

SIR ARCHIBALD GRANT OF MONYMUSK, BART. A "CARPING MAINTAINER" AND HIS DERBYSHIRE AGENTS

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Abstract: Archibald Grant had lead mining shares at Eyam Edge, Castleton, and other areas, and had a brief involvement with Olda Smelting Mill. He had difficult relations with almost all he had dealings with, and consideration of his wider business affairs, and his career as a Member of Parliament suggests good reasons why. In his early life at least, he was indeed a villain! His Derbyshire affairs show the problems associated with trying to manage remotely in the first half of the 18th century.

INTRODUCTION

Most shareholders in Derbyshire lead mines were local people, members of the gentry and their families, trades-people, and miners and mining agents. Very often their shares were inherited by others outside this close society, or as in the case of Sir Archibald, acquired, eventually, by marriage. He married Anne (Nancy) Potts, daughter and heiress of Charles Potts of Castleton, a lawyer, and owner of lands and shareholder in mines on Eyam Edge, and also mines at Castleton, including Oden. His voluminous papers - he had a prolific personal and business correspondence - now at the the Scottish Record Office yield enormous detail about the Monymusk Estate, near Aberdeen, about his career in London as a Member of Parliament, about his personal affairs, and of course about his lead mining and smelting activities in Derbyshire (SRO.GD345 - most of the lead mining section is held on microfilm at the Derbyshire Record Office No. D2270/1-2). There are strong indications in the microfilmed documents at the DRO that he had some financial difficulties, and that he was a difficult man to deal with, and of this much more is revealed in the House of Commons Sessional Papers (S.P. below) for 1732-1734, and in the papers in Edinburgh.

According to his biographer (Hamilton 1945; 1946), he ruled his Monymusk Estate for the best part of the 18th century, and died "full of years and honour", in 1778, aged 82. His estate was described as "perhaps the most beautiful in the whole of this beautiful country", and he himself has subsequently been revered as "an agrarian reformer and enlightened and progressive heritor (landlord)" If deservedly so, this must largely have been a product of the second half of his life: the first half culminated in discovery of a massive fraud, expulsion from the House of Commons, bankruptcy and imprisonment in the Fleet. Hamilton (1846) glosses his early London affairs as merely "less reputable"!

GRANT'S FAMILY

Grant was born in 1696, son of Sir Francis Grant, later Lord Cullen. The latter bought the Monymusk Estate, which is some twenty miles from Aberdeen. It was a small estate by Scottish standards, only some 10,000 acres. Cullen quickly regretted the purchase, blaming his financial advisers, and Archibald later described it as being poor and ill-equipped. There was an "old

Hooson (1747 article windpipes) referred to "cross-carping maintainers", and wished they could taste the foul air underground in windless places, as they then might have known what the miner abided to earn his wages in such places.

castle with battlements and six different roofs . . . confusedly and inadequately combined, and all rotten". The land was all raised and uneven, full of stones, many very large, and the "farmhouses, and even come millns and mans and scool, all poor dirty hutts."

In 1711 Grant was admitted an advocate in Edinburgh, where he appears to have acquired a range of friends, some of whom, like Grant himself, could be described as ethically disadvantaged, though they seem to have made the best of this disability! Five years later his father made him factor of the Monymusk estate, and in 1719, at the time of his first marriage, to Anne, daughter of James Hamilton of Pencaitland, the entire estate was made over to him. Before 1735, he was rarely in residence, and his brother Robert acted for many years as his factor, but Archibald clearly already had great ideas for improvement, rebuilding the house by 1720, and rebuilding and endowing the school (it proved difficult to maintain the endowment later). He began the series of improvements to the estate, similar to those of Coke of Holkham in this country, with which Grant's name came to be associated in Scotland (Hamilton 1945). His father died in late 1726, and though the date of demise of his first wife is not known, he had married Anne Potts by 1727. She died in 1742, and Grant went on to make two further marriages in his long life. He had two other brothers, Francis who sometimes came to Derbyshire on his behalf, and William, later Lord Prestongrange.

