

# WOODHALL MOATED SITE AND PARK, RISLEY, DERBYSHIRE

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## INTRODUCTION

The site of the former Woodhall is situated 6.2 miles (10km) east of Derby in a shallow valley, approximately  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile (1.2km) north west of Risley and close to a water course known as the Golden Brook (SK45053658; Fig. 1). Channels from the brook supplied the moat with water. All surface features were obliterated in 1947 when the site, with the neighbouring Paradise Cottage to the east, was bulldozed and the area taken into cultivation. Since then it has remained ploughed land. Ground plans of the moat features, however, are recorded on the 1888-1913 6 inch series Ordnance Survey sheets (SK4436; 4536) and also on the 1937-61 1:2500 series even though after 1947 nothing could be seen on the ground.

Mr Mallalieu, the Ockbrook antiquarian, visited the site in the late 1800s and stated

‘...a little to the north west of Risley used to be a park-surrounded seat of the Babingtons. The site is identified by the remains of a rectangular moat, slightly irregular in outline, but with two deep ditches and a double rampart on the west, which is the weakest side according to the lie of the land.’

On the south side are traces of a larger enclosed square, which may have been around the farmstead (Page 1905, 392).

Modern aerial photographs particularly those from the late 1990s to the early 2000s, now reveal traces of these and the Woodhall earthworks, overlain by the later ‘Paradise cottage’ dwelling, showing as soil stains on ploughed surfaces (Plate 1). The name ‘Woodhall’ referred to as *aula bosci* in a medieval latin document, is translated as an open aisled hall situated in woodland.

## HISTORY OF THE HALL AND PARK

### Archive material

Archive searches carried out by Mr D. Castledine and the late Mr P. Stevenson, with the help of Professor K. Cameron, provided the following information:

The earliest reference would seem to be an undated grant in the Middleton papers assigned by Professor Cameron to 1300 or possibly even a little earlier in the reign of Edward I, in which Herbertus dominus de aula bosci (Risley), i.e. Herbert, lord of Woodhall, appears as a witness (Cameron 1959, 496). Mentioned elsewhere under the year 1316, is Rogerus filius Herberti de La Wodehalle de Ryseley, Roger son of Herbert etc. In the period 1305-24 there are six references to this Roger de la Wodehalle of Ryseley, usually as witness to grants of land in Risley. In 1305/6 (34, Edward I) he appears as Roger del Wodehalle.<sup>1</sup> In a court roll of the manor of Mapperley, county Derby, for 1405-7 a Thomas Wodhall was the clerk of court, and Sir Thomas Wodehall, chaplain, was witness at the probate of the will of John Heele of

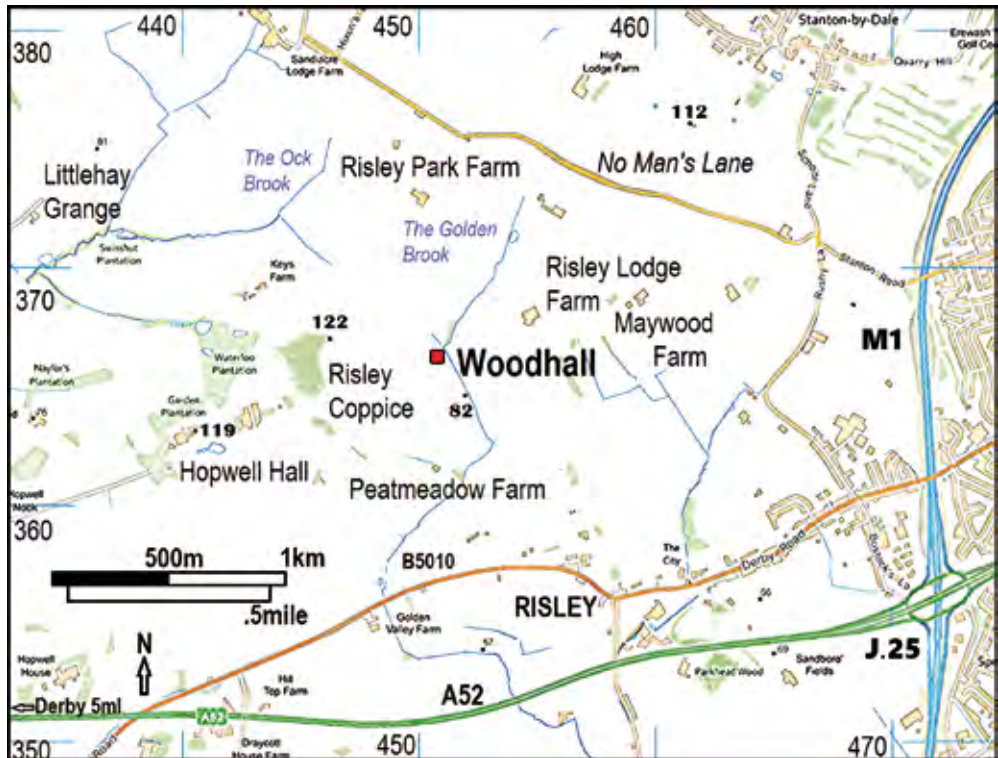


Fig. 1: Woodhall location map.

Mapurley (Derbys) on 29th January 1442<sup>2</sup> (Stevenson 1911, 111).

The earliest references to Woodhall as a place name, as distinct from the personal appendages mentioned above, are in the close rolls for 1423<sup>3</sup> and feudal aids for 1431.<sup>4</sup> In July 1423 a royal escheator for Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire stated that the lately deceased John FitzWilliam esquire, was 'seised of 3s 4d of free rent in Wodhall ...'. Feudal aids in 1431 were authorised by parliament in the same year, which voted a land tax to be levied at a rate of 20s. per Knight's fee and in the Morleyston and Lutchrche Hundred assessment, it was stated that William Babington, a Knight of Chilwell, co. Nottingham, had '...[land] in Woodhall of free tenement' which was held in socage, and was worth per annum 20 shillings.

