

## Chapter 17

# Plantagenet times to Sheffield ca. 1800

600 YEARS FROM THE PLANT NAME'S ORIGINS TO A PLANT'S YARD PLANT FAMILY

October 1998. One of a series of Chapters by Dr. John S. Plant, Keele University, England, ST5 5BG.

**S**parse evidence for 13th century 'origins' to the Plant name yields hints of a Plantagenet influence. Powerful political controversies surrounding Plantagenet-related words may have led to our current need for caution when considering the contemporaneity of various evolving meanings of *plant*. Trade and war may have influenced both the advent of the Plant name in the north west of England and the Plants' subsequent advances across the north Midlands, in their progress towards the clearer light that 17th century records bring.

The later sections of this Chapter outline the progress of a particular line of Plants from 17th century Cheshire through north Derbyshire to 18th century Sheffield. Their apparent descent intersects an environment that includes some key industrial developments.

### 17.1 A smattering of medieval Plant records

**A**bout 20,000 living Plants are now concentrated mostly around the NW Midlands of England. They can be traced back, in particular, to two 17th century clusters of Plant records. One was around the borderlands between East Cheshire and North Staffordshire, near where the Plant family is now mainly found. The other, which has since diminished (Figure 17.1), had about 40% as many Plant records and it was on the south Lincolnshire coast, around Ingoldmells just north of Norfolk and The Wash.

These two 17th century clusters can be related back, it seems, to 13th century records. Plant records from Plantagenet times provide a few clues about how the name may have formed and developed before when, around 1600, IGI records<sup>1</sup> begin to give a more complete picture.

#### 17.1.1 Some possibly related names

**T**he Plantagenet name is associated with a royal dynasty of some 250 years standing in England, which was followed by the two Plantagenet cadet branches of Lancaster (1399-1461) and York (1461-85). The son, Henry II, of Geoffrey the Handsome (nickname Plantagenet) Count of Anjou became the first Plantagenet king of England in 1154. He is known mostly for his disputes with the archbishop of Canterbury, St Thomas Becket, who was murdered in 1170. The bishop of London (1166-87), Gilbert Foliot, said of Becket '*He always was a fool, and always will remain one*'.

It is by reference to an isolated occurrence of the name *Plantebene* that recent texts have asserted a (questionable) meaning for *Plant* (Chapter 16). This rather narrowly derived meaning is 'gardener'. It seems however that further consideration should be given to other 'Plant related' names, with an eye on the contemporary histories. One such name

---

<sup>1</sup>The records here considered were taken from the 1984 version of the International Genealogical Index.

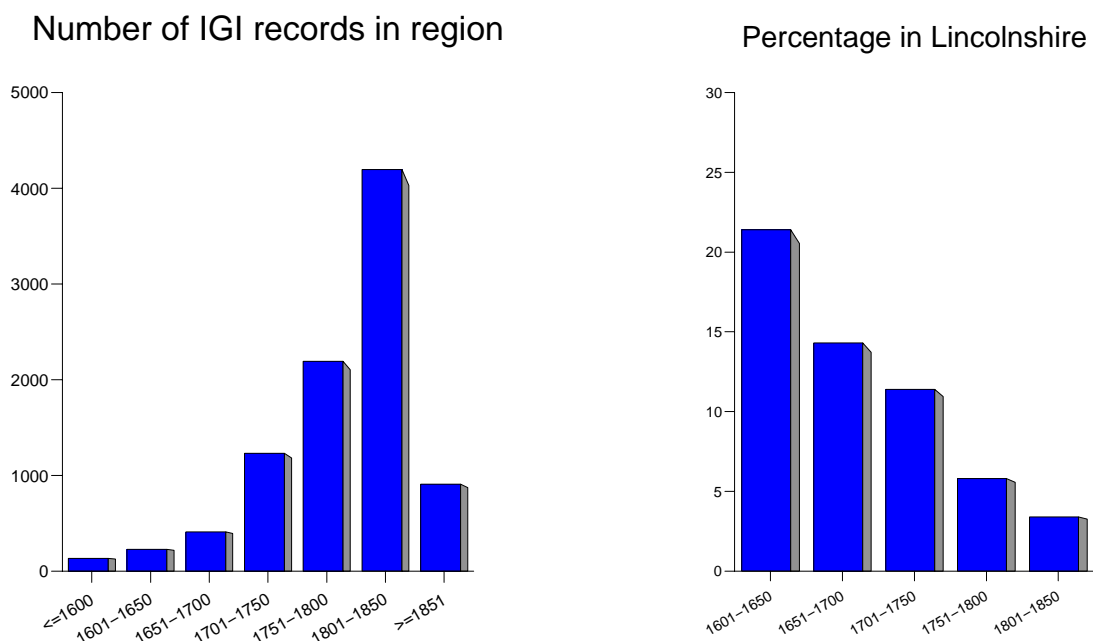


Figure 17.1: Plant records in the 1984 IGI for the region of England indicated in Figure 16.1 (*i.e.* Yorkshire, Lancashire, Cheshire, Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Lincolnshire, Leicestershire, Staffordshire, Shropshire, Worcestershire Herefordshire, Gloucestershire, Warwickshire, Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, Cambridgeshire, Huntingdonshire, Northamptonshire, Rutland). The total number of Plants records in this region is shown alongside the variation of the fraction in Lincolnshire.

is *Plauntefolie*, which occurs more prominently than *Plantebene* in extant records, with occurrences at Leic' in 1209, Somerset 1226, Weston' 1263, and Welle (?vale of York) in 1270 (Table 17.1). It seems that this name needs to be considered in a context of contemporary English history and interpreted in terms of the likely meanings of *plant* and *folie* in early 13th century times (*e.g.* Table 17.2 and 17.3).

In 1194 the absent king, Richard I, transferred charge of England to Hubert Walter, who is credited with instigating the use of itinerant justices to keep records<sup>2</sup>. Establishing wickedness was important at those times and, when King John was excommunicated by the pope in 1205, the churches remained open only for baptisms and for deathbed confessions. It is hence no surprise that *Plauntefolie* can be interpreted as an '*establisher*<sup>3</sup> or *recorder*<sup>4</sup> of wickedness'<sup>5</sup>. In those times of dispute between church and king it is only as expected that an alternative interpretation of *Plauntefolie* is however a '*strewer of madness*' (*cf.* Tables 17.2 and 17.3<sup>6</sup>). This latter interpretation could be seen simply as a rebuttal by those refuting the authority of the Plantagenets and the church, whose judgements were no doubt weakened by recurrent disputes between them.

Such vacillation, at the heart of England's government, may in time have turned into jest, as is perhaps suggested by a meaning of the Middle English word *fol* (**noun** [3] in Table 17.3) — *viz.* 'a court jester, a buffoon kept by a king or a nobleman for his amusement; also a

<sup>2</sup>Roy Strong (1996) *The Story of Britain*, p 72.

<sup>3</sup>The Oxford English Dictionary (1989) cites usage of the meaning 'to establish' for *plant* from 897 AD.

<sup>4</sup>Rothwell et al (1922) give 'to record' as a meaning of *plant* in their Anglo-Norman Dictionary.

<sup>5</sup>*Plantebene* could be interpreted similarly as a '*fine establisher*'.

<sup>6</sup>A further definition, given by *Dictionnaire Historique de L'ancien Langage Francais (XIIe à XIVe siècles)*, is **folie** (4): *attaque téméraire, coup de main*.

menial servant’.

Such meanings remain in keeping with the reasoning of Chapter 16, whereby Plant was gauged to mean a ‘royalist auxiliary’ rather than specifically a ‘gardener’.

### 17.1.2 Emergence of evidence relevant to the NW Plants

Seeds may have germinated for the NW Plants when Henry II’s youngest son John arrived in the north west of England as Lord of Lancaster and Ireland (Chapter 16). The name Roger de *Plan*’ appears on John’s charters to Chester around 1188-99<sup>7</sup>. By 1230, the name *Planterose* appears at *Warr’ Wigorn*’ (sic)<sup>8</sup>. This name may have had various meanings, including an ‘establisher of (crown land) rights’.

Heraldic tradition maintains that the badge of Edmund, first earl of Lancaster (1267), was a rose that was tinctured red to difference it from the gold rose of his brother Edward I. This was around the times of the French epic poem *Roman de la Rose* which was begun ca. 1237 — in this charming allegory of courtly love, a lover seeks the rose in a garden ruled by love personified<sup>9</sup>.

The red rose appears in the Plant blazon<sup>10</sup>. It could be interpreted as the Plant badge. It appears to indicate a connection with the Lancastrian Plantagenets though it is not known when it was added to the blazon. In the 13th century north west, there were various choices of loyalty, not least to the Plantagenet crown during the Welsh Wars, with Edward I taking personal charge of Cheshire, while the cadet earls of Lancaster were more active at that time in the south of Wales.

The only other element of the Plant blazon is a label. Another rare example of a ‘label in bend’ occurs in the blazon of Wm. de Curli<sup>11</sup> and this is dated 1236. A label is a mark of cadetship (*i.e.* subordination to the head of the family) and sloping it (*i.e.* a label in bend) can be taken as an instance of one of six ancient marks of bastardy<sup>12</sup>. The Plant blazon can hence be interpreted as the arms of an ‘illegitimate(d) cadet line, representing the red rose<sup>13</sup>’. In the order of the Plant blazon the red rose follows the label and this could suggest that a Lancastrian allegiance formed after illegitimate descent.

### 17.1.3 Early ‘Plant related’ names around Norfolk

There is evidence of early ‘Plant related’ names around Norfolk in East Anglia, particularly by around 1260. The evidence listed in Table 17.1 reveals for example that, in 1254, a Roger *Plantin* was ‘*serjant of the earl of Norfolk*’. Roger Plantyn was granted land

<sup>7</sup>These are referenced out of order under the date 1396 in the Charter Rolls. See also however Rupert H Morris (1893) *Chester in the Plantagenet and Tudor Reigns*, pps 11 and 484.

<sup>8</sup>This is usually interpreted as Warwickshire though it might alternatively allude to the river crossing at Warrington and the lands of south Lancashire around Wigan and Manchester castle.

<sup>9</sup>Though the initial version of this poem was begun ca. 1237 by the French poet William de Lorris, it was continued ca. 1275-80 by Jean de Meung who developed it as a celebration of sex and propagation which fulfilled God’s will and who included religious and philosophical digressions. Elizabeth Hallam (1996) *The Plantagenet Encyclopedia: an alphabetic guide to 400 years of English History*.

