

THE DEMESNE SHEEP FLOCK AT HARTINGTON:

A NOTE

BY DAVID POSTLES

The Peak was renowned in the later middle ages for the sheep farming there.¹ One of the *collecta* or *cogliette* of the Italian merchants, the Bardi, was organised on the Peak (*del Pecche*).² It is not surprising that some of the manors of the Earldom and Duchy of Lancaster were also predominantly given over to sheep. Hartington *cum membris* was a composite manor of the Earldom and Duchy, which comprised Hartington, Biggin, Sterndale, Crowdecote, Wolfscote, Heathcote, Hurdlow and Needham. There is a flock and wool account for this manor for Martinmas, 1358, attached to one of the court rolls of the manor.³

The account is headed: 'Tonsuracio Bidentium de Anno xxxii [*sc. Regni Regis Edwardi tercii*].' It is essentially an account of the fleeces and fells from the midsummer shearing before the wintering of the sheep from Martinmas (11th November). The account is divided into three sections: wethers (although the wethers of Biggin and Harley follow the ewe account); ewes; and two-year-olds. The fleece account is followed by the *Summa* of the costs of shearing: 'Summa expensarum circa tonsionem bidentium domini Anno xxxii lxxvi. s. iii. d.'

The flock and fleece statistics are shown in Table 1.

The Earl's flocks were organised on more than a dozen bercaries. There was a distinct division of these bercaries: some sustained only wethers, concentrating on the production of heavy fleeces; others supported only ewes and tups, being reproductive centres. Matlock and Barton carried only immature sheep. At Martinmas 1358 the Earl's flock at Hartington *cum membris* thus comprised 2,355 wethers, 1,751 ewes, 443 two-year-olds, 13 tups and 61 yearlings, a total of 4,623 sheep.

In the later-14th century the sheep farming on the demesnes was gradually abandoned by the Earl. In 1386 the bercary of 'Donwall' was farmed out to Philip de Okouere for a term of 20 years, with 20 acres of meadow at 6d. per acre and 45 acres of meadow at 4d. per acre.⁴ In the same year, 'le parkhous' was taken in lease by John le Salshaugh for a term of 12 years, with 24 acres and a 'Placea' of meadow.⁵ William le Barugh took a lease of 'le Wullehous' in 1387 for 20 years.⁶ By 1423, 12 bercaries were being leased: 'del Grene', 'Feunhous', 'Harleycotes', 'dowalhous', 'parkhous', 'glotonhous', 'tounehous', 'fulwalhous', 'cursthous', 'bidwalhous', 'hallecote' and 'Byggincote'.⁷ In the survey of the manor of 1614, these bercaries were still described as demesne farms leased to the tenantry.⁸ In 1614, the tenantry were exploiting the vast potential for sheep farming; the survey described 11,400 acres of common and waste, of which 4,000 acres in the south-west were suitable only for turbarry, but the rest was dry and used as sheep pasture.⁹ The abandonment of demesne sheep farming in the late 14th century was the final phase of the retreat from demesne cultivation.¹⁰

TABLE 1

<i>Manor/Bercary</i>	<i>Shepherd</i>	<i>Number of animals</i>	<i>Number of fleeces</i>	<i>Number of fells</i>	<i>Given as tithes</i>
<i>Wethers:</i>					
Lodwell	Wm. Wade	254	252	1	25
Gnatdale	Ric. Magson	262 ⁱ	249	1	25
Milleye	Henry	288	283	5	28
Couhous	Nic. Partut	262	250	12	25
Grene	Henry de Guyth	219 ⁱⁱ	235	9 ⁱⁱⁱ	23
Hartington	Rog. Cadmon	262	257	5	^{iv}
Cursudhous	Thos. Colyn	263 ^v	260	3 ^{vi}	25
Biggin	Ric. Moykoc	290	283	6	28
Harley	Thos. Pidkoc	255	vii	vii	vii
<i>Ewes:</i>					
Donneuall	Wm. son of Adam	285 ^{viii}	256	11	17
Gloton	Henry son of Adam	230 ^{ix}	220	8	22
Sterndale	John de Hardleigh	232 ^x	230	2	23
Fulwell	Thos. de Harl ⁷	232 ^{xi}	229	3	23
Hazlewood	Thos. de Harl ⁷	270 ^{xii}	260	5	26
Donniwall	John Pidkoc	232 ^{xiii}	227	5	22
Burton	John son of Adam	270	263	7	26
<i>Two-year-olds:</i>					
Matlock	Hugh Sterr	363	288	75	29
Barton	John son of Adam	80	80		8

ⁱSix were devoured (?by wolves).

ⁱⁱTwo devoured.

ⁱⁱⁱ'cum lii devoratis'.

^{iv}MS. blank.

^vIncludes 30 two-year-olds.

^{vi}Two were small (*pellett*⁷).

^{vii}MS. blank.

^{viii}Also one tup and 61 yearlings.

^{ix}Also three tups.

^xAlso two tups.

^{xi}Also three tups.

^{xii}Includes 30 from the clip of Nicholas Partut.

^{xiii}Also four tups.

REFERENCES

- ¹F. B. Stitt (ed.), *Lenton Priory Estate Accounts, 1296-7* (Thoroton Society, xix, 1959), xli; *Annales Monastici*, III (*Annales de Dunstaplia*, ed. H. R. Luard, Rolls Series, 1866), *passim*.
- ²See Pegolotti's list at W. Cunningham, *Growth of English Industry and Commerce*, I (edn. 5, 1910), 630.
- ³Sheffield City Libraries Arundel Castle Muniments (hereafter A.C.M.) D100/12, m.2. I am grateful to His Grace, the Duke of Norfolk, and the Director of Sheffield City Libraries for permission to use these MSS.
- ⁴A.C.M. D100/15, m.4.
- ⁵A.C.M. D100/16, m.1.
- ⁶A.C.M. D100/16, m.2.
- ⁷A.C.M. D100/25.
- ⁸A.C.M. D99, fos. 3r, 4r-v, 5r-6v, 7r, 7v-8v, 15v, 16v. The suffix 'cotes' or 'hous' in the list of 1423 suggests that the sheep may have been overwintered in sheds as Walter of Henley advised: D. Oschinsky (ed.), *Walter of Henley* (1971), 336-9.
- ⁹A.C.M. D99, fo. 38v. A further 822 acres of moor is mentioned after the survey of free tenants at fos. 24r-v.
- ¹⁰The cultivation of the arable demesne seems to have been abandoned much earlier. The demesne cows, their calves and lactage were leased to John del Booth in 1342 for 3s. 6d. per cow: A.C.M. D100/10, m.6d.