

The range of violations relating to agricultural practice on the manor seems limited and fairly standard. There were the usual broken or unrepaired hedges and fences, a few roads obstructed or damaged, baulks cut short and ditches not scoured. Violations pertaining to the tenants' animals and problems over common pasture were basically the usual ones, i.e. pigs not yoked or ringed, too many animals pastured, and breaking the common pinfold. There are two references to animals that were diseased, i.e. a 'ridgling' sheep in the common pasture of Rastrick (p. 80) and horses with "feltr" bound in the field of Sandal (p. 143). A few, typically in the manorial setting, mistreated the lord's woods in one way or another. The Stanley reference to stripping the bark from wood cut in the king's woods (p. 155) may indicate an interest in tanning which required a regular supply of oak bark. There is little extraordinary here, and the number of times the various vills declared at the leet court that all was well almost seems suspicious. Perhaps the sweating sickness cut down on the reporting of violations.

The existence of the epidemic in the general area is a distinctive background for these rolls. Not as serious as the plague in the fourteenth century, the mortality was significant for a short time. For the city of York, Palliser identified. January, August and

September 1550, February 1551 and June through that autumn of 1551 as the height of various epidemic diseases - the bubonic plague, sweating sickness, and possibly influenza or typhus. Parish records often make it difficult to differentiate the kind of epidemic disease, and the Halifax parish records only mention sweating sickness as the cause of the high mortality rate in August 1551. Halifax was severely hit that summer. There were twelve burials in July, forty-nine burials in August, but only five in September. The eighth of August must have been a sombre day indeed with a total of nine burials.⁸

The rolls themselves reflect the existence of the epidemic, but not as precisely nor as dramatically as the Halifax parish records. No one indicator confirms the existence of an epidemic on the manor or parts of it, but when these indicators are taken together they give the overall impression that something was wrong. The number of heriots should reflect the death rate, but that is not obvious in these two rolls. There were ten heriots in the 1550/1 roll and fourteen in the 1551/2 rolls. This number is about the same as the number of heriots in 1583-1585.⁹ However heriots could well be a lagging indicator. The people who died in the summer of 1551 had to hold manorial land and have an immediately obvious heir if these rolls were to match the parish records more exactly. Both lists of free tenants owing suit at the great court contain a high number of heirs. The number of unnamed heirs in 1550 may be significant. On 3 October 1550 there were 13 unnamed heirs and one wife out of the 27 representing one half of the free tenants who asked to be excused (p. 1). In the next year the number had gone down to 6 out of 31 who were excused. Normally the phrase 'the heirs of' would mean that there were several heirs responsible for suit of court. In this case, the fact that the number went down dramatically the next year and some single heirs had been identified may indicate there had not been enough time to sort out the situation before the great court met.

Some other items in the rolls, which when taken alone would not be indications of an epidemic or disturbance, in this context and with the other items can fairly be considered as further evidence. For example, the number of land transfers that include provisions for heirs or the care of minor children (pp. 8, 26, 27, 40, 49, 50, 104, 123) is not evidence for an epidemic in and of itself, but is corroboration

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heirs of his body lawfully procreated under the following conditions; that the said John pay to John Bothomley, base son of Richard Bothomley, £6 13s 4d according to the last wish (ultima voluntate) of the said Thomas. Should it happen that the said John Bothomley and the heirs of his body lawfully procreated die, then the said messuage, lands and tenements will remain to the right heirs of the said Thomas forever. Agreed. Entry fine 2s 8d.

Rastrick: William Firth put himself in mercy for licence to agree with **Margaret Malynson** in a plea of trespass: amerced 2d; Laurence Hirst the same to agree with Thomas Hanson in a plea of debt: amerced 2d.

Ossett: Thomas Sykes the same to agree with Ralph Medley in a plea of debt: amerced 2s; Robert Tyas the same to agree with Robert Megson in a plea of debt: amerced 2d; Ralph Scolefeld the same to agree with Robert Megson in a plea of debt: amerced 2d; Richard Scott the same to agree with Edward Crawshaie in a plea of debt: amerced 2d.

Bailiff: Henry Egremond the same to agree with Edward Crawshaie in a plea of debt: amerced 2d; Henry Egremounde the same to agree with James Morley in a plea of debt: amerced 2d; John Estwodd the same to agree with Robert Cokson in a plea of debt: amerced 2d; Henry Burneley the same to agree with Thomas Baiteman in a plea of trespass: amerced 2d.

Wakefield: James Wilkynson offered himself against John Broke in a plea of trespass: the grave of Wakefeld was ordered to attach him to appear before the next court: attachment; Robert Syddall put himself in mercy for licence to agree with John Senyour in a plea of debt: amerced 2d; Joan Collynson the same to agree with Isabel Holmes in a plea of trespass: amerced 2d; Robert Gybson the same to agree with Christopher Penson in a plea of debt: amerced 2d; Robert Agland the same to agree with Leonard Baites in a plea of debt: amerced 2d;² Edward Hardy offered himself against Richard Grenewod in a plea of debt: it was ordered he be summoned to the next court: summons.

2. This entry is crossed out. The writing above the line to replace it is virtually illegible, but may be "he is dead and has no son".

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[Membrane 9 dorse]

Court held at Wakefield 14 August 1551

[Ho]lme: Thomas Thomson put himself in mercy for licence to agree with Thomas Calles senior in a plea of debt: amerced 2d; Peter Day complainant (quer') the same to agree with Robert Bever in a plea of trespass: amerced 2d.

[Rast]rick: Edmund Foxe the same to agree with Edward Malynson in a plea of trespass: amerced 2d; Edward Malynson the same to agree with Edmund Foxe in a plea of trespass: amerced 2d.