<sup>10</sup>The Plant blazon is ‘*Ar. a label in bend az. in chief a rose gu.*’ which translates as ‘*Silver (shield), a label sloping diagonally (to the left or to the right), in the top third a red rose (which is a usual position for the bearer’s badge, or for brisure)*’. A rose could be brisure for a seventh son, though it seems that the Plant blazon could predate that convention.

<sup>11</sup>This blazon includes ‘... *a label of four points in bend sinister ...*’. A.C.Fox-Davies (1929), ‘*A Complete Guide to Heraldry*’, p 154.

<sup>12</sup>Lt.-Colonel Robert Gayre of Gayre and Nigg (1961) *Heraldic Cadency: The Development of Coats of Arms for Kinsmen and Other Purposes*, p 105.

<sup>13</sup>Roses are quite rare in the arms of Leek and east Cheshire families — the few exceptions include roses of various colours on the arms of the Rudyerd, Davenport, and Sherd families. There is a 17th century plaque in Stockport Church to members of the Foley family (*cf.* the early bye-name Plantefolie) whose arms are ‘*a fess ingrailed between 3 roses*’. J.P.Earwaker (1877) *East Cheshire: Past and Present; or A History of the Hundred of Macclesfield in the County Palatine of Chester*, Vol.I, p 358.

1188-99	<b>Plan'</b> Roger de, Chester's Charters
1199	<b>Plantebene</b> Ralph, Norfolk, Pipe Rolls
1209	<b>Plantefolie</b> Gilbert, Leic', Curia Regis
1214	<b>Planet'</b> Susan de, Jelding' Kent, Curia Regis
1220	<b>Plantan'</b> William, Suff', Curia Regis
1221	<b>Planetis</b> Ralph de, Kent, Curia Regis
1226	<b>Plantefolie</b> John, Somerset, Curia Regis
1230	<b>Planterose</b> Robert, Warr' Wigorn', Curia Regis
1254	<b>Plantin</b> Roger, serjent of E. of Norfolk, Close Rolls
1258	<b>Plantyn</b> Roger, butler of E. of Norfolk, Close Rolls
1258	<b>Plantyn</b> Roger, lands in Norfolk, Patent Rolls
1262	<b>Plaunte</b> William, Essex, Forest Pleas
1263	<b>Plauntefolie</b> Maud, Weston', Close Rolls
1266	<b>Plauntegenet</b> Galfrido, serjent at arms, Wodestock, Close Rolls
1268	<b>Planteng'</b> Roger, Guldeford' Norff', Close Rolls
1270	<b>Plantefolie</b> Adam, Welle Fanerwal' (co. York), Close Rolls
1273	<b>de la Plaunt</b> and <b>Plaunt</b> , 3 Rouen merchants, Patent Rolls
1275	<b>Plauntes</b> William, Norfolk, Rotuli Hundrederum
1279	<b>Plante</b> William, Cambridge, Rotuli Hundrederum
1282	<b>de Plantes</b> Henry, appeal in Huntingdonshire, Patent Rolls
1285	<b>Plauntain</b> Henry, Patent Rolls
1301	<b>Plant</b> Richard, rights to coal, Ewelowe near Chester, Flint Receipts
1341	<b>le Plaunter</b> Henry, Cambridge-Huntingdon border dispute, Patent Rolls
1342	<b>Plente</b> Walter, Exeter co. Devon, Patent Rolls
1343	<b>Plente</b> John, messuage of land, vicar of the cathedral church of Chichester, Patent Rolls
1343	<b>Plente</b> John, witness at Theydene Boys on release of claim to lands in Theden Boys, Close Rolls
1344	<b>Plant</b> John, son of Alan, of Burgh Marsh co. Lincoln, Patent Rolls
1352	<b>Plant</b> James, and others carried away goods at Welles, Warham and Styvekey co. Norfolk, Patent Rolls
1364	<b>Plente</b> Roger of Exeter, license to take 20 packs of large cloth of divers colours from port of Exeter to Gascony, Spain, and other parts beyond seas; and to return with wine and other merchandise to the ports of London, Suthampton, Sandwich or Exeter, Patent Rolls
1364	<b>Plente</b> Roger, right to be collector of customs at Exeter, Fine Rolls
1364	<b>Plente</b> Roger, searcher of gold and silver exported without license in the county of Devon, assault on, Patent Rolls
1365	<b>Plente</b> Roger, merchant of Exeter, his ship 'le Ceorge' of Exmouth, Patent Rolls
1367	<b>Plente</b> Roger, king's minister in Devon, Patent Rolls
1368	<b>Plente</b> Roger, collector of customs in port of Exeter, Patent Rolls
1386	<b>Plente</b> Reynold, rights to yearly rent had been granted by William Botreaux, knight, the elder, Inquisition at Launceston Cornwall
1386	<b>Plonte</b> William, chaplain (land of prior and convent of Bath), rent in Olveston, Patent Rolls
1393	<b>Plente</b> Reynold, granted rent of 40s for life, Cornwall, Close Rolls
1394	<b>Pleyntif</b> Richard, Somerset, Patent Rolls
1394	<b>Plaint</b> John, aged 60 years or more, witness at Lincoln, had been servant to Master Thomas de Sutton, Calendar of Inquisitions

Table 17.1: Some Medieval Plant related records

plant	plan
plante 1.	plainte, du latin <i>planctus</i>
plante 2.	(1) endroit planté, pépinière (1375); (2) plante des pieds
planter	(1) mettre en terre; (2) au pronominal, se jeter
plantin	plançon, bouture
plont	plomb (1396)
folie	(1) action ou parole folie, téméraire; (2) viol, débauche
folier	agir, parler en fou; folatrer; mener une vie débauchée; tromper; errer; injurier
folle	(i.e. folle du pied) sole du pied, en parlant des cerfs
follée	l’empreinte du pied

Table 17.2: Some Old French definitions (from La Curne de Sainte-Palaye (1879) *Dictionnaire Historique de L’ancien Langage François*).

fol	noun 1a	a foolish, stupid, or ignorant person
	noun 1b	a person temporarily foolish: (a) one who is dazed or drunk; (b) one who is duped or deceived
	noun 2	an impious person, a sinner, a rascal
	noun 3	a court jester, a buffoon kept by a king or a nobleman for his amusement; also a menial servant
fol	adj	(1) foolish, stupid; (2) sinful, wicked; (3) lecherous, wanton
folie	noun 1a	foolishness, stupidity, dullness; folly, impudence, lack of wisdom
	noun 1b	a foolish act, or course of action
	plural 1c	foolish talk, nonsense; an idle tale; also falsehood, slander
	noun 2a	sinfulness, wrongdoing, sin or crime
	plural 2b	lechery, adultery, fornication
noun 3	madness, insanity, anger	

Table 17.3: Some Middle English definitions (from Kurath and Kahn (1954) *Middle English Dictionary*).

<p>PLANT:- set up, furnish, esp. in connection with new colonies.</p> <p>PLANTAIN:- The application of the plantain leaf as a popular remedy for bruises and wounds is constantly referred to in Elizabethan literature.</p> <p>PLANTATION:- colonisation.</p>
--

Table 17.4: Some Plant related meanings in Shakespeare (1564-1661) (from the Glossary to the Cambridge Text of *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare*).

in Norfolk and, the same year of 1258, the same name is recorded as the ‘*butler of the earl marshal*’.

The earl of Norfolk, to whom Roger Plantyn was serjent and butler, was a Roger Bigod who, in 1225, had married Isabella daughter of king William the Lion of Scotland<sup>14</sup>. In 1261 Roger Bigod, with his brother Hugh, supported the provisions of Oxford though he acquiesced to the restoration of royal power in 1263<sup>15</sup>.

The sole *explicit* mention of the royal name in the records of Table 17.1 is with a variant spelling of Plantagenet. It appears, with a similar title to that of Roger Plantin’s, in the instance of Geoffrey *Plauntegenet, serjent at arms*, who is listed as having garderobe duties to the king, at *Wodestock* (sic) (Oxford) in 1266. This provides clear evidence that the ‘Plantagenet’ name was known at that time. Early Bigods had spasmodically defied the crown<sup>16</sup> and the placement of an apparent ‘Plantagenet related’ name *Plantin* with them by 1254 may perhaps have been seen to signal an eventual measure of Bigod loyalty.

The aforementioned Roger Bigod had a nephew also called Roger Bigod, who succeeded as earl of Norfolk and who was evidently in chief command of Flint (near Chester) in the Welsh War of 1277. In Edward I’s campaign from Chester into north Wales in 1282, this Bigod was busy with the commisiariat in the supply of provisions<sup>17</sup>.

Such a historical background could be taken to provide a possible link that connects the south east with the main (?subsequent or existing) body of Plants in the north west of England. There are known occurrences of the name *Pla(u)nt(e)(s)* in the south east, near the Bigods’ home base of Norfolk, with *Pla(u)nt(e)(s)* in the counties of Essex, Norfolk, Cambridgeshire, and Huntingdonshire by 1262, 1275, 1279, and 1282 respectively (Table 17.1). The ‘Plant’ name also occurs in Flint, where Roger Bigod had been active, by 1301.

The Old French word *plantin* means ‘a shoot or cutting for propagation’ (Table 17.2) and the word *plantin(g)* means a ‘plantation’ in the dialect of northern Britain, extending as far south as Cheshire, Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, and Lincolnshire<sup>18</sup>. This suggests connotations, for the name *Plantin*, of French colonisation in the north perhaps especially in connection with Bigod activities in north Wales. There is also mention, in 1268, of Roger *Planteng*’ (sic) at *Norff*’ (sic) — the name *Planteng*’ (1268) can apparently be taken in context to allude to the ‘establishment of English<sup>19</sup> (land) rights’.

<sup>14</sup>Subsequently, Bigod quarrelled with Henry III about the tutorship of the young king of Scotland in 1255 and his young queen.

<sup>15</sup>He maintained however an opposition to the harsh treatment of the disinherited.

