

PART 2: 16TH AND 17TH CENTURY WORKSOP

In 1530 George Talbot, 4th Earl of Shrewsbury, was visited at Worksop Manor by Cardinal Wolsey who was then in disgrace with Henry VIII and on his way to his house at Cawood in Yorkshire. At the end of this year, the Earl of Northumberland, Shrewsbury's son in law, was sent to arrest the Cardinal at Cawood and deliver him into the custody of the Earl of Shrewsbury. The Cardinal arrived at Sheffield Manor on Tuesday November 8th and remained there sixteen or eighteen days, and then proceeded to Leicester Abbey where he died.

The 4th Earl of Shrewsbury died in 1531 at Wingfield and was buried at Sheffield. He was succeeded by his son Francis. He was a favourite of King Henry VIII who described him: 'He is a gentleman, wise and of good courage'. Francis received from the King considerable grants of abbey land including those of Worksop Priory which passed to him as the following document shows:

No 1003 1544 Tenth Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records, Appendix 2.

Shrewsbury, Francis, Earl of – Section 1 – Summary and particulars of exchange dated 1 July, 36 Henry VIII, mentions the following possessions appointed by the Earl to the King, viz.: the manor of Farneham of the yearly value of £38, woods of the yearly value of £659 6s 10d and the patronage of the church of Farneham of the yearly value of £13 6s 8d in exchange for the Demesnes of Warkyssoppe of the yearly value of £11 10s 5d. Lands called Jesus House, parcel of Warkyssoppe of the yearly value of 6s 8d, lands called Kings Meadow of the yearly value of 13s 4d. Parcels of land of the late Priory of Rocester, of the yearly value of £9 13s 10d. Lands of Pyllesbury of the yearly value of £19 13s 10d. Lands parcel of Roche of the yearly value of £7 13s 4d and also lands in the county of York.

The Earl is to hold the premises of the King in chief by the service of the tenth part of a knight's fee and 'to find to the King a glove for his right hand at his coronation, and to bare up his right arm the same day that the King does bear the sceptre in his graces hand'. This right to present a glove and support the monarch's arm during the coronation ceremony continued as a right of the lord of the manor of Worksop until the 20th century.

Francis's son George Talbot, 6th Earl of Shrewsbury, inherited his father's lands. He was reputed to be the wealthiest man in England. He owned Sheffield Castle, Sheffield Manor, Wingfield Manor, Buxton Hall, Welbeck Abbey, Rufford Abbey, Worksop Manor and several houses in London. He also leased Tutbury Castle. In 1539 he married Gertrude, daughter of Thomas Manners, 1st Earl of Rutland. She died in 1566.

George Talbot, 6th Earl of Shrewsbury (Copyright NTPL/John Hammond, Hardwick Hall)





Elizabeth Countess of Shrewsbury (Copyright NTPL/John Hammond, Hardwick Hall)

George's second wife was Elizabeth Cavendish, widow of William Cavendish who owned Hardwick and Chatsworth. They married in 1567. Their children and step-children and their descendants built palaces and vast estates against the backdrop of Sherwood Forest and for four hundred years from 1550 to 1950, these estates were owned by some of the highest and most powerful families in the land, including the Dukes of Norfolk, Portland, Newcastle under Lyme, Newcastle upon Tyne, and the Earls of Kingston upon Hull, Arundel, Oxford and Scarborough.

In 1612 the landowners in Worksop were listed in Thoroton's history of Nottinghamshire as, Gilbert, 7th Earl of Shrewsbury, Sir Bryan Lassels of Gateford, Thomas Bowles of Osberton, George Eyre, Brian Taylor, Edward Needham, George Hodgkin, George Lowe, John Snowden, Robert Mandeville, Christopher Champion, Thomas Longley, John Hatfield, Richard Hatfield, Robert Lowe, John Dunston, William Jervas, William Goodridge, William Horsefold and John Rayne. The 7th Earl of Shrewsbury's daughter Alethia, his heiress, married the 14th Earl of Arundel. Their descendants later became the Dukes of Norfolk. In 1636 the Earl of Arundel commissioned John Harrison to survey all his land in Worksop:



The 14th Earl of Arundel and his wife Alethia Talbot

In 1636 Worksop consisted of the two manors of Radford and Worksop. The principal roads with houses were Potter Street linking Worksop with Low Town and Cheapside where the Priory was situated in Radford, and Newgate Street, Bridge Street, Westgate, Castle Street and Tenter Green around the Market Place and the Castle. Harrison's general description states:

'Before I begin to express the particulars of these manors, it will not be amiss to relate something concerning the royalties, profits and commodities belonging to the same. And first the manor of Worksop, which in times past did belong to the right honourable family of the Shrewsburys, where is kept a Court Baron, once every three weeks if occasion serves and a Court Leet twice every year.

