

Baslow and War Assessment, 1796.

By J. B. HIMSWORTH, F.R.S.A.:

With additional matter by F. WILLIAMSON, F.R.Hist.S.

A DOCUMENT found recently among letters and old bills relating to a Baslow estate gives some idea of the number of inhabitants and other items of interest at the period when George the third reigned. It is entitled:—

“An assessment of /15d. in the Pound on the Inhabitants of Baslow to Provide Money for his Majesty’s Army Dec. 13th 1796.”

Seventy-two assessments are made upon individuals. Three assessments upon two people jointly. “Duke Rutland Woods” is a separate item of 3/-. In addition seventeen people form a list of freeholders—the lowest charges in this section being two at 11¼ pence each—namely, Widow Rowland and Ralph Penistone. The two highest are Edward Kitchen at 13/9, and Joseph Marple at 15/- respectively. Of the seventy-eight people given in the first two categories mentioned above we have three charged at 3d. each, namely William Bowler; John Marple (carpenter); and Joseph Short. There are several at 10½d. and 1/- each. The highest assessments in this section are Joseph Broomhead paying £4/10/6; and Joseph Hodkinson £3/19/9.

Thirteen women altogether are recorded. Of these, eight are widows, one of them among the freeholders.

Eleven people bear the surname Marple: the next in number having the surname Marsden.

Very few occupations are given. The Marple family apparently dominated the craft and trading element in

the little community, but none had 's' at the end of his name.¹

Here is a complete list:—

2 Blacksmiths	both named Marple
1 shoemaker	Thos. Gordom
1 weaver	John Barker
1 innkeeper	William Marple
1 sadler	also a William Marple
1 carpenter	John Marple
1 baker	Robert Marsden
1 mercer	William Shaw
1 minister	Rev. John Barker

£47/3/10½ was the total amount collected, and from roughly made memoranda on the back of the folded paper we can see that the money was disposed of, as regards the last item, to the overseer of the Highway before witnesses.

	£	s.		s.	d.
" 1½ shares	23	16	0	is	34 10 0
		11	18	0	

	35	14	0
Expenses	11	6	
		0	6

£36 6 0

6)47 3 10½

	7	17	3½
47	3	10½	
36	6	0	

£10	17	10½
7	17	3½

Car. forward £3 0 7

¹ The name comes from Marple, in Cheshire so that the form without final 's' is correct—Ed.

Br. forward	3	0	7		
For collection	5	0		In hand	2 12 0
D for exes	3	7		To paid two	
	<hr/>			single (?)	1 15 0
	8	7	8 7		<hr/>
	<hr/>			Remain in hand	0 17 0
	£2	12	0		

Oct 12/97. Paid the Overseer of the Highway the Balance £0 17 0

Witness Wm Bright

Jn Matley

Wm Marsden "

There is reason to believe a Marple was the collector.

An Assessment of /15d. in the Pound on the Inhabitants of Baslow to provide money for his Majesty's Army Decr. 13th, 1796.

Alsop, Widow	..	..	..	..	0	6	4½
Ashton (or Barker) Benjamin	..	..	..	..	0	5	6
Barber, John & Thomas	..	..	..	..	0	12	6
Barker, Revd. John	..	..	..	..	0	4	7½
Barker, John, weaver	..	..	..	..	0	5	7½
Barns, David	..	..	..	..	0	10	0
Barton, John	..	..	..	..	0	5	9
Bennett, Ralph	..	..	..	..	0	2	6
Bowler, Elizth.	..	..	..	..	2	8	4½
Bowler, William	..	..	..	..	0	0	3
Bowler, Alice	..	..	..	..	0	14	0
Bright, William	..	..	..	..	0	13	7½
Bright, Michael	..	..	..	..	0	1	9
Broomhead, Joseph	..	..	..	..	4	10	6
Brockley, Joseph	..	..	..	..	0	3	4½
Brushfield, Bartholomew	..	..	..	..	0	3	9
Brushfield, Thomas	..	..	..	..	0	4	0
Drable, William	..	..	..	..	0	3	10½