<sup>16</sup>The first earl of Norfolk, Hugh Bigod (?1095-1177), had been given his earldom by the Norman king Stephen in 1135. Even so, he held Norwich against Stephen in 1136 before submitting and being pardoned. In 1141 this Bigod fought for Stephen but joined the party of Henry of Anjou (later the first Plantagenet king, Henry II) by 1153, only to persist with his unruliness such as by joining the rebellion of Henry the young king against his father Henry in 1174. Again, by the mid 13th century, the Bigod earls were showing spasmodic defiance of the crown.

<sup>17</sup>The younger Roger Bigod, earl of Norfolk, defied the king however in 1297. His title and lands were passed to the king in 1302, being returned to Bigod only for his lifetime, and in 1302 they passed to Edward II’s half brother, Thomas Brotherton. F.M.Powicke (1947), *King Henry II and the Lord Edward*, pps 336, 342, 422, 432, 472, 506, 541, 707, 768. John E Morris (1901), *The Welsh Wars of Edward I*, pps 133, 162.

<sup>18</sup>Joseph Wright (1898) *The English Dialect Dictionary*.

<sup>19</sup>The Oxford English Dictionary cites usage of the term *Engla lande* from 890 AD.

#### 17.1.4 An early French connection, Chester, Exeter and Lincolnshire

Rouen, near the mouth of the River Seine, was the capital of Normandy and it had been a Plantagenet stronghold, from 1144 to 1203. In this context ‘*de la Plaunt*’, which occurs here, might mean ‘*from the plantation*’ or ‘*from the Plantagenet colony*’ (i.e. from ‘England’)<sup>20</sup>. Certainly it is known that ‘plantation’ meant ‘colonisation’ some three centuries later, in Shakespearean times (Table 17.4).

Various evidence for those with ‘Plant related’ names in the early 14th century suggests that they could have been involved with sea trade, or at least they are found near the coast.

In 1273, an embargo was placed on wool exports from England — this was instigated initially as a result of military hostilities with Flanders, though the potential for raising revenue was soon realised<sup>21</sup>. That year (1273) the king’s court issued export licences for wool to, amongst others, three Rouen merchants called John and Richard *de la Plaunt* and Geoffrey *Plaunt* (Table 17.1).

Chester was a flourishing port<sup>22</sup>. Sea trade with France, as well as the concentration of nobility in the Welsh Marches<sup>23</sup>, could have influenced the incidence of the Plant name around Cheshire. In 1301, a Richard Plant of Ewelowe<sup>24</sup>, on the Flint-Cheshire border, was granted a license to dig coal and deadwood at Ewelowe, near Chester<sup>25</sup>. Chester had prospered with the military activity of the Welsh Wars and, in 1302, Edward I’s daughter Elizabeth (Plantagenet) was married there.

The name Walter *Plente* appears at the port of Exeter in Devon by 1342. This was shortly after the battle of Sluys at which the French navy (i.e. the navy of king Philip, in opposition to the Plantagenets) was largely destroyed<sup>26</sup>. Edward I’s nephew Henry of Grosmont (1300?-61), 3rd earl of Lancaster, 11th earl of Lincoln, and 1st duke of Lancaster was active at this sea battle in Flanders (1340), and also in Gascony (1343)<sup>27</sup>.

The extant evidence indicates, for example, that Roger Plente of Exeter was licensed in 1364 to take ‘*20 packs of large cloths of divers colours*’ to Gascony, Spain and ‘other parts beyond seas’. There was an assault on Roger Plente of Exeter, in 1365, when he was described as a ‘*searcher of gold and silver exported without license in the county of Devon*’. That same year, Roger Plente is described as a ‘*merchant of Exeter*’ with a ship ‘*le Ceorge of Exmouth*’. In 1367 Roger Plente is described as the ‘*king’s minister in Devon*’ and, in 1368, as ‘*a collector of customs in the port of Exeter*’.

In 1344, there is mention of John Plant, son of Alan of Burgh Marsh in south Lincolnshire, again near the coast, just to the north of Norfolk. This early Lincolnshire Plant can plausibly be connected to the subsequent 17th century cluster of Lincolnshire Plants (Figure 17.1), in as much as the parish of Burgh le Marsh adjoins those of Orby, Addlethorpe, and Winthorpe where Plants are most concentrated in the early Lincolnshire records of the IGI.

<sup>20</sup>cf. Ernest Weekly (1916), *Surnames*, p 185, who alludes to an occurrence of a *John de la Plaunt* in the 13th century Patent Rolls and interprets it as ‘from the plantation’.

<sup>21</sup>Robert H.S. Robertson (1991) *Fuller’s Earth: A History of Calcium Montmorillonite*, p 97. May McKisack (1959) *The Fourteenth Century 1307-1399*, pps 350-9.

<sup>22</sup>The main trade from Chester, it seems, was with Ireland and Chester’s importance as a port apparently peaked around 1350 to 1450.

<sup>23</sup>The possibility has already been mentioned of a link with SE Plants, perhaps arising with for example the earl of Norfolk Roger Bigod’s command of Flint at the time of the 1277 Welsh War.

<sup>24</sup>In the June of 1282, Richard de Grey was sent to cover the left flank of Edward I’s advance through Flint from Chester at a castle which, though difficult to read, seems to have been *Ewloe* close to the estuary of the River Dee. John E. Morris (1901) *The Welsh Wars of Edward I*, pps 161-2.

<sup>25</sup>W.K.Plant, private communication.

<sup>26</sup>At the naval battle of Sluys, on 24 July 1340, the fleet of Edward III defeated that of Philip IV of France in the first major battle of the so-called ‘Hundred Years War’. Though 30 French ships escaped during the night, more than 200 were captured. Edward III directed the battle from his great ship, the ‘Cog Thomas’.

<sup>27</sup>Henry Grosmont’s daughters, Maud and Blanche, were born around that time at Lancaster, in 1339 and 1345 (International Genealogical Index, 1984). It was Blanche who was later to give birth, at Bolingbroke in Lincolnshire, to Henry Bolingbroke who was to become the first king of the royal House of Lancaster.

<p>THOMAS SON AND HEIR OF HUGH DE SWYNFORD</p> <p><b>432</b> <i>Writ</i> to the escheator in the county of Lincoln to take proof of the age of the said Thomas, who is said to have been born in Lincoln and baptised in the church of that town; and to warn Katherine de Swynford, in whose custody are the lands etc. of the inheritance of the said Thomas by commitment of Edward III, to be present at the proof. 27 February, 17 Richard II.</p>
<p>THOMAS SON OF HUGH DE SWYNFORD</p> <p><b>576</b> LINCOLN. <i>Proof of age</i> taken at Lincoln, Friday ..., 18 Richard II.</p> <p>John Plaint, aged 60 years or more, says that the said Thomas was born at Lincoln on the feast of St Matthias, 47 Edward III and baptised the next day in the church of St Margaret in the Close, on which day the said John was servant to Master Thomas de Sutton, clerk, godfather of the said Thomas de Swynford, and brought fire to light the candle.</p> <p>(followed by testimony from 11 others)</p>

Table 17.5: Some extracts from the Calendar of Inquisitions

### 17.1.5 A possible link between Lincoln and east Cheshire

When *John Plaint* testified at Lincoln in 1396 he was over sixty years old (Table 17.1). He was called to establish proof of age of Sir Thomas de Swynford, a half-brother to John Beaufort who was in turn a half-brother to John of Gaunt's son Henry Bolingbroke, who was soon to become the first Lancastrian king, Henry IV. Both Sir Thomas<sup>28</sup> and John Beaufort had jostled for the Lancastrians under John of Gaunt<sup>29</sup> at St Inglevert in 1390 and both were sons of Catherine Swynford, whose presence had also been called (Table 17.5). It has been estimated that John Beaufort was born to Catherine in ?1373 and this can be compared with John Plaint's testimony that Catherine's son Sir Thomas was born at about the same time.

Catherine Swynford (1350?-1403)<sup>30</sup> had been a *domicella* to Henry Grosmont's daughter Blanche, Duchess of Lancaster, the first wife of John of Gaunt. Catherine Swynford's first husband was a Lancastrian knight and, after the death of her second husband Sir Hugh de Swynford in 1372, she became governess to John of Gaunt's children, his mistress, and had children by him. Following the death of Gaunt's second wife in 1396, he married Catherine and, in 1397, their 4 children were legitimated with the proviso (inserted 1407) that they had no claim to the throne. The eldest of these legitimated children was John Beaufort (b ?1373) who was to become the grandfather of Henry VII's mother.

<sup>28</sup>Sir Thomas de Swynford (b 1373) was a half brother to the four Beaufort children of Catherine Swynford and John of Gaunt and he is listed amongst the 30 strong Lancastrian contingent of John of Gaunt at the famous 1390 jousts of St Inglevert for the honour of France. Anthony Goodman (1992) *John of Gaunt: The Exercise of Princely Power in Fourteenth Century Europe*, p 146.

<sup>29</sup>Following the three Edwards, the last king of the so-called royal 'House of Plantagenet', Richard II, became king in 1377 at the age of 10 with Edward II's fourth son, John of Gaunt, who had been close to the eldest son Edward The Black Prince (d 1376), leading the Parliament. The government of John of Gaunt became unpopular in the south east of England, at the time of the peasants revolt of 1381. However John had married Blanche (Plantagenet) of Lancaster in 1359 and he thereby came to father the succeeding Plantagenet cadet line of the so-called royal 'House of Lancaster' (1399-1461).

<sup>30</sup>Elizabeth Hallam (1996) *The Plantagenet Encyclopedia; an alphabetic guide to 400 years of English History*. May McKisack (1959) *The Fourteenth Century 1307-1399*, pps 393, 442, 493, 490, 530. Anthony Goodman (1992) *John of Gaunt*, especially pps 50, 179, 363.

A contemporary (1388) Inquisition Post Mortem<sup>31</sup> refers to the king's ongoing hunting rights in the royal forest of Macclesfield (east Cheshire). In 1372, John of Gaunt received the adjoining castle and manor of High Peak (NW Derbyshire), to which he was a regular visitor, exchanging this for lands in Lincolnshire and Hertfordshire and thereby amending his many lordships which extended, in particular, as a broad swathe from Norfolk to Lancashire<sup>32</sup>. At that time (1373), John Plaint was said in testimony to have been *servant to Master Thomas de Sutton, clerk, godfather to the said Thomas de Swynford*. This Thomas de Sutton may have been he who held lands (1357) in Disley (east Cheshire), just to the north of Macclesfield Forest<sup>33</sup>.