An indenture of 28th November 1589 states that 'Richard and Constance Abingdon (Babington?), in consideration of a sum of £50 from Michael Willoughby, sell to him all the tithes of corn, grain, hay, wool, lambs etc, of Risley within the parish of Wilne, on a yearly rent of £3 6s 8d; also 6s 8d as yearly rent for the tithes of Woodhall Park'. The indenture is later endorsed 'I, Sir Henry Willoughby, Bart., having sole interest in this assignment, have surrendered the same to Sir Edward Knight, and caused this to be cancelled – 19th October 1624' (Cox 1919, 380).



Plate 1: An aerial photo showing the Woodhall footprint to the west, overlain by the Paradise cottage enclosure and another outline to the south. The line of trees to the east follows the course of the Golden brook (UKAerialPhotos, 2004). Picture courtesy of Bob Brudenell.

### **Medieval and post-medieval history**

The Willoughbys had held land in Derbyshire and in Leicestershire including Willoughby on the Wolds from the early 13th century. Sir Richard Willoughby (1290-1362) acquired Wollaton, Cossall, Risley and Mapperley through his marriage to the daughter of Sir Roger Morteyn. His son, Hugh, rector of Wollaton, (d.1406) lived with Joan Spenser and it was to this family that Risley descended. Another son from a second marriage, Edmund, inherited Wollaton and Willoughby. Thomas Willoughby is believed to have built Risley Hall shortly after 1513. Woodhall and its park were purchased from the Babingtons by a Lord Sheffield in 1503 and his family sold it to Michael Willoughby of Risley Hall in 1587. After its acquisition, Woodhall Park was amalgamated with the existing Risley Park. It is quite likely that the newly combined estate was then redesigned with the northern end retained as a deer park of some 202 acres, as shown on Aston's map of 1722 (Fig. 2), and henceforth known as Risley Park. Former areas of parkland to the south could then be enclosed and partitioned into fields, as evidenced there by several 'new' and 'breach' elements (new agricultural land) in field names (Fig. 3). In the late 16th /early 17th century, Dale Abbey and its surrounds were also acquired by Sir Henry Willoughby from the agent of Sir George Hastings. Tradition has it that stone from Dale Abbey was used in walling around Risley Hall during improvements made after the Dissolution of the Priory. It may be in the same period that the lodge in the shape of a grand hunting tower, similar to the one at Chatsworth, was built on the high ground then known as 'Toppenall' (called 'Toppenhouwe' in c.1240 and 1260 in 2 charters, Saltman 1967, nos. 316,

317). The tower is no longer in existence but stood on the site now occupied by Risley Lodge Farm. It was shown, however, on a 17th century painting of Risley Hall (Fig. 4) (Robinson 1866, 51; Craven and Stanley 2002, 39) and is also recorded by a drawing on Aston's 1722 map immediately to the north of 'Topnall Pasture' (Figs 2 and 3).

In 1591 Michael Willoughby willed to his nephew John Willoughby 'all that ground or pasture called Woodhall Park in Risley which I bought of the Right Honourable Edmund Lord Sheffield'.<sup>5</sup> No building is mentioned. A petition, however, by Ockbrook inhabitants to Anchitel Grey in 1700 requests a father to son succession for the post of park keeper.<sup>6</sup> The Willoughbys held the combined estate until the last of the male line died with Sir Henry, baronet, in 1649. One of his four daughters, Anne, married Sir Thomas Aston, to whom Risley then passed. After his death, she married Anchitel Grey who improved the hall and remained at Risley until his death in 1702. His only daughter was Dame Elizabeth Grey, the Risley benefactress and founder there of the Latin House and school. Being unmarried at her death, the estate then reverted to the Astons of Aston Hall Cheshire, and Mathias Aston in 1722 produced the detailed map of the estate. This map contains fascinating details recording the presence and identity of structures then in existence and the gradual transition of the park from an enclosed area of open woodland and rough grazing, in which deer and sheep were kept (as at Chatsworth and Calke Abbey today), to an area of partitioned arable fields and grassy meadows. It shows that by 1722 the area south of the moated site had been enclosed and each enclosure is given a descriptive name. Several are termed 'new close' (new enclosure) or incorporate the term 'breach'. Both terms are indicative of former rough grazing or woodland areas newly taken into agriculture (Cameron 2001, 232). Dame Elizabeth died the following year and it can be assumed that the Astons, as inheritors, carried out the survey in order to assess the estate's extent and potential.

By 1729, however, the remaining parkland was encroached upon, which resulted in the famous Risley lanx, a 4th century AD Roman decorated silver salver (Plate 2) being unearthed in newly ploughed land (Stukeley 1736; Johns 1981, 53-72; Johns and Painter 1991, 6-13). The newly created field where the lanx was found, was then given the name 'Silver Hill', which was superimposed on Aston's 1722 map (Fig. 3). Due to inaccurate information, some Victorian maps place the findspot of the lanx on the Woodhall site, but this is incorrect.

The 1722 map does not show the moat itself but it does show a field with a building labelled 'house and croft'. This enclosure is easily recognisable on other maps and by converting the scale of perches to the inch, to the 1890 6 inch OS map on which the moat is marked, and comparing the two, the field was clearly unchanged. The moat occupied the western half of this enclosure. To the immediate west on the map is indeed 'Moat Close'. This is bounded by fields named as 'The Close adjoining the Park', 'The Close of the Keeper meadow' and 'Upper' and 'Nether Keepers meadow' (Fig. 3). This dwelling, occupied by the Park Keeper, was later renamed and appears on ordnance survey maps as 'Paradise Cottage'. Demolished in 1947, it was temporarily occupied during the 1939/45 war by a family of evacuees from London and had sometime previously been used as a love nest by a Leicestershire business man. Paradise Cottage was probably built sometime after the purchase of Woodhall Park by Michael Willoughby in the 16th century. Archaeological finds support this assumption, with concentrations of 17th to 19th century pottery sherds spread over the site. The pottery associated with the moated hall simultaneously diminished markedly by the 17th century.

