

HUNTLEY Field and Place-Names

Huntley is situated on the A40 road approximately half way between Ross-on-Wyë and Gloucester. It is mentioned in Domesday Book as 'Huntelei' and had a probable population of just over 50 people. Later spellings include 'Hunteleia' and 'Hunteslega'. The English Place Name Society give its meaning as the 'Huntsman's Forest Clearing'. The village had grown gradually until the late 18th century when there was a sharp increase in population to about 550 people followed by a decline until the recent estates of houses increased the population level to about 700.

The principal landmarks are the church, which was established by the 11th century and rebuilt except for the tower in 1863, Huntley Court and Manor, the latter built in 1862. Huntley Court was the principal property in 1719 when it was sold by the Duke of Kent to Edmund Probyn of Newland.

There have been a number of pubs in Huntley although many have only existed for a few years. The 1717 survey shows Peter Haynes as the tenant of the 'White Hart' which was situated on the main A40 road opposite the present pub - the Red Lion. In 1743 a 14-year lease was made to John Uzzell, Innkeeper, by Edward Probyn but the fate of this inn after c.1750 is uncertain. In 1732 a lease was signed for the property 'previously called or known by the name of the George Inn but now the Red Lyon' which referred to an inn called the 'Crown now pulled down' which had stood in the orchard adjoining the Red Lyon. Evidently the Crown or George had existed in competition to the White Hart for some years. The meeting of title-paying landholders was held in the Red Lion in 1883 to agree to purchase tithes from the Rev. John Probyn for £250. A 19th century advertisement card for the Red Lion offers 'choice old wines and spirits, home brewed beers: Well aired beds : good stabling : lock up Coach Houses etc: neat Fly and Post horses to let'.

The 1903 Licensing Act lists a beerhouse called the 'Yew Tree' in addition to the Red Lion. Local information suggests that this was probably situated on the corner of Hamlen Close and North Street. The 1851 census shows the 'Masons Arms' and lists the occupier as a Master Mason and Innkeeper. This pub or beerhouse was on the common but no other reference to it has come to hand.

There is a mention of a mill at Huntley in 1300 which was called 'Stinderforthemilne'. Huntley Mill is shown on the 1717 map situated due south of the Court House on the southern parish boundary (S071-7187.1840) and Charles Jones was the tenant. By 1841 the mill seems to have gone out of use and the land is shown as containing only a cottage and garden.

Wood End Farm was let to John Cox in 1717 and is probably named from the 'end of Huntley Wood' although 'end' can also mean 'a hamlet'. The Estate sale particulars of 1883 quote 'a model farm homestead recently erected on the most approved principals at great cost'. The original Wood End seems to

have been the principal farm in 1717 followed by North End Farm which was tenanted by Edmund Humphries. By 1841 Little Northend Farm appeared as a separate enterprise. In 1763 a lease shows the two farms let together as 'the two farms called by the names of Northend or Adams'. Modern maps show two areas of coppice or woodland in this area as Great Adam's wood and Little Adam's wood.

Hinders Farm, formed between 1717 and 1841 is shown on the early Ordnance Survey maps as Inders and elsewhere as Enders. Yew Tree Farm must have come into being after the inclosure of Huntley Common in 1857 but was a sizable concern by 1883. It included a large part of what had been Huntley Common and an area called the 'Billies' or 'Billes'. Deep Filling Farm also came to prominence in the mid 19th century and was noted for its cider production. Following the leasing of land in the 17th century by John Bird this farm was known as Birds Farm. This is now called Coppice Farm and adjoins Birdwood Coppice - this coppice is named from Birdwood which existed in 1250.

Street names such as 'Frog Lane' and 'North Street' appear to be of recent origin (Ordnance Survey 1923). It seems that the streets were identified by their destination and there are references to 'Tibberton Lane' and the 'Newent Road' and 'Ross Road' on the 18th century map of the village.

The 1717 survey of the parish gives a large number of field-names and shows that the village did not extend to Huntley Hill but that the cultivated land and pasture fields ended at the Longhope Road with the exception of 8 encroachments on the Hill. By 1841 many cottages each with a few small patches of hill pasture and orchard existed on Huntley Hill and their numbers had increased further by 1883. Most of these cottages have now disappeared and the Hill is again woodland with small pastures on the slopes.

Huntley Common covered the whole area within the present main road, North Street and Tibberton Lane and extended to Birdwood. On the edge of the common were fields called 'the Baths', nearby on the Newent Road was 'the Plashes' and between them lay 'Pool House' immediately behind the Red Lion. These names all refer to a number of ponds or pools which were present in the area until at least the mid 19th century. The inclosure award for Huntley Common makes reference to arrangements for keeping clean the two ponds on what is now the recreation area. A report made in 1794 by George Turner, a local farmer, says that Huntley Common was 'a considerable tract now of little use, which might by inclosure be rendered very valuable to the proprietors and the nation', however the common was not inclosed until 1857.

Many fields were named after their occupiers or former occupiers, like Annettes Meadow, Gwilliams Mead, Gingers Dole, Cliffords Orchard, Church Field, Philpots Lease, John Winters Free and Hopkins Close. Three fields are called Sinder Hill. There are many areas locally where cinder from the iron workings in the Forest of Dean have been found but no record

of this exists for Huntley. Other fields were named for their quality as meadow or pasture or for their usage i.e. Butter-walls Close, Little & Great Sow Mead Closes, Great Honey Pare (or Pear) Hill, Pease Stubble, Gorsty Hay and Vatches Stubble. Three large fields called the Haies were probably once one large field which may have been common property. A Dole is a share of the common land and occurs several times: Red Dole, Gingers Dole, Bakers Dole, Day Dole, and The Doles Free. More unusual field names include Cat Brain Close and Little Copped Hall. Cat Brain as part of a field-name in the Cotswolds is normally associated with quarrying activities and although this could be true in Huntley there are no visible signs that this was the case. Copped means peaked to form a dome and the fields which bear this name are situated on a small round hill. Little & Great Mill Pond Meadows were by the Mill on the southern parish boundary. A second Millpond Meadow was situated near Woodend Farm along side the stream which served the Mill. Mons Hill is also shown on the 1717 map but although Mons is the Latin for 'mountain' it would seem unlikely that the villagers were aware of this meaning.

A survey dated approximately 1805 also lists Starve Crow, Paul & Nanny and Isle of Wight but there is, unfortunately, no map with this survey and it is not possible to identify these fields. The 1841 tithe map was disappointing in that it listed the fields by numbers and not names as many maps do. However, deeds held by the Gloucester Record Office have verified many of the field-names and helped to establish the position of both fields and buildings.

The character of the village has changed in recent years since the two new housing estates have been built and at first sight there seems to be little of historic interest remaining. However closer examination of buildings, lanes and fields reveals much that has survived despite the changing environment.

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Sources.

- Glos. R.O., GDR 106, Huntley tithe map, 1838.
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Glos. R.O., D1297, Survey of Huntley, Longhope and Netherleigh, 1717.
Glos. R.O., D1230/1 and 15, Deeds and leases of Probyn estate.
A.H. Smith, Place-Names of Gloucestershire, III, 191.
C.E. Hart, 'The metes and bounds of the Forest of Dean', Trans. Bristol & Glos. Arch. Soc., LXVI, 166-207.