'Within this manor or Lordship is a very spacious park, being seven miles and a half in compass and contains by measure according to the statute 2302 acres, 2 roods and 31 ½ perches. About in the middle there stands a very stately house called the manor, built of freestone, being very pleasantly situated upon a hill, with corresponding gardens to the same.

'About half a mile from the said mansion is another house fairly built of stone and well contrived called the new lodge, besides the old lodge where the keeper dwells.



Worksop Manor, designed by Robert Smithson in 1586

'This park is well adorned with timber and not meanly furnished with fallow deer, the number of them at present is about eight hundred. There is a little river running through this park, very profitable, not only in regard to trout and other fish therein contained; but especially in regard of the water mill, well built of stone, standing upon the said river, near the park and the town of Worksop, in which said town there is a market kept every Wednesday and one fair yearly and that is upon the 20th day of March.

'There is also within these manors very good meadow ground with pastures and arable lands, and some heath fit for no other purpose but for the maintaining of sheep.

'Near to this town of Worksop has been a castle in times past, but there is nothing remaining there, but only a hill where the castle stood.



Bracebridge, Worksop, painted by James Walsham Baldock

'I cannot here omit that thing wherein this town of Worksop excels all others within this realm and most noted for: I mean the store of liquorish that grows there and that of the best. If you look in the bowels of the earth you shall find very good quarries of stone for building, and limestone for the making of lime not only for necessary uses in building, but especially for the manuring of grounds.

'There has been in times past adjoining to Worksop church, a Priory with a manor there belonging, but the court is discontinued, and now for the most part they are brought to do service at the court belonging to Worksop manor.'

He lists the inhabitants of the town, of which a few examples are given below :

'Edward Turner holds at will one toft by the yearly rent of 33 shillings and 4d. Particulars, a toft lying in Pottergate in Worksop containing a dwelling house of 4 bays, well built with a stable and a garden.'



Lady Lee Farm, Worksop, painted by James Walsham Baldock

'Joane Gladwin, widow, holds at will a toft and the Castle meadow by the yearly rent of £3 16s. Particulars, a toft in Worksop Town containing 3 bays and a garden.'

Robert Slator holds a cottage at will by the yearly rent of 15 shillings. Particulars, a cottage and garden lying in Worksop abutting upon the meadow called Busling east and Bridgegate west.'

'Robert Parkin holds a cottage at will by the yearly rent of 30 shillings. Particulars, a cottage in Worksop Town of 5 bays and a liquorish garden abutting upon Worksop Street east and Worksop Park west.'

'Henry Rutter holds at will one messuage or tenement situated in Worksop Town with the appurtenances of the late John Poytons, who hanged himself and so it was forfeited unto the Lord, he pays the yearly rent of 4 shillings and 1 capon. Particulars, first, a tenement in Worksop Town containing a dwelling house of 5 bays, a stable adjoining of 1 bay, a barn of 2 bays, a garden and part of a fold abutting upon Worksop Market Place towards the east and Tenter Green towards the west.'

'John Templeman holds at will his house and 2 closes by the yearly rent of £3 4 shillings 8 pence whereof he pays to the King for the fee farm rent thereof 46 shillings 8 pence and so there remains to the Lord the yearly rent of 20 shillings. Particulars, first the site of his tenement called Bracebridge Mill containing a dwelling house of 3 bays, a kiln and malt house of 2 bays, a mill house of 2 bays and other outhouses of 4 bays and a garden and a fold all lying between a Highway east and south and Farmyard west. '

One of the oldest houses mentioned in the survey of 1636 was Jesus House, a moated house given to the priory by the Lovetots in 1160. It remained habitable until the 19th century.

Please go to **John Harrison's Survey** for a full version of this document.

The Hearth Tax returns of 1674 show that Worksop had 184 houses with 21 having over three hearths. Radford contained 92 houses, of which only one had more than three hearths. This total of 276 houses had increased to 358 in 1745.



Jesus House drawn in the mid nineteenth century