

BASLOW ENCLOSURE AWARD

Or How The Duke got his Golden Gates

including

THE BASLOW ENCLOSURE AWARD

THE TURNPIKE ROADS OF 1812 & 1824

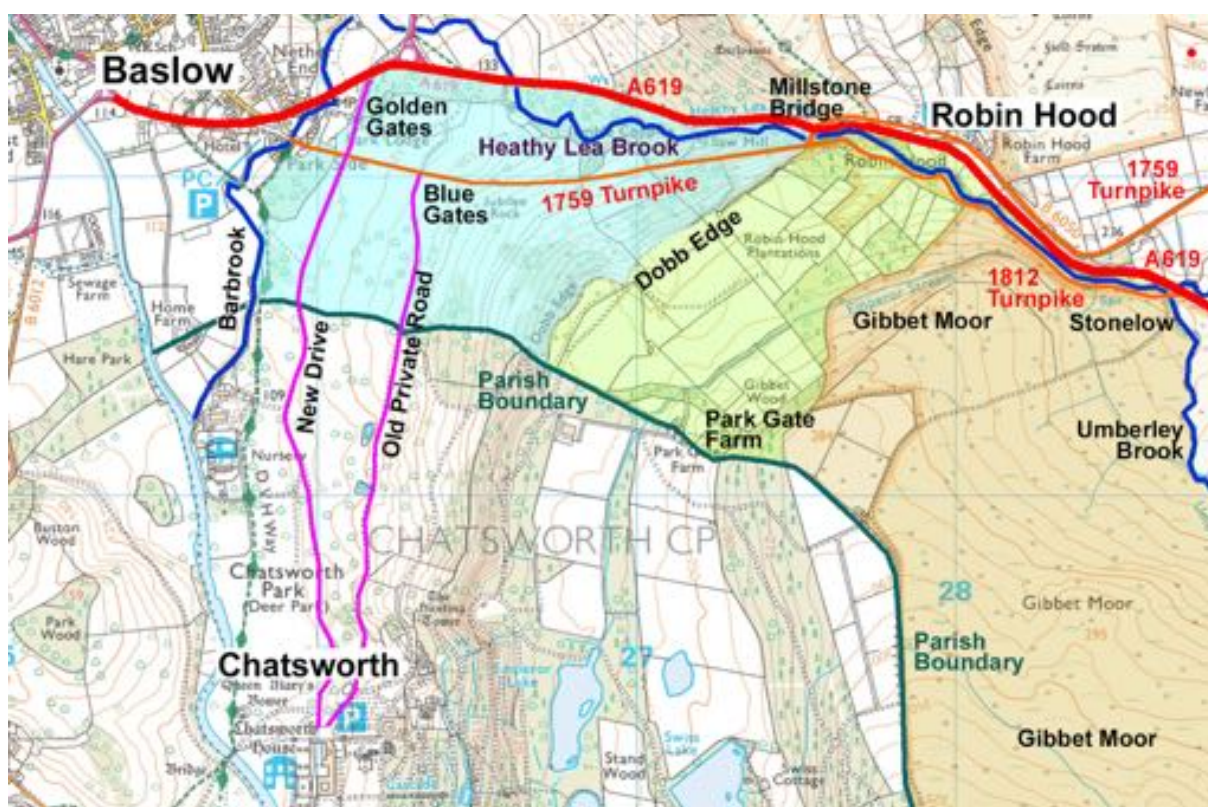
THE RUTLAND/DEVONSHIRE EXCHANGE OF LANDS

THE NEW OUTER PARK



by David Dalrymple-Smith
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MAP of BASLOW and CHATSWORTH
showing areas and features described in the text



- Light blue* - the Outer Park and plantations, new in 1824
- Light green* - the "Shelf of Land" between Dobb Edge and Gibbet Moor
- Light brown* - part of Gibbet Moor

*The photograph on the front page shows Baslow village bottom left
 The new "Outer Park" white with snow is centre right
 Above is the "Shelf of Land" with moorland in the far distance*

SUMMARY

Major events in the parish of Baslow in the 1820s. New roads were built and there was a major extension of Chatsworth Park taking over earlier farmland. The moors were privatised and dedicated to sport and grouse shooting. Most was for the needs of the Dukes of Rutland and Devonshire, but in the end Baslow benefited as well.

