strongly resembled, was smaller, 'Nimble and Vigorous' and hunted more by eye than nose.⁵⁷ They would, wrote Blome, 'exercise your *Horses* and try their strength' and were the preferred breed for 'open level and Champain *Countreys*'.⁵⁸ As Anonymous 1733 asserted, they were ideal 'For our younger Gentry who take Out-running and Out-riding their Neighbours, to be the best Part of the Sport', though, as Somerville cautioned, they were prone to get 'Moil'd in the clogging Clay'.⁵⁹ For mixed terrain and where there was no preferred hunting style, unsurprisingly, a middle-sized dog was recommended: 'By crossing these *Breeds*... you may bring your *Kenel* to such a composure as

⁵³ Howlett (1701), 3.

⁵⁴ Somerville (1735), Book I, lines 226-7.

⁵⁵ Anonymous (1733), 45.

⁵⁶ Blome (1686), part 2, p. 68; Somerville (1735), Book I, lines 258-9. A covert is an area of dense ground cover harbouring game, foxes etc.

⁵⁷ Anonymous (1733), 45.

⁵⁸ Blome, 1686, part 2, p. 68.

⁵⁹ Anonymous (1733), 45; Somerville (1735), Book I, line 262.

you think fit'.⁶⁰ This apparent flexibility, however, belied the experience, summed up by Beckford in 1781, but well recognised a century earlier: 'Hounds cannot be perfect, unless used to one scent, and one stile of hunting.'⁶¹ In Rufford estate correspondence hounds were invariably referred to not by their owner's name or their 'Countrey' but by their quarry.⁶² Moreover, considerable lengths were on occasions taken to educate/re-educate hounds in line with an owner's hunting tastes. In 1734, for example, Lord Monson sent his fox hounds to Thoresby for a month 'to Break them from Hunting Deer'.⁶³

The resourcing of Rufford's kennels and stables promoted a frequent epistolary exchange and traffic of personnel between Savile's estates in Nottinghamshire and Yorkshire, and much of the information regarding their composition derives from the letters addressed to Savile by his Thornhill steward, William Elmsall. With the exception of George Holt, there is no evidence that Rufford stewards hunted (other than otters), and though Holt might accompany Savile's huntsman in his master's absence, there is no evidence that he accompanied the 7th Baronet either hunting or shooting. Savile's social engagement with his Yorkshire steward, however, was of a more intimate character. A shared passion for field sports almost certainly contributed to a relationship which bordered on friendship. Elmsall and his sons Raph and Henry (see Section 3.4.2) were qualified to hunt, shoot and fish in their own right, and on occasions father or son Raph accompanied Savile in these pursuits both at Rufford and Thornhill. Elmsall and later Raph dealt in horses, Raph trained shooting dogs. Their network of associates included both significant landowners and gentleman sportsmen and was extensive, making them important sources of Rufford dogs and horses for hunting and shooting, in addition to shooting nets and a variety of fishing equipment.⁶⁴ Moreover, the regular commerce in dogs

⁶⁰ Blome (1686), part 2, p. 68.

⁶¹ Beckford (1781), 139.

⁶² Allied to the development of fox hunting was an increasingly formal association between pack and terrain; a hunt's 'country' came to describe the territory within which the right to draw coverts had been negotiated. Itzokowitz (1977), 180; Longrigg (1977), 118.

⁶³ Letter Holt to Savile, 7 December 1734. NA:DD/SR/24/82. John Monson (c.1692-1748) of Burton, Lincolnshire, created Baron Monson, May 1728.

⁶⁴ Shooting and fishing equipment were also sourced by Savile directly from London dealers: in May 1722 'a net for Woodcock 15s and a shooting bay net 1s' were

and horses conducted by Elmsall's family buffered Savile from some of the financial risk inherent in purchasing for his kennels and stables: a hunting horse might cost 30-40 guineas; a young setting dog, 8-10 guineas.⁶⁵ Hounds, spaniels and hunters were frequently sent from Yorkshire to Rufford for a month or season's trial before payment was finalised.

Rufford's kennels seem to have contained a mixture of large scenting hounds and smaller, swifter, northern stock and Yorkshire is their most frequently cited source. Elmsall, on occasions, records sending recently entered whelps from his own pack. In October 1715, for example, he offered Savile five or six couple of 'young beagle hounds that we practice a little'.⁶⁶ Surprisingly, these dogs were recommended on the basis that they would 'runn any Hare downe', suggesting either that Savile kept harriers and fox hounds at this period or that the dogs were being promoted as swift, but as yet untrained to their quarry.⁶⁷ Another important Yorkshire supplier was Mr Bright of Badsworth, a close friend of Elmsall who traded in and bred dogs and horses on behalf of a range of gentleman, including Lords Cardigan and Lonsdale as well as Savile, and who on occasions conducted business with the 7th Baronet (both of a sporting and, at election time, political character) in person.⁶⁸ When in 1720, for example, Elmsall had been informed by Smith that though Savile's hounds were 'in great Strength... their failing seem'd to be want of Power' (meaning, as Elmsall paraphrased, that the pack were 'extraordinary Hunters with good Noses but want metle'), he had at first recommended the addition of sheep feet to their

purchased from Mr Garraway. Savile's Personal Account Book, 1722-7 (NA: DD/SR/211/192/2); for fowling guns and angling see **RECREATIONAL VALUE** in Section 5.1.4.

⁶⁵ Letters Smith to Savile, 5 May & 22 October 1722 (NA: DD/SR/211/227/15,7); Burden's Estate Accounts 1703 (NA: DD/SR/A4/27); Letter Elmsall to Savile, 14 July 1723 (NA: DD/SR/211/6).

⁶⁶ Letter Elmsall to Savile, 8 October 1715. NA: DD/SR/211/2.

⁶⁷ Letter Elmsall to Savile, 20 October 1715. NA: DD/SR/211/2. There is considerable evidence that Elmsall was aware of the need to train dogs to their quarry.

⁶⁸ Letters Elmsall to Savile, 15 January & 29 April 1721, 5 December 1725. NA: DD/SR/211/2. The Brights were a wealthy West Riding family. John Bright (1671-1735) successfully contested Pontefract in 1698, ended his commons career in 1701 but remained active in the Whig interest (Cruickshanks *et al.*, eds. (2002), vol. 3, p. 328); George Brudenell (1685-1732) was 3rd Earl of Cardigan from 1703, Master of the Buckhounds (1712-15) and a prominent Tory; Henry Lowther (1694-1751) became 3rd Viscount Lonsdale in 1713.

diet.⁶⁹ Proving insufficient remedy, in April 1721 he offered Savile a 'Hound whelp' bred by Bright for Lord Lonsdale in addition to three or four couple just ready for entering.⁷⁰ In addition to Bright and Elmsall, the Savile Archives contain references to dogs resourced from both Leicestershire and Derbyshire packs. In 1719, for example, Lord Granby of Belvoir Castle sent a couple and a half of his dogs to Savile's huntsman desiring, as Smith reported, that they 'might be admitted into your pack if they provd worth your Acceptance'.⁷¹ Rufford estate accounts from 1736/1737 record the purchase of '3 couple of young hounds' for 10s 6d from the 3rd Duke of Devonshire's (Chatsworth) huntsman.⁷² Though some of these men had Whig affiliations the degree to which Savile's sporting and political networks overlapped remains uncertain, and Elmsall served both Whig and Tory landowners.

In addition to the purchase of hounds, there are occasional references to dogs from the Rufford kennels being used for cross-breeding. In March 1721, for example, Savile's fox hound, 'Virgin', was sent into Yorkshire for that purpose, though local dogs were more frequently used.⁷³ Those of Mr Pinkney (Mansfield Woodhouse, JP) and Mr Challand (High Sheriff of Nottinghamshire, 1737) are identified in Rufford estate correspondence.⁷⁴ The characteristics being bred for are only rarely specified, but 'a tall whelp' was, in Elmsall's opinion 'a very valuable breed'; and one which Bright was keen to cross with a 'short leg't bitch'.⁷⁵

With regards the sourcing and educating of dogs to hunt for the net and gun, Savile seems to have been even more dependent upon the family of his Yorkshire steward. With few exceptions, the shooting dogs referenced in Savile's estate documents were procured and trained by Elmsall's family.⁷⁶ Spaniels

⁶⁹ Letters Elmsall to Savile, 20 October 1720 & 29 April 1721. NA: DD/SR/211/2. The characterisation suggests a high southern to northern ratio in Savile's pack.

⁷⁰ Letter Elmsall to Savile, 29 April 1721. NA: DD/SR/211/2.

⁷¹ Letter Smith to Savile, 9 February 1719. NA: DD/SR/227/60.

⁷² Holt's Estate Accounts, 1736/1737. NA: DD/SR/6/1/7.

⁷³ Letter Elmsall to Savile, 17 March 1721. NA: DD/SR/211/2.

⁷⁴ Letters Matthew to Savile, 30 December 1728, 9 January, 5 May & 29 March 1729. NA: DD/SR/211/58/25,24,8,14.

⁷⁵ Letters Elmsall to Savile, 1 December & 5 June 1725. NA: DD/SR/211/6.

⁷⁶ Exceptions include a proposal by Rufford's 'shooter' (employed to supply game for London) to train two of Savile's bitches to the gun for 18d a week; the gift of a spaniel

were the recommended breed in the period and certainly preferred by Savile. The Baronet's personal account book of 1729 references the employment of an estate servant at Rufford with explicit responsibility for their upkeep: William Wise at £10 per annum 'To look to my Woods, Game, Spaniels &c'.⁷⁷ Spaniels needed to be trained to range widely,⁷⁸ to 'set' game (stay perfectly still as either a net was passed over them to trap the identified quarry or a gun fired to kill it directly, both methods practised by Savile) and to obey a particular master. As the Baronet was constantly reminded by his Yorkshire steward, 'a setting Dog is very precarious' and 'not to be depended on without a particular knowledge of them'.⁷⁹ In 1709 Henry Hinchiff was paid £1 1s 6d 'for fetching to Yorkshire a Dog, endeavouring to teach him to set, and bringing him back to Rufford', and in September 1717 Elmsall was paid £5 7s 6d 'in consideration of his endeavours to teach a Bitch to Sett'.⁸⁰ Elmsall or his son Raph might accompany Savile in the field to facilitate the transition between early trainer and future master. Yorkshire estate correspondence from June 1714, for example, records Elmsall's suggestion that an extended period spent shooting alongside Savile at Rufford would complete a potential setter's training: 'if I,' wrote Elmsall, 'co'd have the happiness as be call'd to attend of your Honour for ten days ore a fortnight for you to shoot before her – I dobt not but might perfect her to set for ye gunn.'⁸¹

Unlike hounds, spaniels were frequently worked in terrain which was unfamiliar to them, and seem to have been less quarry specific. Significant evidence points to woodcock and partridge as Savile's favoured fowling quarry at Rufford, moor game (grouse, poots⁸² and partridges are specifically referenced) at Thornhill, and though during much of his lifetime Savile possessed at least two spaniels, these might hunt across diverse habitat. The

bitch by Sir William Codrington of Dodrington, Gloucestershire. Letters Smith to Savile, 18 November 1724 & 18 March 1728. NA: DD/SR/211/227/154,163.

⁷⁷ NA: DD/SR/A4/35. A letter from Savile to Madam Savile, 24 August 1730, indicates that Wise had by then been dismissed. NA: DD/SR/211/13/20.

⁷⁸ An activity Smith understood as 'Covering or Spreading over a Great deall of Ground'. Letter Smith to Savile, 2 April 1720. NA: DD/SR/211/227/45.

⁷⁹ Letter Elmsall to Savile, 14 July 1723. NA: DD/SR/211/6.

⁸⁰ Savile's Personal Account Books, 1708-15 & 1715-22. NA: DD/SR/211/319; DD/SR/211/178/1.

⁸¹ Letter Elmsall to Savile, 26 June 1714. NA: DD/SR/211/2.

⁸² A generic term for young moor birds but applied most commonly to grouse. Wright (1855-1930), entry: 'moor'.

Baronet's shooting expeditions routinely encompassed a range of counties. In 1719, for example, after what seems in part to have been a sporting sojourn in Bristol, he broke his journey back to Rufford with a fortnight's shooting and fishing in 'Monmouth (1), Hereford (3), Brecknock (2), Worcester (4), Staffordshir (5), Darbyshir (6)'.⁸³ Reference to this tour is confined to an entry in Savile's personal account book which does not detail the dogs used, though the setting dog Matt, which had been trained by Raph Elmsall on the Yorkshire moors and was kennelled (and presumably also worked) at Rufford, was taken fowling in Ireland when the 7th Baronet and William Elmsall went to appraise the condition of Savile's Irish estate in June 1732.⁸⁴ As with hounds, however, terrain did play a part in conditioning the choice of spaniel build. Elmsall ruled out a 'heavy' dog as unsuitable for shooting at Rufford as 'your large Brecks,' he told Savile, 'wil weary him'.⁸⁵

It is not clear whether Savile shot on foot or from horseback. The purchase in February 1707 of '¼ lb of Gunpowder to teach the Horses to stand fire' and occasional recommendations of a horse for purchase expressly because it would tolerate a gentleman 'to shoot when on his back' suggest that both were customary and practised by the Baronet.⁸⁶ Fox hunting, on the other hand, was a pre-eminently equestrian sport and both Savile and his estate servants attended the field mounted. The acquisition of hunters capable of performing on both Nottinghamshire's sand and clay terrains is a recurrent topic of concern within both Rufford and Thornhill correspondence. Diverse fairs were regularly sourced by Rufford stewards – Warsop, Chesterfield, even Pontefract (ranked by Savile's under-steward, Joshua Mann, 'one of the Best fares in yorkshire for Hunters and Haigney Horses') – and shortage of suitable fox hunters was such that an advertised sale from a private gentleman's stable might justify travel

⁸³ Savile's Personal Accounts Book, 1715-22. NA: DD/SR/211/178/1.

⁸⁴ Letters Elmsall to Savile, 12 August 1728 & 7 September 1729 (NA: DD/SR/211/6) and 3 April & 7 June 1732 (NA: DD/SR/211/3/90,85).

⁸⁵ Letter Elmsall to Savile, 14 July 1723. NA: DD/SR/211/6.

⁸⁶ Burden's Estate Accounts, 1707 (NA: DD/SR/A4/28); Letter Elmsall to Savile, 7 October 1737 (NA: DD/SR/211/4/42); Elmsall's correspondence of 18 February 1726 even suggests that fly fishing might be executed on horseback (NA: DD/SR/211/6).

from Rufford as far afield as Wirksworth in the Peak District.⁸⁷ That said, the task of finding horses fell primarily to Elmsall, whose judgement and network of contacts were acknowledged as superior: 'Mr Elmsall,' observed Smith, 'has both ye choice and skill'.⁸⁸ But even Yorkshire might fail on occasions. In 1715, despairing of satisfying his master's needs, Elmsall suggested that one of Savile's grooms try the 'Jockeys Stables' (presumably associated with the racecourse) in Northampton, and in 1720 he was forced 'to goe 40 miles to a Fair in the North'.⁸⁹ Attention was paid by Savile's stewards to the 'shape' of hunting horses and though there is no evidence that thoroughbreds were sought for purchase, the Savile Archives contain records, particularly from Burden's accounts and correspondence, of thoroughbred horses being used for cross-breeding. In 1707, for example, payments of 10s 9d and 11s were recorded for 'covering' Rufford mares with the Arabian stallions of Lord Dorchester and the Duke of Newcastle respectively.⁹⁰ The following May the grooms of Thoresby and Welbeck were again approached and Burden was able to report that 'The Duke of Newcastle's Groom hath orders to cover one mare [of Savile's] with his Arabian & one with his Spaniard' and that Savile's 'little Bay Mare is cover'd with my Ld Dorchester's Stallion which hath been one of his best Running horse', the 'White mare' with his 'English stallion': services costing the Baronet 10s 9d per mare.⁹¹ Breeding programmes continued at Rufford throughout Savile's ownership. In 1711, for example, it was Lord Lexington's stallion at Kelham which was used,⁹² but the stallions of commercial horse breeders rather than private sportsmen seem to have been increasingly preferred. In 1722 Savile was unwilling to request favours from either the 2nd Duke of Devonshire or Brigadier Sutton and instead

⁸⁷ Letters Smith to Savile, 5 May & 1 August 1722 (NA: DD/SR/211/227/15,11); Letter Mann to Savile, 10 March 1729 (NA: DD/SR/211/58/35); Elmsall also visited Pontefract fair (NA: DD/SR/211/2).

⁸⁸ Letter Smith to Savile, 5 November 1722. NA: DD/SR/211/227/6.

⁸⁹ Letters Elmsall to Savile, 9 October 1715 & 5 June 1720. NA: DD/SR/211/2.

⁹⁰ Burden's Estate Accounts, 1707. NA: DD/SR/A4/28. Evelyn Pierrepont of Thoresby was made Lord Dorchester in 1706, 1st Duke of Kingston, 1715; John Holles, 1st Duke of Newcastle.

⁹¹ Letters Burden to Savile, 10 May & 30 May 1708 (NA: DD/SR/211/435); Burden's Estate Accounts, 1708 (NA: DD/SR/A4/29).

⁹² Burden's Estate Accounts, 1711-12. NA: DD/SR/A4/30.

sent mares to Mr Bright and, after a search at Chesterfield Fair, to a stallion identified in Derbyshire at '1 guinea a leap'.⁹³

Savile generally maintained two hunting horses for his own use. In addition, the Rufford stables contained mounts for his hunting servants and, in 1737, a versatile horse was sought for the use of a guest sportsman: 'strong enough for any weight that can ride a Chace'.⁹⁴ 'Strength' is a word used repeatedly by Savile's stewards to recommend a mount: 'All foxhunters tho' never so light,' commented Elmsall, 'wil have strong Horses'.⁹⁵ It was a quality of paramount importance if injury was to be avoided on the Nottinghamshire clays, but more generally suggests that speed, daring and endurance characterised the pursuit of foxes in this period (see Section 8.3.3). Fox hunters at Rufford were selected to withstand 'a long and brisk fox chace' and excel at 'leaping and Galloping'.⁹⁶

During the first two decades of Savile's ownership, the daily management of Rufford hounds and horses – feeding, physicking, exercise and training – were primarily the responsibility of two men: a groom, Robert Osborne, and a huntsman, John Shelton. The former boarded at the Hall and was responsible for the hunters' stables;⁹⁷ the latter resided in the Keeper's Lodge, Old Park, and saw to the kennels, which were also located in the park. This conventional division of responsibility was disrupted in 1720 by the dismissal of Osborne for 'idleness and carelessness with several other defects'.⁹⁸ The occasion allowed Smith to propose, for broadly economic reasons, a novel restructuring whereby Savile's huntsman would live at the Hall and serve both as groom and huntsman, while one of Savile's day-labourers would lodge with the keeper and assume Shelton's routine management of the dogs – 'clean ye kennel, make the dogs meat'.⁹⁹ Despite the Baronet's initial objections – 'Inconsistent with ye hunting and well

⁹³ Letters Smith to Savile, 30 April & 5 May 1722. NA: DD/SR/211/227/16,15.

⁹⁴ Letter Elmsall to Savile, 12 October 1737. NA: DD/SR/211/4/41a.

⁹⁵ Letter Elmsall to Savile, 10 November 1728. NA: DD/SR/211/6.

⁹⁶ Letter Elmsall to Savile, 28 August 1711. NA: DD/SR/211/2.

⁹⁷ Letter Smith to Savile, 17 February 1722. NA: DD/SR/211/227/25. Work horses were stabled in 'Abby Yard', west of the kitchen garden (see Figure 4.1b).

⁹⁸ While praising Osborne's skill as a farrier, Smith criticised both his over-physicking of the horses and general lack of commitment to the work. Letter Smith to Savile, 7 March 1720. NA: DD/SR/211/227/47.

⁹⁹ Letters Smith to Savile, 12 March & 2 April 1720. NA: DD/SR/211/227/46,45.

managing of ye hounds in one person' and so would compromise the pack's performance – the new arrangement, in defence of which Madam Savile's intercession was sought by Smith, became established as Rufford practice.¹⁰⁰ In 1727, Thomas Shelton, who had been employed by Savile to tend to the coach horses since 1721, took over from his brother. Rufford estate accounts from 1730 onwards record Thomas Shelton as Rufford 'Groom and Huntsman' (annual salary £10), Charles Glegg (junior) as 'Under Groom' (annual salary £8).¹⁰¹ Prior to John Shelton's departure, young Charles Glegg had been taught 'to whip in ye hounds' and he almost certainly assisted Thomas Shelton in the field.¹⁰²

8.3.2 The 'country' regularly hunted by Savile's fox hounds

'Foxes,' stated Beckford, 'are not capricious... They generally have a point to go to... [and] seldom fail to make it good at the last'.¹⁰³ To hunt effectively dogs needed to know the terrain and the huntsman the location of fox earths and likely flight path of the quarry under chase.¹⁰⁴ Nothing, in Beckford's opinion, was therefore more essential to a successful chase than that the huntsman knew his country.

