

The Examination of *Henry White*, One of the Keepers in *Woolmer Forest*; taken on Oath, this Thirteenth Day of *December* 1789.

This Examinant has been One of the Keepers in *Woolmer Forest* about Thirty-five Years. He was first appointed by the late Mr. *Legge*, Father of Lord *Stawell*, and has always resided in *Bourn or Borden Lodge*.—He understands that there is a Salary from Government intended for his Office, amounting to Three Pounds and Ten Pence a Year, but no Salary has ever been paid to this Examinant, nor has he any certain Fees, but is allowed to take whatever he can make of the Forest by the Disposal of Peat, Turf, Heath, or Fern cut within his Walk.—That he is not restrained to any Quantity, nor confined to any particular Parts of the Walk, but may cut as much as he can dispose of in any Part of his Walk, and sell it to any Person whatever, without Distinction, whether living within or without the Perambulation, and without Regard to the Parish in which the Purchaser has his Residence. No Persons cut Peat, Turf, or Heath, but such as are employed by this Examinant, and the Buyer pays for Peat Two Shillings per Load to the Labourer for cutting and drying it, and One Shilling per Load to the Keeper. The Load contains, he believes, more than a Thousand Peats, but they are not commonly numbered. For the Turf the Buyer pays One Shilling and Six Pence per Thousand to the Cutter or Labourer, and One Shilling to this Examinant, and the Labourer is paid Six Pence per Thousand more if he sets up the Turves and dries them; and for Heath, the Labourer is paid Three Shillings per Load for cutting, and the Examinant receives One Shilling.—The Heath is commonly used in burning Lime: Six Loads burn a Kiln, and when he is paid by the Kiln, and not by the Load, he receives only Five Shillings for the Kiln. For the Fern he gets such Price as he can obtain from the Buyers, setting out a certain Quantity of Ground on which the Farmer or Buyer is allowed to cut the Fern, according to the Price agreed on. The Fern is used for littering Horses or Cattle, and the Peat and Turves for Fuel. No Coal is burnt except in Gentlemen's Houses, and Wood is become scarce and dear, so that the Turf and Peat are the most common Fuel. There are other Parts in the Neighbourhood in which Turves are got, but they are not so good as those in *Woolmer*, the Soil being inferior, and more sandy. His Profit from the Disposal of all those Articles, Peat, Turf, Heath, and Fern, is, one Year with another, to the best of his Belief, about Forty Pounds a Year. In the Mosses, Roots and Stems of Trees are often dug up, some of which are Oak, and others Fir, but none of great Size. The Soil on the Hills in the Forest is generally sandy, some white, some black, and some red, all poor, but he thinks the red is the best, and the black the worst. A Plantation of Scotch Fir was made by Mr. *Legge* about Twenty or Five-and-Twenty Years ago, of about Two or Three Acres. Some of the Soil is of the red and some of the black Kind, and the Trees on the red thrive much better than the rest. Some of those Firs are now about One Foot diameter, and very thriving. The low Grounds are generally mossy, producing Heath and coarse Grass; Peat is got in the greatest Part. There were formerly some Red Deer in *Woolmer Forest*, but there are none now; formerly, as he has been told, Cattle were turned out of the Forest, particularly Milch Cows and Shoed Horses, during the Fence Month, and the Forest was then driven, but no Attention has been paid to that within his Time. All Kinds of Cattle are now admitted, Sheep only excepted, and at every Season; the Forest is never driven. Formerly Cattle put into the Forest by those who had no Right of Common were pounded; but that has also been discontinued, and the Cattle of Strangers are admitted without Challenge. No Fine or Fee is paid for depasturing Cattle. Some Rents in Oats, as he has been informed by his Wife's Father, *Henry Holt*, who was Keeper in *Holt Forest* in Lady *How's* Time, were formerly paid, but he has never received any Oats, nor any Rent of any Kind; but there are Three Persons, *Edward Alberry*, *James Farr*, and *John Chuarton*, who possess Cottages, with small Pieces of Land adjoining to their Houses, and within the Forest, who pay small Quit Rents to Lord *Stawell*—the First a Pepper Corn, the Second Four Pence, and the last he does not exactly know the Rent. The Land, in all of these Parts together, may be about Thirteen Acres, and they are said to have been granted to them for assisting the Keepers when there were Deer in the Forest. The Examinant possesses a House, called *Borden Lodge*, with about Ten Acres of Land within the Rails, worth together about Four Pounds a Year, the Land being of a poor Quality. He keeps generally Seven Horses, Four of which are Foresters, which go always in the Forest; Three Cows, which go in the Forest all Day, and are put into the House at Night; and generally Two Pigs or Swine. There have been no Encroachments in his Walk since he has been Keeper, except that *Alberry* above-mentioned, in making his Hedge straight, took in a few Rods. No Courts of Attachment or Swanimote have been held, nor are there now any Verderors or Regarders, though he remembers, when he was first appointed, there were Two Regarders, the one Mr. *Edwaker*, and the other Mr. *Jefferey*, of *Bonham*; and he remembers to have been sent by his Father-in-Law to call upon them, to attend in *Holt Forest*, in order to mark Beech Wood for Fuel for the *Great Lodge*; and has heard, that they always did attend when any Wood was to be marked for that Purpose. Believes that the Places which have Right of Common in *Woolmer Forest* are the Parish of *Kingsley*, and *Oakhanger*, which is Part of the Parish of *Selbourne*, and *Evely Farm*, belonging to *John Baker* of *Hadley*, which is in the Tything either of *Kingsley* or *Oakhanger*, and is a Purlieu; he knows no other Purlieu. *Stream Farm* has also Right of Common, and *Moor House Farm* and *Hopperie*, and a small Farm called *Haine's* and *Becil's Farm*, all in the Tything of *Kingsley*; he knows of no other out of the Perambulation which have Right of Common; but on all Open Grounds within the Forest the Deer and Commoners Cattle of the Forest are admitted, and all Estates within the Perambulation have Right of Common in the Forest, which is called Intercommoning. There are very few Oak Trees now in his Walk; one grows at a Place called *Dead Water*, and is called *Grover's Oak*, where a Forest Court is said formerly to have been held. There is a Part of the Common near *Bins Pond*, on the West Side of his Walk, claimed as belonging to *Chapel Manor*, which Manor, when he was first appointed Keeper, belonged to the late Mr. *Legge*, who had bought it about Three or Four Years before of one Mr. *Chaffinch*, as he believes; and he remembers hearing Mr. *Legge* say to a Tenant of his, one *John Lee* of *Chapel Farm*, who desired to have that Land for a Sheep Common, that he should not have it, as he could not find by his Writings that it belonged to *Chapel Manor*; and added, that he should certainly have been glad to find that it belonged to him, as he would rather have it for his own than be Ranger over it. This Examinant has heard that *Bins Pond* was the ancient Boundary between the Forest and *Chapel Manor*, and that there were formerly Two Sluices in that Pond, one of which was managed by the Forest Officers, and the other by the Owner of *Chapel Manor*; but this Examinant does not remember more than One Sluice there since he has been Keeper, which Sluice is wholly managed by the Lord or Tenants of *Chapel Manor*. Says, that Lord *Stawell* cuts Peat in that disputed Part for his own Use at the *Great Lodge*, but not for any other Use; and that this Examinant cuts Turf there for Sale, as in other Parts of the Forest, but not Peat; but he has been informed by one *John Adams*, who was Keeper of the same Walk before him, that in Mr. *Mordaunt's* Time (Mr. *Legge's* Predecessor) the Keepers cut Peat there for Sale, as well as Turf.

(Signed) *Henry White*.