

The Examination of *Daniel Annett*, One of the Keepers of *Woolmer Forest*; taken on Oath, the Thirtieth Day of *December 1789*.

This Examinant is Keeper of *Linsberry*, otherwise *Lynchborough Lodge*, in *Woolmer Forest*. He was appointed by Lord *Stawell* in *February* last, on the Death of his Father *Daniel Annett*, who was Keeper of the same Lodge upwards of Twenty-two Years, during all which Time this Examinant lived with his Father at the Lodge, and for the greatest Part of it acted as a Servant under him. He occupies the Lodge House, with about Eight Acres of Arable Land, Seven Acres of Meadow, and about One hundred and Ten Acres of rough Forest Ground, all of a poor Soil,\* and not worth more than Nine or Ten Pounds a Year. He usually keeps about Four Cows, and Two or Three Pigs, for the Use of his Family, and a Mare and Colt upon the Forest, and no more. He receives no Salary, nor any Rents or other fixed Payments; and his only Profits arise from Peat, Turf, Heath, Fern, and Stones, of which he has the Liberty of selling as much as he can. The Average Amount of these Profits he believes to be about Fifty Pounds a Year at the most, out of which he pays Five Pounds a Year to an Assistant (one *William Carpenter*) who lives in a small House called *Woolmer Pond House*, and for the Wages and Board of a Boy who lives with him about Thirteen or Fourteen Pounds a Year, and he keeps One Horse, which costs him about Nine or Ten Pounds a Year. There are no Deer in *Woolmer Forest*, nor have been since he has known it; but there are several People in the Neighbourhood who remember when there was a considerable Number of Red Deer there. There have not been any Courts held for the Forest, nor Verderors or Regarders appointed, since he has been employed there. There is some Oak Timber growing on a Tract of Ground of about Fifty Acres, called *Oak Hills* (or *Holly Hills*) near his Lodge, and in the Fences of his inclosed Grounds, in Number about One hundred and Fifty or Two hundred Trees, whereof about Twelve or Fourteen are good Trees, meting at about a Load each, and in his Judgment are fit for the Use of the Navy. The rest are young Trees, and were in a thriving State, but have been very much hurt by cutting Pieces of Bark from the Sides, and stamping Marks and Numbers on the Bodies of the Trees, which was done by this Examinant, by Order of Mr. *Briant*, the Deputy Surveyor. There is no Timber or Wood on any other Part of his Walk, except some Hollies in a Place called *Sheer Down*, and some Alders and Willows in a Place called *Liss Moor*, and a small Alder Bed near the Lodge, which the Keeper cuts for Firing and for making Fences; the rest of *Woolmer Forest* is a barren sandy Soil covered with Heath, Part of it consisting of a red-dish Sand, Part a white Sand, and the rest a Kind of black Rock. The best of these, he thinks, is the red Sand, which may be about One Tenth Part of the Whole. There are some Plantations of Firs in *Henry White's* Walk, made by the late Mr. *Legge* in that Sort of Soil, which seem to thrive very well; but some Firs, which were planted in the white Sand, died very soon. About One Half of *Woolmer Forest* is of this latter Kind. The black rocky Soil is deemed the worst, and will bear nothing besides a little Heath on the Surface. There have not been any Encroachments made on the Forest since his Father was appointed Keeper, nor any Lands inclosed from thence for the Benefit of the Keepers, or otherwise; but the Lord of the Manor of *Mill Land* claims a Part of *Oak Hill* as within his Manor, and has cut Timber and Wood there; and since the Trees now growing there were marked by Mr. *Briant's* Order, as before mentioned, Mr. *Hutterson*, the present Lord of that Manor, has had his Mark put upon them, and threatened to prosecute this Examinant for marking them as directed by Mr. *Briant*. Says, that the Parishes of *Bramshot*, *Headley*, *Liss*, *Greatham*, *Amshot*, *Selburne*, *Kingsley*, *Binsted*, and *Bentley*, claim a Right of Common of Pasture and Turbary, paying to the Keeper One Shilling per Waggon Load for Peat, which contains from 1,000 to 1,200 in Number, and for Turf One Shilling and Six Pence per Thousand, besides One Shilling and Six Pence a Thousand for cutting the Turf, and Two Shillings a Load for cutting and drying the Peat. He has heard that the Price of Turf was formerly One Shilling a Load, but raised by one *John Adams*, a former Keeper, to One Shilling and Six Pence per Load, on being threatened by the Parishioners of *Bramshot* to be assessed to the Parish Rates, which however was not effected. These Prices are paid by the Commoners, but Strangers are charged Six Pence per Load more for Peat, and are not allowed to have any Turf. Heath is cut for burning Bricks and Lime, and is usually sold by the Kiln, at Five Shillings per Kiln to the Keeper, and Eighteen Shillings a Kiln for cutting; but if sold by the Load, the Price is One Shilling per Load, and is cut by the Buyers, or at their Expence, for which they pay Three Shillings a Load. Fern is cut for Litter for Cattle, and is sold at Two Shillings and Sixpence a Waggon Load, if cut by the Keeper, or One Shilling, if cut by the Buyers; and Stones at Six Pence per Load, and One Shilling and Six Pence for digging. It frequently happens that Stems of Fir Trees are found in the Peat Bogs, some as large as a Man's Body. He has heard that Oak Trees have been found in some of the Bogs in *Woolmer*, but never saw any other than Fir. No Payments are made for Herbage, except an optional Gratuity of One Shilling or One Shilling and Sixpence each, formerly given to the Keeper at *Easter*, by many of the Commoners, but now by very few. All Kinds of Cattle are admitted, except Sheep, which are not allowed to be turned into the Forest, but sometimes stray in from the adjoining Commons, the Forest being open on almost every Side. The Forest has not been driven within his Remembrance, but when any Cattle are seen in the Forest not belonging to Commoners, the Keeper endeavours to find out the Owners, gives Notice to them to take away their Cattle, and threatens to pound them if not taken out of the Forest. Has never pounded any Horned Cattle there, but frequently Horses, the Owners of which, on taking them out of the Pound, pay Two Shillings and Six Pence each for catching them, and the Expence of keeping them while there, and if not owned, they become the Property of Lord *Stawell*; but he remembers only Three or Four Instances of Horses not owned, which were given by Lord *Stawell* to his Father for his Trouble.

(Signed) *Daniel Annett*.