

Kilns and clay-pits in the fields

Mid-17th century field-name evidence of the ceramic industry in the north Midlands from the Welbeck Atlas

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I first met Anna Slowikowski in the late summer of 1978 when we were both working for the City of Nottingham field archaeology unit and just starting our careers. Having been born and brought up in Nottingham, Anna was able to enthuse to me about its history and landscape and over the next few years she taught me much about the city as well as the rest of the county. For me this was the beginning of a career-long interest in researching the topography of Nottinghamshire, especially its landscape in the 16th and 17th centuries. I am glad, therefore to be able to make a modest contribution to this volume dedicated to Anna by discussing a number of references to possible ceramic production found in field names recorded within the Welbeck Atlas – a collection of estate surveys belonging to William Cavendish, the first Duke of Newcastle.

The Welbeck Atlas was commissioned by William Cavendish (1596–1676) as part of a major survey of his estates undertaken by William Senior (c.1570–post 1640) between 1629 and 1640. It comprises a substantial volume of 81 large-scale manuscript maps drawn in ink on vellum and highly coloured. In all, the atlas provides surveys of over 100 estates owned by Cavendish in Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire, Staffordshire Northumberland, Gloucestershire and Somerset. Over 100,000 acres of land are recorded in these maps and in most cases they constitute the earliest cartographic depiction of the areas surveyed. Most fields and closes are named and their tenants identified in some way, although the original volume of written surveys that would have accompanied the atlas is sadly lost. This would have provided more detailed information about the nature of each parcel of land, its tenant and acreage value. This short account of field names associated with the production of ceramics arises out of my work for the digital edition of the Welbeck Atlas published by the Thoroton Society of Nottinghamshire in its Record Series (Mastoris 2017).

Although the maps in the atlas are inscribed with several thousand field and place names, there are only eight that have any possible associations with kilns (6), pot-making (1) or clay digging (1). These are listed in Table 1 and illustrated in Figs. 1–8. There are a considerable number of locations called ‘clay field’ listed in the atlas, but these have been discounted as

such a term invariably relates to the quality of the soil, rather than the extraction of clay. The one clay pit mentioned in the atlas (in Hardwick Grange, Nt.) is also probably shown on a map because of its proximity to a lordship boundary where it could have acted as a way-marker or mere-point. This pit, surveyed in 1629, continued as a landscape feature until at least 1947 in the OS six-inch survey (Nottinghamshire XIV.SW), and as the place name ‘Claypit Wood’ in the current 1:25,000 maps.

There are six field names containing the element ‘kiln’. One, Barlow (Derbyshire) can be firmly designated a lime kiln through place-name evidence of both earlier and later date. The nearby ‘Kiln Croft’ in Brendwood (Peakley Hill), Derbyshire, may therefore also have been used for a similar purpose, but there is no other place-name evidence to support this. Two of the remaining four references relate to brick kilns (Meynell Langley, Derbyshire and Blore, Staffordshire), while the final two references relate to the same tile kiln on the Welbeck estate, Nottinghamshire. This field name can be traced back to the mid-14th century, suggesting that this location was used to produce tiles for the Premonstratensian abbey of Welbeck (founded 1140, dissolved 1538). By the early 19th century the landscaped estate included a ‘Tile Kiln Wood’ in this location.

‘Potter Field’ is found in two adjoining fields in Grindon, Staffordshire, close to the hamlet of Ford.

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Figure 1. 'Tile Kills', Welbeck, Nottinghamshire (Welbeck Atlas, Mastoris 2017, 4).



Figure 2. 'The tile Kilne', Norton, Nottinghamshire (Welbeck Atlas, Mastoris 2017, 6).



Figure 3. 'Claie pitt', Hardwick Grange [Clumber], Nottinghamshire (Welbeck Atlas, Mastoris 2017, 10).



Figure 4. 'Kiln Croft', Brendwood (Peakley Hill), Derbyshire (Welbeck Atlas, Mastoris 2017, 46).

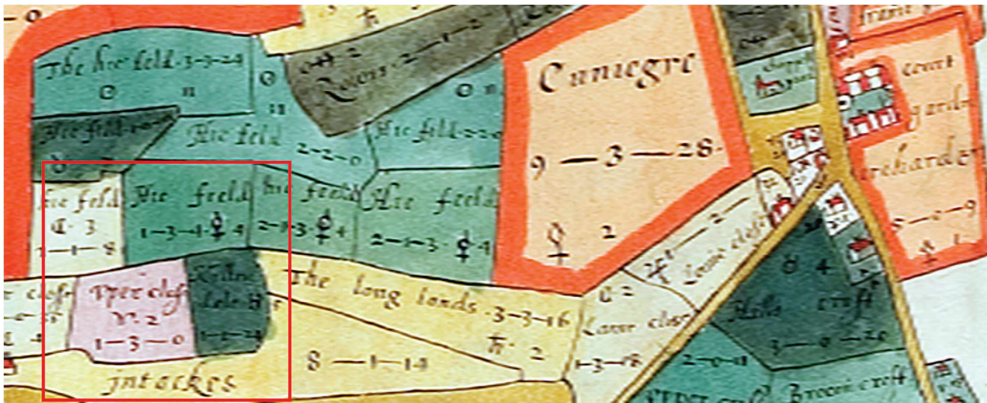


Figure 5. 'Killne Dole', Barlow, Derbyshire (Welbeck Atlas, Mastoris 2017, 46).



