

NEWSLETTER

1963



Harker, R.S. & Richardson, D.T. 1963
“Bullocks and Geese - Correspondence Relating to Shoeing of Oxen and Geese”
Newsletter Vol.1 No.3, NCMRS, pp.13-15

Published by the
THE NORTHERN CAVERN & MINE RESEARCH SOCIETY
SKIPTON U.K.

© N.C.M.R.S. & The Author(s) 1964.

NB

This publication was originally issued in the 10 by 8 inch format then used by the society. It has now been digitised and reformatted at A5. This has changed the original pagination of articles, which is given in square brackets.

BULLOCKS and GEESE.

The following correspondence and notes have been received as a result of the article entitled "Bullocks and Geese" by R.G. Guthrie which appeared in the Society Newsletter Volume I Number 2. May 1963, p.20 - 21.

"Mr. William (Billy) Blakey of Grassington, Skipton, Yorkshire, is in possession of several bullock or heifer shoes even today, which is not really surprising, Dales farmers being very conservative. In the mistal near his house he also showed me a "besom engine" which is a tool rather like a large pair of tongs - one end was stuck in a block of wood the other being flattened to take pressure from the knee. The twigs were held between the tongs and bound with strips of ash obtained by soaking a log of ash in water for several weeks. A similar engine is to be seen in Castle Bolton Museum, Wensleydale, the curator having been recently informed by the writer as to the exact nature of the tool.

Mr. Blakey is also in possession of brake shoes for horse drawn carts which are flanged iron shoes inserted under the locked wheels of a cart to prevent the iron tyres of the cart wearing out.

The writer recently came into possession of a "stone mop", which is [13] a block of stone (grit or limestone) fitted with an iron socket to take a wooden handle. Sand was scattered on the wet flagged floor and the "mop" was used to scour the floor.

Mr. Richard Joy, of Hole Bottom, Hebden, is in possession of a similar stone mop along with various miners picks and boring bars and a "bucker"* initialled A.J. The initials probably refer to one Antony Joy, a mining ancestor of the said Richard Joy."

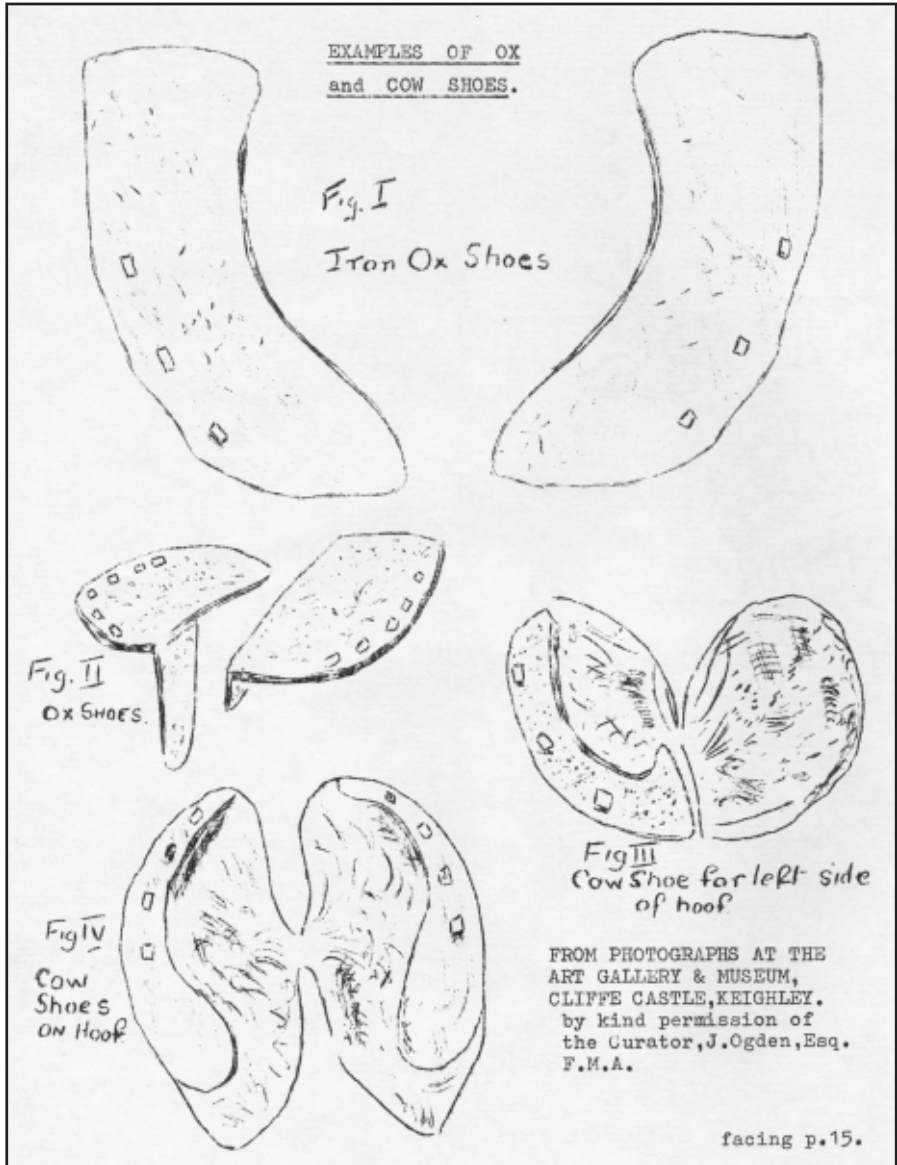
(* Bucker or Booker: A kind of hammer with a broad and flat face with which ore was knocked into a reasonable size on a "knockstone". Illustration: N.C.M.R.S. Transactions Volume 1. Number 1. figs. 8 & 9 Plate One.) Ed.