INTRODUCTION

Baslow Parish

Baslow is an ancient village that today includes the equally old hamlet of Bubnell. The village is in the valley of the river Derwent in north Derbyshire not far from Bakewell. The early Chapelry of Baslow included Curbar and Froggatt. The latter became a parish in its own right in 1868.

The main geographical feature in the area is the long line of “Edges” west of the river Derwent. They make for dramatic scenery, but have always been an obstacle to east west traffic. The valleys at Baslow provide some of the easier routes up this feature, attracting traffic and encouraging trade and growth in the village.

Agriculture had always been the mainstay of the economy. In addition in mediaeval time, there was lead smelting: traces of the sites are still present in the parish. An outcrop of coal made Robin Hood a small industrial area. The “Edges” above the Derwent Valley were a source of stone: Baslow was one of the main centres of the production of millstones.

By the early 1800s these industries had faded away, but Baslow remained a thriving village, well supported by Inns, tradesmen and craftsmen. Bubnell was smaller with no “services”, but had larger productive farms with relatively few farmers, some of whom could well be described as “Gentleman Farmers”.

Both communities had wealthy residents, often described as farmers but who had outside interests such as factories in Sheffield, dealerships in Chesterfield or even businesses in London. There were only a handful of freeholders in Baslow, not necessarily rich, and none in Bubnell.

There were never any Cotton mills, a feature that dominated life in many other villages in the valley. The combined population in the 1841 census was 1090

The Dukes

The Duke of Rutland, Lord Manners, was Lord of the Manors of Baslow and Bubnell and had been for many years. His family came from Haddon Hall near Bakewell which he still owned but did not use as a residence. He was a rich man with significant estates around in the country.

The Duke of Devonshire was much richer, had larger estates, and often lived at Chatsworth. In the late 1700s the fourth and fifth Dukes had made significant changes to the Park and the village of Edensor with the advice and help of Capability Brown and others. William George Spencer Cavendish became sixth Duke in 1811. He was ambitious for Chatsworth and determined to continue the enhancement of the House, the Garden and the Park.

The Background

By 1824 grouse shooting had become important to the landed classes. It was a status symbol where a large “bag” was expected. The Duke of Rutland only had a small house in Baslow as a shooting lodge. As Lord of the Manor he had access to large tracts of moor, but this was common land which limited his control of them.

One of the early objectives sixth Duke of Devonshire was an improved access through Baslow to the main roads to Sheffield and Chesterfield. Part of the old Deer Park had been “taken in” by his predecessor and he had cleared a large farm so the Park could be extended to the Baslow Parish Boundary. Even so his private road to Baslow was hilly and ran through “ordinary” farmland. He needed a new road consistent with his status.

The two Dukes or their agents must have discussed these problems some time in the early 1820s and came up with the course of action described below. There is a story that it was finalised when the two Dukes had a game of cards to settle a gambling debt

To achieve their ends, the Dukes needed an Act of Enclosure to gain control of the moors, A Turnpike Act to divert a road, and an Exchange of Lands to give the Duke of Devonshire space to extend his park and built his road.

THE ENCLOSURE AWARD

Baslow Enclosure Act of 1824 affected the whole Parish, which at that time included Curbar and Froggatt as well as Bubnell. This paper describes the actions in Baslow and Bubnell only. An Enclosure Award was designed to allocate “Common and Waste Land” controlled by the village as whole to the freeholders who would own it and use it more efficiently. Waste Land included moorland.