Figure 6. 'The Brickkillne Coppice', Meynell Langley, Derbyshire (Welbeck Atlas, Mastoris 2017, 69).



Figure 7. 'Bricke Kilne close', Blore, Staffordshire (Welbeck Atlas, Mastoris 2017, 74).



Figure 8. 'Potter Field', Grindon Moor, Staffordshire (Welbeck Atlas, Mastoris 2017, 77).

This most straightforward reference to the ceramic manufacturing is nevertheless devoid of any further information about if and how this location relates to the north Staffordshire pottery industry. It is a question that I am sure Anna Slowikowski would have been interested in and very probably able to answer.

References

Mastoris, S. (ed.), 2017 *The Welbeck Atlas: William Senior's maps of the estates of William Cavendish, Earl of Newcastle, 1629–1640*. Thoroton Soc Rec Ser 47 with an interactive digital flashcard edited by Andrew Nicholson.

Résumé

J'ai rencontré Anna Slowikowski pour la première fois à la fin de l'été 1978, quand nous travaillions tous les deux pour l'unité d'archéologie terrain de la ville de Nottingham et venions de commencer nos carrières. Anna est née et a grandi à Nottingham, donc elle pouvait parler avec beaucoup d'enthousiasme avec moi de son histoire et son paysage. Dans les années suivantes, elle m'a appris beaucoup sur la ville ainsi que sur le reste du comté. Pour moi, c'était le début d'un intérêt qui durera le long de ma carrière à rechercher la topographie de Nottinghamshire, en particulier son paysage dans les 16^{ème} et 17^{ème} siècle. Je suis donc heureux de pouvoir faire une contribution modeste à ce volume qui est consacré à Anna en discutant d'un certain nombre de références sur la production possible de céramique qui étaient trouvées dans les noms de champs enregistrés dans l'Atlas de Welbeck – une collection inédite de levés de domaines qui appartenait à William Cavendish, le premier duc de Newcastle.

Zusammenfassung

Ich traf Anna Slowikowski zum ersten Mal im Sommer 1978 als wir beide in der Feldarchäologie-Einheit der Stadt Nottingham arbeiteten und am Anfang unserer Karrieren standen. Anna, die in Nottingham geboren und aufgewachsen war, konnte mich für die Geschichte und Landschaft der Stadt begeistern. Über die nächsten Jahre lehrte sie mich viel über die Stadt und den Rest des Landkreises. Für mich war das der Anfang meines Interesses, das meine gesamte Karriere spannt, in die Erforschung der Topographie Nottinghamshires, insbesondere seiner Landschaft im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert. Ich leiste daher gerne einen bescheidenen Beitrag zu diesem Anna gewidmeten Band. Dazu bespreche ich eine Reihe an Hinweisen auf mögliche Keramikproduktion. Sie wurden in den Feldnamen, die im Welbeck Atlas eingetragen sind, gefunden. Dabei handelt es sich um eine unveröffentlichte Sammlung von Grundstückserfassungen, die William Cavendish, dem ersten Herzog von Newcastle (Duke of Newcastle), gehörten.

Table 1. List of field names relating to ceramic production.

Fig. No.	Page in Welbeck Atlas	Field name	Lordship and County	Date of survey	Acreage, location and other versions of the field name
1	4	'Tile kills' (as below)	Welbeck, (Nottinghamshire)	1629	Acreage: 29a 2r 0p Located at: SK 556730 'Tile Kiln Wood' (pre 1940), 'Tilekiln Wood' (1826), 'Tylekylneclose' (1539), 'Tylekylnecroft' (temp. Ed III): <i>EPNS Nt</i> , p. 105.
2	6	'The tile Kilne' (as above)	Norton, (Nottinghamshire)	[? 1629]	Acreage: 29a 2r 0p Located at: SK 556730
3	10	'Claie pitt'	Hardwick Grange, (Nottinghamshire)	1629	Acreage: not stated Located at: SK 648741
4	46	'Kiln Croft'	Brendwood, (Peakley Hill, Derbyshire)	1630	Acreage: 8a 1r 17p Located at: SK 336763 'Kilncrofte' (1611): <i>EPNS Db</i> , p. 207
5	46	'Killne Dole'	Barlow, (Derbyshire)	1630	Acreage: 1a 0r 14p Located at: SK 339744 'Lyme Kile dole' (1610) and 'Lime Kiln dole' (1746): <i>EPNS Db</i> , p. 206.
6	69	'The Brickkillne Coppice'	Meynell Langley, (Derbyshire)	1640	Acreage: 27a 0r 0p Located at: SK 285400
7	74	'Bricke Kilne Close'	Blore, (Staffordshire)	1631	Acreage: 28a 3r 20p Located at: SK136495
8	77	'Potter Field' [x2]	Grindon, (Staffordshire)	[1631]	Acreage: 16a 3r 20p and 7a 0r 20p Located at: SK 071547