Tom Shelton hunted the Rufford hounds once a week and sometimes three times a fortnight throughout the winter months and claimed, when challenged by Mann in 1729, that Savile allowed hunting to proceed 'all the same as your honor was at Rufford'.¹⁰⁵ It seems reasonable to assume, therefore, that the territory hunted by the Sheltons (John and Thomas), which is moderately well-documented in estate correspondence, described at least in part that favoured by Savile, for which the direct evidence is far more limited.

Figures 8.1a & 8.1b show a selection of hunts performed by the Rufford hounds during Savile's absence mapped respectively onto Charles Smith's 1804

¹⁰⁰ Letter Smith to Madam Savile, 4 June 1720. NA: DD/SR/211/227/41/1.

¹⁰¹ Thomas Shelton had previously 'lived with Sir Francis Molyneux as footman', helped in the stables and learnt to drive a coach 'very well'. Letter Smith to Savile, 17 February 1721. NA: DD/SR/211/227/25.

¹⁰² Letter Smith (junior) to Savile, 31 March 1722. NA: DD/SR/211/227/20.

¹⁰³ Beckford (1781), 279.

¹⁰⁴ Fox earth is a term used for underground hollows or dens favoured by foxes.

¹⁰⁵ Letter Holt to Savile, 18 March 1732 (NA: DD/SR/211/24/24); Letter Mann to Savile, 4 January 1729 (NA: DD/SR/211/58/31).

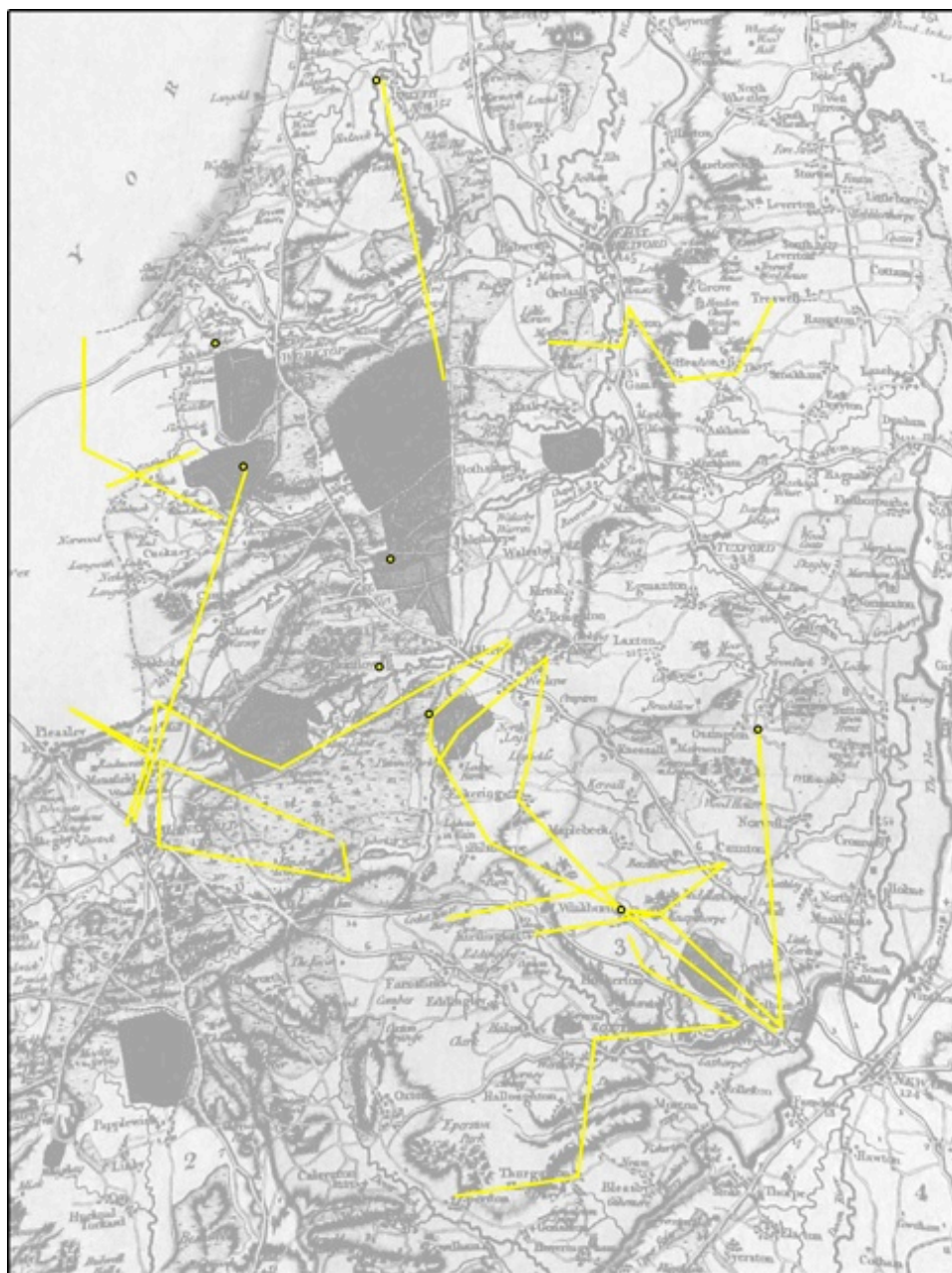


Figure 8.1a: Hunts performed by the 7th Baronet's hounds (1714-39) mapped onto Charles Smith's *Map of the County of Nottinghamshire* (1804).

- Yellow lines trace the routes of recorded chases.
- On occasions the course of a chase was not fully recorded but the locations of significant events within it – where the hunt began, the place where the fox was killed – were identified. Where possible, these have been marked with a yellow spot circled in black.

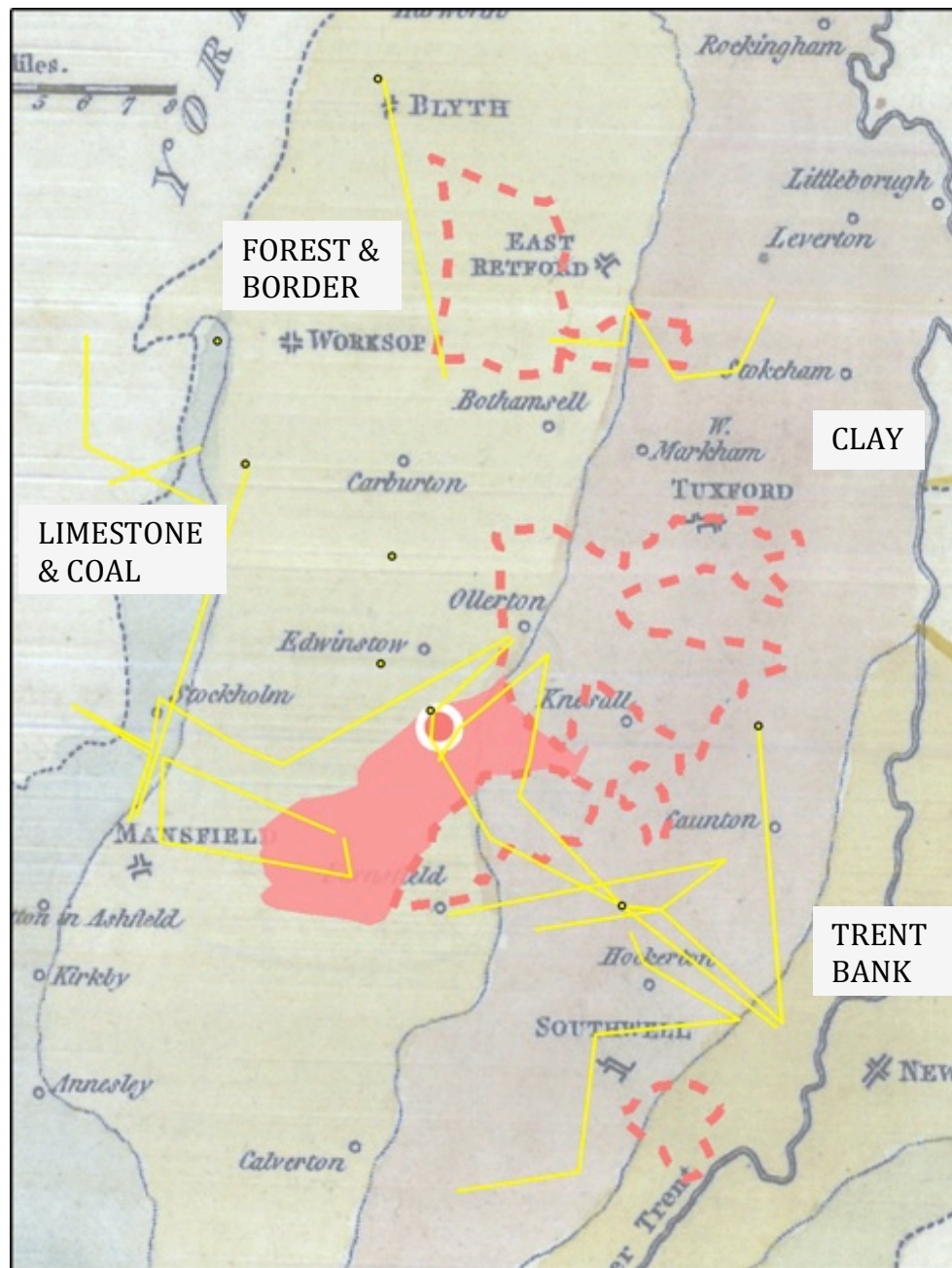


Figure 8.1b: Hunts performed by the 7th Baronet's hounds (1714-39) mapped onto Robert Lowe's *Map of the Soils of Nottinghamshire* (1794).

- To highlight the proportion of time spent in pursuit of foxes across the Rufford Estate relative to that spent on ground held by neighbouring landowners, the land distribution of the Rufford Estate in 1743 has also been shown – solid red = Rufford Liberty, dotted enclosures = land in multiple ownership.
- As in Figure 8.1a, yellow lines trace the routes of recorded chases; significant locations related to fox hunts are marked with a yellow spot circled in black.

Map of the County of Nottinghamshire and Robert Lowe's survey of the county's soil types (1794). The area encompassed by Rufford estate holdings c.1743 has been highlighted on Lowe's map, a distinction being made between Rufford Liberty (under the sole ownership of Savile) and townships on the clay which were divided among multiple landowners (see Section 3.3.1). The most striking features thus made apparent are the considerable scale of the country hunted by Savile's hounds and the variety of terrains they regularly traversed. Rufford hunting country extended as far north of the Hall as Blyth, as far east as Treswell and Kelham, west as Kiveton and Whitwell, south as Epperstone and Thurgarton.¹⁰⁶ This was an area comparable to that enjoyed by the Rufford subscription pack in the second half of the eighteenth century.¹⁰⁷ Much of the ground was far beyond the boundaries of the Rufford Estate, an observation which speaks against Bovill's generalisation that the private packs of eighteenth-century fox hunters 'seldom had cause to look for a fox beyond their vast estates'.¹⁰⁸ Moreover, though the data is insufficient to draw firm conclusions, the impression suggested by the mappings is that Savile's huntsmen may actually have avoided hunting on Rufford estate ground, particularly the tenanted clay. That said, Savile entered into negotiations with his tenants over the preservation of foxes (see Section 8.4.2) and estate documents record the vigilance with which both hunting and shooting within Rufford Liberty was policed, indications that Savile himself hunted this area.¹⁰⁹ Beckford recognises that a fox hunter, to make the most of his sporting country, needed to be strategic in its use. In particular, he should preserve the quality of convenient quarry. To this end, wherever other sites presented, he should avoid drawing coverts close to home and certainly desist late in the season: 'they should not be much disturbed after Christmas. Foxes will then resort to them, will breed there,

¹⁰⁶ See Appendix 8.1.

¹⁰⁷ *Nottinghamshire in Hobson's Fox-Hunting Atlas*, London: J. & C. Walker, 1870.

¹⁰⁸ Bovill (1959), 31.

¹⁰⁹ In addition to a keeper and woodtenters, in September 1726 Savile appointed his Elmsley warrener, Joseph Falkonbridge, as 'Deputy Forrest Keeper of Rufford & Hemsley=Rail=Walk & to Preserve ye Game' (NA: DD/SR/229/13/9); dormant warrants authorised to Rufford estate servants facilitated the apprehension of poachers (NA: DD/SR/218/34/1-3).

and you can preserve them with little trouble.’¹¹⁰ All the available evidence suggests that Savile’s principal hunting season at Rufford was between October and early January. Not only were the chases described in Figures 8.1a & 8.1b enjoyed in Savile’s absence, but also in January and February, the end of the fox-hunting season.¹¹¹

The country hunted by Savile’s fox hounds encompassed four distinct geological zones. Moving from west to east: the limestone and coal district on the Derbyshire border (Annesley, Worksop, Kirkby etc.); forest sand lands of the central zone (Rufford, Clipstone, Mansfield etc.); clay land to the east (Winkburn, Kirklington, Thurgaton, etc.); alluvium/marl of Trent Bank (Kelham, Averham, etc.).¹¹² Different soil types presented different sporting challenges both in terms of the way the scent clung to the ground and the demands made on dogs and horses (see Section 8.3.1). Hunting on clay placed considerable strain upon the horses of the period. Both Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire steward correspondence highlight the difficulty of finding Savile mounts capable of galloping and leaping on such terrain. In 1721, for example, a ‘strong clay hunter’ was expressly sought to carry the Baronet ‘fox chases in Durly clay Rings’ and only after an extended search was a gelding of Lord Lonsdale’s finally purchased through the mediation of Mr Bright and for ‘a Great Deal of money’.¹¹³ Chambers, in his history of eighteenth-century Nottinghamshire, draws attention to the relationships between soil type, agricultural system, patterns of tenure and enclosure history. Since enclosure involved hedging, his study offers a broad indication of the distribution of one of the huntsman’s principle obstacles in the field. One appeal of hunting the limestone borders and pasture grounds of Trent Vale might have been the excitement of leaping the mature hedgerows of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century enclosures. Diversity of sporting challenge, however, was probably secondary to the distribution of foxes in determining the location of a chase.

¹¹⁰ Beckford (1781), 248-9.

¹¹¹ Howlett, Giles and Cox all state 25 March as the closing date of the fox-hunting season.

¹¹² Lowe (1794), 8; Chambers (1966, first published 1932), ch. 6.

¹¹³ Letters Smith to Savile, 20 March & 20 May 1721 (NA: DD/SR/211/227/37,33); see also 1 August 1722 (NA: DD/SR/211/227/11).

Approximately 10,000 acres of Rufford Liberty lay upon Sherwood Forest sand land (see Table 3.1). Moreover, 'by ancient grant of the Crown', Savile held the appointment of 'Chief Keeper of Rufford [Walk]'. In 1716 he was appointed Chief Forester and Keeper 'of the office and walk of Clipston Shroggs in ye said Forest of Sherwood' and in 1729, 'Forest Keeper', positions that granted Savile hunting privileges.¹¹⁴ Chambers refers to the forest, along with the limestone ground of the far west and marshland of the far north of the county, as 'Natural Waste': despite brecks, small early enclosures for pasturage in the border regions and stretches of woodland, much was heath (see **SAND LANDS** in Section 3.3.1). Such open ground offered the potential of long runs during a chase. However, newly established wood grounds might be large, as, if local testimony is to be credited, might areas of ancient woods: Savile encoppiced two c.50 acre areas of his forest ground (see Section 6.1.3); William Wylde of Nettleworth (died 1780) described the landscape between Mansfield and Nottingham 'one continuous wood'.¹¹⁵ Large woods frequently meant a high density of quarry: fox and hare in general, but, in the forest, also deer. Holt's reflections, recorded in late January 1735 after several aborted chases within the area, highlight that too many foxes might be as great a threat to a successful day's sport as too few:

The hounds... have been Out a Hunting in the Woods severall times this Winter but cou'd not make any thing out, for the Ground was so very wet, and they so often chang'd the Fox's (Having great plenty in the Woods) that the[y] cou'd not Kill.¹¹⁶

Beckford advises that young fox hounds should always be 'well blooded to fox' before being trusted in forest grounds, to obviate the attractions of deer and

¹¹⁴ Entry dated 3 June 1729 in a 'Catalogue of Papers titled Writings of Consequence No:1', compiled 3 October 1743 (NA: DD/SR/229/13); appointment, 26 June 1716 (NA: DD/SR/229/13/16); appointment, 1729 (NA: DD/SR/207/71). Keepership of a walk was generally granted for life. Private communication Dr David Fletcher, London Metropolitan University, March 2011.

¹¹⁵ Words recalled by his son, Dr Wylde, prebend of Southwell, quoted in Groves (1894), 82. Sherwood made a bleaker impression upon a London gentleman: Resta Patching recorded the route between Nottingham and Mansfield, July 1755, 'as remarkable for nothing but a deep sandy Road... and a Desart, overgrown with Heath and Fern.' Patching (1757), Letter II.

¹¹⁶ Letter Holt to Savile, 13 January 1735. NA: DD/SR/211/24/85.

hare.¹¹⁷ Despite such hazards, the 7th Baronet actively increased the fox density within his forest coverts and ranked Rufford Liberty his 'best hunting'.¹¹⁸

8.3.3 The style of Savile's fox hunting and landscape interventions aimed at its enhancement

...draw with your Hounds about Groves, Thickets, and Bushes near Villages: for a Fox will lurk in such places, to prey on young Pigs and Pullein [poultry; term originally used to indicate young birds].¹¹⁹

...so hotly pursued, that he can't secure himself in those *Coverts* and *Places* he is acquainted with... [the fox will] trust wholly to his Feet, leading them [the hunting party] from *Wood* to *Wood*, a *Ring* of four, six, or ten Miles and sometimes endways about twenty miles, trying all the *Earths* he knows, which as near as possible should be stopt the Night before the *Hunting*...¹²⁰

From the descriptive evidence of Shelton's hunting activities (Appendix 8.1), Cox and Blome would appear to provide a fair representation of early eighteenth-century practice. The fox chases described in Rufford estate correspondence (see Appendix 8.1) invariably commenced in and frequently passed between woodland enclosures – Winkburn Woods, Ossington Woods, woods at Cresswell Craggs, Eperston Woods, Mather Wood, Mansfield Woods, Treswell and Gamston Woods, Warsop Woods, White, Stubb and Dilimer Woods are all singled out in the letters, together with a range of gorse coverts.

What Blome and Cox make no reference to, however, is the planting of new sporting coverts.

LANDSCAPING FOR SPORT: COVERTS AND RIDES

Two landscape interventions are widely cited as having steered the development of fox hunting towards its modern focus on equestrian daring and pace: Parliamentary enclosure, which resulted in a marked extension in fence

¹¹⁷ Beckford (1781), 93.

¹¹⁸ Letter Smith (junior) to Savile, 31 March 1722. NA: DD/SR/211/227/20.

¹¹⁹ Cox (1706), 100.

¹²⁰ Blome (1686), part 2, 88-9.

coverage and concomitant leaping, and the establishment of a network of sporting coverts. Bryden sums up the impact of the latter:

Small coverts were planted, as it began to be recognised by the new school that hunting in the great woodlands often meant long and tedious days of slow sport, and that from gorse coverts, planted in convenient parts of the country, first-rate runs in the open were most frequently obtained.¹²¹

Coverts contributed to the speed of the sport in three significant ways: they provided a swifter means of locating foxes; they raised stock numbers by providing suitable breeding habitat; since foxes tend to run between coverts they permitted the exercise of greater control over the course of a chase. Though Carr contends that the 'planting of artificial gorse or blackthorn coverts' became prevalent from the late eighteenth century,¹²² the evidence of landscape practices at Rufford suggests that their benefits were beginning to be recognised in the opening decades of the century.

In late 1719 Savile expressed a desire to have an area of forest breck land, part if not all of which had hitherto been tenanted sheep walk, planted up with gorse. Though the Baronet's motives go unrecorded, improvement in the quality of Rufford's hunting ground was almost certainly a prime consideration. Once the extent of the proposed area (c.50 acres) had been ascertained by Smith, the latter was swift to suggest a design for the site which would maximise its sporting potential by ensuring a covert size (6-8 acres) that could be efficiently ranged by hounds. Notably, it is to Madam Savile that Smith's letter is addressed:

...if my master please to Consider that 50 Acres is a Great Deall & when it Grows to a thick Cover ye hounds wont be able to make anything break out, And it will hinder his Riding makes me propose whether Two pieces Each about Six or Eight Acres One at that Corner next Umoss Russells and ye other at ye Corner next Edwinstow would not be Sufficient.¹²³

¹²¹ Bryden (1904), 130.

¹²² Carr (1976), 114.

¹²³ Letter Smith to Madam Savile, 1 February 1720. NA: DD/SR/211/227/52.