Lythe House,
R.S. Harker.
Grassington.

"In the Art Gallery and Museum, Cliffe Castle, Keighley, Yorkshire are exhibited several examples of ox and cow shoes. Included in the collection are specimens of ox shoes which came from the blacksmith's at the bottom of the village at Grassington. Unfortunately the museum knows very little about these particular ox shoes except that they were definitely made in Grassington.

BULLOCKS and GEESE

I am indebted to Mr. Ogden, Curator of the Cliffe Castle Art Gallery and Museum and members of his staff for supplying me with the following references to ox shoes, the shoeing of geese, the loan of the photographs from which the accompanying illustration was prepared and for permission to reproduce the illustration.



OX – SHOEING, etc.:

“Browns Survey of the West Riding 1793” - SKIPTON - “I understand that even within the last forty years, there was a considerable portion of land in tillage; the ploughing was then performed by four or six oxen, and one or two horses; and I am informed that mode of husbandry answered very well.”

“Byways of British Archaeology;” by Walter Johnson. Camb. Univ. Press 1912.

“Countryman” Spring, 1943. p.99 Illustration.

“Countryman” Winter, 1943. We never shoe our oxen as their work lies mainly on turf and our roads are chiefly of soft limestone which is not injurious to their feet.”

“The Home Owner”, Summer 1949. (Halifax Building Society) publish a photograph of oxen still working in England on the estate of the Earl of Bathurst, Cirencester.

Whitby Gazette 25th. January 1963” “Old time butchers used to tell me that there was no beef equal in flavour or texture to that of bullocks which had been used for ploughing and draught work until they were four or five, and then fattened off one never or rarely sees oxen yoked in North Yorkshire though it is still possible at Scaling The last in the North were on Lord [14] Feversham’s Duncombe Park Estate ... and the man who shod them is still alive, Mr. Bob Bonas of Lingdale in Cleveland who sixty years ago had a blacksmith shop at Rievaulx and another at Helmsley; he is now ninety”

“Dr.Rees Cyclopaedia 1819” Part E (plates) Plate 27 - Illustration of an ox-shoeing machine.

IN KEIGHLEY MUSEUM :

Adjustable ox-shoe (Sunderland Collection)

Ox Shoe found on Addleboro near Bainbridge, by Rosse Butterfield. (former curator).

Ox Shoe from Grassington (Blacksmith’s at the bottom of the village.)

Cow Shoe (Grassington) wrought iron, for left side of hoof,

presented by Michael Jackson of Cross Hills, 1945.

Pair of Ox Shoes.

Iron Ox Shoe, Canadian Type with upturned flange studs.

Ox Shoes made recently.

oooooooo

SHOEING of GEESE.

“Country Life 11 May; and June 1969. “Shoeing the Goose” at St. Mary & All Saints Church, Whalley, Lancs. Illustration of Misericord.

“Country Life, May: 1960 p.1137. Illustration of smithy attempting to shoe goose, smithy in background, but nails and hammer out of all proportion with job in hand, and underneath is inscription:

BULLOCKS and GEESE

“WHOSO MELLE (MEDDLES) HIM OF THAT AL MEN DOS, LET HYM
CUM HIER AND SHOE THE GHOS”

“Country Life” June 1960 p.1257. Misericord at Beverley Minster - Illustration of smith and goose, (again shoeing a shoe not in proportion to job.)

Also mentioned a similar carving in stone on one of the capitals of the choir at York Minster.

Mrs. P. Cowton, a member of the museum staff remarks: “I have a vague recollection that I have heard of leather being used for the geese feet, but no proper description of the way in which it was fastened on.”

5, Calton Terrace,
Skipton-in-Craven.

D.T. Richardson.

—000—