The established and legal procedure was followed. First the parish was surveyed and valued, with particular attention to the property of the few freeholders: in Baslow they owned about a twentieth of the village. Some taxes were also relevant and had to be taken into account.

Next calculations were made to decide how the Common and Waste Land was to be divided up. The beneficiaries were

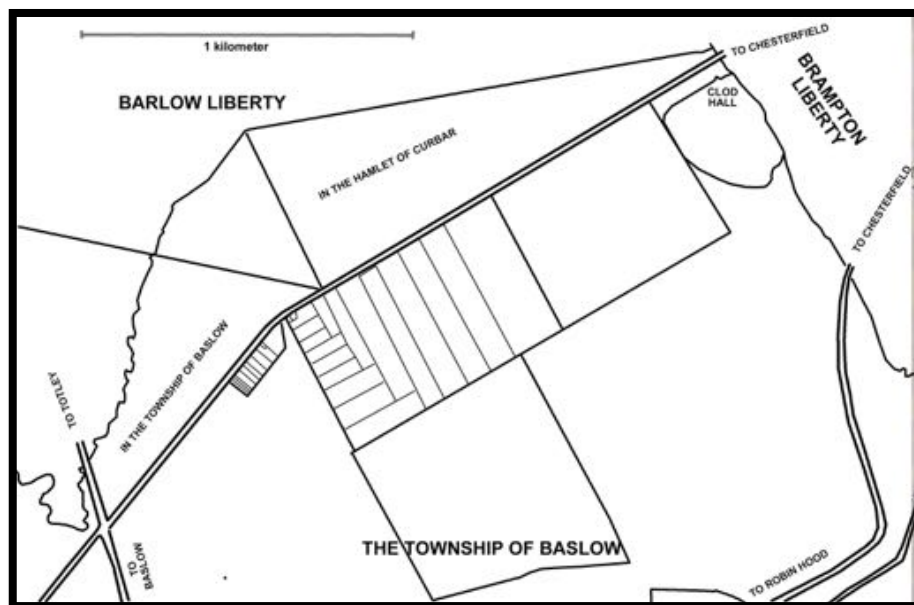
- the freeholders, as property owners in the village
- the Vicar of Bakewell, to compensate for loss of Tithes
- the Duke of Rutland, because he was Lord of the Manor, and also as owner most of the village.

Each party was then allocated an appropriately sized plot of land large or small as in any Enclosure Award. These plots were on barren moorland off the road near Clod Hall as shown on the plan on the next page. In the original they were numbered, with details in the accompanying schedule. Some were small, perhaps $\frac{1}{4}$ acre or even less. The largest amounting to 120 acres went to the Vicar of Bakewell. The remaining Common or Waste Land amounting to nearly 2800 acres went to to the Duke of Rutland.

Most villagers did not own land, and are not even mentioned in the Enclosure Award. However they did have certain rights, such as access for grazing cattle and sheep, cutting

peat and bracken etc, rights that disappeared when the Act was passed. It is possible that they realised some drop in rent or taxes.

Plan of Allocations on the Moor



*The rectangles are the plots of land allocated to freeholders in the Award.
The diagonal road is from Curbar Gap to Clod Hall, with the Baslow to Owlbar road crossing it at the bottom left.*

These small plots were “virtual”. They existed only on a map for a brief period, and most would have been of no practical value whatsoever. The Duke of Rutland then exchanged each plot for something of use to the new owner. The Vicar got land in Bakewell. Most freeholders got land for building or agriculture close to the village. One got money. No-one refused the exchange. All the transactions were carefully recorded in the schedule attached to the Act of Parliament. As a result the Duke of Rutland became the sole owner of all the Common and waste Land – in effect all the moorland in the parish from Lady Cross in the north to the Robin Hood in the south.

It is interesting that no fields were enclosed as a result of this award; no walls were built. The whole process was for the personal benefit of the Dukes. And perhaps the freeholders may have valued their new possessions more than their earlier rights. Ordinary villagers were the losers.