### 17.1.6 The hereditary name Plont in east Cheshire

Records are found for the Prestbury Plonts of east Cheshire, in the north west midlands of England, from around 1370<sup>34</sup>. These extant records relate to fines for stray animals and payments for pasture<sup>35</sup>. It may be relevant that, at the end of the 12th century, the monks of Combermere Abbey (founded 1133) had been granted land for erecting Wincle Grange, with pasture for 2,000 sheep and other animals, near where the Prestbury Plonts were subsequently found<sup>36</sup> (Chapter 16). It might also be relevant that the east Cheshire coalfield extended through this region — there is an early reference to mining in Macclesfield Forest in 1382<sup>37</sup>.

### 17.1.7 Demise of the royal Plantagenet house

This evidence for the east Cheshire Plonts appears during the final years of the royal House of Plantagenet (1154-1399) when, for example, the duke of Lancaster was under pressure to apply to law justly to his own following. The general circumstances around the borders of east Cheshire at that time can be outlined briefly as follows. The 2nd duke of Lancaster, John of Gaunt had inherited his title through his first wife, the aforementioned Blanche of Lancaster (1345-68). It was he who settled the revolt of 1393 in the king's palatine of Chester. In the 14th century, loyalty in Lancashire was to the Lancastrian Plantagenets, or perhaps to the Bottiler family of Warrington for example, though such families were barely distinguishable from the more prosperous gentry. This can be contrasted with Norfolk where there had been a 1275 occurrence of the name *Plauntes* — a great choice of allegiance had developed there which no doubt diminished the authority of any particular badge or livery mark, such as Gaunt's SS livery collar. In Staffordshire and Derbyshire, which adjoin east Cheshire's borders, it seems that the prevailing situation can be surmised to be intermediate, between the potent 'bastard feudalism' of Lancashire and a faltering authority of the crown (Richard II) in the south east<sup>38</sup>. Such conditions foreshadowed the emergence of the royal 'House of Lancaster' in the form of John of Gaunt's son Henry IV<sup>39</sup>.

<sup>31</sup>J.P.Earwaker (1877) *ibid*, Vol. I, p47.

<sup>32</sup>Simon Walker (1990) *The Lancastrian Affinity 1361-1399*, pps 33, 209, 217, 229, 400.

<sup>33</sup>Thomas de Sutton was a son of John de Sutton of Sutton and Disley (d 1362) who was a Forester of Macclesfield Forest in 1358. One of the descendants of this family founded Brasenose College, Oxford. J.P.Earwaker (1877) *ibid*, Vol.II, p 443.

<sup>34</sup>By around 1380, the name *Plont* was hereditary and well established in the pennine foothills of East Cheshire, which included the royal hunting forest of Macclesfield and the vicinity of Wincle near where the parish of Prestbury (East Cheshire) joins that of Leek (North Staffordshire). W.K.Plant, private communication.

<sup>35</sup>W.K.Plant, private communication.

<sup>36</sup>Disputes with other houses and gross financial mismanagement led to this Abbey's bankruptcy in the 1270s and again in 1410.

<sup>37</sup>J.T.Leach (1996) *Coal Mining around Quarnford*, Staffordshire Studies, Vol 8, pps 66-95.

<sup>38</sup>This is implicit in the the peasants revolt in the south east, for example.

<sup>39</sup>Simon Walker (1990) *The Lancastrian Affinity 1361-1399*, pps 4, 142, 141-234.

### 17.1.8 Some possibly related spellings

It seems likely that the spelling *Plont*, which appears in east Cheshire in those terminal years of the royal Plantagenet House, relates to the spelling *Pla(u)nt(e)(s)*, which was found earlier in the south east. Such spellings can be compared with a modern French (and southern English) pronunciation of *Plant*. A similar spelling occurs in a record for a William *Plonte* who is described as a chaplain in 1386 in connection with land at Olveston (on the coast of the Bristol Channel) of the prior and convent of Bath (Table 17.1). The earlier spelling *Plent(e)*, in the south west, as well as the spelling *Plaint* at Lincoln, may relate to local pronunciations and/or associated transcriptions of the same name. Early instances of the name *Plente* in southern England (Table 17.1) might be thought<sup>40</sup> simply, like *Plont*, to represent an alternative spelling of *Plant*. Indeed, a similar spelling *Plent* occurs in Staffordshire in 1429<sup>41</sup>.

### 17.1.9 Some Plants of the Cheshire-Staffordshire borders

A 1445 list of Knights, Gentlemen, and Freeholders in Cheshire's Macclesfield Hundred includes, with 96 others, a *John Plant jnr*. At the nearby north Staffordshire battle of Bloor Heath in 1459<sup>42</sup>, the 'Lancastrian' Commander Lord Audley (1400-59) was killed and his second in command, John Sutton lord of Dudley and of Malpass in south Cheshire (d 1482), was wounded<sup>43</sup>. This battle was amongst the first in the so-called 'War of the Roses', which led on from the 'House of Lancaster' to the 'House of York'.

The Plantagenet cadet House of York (1461-85) ended with the killing of Richard III at Bosworth Field in Leicestershire. Rudyerd family tradition maintains that it was Radulphus, lord of Rudyerd (north Staffordshire), who slew this last cadet king of the Plantagenets<sup>44</sup>. The succeeding first king, Henry VII, of the royal House of Tudor commemorated this act by allowing 'Ralph Rudyard' to add a rose to his shield<sup>45</sup>. Twenty years into the reign of Catherine Swynford's great great grandson, Henry VII, this same Ralph Rudyard was granted a tenement *within Rydrard called Bottles* by *Lawrence Plant*, whose family name was said to have been a corruption of Plantagenet<sup>46</sup>.

The aforementioned 1459 north Staffordshire battle of Bloor Heath was at Mucklestone. When IGI parish records begin, there is a distinct knop of Plants around Mucklestone, which is some 25 miles to the south west of Wincle and the surrounding main Prestbury-Leek cluster of 17th century Plants.

---

<sup>40</sup>It might also be relevant to note that *pleinte* is an old French spelling of *plainte*, meaning complaint. Alternatively, it could be noted that there was a place name *Pleuent* or *Pelynt* in Cornwall. Such considerations might then be taken to relate to the existence of the modern Cornish surname *Plint*.

<sup>41</sup>The 1614 visitation of Staffordshire has left a record of the arms and pedigree of the family Bentley of The Ashes and this includes the 1429 marriage of Henry Bentley to *Jone Plent*. Wm. Salt Archaeological Society (1884) *Collections for a History of Staffordshire*, Vol.III, p 34.

<sup>42</sup>In 1459, Queen Margaret of Anjou gathered 'red rose' levies, it seems, mostly from Cheshire who were defeated by a smaller but well trained force of Yorkists at the battle of Blore Heath near the border of north Staffordshire with Shropshire. There is no known early evidence of a *Plantefolie* here — though Folly Plantation adjoins this battle site, the so-named coppice, if not the name, appears to date from later times. I am grateful to Martin Phillips, Assistant Director of Keele Information Services, for drawing my attention an article by Ian Rowney (1980), *Medieval Chroniclers and the battle of Blore Heath*, North Staffordshire Journal of Field Studies, Vol 20, pps 9-17.

<sup>43</sup>Col. Francis R. Twemlow (Wolverhampton 1912), *The Battle of Blore Heath*.

<sup>44</sup>John Sleigh (1862) *A History of the Ancient Parish of Leek, in Staffordshire*, p 159.

<sup>45</sup>This addition is described as '*on a canton a rose or, in a field gules*'.

<sup>46</sup>John Sleigh (1862) *ibid*, p 33.

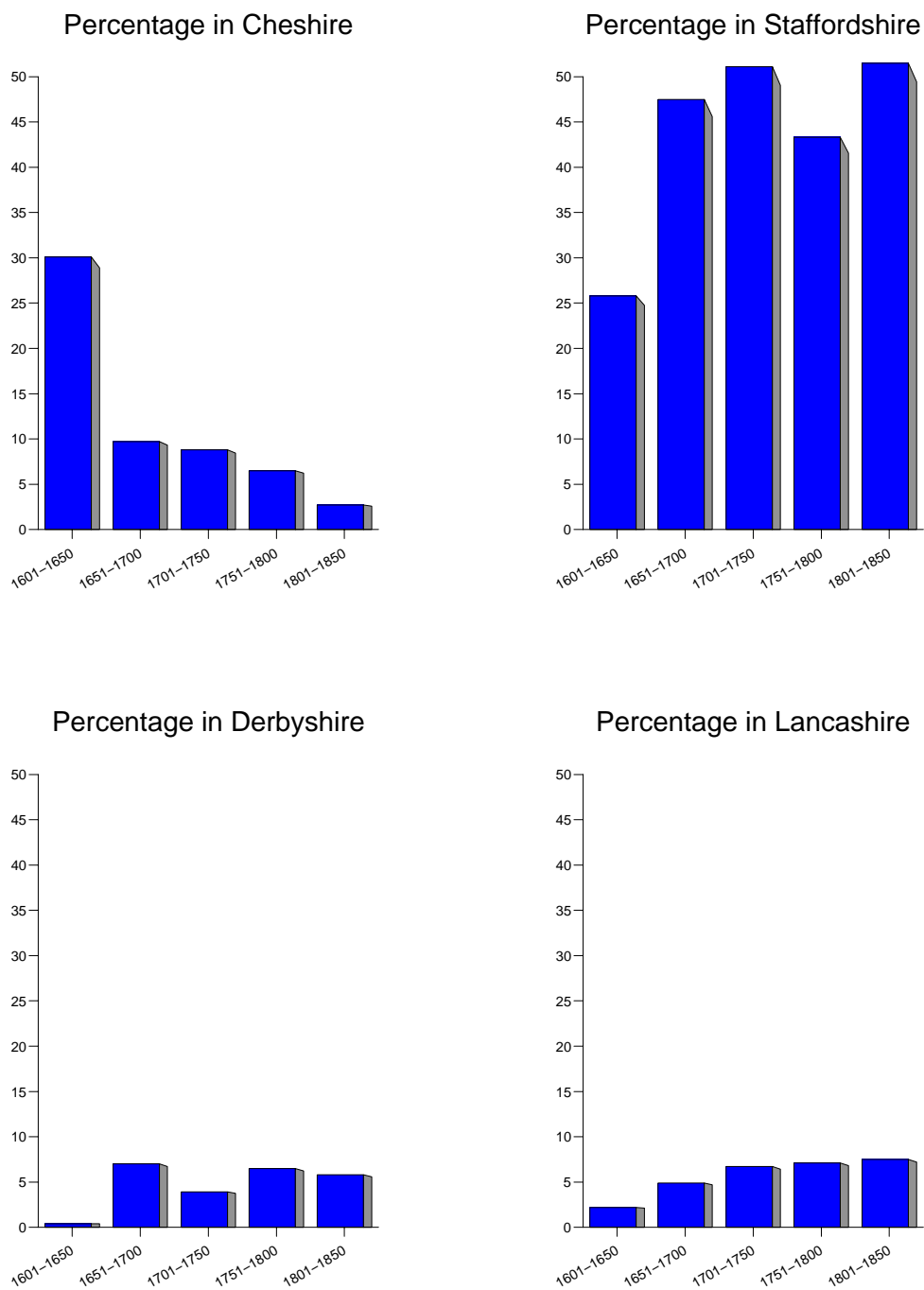


Figure 17.2: Plant records in the 1984 IGI (*cf.* Figure 17.1). Changing fractions in Cheshire, Staffordshire, Derbyshire, and Lancashire.