From subsequent correspondence it is clear that some time prior to this event a gorse enclosure had been established on Rufford warren ground at Elmsley Lodge. Madam Savile had again been consulted, and on that occasion purchased the pre-requisite seed at 6d per lb.¹²⁴

Despite this previous experience, Smith's correspondence reveals considerable local uncertainty about the optimum density of sowing, suggesting that planting gorse was still a fairly uncommon practice. Savile's gardener was reported 'a stranger to ye seed... & consequently to what quantity may serve' as were other estate gardeners in the area.¹²⁵ During the course of enquiries it was ascertained that the Duke of Newcastle (John Holles, died 1711) had sown about 16 acres, and that the man responsible for the work (who had relied on directions from the London supplier) recollected using about a bushel of seed. As Smith pointed out, however, a bushel was not a standardised measure (4 pecks in London, 8 pecks locally) and further clarification was therefore necessary.¹²⁶ Finally, after almost a month, Smith was able to inform Madam Savile that 'by ye best Enquirys' 'half a peck of Gorsseed is too little to sow an Acre of Ground that Three quarters of a peck will not make them too thick'.¹²⁷ This recommendation had to be reassessed on finding that there was 'no such thing as Gors seed to be had' locally and that the commodity was extremely dear in London. Smith's revised approach was to use a smaller quantity of seed and fence the crop so that the tender roots might be 'preserved to branch', the thick bushes would then, it was hoped, shed their own seeds and improve cover. The fencing issue clearly implied additional expense, though, as Smith explained, it could be postponed until the following year as the breck in question would be enclosed for corn until Michaelmas.¹²⁸ By March, however, when the seed arrived from London – £9 5s of 'gorse seed to sow in ye forest' supplied by Mr Turner¹²⁹ – Smith had a fresh proposal for recouping costs without detriment to the gorse. Namely, that the young bushes be interspersed with oak trees:

¹²⁴ Letter Smith to Savile, 10 February 1720. NA: DD/SR/211/227/50.

¹²⁵ Letter Smith to Savile, 24 December 1719. NA: DD/SR/211/227/55.

¹²⁶ Letter Smith to Savile, 9 January 1720. NA: DD/SR/211/227/53.

¹²⁷ Letter Smith to Madam Savile, 1 February 1720. NA: DD/SR/211/227/52.

¹²⁸ Letter Smith to Savile, 10 February 1720. NA: DD/SR/211/227/50.

¹²⁹ Savile's Personal Account Book, 1715-22. NA: DD/SR/211/178/1.

...when we have Sowd ye Gors Seed we may Expect Severall opens, vacancys, or Miss Spotts those will appear in One year then if Acorns were Sowd Trees planted & in ye Midle of ye Roomyest or Largest vacancys theyd be fenced by ye Gorse and so far from them & their Growing branches that Doubtles theyd Do well and thrive finely.¹³⁰

The degree of consultation this intervention entailed seems at first surprising, particularly given that gorse was native to the forest. However, it was the very fact that it was native which made active cultivation such a novelty. When trying to purchase seed Smith was not even sure of the variety he desired: 'I believe our Gorse are ye same as ye french only Stockt or Dwarf't with sheep' he advised Savile when the latter was seeking suppliers in London.¹³¹ As Kerr records and Rufford estate correspondence corroborates, tenant farmers were more accustomed to the challenge and expense of stubbing the crop up in order to cultivate the ground.¹³² Even where, as within Sherwood Forest, the economic value of gorse (as fodder for rabbits, sheep and deer) was recognised and the bushes regularly cropped, they were customarily replenished without any need for fencing. As Smith explained to Savile, the root stock of old native plants was so strong that if stunted bushes were burnt they would sprout up with such vigour that a thick bush would result 'in spite of ye sheep'.¹³³

In 1727 a further gorse enclosure was established at Rufford 'in ye forest'.¹³⁴ The location is uncertain but the area seems to have been on tenanted ground (probably breck land) and of c.10 acres, a comparable scale to the sporting optimum advised by Smith.¹³⁵ French gorse seed was now confidently specified – 81 lbs (at 1s 6d per lb) were supplied by Mr Garraway of Fleet Street,

¹³⁰ Letter Smith to Savile, 27 February (1 March on *verso*) 1720. NA: DD/SR/211/227/48.

¹³¹ Letter Smith to Savile, 10 February 1720. NA: DD/SR/211/227/50.

¹³² Bere Regis Churchwardens' Accounts, 1732, quoted in Kerr (1993, first published 1968), 151.

¹³³ NA: DD/SR/211/227/50.

¹³⁴ Savile's Personal Account Book, 1727-32. NA: DD/SR/A4/35.

¹³⁵ Area estimated on the basis of seed volume stated – 6 pecks – and planting density previously adopted. Letters Smith to Savile, 11 November & 2 December 1727, 1 January 1728. NA: DD/SR/211/227/180,178,173.

London in January 1728¹³⁶ – and the pre-requisite ground preparation more securely established:

...it Ought to be plowd Three times and harowed well the finer Tis
ye better[.] Spring is ye Time to provide Seed & Sow.¹³⁷

By April 1728 the only remaining uncertainty related to fencing economics: from where should the necessary ‘stakes and bindings’ be taken? Wellow Park, the most common source, was disapproved of by Smith because of the high transport costs which would be incurred. Instead, he recommended plashing the hedge in Nottingham Road by Old Park.¹³⁸ Smith’s proposal suggests that, like the coverts established in 1719, the new gorse was intended for forest land southwest of the Hall.

In addition to Savile’s new coverts and the 16 acre stretch planted by the Duke of Newcastle sometime prior to 1711, descriptions of fox chases performed by Savile’s huntsman (Appendix 8.1) include references to gorse coverts at Clown near Welbeck Carrs and Ollerton Hills, to Clipstone Gorse Break, ‘Pawmer’s [Palmer’s] Gorse’ near Mansfield and a ‘large gorse cover’ near Worksop. A new gorse plantation would have taken time to establish: the first mention of foxes harbouring in Savile’s French gorse does not occur until 1739, almost 20 years after the first site was sown and over 10 after the second.¹³⁹ That many of the above-mentioned coverts were either sites for the commencement or termination of a hunt suggests that they were well-established by the time the chases occurred. Rather than being new coverts established with their hunting potential foremost in mind, they might instead have been areas of native gorse recognised for their sporting value. Savile’s coverts were almost certainly motivated by his enjoyment of shooting (see **PARKS** in Section 3.3.2) as well as fox hunting, in addition to fodder for the warrens etc.

¹³⁶ Savile’s Personal Account Book, 1727-32 (NA: DD/SR/A4/35); Smith quotes 84 lbs in his letter to Savile, 28 January 1728 (NA: DD/SR/211/227/168).

¹³⁷ Letter Smith to Savile, 11 November 1727. NA: DD/SR/211/227/180.

¹³⁸ A recommendation subsequently acted upon. Letters Smith to Savile, 10 January & 8 April 1728. NA: DD/SR/211/227/171,160.

¹³⁹ Letter Holt to Savile, 28 April 1739. NA: DD/SR/211/24/154b.

A second landscaping practice, well-established at Rufford by the late 1710s and continued throughout Savile's ownership, was the construction of rides through spring woods, parkland and on forest ground (see Chapter 7). Though sport was not the sole end for which these features were designed, rides would have facilitated swift passage through densely planted areas and orientation in the landscape,¹⁴⁰ and perhaps most important in a sporting context, the casting of hounds and sighting of quarry, whether fox, deer or bird (see Section 7.1.2).

THE CHASE

As the quotation from Cox which introduced this section makes clear, fox chases regularly began with the 'drawing' or flushing out of quarry from its cover. The importance of training hounds to 'cast' or 'range' widely is highlighted in Rufford estate correspondence. When in 1720 change to the management of Savile's hounds caused the Baronet apprehension, Shelton reassured his master that the new arrangement would encourage the hounds 'to observe an Assistant or Assistants on ye field that should share with him in making ye hounds to Cast broad and a very Great Distance without which there never could be a pack of Good fox hounds'.¹⁴¹ In Beckford's opinion, wide casting was even more important in open country than woodland.¹⁴²

A 'fine chase', as understood by Savile and his servants, was both a long chase – in terms of duration 3 hours is recorded with satisfaction; circuits as long as 30 miles (see Appendix 8.1) – and included hard sprints. Savile's hunting style, as Elmsall observed, was to be carried 'at the heels of any Fox Dogs', and it is not uncommon for estate correspondence to include details such as 'they runn him [the fox] above half an hour'.¹⁴³ Savile, it would seem, if not amongst Anonymous 1733's 'younger Gentry' who considered 'Out-riding their Neighbours, to be the best part of the Sport', certainly valued a fast chase.

¹⁴⁰ Trees, particularly holly, were often planted by gates to help orientate fox hunters. Kerr (1993), 149. Surtees (1908, p. 111) highlights the challenges of dense woodland to huntsmen.

¹⁴¹ Recommendations relayed by Smith, 2 April 1720. NA: DD/SR/211/227/45.

¹⁴² Beckford (1781), 264.

¹⁴³ Letter Elmsall to Savile, 15 January 1721 (NA: DD/SR/211/2); Letter Holt to Savile, 31 January 1735 (NA: DD/SR/211/24/85).

Contrary to Bovill's view, early fences were not merely 'jumped standing or at a trot' by elite sportsman and their hunt servants, rather, 'flying leapers' were, if not already fashionable, certainly becoming so.¹⁴⁴ As early as 1717 Elmsall was emphatic that unless Savile's hunters were 'in good leaping' they would be 'spoyl'd the first strong Chace', and in estate correspondence from 1722, Smith's appraisal of a new hunter (purchased for a mere 11 guineas) concluded that 'tho' not near so handsome' as Savile's current mount, he was not only as strong 'but Speedyer... Leaps well both Standing, flying or Leads over'.¹⁴⁵ Savile was by no means unusual in his preferences. When in 1720 Elmsall was asked to fit one of the Baronet's relations, Mr Newton, with a mount, 'the Character of a fine Leaper' was a significant purchase point.¹⁴⁶

That the exigencies of the Nottinghamshire terrain coupled to the speed at which the chase was pursued on occasions taxed both dogs and horses beyond their capabilities, is suggested by casualties and 'failures' in the field. At the end of a near 30 mile chase Smith recorded that the hounds had killed their fox but 'poor Jupiter [one of Savile's pack] burst his heart to come up with Renny & is Dead'.¹⁴⁷ It is not uncommon to find references such as 'ye mare Tired & faded so much that Shelton quite Lost the whole pack'.¹⁴⁸ That said, the majority of chases recorded in estate correspondence resulted in the fox being 'run down'. Beckford asserts that for a 'true fox-hunter' 'the chief pleasure of the chace' was '*the killing of the fox*'.¹⁴⁹ The extent to which even by the late eighteenth century this view was widely held is uncertain. The evidence of Rufford does, however, indicate that a static fox was not deemed a suitable quarry: the objective was to kill the fox in the field even if this entailed the expense of digging the creature out, releasing it and then continuing the pursuit.

From the evidence of Rufford estate accounts from the 1730s and 1740s, the task of unearthing the fox invariably fell to either Savile's huntsman

¹⁴⁴ Bovill (1959), 32.

¹⁴⁵ In 1725 Elmsall questioned the suitability of an otherwise 'strong Guelding' because of the animal's 'Short walk and his slow leaping'. Letters Elmsall to Savile, 8 July 1717 & 1 December 1725 (NA: DD/SR/211/2,6); Letter Smith to Savile, 1 August 1722. (NA: DD/SR/211/227/11).

¹⁴⁶ Letter Elmsall to Savile, 5 June 1720. NA: DD/SR/211/2.

¹⁴⁷ Letter Smith to Savile, 26 January 1719. NA: DD/SR/211/227/62.

¹⁴⁸ Letter Smith to Savile, 24 December 1719. NA: DD/SR/211/227/55.

¹⁴⁹ Beckford (1781), 179.

(successive Sheltons) or under-groom (successive Gleggs), for which they earned 1s 6d in excess of their standard wage for every fox dug.¹⁵⁰ Descriptions of practice in the field are too limited to ascertain whether there was a particular ritual around the kill, although on occasions ‘trophies’ were taken. In January 1734, for example, when Savile’s pack were lent to Mr Thorney ‘to kill a fox that haunted his sheep walk’, Thorney’s gratitude for a successful chase took the form of praise for the hounds and the forwarding to Savile of the fox’s ear.¹⁵¹ Evidence suggests that the Rufford hounds were not permitted to eat the fox except at the end of the season, when in order to ‘lay them up in blood’ Shelton might recourse to a ‘bag fox’, which by the 1740s sold at 5s.¹⁵²

Holt’s account of the chase in Mr Thorney’s sheep walk highlights a feature common to many of the hunt descriptions in Rufford correspondence. It was generally the hounds rather than horses (despite considerable attention given to their selection and management) that were singled out for praise and comment. Possession of a high performance pack, it would appear, was a more notable source of sporting pride than a high calibre steed.

8.4 Neighbourly Accord and Savile’s Desire to Hunt the County

A claim reiterated in hunting literature since at least the seventeenth century and considered by modern scholars as pertinent also to the medieval period, is that field sports were essential elements in establishing and maintaining social cohesion within the upper echelons of English society. ‘As a widely shared passion,’ concludes Miles on from his study of medieval parks, ‘hunting might unite the aristocracy, strengthening relationships’.¹⁵³ ‘It served,’ to quote Munsche, ‘as a symbol to English country gentlemen of the virtues of their class’.¹⁵⁴ It was also, as Schechner observes, ‘self-conscious theatrical display’,

¹⁵⁰ Holt’s Estate Accounts, 1735/1736 & 1740/1741. NA: DD/SR/6/1/6,11.

¹⁵¹ Letter Holt to Savile, 26 January 1734. NA: DD/SR/211/24/54a.

¹⁵² ‘Bag foxes’, later referred to as ‘bagmen’, were foxes imported into an area to provide sport where there was local shortage. Letter Smith to Savile, 12 April 1721 (NA: DD/SR/211/227/36); Holt’s Estate Accounts, 1742/1743 (NA: DD/SR/6/1/13); Carr (1976), 111.

¹⁵³ Miles on (2009), 146.

¹⁵⁴ Munsche (1981), 19.

and, as Mileson substantiates, ‘display helped reinforce power’.¹⁵⁵ The territory over which one could hunt (or delegate one’s huntsman as proxy to hunt) was a clear indication of ownership, or peer equality where the right had been gifted. It could serve to reaffirm rights which if not demonstrated publicly might be usurped, as well as signify the possession of wealth and leisure. Qualified sportsmen often took to the field together, and, as Munsche’s work makes clear, an increasingly complex system of statute laws between 1671 and 1831 was designed to restrict hunting to the privileged landowning few and those who were authorised to attend them. Field sports, however, could also be a source of tension. One landowner’s coveted sporting quarry – whether deer or fox – might be viewed by another as simply an unwelcome predator. By enclosing a spring wood, assarting a piece of forest land,¹⁵⁶ or extending a park into what had hitherto been wasteland or common ground, a landowner might be denying his neighbour access to previously unrestricted hunting territory.

8.4.1 Access to hunting territory outside the Rufford Estate

Rufford hounds traversed both the Crown land of Sherwood Forest and parks, woods, warrens and tenanted farmland of neighbouring landowners. Sporting privilege within English forests was regulated by a complex of Forest and Common Law, the latter applying for non-forest offences within the forest.¹⁵⁷ Langton quotes forest legislation prohibiting not only the killing of deer without warrant in private chases, parks, warrens and their purlieus, but also any harm to or chase of deer, or anything else – ‘because it disquieteth the Beasts of the Forest’.¹⁵⁸ Where an owner had been granted franchise of free warren, hunting prohibitions were in theory still more exhaustive: the franchise holder could protect and prosecute offenders against ‘beasts of the warren’, which included

¹⁵⁵ Schechner (2002, first published 1994), 614 (quotation), 620-2; Mileson (2009), 107.

¹⁵⁶ An ‘assart’ is a piece of land cleared of trees and bushes and fit for cultivation.

¹⁵⁷ See Langton (2005), 5 & (2010), 17; de Belin (2010), 37-8; Munsche (1981), 14.

¹⁵⁸ Coke, E., *The Fourth Part of the Institutes of the Laws of England: Concerning the Jurisdiction of the Courts*, London, 1644, p. 314, quoted in Langton (2010), 15. The warrant required was from whoever was lord of the chase: the Crown in royal forests such as Sherwood, but others in ‘private forests’ such as Cranborne Chase.

foxes and hares.¹⁵⁹ Savile, as a Forest Keeper and possessor of franchises to free warren (Elmsley, Winkerfield and Pittance), held hunting rights on the forest and there is no evidence that his freedom to hunt either fox or hare was restricted within Sherwood's bounds.¹⁶⁰ The freedom of his estate servants is less clear. Records of action taken against those who contravened either Forest or Statute Law (or both) with regards hunting on Rufford estate ground suggest that measures taken to curb unauthorised hunting were highly case specific.¹⁶¹ When in March 1728 Tom Stroud (hunter, but no indication in whose service) was exercising 'his Stag hounds', the dogs entered Old Park, killing two bucks and a doe.¹⁶² Given that Thomas Shelton, who was policing the park, made every effort to chase them off, it seems unlikely that Stroud was hunting with Savile's consent.¹⁶³ But there is no mention of prosecution or even a formal cautioning of Stroud in the Savile Archives.¹⁶⁴ When Bayley, the Duke of Kingston's keeper, was apprehended shooting with dogs in Eakring-Brail wood, however, Holt reported to Savile: 'I told him Your Honour did not allow... Gentlemen Servants to Shoot, or Destroy Game any where in Your Liberty'.¹⁶⁵

After 1610 most gentlemen and noblemen in England had the right to possess dogs and nets and to hunt deer, rabbits and game on their own grounds. The Game Act of 1671 both restricted the number of sportsmen to whom this privilege was granted (henceforth only those with freeholds worth £100 a year or leaseholds worth £150) and extended their access to quarry: 'The qualified sportsman could... [now] hunt where he pleased'.¹⁶⁶ Nevertheless, sportsmen

¹⁵⁹ See discussion of Royal franchises in Munsche (1981), 10, 189 fn. 12. On the creation of free warrens through royal grants under Forest Law see Crook (2001), 232-43.

¹⁶⁰ Evidence identified by the present author of prohibitions on Savile's use of land within Sherwood Forest is limited to silviculture and the creation of brecks. See Section 6.1.3; 'Order for Brecks Inclosures &c at Rufford 1665' (NA: DD/SR/229/13/21); Chapter 3, fn. 121.

¹⁶¹ This was typical in the period, see King (2000), 1, 10.

¹⁶² Letters Smith to Savile, 25 March & 6 April 1728. NA: DD/SR/211/227/162, 161.

¹⁶³ Statute 13 Car. II c.10 made it unlawful to 'course, kill, hurt or take away any red or fallow deer... without the consent of the owner or person chiefly intrusted with the custody thereof' within 'any forest, chase, purlieu, paddock, wood, park or other ground where deer are or have been usually kept'. Quoted in MacDermot (1911), 104-5.

¹⁶⁴ That said, estate correspondence is interrupted June-November 1728; for hunting regulations pertaining to attendants where a licence had been granted to chase in a park see Giles (1718), 68-9.

¹⁶⁵ Letter Holt to Savile, 3 March 1732. NA: DD/SR/211/24/45.

¹⁶⁶ Munsche (1981), 12; see also Raithby, ed. (1819), vol. 5, pp. 745-6.

were still subject to the law of trespass, and, as Rufford steward correspondence documents, Savile endeavoured to restrict the hunting and shooting activities of even the qualified in his spring woods and parks.¹⁶⁷ It seems reasonable to assume that Sir George's hunting within neighbouring estates was similarly regulated. Furthermore, although the 1671 act granted any qualified sportsman unrestricted right to game, documents in the Savile Archives suggest that earlier legislation tying rights to landownership was still respected. In December 1726 the 7th Baronet received a 'Deputation for ye game in manor of Southwell sent by the Arch Bishop of York', and seventy years after the 1671 Act, he was disputing ownership of manorial rights to Walesby, Kirton and Wellow with the 2nd Duke of Kingston: in part, it would appear, because the 'Lord Paramount [of] Those Manors... is entitled to the Game'.¹⁶⁸

In contrast to legislative treatment of deer, hare and land fowl, there were no statute laws limiting the killing of foxes. On the contrary, classified as vermin, their destruction was considered by Common Law as a 'service to the community':¹⁶⁹ Kerr records churchwardens paying a shilling for a fox's head in 1732 (see Section 8.4.2).¹⁷⁰ Successful hunting, however, involved the control of their earths and as Jacob Giles records:

Notwithstanding the Common Law allows the Hunting of Foxes, Badgers, and other Ravenous Beasts of Prey, in the Ground of another Man, yet Digging to unearth them without Licence, is not warrantable by Law.¹⁷¹

A letter from Sir Bryan Broughton (owner of Bilsthorpe Manor) to Savile in February 1721, not only released Sir George and his servants from liability for trespass within Broughton's estate, but promoted their sport by allowing the stopping of earths:

¹⁶⁷ See Section 7.1.2.

¹⁶⁸ Savile's Personal Account Book, 1722-7 (NA: DD/SR/211/192/2); Copy of letter forwarded to Savile from J. Whitaker (Worksop attorney) to Thomas Warde (of Staples Inn, London) 'about Rufford, Kirton, Walesby & Wellow Mannors and of Mr. Rook's [Keeper of the Rolls Chapel] answer to it, & about Morton Grange', October 1741 (NA: DD/SR/229/13/2). Ruling referred to is part of the 1671 Game Act.

¹⁶⁹ Munsche (1981), 4.

¹⁷⁰ Kerr (1968), 151.