Elliott, Thomas	..	..	..	..	0	4	4½
Etches, George	..	..	..	..	2	15	0
Froggatt, Henry	..	..	..	..	1	10	6
Froggatt, Samuel	..	..	..	..	0	19	10½
Gardom, Thomas, shoemaker	..	..	..	..	1	18	0
Green, Matthew	..	..	..	..	0	0	10½
Goodwin, John	..	..	..	..	0	3	9
Gregory, Joseph	..	..	..	..	0	1	9
Gregory, Joshua	..	..	..	..	0	8	1½
Heaton, Thomas & Geo. Marsden	..	..	..	..	0	8	1½
Henshaw, William	..	..	..	..	1	0	3
Hibberd, Peter	..	..	..	..	0	4	4½
Hodskinson, Joseph	..	..	..	..	3	19	9
Hully, Samuel	..	..	..	..	0	1	4½
Holmes, Robert	..	..	..	..	0	5	4½
Jenkinson, James	..	..	..	..	0	1	9
Jenkinson, Ralph	..	..	..	..	0	1	0
Johnson, Widow	..	..	..	..	0	2	6
Marple, William, inn-keeper	..	..	..	..	0	5	3
Marple, William, sadler	..	..	..	..	0	9	4
Marple, Robt., & Son, Gate Row	..	..	..	..	1	4	9
Marple, Robt., blacksmith	..	..	..	..	0	6	10½
Marple, John, carpenter	..	..	..	..	0	0	3
Marple, John, blacksmith	..	..	..	..	0	6	10½
Marple, Robt.	..	..	..	..	0	9	9
Marple, Samuel	..	..	..	..	1	0	1½
Marple, Geo. & Joseph	..	..	..	..	0	4	3
Marsden, Edmund	..	..	..	..	0	6	0
Marsden, Robt., baker	..	..	..	..	0	4	9
Marsden, Widow	..	..	..	..	0	13	3
Marsden, Thomas	..	..	..	..	0	0	10½
Marsden, William	..	..	..	..	1	12	0
Matley, John	..	..	..	..	0	9	7½
Moore, Catherine	..	..	..	..	1	1	7½
Newton, James	..	..	..	..	0	9	6
Noton, Widow	..	..	..	..	0	7	7½

Penistone, Henry	0	1	0
Penistone, Widow	1	1	3
Richards, William	0	0	6
Rowland, Widow	0	16	3
Rowland, George	0	3	1 $\frac{1}{2}$
Rushton, Mary	0	3	4 $\frac{1}{2}$
Savage, John	0	12	7 $\frac{1}{2}$
Shaw, William, mercer	0	2	4 $\frac{1}{2}$
Shaw, William, Green	0	1	1 $\frac{1}{2}$
Short, Joseph	0	0	3
Sidebottom, Robert	0	3	1 $\frac{1}{2}$
Stafford, Elijah	1	1	9
Strother, Widow	0	1	1 $\frac{1}{2}$
Tattersall, Thomas	0	1	10 $\frac{1}{2}$
Vernon, Enoch	0	2	9
Watson, White	0	1	10 $\frac{1}{2}$
White, Henry	1	10	4 $\frac{1}{2}$
Wragg, George	0	11	1
Wragg, Alexander	0	2	4 $\frac{1}{2}$
Wilson, William	0	0	10 $\frac{1}{2}$
Young, William	0	1	6
Duke Rutland Woods	0	3	0

Freeholders.

Ashton, Valentine	0	3	1 $\frac{1}{2}$
Alsop, Sampson	0	3	9
Bowler, Elizabeth	0	2	6
Broomhead, Joseph	0	6	10 $\frac{1}{2}$
Gardom, Thomas, Ford Green	0	2	6
Gardom, Thomas	0	8	9
Gregory, Joshua	0	2	6
Hattersley, George	0	2	6
Hattersley, Robert	0	6	3
Johnson, William	0	5	0
King, David	0	7	6
Kitchen, William	0	6	3
Kitchen, Edward	0	13	9

Marple, Joseph	..	..	..	..	0	15	0
Marple, George	..	..	..	..	0	2	6
Rowland, Widow	..	..	..	..	0	0	11 $\frac{1}{4}$
Penistone, Ralph	..	..	..	..	0	0	11 $\frac{1}{4}$

£47 3 10 $\frac{1}{2}$

At the time of this assessment the whole of Europe was in a state of turmoil, just as it has been for some years past. In 1789 the French Revolution took place and in 1793 war was declared between Britain and France, Louis XVI of France was executed, and in the following year the Directory was established. A year later the people of Paris were rioting for bread, and in 1796 Napoleon fought eleven important battles.