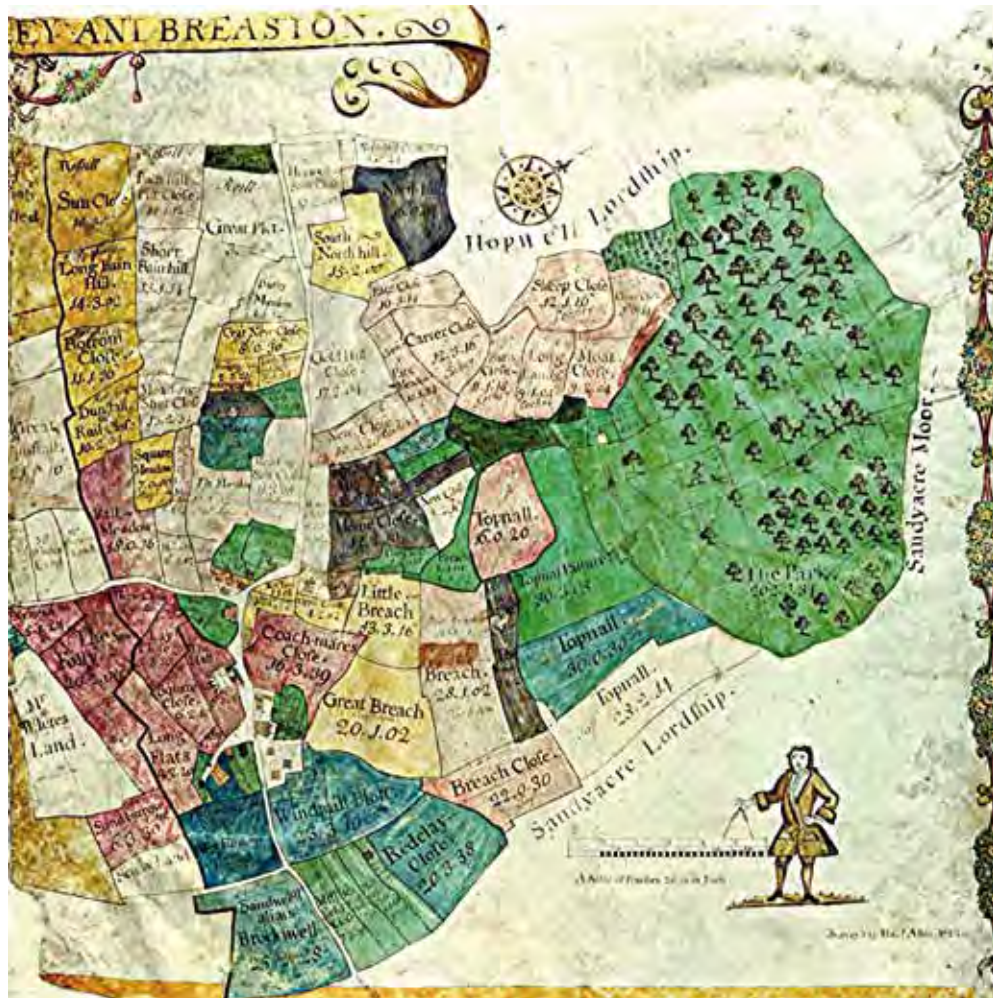


Fig. 2: The northern part of “An Exact Mmapp of Risley and Breaston”, surveyed by Matthias Aston in 1722 (DRO D393z.P1). It is oriented with North to the right. It shows the original lodge and hall with the Park at the north end where new field boundaries were added as Woodhall was combined with Risley Park. Deer are depicted running through the park and a gentleman in period costume with a hunting rifle over his shoulder strides forward followed by his trusty hound (visible on the zoomable copy).

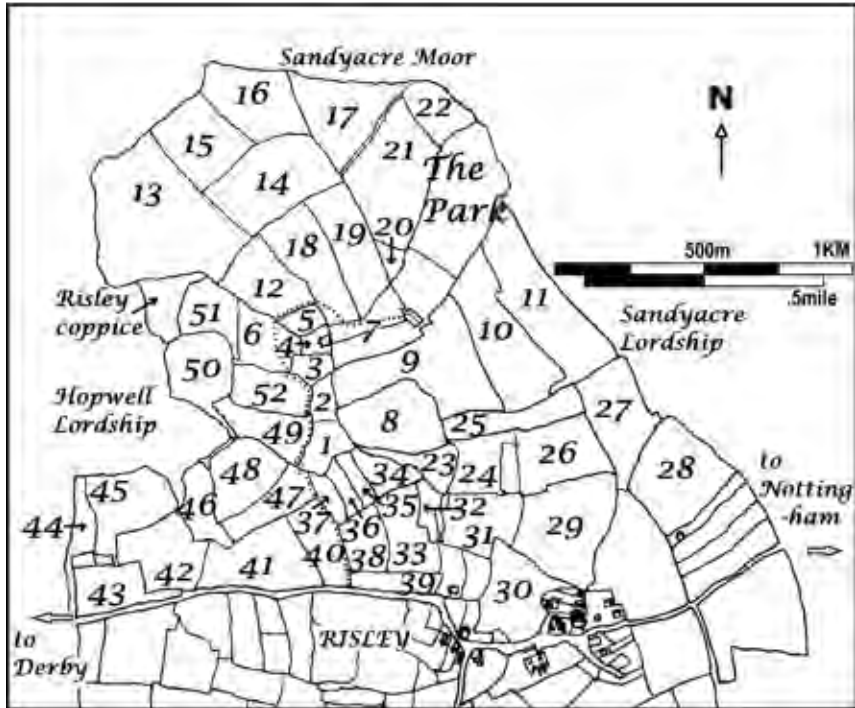


Fig. 3: An outline drawing of Fig. 3, turned to show North at the top and with the field boundaries that were added to the 1722 map. The field names are given on the numbered list below. The dotted line shows a track marked on the map, running from the Derby-Nottingham road to the lodge.