Grant was frequently away from his wife - in Scotland when she was in London, in London, detained and sometimes imprisoned in 1732-34 when she went to live at Monymusk, and because of frequently travelling about his business. Their son Archibald (II) was born soon after she went to Monymusk, and there were one or two daughters later. Sir Archibald and Lady Grant were prolific letter writers - several hundreds survive (SRO. GD345/passim), and it would be possible to gather together a great deal more information about their life. Despite the massive strains the marriage must have sustained, the letters between them (Dear Life, Dear Nancy) are very affectionate, though the strains come through in his gentle but (but always!) detailed chiding about her extravagance - usually stated at the end of the letter after a great deal of rather sanctimonious preliminaries which avoid the point carefully.

HIS LONDON CAREER AND THE CHARITABLE CORPORATION

In 1722, and again in 1727, he was elected Member of Parliament for Aberdeenshire, and from then until 1734 his main residence was in London, though this was not always

voluntarily. The combined expenses of improving the estate and maintaining the comfortable life he felt essential must have been very heavy, and it may have been because of this that he began a series of speculations in a variety of businesses and shareholdings (he was one of those who lost money in the South Seas Bubble). Perhaps from his Edinburgh days, or possibly since the financial attractions of London seemed particularly alluring to Scots businessmen, he came into contact with John Thomson, and soon began to owe him considerable sums of money. His accounts with Thomson are included in the Sessional Papers, but these, though substantial, clearly only included a part, possibly only a small part, of their dealings. Probably before his second marriage in 1727 he got rid of these debts by disposing a large mortgage on the estate of Sir William Gordon to Thomson, but he soon ran up a further substantial debt with him "the balance was for years against him" (S.P. April 1733), despite disposing of other assets. About this time he claimed his creditors were glad to receive 40 pence in the 100 in settlement.

The Parliamentary inquiry shows he acted in partnership with Thomson, and with an associate of Thomson, George Robinson. Together Thomson, Robinson and Grant owned or had shares in the Morven Mine in Scotland on which they expended £12,000, and a mine or mines in Norway which accounted for some £4000. Grant seems to have been largely responsible for managing these from London. He was associated with Sir John Meres the Chairman and substantial shareholder of the Mines Royal, and with Meres' nephew Thomas Hayley (probably Thomas Hayley, Ironmonger of London who was involved with the Stoneylee Mines on Stanton Moor, around 1750 (Willies 1975 p147)). There were also shares in Welsh mines, in Sir Thomas Mackworth's copper concerns, and in Derbyshire (at that time through his wife), and he set up a venture worked by Derbyshire miners at Strontian in Scotland. His mining affairs required the use of agents locally, but he took a very close interest in them indeed. Non-mining interests included a glasshouse in North Britain (Scotland) and a fifth share in two fishing boats.

In October 1725 Grant was one of four MPs appointed to manage the affairs of the *Charitable Corporation for Relief of the Industrious Poor by Assisting Them with Small Sums upon Pledges of Legal Interest*. This was one of the many companies set up in the decades prior to this time, with limited liability by charter in order to attract the shares of large numbers of people to cumulatively sometimes very large sums indeed. It was a more or less moribund association, with a capital of some £60,000, and in 1718 when its regulations were revised, clearly dealing in very small sums. It was really a sophisticated pawnbroking operation, with indeed some charitable aims: loans of sixpence were made on the deposit of a valuable pledge, without interest or charge, and between 6d and 2/6, at the legal rate of interest (5% annually) without charge. Higher sums were made available at a rate, including the charge, intended to produce 6% annually, and it was anticipated the business would yield about 10% gross profit, with which to pay shareholders: these last were a large number - Joseph Banks of Ashover was one such who bought 150 £5 shares for £1012 - 10s. The Company was managed by a committee of seven directors, of which three were a quorum, and to which Grant was appointed in October 1725. In November 1725 the committee appointed John Thomson as their Chief Warehouse-Keeper, and Grant, who, it will be remembered, was deeply in debt to him, was responsible for examining Thomson's sureties - these were later to prove inadequate.

