

Historical Background:

Maurice Beresford

Maurice Warwick Beresford was born in Sutton Coldfield, Warwickshire on the 6 February 1920. His interests in history, geography and literature originated at Bishop Vesey's Grammar School and then in 1939 he went on to read history at Jesus College, Cambridge. He was a conscientious objector and never felt completely comfortable in the collegiate set-up. He excelled at university and he was invited to participate in a seminar with John Saltmarsh, one of the few historians interested in the visible evidence in the landscape as well as the documentary evidence and this was to be key influence in Beresford's subsequent research.

Beresford began working at an adult education centre in Rugby and it was here that he developed his interests in both local and Midlands history and began field-walking amongst the deserted villages in Warwickshire. He was encouraged by W.G. Hoskins who was also researching deserted medieval villages in Leicestershire and both published work on their research and was to lead to Beresford's *The Lost Villages of England* (published in 1954). Beresford sought to verify his work through archaeological excavations and shortly after being appointed to a role in Economic History at Leeds University he began excavating the earthworks at Wharram Percy assisted (from 1952) by John Hurst and the two were to spend over forty years excavating the village. Beresford recruited hundreds of volunteers to assist the work each summer. Beresford researched and published widely on the medieval landscape through maps, field-walks, aerial photography and excavation making Beresford and Hoskins the pioneers of Landscape History.

At Leeds he developed his interests in urban history with his *New Towns of the Middle Ages: Town Plantation in England, Wales and Gascony* (1967) and continued to research and write on a range of topics and themes. He spent twenty-five years as Professor of Economic History at Leeds from 1959 to 1985. In 1985 he was made a Fellow of the British Academy. He was awarded honorary degrees from Leeds, Loughborough, Leicester and Hull. He died on 15 December 2005.

Poll Tax Returns

With King Edward III ill it was John of Gaunt who asked Parliament for funds to finance the war against France. It has been named the poll tax as it was levied against each person, except beggars rather than against property or wealth. Initially intended as a one-off, it proved so successful that it was duly repeated. In 1377 everybody over the age of 14 had to pay one groat (4d), in 1379 the minimum age was raised to 16 and graded by social class and in 1381 everybody over 15 had to pay one shilling - three times the rate of 1377 and was a contributing factor to the 'Peasants Revolt'. The 1379 returns often provide occupation information but are not as comprehensive in terms of covering the entire population due to widespread evasion of the tax. Some of the 1381 returns were physically destroyed during the Peasants Revolt itself. Those returns that have survived were printed in full in Carolyn Fenwick's *The Poll Taxes of 1377, 1379, and 1381* published between 1998-2004.

The transcripts of the Poll Tax returns were prepared by Margaret Midgley, a historical researcher who worked for a range of individuals including Hilda Jonstone, Professor of History at Royal Holloway College, London from 1927 to 1940. In 1935 she became assistant to L.F. Salzman the Editor of the Victoria County History of the Counties of England. 1940-1947 she was librarian at the William Salt Library in Stafford before she took-up a role

surveying the diocesan and cathedral archives of the Church of England. Further work took her back to the William Salt Library as Editor of the Staffordshire VCH. She retired in 1956 only to then undertake research for the new *Agrian History of England* being produced at the University of Leicester and in 1965 worked for Professor Beresford at Leeds University on the 1377 Poll Tax returns. She continued to work until the early 1980s and she died in 1991

Medieval Peat industry

Beresford's interest in the medieval peat industry arose from his research and interest in landscape history.

Wharram Percy

Beresford and archaeologist John Hurst ran a summer season of excavations at Wharram for the next 40 years, and together wrote *Wharram Percy* (published in 1990) about the site. They also coordinated research through the Deserted Medieval Village Research Group (founded in 1952), culminating in a book, *Deserted Medieval Villages* (1971). The sites continue to provide a route to understanding the material life of peasant England and exploring the origin and development of villages.

Custodial history:

Donated by Prof. MW Beresford, Leeds. [U DX177/1/] in April 1987, [U DX177/2 and U DX177/3] were donated in September 2002.

Description:

Transcripts of the Poll Tax returns covering 1377-1381 held at The National Archives (Ref E.179). Collection also includes papers regarding an unpublished book on the medieval peat industry and research into Wharram Percy and the surrounding area.