## 17.2 Origins through Derbyshire for the Sheffield Plants

**T**he aforementioned Abbey Grange at Wincle is at the southern limit of the pennine slopes of east Cheshire. This is in Prestbury parish of the Macclesfield Hundred of Cheshire, near the River Dane which forms Prestbury's boundary with Leek parish to the south. As indicated in Chapter 15, this general region, comprising the Leek-Prestbury borderlands and the Dark Peak of NW Derbyshire, forms an area of high ground (?Brand) whose slopes in Prestbury may have been those that are referred to, in an 18th century Hallamshire Cutlers Apprenticeship record, as '*Branside, Prestbury*'. It is this piece of evidence in particular that leads to the suggestion that the ancestry of the first Sheffield Plants may have involved Plants from this region near Wincle on the Cheshire-Staffordshire border.

### 17.2.1 Possible origins at Gawsworth and Great Longstone

There seems little doubt that Sheffield Plants descended from  $W^m(0)$  of Duckmanton (NE Derbyshire) about 10 miles south of Sheffield. The aforementioned 18th century Cutlers Apprenticeship record (Chapter 14) appears to connect the brickmaker  $W^m(0)$  of Duckmanton with a carpenter William Plant of '*Branside, Prestbury*' (east Cheshire) around 40 miles to the west of Duckmanton — indeed, these two William Plants may well have been one and the same person<sup>47</sup>. There is, for example, a possible baptism for this supposable carpenter-brickmaker William Plant at Gawsworth, which is surrounded by the much larger parish of Prestbury. This point holds significance in as much as there are further possibilities whereby  $W^m(0)$ 's father could have been called William. As well as the possible baptism for  $W^m(0)$  to a father William at Gawsworth (east Cheshire), two out of three alternative possibilities for  $W^m(0)$ 's baptism were at nearby Leek (north Staffordshire) and also to a father called William. It accordingly seems appropriate to proceed to noting that there are difficulties finding origins, other than at Great Longstone (north Derbyshire), for a father called William to the brickmaker  $W^m(0)$  of Duckmanton. It thereby seems possible that  $W^m(0)$ 's father may have been from Great Longstone and that he may have visited the vicinity of Wincle (near Gawsworth and Leek) around the time of  $W^m(0)$ 's birth.

This scheme is at least compatible with available evidence for the general behaviours of both Sheffield apprentices and the Cheshire Plants around the times of the late 17th century.

Most Sheffield apprentices were from nearby families. Nearly three quarters of the boys who were apprenticed to cutlers in and around Sheffield between 1650 and 1724 came from within a 15 mile radius of their new homes<sup>48</sup>. Only 4% came from as far as 40 miles, which is about the distance of the likely locality of '*Branside, Prestbury*'. It was accordingly noted, in Chapter 15, that the origins of the first known Plant who arrived in Sheffield by 1737 may have involved not only Plants from near '*Branside, Prestbury*' but also ones who are known to have been at the intermediate location of Great Longstone, near Ashford-on-the-Water and Bakewell, in north Derbyshire (Figure 17.3).

Around that time (Figure 17.2), there may have been a migration of Plants from Cheshire into north Derbyshire<sup>49</sup>. The evidence of Figure 17.2<sup>50</sup> suggests a local migra-

<sup>47</sup>The '*Branside*' mentioned here apparently refers to the pennine slopes of East Cheshire, perhaps around Wincle — this is near a modern location called Brand Side which is just to the south of Buxton in NE Derbyshire. Also near Wincle, in East Cheshire, lies Gawsworth Hall.

<sup>48</sup>David Hey (1987), *ibid*, p 79.

<sup>49</sup>It should be added however that the *first Plants* in north Derbyshire did not arrive with a mass migration at that time, since it is known that there was already at least one Plant at Bakewell, near Great Longstone, a century earlier in 1538 (Chapter 11).

<sup>50</sup>The Plant records in the 1984 IGI, as summarised in Figure 17.1, may exclude significant communities of Plants and, to this extent, the results indicated in Figure 17.2 could be an inaccurate representation of the full picture of Plant

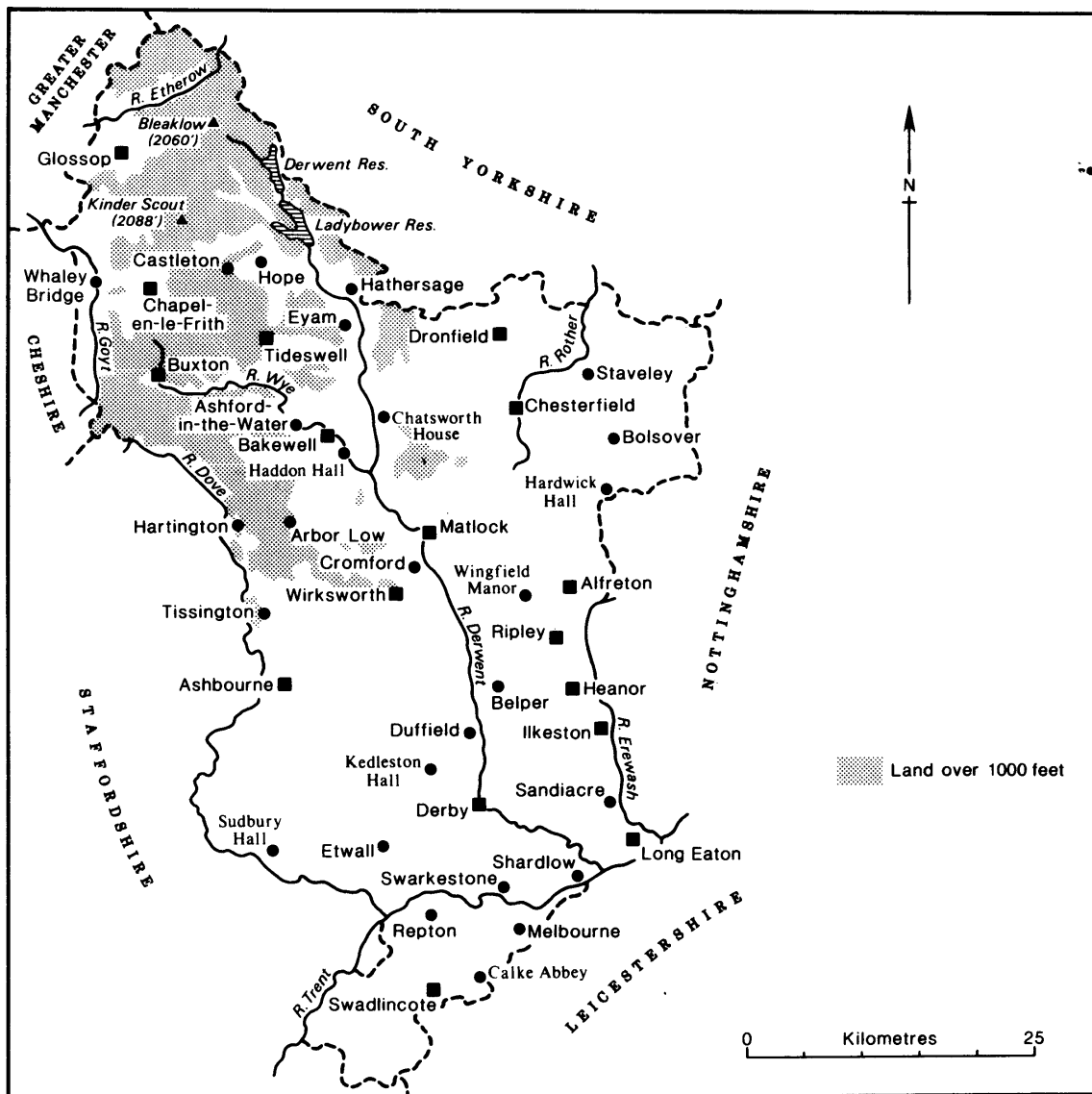
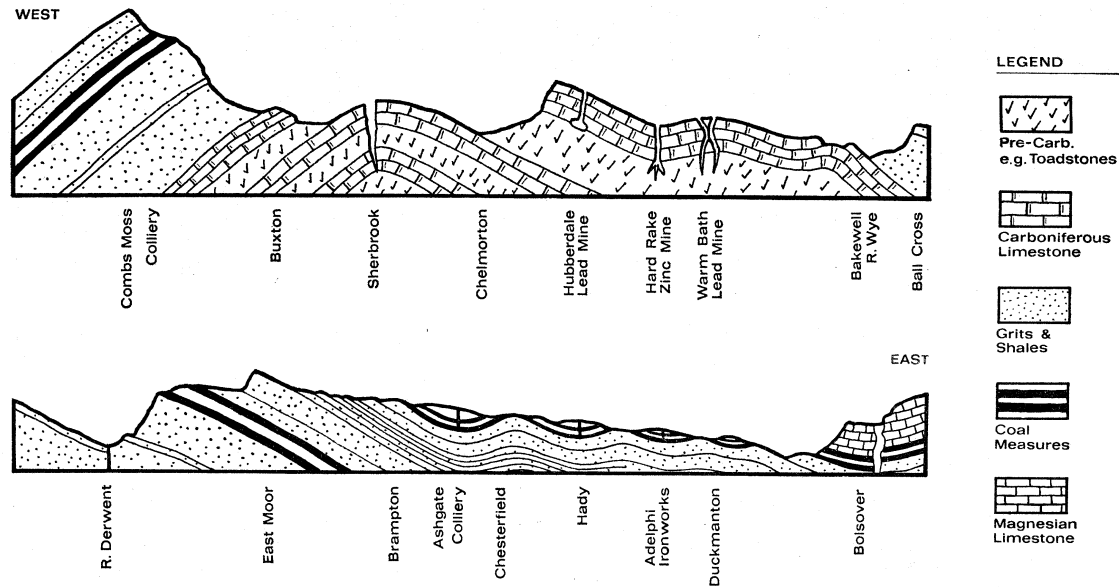