The Turnpike Roads

1759 Turnpike

The first turnpikes in the area were authorised around 1760 replacing traditional parish maintained roads. All were used by long distance traffic between the Cheshire with its salt mines & the industrial towns of Lancashire in the west, and Sheffield Chesterfield & the Trent ports in the east. Baslow itself was served by branch of the 1759 Chesterfield

to Hearnshaw Lane Head Turnpike. From Baslow heading east, this road crossed the small bridge over the Barbrook at Nether End and headed up through farmland (now the Park) to Millstone Bridge (see the map on page 2) where it crossed the Heathylea Brook: on to Robin Hood and then over the moors to Old Brampton and Chesterfield.

Note : Millstone Bridge about ¼ mile below robin Hood still exists but is damaged and dangerous. It is totally hidden by vegetation.

1812 Turnpike to Chesterfield

The section of the 1799 Turnpike over the moors from Robin Hood to Old Brampton must have had its problems making, amongst other things, access to Chatsworth difficult. One of the first actions of the 6th Duke of Devonshire was to sponsor a completely new Turnpike to Chesterfield. According to tradition he paid for it himself

It started at “Blue Gates” near Baslow where the private road from Chatsworth joined the main Turnpike. It followed the earlier 1759 road as far as Millstone Bridge, then it took a completely new route up the south bank of the Heathylea Brook, emerging onto Eastmoor at Stonelow. The road, now the A619, continued up Wadshelf Brook, passed south of Wadshelf village and via Chatsworth Road ended at Chesterfield market place.

The 1812 Turnpike and Heathylea Brook.



*The remains of the 1812 Turnpike close to the Heathy Lea Brook
It was subject to landslides and flooding. 1816 Turnpike Baslow to Owler Bar*

1816 Turnpike to Owler Bar (completion)

Communications to Sheffield improved dramatically when the new Turnpike to Owler Bar was finally completed in 1816

1824 Turnpike Baslow to Eastmoor

In 1824 the Dukes exchange lands. The 1759 Turnpike passed through the area destined to be the new “Outer Park”: this was unacceptable and had to be moved. Plans were made and approved by Parliament for a completely new road north of the Heathylea Brook. It started at the Wheatsheaf Hotel, passed through Robin Hood and reached the 1812 road at Stonelow on Eastmoor. It also served as the new boundary of the between the properties of the two Dukes. The road now the A619 was a great improvement on its predecessor.

THE 1824 EXCHANGE OF LANDS.

The stage was now set for the Dukes to “Exchange Lands”. The Duke of Rutland got 2350 acres: there were 1250 acres in Hathersage, the rest in a dozen different parishes in the area. The Hathersage portion, which included Millstone quarry and Yarncliff woods, was relatively cheap suggesting that it was mainly moorland. The Duke may already have been planning ahead for his Hunting Lodge at Longshaw with grouse moors nearby.

The Duke of Devonshire got 1002 acres in Baslow (and 21 in Bakewell). These were in the south east corner of Baslow Parish adjacent to Chatsworth Parish. The boundary was the Barbrook and the new Turnpike road (A619) as far as Stonelow. From there it followed the Parish boundary up Umerley Brook, along the top on Bunkers Wood to Parkgate and downhill to the Barbrook.

The “Shelf of Land” and Gibbet Moor

*Parkgate and “The Shelf of Land” is above Dobb Edge in the centre
Gibbet moor is in the distance*

The newly acquired land can be divided into four sections. The areas are approximate.