Arrangement:

U DX177/1 Transcripts of the Poll Tax returns
U DX177/2 Papers regarding an unpublished book on medieval peat industry
U DX177/3 Research papers relating to Wharram Percy and surrounding area
U DX177/4 Research papers relating to Thixendale and surrounding area

Extent: 45 items

Related material:

Poll Tax returns, The National Archives [E.179]

Access conditions:

U DX177/1 and U DX177/2 - Access will be granted to any accredited reader

U DX177/3 and U DX177/4 (10 boxes or 1.67 linear metres) is currently un-catalogued. In some cases a draft or box list may exist which may allow us to provide access to the collection ahead of the material being catalogued. If you are interested in this collection please contact archives@hull.ac.uk clearly outlining your interest and timescales.

U DX177/1	Transcripts of the Poll Tax returns 45 items	1377-1381
U DX177/1/1	Explanatory note by M.W. Beresford Typescript notes relating to the compilation of the returns by Margaret Midgley 1 item	4 Mar 1987
U DX177/1/2	Transcripts of Poll Tax returns. Bedfordshire 1 item	1377-1381
U DX177/1/3	Transcripts of Poll Tax returns. Berkshire 1 item	1377-1381
U DX177/1/4	Transcripts of Poll Tax returns. Buckinghamshire 1 item	1377-1381
U DX177/1/5	Transcripts of Poll Tax returns. Cambridgeshire 1 item	1377-1381
U DX177/1/6	Transcripts of Poll Tax returns. Cornwall 1 item	1377-1381
U DX177/1/7	Transcripts of Poll Tax returns. Cumberland 1 item	1377-1381
U DX177/1/8	Transcripts of Poll Tax returns. Derbyshire 1 item	1377-1381
U DX177/1/9	Transcripts of Poll Tax returns. Devonshire I 1 item	1377-1381
U DX177/1/10	Transcripts of Poll Tax returns. Devonshire II 1 item	1377-1381
U DX177/1/11	Transcripts of Poll Tax returns. Dorset 1 item	1377-1381
U DX177/1/12	Transcripts of Poll Tax returns. Essex I 1 item	1377-1381
U DX177/1/13	Transcripts of Poll Tax returns. Essex II 1 item	1377-1381
U DX177/1/14	Transcripts of Poll Tax returns. Hampshire and the Isle of Wight 1 item	1377-1381
U DX177/1/15	Transcripts of Poll Tax returns. Herefordshire 1 item	1377-1381

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U DX177/1/16	Transcripts of Poll Tax returns. Hertfordshire 1 item	1377-1381
U DX177/1/17	Transcripts of Poll Tax returns. Huntingdonshire 1 item	1377-1381
U DX177/1/18	Transcripts of Poll Tax returns. Kent 1 item	1377-1381
U DX177/1/19	Transcripts of Poll Tax returns. Lancashire 1 item	1377-1381
U DX177/1/20	Transcripts of Poll Tax returns. Leicestershire 1 item	1377-1381
U DX177/1/21	Transcripts of Poll Tax returns. Lincolnshire 1 item	1377-1381
U DX177/1/22	Transcripts of Poll Tax returns. Middlesex (including London) 1 item	1377-1381
U DX177/1/23	Transcripts of Poll Tax returns. Norfolk 1 item	1377-1381
U DX177/1/24	Transcripts of Poll Tax returns. Northamptonshire 1 item	1377-1381
U DX177/1/25	Transcripts of Poll Tax returns. Northumberland 1 item	1377-1381
U DX177/1/26	Transcripts of Poll Tax returns. Nottinghamshire 1 item	1377-1381
U DX177/1/27	Transcripts of Poll Tax returns. Oxfordshire 1 item	1377-1381
U DX177/1/28	Transcripts of Poll Tax returns. Rutland 1 item	1377-1381
U DX/177/1/29	Transcripts of Poll Tax returns. Shropshire 1 item	1377-1381
U DX177/1/30	Transcripts of Poll Tax returns. Somerset 1 item	1377-1381
U DX177/1/31	Transcripts of Poll Tax returns. Staffordshire 1 item	1377-1381
U DX177/1/32	Transcripts of Poll Tax returns. Suffolk 1 item	1377-1381