Figure 17.3: A modern map of Derbyshire, showing in particular the high ground of the Peak District in NW Derbyshire — this formed a natural barrier between the main body of 17th and 18th century Plants (which were in the Cheshire-Staffordshire borderlands, at the left side of the map) and a smaller cluster of Plants at Great Longstone (which is not shown but which lies to the east near the shown locations of Ashford-in-the-Water and Bakewell). Further to the east is Chesterfield (NE Derbyshire), which then lies about 10 miles south of Sheffield (not shown, in South Yorkshire). The new county of Greater Manchester (top left) came into being in 1974 and, similarly, South Yorkshire was formerly part of Yorkshire. (10 km = 6.2 miles) (after Joy Childs (1987) *A History of Derbyshire*).



A W-E SECTION ACROSS DERBYSHIRE, AFTER WHITE WATSON, 1811.

Figure 17.4: Geological profile of North Derbyshire; showing (top) the Dark Peak (left) followed by the limestone outcrops (White Peak) between Buxton and Bakewell; and (bottom) the basetting of coal and ironstone to the east between Chesterfield and Duckmanton

tion across the Cheshire border into Staffordshire, around the times of the 17th century Civil War, and there is similar evidence for a smaller migration into Derbyshire — Figure 17.2 shows that there was a large drop from around 30% to 10% in the fraction of *known* Plant records in Cheshire, in the second half of the 17th century, and this is largely matched by a large growth in the fraction in Staffordshire from around 25% to 50% and, to a lesser extent from 2% to 5%, in Derbyshire.

To summarise, tracing Plant family history backwards from the times of the Plants' arrival in 18th century Sheffield seems to track out a time-reversed journey across north Derbyshire (Figure 17.3) for the travels of the likely ancestors of the first Sheffield area Plants. Plants are known to have been based some 15 miles to Sheffield's south west, near the lead mines around Ashford-in-the-Water (north Derbyshire), in the 17th and 16th centuries as well as in the main Plant cluster of those times, some 20 miles further to the west near the Cheshire-Staffordshire border (Chapters 14 and 15). Beyond this, it is largely just as an illustrative example that one might suppose that  $W^m(0)$ 's father was the aforementioned father, William of Gawsworth in east Cheshire. If one were to accept this possibility, one could then fabricate a story whereby  $W^m(0)$ 's father *could be imagined to have* practised similar trades to those of his brickmaker-carpenter son. He could thereby be supposed to have been involved in the reconstruction work that is known to have been taking place at Gawsworth at that time. It is known that, in 1701, the small leaded lights of Gawsworth Hall were replaced by wooden sash windows and the Great Hall, which extended southwards from this half timbered building, was reduced to a third of its former size by an external brick wall. This imagined picture could furthermore include a supposed involvement, still earlier, of  $W^m(0)$ 's ancestors with 'bricks' and 'carpentry' in the lead mines some 20 miles to the east of Gawsworth, near the mid-north Derbyshire base of the Great Longstone Plants. Such a picture is, at least, consistent with a general scheme for the possible behaviours of Plants in this area.

migrations.

### 17.2.2 Great Longstone Plants and ‘planting’ engines

As indicated above, there may have been links across the Peak District of NW Derbyshire between Plants in the main 17th century Plant homeland, which included Gawsworth (East Cheshire) and Leek (North Staffordshire), and the 17th century Plants at Great Longstone. Beyond here, the connection may have extended through NE Derbyshire to Duckmanton, which is then just 10 miles south of Sheffield (Figure 17.3). This hence implies that there could have been Plant links, around 1700, across the north Derbyshire landscape which is profiled in Figure 17.4.

Plants from near Wincle, around the Prestbury-Leek border, would have needed to pass near by Buxton and Chelmorton to reach Great Longstone and Bakewell (top section of Figure 17.4). Beyond here, they would have needed to pass Chesterfield to reach Duckmanton (bottom section of Figure 17.4). Such a journey, if undertaken, would have taken them by the lead mines around Great Longstone and thence, through the market town of Chesterfield, to the coal, iron, clay, and water power around Duckmanton.

By the early 17th century, when parish records begin for the Great Longstone Plants, there is documentary evidence for the local lead mines of ‘*Engines, Pumps, Forces, there set and planted*’<sup>51</sup>. As Pumps were mostly made of wood the ‘Engineer’ was often described as a ‘carpenter’ and, in 1635 for example, an engineer was called to ‘*plant an engine to the water*’ in order to drain a flooded mine. In the context of the ‘Great Longstone ancestral contention’, it might be *imagined* that a ‘carpenter’ Plant for example could have traveled, around 1700, between Great Longstone and the Gawsworth Hall building work some 20 miles to the west.

The Hassop Eyre family were prime brokers of the local lead trade which involved the lead mines of the Peak and Great Longstone, the bellows-driven (*i.e.* ‘water blast’) lead smelting mills around Barlow, and the trade beyond to the lead markets of Chesterfield near Duckmanton. These trade links may have laid a basis for the contended connection around 1700 between the Great Longstone Plants and the arrival of Plants at Duckmanton and then Sheffield (Figure 17.3).

### 17.2.3 The local Eyre gentry

In the ‘Great Longstone ancestral contention’ (Figure 17.5) it is conjectured that the Great Longstone Plants were the antecedents of the Duckmanton Plants. Moreover in this scheme, which includes Plant-Eyre marriages, it seems feasible that traditional Eyre family connections in north Derbyshire played a part in the arrival of Plants in Sheffield by 1737. Published genealogies for the Eyres give rise to the following further detail for this prominent north Derbyshire family and their lead fortunes.

The Hassop<sup>52</sup>, Highlow<sup>53</sup>, and Edale branches of the Eyre family seem ‘relevant’ to the spread of Plants across North Derbyshire since:-

<sup>51</sup>Nellie Kirkham (1968), *Derbyshire Lead Mining through the Centuries*, p 88.

<sup>52</sup>It was in particular the Eyres of Hassop in Great Longstone parish who became pre-eminent by the 17th century as Roman Catholics and Royalists, subsequently facing financial ruin by sequestration as recusants.

<sup>53</sup>Whilst the Hassops Eyres made the ruinous mistake of declaring themselves as Royalists at the time of the Civil War, the Highlow Eyres became almost as notorious as Parliamentarians. S.C.Newton (1966), *The Gentry of Derbyshire in the 17th Century*, Derbyshire Archaeological Journal, Vol 86, pps 1-30.

- the *Hassop* Eyres were based in the parish of Great Longstone where the contemporary 17th century Great Longstone Plant family was to be found;
- the nearby *Highlow* Eyres married into the Jessop family of Broomhall (at the SW edge of Sheffield) in the 17th century and subsequently inherited it, prior to the arrival of Plants near there; and
- two Plant brothers from Great Longstone married Eyre brides who apparently descended from the *Edale* branch of the Eyre family (Chapter 15).

The Great Longstone Plants can thus be associated, through 18th century marriages, with the Edale Eyres. These Plants are also loosely connected, through proximity, to 17th century relatives of the Edale Eyres, namely the Hassop and Highlow Eyres who neighboured Great Longstone. In particular, the Highlow Eyres had links to Broom Hall near Sheffield, near where the 18th century Duckmanton Plants first arrived in Sheffield. It is known that strong connections between these three branches of the Eyre family continued at least into the 17th century<sup>54</sup>.

As already indicated, the lead trading activities of the Eyres may have been relevant to the local Plants. More generally, these activities of the *Hassop* Eyres in particular were of significance to the local history of the region. The evidence for the early involvement of the Great Longstone (Hassop) Eyres in using ‘*water blast*’ for lead smelting can be outlined briefly as follows.

In 1568, William Humphrey, Master of the Queen’s Mint acquired various patents with the main purpose of protecting the processes of his lead smelting mill at Beauchief, between Great Longstone and Sheffield. He appears to have claimed rights over a fine wire sieve for washing the lead ore and an improved type of lead smelting furnace<sup>55</sup>. In 1581, Eyre, Columbelle, Tracy, and Heathcote were named as the north Derbyshire gentlemen who were infringing his rights to the furnace. In 1586, Rowland Eyre of Hassop obtained from Peter Barley ‘*one smelting hows or furnes with two wheels & two hearthes buylded, erected & made for smyting of lead by water blast*’ with Barley undertaking to ‘*well & sufficiently furnysh the said smelting hows or furnes with convenyent water wheles, harthes, ovens & bellows ... for or about the smelting or making of lead by water blast*’.

#### 17.2.4 Sheffield descendants of Wm(0) of Duckmanton

It has been outlined already in earlier Chapters that the evidence seems to show quite clearly that some of the sons of the brickmaker (?and carpenter)  $W^m(0)$  of Duckmanton arrived in Sheffield by around 1760. One of these sons *Ben(bellows)* acquired for example Broomhall land, nearby property in Coalpit Lane (?the site of Late Plant yard), and at the Little Sheffield site of Plant’s Yard where adjoining land was owned by his brother, a bricklayer John Plant<sup>56</sup>. It seems that another brother, James, had been apprenticed in Coalpit Lane (cf. Figure 17.7)<sup>57</sup>. A son  $W^m(1)$  of the youngest brother, Thomas of Clowne,

<sup>54</sup>The common ancestor of the Edale and Highlow Eyres was Christopher Eyre of Highlow. His grandson Thomas Eyre of Edale left a widow who remarried Rowland Eyre of Hassop (d 1625-6). The common ancestor of the Eyres of Highlow, Edale, Rampton, Newbold, and Hassop was Robert Eyre I of Padly, who died in 1459/60. Rosamund Meredith (1964), *The Eyres of Hassop 1470-1640*, Derbyshire Archaeological Journal, LXXXIV, pps 1-51 and continued as (1965), LXXXV, pps 44-91.