Fig.3 Key to Field Names (taken from the Aston map):

**1** Nether Keeper's Meadow; **2** Upper Keeper's Meadow; **3** The Close belonging keeper of Meadow; **4** The House and Croft; **5** The Close adjoining the Park; **6** Moat Close; **7** Lodge Hill; **8** Topnall; **9** Topnall Pasture; **10** Topnall; **11** Topnall; **12** Silver Hill; **13** Hopwell Nook; **14** Crow Hill; **15** Cooks Orchard; **16** Cooks Orchard; **17** The M/H--- P-- (illegible) The Marl Pit?; **18** Appletree Close; **19** Barn Close; **20** Busy Brigge Close; **21** Wingfield; **22** Wingfield Leys; **23** Breach Lane; **24** Boots Breach; **25** The Breach; **26** Breach; **27** Breach Close; **28** Redclay Close; **29** Great Breach; **30** Coach mares Close; **31** Little Breach; **32** The Close; **33** Home Close; **34** New Close; **35** New Close; **36** New Close; **37** New Close; **38** Hungry Hill; **39** Home Close; **40** New Close; **41** Gold Hill Close; **42** South North Hill; **43** Hopwell Shut Close; **44** North Hill Close; **45** North Hill; **46** Pate Close; **47** Pate Meadow; **48** Carter Close; **49** Barn Close; **50** Sheep Close; **51** Clover Close

### THE PARK BOUNDARIES

Of the earliest maps to show the existence of three enclosed parks at Risley (e.g. John Speed 1610; Valk and Schenk 1670-90; Richard Blome 17th century), Saxton's 1577 map of Derbyshire is the most reliable, despite being of small scale and omitting highways (Fig. 5).



Fig. 4: A picture of Risley Hall taken from a woodcut of a lost 17th century painting. The Lodge is uphill to the extreme right.

Saxton's map shows three adjoining paled parks to the immediate north-west of Risley. They are not named and neither is the site of Woodhall shown, but the western park can clearly be identified as Hopwell. Its eastern boundary abuts the two other parks which are aligned north and south of each other. One was Woodhall Park, the other the original park of Risley. The 'Sandyaker' annotation across the north-eastern park refers to the village of Sandiacre, immediately to the east, and not to the parkland. The identification of Woodhall and Risley Parks needs further clarification.

Saxton's map shows that these two eastern parks share a common boundary which runs in a general east-west direction between a triangular-shaped eastern projection of Hopwell Park, at the western edge, to a similar but westward pointing indent at the eastern end of the boundary. These features can be identified with similar ones shown on Mathias Aston's 1722 map (Fig. 2). His accurate, scaled map shows the western indent as Hopwell lordship and the triangular-shaped field at the eastern extremity as 'Breach Lane'. The site of Woodhall lies north of the common boundary between these two eastern parks, thus revealing the northern one as the former Woodhall Park and the original Risley Park as the southern of the two parks.

As stated above, it seems likely that following the acquisition of Woodhall Park by Michael Willoughby in 1587, some restructuring of the combined estate took place with areas of the southern park converted to arable farming. This is indicated by ridge and furrow traces on aerial photographs directly south of the conjectural boundary (shown by broken lines, Fig. 6) between the two parks and by a block of field names south and east of this point given the description 'breach'. Neither are evident north of this position which would indicate different usage.



Plate 2: The Risley Lanx. A copy of the late Roman silver plate ploughed up on Silver Hill in 1729 (from Millett, 1995, colour plate 8). In the 1990s it was found to have been reproduced by melting down some Roman silver, using an engraving originally published by William Stukeley in 1736. It was subsequently removed from display at the British Museum but is still shown occasionally.



Fig. 5: An extract from Christopher Saxton's map of Derbyshire of 1577, showing the Woodhall, Risley and Hopwell Parks. The 'Sandyaker' label across Woodhall Park refers to the village to the immediate east.