¹⁷¹ Cro. Jac. 321. Gensh and Mynn's Case. Roll. Abr. 558, cited in Giles (1718), 49.

Sir George Savile Baronet has Free [Way] to Hunt thro all my Grounds in Nottinghamshire, and to order whom He shall think fit to stop up Fox Earths in the said grounds.¹⁷²

Though the digging of earths is not expressly mentioned, Rufford estate accounts and correspondence regularly record Savile's servants digging out foxes from neighbouring estate grounds: Clumber Park, Kiklington Park, Whitwell Wood are all cited.¹⁷³ The fact that Savile's fox hounds frequently set out from and traversed the enclosed grounds of other landowners (see Table 8.1) suggests that grants such as Broughton's had been gifted, despite the absence of archival documents. Similar permissions were almost certainly granted by Savile in return, though descriptions of the legitimate hunting activities of neighbouring sportsmen are comparatively rare. Not all neighbouring estate owners, however, were equally welcoming to fox hunters. By early 1736, General Whetham had purchased an estate at Kirklington and Hockerton, bordering Savile land.¹⁷⁴ In the peak of the subsequent fox-hunting season, Whetham's gamekeeper was ordered 'to kill and Destroy all the Foxes (if it can be done) in Kirtlington [Kirklington] Lordship', a cull which was to be achieved by 'the Neighbours at Kirtlington [who were] to attend about the woods with what Doggs and Guns they have'.¹⁷⁵ Holt's reassurance to Savile that 'if it be weather for Hunting this week Thomas Shelton designes to Hunt at Kirtlington Woods in Order to disperse the Foxes into other places', indicates both the sportsman's need to keep abreast of initiatives on neighbouring estates, and the sort of strategies he might use to protect his sporting interests.¹⁷⁶

Returning to the theme of co-operation, facilitation of a neighbouring landowner's hunting might extend to the loan of dogs. Savile borrowed otter hounds from neighbouring landowners to protect Rufford's carp from predation.¹⁷⁷ The Baronet loaned Rufford hounds, principally for fox hunting,

¹⁷² 'Licence from Sir B. Broughton to Hunt &c: in his Grounds in Nottinghamshire', 27 February 1721. NA: DD/SR/218/5.

¹⁷³ Holt's Estate Accounts, 1735/1736 & 1740/1741. NA: DD/SR/6/1/6,11.

¹⁷⁴ See Chapter 3, fn. 109.

¹⁷⁵ Letter Holt to Savile, 20 December 1736. NA: DD/SR/211/24/106.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁷ Mr Neville (almost certainly of Thorney, East Nottinghamshire) and the 2nd Baron Lexington of Averham & Kelham loaned hounds in 1708 and 1718 respectively. Letter

Table 8.1:

**The enclosed grounds of neighbouring landowners
traversed by the 7th Baronet's hounds.**

Location	Ownership	Reference
Pleasley Park	Derbyshire Estate of the Lokes.	NA: DD/SR/211/227/61
Clown Hill	Welbeck Estate, Nottinghamshire owned successively by the Holles, Harley and Bentinck families.	NA: DD/SR/211/227/60
Averham Park	Nottinghamshire Estate of the Suttons and later Manners-Suttons.	NA: DD/SR/211/227/114
Thoresby Park	Nottinghamshire Estate of the Pierreponts.	NA: DD/SR/211/24/154b
Park close to Gamston Woods	Part of the Wasteney Estate, Nottinghamshire.	NA: DD/SR/211/24/147
Worksop Manor Park	Nottinghamshire Estate of the Howards.	NA: DD/SR/211/24/54a
Clumber and Clipstone Parks	Nottinghamshire Estate of the Holles.	NA: DD/SR/211/227/113; DD/SR/211/24/85
Kiveton and Cresswell Craggs	Derbyshire Estate of the Osbornes.	NA: DD/SR/211/227/53

but, on one occasion, the pursuit of otters. Lord Granby, Mr White of Wallingwells and Tuxford, Brigadier Sutton and Squire Thorney are variously recorded in Rufford estate correspondence as beneficiaries.¹⁷⁸ Such reciprocal largesse might override significant conflicts of interest amongst neighbouring landowners. Broughton's gift of access, for example, was granted only months after the acrimonious conclusion of a lengthy dispute between himself and Savile concerning ownership of a piece of land abutting both estates and the 'trespass' of rabbits from Elmsley warren on Bilsthorpe Common.¹⁷⁹ The conclusion drawn from examination of elite social relationships in the medieval period that 'a fairly ostentacious, open-handed lifestyle was seen as a necessary part of a lord's standing', seems equally applicable to the early eighteenth century.¹⁸⁰

'Anthropological studies suggest a recurring pattern in which hunting is a means of integrating and ordering communities as well as gathering food'.¹⁸¹ The social inclusivity of hunting was a recurrent theme of sporting literature circulating in the early eighteenth century, and though champions of the chase might overstate the benefits and vicarious pleasures to be gleaned by non-participants in the field, a wide spectrum of individuals certainly derived employment and on occasions financial reward, if not delight, from Savile's hunting. Keepers and woodtenters were paid to police Savile's deer and game and might accompany gentleman sportsmen in the field. In 1736, for example, Caleb Townsend was instructed 'to wait upon Mr William Mellish when he come to shoot in Wellow Park', in addition to his regular responsibility for overseeing the woods and game.¹⁸² Informants of poaching offences not only received a portion of any penalty fine at law but might be rewarded generously by the Baronet as an incentive to future vigilance.¹⁸³ Until 1727 the rent for Rufford Mill

Burden to Savile, 10 May 1708 (NA: DD/SR/211/435); Burden's Estate Accounts, 1707 & 1708 (NA: DD/SR/A4/28-9); Letter Smith to Madam Savile, 26 November 1718 (NA: DD/SR/211/227/68).

¹⁷⁸ Letters Smith to Savile, 9 & 11 February 1719 (NA: DD/SR/211/227/60,59); Letter Smith (junior) to Savile, 31 March 1722 (NA: DD/SR/211/227/20); Letter Matthew to Savile, 15-16 January 172[9] (NA: DD/SR/211/58/36).

¹⁷⁹ Letters Smith to Savile, 6 June 1717 – 20 March 1721. NA: DD/SR/211/227/37-78.

¹⁸⁰ Miles (2009), 107.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 105; see also Lee (1997), 252-3.

¹⁸² Letter Holt to Savile, 4 December 1736. NA: DD/SR/211/24/108.

¹⁸³ According to Statute 11 Hen.7 cap.17 (quoted in Giles (1718), 29) the penalty fine for taking partridge and pheasant on another man's ground was to be divided equally

was paid out of money earned from grinding oats for Savile's hounds;¹⁸⁴ Rufford lease agreements might contain a clause requiring the future tenant to raise a whelp;¹⁸⁵ tenants were regularly paid to rear and protect foxes (see Section 8.4.2); and day-labourers were taken on to plant gorse coverts and construct rides. In addition, there were the estate servants who participated directly in the sport as huntsman, whipper-in etc. It seems reasonable to assume that this shared involvement led to a common topic of discourse, and even if much of the exchange took place through the mediation of the steward, the need to negotiate terms of employment must have brought disparate sections of the community into contact.

8.4.2 Negotiating the preservation of foxes

Somerville's *The Chace* eulogises the protection that fox hunting provided to local farmers. Although the Savile Archives provide evidence that efforts were made to bring hunting and farming interests into alignment, Savile's policy was not without ambiguities.

Upon ground held in-hand, Somerville's contention undoubtedly held true. Savile's hounds were regularly employed to protect his own or a fellow landowner's husbanded animals, whether game, poultry or livestock. In April 1739, for example, when wild ducks nesting in Rufford 'New Garden' (see Section 4.3.4) were attacked, the hounds were used to range the most likely areas: the Wilderness, New Park, Beech Hill Intack, Old Park.¹⁸⁶ Rufford hounds were loaned to protect fellow landowners' fishponds and sheep walks (see above) and it was not uncommon for a hound that worried sheep to be killed.¹⁸⁷ The custom of blocking fox earths the night before a hunt, favoured because it increased the probability of a brisk early morning start, meant that foxes were at large for longer periods and tenants' poultry at greater risk. Desirous to protect

between landowner and prosecutor; both Rufford and Thornhill estate correspondence documents financial incentives for apprehending fish poachers (Section 5.1.2; NA: DD/SR/211/4/71,65-6).

¹⁸⁴ Letter Smith to Savile, 11 December 1727. NA: DD/SR/211/227/177.

¹⁸⁵ Examples include 21 year lease agreements signed by two of Savile's principal tenants, John Vessey and William Thompson. NA: DD/SR/207/142.

¹⁸⁶ Letter Holt to Savile, 28 April 1739. NA: DD/SR/211/24/154b.

¹⁸⁷ Letters Smith to Savile, 1 August 1722 & 28 January 1728. NA: DD/SR/211/227/11,168.

his tenants' interests Savile therefore directed his huntsman (at least on occasions) to leave earths open, as Smith documents in estate correspondence of 10 March 1722:

Your Hounds have killed Two foxes since you went and earthed
[as many] more from your orders that they should hunt to oblige
ye Neighbourhood but leave ye Earths open.¹⁸⁸

Good local hunting, however, required ample quarry, and Savile, in somewhat contrary vein, also went to expense and effort to increase the local fox population. In addition to improving fox habitat at Rufford, young foxes were monitored, introduced to coverts on forest ground in Rufford Liberty, and might even be reared by hand. In May 1708, for example, Burden reported difficulty with feeding young cubs – 'one of the fox cubbs is dead, but the other is likely to live, have some trouble to get meate for them, but some times shoot Jack daws and magpies for them'¹⁸⁹ – and Smith's account of the acquisition of a bitch fox in February 1720 reflects similar care for its well-being:

[Thorp] of Cresswell brought to John Shelton a bitch fox full of
young which he paid him for and ventured to turn her into ye
Earth on beech hill, believing that Earth to be So Good and Strong
as to Invite her Continuance.¹⁹⁰

In May 1737, Shelton recorded six litters 'near us' – one in New Park, three in Beech Hill Intack, one in the French Gorse, one in Elmsley Warren – and when in May 1739 he retrieved ten young fox cubs whilst hunting, he wished to know into which of Savile's coverts they were to be 'turned out'.¹⁹¹ The wording of the request suggests that Carr Brecks, an area of forest ground between the Hall and Edwinstowe, was Savile's preferred cover at this time. On this occasion, however, it could not be used, a large portion having been 'burn't up'.¹⁹² Unauthorised burning of 'the Deep Ling [heather] in Rufford Liberty' was not unprecedented; in April 1722 and May 1737, similar abuses were recorded in

¹⁸⁸ Letter Smith to Savile, 10 March 1721. NA: DD/SR/211/227/22.

¹⁸⁹ Letter Burden to Savile, 30 May 1708. NA: DD/SR/211/435.

¹⁹⁰ Letter Smith to Savile, 15 February 1720. NA: DD/SR/211/227/49.

¹⁹¹ Letters Holt to Savile, 4 May 1737 & 12 May 1739. NA: DD/SR/211/24/123,154a.

¹⁹² NA: DD/SR/211/24/154a.

Rufford estate correspondence.¹⁹³ There is no evidence, however, that such offences were aimed directly against elite hunting, and in 1737 an alternative/additional source of resentment was Savile's disappointment of local appeals for the creation of a breck there the previous year.

Savile regularly rewarded his tenants for preserving foxes: from 1739 Edward Warren (Inkersall [Winkerfield] warrener) and Thomas Clark (Elmsley warrener) were paid half yearly rates of £1 7s 6d and 17s 6d respectively.¹⁹⁴ Whereas parish officials might offer 12d for a dead fox,¹⁹⁵ Savile provided greater financial incentive for delivery of a live one to the Hall, especially when his hounds needed to be blooded. Though, as Smith's letter of January 1719 shows, the wily might profit from both incentives simultaneously:

...your hounds Craggd a fox in pleasley park... Mr Justice [Bilsthorpe curate and briefly Rufford chaplain] and Mr Challand being there with ye Keepers man, told some Collyers that were working there if theyd Get a Box trap and take ye fox Safe they would pay them for so Doing... But ye Raskally Collyers broke ye fox Legg & then thought No boot to Bring him to Rufford only Caryd him to three of their Nearest towns to Get 12 pence from Each as we Suppose...¹⁹⁶

Where tenants rather than 'Raskally Collyers' were involved, and deference to rank therefore more customary, a landowner might rely solely on his authority to protect foxes. In the case of Savile, this seems to have held sway with Thoresby tenants also, as Smith's report of a trapping incident at Bellow Farm, part of the Thoresby Estate, illustrates:

...Wattson [Thoresby tenant] Ordered Moor [Bilsthorpe man] to Sett Trapps to Kill vermin which Ketcht a fox your hounds were

¹⁹³ Statute 5 Anne c.14 (quoted in Munsche (1981), 179) prohibited the burning of furze in Sherwood Forest; Letter Smith (junior) to Savile, 14 April 1722 (NA: DD/SR/211/227/17); Letters Holt to Savile, 22 February 1736 (quotation), 25 May & 25 June 1737 (NA: DD/SR/211/24/105,126,128);

¹⁹⁴ Holt's Estate Accounts, 1739-42. NA: DD/SR/6/1/10-12. Warren signed his lease in late February 1731; Clark took up his tenancy in Spring 1731. Letters Holt to Savile, 1 March & 12 April 1731. NA: DD/SR/24/8a,11b.

¹⁹⁵ For example, Mr Digby (JP) of Mansfield Woodhouse. Letter Smith to Savile, 31 January 1719. NA: DD/SR/211/227/61.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

Runing. Moor Now Seems very Sory for ye Accident and Wattson
Says he shall not Set any more.¹⁹⁷

8.6 Conclusion

The Savile Archives provide substantial evidence that by the end of the 7th Baronet's lifetime (1743) fox hunting in Nottinghamshire was well-established as an elite field sport alongside hare hunting, though stag hunting continued to be enjoyed by a narrow section of that group. Diverse sources of evidence, both archival and published, support the conclusion that Sir George was a passionate fox hunter and that his hunting style and management of the sport reflected the contemporary mode of practice and might even have influenced its character and development. Galloping at the heels of the hounds, flying leaps over hedges and gates, and active preservation of foxes (whether through the planting of coverts or negotiations with local farmers) are all features that modern authors have attributed to the late as opposed to early eighteenth century. Moreover, Sir George's sporting terrain encompassed the forest sand land and tenanted limestone and clay land of neighbouring estates, as well as his own, and on a scale commensurate with the hunting country enjoyed by later subscription hunts (first the Confederate Hunt, then the Rufford and Grove).

Itzkowitz asserts that hunting men throughout the eighteenth century 'wasted little thought on their sport. They hunted because they liked to, and that was all that mattered'.¹⁹⁸ He sets this against the conscious mythologizing and image-making that characterised nineteenth-century sporting literature. As with the nature of the chase in the field, this contrasting of the social dimension of 'early' and 'late' practice seems too stark. Archival and published sources from the first half of the eighteenth century, including writings of the 7th Baronet, his stewards and published works to which Savile subscribed, emphasise the health-inducing qualities of field sports, their encouragement of manly virtues, and their social function: 'they render them [our Youth] more capable of Serving

¹⁹⁷ Letter Smith to Savile, 28 January 1728. NA: DD/SR/211/227/168. For Moor's identity see Letter Holt to Savile, 23 January 1731. NA: DD/SR/211/24/5.

¹⁹⁸ Itzkowitz (1977), 18.

their Country, in a just and honourable Manner'.¹⁹⁹ Hunting men spent a great deal of time and money preserving and protecting their quarry, defending their rights to it and, at least in the case of Savile, refashioning their landscapes to facilitate its pursuit. Estate stewards, keepers, woodtenters, even gardeners and tenants all played significant parts. One social dimension in which early and late practice did significantly differ, however, is the scale of a meet. Private hunting parties in Nottinghamshire seem to have been small and intimate, and it is possible that Anonymous 1733's sentiment – 'I abhor joining with *Strangers*; for that is the way to spoil and debauch the stanchest Hunters...' – was more widely felt.²⁰⁰

Savile's zeal for hunting and shooting, more than any other aspect of engagement with his landed inheritance, linked his Rufford and Thornhill Estates. The regular traffic of estate servants involved in the purchase and training of dogs and horses almost certainly had far broader managerial implications: Madam Savile was kept abreast of Yorkshire affairs; estate grooms and huntsmen had opportunities to visit neighbouring stables and kennels; and the 7th Baronet's stewards were brought regularly into a contact which, in the case of Elmsall and Smith, fostered mutual respect. But the measures taken by Savile to negotiate access to the territory over which he desired to hunt and to ensure an adequate quarry also draw attention to the complex web of social relationships which underpinned hunting in the period.

¹⁹⁹ Flyer for 'Mr Tunstall's fifty years Observations upon Hunting, Hawking, Shooting Flying, and Angling, &c'. NA: DD/SR/218/29. In August 1727 Savile paid a 1 guinea subscription fee for Mr Tunstall's *Book of Sport*. Savile's Personal Account Book, 1727-32. NA: DD/SR/A4/35.

²⁰⁰ Anonymous (1733), 52.

Chapter 9

Conclusion

...for no man finishes any view he has, or any scheme he projects,
but by halves – And life itself can nothing more supply, than just to
plan our projects, and to die. *Alexander Pope*¹

Pope's reflections, addressed to his friend Allen, Lord Bathurst, would almost certainly have found sympathy with the 7th Baronet. Landscaping the demesne ground at Rufford was an on-going concern for Sir George, one in which he invested significant creative energy and financial resources and which ceased only with his sudden death in 1743. In this the Baronet was no exception. But while the constant state of transformation which characterised many great seats of the period has been attributed to a desire 'to express the continuing success, importance and sophistication of their owners',² it seems unlikely that the claiming of cultural authority was ever more than one of a broad range of motives for Savile's landscaping. Rufford was a comparatively large estate, but not in any way renowned for its grounds: Thomas de Quincey's *Tour of the Midlands* (1775) provides the earliest published visitor account recording the eighteenth-century pleasure gardens. Evidence from the Savile Archives suggests that the long time frames over which changes were made (in the case of White Walk, 12 years) can be accounted for to a large degree by the practical challenges of the projects undertaken and constraints on the labour force and horse power available. The same day-labourers were engaged across the spectrum of demesne activities; the animals that ploughed in Old Park also carted loads to repair Winkerfield Dam and level the *parterre*. Moreover, harvest and hop work, pisciculture and silviculture all had seasonal rhythms which impacted significantly on the pace at which the hard landscaping of more overtly aesthetic projects was carried forward.

¹ Letter Alexander Pope to Allen, 1st Lord Bathurst, quoted in Ruffhead (1769), vol. 4, p. 199.

² Barnatt & Williamson (1988), 11.

The introduction to this thesis drew attention to the particular strengths of a case study approach – its ability to test ideas, illustrate and perhaps elaborate existing themes and suggest avenues for further research – and the empirical chapters of the work have already highlighted a range of ways in which this has been achieved. Analysis of the early eighteenth-century landscaping practices on the Rufford Estate has been used to provide a lens through which to investigate how ‘elite estates’ were contextualised, understood, managed and enjoyed by their owners – a task, as has been both argued and demonstrated, demanding an holistic and integrated approach and pertinent to a wide range of scholarships. This final chapter, however, will focus specifically on over-arching conclusions which speak most directly to the concerns of scholars of ‘elite estates’ within Cultural Geography – landscape management; professional development, in particular, stewardship; gender roles and agency, both human and animal; silviculture in the context of Crown (forest) and private woodland – before pointing to some of the practical initiatives underway to disseminate this understanding to a wider public and assist in the future management of the Country Park.

As the opening paragraph to this chapter indicates, the empirical work presented here upholds one of the central insights of contemporary scholars of landed estates, namely that estate design and management were inseparably linked. Within cultural geography discussion of this inter-dependence has centred on the concepts of ‘improvement’ and ‘improvers’, terms widely used in relation to the ‘laying out of grounds’. While Jacques in his preface to *Georgian Gardens* considers such terminology ‘too general’ for his purpose, embracing as it does ‘agriculture and other forms of improvement besides the ornamental’.³ The Rufford evidence supports and extends the late eighteenth-century studies of Seymour, Daniels and Watkins by suggesting that it is the very inclusivity of the term ‘improvement’ – a process of ‘progressively restructuring the landscape for social and economic as well as aesthetic ends and, by extension, restructuring the conduct of those who lived in, worked in and looked upon it’⁴ – that makes it so appropriate.

³ Jacques (1983), 12.

⁴ Daniels & Seymour (1990), 487.

