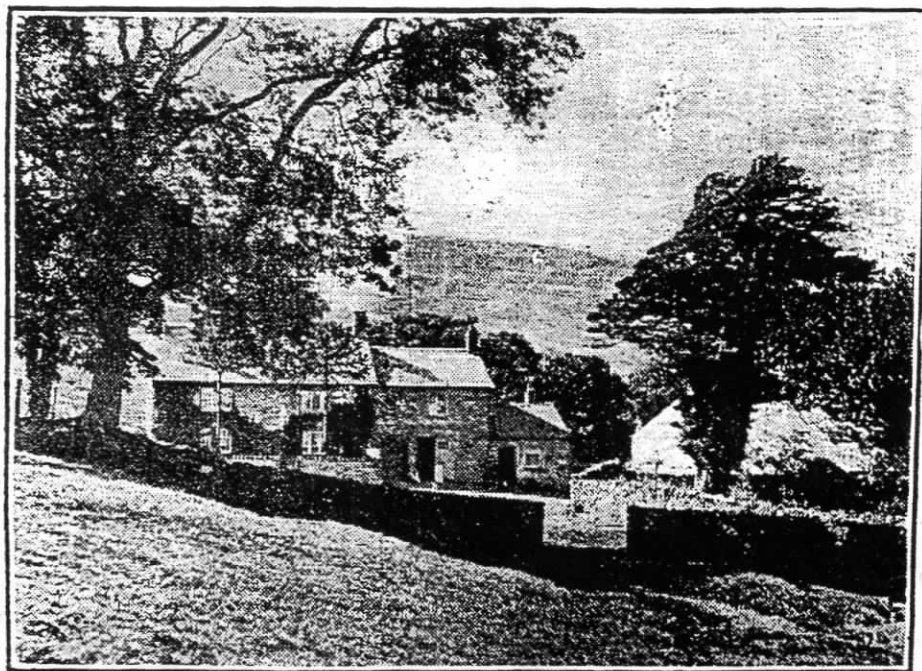


## THE WOLF HALL ESTATE and the PROCTER family



Wolf House Farm, from the Preston Guardian, 11th July 1914.  
(Originally Wolf Hall; Wolfen Hall on O.S. maps; "Woofus" in the local dialect).

The article about wolves in our 1991 "Longer Sen" suggests that one of the last strongholds of the wolves was in the loose tumble of rock on the front of Wolf Fell, and that this was the real wolves' house, or "woofus". It was suggested that these wolves were exterminated somewhere between the years 1350 and 1500, and that it would then be possible to graze sheep.

By 1500 the Wolf Hall estate, or "demesne" was held by Sherburnes, cousins of the Stonyhurst Sherburnes, making a fairly continuous block of Sherburne territory stretching from near Ribchester through Aughton, Bailey and Chaigley and Leagram to the old County boundary along the top of the fells at the north end of Chipping township. The Stonyhurst Sherburnes had built themselves a chapel at Mitton church, but the Chipping Sherburnes kept separate and in 1519 built the Wolfhouse Quire at the south-east corner of Chipping church. They retained the feudal customs, as shown by the 1574 agreement featured in the 1989 "Longer Sen". The tenants, mostly living around Saddle Fell, unanimously gave their "free consent and assent" to the orders of their lord and master living at the "capital mansion", Wolf Hall. The corn was ground at the Wolfen Mill and there was a kiln for drying. The tenants grew oats, but the field-names suggest that wheat and rye also were grown, and barley, probably for brewing.

A small farm near Wolfen Mill was called "Clough Foot" and was leased by the Sherburnes to vicar John King from 1635 (Lancs. Record Office, DDK) probably till 1668. But the Wolf Hall Sherburnes were in decline and the estate was sold to the Pattens in 1680. In 1688 the Patten heir, Elizabeth, married Sir Thomas Stanley of Bickerstaffe, one of the Derby family, and their son, Sir Edward Stanley of Bickerstaffe leased the Wolf Hall and its land and the mill to Henry Procter in 1718. The lease was for eleven years at a rent of £52 per year, plus a charge for the wear on the millstones. (LRO, DDK Chipping 1718). Clough Foot was leased to a William Procter in 1719. (LRO, DDK Chipping 1719).

The "WOOFUS" PROCTERS had come down from Wyresdale. Henry's will shows that in 1743 he still had a lease of the farm called Borderside, on the western side of the Trough of Bowland. The first mention of Henry Procter being in Chipping is in 1711 when the nonconformist minister, the Rev. Peter Walkden of Hesketh Lane chapel, baptised one of Henry's daughters. At that time, Henry was at Higher Core, which was owned by the Parkinson family.

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