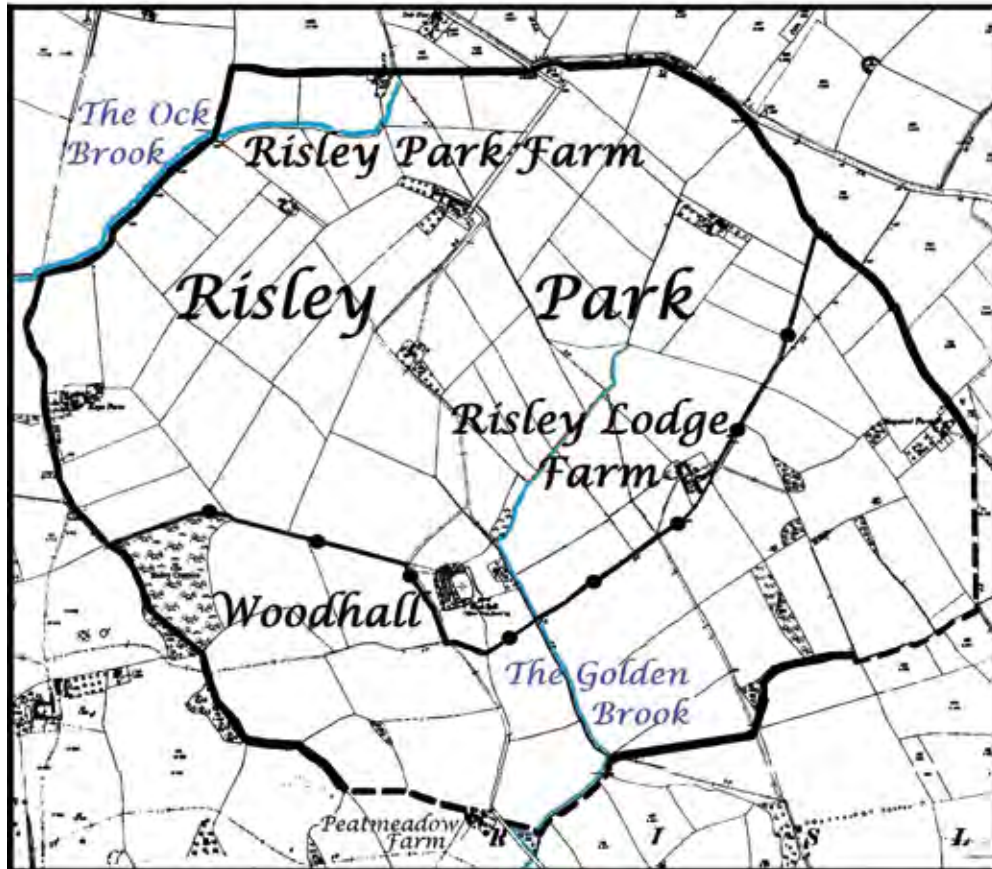





Fig. 6: Field map compiled from 1898-90 OS maps, showing the boundaries of Woodhall Park in 1577 and 1587.

#### FIGURE 6 - KEY

-  Deduced boundary of Woodhall Park in 1577
-  Conjectural boundary
-  Southern boundary of reduced area of park post-1587 when renamed Risley Park as on Aston's 1722 map

The boundary of the former Woodhall Park (Fig. 6) may be traced with some confidence along parts of its circuit by studying early and modern maps, combined with observations in the field and evidence from aerial photographs, but some sections remain conjectural. Successive OS maps record constantly changing field boundaries since Aston's detailed



Plate 3: Looking south along the ditch which formed the Woodhall Park boundary pre-1577. This can still be seen running through the Risley Coppice and the smaller copse below it. Taken at SK44783631 with permission of David Hitchcock, Hopwell Cottage Farm.

1722 map and many earlier boundary features have been obliterated. Where visible evidence remains, however, parish boundaries, trackways, ditches and natural features such as brooks, can help to interpret sections of the former boundary. This can be followed in a clockwise direction from the Ock brook at SK44553750, eastwards towards a bend on No Man's Lane (SK45453755). Then it turns south towards a former track (now the parish boundary) as far as Maywood Farm, beyond which its course is uncertain, but it is believed to have turned south-west towards a right hand bend of the Golden Brook, at a point shown on Aston's map as the triangular field named Breach Lane (SK45283623; Fig. 3, field 23). The southern hedge boundary of this field still exists but the northern boundary is shown as a soil stain on modern aerial photographs (Bing maps; Google Earth particularly 1999, 2001). This boundary seems to have continued westwards to the boundary of Hopwell Lordship but its course is indefinite (SK44853620; Fig. 3, field 49 south-west corner). Woodhall Park boundary can then be recognised just to the north-west of this point forming the parish boundary with Hopwell, with a clearly defined section of bank and ditch recognisable along the modern field boundary and then running through the small copse and Risley Coppice to the north (Plate 3). Here it is contiguous with the parish boundary which extends to the Ock Brook and eastwards to complete the circuit. Risley Park would appear to have extended south beyond the present B5010 road to continue east of the Golden Brook and to enclose Risley Hall.

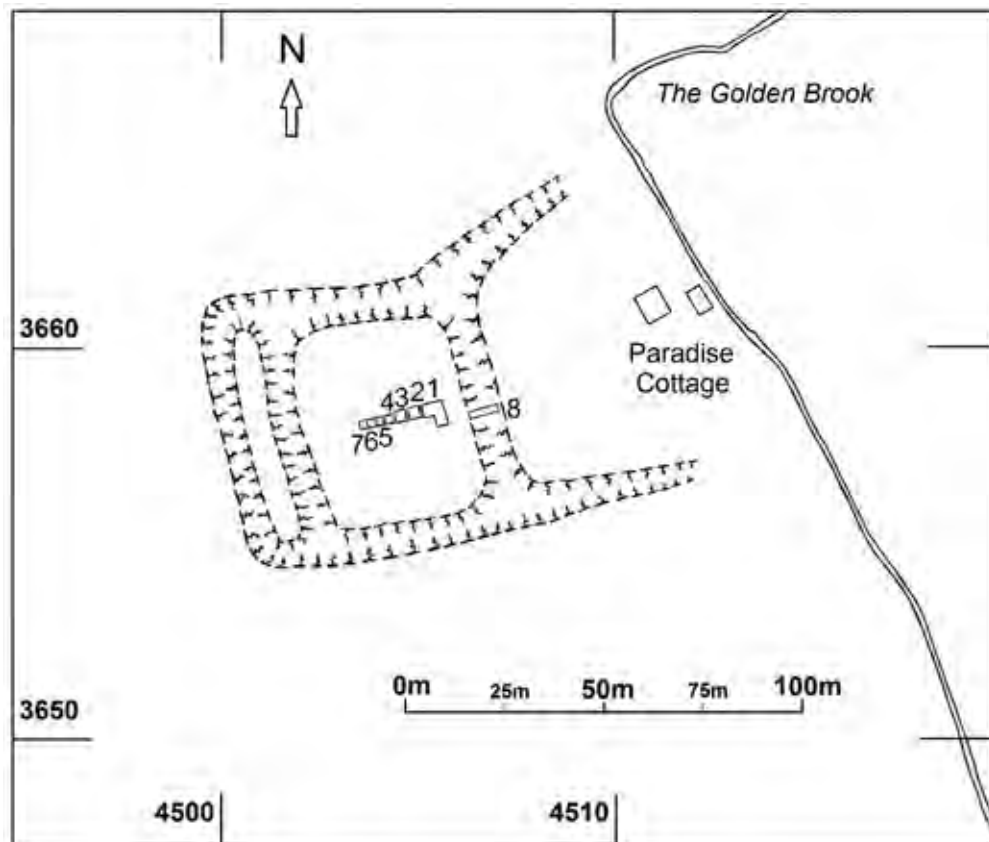


Fig. 7: A plan of the Woodhall moat, showing the position of the test-pits.