Within Rufford estate accounts and day-labourers' account books, landscaping activities ranging from the replenishing of spring woods to the gravelling of walks in the *parterre* are categorised collectively as 'improvements'. It is now commonplace to associate what might loosely be termed a 'Georgic sensibility' with the period: Georgic poetry, writes Feingold, became a source of 'certain habits of thought and feeling' amongst the educated.⁵ The *Georgics* celebrate stewardship and an aesthetic of agrarian productivity: in the garden designs of Stephen Switzer they found practical expression in 'a judicious Mixture and Incorporation of the Pleasures of the Country with the Profits...'.⁶ Evidence cited throughout this thesis supports the conclusion that such attitudes underpinned landscaping at Rufford. While the Baronet's schemes were ambitious – towards the end of his life a day-labour force of 30-40 men were regularly employed, and by 1743 the pleasure gardens had almost quadrupled in size – he was no Brobdingnagian Timon.⁷ New projects adapted and incorporated elements in the antecedent landscape and were underpinned by economic considerations. Elmsall remarked on Sir George's 'frugality', a term almost certainly intended as a compliment and signifying a responsible use of wealth.⁸ Expansion of the pleasure gardens was primarily achieved through ornamental woodland of forest trees and canals. The latter provided reservoirs for fish husbandry and channelled river and floodwater to a new corn mill, itself both a functional structure and a building of architectural merit. The design incorporated meadow ground and paddock and linked the Hall to the wider landscape of spring woods, parks and warren ground through the orchestration of rides, which again satisfied multiple needs. That this approach to demesne landscaping was being presented by garden theorists in the late 1720s as novel, adds weight to the growing impression, *pace* Hunt, that practice in the period ran ahead of theory.

⁵ Feingold (1978), 27.

⁶ Switzer (1715), xiii.

⁷ For discussion of Pope's satire of Timon's villa in Epistle IV: 'of the Use of Riches' to Richard Boyle, Earl of Burlington see Kelsall (2007).

⁸ Elmsall was openly critical of the lavish expenditure of another of his employers, Lord Carmarthen. Letters Elmsall to Savile, 2 January 1717 (quotation) & 25 September 1728. NA: DD/SR/211/2.

Questions of authorship and managerial structure run throughout this study: who directed improvements and how were decisions negotiated and prioritised? Biographical approaches to landscape have gained considerable recognition within Cultural Geography since Samuels's paper in the late 1970s and have long been favoured by garden historians, though analysis by the latter has been confined broadly to the contributions of patrons and designers. Savile's demesne ground was undoubtedly shaped by his personality and priorities, the prominence given to a technically sophisticated water system within the pleasure gardens compatible with the management of fish and nesting of wild-fowl being a clear example. But while the Baronet retained control over even minor managerial decisions, drew up design plans and on occasions directed progress on the ground, instructions were more commonly delivered from London, and Savile's decisions were often mediated by the advice of his mother, Madam Barbara Savile, and yet more significantly, by that of estate servants charged with the practical task of realising improvements.

The role played by elite women in estate administration, though comparatively well-documented for the Commonwealth and immediate post-Restoration period and increasingly so for the late eighteenth century, has received little attention in an early eighteenth-century context. Madam Savile's scrutiny of estate accounts, commissioning of survey work, involvement in wood sales and legal disputes may therefore be more commonplace than has hitherto been recognised. Garden historians generally present the laying out of grounds as a male preserve in this period, and there is little evidence for her direct involvement in either the design of Rufford's pleasure grounds or rides. That said, Barbara Savile's working knowledge of both her son's Thornhill and Rufford Estates and engagement with the staff of their households undoubtedly facilitated the exchange of knowledge and personnel between Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire, which in turn impacted upon horticultural initiatives.

'The role of estate stewards in eighteenth-century England was an important one which is often under-estimated', states Beckett.⁹ The pivotal role of such men in the realisation of Rufford's pleasure gardens and landscape improvements more widely is in no doubt: a conclusion made more striking by

⁹ Beckett (1990), 69.

the scant attention such men have received in garden history narratives concerned with the first half of the eighteenth century. At Rufford, land management was, as Jancey contends, 'a partnership between landlord and steward'.¹⁰ The versatility and skill of Rufford's stewards – in particular, Thomas Smith (senior) and George Holt – has been a recurrent observation within this study. While Rufford gardeners engaged in a broad range of tasks across the estate, in all areas of estate improvement other than the cultivation of flowers and produce and the management of tree nurseries the gardener was answerable to the steward. This situation is in marked contrast to the examples of managerial hierarchy discussed by O'Halloran and Seymour.¹¹ How widespread such a ranking was remains uncertain. Both the Rufford and Thornhill Estates seem to have attracted stewards of a notably high calibre. Smith, in addition to his responsibilities as estate collector, carried out surveys, advised on and even suggested design plans, valued wood, sought buyers and negotiated sale contracts, directed fish husbandry, oversaw the stables and hop yards, co-ordinated and oversaw (with assistance) the work of day-labourers, reported on local hunting and defended Savile's interests in legal disputes. Holt's skills, though weighted somewhat differently, were no less wide-ranging. As highlighted throughout this thesis, the concentration of such a broad spectrum of responsibilities in one role promoted an efficient deployment of labour and co-ordination of activities across the Rufford Estate. Furthermore, it meant that the economics of landscaping was realistically factored into all stages of decision-making.

'The gradual emergence of professional land agency [during the long eighteenth century],' argues Webster, 'demonstrates an attempt to apply scientific and industrial management techniques to the estate in order to provide a more efficient and profitable resource for the landowner', though the chronology of this development 'is unclear'.¹² Moreover, 'relatively little is known about individual eighteenth-century stewards' and, as Corfield observes,

¹⁰ Jancey (1957), 41.

¹¹ See O'Halloran's works cited in Section 2.2.2; Seymour (1988, 2013).

¹² Webster (2007), 49-50.

‘occupational pluralism... [was] not uncommon’ in the period.¹³ The Rufford data adds definition to this emerging portrait. Beyond a sense that accounting skills became more systematic during the Baronet’s ownership, the evidence suggests that on Savile’s estates the paternalistic model of late Stuart stewardship put forward by Hainsworth persisted until mid-century at least, and that in the opening decades of the eighteenth century roles were markedly fluid. As Hughes contends, the individual ‘created the office’.¹⁴ Examples of this flexibility at Rufford extend beyond that of chief steward: Charles Glegg (senior) was undergroom and garden labourer; Thomas Shelton was groom and huntsman; Joshua Mann was contracted ‘to give out ye Corn & have the Care of ye Stables &c: To Overlook Workmen, ye Sale of Wood, ye Barns, Out Houses, Waters, & ye Like’,¹⁵ and even expressed a willingness to wear a livery on occasions. Ben Cowell concluded from his cultural history of estate parks (1750-1850) that there was no simple dichotomy between patrician and plebian ways of seeing the landscape.¹⁶ Certainly, the attitudes towards land management and use expressed in Rufford steward correspondence support this opinion, and many of Savile’s estate servants arguably shared with their master a sense of the Rufford landscape as a plural enterprise.

If adaptability was a striking characteristic of Savile’s estate staff, loyalty was another. There are numerous examples of positions passing from father to son: in the case of the Sheltons, between brothers. Holt served the estate, with only a two-year break, for at least 30 years. Relationships once established with suppliers – nurseries, seed merchants – tended to be maintained; the same skilled tradesmen – masons, bricklayers, painters – were regularly employed. Moreover, there was a marked preference for employing local men. In economic terms such a policy had clear advantages, fostering mutual trust and accountability. As regards landscaping, the benefits were no less apparent. Continuity promoted familiarity with the Rufford Estate and its wider socio-geographical environs. It improved networking, which in turn promoted the pooling of expertise. The form which Savile’s demesne grounds came to take,

¹³ Beckett (1990), 56; Corfield (1995), 26.

¹⁴ Hughes (1949), 188.

¹⁵ Savile’s Personal Account Book, 1727-32. NA: DD/SR/A4/35.

¹⁶ Cowell (1998), 254.

however, depended on the location of the Hall in still more direct ways. Access routes affected the design and scale of the pleasure gardens. The availability of water and clay influenced the location of mills, ponds and water features. Regional wood markets impacted on the age at which trees were felled and the species balance within estate woodland: the strength of the local hop market, in particular, led to a marked shift towards the cultivation of ash. The impact of local topography and the pattern of landownership in the area are most clearly evidenced in relation to the siting of rides.

‘Knowledge-on-the-ground’ is a term used by Lorimer to characterise the way in which animals know geography through their feet. From a study of reindeer husbandry he concludes:

For herders and herd the landmass is territory. That territory is known by its margins and bounds, by places to eat, to bed down, or to linger, by muster points, and according to networks of paths.¹⁷

Landry, reflecting on the ways in which hunting has shaped the English countryside, writes:

Hunting a country in the sense that Somervile or Beckford intended requires the use of all five senses (not merely sight) and an intimate local knowledge of topography, plants and animals that would do a naturalist credit.¹⁸

As the evidence examined in this thesis substantiates, hunting practice at Rufford had much in common with that of the eighteenth-century sportsmen authors that Landry quotes, as did the engagement with animals more broadly. Savile’s hunting servants, and to some degree his stewards and gardener – to cite only those members of the Baronet’s household for which there is direct documentary evidence – knew the hunting territory around Rufford in a manner that paralleled their quarry. Horses and dogs were selected and bred for the specific terrains they traversed – forest breck and heath, clay ground, woodland and gorse cover. Hunting, hunted and husbanded animals alike placed

¹⁷ Lorimer (2006), 499, 501 (main quotation).

¹⁸ Landry (2001), 64.

constraints on landscaping: desire to augment fox populations for the purpose of sport led to the planting of coverts in areas where the animals would be least disturbed and on a scale that dogs could effectively range; the breeding seasons of fowl influenced woodwork and island planting; efforts to reduce the natural habitat of otters led to the improvement of marshy ground. Pisciculture at Rufford was pursued with minute attention to the lifecycle and habitat needs of the carp, and on a range of geographical scales: it impacted on the design of the pleasure gardens, parks and wider estate landscape. Williamson's survey of Norfolk estates revealed that productive garden components – kitchen gardens, fishponds, dovecots – were retained close to the house into the 1730s. While the Monastic origins of Rufford account for the initial development of its pisciculture system, the scale upon which that system was augmented in the immediate vicinity of the Hall during the 7th Baronet's ownership is striking and, together with the gifting of estate carp to neighbouring landowners, underlines the continued importance of fish husbandry to the identity of early eighteenth-century estates. At Rufford, pisciculture seems to have had a greater impact on the form of the landscape than deer husbandry, which was confined to Old Park. Yet among scholars of elite landscapes, parkland deer have to date received considerably more attention.

I hate moving, especially to London from the Country where I think I am in general in better spirits than in town... As to hunting... I am fond of no other diversion that makes me get out of doors & I believe without it I shou'd scarce ever go farther than the mill.¹⁹

These words, written by Savile's son in 1748, capture another important dimension of hunting in the period: it defined a significant, if not the principal way in which an elite sportsman like the 7th Baronet encountered his estate and its environs. De Bolla, in his analysis of William Kent's legacy, emphasises the importance of understanding *how* viewers looked at the landscape as well as *what* they looked at.²⁰ Movement is clearly central to this appreciation, and in relation to rides and parks, often at speed. The formal qualities of rides

¹⁹ Letter 8th Baronet to Gertrude Savile, 21 December 1748. NA: DD/SR/212/15/35.

²⁰ De Bolla (2003), 106.

(particularly across tenanted land) and the uses to which they were put are subjects still only fleetingly engaged with in garden histories. At Rufford, however, they were foremost in Savile's early landscaping priorities, and more than any other single feature examined in this study draw attention both to the multiple concerns and skills – in particular surveying expertise – that underpinned landscape interventions in the period. Moreover, while rides have generally been associated with stag hunting or, in a late eighteenth-century context, shooting, the pursuit they were intended primarily to facilitate at Rufford was the fox. Bevan suggests that the physical geography of the country around Rufford lent itself to fox hunting. Even so, one of the more surprising insights from this study has been the popularity of fox hunting in and around Sherwood Forest at such an early date. From the evidence presented here, even the wealthiest sportsmen might pursue fox alongside their more traditional quarry (hare and deer) and in a manner that shows many points of similarity with the later form of the sport – most notable, in a landscape-context, is the establishment of coverts in the early eighteenth century.

The archival research on which this thesis is based has done much to uncover 'the textures and cycles of work that leave a landscape replete with meaning'.²¹ From the outset, the project has been a collaborative one, responsive to both the interests and concerns of the academic community and the team of individuals responsible for the management of Rufford Country Park. The next phase of the work will be focussed on practical outcomes – contributions to a conservation management plan and to sharing interpretations of the site with the visiting public. Both initiatives are already in progress.

'The need for site-specific historical research and assessment,' writes David Lambert, a conservation expert specialising in public parks, 'has been enshrined in the requirements of grant-givers, chiefly in the form of conservation plans and conservation management plans.'²² Rufford Country Park is currently in the final stages of drawing up such a plan. This has involved a gazetteer of changes made to the site and an evaluation of their significance, both areas in which the case study presented here has provided fresh insights. It

²¹ Lorimer (2006), 504.

²² Lambert *et al.* (2006), 6.

is now clear that the hitherto accepted chronology of the Country Park's development was significantly in error: triangulation of sources has made it possible to attribute many of the design plans to specific dates and individuals and to establish to a considerable degree the extent to which they were realised on the ground. Design interventions in the early Georgian period were largely responsible for the form of the present Country Park and the provenance of important material artefacts still visible in the landscape. The focus on use adopted throughout this study has drawn attention to the complex motivations behind many aspects of the 7th Baronet's landscaping. Rufford's new corn mill, for example, previously attributed to Savile's son in the second half of the eighteenth century and presented as part of a broad scheme to 'naturalise' Rufford's pleasure gardens, is shown to be the work of Sir George senior and to have arisen from multiple causes: the culmination of an extensive programme of water management, the disorderly conduct of a miller, and a desire to improve waterfowl habitat on the forest. Although much of the area that was once the 7th Baronet's demesne ground lies outside the present Country Park, views to and from the core grounds were integral to Savile's design. As the 2014 planning application for Bilsthorpe Energy Centre highlights, development of the wider landscape may impact upon these and threaten the heritage value of the site. It is hoped that the evidence presented here will be of service to the park in the appraisal of future planning proposals.

Of more on-going concern to the park is finding ways of enhancing visitor engagement with the site's history through active interpretation strategies. The park is no stranger to period re-enactments and costumed tours, and though the latter have been confined to the medieval and Edwardian eras, plans are underway to include Madam Savile and Sir George's steward, Thomas Smith, as representatives of the Georgian period. But the area most fully explored by the present author has been the potential of storytelling and story walks to deepen awareness of place and bridge the gap between present and past. In this context the site-specific performances of Mike Pearson and Hugh Lupton have proved particularly instructive. Pearson's work, as exemplified in *Bubbling Tom*, weaves together fragments of history, natural history, folklore and hearsay, oral testimony, memoir and biography during the course of a guided walk through

the North Lincolnshire village where he grew up.²³ While *Bubbling Tom* is strongly auto-biographical, Pearson's approach is rooted in the chorographies of eighteenth-century antiquarianism, and arguably captures a way of conceiving landscape sympathetic both to the Georgian period engaged with here and the fragmentary character of archival records.²⁴ Lupton, in his performance of *A Norfolk Songline: the Peddars Way*, employs more traditional storytelling techniques – creative retellings of folktales and local history linked to points along the trail.²⁵ Though *A Norfolk Songline* is less concerned with history *per se*, its clear narrative thread is arguably more adapted to mixed audiences; a well-told story, as Michael Morpurgo contends, can stimulate the desire to know more and be a gateway into the past.²⁶ It is hoped that the multiple voices retrieved from the archives and presented here will add an immediacy to future performance work at Rufford and stimulate the kind of discourse of landscape that 'makes it really, actually exist as a consequential and meaningful set of beliefs, attitudes and everyday practices and performances'.²⁷ 'A place,' as Crang points out, 'is the product of how we interact with it.'²⁸

²³ See Pearson (2006) for the author's contextualisation of the work.

²⁴ Pearson's approach draws on the concept of 'deep map' developed by interpretive archaeologists (see Pearson & Shanks, 2001, p. 16) and 'blurred genre' in social anthropology (see Geertz, 1983).

²⁵ See Lupton (1999) for a transcript and the author's contextualisation of the work.

²⁶ Michael Morpurgo in discussion with Dr Helen Sharman, broadcast on Radio 4, *Saturday Live*, 12 December 2015.

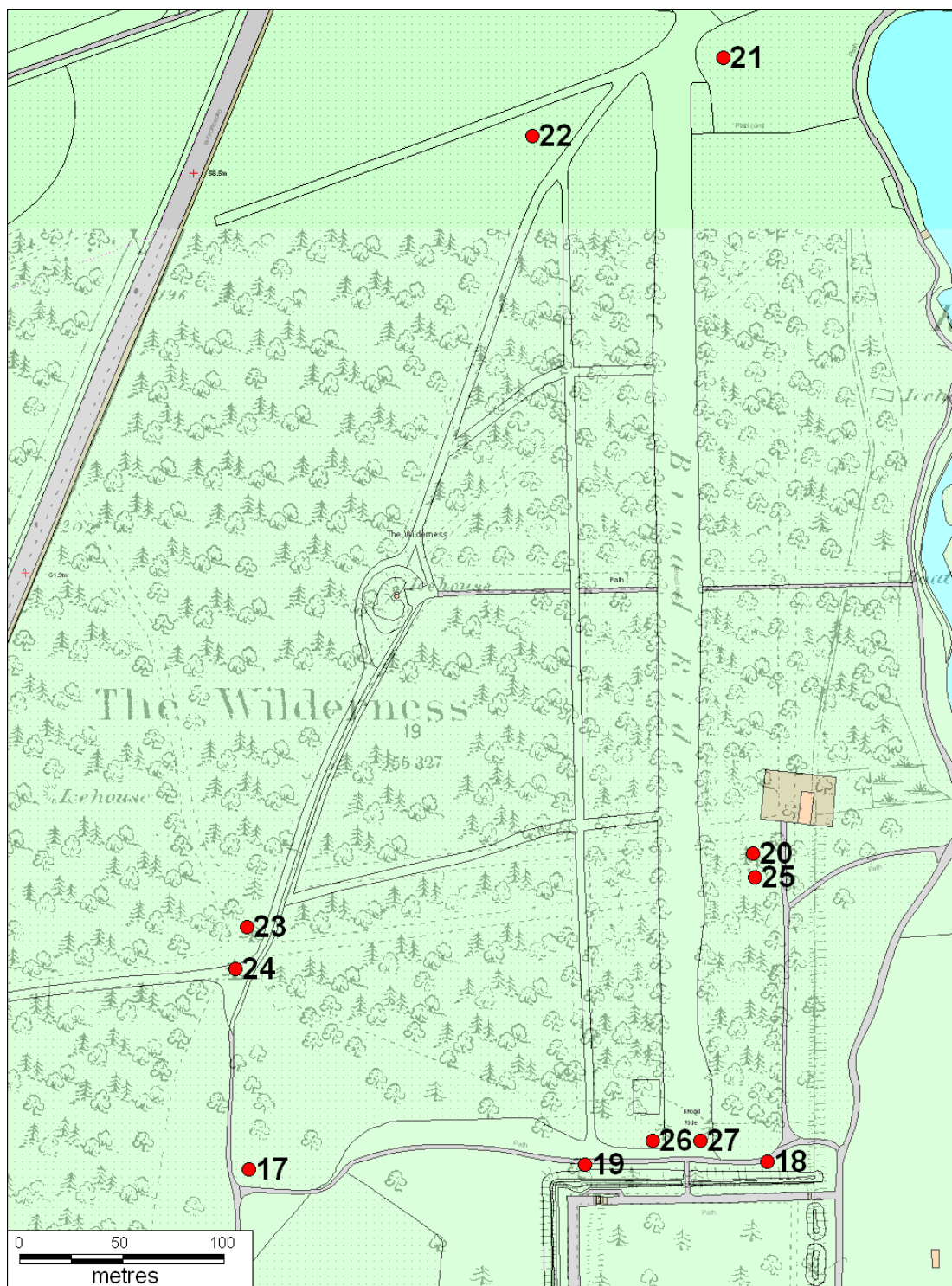
²⁷ Wylie (2007), 110.

²⁸ Crang (1998), 109.

Appendix 1.1:

Co-ordinates of features in Rufford's pleasure grounds, 1700-1743, extracted using GIS from historic maps and plans.