- 230 acres destined for the new Outer Park (180 acres) and plantations (50 acres). This was flat and then sloping ground rising from Barbrook up to Dobb Edge, bounded on the north by the gorge of the Heathy Lea Brook. At the time it was covered with farms and fields, walls and houses.
- 5 acres alongside the Barbrook. There were 6 houses in it with 8 families. Except for a change of landlord, they were not affected by the changes.
- 140 acres of relatively flat fields, the “Shelf of Land” above Dobb Edge and below Gibbet Moor, reaching from Robin Hood in the north to Parkgate in the south. It had been the site of coal mining and quarrying for stone and millstones, industries that had all but disappeared by 1824. The tenants of the fields and the farmer resident at Parkgate all remained in situ.
- 650 acres on Gibbet Moor. This had been Common Land until the Act of Enclosure when it had been awarded it to the Duke of Rutland. As owner he could then transfer it to the Duke of Devonshire. It would have been taken in hand by gamekeepers and prepared for grouse shooting and other sport. It is also likely that the ancient tracks and packhorse routes across it were closed to general traffic at the same time.

Twenty acres of land near the entrance to the park was owned by three Baslow residents, each of whom had a house on it. Purchase was essential to complete the project. Individual negotiation was needed and in the end they all accepted the Duke’s money.

The Grouse Moors and the New Outer Park

The Duke of Rutland

Once the Enclosure Award had been completed and the Duke of Rutland had control of the moors, he could start improving them for grouse and other sport. Gamekeepers were employed, some occupying new houses such as White Lodge: one came from Scotland. There would have been new walls, culverts, drainage, butts for shooting etc., with on-going maintenance including management of the heather and suppression of vermin. His sporting estate was completed a few years later by the building of Longshaw Lodge near the Fox House Inn, on or close to land acquired in the exchange with the Duke of Devonshire. He could now entertain in style, and compete with his peers for the largest “Bag”.

The Duke of Devonshire

The Duke of Devonshire had a much bigger task which would have taken several years to complete. The area destined for park and woods had to be cleared completely. Houses were demolished and walls obliterated. It was done so efficiently that few traces remain. Some trees were left, a few of which still stand today. Plantations were created on the sides of the Heathy Lea brook and near Barbrook. A major feature was a wide new entrance leading up to two lodges, then a drive through new and old parkland right up to Chatsworth House. By chance the Duke had iron railings and gates originally

commissioned by the 1st Duke for his new gardens, but unused and in storage for many years. These were ideal between the lodges and remain there today as The Golden Gates.

The Outer Park



*The clear area in the centre is part of the Outer Park.
Chatsworth house in the distance
with the old private road on the right and the new drive the right.
The A619 hidden by trees is in the foreground.*

It must have taken years to complete. Finally he had a magnificent approach to his house, compatible with his status as a leading peer of the realm. Visitors were always welcome, both to park and house.

Tenants had to leave, but it was done with care. Families in three of the larger houses had to move with no record of recompense, but they would have had the resources to cope. All the other resident tenants had alternate accommodation in the village or were rehoused elsewhere on Chatsworth land. More villagers lost a few fields, however there would have been plenty of work available clearing the park to compensate for any loss of income.

EFFECT ON BASLOW

Baslow was well placed to benefit from these major construction projects. There would be ample jobs for villagers. Workers from outside the area would need accommodation and feeding, benefitting hotels and anyone with a spare room. There would be opportunities for the craftsmen in the village. It was a major boost to the economy of the village.

Coincidence or not, there was a major redevelopment near the church in 1827. Houses were demolished and the road widened: new houses were built for craftsmen. A comparison of 1824 and 1848 maps show that there was an upgrading of local roads throughout the village with proper walls and pavements over this period. No doubt individual residents took the opportunity to improve their premises.

Meanwhile changes were taking place in society as a whole. A new middle class was emerging with education and money to spare. Travelling for recreation, previously limited to relatively few, was becoming possible for many more. They wanted to see the world beyond their town or parish.

Baslow was only 10 miles from several major towns. It had impressive scenery, a rural appearance and good facilities. There were new roads. Chatsworth was an extra attraction. Though it did not know it at the time Baslow was getting ready for tourists.

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