#### NOTES ON THE 1970s EXCAVATION

In 1970/71 the Ilkeston and District Local History Society, led by the writer, conducted an exploratory excavation within the moated site to see whether any features had survived the bulldozing of 1947 and subsequent ploughing. The geology is Mercia Mudstone with skerry stone bands, partially overlain by glacial alluvium of yellow clay and pebbles.

The site is enclosed by moats 75m long with inlet and outlet channels leading to the Golden Brook. The western arm had a double ditch with intervening banks leaving a central rectangular platform, 50m by 40m, on which stood Woodhall (Fig. 7).

#### **The moat** (Test pit 8)

A trench c. 1.5m wide was cut midway across the likely position of the eastern moat. This revealed a moat 2.2m deep and approximately 8m wide with a muddy sterile deposit filling its base. Several pieces of a small, plain, pinky orange jug were recovered from the top of this basal deposit (Plate 4). At some time prior to the 18th century the moat had been infilled with red marl containing mixed medieval and Tudor sherds. Then rubble had been spread over the



Plate 4: Partially reconstructed small jug, the only vessel from the primary fill of the moat.

infill and a rough brick building constructed over it. This feature later subsided and the moat was filled in further by the bulldozing in 1947.

### **The platform**

#### ***The plough soil***

A line of test pits, 6ft by 6ft (1.8m by 1.8m), was dug in an east-west direction across the centre of the internal platform. This revealed that ploughing had removed and scattered all archaeological features except for where patches of subsidence had taken structures below plough depth. As a consequence the plough soil contained a mixture of artefacts and pottery sherds dating from the 13th to 17th century. An interesting find in the plough soil over test pit 3 was a green glazed, anthropomorphic jug sherd displaying a bearded face, which decorated a two-strand plaited handle (Plate 5 and Appendix I). Also found was a 15th century French jetton and one complete medieval floor tile together with further fragments (Appendix I).



Plate 5: Bearded anthropomorphic face sherd from the side of a jug of the 13th to 14th century, actual size. Found in ploughsoil over the moat platform.

***Test pit 1 (enlarged to south-east: 1.8 by 3.6m)***

This revealed an area of packed skerry stone slabs sealed by a thin humic layer on which were scattered a few fragments of sandy-surfaced, fired clay roof tiles. Some of the latter had a single neb pinched out on the upper edge and reconstructions of pieces produced a size of 6.75inches (17cm) wide, ½inch (1.2cm) thick and length in excess of 8.5inches (21cm), but no complete tiles were present. Some skerry slabs had pecked-out tapered holes to house wooden pegs, identifying them as recycled roof slates to make a floor. This floor both incorporated and sealed medieval potsherds.

Excavations into the floor revealed an underlying rubble-filled shallow trench-like feature, 45-60cm wide, filled with lumps of Crawshaw sandstone and quartz boulders, with dark humic soil accumulations in the interstices. Converging with this at *c.* 90° was another trench-like feature of similar size and fill, but with a far greater amount of medieval pottery sherds, the majority at its base. Finds from the feature and from the underlying clay comprised green glazed 13th to 14th century pot sherds from a rounded jug (Plate 6 and Appendix I); 3 antler tines; various medieval bowl rims with incised sinuous decoration (Plate 7); animal teeth and bones; and a range of iron nails. Cutting into the feature were two post holes, with small abraded Cistercian and Ticknall wares of the 15th to 16th centuries and residual 13th to 14th century medieval sherds in their fill. These two features are likely to have been sill wall foundations, but their relationship is confused by ground disturbance in the area where they may have joined.

To the east in the enlarged test pit a rubble-filled drain was identified leading to the eastern arm of the moat. The similarity of this to the second ‘sill-wall’ trench raised the possibility that the latter could in fact, also have been a drain. In this eastern extension an almost complete medieval iron prick-spur was found (Appendix I)

***Test pit 2 (enlarged by 0.5m all round)***

Rubble surfaces and gravel were disturbed by the plough but a charcoal-blackened area was



Plate 6: Rounded glazed jug from test pit 1. 13th to 14th century.



Plate 7: Bowl, jug and cooking pot rim sherds from 13th to 17th century.

revealed in the south-west corner. Coal fragments were found with medieval pot sherds, two broken whetstones and one lead spindle whorl.

***Test pit 3 (enlarged by 0.5m all round)***

Again disturbed but two patches of levelled packed rubble survived, composed of skerry stone laid on edge around a larger, flat, Millstone grit padstone. Two possible post holes were also noted with Tudor pottery in their fills.

In Test pits 1-3, pebbled areas produced evidence of iron slag within reddened patches, suggesting either primary or secondary smithing.

***Test pit 4***

Ploughing had removed most of the archaeological features, exposing the yellow clay subsoil. Only one area of fire-reddened clay mixed with charcoal was evident.

***Test pits 5 and 6***

All features had been removed by ploughing.

***Test pit 7***

Here a 60cm length of wall foundation 45cm wide, composed of local Crawshaw sandstone blocks had survived.

No traces of mortar, plaster or dressed stone work were found in the moated site and it seems that the Hall was timber framed resting on low drystone sill walls. The stone used included Millstone grit, Crawshaw sandstone, which outcrops between Dale Abbey and Stanton by Dale, and smooth boulders from the local boulder clays. The evidence of post holes cutting through the wall in Test pit 1 and the floor in Test pit 3, containing later pottery, suggests two phases of building and the presence of potsherds underneath the floors may indicate a third. The site was certainly occupied during the 13th century, up to and including the 16th century.