ID	Name	Map	NG_Easting	NG_Northing	Comments
1	Fountain Court	Parterre Map Savile	464596.27	364830.07	NE corner
2	Fountain Court	Parterre Map Savile	464597.12	364793.62	SE corner
3	Fountain Court	Parterre Map Savile	464563.31	364795.73	SW corner
4	Fountain Court	Parterre Map Savile	464562.32	364831.74	NW corner
5	Abbey	1885 25-inch OS	464543.43	364866.06	NW corner
6	Abbey	1885 25-inch OS	464566.42	364866.51	NE corner
7	Great Canal	Parterre Map Savile	464741.16	364777.63	SE corner
8	Great Canal	Parterre Map Savile	464704.74	364780	SW corner
9	Great Canal	Parterre Map Savile	464749.66	364874.26	NE corner
10	Great Canal	Parterre Map Savile	464712.19	364877.48	NW corner
11	Bridge	Parterre Map Savile	464708.34	364831.95	NW corner
12	Bridge	Parterre Map Savile	464707.92	364822.75	SW corner
13	Bridge	Parterre Map Savile	464745.64	364828.9	NE corner
14	Bridge	Parterre Map Savile	464744.87	364819.86	SE corner
15	Parterre Wall	Parterre Map Savile	464596.35	364880.35	N end
16	Parterre Wall	Parterre Map Savile	464597.42	364784.7	S end
17	Old Wilderness	1725 Smith Map	464339.67	364963.38	SW corner
18	Old Wilderness	1725 Smith Map	464592.3	364970.12	SE corner
19	Kings Garden	1725 Smith Map	464503.51	364967.73	-
20	New Wilderness	1725 Smith Map	464583.7	365119.72	SE corner
21	New Wilderness	1725 Smith Map	464564.87	365506.65	NE corner
22	New Wilderness	1725 Smith Map	464472.15	365467.42	NW corner
23	New Wilderness	1725 Smith Map	464337.66	365081.19	SW corner
24	Old Wilderness	1725 Smith Map	464332.25	365060.97	NW corner
25	Old Wilderness	1725 Smith Map	464584.78	365108.29	NE corner
26	Great Vistoe	1725 Smith Map	464536.63	364979.58	W end
27	Great Vistoe	1725 Smith Map	464559.74	364979.84	E end
28	Mill	1725 Smith Map	464911.63	364923.2	NE corner
29	Mill	1725 Smith Map	464916.05	364916.18	SE corner
30	Mill	1725 Smith Map	464901.28	364908.96	SW corner
31	Mill	1725 Smith Map	464898	364916.44	NW corner
32	Stew Complex	1725 Smith Map	464629.1	364765.01	NW corner
33	Stew Complex	1725 Smith Map	464676.58	364753.81	NE corner
34	Stew Complex	1725 Smith Map	464668.31	364721.63	SE corner
35	Stew Complex	1725 Smith Map	464620.83	364732.84	SW corner
36	The Great Stew	1725 Smith Map	464640.77	364727.58	NW corner
37	The Great Stew	1725 Smith Map	464621.02	364668.67	SW corner
38	The Great Stew	1725 Smith Map	464644.71	364656.16	SE corner
39	White Walk Canal	1725 Smith Map	464806.04	364569.02	River end



Features in the pleasure grounds north of the Hall.

Appendix 3.1:

Diary of the 7th Baronet's residences based on entries in his personal account books.

Though not a complete record these documents provide the most detailed available data.

R = Rufford

L= London

T = Thornhill; Y = Yorkshire or York; Scar = Scarborough; Don =Doncaster

Derb = Derbyshire

Bris = Bristol; Cam= Cambridge; Oxf = Oxford; New = Newmarket; Guil = Guildford; Tun = Tunbridge Wells.

Repeated initialling is used to indicate the proportion of time spent in a given place where Savile's residence changed in a given month.

YEAR	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
1703												R/L
1704	L	L	L	L	L	L	R	R	R	R	R	L
1705	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	R	R	R	R	R/LL
1706	L	L	L	L	L/RR	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
1707	L	L	R	CAM/NEW/ L	L	BRIS	BRIS	BRIS	BRIS	BRIS	BRIS	BRIS/ L
1708	L	L	BRI S	BRIS?	BRIS?	BRIS?	R	R	R	R	R	R/L
1709	L	L	L	L	LL/BRIS	BRIS	BRIS/OXF/R	R	R	R	R	L
1710	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	DERB	R	R	R	R
1711	R/L	L	L	L	L/R	R	R	R/BRIS	BRIS	BRIS	BRIS	BRIS
1712	BRIS/ LL	L	L	L	BRIS	BRIS/?	?/R	R	R	R	R	R
1713	R	L	L	L	L	LL/R	R	R	R	R	R	RR/L
1714	L	L	L	L	LLL/R	Y	Y?	Y?	R	R	R	R

1715	R		R	L	L	L	L	L	Y	Y	YY/R	?	?	?	?
1716															R/L
1717	L		L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L/R	L/R	R?	R?	R?	R?
1718	R?		R?	R?	R?	R?	R?	R?	R/L						
1719									BRIS	BRIS/COUNTIES	R	R	R	R	L
1720	L		L	L	L	L	L	L	L	LL/WEEDON/BRIS	BRS/R	R	R	R	R
1721	L		L	L	L	L	L	L	RACES/LL/	L/R	RACES/SCAR/Y	R	R	R	R
1722	L											BRIS	L	L	L/R*
1723	R		R											R	L
1724	L		L	L	L	L	L	R	R	R	R	R	R/LL	L	L
1725	L		L	L	LL/R	R	R	R	R	R	R	SCAR	R	R	R
1726	R		R	R	R	R/L	R	L	L	L	L	R	R	R	R
1727									RR/SCAR	RR/L	SCAR	RR/L			
1728								R	R	R	R	R	R	R	L
1729	L		L	L	L	L	L	L	L/TUN	R	R	R	R	R	R
1730	L		L	L	L	L	L	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
1731	L		L	L	L	L	L	L/R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R/L
1732	L		L	L	L	L	L	L/R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R/L
1733	L		L	L	L	L	L	L/R	T	R	R	R	R	R	R
1734	R/L		L	L	L	L	L	L/R/T	T/R	T/R	R/LL	L			
1735					L/RR	T	T	T	R	R	DON/Y	R?	R?	R?	R/L
1736	L		L	L	L/R	T/R/L/R	R	R	R	R	R	R	T/R	L	
1737											L/R			R/L	

Appendix 3.2:

Principal activities of Rufford male day-labourers employed on 'Improvements to Rufford Seat', 1729-1743.

The data is drawn from labourers' fortnightly payment books and the primary intentions of the table are to give an impression of the range and scale of 'improvements' and some indication of the co-ordination of activities. To this end, several classificatory decisions have been made:

1. A broadly seasonal classification has been adopted for summary purposes:

Winter (December, January, February); Spring (March, April, May); Summer (June, July, August); Autumn (September, October, November)

2. Where identical combinations of activities were sustained across a seasonal period they are only specified once. But where the same activity features several times but in different combinations of tasks it is re-quoted.

3. The numbers specified provide only a rough indication of the scale of the task. Further, the style of documentation changes towards the end of the period under consideration and the numbers assigned to individuated tasks become highly ambiguous.

4. Several labouring activities feature consistently across the period and throughout the year:

- Woodwork (up to 4 men consistently engaged sawing, cutting cord wood, making fences etc.)
- Wood Tenter (1)
- 1-2 labourers assigned to the stables
- 1-2 labourers assigned to the wagon and cart
- Kitchen help (1 but intermittent)
- Brew house (1-2 but intermittent)

These are not included in the chart below

5. Neither male harvest and hop work nor seasonal wood management (cutting and stubbing coppice, charcoaling etc.) are consistently treated in labourers' fortnightly payment books.

Though both drew upon the regular day-labour force to a large extent, the expenses incurred are generally recorded as discrete events under 'harvest expenses' and 'wood expenses' in full estate accounts (see Table 3.7 and Chapter 6 for fuller discussion).

Archival Source & Year	Principal Activities	Average male labour force
	<p><i>Note: In early labourers' account books estate expenditure was recorded on a weekly rather than fortnightly basis and by task rather than by the activities and outlay on an individual labourer – the latter became the norm soon after George Holt assumed stewardship.</i></p> <p>❖ indicates 10 - 20 labourers involved for at least 1 week indicates</p>	
<p>NA: DD/SR/211/368; DD/SR/211/366 Nov 1729 – Sept 1730</p>	<p>Autumn: gathering beech mast; Winkerfield Dam; Winter: ❖ in Beech Hill Intack; ❖ pruning, planting, digging New Park; grubbing timber for fences. Spring: ❖ pruning & planting New Park; ❖ 'in the New Wilderness'; ❖ planting firs New Park; ❖ pruners and other work in Old & New Wildernesses; mending breech in bath-house bank; planting white thorn in New Park; 'amending' Black Walk; 'Levelling [Nottingham] Road'; ❖ in Kitchen Garden viz: White Walk. Summer: ❖ weeding oaks & beeches New Park (men+women); ❖ White Walk & Bridge; ❖ cleaning river Nottingham Road; ❖ 'in the ponds'; ❖ stables (16 men); 'cleansing Black Walk Pond and Leather Miller';</p>	Not available
	<p><i>Note: George Holt prepares accounts from mid-July 1729. From September 1729 labour books adopt a consistent format listing labourers by name/ days worked/ summary of tasks engaged in.</i></p>	
<p>NA: DD/SR/211/366; DD/SR/211/358. Sept 1730 – Sept 1731</p>	<p>Autumn: 'cleansing river Nottingham Road' (13); 'wash in Nottingham Road and Alay's [allees] in Wilderness' (11); 'digging earth in new wilderness' (4); 'with carts in new wilderness' (2); 'serving masons' (5); at Wellow Dam (7). Winter: 'digging at gravel pits and ahays [ha-has]; 'at HaHay's in New Wilderness' (8); 'cutting a Ride in Old Wilderness'; 'HaHay's Old Wilderness'; '[screening] earth for G [garden] Borders and HaHa's in Old Wilderness' ditto New Wilderness (6); helping at lodge; 'planting and pruning and digging ha-ha's in new wilderness'; 'draining kitchen garden and stopping fox earths'; 'digging at gravel pits'; 'filling gravel for Nottingham Road'; Spring: 'stopping and clearing wood in Old Park for cord wood and pales' (5); 'planting and pruning in the New Wilderness(7); 'with wagon and plowing' (4); 'hewing rails and pales for park fence' (3);</p>	<p>20</p> <p>16 (for 6 wks 4 men draining hop yards)</p> <p>20</p>

	<p>'draining in the meadow' (4); 'in the New Wilderness Ha-ha's'; 'at Hemesley [Elmsley] Warren'; 'raming clay at Bath and leviling Garden' (3); 'leading gravel to White Walk'; 'at gravel potts and laying otter grates'; 'hedging French gorse'; 'falling trees, pilling bark, cutting cordwood'; 'Leviling Dial Court' (9); 'Hedging Lound Wood'; 'at Kitchen Garden'.</p> <p>Summer: 'at HaHa's in New Wilderness and Leviling Dial Court and Kitchen Garden' (8); 'at Hemesley'; 'serving masons'; 'thatching'; 'cutting trees and cord wood in Old Park' (5); 'Kitchen Garden' (9); 'digging clay' (3).</p>	15 Average: 18
<p>NA: DD/SR/211/358; DD/SR/211/364</p> <p>Sept 1731 – Sept 1732</p>	<p>Autumn: 'at HaHa's in New Wilderness' (7); 'hedging French gorse'; 'serving masons'; 'cutting stoups and rails for park fence'; 'at new walk in Lowyard'; 'serving masons'; 'thatching at lodge'; 'at Wellow Dam'; 'stopping fox earths 1 night' (2); 'New Park fence' (4); 'tempering clay in Kitchen Garden' (9); 'at Wellow Dam' (8); 'at New Wilderness and Kitchen Garden' (11); 'stopping thorns in Wellow Park'; 'getting ash keys' (8); 'at new cascades' (2).</p> <p>Winter: 'in New Wilderness'; 'planting in Wellow Park'; 'cutting New River in Mill Meadows' (6); 'planting wellow Park' (6); 'planting at Smith's [Thomas Smith's] at Ompton'; 'making Edwinstowe Ride wider in Wellow Park'; 'pruning in Beech Hill Intack' (7); 'sorting hop poles'; 'threshing'; 'hedging in Mill Lane'; 'planting in New Wilderness and at plow' (6); 'hedging in Wellow Park'; 'serving bricklayers'; 'draining in the meadow'.</p> <p>Spring: 'at Cascades in the Kitchen Garden' (4); 'planting Firrs in New Wilderness' (8); 'ditching in ye Miller's meadow' (6); 'at Kitchen Garden and leading cordwood' (9); 'making Bowling Gren Fence' (3); 'at wash in Mill Lane' 'leading Gravel thither and filling Gravel' (7); 'at Brick Walls [garden court] making stoup hoults [holes]'.</p> <p>Summer: 'leviling in New Wilderness' (8); 'kidding gorse'; 'sodding in the Old Park' (9); 'at mount in New Wilderness'; with 'wagon and cart'; 'leviling New Wilderness'; 'getting stone at Eakring'; 'serving bricklayers'; 'mowing rushes'; 'mowing corn and at harvest work' (13).</p>	19 16 17 16 Average: 17
<p>NA: DD/SR/211/364</p> <p>Sept 1732 – July 1733</p>	<p>Autumn: 'Leviling in New Wilderness'; 'serving bricklayers'; 'leviling the Ride in the Old Park'; serving mason at Inkersall [Winkerfield] boat house'; 'Leviling in Brail [Eakring-Brail Wood]'; 'Cold Well Bridge'; 'serving masons'; 'fencing at Hay stacks'; 'getting stone at Eakring'; 'kidding gorse' (5); 'filling manure' (6); 'ditching on the forest behind ye New Wilderness' (15); 'at Wellow Dam'</p> <p>Winter: 'ditching on the forest' (7); 'kidding for house use'; 'stopping at Boscoe and Wellow Park' (6); 'at Inkersall Boat house'; 'leading earth to the Cave in Wilderness' (8); 'leviling up New Wilderness' (8); 'leading gravel to Nottingham Road'.</p> <p>Spring: 'Widening Edwinstowe Ride in Wellow Park' (8); 'Leviling New Wilderness' (8); ploughing (4); 'stopping in Wellow Park' (4); 'getting in corn' (2); 'serving bricklayers'; 'repairing the mill'; 'cleansing fatt</p>	18 13 18

	pasture ditch'; 'going into Yorkshire with mares'; 'at Bogg to make a New Road' (12); 'felling timber and cutting cord' (2); 'at Gravel Pitt' (12); 'getting and leading gravel to road' (9); 'hedging French gorse' (10). Summer: 'getting and leading gravel to the road'; 'at gravill pitt and mowing' (12); 'leading to Bogg'.	15 Average: 16
	July 1733 - July 1734 absent from the archival record	
NA: DD/SR/211/361 22 July 1734 - Sept 1734	Summer: 'digging at parterre'; 'about the canal and parterre'; 'serving masons at the Terras [terrace]'; 'banking at Canal' (13).	18
	<i>Note: In July 1735 Holt begins to head the day-labourers' payment records with a summary of the activities undertaken in any fortnight. The numbers of workmen undertaking specific activities become more uncertain and are therefore omitted, however, specific tasks are sometimes identified in the breakdown of labour which do not occur in the summary heading. To make the distinction clear, summary headings have been underlined.</i> In October 1734 Mr Johnson began to 'oversee' the labourers.	
NA: DD/SR/211/361; DD/SR/211/365 Sept 1734 - Sept 1735	Autumn: 'at Terras drying foundation' (3); 'at canal' (25); 'getting stone at Eaking' (2); 'serving masons'; 'filling gravel'; 'serving bricklayers' (3); 'at canal and Wellow Dam [possibly quarry being referenced]' (23); 'baring stone at Wellow and at Canal' (27). Winter: 'at canal' (37); 'planting, pruning, and Gravel Pitt' (28); 'planting, pruning, and levelling in New Wilderness and New Park' (34); 'leading gravel and earth' (1); 'winnowing and getting in corn' (2); 'levelling and planting in the New Wilderness and leading Gravel and [Br...]' (34); 'at canal and parterre' (38); 'stubbing thorns in the meadow'; 'hedging French gorse' (2). Spring: 'at canal &c.' (36); 'stubbing trees and cutting cordwood' (2); 'pulling down old building'; 'at the new building' (4); 'helping at ye Iron Gates'. Summer: 'helping painter at ye Iron Gates'; 'stubbing trees and cutting cord'; 'getting stone at Wellow' (29); 'at Cannal and Mr Savile's Apartment, with Carpenters, Masons and Bricklayers &c.'; 'at canal and leading Hay'; 'getting stone at Wellow'; 'leading Hay'; 'at Canal, Mr Savile's Apartment, Stone Quarry, and mowing, and Cleaning parterre &c.'; 'at Canal, Cleaning Rivers, Serving Masons and Leading Corn &c.'; 'fencing at Snake ponds'; 'at the Rivers, Cleaning, Leading Corn, and Serving Masons and Bricklayers'; 'baring and getting stone at Wellow'; 'pulling ling'.	35 42 43 37
NA: DD/SR/ 211/365;	Autumn: 'at canal getting and leading stone &c and serving the Masons'; 'plowing in the park'; 'at the	Average: 39 39

<p>DD/SR/211/360</p> <p>Sept 1735 – Sept 1736</p>	<p>Canal, Mowing the Parterre, Getting and Leading Stone and serving Masons &c.; 'at Canal, getting stone at Wellow, Leading Stone, manure, gravel &c.'; 'at Canal, Leading Stone, Gravel, and Plowing &c.'; 'at Canal, stone quarry, gathering ash keys &c.'.</p> <p>Winter: 'at Canal, Stone Quarry, &c.'; 'at Canal, Stone Quarry, Planting &c.'; 'widening woods in Wellow Park'; 'at Stone Quarry, Widening Rides in Wellow Park, Pruning in New Park, Planting &c.'.</p> <p>Spring: 'planting, pruning, at the Stone Quarry and Canal &c.'; 'Planting in the Wilderness, and at Canal and Stone Quarry, Plaching [plashing] and Hedging &c.'; 'at Canal, plowing and sowing, serving Masons, and Bricklayers &c.'.</p> <p>Summer: 'at Canal, Stone Quarry, making the New Foard at the Park Gate near the Mill &c.'; 'at Canal, Stone Quarry, Leading Hay, Serving Masons &c.'; 'at Canal, Stone Quarry, Serving Masons, cleaning Sinks, Leading Corn &c.'.</p>	<p>44</p> <p>44</p> <p>43</p> <p>Average: 43</p> <p>*In Nov/Dec wood cutters itemised separately.</p>
<p>Mr Johnson left Savile's service in late June 1737; Mr Richard Johnson began as overseer in late August</p>	<p>Mr Johnson left Savile's service in late June 1737; Mr Richard Johnson began as overseer in late August</p>	<p>Average: 41</p>
<p>NA: DD/SR/211/360; DD/SR/211/362</p> <p>Sept 1736 – Sept 1737</p>	<p>Autumn: 'at Canal; Stone Quarry, serving Masons &c.'; 'at Canal, Stone Quarry, making the Mount, serving Masons &c.'.</p> <p>Winter: 'at Canal and Serpentine River &c.'; 'at Canal and Serpentine River, threshing &c.'; 'about the Canal and Planting in the New Park'; 'planting in the New Park and cutting up rubbish and fallows out of the way &c.'; 'planting in the New Park, cutting cordwood &c.'.</p> <p>Spring: 'planting, and cutting and stubbing wood &c.'; 'planting, and fencing and plowing &c.'; 'planting and sowing ash keys'; 'planting, fencing, plowing &c.'; 'planting poplars' (1); 'levelling the meadows and sowing clover seed and banking at John Vessey and our own meadow from Coldwell &c.'; 'leading gravel and making a gravel walk in the Kitchen Garden and raising the Walk and Levelling on the north side of White Walk Canal &c.'; 'mowing new Garden and Wilderness Walks'; 'sodding the Mount, leading gravel &c. about the Canal, stubbing and cutting Hedges &c.'; 'edging Canal' (2); 'Leading Gravel to the Gardens, Parterre, Walks, Sodding the Mount, cutting cordwood &c.'.</p> <p>Summer: 'leading Gravel to the Parterre, howing in the wood &c.'; 'about the Mount, Canal, and leading earth &c.'; 'howing a fortnight in the New Park and at the Islands at the Mill Dam &c.'; 'at Canal and Mill Dam &c.'.</p>	<p>43</p> <p>41 (4 wks Nov/Dec only 29 men)* 52</p> <p>29</p> <p>Average: 41</p>
<p>NA: DD/SR/211/362</p> <p>Sept 1737 – May 1738</p>	<p>Autumn: 'at Mill Dam, Mowing Bracan in the Park, and Cleaning the river below the Dam &c.'; 'about the Mill Dam and Cleaning the River in Nottingham Road &c.'; 'Repairing Nottingham Road and Levelling a Ride in Beech Hill Intack &c.'; 'at the Mill Damms and Cleaning the Wilderness Walks &c.'; 'at the Old Mill</p>	<p>29</p>