<sup>55</sup>In smelting furnaces, the blast was supplied artificially by bellows worked by men’s feet or by water power and Humphrey maintained that his furnaces were constructed and worked on an improved method.

<sup>56</sup>Before then, it is only within the context of uncertain 17th century Plant family relationships that we may say that Duckmanton Plants may have come to Sheffield to take up Broom Hall land (Chapter 11) in the wake of connections between the Highlow Eyres and their neighbours the Great Longstone Plants, who married into Eyres who were apparently from the Edale branch of that family.

<sup>57</sup>By 1768, it appears that it may have been  $W^m(0)$ ’s son James who was apprenticed in Coalpit Lane, though the apprenticeship record refers to his father as a carpenter William Plant of ‘*Branside, Prestbury*’. It appears that there

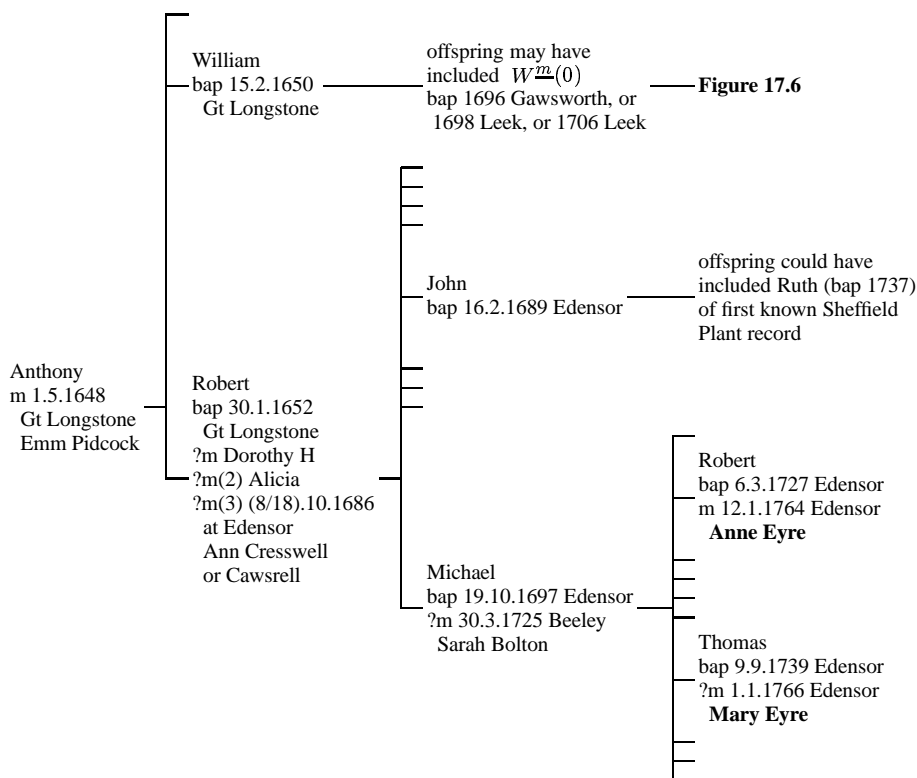


Figure 17.5: A simple Great Longstone contention for the ancestry of Wm(0) who became the stirp of the Duckmanton Plants

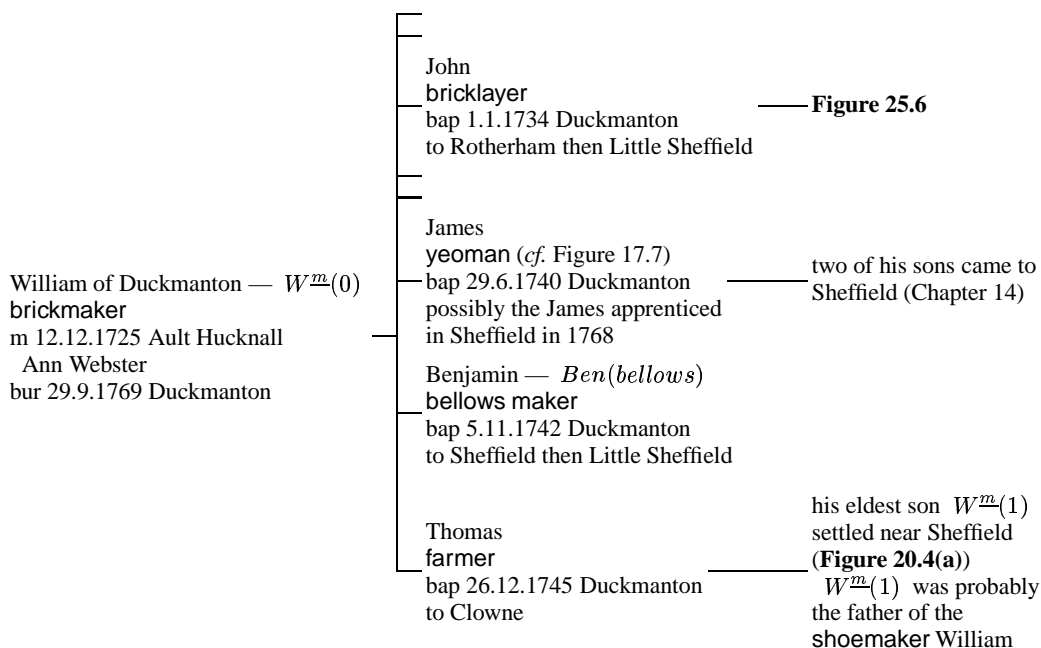


Figure 17.6: Descent of Sheffield Plants from Wm(0) of Duckmanton

<u>Continued and Brought forward</u>		L	s	d
James Plant. . . . .	as by. Bill		13	
George Allen. . . . .	Peck Shovelers d. <sup>o</sup>		14	8
Thomas Burton. . . . .	Blacksmiths d.	5	2	6
William Forest. . . . .	Plumber: d. <sup>o</sup>		5	
M <sup>r</sup> . Manley. . . . .	Attorney d. <sup>o</sup>	49	14	
Mess <sup>rs</sup> . Boulton & Watt. . . . .	d. <sup>o</sup>	2	17	8
As Composition for up Engine having made. . . . .	1348750 Strokes at 10/- for every 10,000	67	8	9
Sweeds Iron. . . . .	3, 7, 24. . . . .	3	14	6
Candles 51 Doz. @ 6/9 & 5 Doz. @ 6/6. . . . .		3	6	3
Oil 7 Gallons at 3/1 & 1.3.4. 7 Gall. @ 2 Gall. @ 4/1. 8/1. . . . .		1	11	4
Linseed Oil 2 Gallons @ 4/1. 8. 7 Gall. @ 10/11. . . . .			18	11
Cloth 7/1. Whiting to Soft Soap 7/4. . . . .			14	8
Nails 400 @ 4 500 @ 6 and 900 @ 8. . . . .			9	10
Hemp 2 1/2 Files 3/6 Brush 7 Gimblets 3. . . . .			6	8
Barth's Duck 2/8 Besoms 3 paper 4. . . . .			3	3
Pondered Tallow 1. 2. . . . .	46/6	3	9	9
Paid for a Bell. . . . .			1	10
Widow Wood Meal 26 wks 2 Pks of Wack @ 8. . . . .		1	14	8
Abram Berks for Lime 3 Load. . . . .			2	3
M <sup>r</sup> . Hodykinson for 605 Square yards of Land for Millock Room. . . . .		8	6	3
Assistance at up Mine and keeping Accls 13 wks @ 10/1. . . . .			6	10
Carried forward		76	17	6

Figure 17.7: A page from the 1782 accounts of the Gregory Mine partners, including a payment of 13/- in settlement of James Plant's bill and a licence payment to Boulton & Watt, in respect of their patent, of 10/- per 10,000 strokes of the steam engine.

arrived in the Ecclesall chapelry of Sheffield parish before the end of the 18th century<sup>58</sup>.

There is particular information, as already outlined in earlier Chapters, for Benjamin Plant from Duckmanton who was one of these first known Plants to arrive in Sheffield. This Benjamin was one of only two **bellows makers** in the contemporary Sheffield area Trades Directories. The background outlined above makes it seem likely that he may have learned his key technological trade of bellows making in the prevailing local culture of NE Derbyshire, where 'water blast' had long been used for the smelting of lead and the working of iron — even by 1507, there is a record that John Selyok leased at Norton, between Chesterfield and Sheffield, the 'Syte of a Smethe place to Bylde an Ironsmethe, both blome harthe and strynge harthe' with 'the Course of the Water called Mossebeck to turne the said Smethes'<sup>59</sup>. *Ben(bellows)* from Duckmanton with his Little Sheffield *Plant's Yard* neighbour and brother, John Plant, thereafter apparently became involved with some key 18th century 'water blast' and 'steam powered' conversions of Sheffield's grinding water mills, turning them to Sheffield's historic future as forges for iron and steel.

It accordingly seems that there is some historical basis for saying that these *Plant's Yard* Plants may have been continuing, in 18th century Sheffield, a tradition that had featured the Eyre neighbours of the 16th and 17th century Great Longstone Plants.

## 17.3 A résumé of Origins and the Plant's Yard Plants



The Plant name can be compared, in extant 13th century records, with some similar names. Such evidence (section 17.1) seems broadly compatible with two theorems, which were developed in Chapter 16 for the name's original meaning(s):-

**theorem (1):** 'Plant related' names, such as Plantebene and Planterose, suggest a general meaning of 'royalist auxiliary' rather than just a 'gardener' — this contention has been reinforced in this Chapter with the evidence of section 17.1 for the further 'Plant related' names Plan', Plantefolie, Plantyn, Pla(u)nt(es), Plauntegenet, Planteng', Plente, and Plont(e); and,

**theorem (2):** other linguistic, literary, and surname evidence suggests a meaning 'illegitimate Plantagenet child' for the NW Plants in particular — this was explained in some detail in Chapter 16 and it has been reinforced in this Chapter by citing an early occurrence of the name Planterose at Warr' Wigorn' (sic) in 1230 — this 'north west' name Planterose can be compared with the Plant heraldry in as much as the Plant blazon can be interpreted as that of an 'illegitimate cadet line, which subsequently bore the red rose badge'.