A dark rectangular area to the south of the moated site, mentioned by Mr Mallalieu, was not investigated. On aerial photos it appears as a rectangular enclosure with internal features and it may have been a home farm, as he suggested, or a winter retreat for Park animals.

It is disappointing that the plans and drawings of archaeological features made at the time were not submitted to this author and are now missing. The archaeological information above, including Fig. 7, has been obtained from my notes taken at the time of the excavation. Pottery drawings are held with the author and the pottery is now lodged in the Erewash Museum, Ilkeston.

## DISCUSSION

Early moated sites (AD1150-1300) are seen as the residence of a Lord of the Manor, normally a knight. These sites, comprising hall, yard and outbuildings, were enclosed by a water-filled ditch. In this region, they tend to be sited a short distance from a village and its field system, and near to a stream in an area of open woodland which often became a park.

In 1978 (Aberg, fig. 1) a distribution map and a table of numbers of all known moated sites per county was published as the ongoing work of the Moated Sites Research Group. Only in the area north of Yorkshire, west Wales and the Cornwall/Devon peninsula were these sites

sparse. A true moat was deemed to be in excess of 5m wide and up to 2m deep. The 13th century was a period of expansion and enlargement of moated sites, with internal structures becoming more complex. In the later moat-building period (AD1350-1500), freemen who could fund them also constructed moats but increasingly the occupation and function of the sites was changing along with associated structural and land adaptations. Taylor (1972) noted that large moats occur in more densely-settled areas and raised the issue of a link between size and social status and whether a moat was seen as a status-symbol. Le Patourel, however, stated that seigniorial moats showed an enormous diversity in size and one could not rule out the fact that they afforded some protection for the lord, although perhaps defence was not a primary motive (Le Patourel and Roberts 1978, 48). Wilson (1985) agreed, but acknowledged that it was a necessity for security against thieves, fire and wild animals attacking livestock.

This author is unconvinced that the interpretation of moats as non-defensive applies to the majority of moated sites in this area. His excavations at Woodhall and Parkhall, Mapperley (SK425430) (Palfreyman, 1970; SMR 22900) indicate an early 13th century origin at the latest. At Parkhall evidence of a palisade of close-spaced split oak stakes with sharpened points driven into the inner bank of the moat was revealed, with 13th century pottery sherds in association. It is hard to believe that a rudimentary timber framed hall, in a far from commanding position, would be regarded as a status symbol, even though moated. It is, however, very obvious that local examples are invariably situated within former parks, near to a stream and usually close to the park boundaries. This is the case at Woodhall, Parkhall, Foxhole Farm, West Hallam (SK438404) (Wiltshire and Woore 2009, 82) and Mapperley Park wood (SK434425, HER 22902). This link can also be seen at sites further afield, such as Atlow (SK226484), Champion Park, Windley (SK324437), Hough Park, Hulland (SK240464), Bearwardcote Hall, Etwall (SK283334) (Wiltshire and Woore 2009, 24, 50, 96 and 209 respectively) and others certainly exist.

The author's view is that the park itself was the status symbol with its much prized and valuable stocks of deer and other livestock. A constant presence, therefore, would be required for their protection, particularly so in periods of anarchy and general lawlessness which erupted periodically throughout the medieval period. A permanent defendable residence on site would be an absolute requirement to achieve this. It is recorded that in AD 1266 William de Montgomery made a complaint that various people had burned his manor at Cubley and broken into his parks at Cubley and Marston and carried away his animals (Wrottesley 1883, 163 no. 128). In AD 1342 William Deyncourt made a complaint against John Attewood, John of Hugley, William Young and others who had

‘broke his close at Holmesfield, drove away 20 oxen, 30 cows and 200 sheep worth £40, fished his stews and carried away fish, broke his park, hunted therein, took away deer and assaulted his men and servants’.<sup>7</sup>

At Park Hall, Mapperley, home of Simon de Arderne,

‘an attack was made ... by Ralph de Crumwell (of Wingfield Manor stock and apparently Lord of Hallam) assisted by his West Hallam men who, by force and arms, entered Simon's manor, threw down the pillory; in fact, the ‘juridicilia’ of the Court Leet of a Barony, which Simon's was not’ (Kerry 1905, 70).

Similar transgressions are recorded between the 13th and 15th centuries at Ednaston, Morley, Hartsay, Kedleston, Postern and Shottle, Ravensdale, Heage and Walton-on-Trent. These concern organised bands of up to 20 men, and demonstrate the need for defensive structures.

The author's excavations at Parkhall and Woodhall support the start date used by the



Moated Sites Research Group, but occupation of both sites continued well beyond the 14th century. It is quite possible, however, that owners moved to better accommodation by the 16th century leaving staff to occupy and manage the property and the park until the park was converted eventually to farmland. The Parkhall site continued to be occupied as a farm and at Woodhall the site was occupied by nearby Paradise Cottage.

In the 12th century Henry II had permitted William FitzRalph to impark Little Hay, Ockbrook, situated within the boundary of the newly created Royal Forest, as a special privilege granted to a favoured high ranking official (Saltman, 1967, 62, no 29). King John, as Count of Mortain and deputising for Richard I, held Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire between AD 1189 and 1194, during which time he sold major concessions from forest laws to favoured individuals. In all probability, however, Woodhall and similar parks were created shortly after AD 1225 when Henry III was forced, by pressure from the barons, to relinquish control of the royal forest created by Henry II between the rivers Derwent and Erewash (Crook, 1990, 98-106). It would then become possible for local knights, on payment of a fine to the crown, to be granted Free Warren (hunting rights) within the forest confines, essentially open parkland. It has been calculated that between 1227 and 1257, Henry III granted rights of free warren to 37 lords, of which 30 were laymen, for at least 121 sites in Derbyshire, of which about 42 lay within the former royal forest between the rivers Derwent and Erewash (Crook, 2001, 234)

The possessors of these rights used this privilege as justification for enclosing areas of the former forest to create their own private deer parks. It is recorded that Richard Willoughby claimed free warren in Risley in 1330 (Wiltshire and Woore, 2009, 144), maybe just formalising an existing situation.