	<p>Dam and levelling the Meadows &c.’</p> <p>Winter: ‘at the Old Mill Damm and Fencing and Sowing &c.’; ‘at the Old and New Mill Damms &c.’; ‘Planting in the New Park and Wellow Park &c.’ ‘cutting and stubbing in Wellow Park’ (9); ‘planting in the New Park and leading Gravel into the Nottingham Road &c.’; ‘planting in the New Park, leading Gravel and Earth &c. and Threshing’; ‘planting in the New Park, leading Gravel to the Foard by the Mill &c.’</p> <p>Spring: ‘levelling in the New Gardens and at the Canal &c.’; ‘planting by Edwinstowe and Levelling in the Meadows &c.’; ‘planting Trees on the Forrest and cleaning the New Garden &c.’; ‘getting stone at Wellow Quarry and cleaning the New Garden &c.’</p>	<p>29 (9 men ‘cutting and stubbing’ for 6 wks itemised separately) 35 Average: 31</p>
	<p>May 1738 - May 1739 absent from the archival record</p>	
<p>NA: DD/SR/A4/49/1 May 1739 – Sept 1739</p>	<p>Spring: ‘at New Mill Dam and Center of New Park and Wood Work and at Quarry &c.’; ‘leading earth to the center in the New Park and Howing and at Wood Work &c.’.</p> <p>Summer: ‘at Mill Dam and Mud Pond and Watering Plants &c.’; ‘at mud pond and in new Garden’; ‘at Wellow Quarry’ (8); ‘at Mud pond &c and Fencing’; ‘at Mud pond and Wood Work and Serving Masons &c.’; ‘stubbing a vistoe in Broad Oak Break and at New Mill Damm and leading Hay &c.’; ‘at Mud pond, New Mill Dam, Brackan Mowers in the Old Park and at Woodwork &c.’</p>	<p>46 40 (only 29 fortnight in July) Average: 43</p>
<p>NA: DD/SR/A4/49/1; DD/SR/211/363 Sept 1739 – Sept 1740</p>	<p>Autumn: ‘at and about New Mill Dam &c.’; ‘at Stone Quarry, New Mil Dam, Mowing and Raking the Wilderneses &c.’; ‘about the Mill Dam, Wellow Quarry and at Wood work &c.’; ‘at New Mill Dam, Woodwork, serving Mason at Mill, also leading Water in the nights at the Mill Foundation &c.’; ‘at Wellow stone quarry’ (8); ‘at New Mill Foundation also [leading] Water there, and levelling in the Mill Meadow &c.’</p> <p>Winter: ‘digging and wheeling Earth at the Decoy and leviling in the Mill Meadow and cutting down Birches in New Wildernes and Fencing &c.’; ‘at New Mill Meadow and Woodwork &c.’; ‘leading stone from Wellow Quarry &c.’; ‘digging and wheeling earth out of the New Mill Dam, sawing and wood work &c.’; ‘wheeling earth to the Plants on Thompson’s Hill, stubbing and cutting Underwood in Wellow Park &c.’</p> <p>Spring: ‘stubbing and cutting underwood in Wellow Park and planting in the Lound &c.’; ‘planting in Lound Wood and Wellow Park &c.’; ‘planting in Wellow Park and planting and weeding in the nurseries and at Woodwork &c.’; ‘weeding in the Nurseries, leading Earth in the Mill Meadow, stubbing vistoes in New Park &c.’; ‘leviling Rideing in New Park, Levilling Mill Meadow, wood work, serving masons &c.’; ‘leviling Mill Meadow, at New Mill and Quarry &c.’; ‘cutting and stubbing wood’ (4); ‘at Wellow Quarry’ (8); ‘Leviling vistoes in the New Park, at New Mill &c.’</p>	<p>40 41 45</p>

	Summer: 'wheeling and leading Earth out of the Mill Dam &c.'; 'stubbing and cutting trees' (5); 'at Wellow Quarry' (8); 'leading earth out of the Mill Dam and making the Decoy, serving Masons &c. and at Quarry'; 'making the decoy, serving Mason &c.'; 'working at new Mill, Woodwork, serving masons &c.'; 'at New Mill, at Decoy, at Quarry, Woodwork, serving Masons &c.'; 'at the Decoy, weeding in the Nursery, at Quarry, serving masons &c.'; 'at Decoy, serving Masons, at Quarry &c.'	49 Average: 44
NA: DD/SR/211/363; DD/SR/206/1/136 Sept 1740 – Sept 1741	Autumn: 'at Decoy, Mill Dam and at Quarry'; 'at New Mill Dam &c.'; 'at Mill Dam, woodwork, serving Masons, at Quarry &c.'; 'at Decoy, at otter pond, woodwork, serving masons, at Quarry &c.'. Winter: 'at Mill Dam, Otter pond, Woodwork, serving Masons &c.'; 'at Mill Dam, woodwork, and serving Masons &c.'; 'cutting, stubbing and planting Wood in Wellow Park &c.'; 'at New Mill, cutting and stubbing underwood in Wellow Park &c.'; 'at Mill Dam and woodwork &c.'; 'planting and stubbing in Wellow Park &c.'; 'stubbing Rides in Wellow Park and planting in Lound Wood &c.'; 'planting in Lound Wood, in Nursery, Woodwork, &c.'. Spring: 'leading Gravel into New Garden, and Fountain Court, at mill Dam, Woodwork &c.'; 'at mill Dam, Graveling New Garden, Woodwork, Serving Masons &c.'; 'at Mill Dam, leading earth to center in Wellow Park, Woodwork, serving Masons &c.'; 'at New Mill Dam, at Wellow Quarry, Woodwork, serving Masons &c.'. Summer: 'at Mill Dam and Stone Quarry &c.'; 'at Mill Dam, Mowing grass Woodwork, at Stone Quarry, serving Masons &c.'; 'at Mill Dam, Woodwork, at Quarry &c.'; 'at Mill Dam, mud Pond, Quarry, Woodwork, Serving Masons &c.'	48 50 50 46 Average: 49
NA: DD/SR/206/1/136 Sept 1741 – May 1742	Autumn: 'at Mill Dam, stone quarry, Woodwork, Serving Masons &c.'. Winter: 'planting, stubbing underwood in Wellow Park, planting in Lound Wood &c.'; 'cutting and stubbing underwood in Wellow Park, planting in Old Park &c.'; 'planting in Old Park, at Woodwork, serving Masons &c.'. Spring: 'planting in Old Park, at Mill Dam, at Stone Quarry, Woodwork, serving Masons &c.'; 'planting and wheeling earth in Borderswood and Mill Dam, at Woodwork, stone Quarry &c.'; 'wheeling earth in New Mill Dam, at woodwork, serving masons &c.'	47 49 47 Average: 48

Appendix 4.1:

Overlay of Tonus's plan for the New Wilderness on the *c.1700 Survey* indicating the surface areas of various distinct parts of the pleasure grounds.

Measurements in acres.



Appendix 4.2:

'Memorandum of distances of the ground on the East side of Rufford House', 15 October 1733.

(NA: DD/SR/202/13)

The transcription reproduces the formatting of the original document as far as possible – bullet points have, however, been used to replace the lines which separated distinct points in the original.

- From the House cross the Fountain Court to the East Edge of the Boulion Walk 145ft 6ins
- From the East Edge of the abovesaid Walk to the center of the Ring or Circle 106ft 6ins
- From the said Center of the Ring or Circle to a RectAngular Intersection of the same Line by another Line going Perpendicular from it, through the middle of a Gate Intended to be made in the new Intended wall. 107ft.
NB. This Intended Gate is to be in the Line passing through the Kitchen Garden Gate and Right between the Stew Ponds, and through the middle of the Great Pond.
- From the said Rectangular Intersection to another Oblique Intersection by the above said Line last mentioned passing through the aforesaid Two Gates, and Right between the Stew Ponds &c. 24ft 7ins
- From the said Oblique Intersection to the middle of the Intended Cannal. 171ft 5ins
 - The other Half of the Breadth of the Cannal 30ft – to be added more
 - The other Walk on the East side of the Cannal 30ft – to be added more
 - total 60ft
- The whole Depth of the Ground to be taken in Eastward from the House 615ft 10ins
- From the Perpendicular Line rising from the Balcony or middle of Fountain Court To the Outside of the Intended Wall which is to be Paralel with it, and to Rise Perpendicular from the North side of the middle Window of the three Windows at the South End of the House Eastward. 78ft 2ins
From the said Perpendicular Line Rising from the Balcony or Middle of Fountain Court to another Line Paralel with it arising Perpendicular from the middle of the End of the Terras Walk. 79ft 4ins

Appendix 4.3:

‘Directions for a Fish Grate, – a Wash, – and a Cataract of Water for the Great Canal over against the Cave Walk in the Wilderness’, 5 June 1735. (NA: DD/SR/215/13/10)

The transcription reproduces the formatting of the original document as far as possible.

The Grate

The Length of the Grate (Equal to the Breadth of the Cave Walk) Exclusive of the Sills.....30ft

The Depth of ditto.....4ft

The Under side of the upper sill to lye Even with the surface of the ordinary water

To be in 6 Distinct Grates to Draw out upon occasions in Grooves.

The Thickness of the Barrs 1 Inch $\frac{1}{4}$ The Breadth 4 Inches

The vacancy between the Barrs $\frac{1}{2}$ Inch

The Wash and Cataract of Water

The 1st wall From the Bottom of the Grate a Stone Pavement Two Foot or more wide on the West Side Declining about one Inch or more from the Grate for the Bottom of the Grate well. Then for the West Side of the well a stone wall sloping back as it rises to the west (like the sloap of the walls of the Islands) widening the upper mouth of the well. Four yards of the middle of this wall to be 4 Inches below the Ordinary surface of the water, the other six yards (viz Three yards on each side) to be 2 Inches below the said surface.

N.B: Call the middle Four yards The Deeper Sluce, & the other six yards The shallow part of the Sluce.

N.B. The west side of the well to be at Right Angles with ye cave walk.

[Note along the side] This wall is not to be Paralell with the Grate But at Right Angles with the Cave Walk.

The 2nd wall Westward Five yards beyond the west side of the walk another paralell wall, with a sluce in the Middle Four Yards Long, and 8 Inches Lower than the like Sluce in the first wall, and the other six yards shallower sluce also 8 Inches Lower than the like Sluce in the first wall.

N.B. The Depth of this wall need be about one Foot or more from the Bottom of the Foundation to the Deeper sluce, and one Foot 2 Inches at the shallower parts of the Sluce.

The 3rd wall Westward still Four yards beyond the second wall another paralell Wall, with Sluces like the others 4 Inch Lower than the second Wall.

N.B: This Wall must be strong and Rise from a good Foundation, and the Foundation to be Lower than the surface of the Intended Lake below will ever rise. And also the said Foundation must be extended still westward beyond the said wall far enough to be the Foundation of a Stone Pavement to receive the Fall of the Cataract of Water in its Parabolick Descent. The said Pavement to Decline a little westward to Rebound the Dash of Water outward from the Wall.

See the note A on the other side

The Two – Also Two side walls to confine the Ten yards Sluce of water of a suitable
sides Depth to the other walls in their Respective places. – N.B. Ten yards of these Two
sides walls next to the Canal (viz. So much of them as stands cross the walk) must
rise 2 Inches above the ordinary surface of the Water in the Canal.

Corner – N.B: The Twelve Corner Stones of the sluices (viz. 2 In the Deeper sluce and 2 In
stones of ye the shallower sluce of each of the first named walls) must be strong Mansfield
sluces stone, corner of the sluce may be cut in the solid stone. And the sides of the
Deeper sluce are not to rise Two Inches Parpendicular, but be slop'd back a little.

Gutter in – The Second or Middle of the 3 first named walls must be continued as far as the
walls End of the Canal and southward to the like Distance and Running Paralell with
the Walk of the Canal, and Five yards Westward from it. This wall must be 2
Inches Higher than the Ordinary Surface of the Water in the Canal. It need be only
20 Inches High, from the Top to the Bottom of the Foundation at those parts of it
next to the Sluce; and only 14 Inches High at the Two Extreame Ends. In all parts
of it thus continued beyond the Sluces to be 12 Inches Under Ground: and at
those parts next to the Sluces 8 Inches above Ground; and so less and less above
Ground Gradually to the Extreame Ends where it is to be only 2 Inches above
Ground.

The Five yards space between this wall and the wall into the Gutter to Convey
such Water as may overflow that part of the Canal in a Flood to the Sluce.

[Note along side] The two Corner Stones of the Deeper sluce nearest to the Grate must
rise one Inch or more above ordinary surface of the Water in the canal, to support a
Bridge of Planks. These stone may be in one piece each and [8] foot [8] Inch long from
East to West, and 9 Inches wide from South to North. The Bridge is to lye upon 2 foot of
the East Ends of them and grooves on the West side of the Bridge on both sides of the
stones 2 Inch: Wide and 1 ½ Deep, to fix Planks in to stop water on occasions.

A N:B: From the Third Wall, Described before, the Water is to Deliver it self in a
cataract or Paraolick Fall 15 Inches from the Bottom of the Deeper Sluce. From
thence it is to run Ten yards upon a Pavement descending 1 Inch to the
semicircular Edge on the East side of the Rose Bason described in the Plan.
Then a Fall of 1 Inch more from the said semicircular Edge into the Rose Bason.
And from the Rose Bason to run upon the Level into the design'd Lake.

The Ordinary surface of the Water in the Canal is to be 30 Inches higher than
the water in the Lake Viz:

The Depth of the Deeper sluce	4 Inches
From thence to the Second wall	8 Inches
From thence to the Third wall	1 Inch
The Fall from thence	15 Inches
And to the Semicircular Edge of the Rose Bason	1 Inch
The Fall from the Semicircular Edge into the Bason	1 Inch

	30 Inches

Appendix 4.4:

Seed/plant purchase lists for Rufford's pleasure grounds.

Prices paid selectively transcribed; original spellings retained.

Sir George Savile's bill from John Turner, 17 Dec 1722, paid 22 June 1723.

Total £6 8s 9d (NA: DD/SR/218/2/16)

Strasbourg Onion
White Spanish Onion
Orange Carrot
Sandwich Carrot
London Leek
London Radish
Green Parslaine
Curled Endive
Italian Salliry
[...] Mustard
[...] Parsnip
Roccomboles
Shallots
Cabbage Lettice
Brown Dutch Lettice
Sylesia Lettice
Imperial Lettice
Early Dutch Cabbage
Battersea Cabbage
Best Collyflower seed
Carduns seed
Flanders Hotspurs
Marrow peas
Dutch admirals
[Large] Egg Peas
Windsor beans
Sandwich beans
Cumcumber
Kidney beans
Scarlet beans
1 dozen large double matts

[African] and [French] Marrigold
Belvideres
Amaranthus Tricolor
Amaranthus Coxcomb
8 oz Best Ditto annemonies 6 s
100 Ditto Rannuncilors 8 s
100 Ditto Junquills 5 s
Fine Basherelle [no price given]
100 Best Tulips 8 s
Fine Dutch July Flower seed
Ditto Rose Larkspur
Venus Looking Glass
Marvele of Perue
S Sultan
Lupins of sorts
Ditto Poppy
Convovulos
Annual Stock
Female Balsom
Lobels Catchfly
Fine Double stock
For a box and bag
February 4th 4 Doz Italian Tubyroseroots 10s
For a box

Sir George Savile's bill from Edmund Hodgkinson, 16 December 1729.

Total £4 14s 4d (NA: DD/SR/215/24)

Strasbourg Onion seed
White Spanish Onion
Orange Carrot
Rockainboles
Radish Seed
Salesia Lettuce
Black Spanish Lettuce
Colly flower
Battersea Cabbage
Dutch Cabbage
Green Purslane
Marjoram Seed
African Mari Gould
French Mary Gould
Stepple Bell Flower
Amaranthus Tricolor
Coxcombe
Belvidere
2 doz Mats
Flanders Hotspur pease
Marrow pease
Egg Pease
Windsor Pease

Sir George Savile's bill from Edmund Hodgkinson, 9 February 1730.

Total £3 0s 2d (NA: DD/SR/210/73)

Strasburg Onion seed
White Spanish ditto & Orange Carrot
Sandwich Carrot
Garlick
Salesia Lettuce & black Spanish ditto
White Spanish Raddish
London ditto
Early Dutch Cabbage
Battersey Cabbage
CollyFlower
Green Parsland
Sweet Marjorum
Early Cucumber
Sweet Chervill
Brompton Stock Jilly Flowers [large range in Brompton Nursery Catalogue 1699]
Flanders hot Spur peas 10s
Marrow Ditto 8s
Ditto Egg Peas
Windsor Beans
Flower Seeds 2s 6d

Sir George Savile's bill from Francis Noble, 12 March 1742.

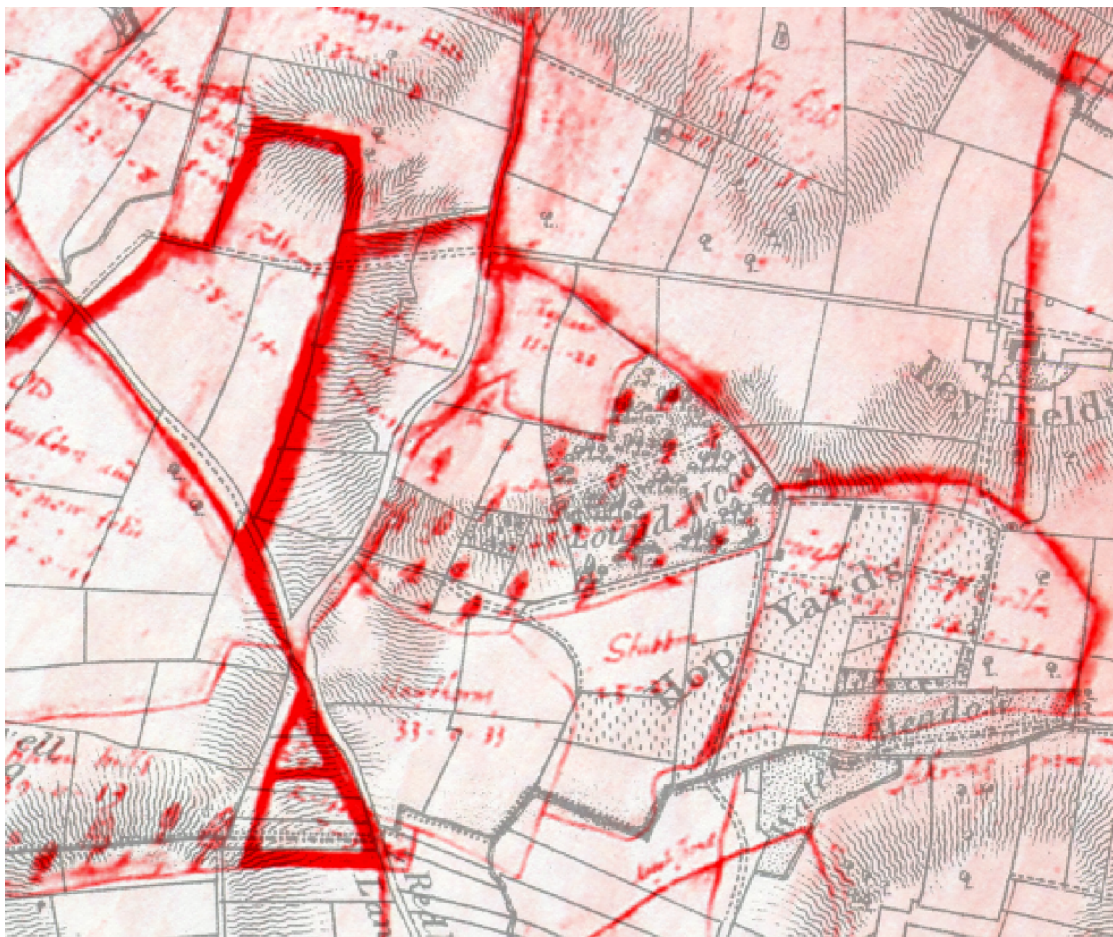
Total £9 7s 9d (NA: DD/SR/206/1)

Strasbourg Onion
White Spanish Onion
Orange Carrot
Sandwich Carrot
Short topp'd Radish
Parsnip
London Leek
Dwarf Celery
Celeriach
Green Parslane
Golden Parslane
Collyflower Seed
Battersey Cabbage
(Stones's) Early
Early Dutch Cabbage
Sugar Loaf Cabbage
Green Curled Savoy
Winter Cabbage
Curled Indive
Caraway Seed
Marjoram Sweet
Sweet Bassill
Bush Bassill
Nasturtium
(Orm^{ts}) Hotspur Peas
Long Hotspur
Spanish [Marrolos]
Dwarf Marrow Peas
Windsor Beans
Lisbon Beans
12 Large Matts
2 Peach Trees
2 Cherry Trees
2 White [Jessimys]
30 [...] French Firr Seed 3 s
2 baggs
3 strike of French Wheat
1 Sack

Appendix 6.1:

Enlargement of Lound Wood in the seventeenth century: map regression study

Below is an overlay of *Bunting's 1637 Survey* (reproduced in red) on *Sanderson's 1835 Map* (reproduced in black). Given that the scale of Lound wood as described in *Medhurst's Survey* equates to that on *Sanderson's 1835 Map*, this overlay indicates that the size of Lound Wood was approximately doubled during the late seventeenth century.



Appendix 6.2:

Establishment of Birkhill Wood: map regression study

Below is an overlay of *Smith's 1720 Survey* (black) on *Sanderson's 1835 Map* (red). It indicates that by the early nineteenth century Wellow Park had been extended to include Birkhill Wood. Thorney Ruff Closes appears also to have been spring wood by this date. The density of tree cover in these closes during the early eighteenth century remains uncertain.