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U DX177/1/33	Transcripts of Poll Tax returns. Surrey 1 item	1377-1381
U DX177/1/34	Transcripts of Poll Tax returns. Sussex 1 item	1377-1381
U DX177/1/35	Transcripts of Poll Tax returns. Warwickshire 1 item	1377-1381
U DX177/1/36	Transcripts of Poll Tax returns. Westmorland 1 item	1377-1381
U DX177/1/37	Transcripts of Poll Tax returns. Wiltshire 1 item	1377-1381
U DX177/1/38	Transcripts of Poll Tax returns. Worcestershire 1 item	1377-1381
U DX177/1/39	Transcripts of Poll Tax returns. City of York 1 item	1377-1381
U DX177/1/40	Transcripts of Poll Tax returns. Yorkshire: East Riding 1 item	1377-1381
U DX177/1/41	Transcripts of Poll Tax returns. Yorkshire: North Riding 1 item	1377-1381
U DX177/1/42	Transcripts of Poll Tax returns. Yorkshire: West Riding 1 item	1377-1381
U DX177/1/43	Transcripts of Poll Tax returns. Miscellaneous counties 1 item	1377-1381
U DX177/1/44	Background material on Poll Tax collection Extensive background notes compiled from the original returns 1 item	1377-1381
U DX177/1/45	Summary and county index Includes some notes for the Agrarian History of England county index 1 file	1377-1381

U DX177/2	Papers regarding an unpublished book on medieval peat industry 1 box	1970s-1990s
U DX177/2/1	Research papers relating to the medieval peat industry Notes on various villages and areas including: Ouse, Dikesmarsh, Reedness, Rawcliffe, Snaith, Swinefleet, Thurn, Don, Quayfield, Hatfield, Haldenby; articles and publications some written by Maurice Beresford some written by others with annotations; Photographic negatives of maps, some photographs of land taken by Anthony Crawshaw. Various maps of Yorkshire and Ordnance survey maps of Cambridgeshire 1 file	1980s-1990s
U DX177/2/2	Correspondence relating to research on the medieval peat industry Letters from people including: Barbara Hutton, Chris Dyer, Wendy Wales, Dr David Postle, Lynn Hiley. Contents include offers of information for Maurice Beresford's book research and requests to him for assistance as well as enclosures with letters about the peat industry 1 file	1970-1994
U DX177/2/3	'Some Useful Consumers of Waste' Privately published book by William Richardson, Canon of York, sent to Maurice Beresford by R Butler. It includes history about two Marshland Parishes: Adlingfleet and Whitgift 1 item	late 20th cent.

U DX177/3

Research papers relating to Wharram Percy and surrounding area

c.1805-1984

Material mainly comprises photocopies and typed and handwritten transcriptions (by various authors) of original records, including parish records, estate records, wills and maps. Analysis of the records is also included with publications, correspondence related to research and aerial photographs. The material does not appear to have been collected for a specific project, but has been used to inform various publications. It is split into subject files and contains topics related to Malton and Drifffield railway, field systems, various villages, churches and vicarages, tithes, Birdsall and Sledmere estates and Thixendale.

Also contains sales particulars (c1805, 1930, 1941); copy of pageant (1980); lists of aerial photographs of medieval sites (1954-1956); annotated plan of Wharram Percy and Wharram le Street and District (1970s-1982).

This material is currently un-catalogued. In some cases a draft or box list may exist which may allow us to provide access to the collection ahead of the material being catalogued. If you are interested in this collection please contact archives@hull.ac.uk clearly outlining your interest and timescales.

7 boxes

U DX177/4

Research papers relating to Thixendale and surrounding area

c.1980s-c.1990s

Material mainly comprises photocopies and typed and handwritten transcriptions (by various authors) of original records, including parish records, estate records, wills and maps. Also analysis of the records with publications, correspondence related to research and aerial photographs. The material is split into subject files and contains topics related to place names, field systems and various villages and possible draft copy of article and draft versions of Thixendale monograph (1994).

This material is currently un-catalogued. In some cases a draft or box list may exist which may allow us to provide access to the collection ahead of the material being catalogued. If you are interested in this collection please contact archives@hull.ac.uk clearly outlining your interest and timescales.

3 boxes