

A Short Background to Longshaw

This article gives a brief account of events leading to the building of Longshaw Lodge. 1824 was a critical year

It all started with Grouse. In the early 1800s grouse shooting was a pastime favoured by the enriched classes. So much so that a large bag contributed to the reputation of the owner. The Duke of Rutland had a poor start. His hunting lodge was a small house (now modified and called Rockwood) and a barn up Bar Road in Baslow. His moors at least those in Baslow parish were Common Land. As Lord of the Manor, he could do a lot on them but his powers were legally restricted. Meanwhile the Duke of Devonshire at Chatsworth felt that the Park north of the house was inadequate and access from Baslow left a lot to be desired.

The Dukes got together and decided on a course of action. First they promoted the 1824 Baslow Act of Inclosure. Various compromises occurred, but at the end, the Duke of Rutland had total ownership of all of Baslow's moorland (which included Curbar and Froggatt), from Lady Cross in the north to Robin Hood and beyond in the south.

Alongside this another Act was needed to reroute the Turnpike to Chesterfield out of the projected new Park. A completely new road was built from Baslow through Robin Hood and on to the moorland – the A619

The Dukes were then in a position to complete the 1824 Exchange of Lands. This was a large project and the areas described below are only part of it

The Duke of Devonshire got a part of Baslow south of the A619, which he cleared completely for extension of his Park and the construction of a new drive from Baslow to Chatsworth House.

The Duke of Rutland got 1273 acres of Hathersage Moor. I expect that he already owned more moors nearby. He was now had control of an area moorland which was soon capable of delivering the large numbers of grouse he needed.

His final project was Longshaw Hunting Lodge which was built soon after. I do not know if the land was included in The Exchange, bought or already owned by the Duke.

N.B. The story has been enhanced by imagination but the facts are real

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Sep 2018