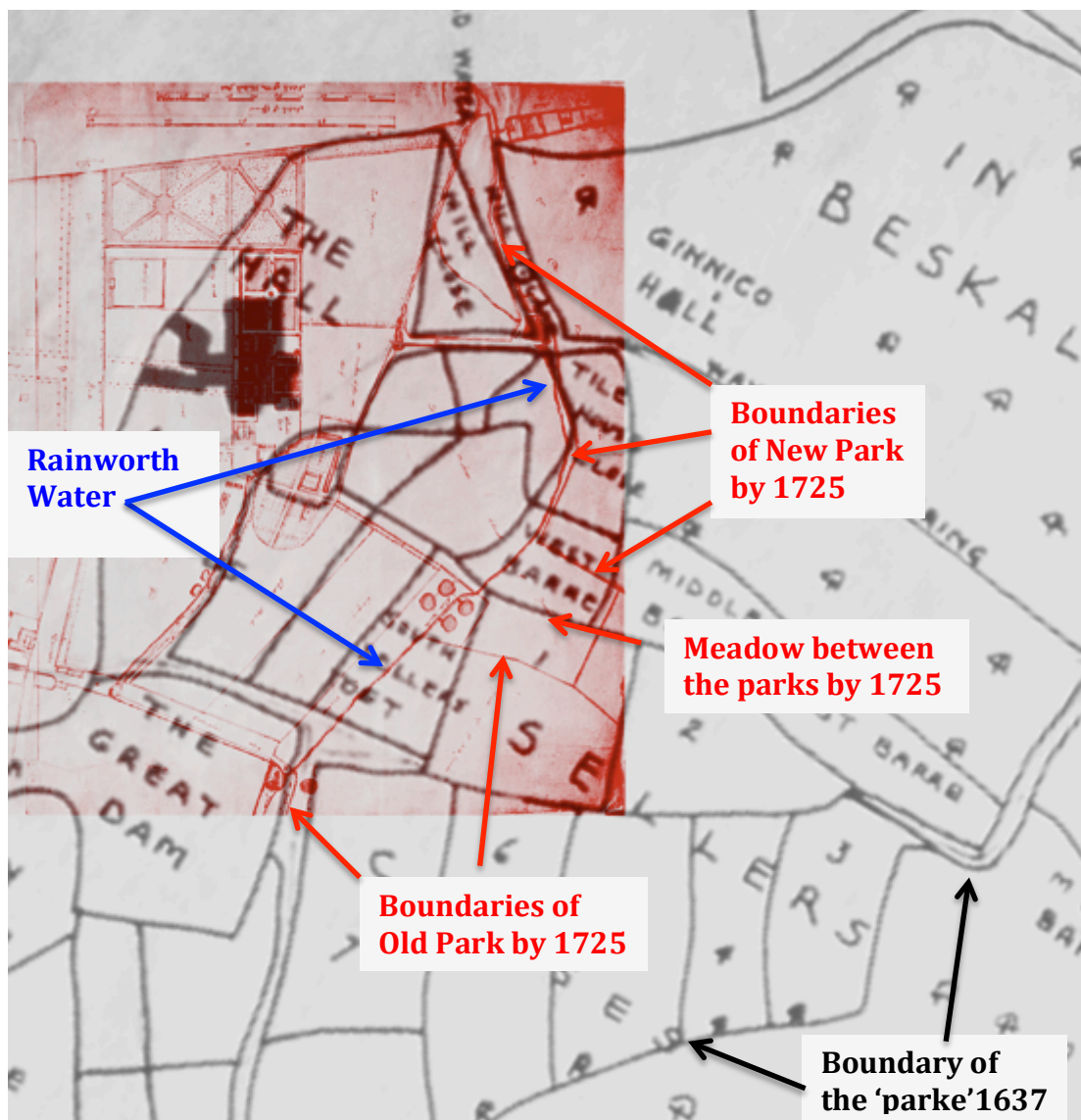
Appendix 6.3

Changes to the boundaries of Old Park and New Park: map regression study

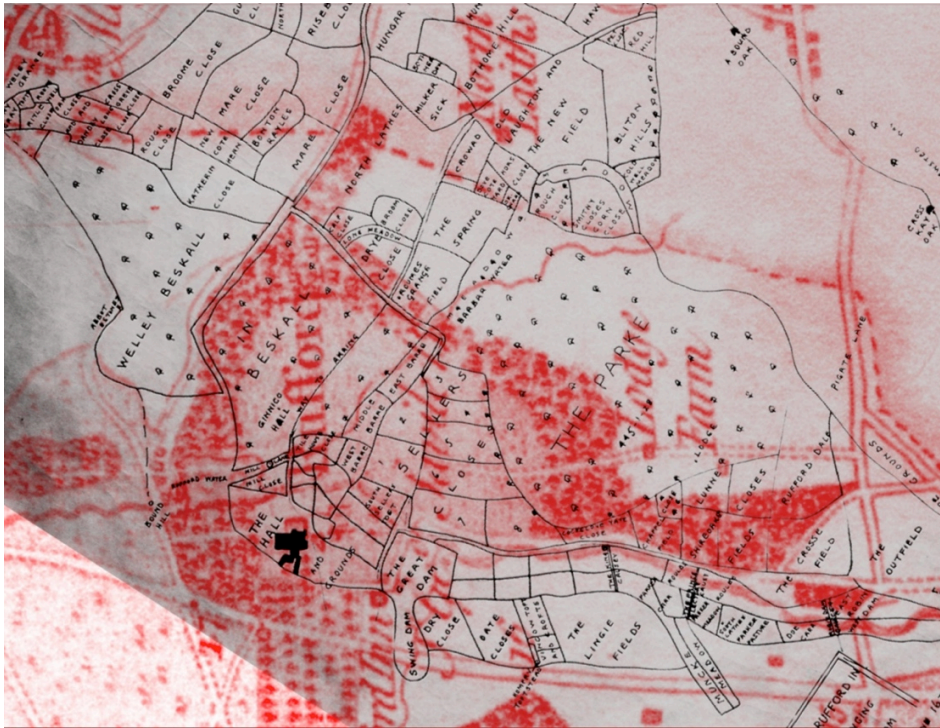
The earliest visual record of a park at Rufford is Christopher Saxton's *Map of Nottinghamshire* (1576). *Bunting's 1637 Survey* provides the first accurate description: 'The Parke' is shown as a wooded area of 445:1:28 a:r:p lying south-east of Rufford Hall (Figures 3.5a & 3.5b). During the seventeenth century the park increased in size, husbanded ground lying on its western boundary being enclosed within the park pales, and, in 1702 if not earlier, was being referred to as 'Old Park' in order to distinguish it from subsequently enclosed parkland, 'New Park', situated to its north. The *c.1700 Survey* (detail Figure 6.7) shows the western boundaries of both Old Park and New Park defined in part by the course of Rainworth Water. A visual representation of this change is provided by an overlay of the *c.1700 Survey* on *Bunting's 1637 Survey* (indicated (a) below). Information provided by the *c.1700 Survey* is limited to the north-western extremity of Old Park. However, additional archival evidence suggests that there was a more comprehensive westerly expansion of the park during the eighteenth century. This is best illustrated by the overlays (b) and (c) below which display, respectively, superpositions of *Chapman's 1774 Map* and *Sanderson's 1835 Map* on *Bunting's 1637 Survey*. The extent to which the distribution of park woodland described by Chapman is reproduced in Sanderson's higher resolution map suggests that Chapman's representation is fairly accurate. That being so, it would appear that by 1774 Old Park had absorbed around 278 acres of ground lying west of its 1637 boundary.¹

The overlays of *Chapman's 1774 Map* and *Sanderson's 1835 Map* on *Bunting's 1637 Survey* – (b) and (c) – considered alongside the overlay of the *c.1700 Survey* on *Bunting's 1637 Survey* – (a) – and a detail from *Reynolds's c.1750 Survey* showing the northern end of New Park – (d) below – indicate that the early eighteenth-century boundary of New Park roughly corresponded to that of the early seventeenth-century wood ground 'Inne Bescall'. Furthermore, that by the mid-eighteenth century the park's northern perimeter had been modestly extended.

¹ The increment in area was computed by the present author in GIS after geo-referencing and overlaying Chapman's Map of 1774 on the *c. 1700 Survey*.



(a): Overlay of the *c.1700 Survey* (red) on a transcribed copy of *Bunting's 1637 Survey* (black).



(b): Overlay of a detail from *Chapman's 1774 Map* showing Rufford parkland on a transcribed copy of *Bunting's 1637 Survey*.

Red Chapman; black Bunting.



(c): Overlay of a detail from *Sanderson's 1835 Map* showing Rufford parkland on a transcribed copy of *Bunting's 1637 Survey*.

Red Sanderson; black Bunting.

Appendix 8.1:

Fox-hunting terrain¹ described in Rufford estate correspondence, 1714-1739.

Chases mostly performed by Savile's hounds and relate to the hunting activities of Savile's huntsmen – John and later Thomas Shelton.

Date & reference (NA: DD/SR)	Chase	Description of route as recorded in estate correspondence	Duration	Distance
(211/227/62)		Not given		30 miles
31 Jan 1719 (211/227/61)	1	End: 'Craggd a fox in pleasley park'. (Property of Earl of Scarsdale)		
9 Feb 1719 (211/227/60)	2	Start: Winkburn. (Savile's hounds had been requested for Lord Granby's use though in the event Granby was ill and they hunted in his absence.)		
9 Feb 1719 (211/227/60)	3	Course: 'found at Clown hills & Dyed in your Liberty towards Mansfield woods'.		
9 Feb 1719 (211/227/60)	4	Course: 'found about welbeck Carr and Dyed about Pawlerton [not identified] or Bonbusk'.		
24 Dec 1719 (211/227/55)	5	General location: 'hounds Ran a fox very finely & hard Last Saturday at Ossington woods &c as Long as Vessy [Vessey was a significant tenant] mare could Cary Shelton up had she not faild He & ye Lad make Shure they should a kild him but ye mare Tired and Faded So much that Shelton quite Lost the whole pack'.		
Jan 1720 (211/227/54)	6	End: 'Killd a fox near Winkburn woods'.		
9 Jan 1720 (211/227/53)	7	Course: 'Your hounds on their way to Eperson [Epperstone] woods Crost a Trayl at Cocket found there and Earthd at Broxbrow [not identified] Then Drew Down to Conton [Cauntton] park near Kellam [Kelham], found & had a hard chase at Winkburn woods & Severall Rings in the Country there about Killd ye fox near Kirtlington [Kirklington] Park'.		

9 Jan 1720 (211/227/53)	8	Course: 'Last week they found at Norton comon Ran through ye Carr and about Severall Little woods to Cresswell [Creswell] Craggs and towards Kiveton [Kiveton]. After a Long & hard Chase Renny (Just Spent) Earth'd at Whittwell [Whitwell] wood where though they were at Trouble and charge of Diging could not Get ye fox for want of a Good Tarryer [terrier] which Shelton Says you have not'.		
1 Feb 1720 (211/227/52)	9	Course: 'hounds found a fox at Epperson [Epperstone] woods had Two Rings there then to Thurgoton [Thurgarton], Southwell and almost to Trent[.] Returned to hockerton and after about 20 Mile Chase kild Renny between there & Winkbourn [Winkburn]'.	20 miles	
1 Feb 1720 (211/227/52)	10	Course: 'On ye 29 th Going to Welbank Carr [not identified] found in Clown Gorse [possibly Clowne in Derbyshire, modern OS indicates a gorse cover just east of the village. Less likely, a precursor to the modern day Clown Hill Plantation on the Welbeck Estate: though located on the modern OS, the area Clown Hill Plantation is not referenced on either <i>Chapman's 1774 Map</i> or <i>Sanderson's 1835 Map</i> suggesting a later provenance] Run to Welbank carr and after to ye forest new park [possibly a reference to newly enclosed Clumber Park] where he Earthed [.] hired men to Digg him out[.] Turn'd him up in view of ye hounds who kild him in about a mile Runing after a Chase of about Ten miles – they were Two Large Dogg foxes'.	10 miles	
31 Mar 1722 (211/227/20)	11	End: 'Brigadeer Sutton [Richard Sutton of Scofton, sometime of Edwinstowe, Major-General in the Army, c. 1673-1737, son of Sir Robert Sutton (1 st Lord Lexington) of Kelham] ² went for your honour's hounds on Good Fryday, who lay at his home all night, and found a Fox next morn, who they killed beyond Blyth, he was a large dogg Fox; afterwards they ran a Bitch Fox into an Earth, who they dug out with her 4 young ones, they brought 'em to Rufford'.		
30 Dec 1723 (211/227/119)	12	Course: 'On fryday ye 20 th [...] Shelton found a fox in Mather Wood which Sported in winkburn woods[.] Aram [Averham] Park, Sutton upon Trent &c and Dyd in Barlow Town Street [not located] after above 20 miles chase'.	20 miles	
30 Dec 1723 (211/227/119)	13	Course: 'On fryday ye 27 th they found a fox in Winkburn Row which after he had Run all over those adjacent woods came to the Brail Out field[.] Old Park[.] Notting[ham] Road[.] Black walk[.] kitchen Garden over your five yards Cascade[.] Up the Rib of Clay at the Canall[.] Snake ponds[.] Bar meadow [.] New park , Brukhills [not identified][.]		

		Then passing near to Tomsons [William Thompson was a major tenant] he went to Ollerton hills Gorse and Dyd there'.		
27 Jan 1724 (211/227/114)	14	Course: 'On ye 17 th Sheltons found a fox in Mather wood which Run Severall Rings about Aram [Averham] Park &c and took ye same Ring & ye hounds ye same Gap which proved fatal to poor Area [a hunter], they Killd this fox in Ossington woods after a Long chase'.		
29 Jan 1724 (211/227/113)	15	Course: 'Yesterday Sheltons found a fox in Clumber Park which Dyd at Blyth Town End after a Chase of near 30 miles'.		30 miles
26 Jan 1734 (211/24/54a)	16	Course: 'Mr Thorney desir'd the Hounds might come over when the Frost was gone to Kill a Fox that haunted his sheep walk, and on Thursday last I [Holt] went with Thomas Shelton; The Hounds Try'd his Sheep-walk and Plantations, but could not find, from thence went to a Large Gorse cover near Worksop, where they found, we had a very fine Chase (which lasted about 3 hours)[.] The Fox went Cross Mr Thorneys sheep walk and through most of his Plantations and from thence near to his House where he made a Head, and return'd back into a Plantation joyning to his sheep walk where the Hounds Kill'd him'.	3 hours	
28 Oct 1734 (211/24/76)	16	End: 'Hounds... Kill'd one Fox in Worksop Mannor Park that run but a short Chase'.	short	short
22 Jan 1735 (211/24/86)	17	'On Thursday last the Hounds found a Fox in Pawmers [not identified] Gorse near Mansfield, from thence he went to M=Woodhouse [Mansfield Woodhouse], from thence above half a mile beyond the West End of Plesley Park [Pleasley Park] where he made a fend and came back again near M Woodhouse from thence to Nettleworth [Nettleworth] and forward within half a mile of Warsop Woods and back again by Nettleworth Common and forward to Clipston [Clipstone] Park and then to Clipston Gorse Break, where the Hounds came up to him and view'd him, from thence he went through the Corner of Clipston Park, and through Clipston Town Street and he took the Road near a Mile towards Oulerton [Ollerton], from thence he came to the northwest Corner of Broad Oak Break [not identified], where the Hounds seem'd to be at a Loss, and were taken off. It was a very fine Chase and lasted about three hours.'	3 hours	
31 Jan 1735	18	Course: 'Early one morning last week the Hounds took a Trail on Clipstone Warren	3 hours	

(211/24/85)		<p>near to the House, and they came near the Fox in Clipstone Park, where they run him above half an hour, and from thence he went to the Forrest about a Mile towards Hemsley [Elmsley] Warren and back to Mansfield Town End, from there to Mansfield Woodhouse, and then back again to the north side of Clipston Park where he Earth'd and was kill'd. The Hounds perform'd very well, and it was an Exceeding fine Chase and lasted near three hours.'</p> <p>Note – This was in a period when Savile seems to have been attempting to police surrounding woodland for foxes more for protection than sport <i>per se</i>.</p>		
10 Jan 1736 (211/24/96)	19	<p>'Yesterday the Hounds were out at Winkbourn [Winkburn] Woods and found a Fox at Paradise Hill [not identified], from thence he ran through White Stubb wood [not identified] and Dillimer Wood, from thence he ran Cross Eakring field and to the East Side of Lound Wood but did not go into It, from thence near Wellow where he made a fend and went to Rufford new Park and forward to Beech Hill Intack, where the Hounds were taken off[f], and none went In. The Hounds run very hard the whole Chase.'</p>		
13 Mar 1736 (211/24/102)	20	<p>Course: 'Mr Newby and some Gentlemen are at Mansfield Woodhouse and have been all this Week with the Fox hounds, We hear they have Hunted on the Forrest towards my Lord Byron's Park and at Plesley [Pleasley] Park and there about.'</p>		
26 Feb 1739 (211/24/147)	21	<p>'[T]he Hounds had a very good Chase, They found near Morton Grange from thence they ran to Eaton Wood, from thence to Whitehouses where he Cross'd Retford River and then went to Retford and back to Gamston Woods and quite through them, near to the Eelpie house and then return'd back through the Wood to Sir Hardolph Westaney's [Wastaney] Park [perhaps Headon] and forward to Truswell [Treswell] woods where he ran several Rings, and they kill'd him above Ground on Truswell Common.'</p>		
28 April 1739 (211/24/154b)	22	<p>Course: 'Viz: A Fox has killed several of the Wild Ducks... in the New Garden [Rufford]... the hounds Try'd for him in and about the Wilderness and twice they took a Trail and ran him into an Earth under an Oak Tree Root in Thoresby Park; The Second time he came he also kill'd two more but they were not Sitting so that in all there are 4 kill'd. Early on Friday morning last about 2 a Clock the Hounds Try'd for him and took a Trail by the Wilderness and ran very swiftly to Carr Brecks [not</p>		

		<p>identified], from thence near to Edwinstowe and back to the French Gorse where the Hounds came to him and kill'd him above Ground, it was a Bitch Fox. Thomas Shelton says never could find a Fox either in Beech Hills or New Park or Wilderness (Though he 'Try'd very often) since you left Rufford.'</p> <p>Note: motivated principally by desire to protect game.</p>		
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1. To facilitate identification on modern OS maps the transcribed place names, where they differ from current usage and where possible, are qualified by the modern term in square brackets, the latter determined upon principally through reference to Gover, J.E.B., Mawer, A. & Stenton, F.M, eds, *The Place-Names of Nottinghamshire*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1940.
2. Raine, Rev. John, *The History and Antiquities of the Parish of Blyth*, Westmorland, 1860.

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Archival Sources

Nottinghamshire Archives

Manuscript sources to which direct reference has been made in this thesis are fully cited in the footnotes together (where it adds to the interpretation of the main text) with a brief description of the document type. A systematic referencing system has never been applied to the Savile Archives (see Section 1.2.2), ruling out the possibility of a summary list of class marks consulted. The bibliography below is therefore confined to identification of the principal types of document consulted.

DAY-LABOURERS' FORTNIGHTLY ACCOUNT BOOKS (RUFFORD)

ESTATE ACCOUNTS (RUFFORD)

ESTATE CORRESPONDENCE (RUFFORD & THORNHILL)

Addressed to the 7th Baronet (and on occasions Madam Barbara Savile) from: Rufford stewards, George Burden, Thomas Smith (senior and junior), William Matthew and George Holt; Rufford under-steward, Joshua Mann; Thornhill stewards, William and Raph Elmsall.

FAMILY CORRESPONDENCE

LEASE AGREEMENTS (RUFFORD)

LEGAL PROCEEDINGS (SAVILE FAMILY + BONDS ETC. RE CONTROL OF POACHING)

RECEIPTS & VOUCHERS (RUFFORD)

SHERWOOD FOREST PERAMBULATIONS

SIR GEORGE SAVILE'S PERSONAL ACCOUNT BOOKS

SURVEYS AND DESIGN PLANS (RUFFORD)

WARRANTS AND RELATED DOCUMENTS GRANTING RIGHTS WITHIN SHERWOOD FOREST

WILLS

WOOD CONTRACTS AND WOOD BOOKS (MAINLY WITHIN PORTLAND ARCHIVES AND SAVILE ARCHIVES)

Other Public Archive Repositories Consulted

British Library Manuscripts, London.

Cambridge University Library: Manuscripts and Special Collections, Cambridge.

Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies, Aylesbury.

Dewsbury Central Library Archives, now transferred to West Yorkshire Archive Service, Kirklees.

Lambeth Palace Library, London.

National Archives, Kew.

National Monuments Record, Swindon.

Rufford Abbey Country Park, Ollerton.

Sheffield Archives, Sheffield.

University of Nottingham: Manuscripts and Special Collections, Nottingham.

West Yorkshire Archive Service, Leeds.

Private Archive Repositories Consulted

Lord Savile's private collection both in the Savile Estate Office, Dewsbury, Yorkshire, and more personal items (letters, diaries, paintings) at his Yorkshire properties – Gryce Hall, near Huddersfield, and Walshaw Lodge, Heptonstall.

Lord Scarbrough's private collection at Sandbeck Hall, Yorkshire.

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Report 'Rainworth Water: Study of Flood Alleviation Measures at the May Lodge Drive Housing Estate', prepared by Binnie & Partners (consulting engineers), May 1991. Related information in correspondence from the early 1990s between Nottinghamshire County Council's Assistant Director (Planning) and Assistant Director (Design).

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English Heritage Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest, 1 January 1986, site reference number 2087.

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