Sandal: Joan Walker the same to agree with Alice Hepworth in a plea of debt: amerced 2d; John Parkyn the same to agree with John Fraunce in a plea of debt: amerced 2d.

Sowerby: [29 cms blank]

Plea of land: [20 cms blank]

Sum of this court 12d, whence

grave of Holme	4d
grave of Rastrick	4d
grave of Sandal	4d

[Membrane 13]

Court with tourn held at Brighthouse 15 April 1551

Rastrick: Inquisition held there for the lord on the oath of John Haldesworth, Nicholas Brodelee, John Wodd, John Bothomley, John Presteley, Edward Hey, Thomas Firth of Botheroide, John Gooder, John Hanson jr, John Shaie, Richard Hawme, John Hemmyngwey, John Townend, John Rommesden, sworn, who said that the vill etc.

Rastrick: the vill there sworn presented that :**Margaret Malyson** (4d) kept on the common pasture a sheep called a ridlynge 15 contrary to the pain imposed on her at the last court. Amerced 4d.

Fixby: the vill there sworn presented that all was well.

Dalton: the vill there sworn presented that all was well.

Quarmby: the vill there sworn presented that all was well.

Stainland: the vill there sworn presented that all was well.

Barkisland: the vill there sworn presented that all was well.

Hipperholme

Hipperholme: the vill there sworn presented that all was well.

Shelf: the vill there sworn presented that William Nicolles (12d) and Edward Gybson (12d) did not repair a road in Shelf on the day they were summoned as they were enjoined: amerced 2s; William Fournes (12d) did not sufficiently repair the road beside Shelfhall on the day appointed to him: amerced 12d.

Hartshead: the vill there sworn presented that all was well

15. a 'ridgling' is a sheep taken out of a flock on account of disease. (J.O.Halliwel, Dictionary of Archaic and Provincial Words (Routledge, 1924), p.683).

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accustomed rent. Entry fine 2s 6d.

[Membrane 13 dorse]

Rastrick: George Foxcroft of Wakefeld by Henry Waddesworth, tenant and sworn, surrendered into the lord's hands all his parts [of] a messuage called Netherwodhous and all lands, tenements, pastures, and closes with their appurtenances now in the tenure and occupation of Nicholas Batley and Gilbert Batley and also all their part of a messuage in Sotehill and all lands, pastures, closes and tenements now [in] the tenure and separate occupation of John Townend, **Edward Malykson**, **John Malykson**, and all his parts of and in one _____¹⁷ in the tenure of Richard Rannesley, and all his parts of an annuity or annual rent of 2s 6d issuing from the land [of] **Edmund Malyson** with appurtenances: to the use of John Foxcroft brother of the said George and [his] heirs [forever]. Agreed. Entry fine 12d.

[Rastrick]: William Rommesden by John Hanson, tenant and sworn, surrendered into the lord's hands all the right, title, estate and term of years he had in a messuage with all the buildings built thereon and in all other lands, meadows and tenements lately in the tenure [of] _____ Hanson with appurtenances which the said William lately had from the surrender of George Pollerd [and which the same] George lately had from the surrender of Edward Firth: to use of the same George Pollerd and his heirs forever. Agreed. [Entry fine] 6d.

Sum of this court 16s 7d

grave of Hipperholme	14s 9d
grave of Rastrick	22d

17. edge missing.

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John Tempest kt, chief steward of the court, and Henry Saivell esq, surveyor there, and took from the lord a house and a garden lying next to the said chapel of Holmefirth lately belonging to the said chapel: to have and hold the said house and garden by the assent of Thomas Gargrave kt and the heirs of John Cotton gen by virtue of a commission of the king dated 2 April 1549 directed to John Tempest kt, chief steward there, and Henry Saivell esq, surveyor there, and enrolled at the court held at Wakefeld 3 May 1549. Agreed that John Hirst and his heirs hold forever according to the custom of the manor, rendering 6d annually to the inhabitants and their successors living within the neighbourhood of Holmefirth at Whitsun and Martinmas in equal portions for distribution to such uses as will be seen better by them. Entry fine 4d.

[Holme]: John Wodd and Margaret his wife came into court before John Tempest kt, chief steward of this court, and Henry Saivell esq, surveyor there, and took from the lord a house and a garden lying next to the said chapel of Holmefirth lately belonging to the said chapel: to have and hold the said house and garden by the assent of Thomas Gargrave kt and the heirs of John Cotton gen by virtue of a commission of the king dated 2 April 1549 directed to the said John Tempest kt, chief steward there, and Henry Saivell esq, surveyor there, and enrolled at the court held at Wakefeld 3 May 1549. Agreed that John Wodd and Margaret his wife [and] their heirs hold forever according to the custom of the manor, rendering 6d annually to the inhabitants and their successors living within the neighbourhood of Holmefirth at Whitsun and Martinmas in equal portions for distribution to such uses as will be seen better by them. Entry fine 4d.

[Holme]: **Richard Malynson** came into court before John Tempest kt, chief steward of the court, and Henry Saivell esq, surveyor there, and took from the lord a house and a garden lying next to the said chapel of Holmefirth lately belonging to the said chapel: to have and hold the said house and garden by the assent of Thomas Gargrave kt and the heirs of John Cotton gen by virtue of a commission of the king dated 2 April 1549 directed to John Tempest kt, chief steward there, and Henry Saivell esq, surveyor there, and enrolled in the court held at Wakefeld 3 May 1549. Agreed that **Richard Malynson** and his heirs hold forever according to the custom of the manor, rendering 6d annually to the inhabitants and their successors living within the

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neighbourhood of Holmefirth at Whitsun and Martinmas in equal portions for distribution to such uses as will be seen better by them. Entry fine 4d.