No wonder that England was taking extraordinary measures for its own defence, and in 1795 Parliament passed an "Act for raising a certain number of men in the several counties in England for the service of His Majesty's Navy," under which Act Derbyshire had to supply 194 men for the navy. Not long afterwards another Act was passed to raise men for the army as well as the navy, and under this Derbyshire had to find 252 men for the army. Besides the men conscripted for the regular forces there was the Militia, called up for limited training, and on the 29th of April, 1794 at the General Quarter Session held at Derby a resolution was sent to the High Sheriff of the county, asking him to call a general meeting to consider the establishment of a volunteer force. The suggested meeting was held on May 21st and no time was lost in collecting subscriptions and in raising four troops of volunteer cavalry.¹

The Baslow assessment was not however in connection with either the raising of volunteers or with the militia, as the levy was made under the act of 1795, for the support of

¹ For a full account see Lt. Col. C. R. Colvill, *A Record of the Volunteer Cavalry of Derbyshire, 1794 till 1864, 1868.*

the regular forces. Within twenty-one days of the passing of the act of 1795, the justices were to hold a special court, the Treasury were to prepare lists of the number of inhabited houses subject to duty within the jurisdiction of each court; the parish officers were to call the principal inhabitants together to consider the most effectual means of raising the men, and to pay them a bounty; such bounty was to be paid out of a rate made upon the inhabitants according to the poor rate. A third of the bounty might be paid by the Justices' order to the volunteer, the residue remaining in the county treasurer's hands until the enlisted is on board one of His Majesty's ships of war.¹

It will be seen that by 1794 four distinct forces were in existence for the defence of the country, namely, the Navy, the Regular Army, the Militia and the Volunteer Cavalry, and in 1797 a Derbyshire Volunteer Infantry was in existence, for on Nov. 28th of that year the infantry attended the funeral of Major Gordon of the 85th Regiment, when they accompanied detachments of that regiment and of the Derbyshire Volunteer Cavalry.

In 1808 an Act of Parliament was passed to raise still another force to be called the Local Militia purely for home defence for it could not be sent beyond an adjoining county except in case of invasion. The strength of this new force in Derbyshire was 4461.

Dr. Cox, in his work just quoted,² estimated that two out of every three able bodied men in Derbyshire, between the ages of 16 and 60, were in uniform at the time.

¹ A detailed account of the county forces raised at this and other periods will be found in *Three Centuries of Derbyshire Annals*, by J. C. Cox, vol. 1, 1890.

² *Op. cit.*, 228.

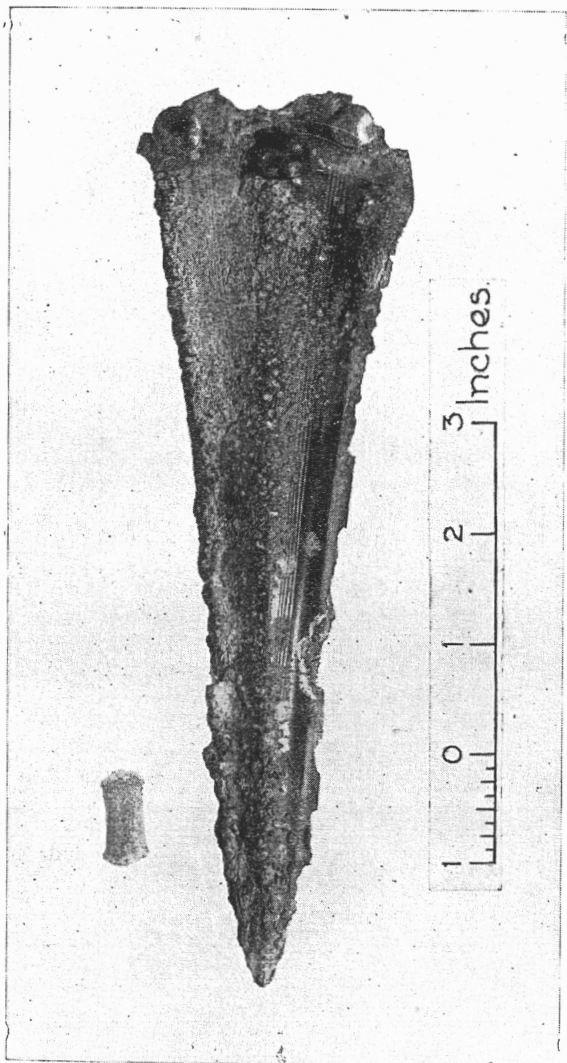


PLATE VI.—BRONZE DAGGER FROM HUNGRY BENTLEY.