### 17.3.1 A further theorem for a developing meaning of plant

In Plantagenet times, men of all classes from the king downwards were involved in the mining of tin, lead, iron, and coal<sup>60</sup>. It seems that coal was gathered mostly from surface workings and used mostly for smith's work, though by the middle of the 14th century

---

were few Plants near Sheffield at that time and it hence seems *probable* that it was the same James who appears in the 1782 accounts of the Gregory Mine partners (Figure 17.7), who had a mine between Duckmanton and Matlock.

<sup>58</sup>It was probably sons of this same James, the yeoman James Plant of Duckmanton (Figure 17.6), who inherited the Little Sheffield site of Plant's Yard in the early 19th century from their uncle *Ben(bellows)'s* (Chapter 14). Another nephew *W<sup>m</sup>(1)* of *Ben(bellows)* was a son of the farmer Thomas Plant of Clowne and *W<sup>m</sup>(1)* appears to have been the father of the Sheffield shoemaker William, as will be outlined later.

<sup>59</sup>Frank Noxon (1969), *The Industrial Archaeology of Derbyshire*, p 49.

<sup>60</sup>May McKisack (1959) *The Fourteenth Century 1307-99*, pps 371-2.

vertical pits with tunnels for drainage began to be sunk and, with the increase in chimneys towards the end of the 14th century, coal was beginning to be burned also in private houses.

There is a 1301 record for a Richard Plant of Ewelowe who was granted rights to coal amongst the surface outcrops along the borderlands between Cheshire and Flint, where lead and silver deposits had held an early importance<sup>61</sup>. By the late 14th century, there is evidence of coal working in the pennine foothills of east Cheshire where contemporary *Plont* records occur.

Such evidence can be embodied in a further theorem:-

**theorem (3):** the Plant family had some early associations with trade and industry, perhaps especially with wool, coal, and lead — these evidently preceded any recognised industrial connotation to the word *plant*.

### 17.3.2 A possible early association with lead and silver

In the Domesday survey, the only lead mentioned is in the Peak District of north Derbyshire. The lead ore here has a low silver content. Queen Eleanor's men of Ashford<sup>62</sup>, as well as the King's men<sup>63</sup> of the adjoining north Derbyshire Liberty of Taddington, are mentioned in a lead mining dispute of 1280/1<sup>64</sup>. The north west Derbyshire lead mines belonged directly to the crown and this lead mining region was called the *King's Field*.

In the early 14th century, lead ore was valued particularly for the silver it contained. Lead mining was carried out especially in the neighbourhood of Bere Alston in Devon though the boom period in Devon was over by about 1340. It is known, for example, that the name *Plente* occurs in Sussex, Devon and Cornwall, around 1340-90 (Table 17.1). In 1364, a Roger Plente was a '*searcher for ... silver exported without license ... in Devon*' and, in 1367, (?the same) Roger Plente is described as '*the king's minister in Devon*'.

It is known that the name *Plont* was well established in the pennine foothills of east Cheshire, adjoining the royal lead mines of north Derbyshire, by 1370<sup>65</sup>. In 1386, a chaplain William *Plonte* is connected to land of the prior and convent of Bath<sup>66</sup> (Table 17.1) — there were active lead mines in this region, in the royal forest of Mendip (north Somerset). These lead mines were leased to the bishop of Bath and Wells who retained part of the profit.

By the end of the times of the royal 'House of Plantagenet'<sup>67</sup>, there is a 1396 reference to the word *plont*:-

Comme le suppliant eust achet e certaine monnoye de *plont* de huit et quatre deniers parisis pour le pris et somme de huit blans; et huit jours apre s ou

<sup>61</sup>The rich lead and silver deposits of Flintshire had earlier been won from the Deceangli and brought under the control of the nearby Roman settlement of Deva (*i.e.* Chester) in about 70 AD. 'Pigs' of lead were cast in Flintshire and brought down the Dee and up the Mersey to be reworked in the workshops of Wilderspool (just south of Warrington in NW Cheshire), which was a major Roman centre of import and export with furnaces for the working of lead and iron. This historic settlement was in decline, however, by the end of the 3rd century AD. Alan Crosby (1996), *A History of Cheshire*, pps 21, 24-5.

<sup>62</sup>The Manor of Ashford was the subject of an unsuccessful petition to Edward I in 1292 when the widow of the lord of Powys (north Wales) claimed entitlement to the whole of it, though the Magna Carta (1215) entitled her, through her late husband's estate, to a third. Sir Maurice Powicke (1962) *The Thirteenth Century 1216-1307*, pps 326 and 510.

<sup>63</sup>When Edward I returned from a long absence in Gascony (1288-9) to England at the height of his fame, he came to Chesterfield (NE Derbyshire) in 1290, continuing through Tideswell and Chapel-en-le-Frith (north Derbyshire) to Macclesfield (east Cheshire) before returning via Tideswell and Ashford.

<sup>64</sup>Nellie Kirkham (1968) *Derbyshire Lead Mining through the Centuries*, pps 100-1.

<sup>65</sup>W.K.Plant, private communication

<sup>66</sup>There is specific mention of rent at Olveston.

<sup>67</sup>When lead was needed for the repair of the Great Hall of Westminster around 1390, the king's contractors obtained it from Derby, Nottingham, and Yorkshire.

environ eust icelle monnoye de *plont* vendue à un nommé Jehan Michaut le pris et somme de cinq sols tournois, et d'icelle monnoye eust esté trouvé quatre ou cinq jours après icellui Jehan Michau saisi en la ville de Lillebouchart, et pour ce eust esté emprisonné au dit lieu.

whereby the old French word *plont* is taken to mean lead (Table 17.2). However the Oxford English Dictionary (1989) recognises *plont(e)* only as a variant spelling of *plant*, with:-

- *plont* being a known 15th century variant of the verb *to plant*, and
- *plonte* being a known 14th and 15th century variant of the noun (sb1) *plant*.

### 17.3.3 Plants and a developing meaning of plant

It seems likely that there was a Plantagenet influence on the Plant name before there was any particular connection between the Plants and lead. However, it may have been such industrial activities as the smelting of lead that led on to an industrial meaning to *plant*.

It can be noted, for example, that:-

- the royal Plantagenets held an interest, for example, in the mining of lead ore (ca. 1280),
- there are occurrences of the names Plente and Plont(e) near 14th century lead mining regions, together with evidence for royal connections,
- an instance of the word *plont* in Old French has been translated to mean 'lead' (1396),
- the Lancastrian livery colours were blue and silver (with silver being obtained from lead),
- an early industrial application of water power was for ore crushing and the smelting of lead by bellows blast,
- the 17th century Great Longstone Plants were located at the centre of the activities of *planting* Engines, Pumps, and Forces in local lead mines, and
- their apparent descendants, the 18th century *Plant's Yard* Plants were suppliers of industrial *plant* equipment.

It hence seems that an historic basis for industrial '*plant*' activities can be found, for example, in origins for the 18th century *Plant's Yard* Plants. It also seems that some early bearers of the Plant name neighboured activities that related to lead (*plont*). Thus, Plant associations with industrial activities, such as in 1301 as well as in the 18th century, may have played some part in the emergence, by the late 18th century, of a recognised industrial meaning to *plant*.

### 17.3.4 A likely industrial background to the Plant's Yard Plants

It may have been partly an old Plant allegiance to the 'red rose' that kept Plants mainly, it seems, to the Cheshire side of the Dark Peak of north west Derbyshire and away from Sheffield at Yorkshire's southern tip (Figures 17.3 and 17.4). However, it is known that, by 1538, a Christopher Plant was leasing estate from Ralf Gell of Hopton whose fortunes were based on wool and lead mining — this was at Bakewell, near Great Longstone, about half

way towards Sheffield. About a century later, when parish records begin, there is evidence for a small cluster of Plants around Great Longstone.

The Great Longstone Plants appear to have had a close association, at least by the 18th century, with the Gell and Eyre gentry who had been prominent in local lead mining and smelting activities<sup>68</sup>. By the times of the 18th century, it seems that Plants had arrived near Sheffield by migrating across north Derbyshire from Great Longstone and east Cheshire<sup>69</sup>. From the 1760's onwards, two sons of the brickmaker William Plant of Duckmanton (*i.e.*  $W^m(0)$  ?-1769) appear near Broom Hall at Sheffield's Coal Pit Lane<sup>70</sup>. One of these sons, a bellows maker Benjamin Plant (1742-1805), and another, the bricklayer John Plant (1733-1816), appear at the Little Sheffield site of Plant's Yard just a mile to the south by 1787.

Soon after, there is a quotation dated 1789:-

MRS PIOZZI, *Journ Franc I*, 133. The ground was destined to the purposes of extensive commerce, but the appellation of a *plant* gave me much disturbance, from my inability to fathom the meaning.

The OED cites this quotation as the first recognised usage of a chiefly American sense to the noun *plant* – the more endemic English sense of the industrial meaning of *plant* is defined as:-

**noun (sb1) (6a):** the fixtures, implements, machinery, and apparatus used in carrying on an industrial process.

The *Plant's Yard* Plants were apparently supplying *plant*, fitting both the English and American industrial senses, at a date before there are illustrative quotations in the OED for either sense.

---

<sup>68</sup>Around the start of the 18th century, John Eyre changed his name to John Gell of Hopton on inheriting, through his mother, the Gell fortunes. This John Eyre's son, Philip Gell, became co-owner of Broom Hall near Sheffield.

<sup>69</sup>In particular, a likely scheme for the ancestry of the stirp  $W^m(0)$  of the *Plant's Yard* Plants of Sheffield suggests that he may have been the same William as the carpenter William Plant who was apparently baptised in the main Cheshire-Staffordshire homeland of 17th century Plants. There are three known suitable baptisms within the adjoining parishes of Leek and Prestbury, which are around 15 miles to the west of Great Longstone. By 1725,  $W^m(0)$  had settled 15 miles to Great Longstone's east, near Chesterfield. It may have been  $W^m(0)$ 's cousin John from Great Longstone who appears in the first known Sheffield Plant record, in 1737 (Chapter 15).

<sup>70</sup>This was quite possibly the site of '*Late Plant yard*'.