



Feudalism in the Wolf Hall Estate, Chipping, revealed by a document at the Lancs Record Office. (ref.DDSt.uncatalogued)

In 1574 the tenants of Roger Shirburne of the Wolf Hall unanimously gave their "free consent and assent" to a list of Roger's orders. One of these was that disputes had to be settled within the estate by Roger himself. A tenant who approached any of the Queen's courts without Roger's permission had to pay him six shillings and eight pence - about half a year's rent. Roger also ordered a similar payment from anyone fighting or brawling, in addition to any penalty imposed by the Queen's authorities.

The Wolf Hall Demesne (Estate) was the whole of the north end of Chipping township, except Parlick which has remained as Chipping's common. Roger's house and farmyard were at the site of the present Wolfen Hall, and the Demesne mill (now Wolfen Mill) was at the southern boundary of the Demesne. The eight tenants lived on small farms on the higher ground which were all still separate farms in 1840. Seven of them were round Saddle Fell and are now amalgamated as Saddle End Farm.

The tenants and annual rents were:-

James Dewhurst 20s
Richarde Hareste 33s 4d
Roger Blaickburne 13s 4d
Roberte Haughton 12s
John Tumlynson 8s
Wife of Henrye Sallesburie 16s
Thomas Rychemond 18s
Roberte Sallesburie 16s

Each tenant had to render each year the following services to Roger Shirburne, "as of olde and ancyente tyme accustomed."

1 day ploughing when a draught (of oxen) was kept.
1 day harrowing
1 day ditching
1 day cutting turf with 2 drawers helping
1 day mowing and 2 haymakers helping
2 days shearing (probably cutting corn)

The farming rules seem reasonable, but Roger ordered a payment if they were broken:

Boundary fencing, round Roger's farm and between tenant and tenant, whether ditch, hedge or wall, had to be completed each year by "the feast of the Holy Cross, commonly called Saint Ellen Day". (Probably 3rd May. A Spring date would be essential, to protect the crops).

Ditches had to be made at least 6 feet wide and 4 feet deep.

The pinfold had to be kept in order. No cattle could be released from it without permission from Shirburne and the tenant who had suffered the trespass.



GOOD SERVANTS SHOULD HAVE GOOD WAGES.