## APPENDIX I – The Finds

### **The prick-spur**

In the eastern extension of test pit 1, an almost complete iron, long-necked prick spur was recovered from a patch of floor which had slumped into a slight depression. Unfortunately it cannot now be traced but an X-ray was taken at the time by Derby Museum. It was *c.*7cm wide and 16.5cm long and the spur sides, one of which was broken, were straight horizontally. This is an aid to dating, as in the 12th century spur sides became shorter and lower, curving under the ankle. In the early 13th rowels appeared, so that by the 14th century prick spurs were rare. One rivet-type terminal survives. These details compare with similar examples in Ellis (2002, 4; fig. 3 nos 8 and 9) and the goad appears to most closely resemble number 8 from Slaughterford, Wiltshire; the side widens out in a 2.3cm extension which seems to have longitudinal mouldings, the small goad at its tip being encased in corrosion. Ellis dated these to the 11th century AD, making this the earliest find from the site. Ward-Perkins suggested a transition period from Anglo-Viking types to curved arm types by the mid 12th century and shows further similar examples from London (1954, 101; fig. 29 nos 4 and 5).

### **The floor tile**

Another find in the topsoil of test pit 1 eastern extension was a complete encaustic floor tile, 12.5cm by 12.5cm, decorated with a shield displaying the arms of the Duchy of Lancaster, in a white slip. This tile had been most likely taken from Dale Abbey following its dissolution in 1538. Further fragments of similar tiles coated with a plain white slip were also recovered.

### **The French jetton**

The jetton (a coin shaped token), found in the topsoil of test pit 3, was identified at the time as 15th century by the late Roy Hughes, then curator of the Derby Museum. He described it thus:

‘The obverse side had three lys enclosed by a tressure of three arches and three angles, all within a granulated inner circle and the legend: VIVE\*AMAHT \*VIVE\*AMOURS. On the reverse, a small cross pattee, fleur de lys cantoned by four trefoils and four open crowns, all within a granulated inner circle, and the legend: \*VIVE\*AMAHT\*VIVE AMAHT.’

He cited a similar example in Barnard (1917, 119).

### **A preliminary note on the pottery**

The anthropomorphic sherd, from the topsoil in test pit 3 (Plate 5), belongs to a known group of 13th/14th century decorated and glazed jugs made in the East Midlands, having face masks which are characterised by a moulded nose and bulbous eyes, and some with pupils made by jabbing a tapered spike into them. Slash marks on the face represent the mouth and facial hair. The Woodhall example has been pressed on to the top of a two-stranded plaited loop where it meets the neck of the jug. These were often added as ‘false handles’. A short length of a third strand has been pulled out from the neck at the back of the head, but it is difficult to tell if this was part of the loop or some other adornment. A yellow-green glaze covers the exterior of the pale, pinky orange medium-hard fabric, which has a reduced core in parts. A well-illustrated example of these details on a late Lincoln glazed ware, baluster jug, a type mostly found there in late 14th to late 15th century deposits, is shown in Young, Vince and Nailor (2005, 202; fig. 170). The Woodhall face sherd also resembles one from Aldwark, albeit of a different fabric (Makepeace and Cumberpatch 2007, 55-57).

A group of green-glazed sherds from the wall or drain foundations in test pit 1 were partially reconstructed to form the top half of a round jug (Plate 6). Two separate bands of horizontal grooving on the shoulder decorated the olive green, pitted glazed exterior which covered the pale, orange-buff sandy fabric. The strap-type handle has a central groove with two thumb pressings at the upper and lower ends, where it was fixed to the body. Similar jugs at Lincoln were dated to the 13th to 14th century (Young, Vince and Nailor 2005, 149; fig. 128, nos 960-962).

The only vessel from the moat itself was also partially reconstructed to produce half of a small jug (Plate 4). The fabric is again a pale, pinky orange but hard, coarse and gritty in texture.

Other pottery includes jugs, bowls and cooking pots in several different fabrics, glazed, splash-glazed and unglazed. Possible Burley Hill wares and gritty fabrics similar to those at Full Street, Derby (Hall and Coppack 1972) and Stanley Grange (Beswick and Challis 2004) have been noticed. Later Midlands purple and Cistercian wares are also present. The site is roughly equally distant from both Nottingham and Derby and proximity to the Trent could enable imports from further afield, as well as local wares.

Given the disturbed condition of the archaeological remains and the fact that much of the pottery was not in securely stratified deposits, it was thought at the time that this assemblage could not contribute to any consensus on medieval pottery and it was never examined in depth or subjected to the types of fabric analysis now available. Recent work by Cumberpatch (2004) and others, however, to reconcile the variety of medieval pottery fabrics in Derbyshire

and improve their chronology requires more evidence from rural sites. Flagging up this site, therefore, and making the pottery available for research may contribute to the overall picture.

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- <sup>1</sup> These early references to Herbert of Woodhall and his son Roger were sourced by David Castledine in 1971 from Professor Cameron's notes on 'medieval Risley' in his Place-Names library.
- <sup>2</sup> Mi 6/173/253; Mi Dc 5, University of Nottingham Manuscripts and Special Collections
- <sup>3</sup> Calendar of Close Rolls 1422-9, p. 2
- <sup>4</sup> Feudal Aids 1284-1431. Vol 1 Derbyshire, p. 301
- <sup>5</sup> 'Will of Michael Willoughbie, Gentleman of Risley, Derbyshire', 18 May 1592. Prob 11/79/410, Prerogative Court of Canterbury. National Archives.
- <sup>6</sup> D5336/2/20/10, DRO
- <sup>7</sup> Calendar of Patent Rolls. Edward III, vol 5, p.442. Online at [sdrc.lib.uiowa.edu](http://sdrc.lib.uiowa.edu)

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