A little after, in January 1726, five Directors, including Grant, set up a smaller "Committee of Accounts", which seems, thereafter, to have acted without the knowledge or approbation of the General Court (of directors), and this nearly always

included Grant in an active role, sometimes as Chairman, meeting at his house.

His and their problems seem to have begun in 1727, probably after his re-election, when the "Partnership of Five" was formed: This was of Grant, a Captain Burroughs, a Mr Squire, and Thomson and Robinson. It was not a well known arrangement outside the group, and nor was another "Partnership of Four", which excluded Grant. The partnerships were set up to acquire shares, which they did, including in the Morven Mine in Scotland, and in a variety of companies, including the South Seas Company and the York Building Company. Some of the dealings were listed in the Thomson/Grant accounts, but again most were not.

In 1728, the Committee applied for a licence to raise its capital to £100,000, which seems to have been done properly and openly, but a further rise to £600,000 in 1730 was applied for in a "clandestine manner". By this time it is clear that the current aims of the Committee of Accounts were rather different than were envisaged in the original charter, though no doubt Grant could, in strictly financial terms, justly consider himself a poor man because of his indebtedness, though at the time he failed to make this public too. To raise some of the increased capital the committee issued a series of £100 notes, a hundred at a time, which it was hoped would circulate as did the Bank's (of England) and the South Seas Company "at a premium". These raised the money, for a time, to pay the dividends on the shares, but were ultimately another part of their downfall.

Previous to Thomson's employment the keys to the warehouse were kept by two persons, both who had to be present when pledges were taken and loans were made. This was soon abandoned, and the keys of the second person were taken back, so Thomson could act alone. When the second keyholder protested, he was dismissed at Thomson's request. Grant chaired the meeting which endorsed this. By October 1726 Thomson was left at full liberty to make loans as he thought fit, and in a meeting of 8 November, (Grant not present) it was agreed that any single committee member could endorse loans of over £1000. By this time it must have been clear to the Committee that Thomson was not taking in adequate pledges for the amounts he was lending, and in fact he was by then lending the money on his own account, on commission to himself, and via several other brokers, including, most importantly, George Robinson. A week later it was agreed that loans could be made to all forms of borrowers, as acceptable to the Corporation, and eight months later Thomson could lend on his own authority up to £2000, and any larger sum with the approbation of the committee. Pledges, where bothered with, were generally of silver plate. It was a very great way from the original purpose indeed.

Small loans at first were made to members of the committee - certainly Grant, Burroughs, and Squire, but witnesses - assistants to Thomson - were not sure about the others, though they suspected Grant *et al* must have been aware of what was happening. However, the partnership of five soon had more substantial ideas. They conceived a scheme of buying then driving up the price of shares in the Charitable Corporation, which were then a little above par. Unfortunately, the shares had been entrusted to Robinson, who for his own purposes, had used them for collateral for loans, so when the price was right, the shares were not available to be sold, "which put the partners into consternation". However, since the three partners all owed substantial sums to Robinson, they did not "resent it" as much as they otherwise might, "and too late they found they had to support him". It was indeed too late. The price fell again.

Robinson's action left the three committee members of the partnership in desperate straits, still having to support Thomson

and Robinson in the "hopes of something turning out in their favour to enable them to make good the loss", and "being unwilling to submit they were ready to attempt anything, and that led them into many Schemes and Projects" (evidence of Thomson, S.P. April 1733). Amongst these was a scheme to purchase shares in the York Building Company, and they bought 500,000 of these when the price was low. Whilst they were satisfying themselves with the prospect of paying everyone what they owed, Robinson disposed of the shares, but "furnished no account to them". "Thus he cut their throat a second time". "On the back of this", on 3 February 1731 came the petition of the City of London to Parliament, praying that Parliament use its powers to investigate and aid

your petitioners who had been defrauded of the greater part of their capital amounting to several hundred thousand pounds, causing them " to become Great Sufferers, and many of them from a condition of Plenty reduced to the Utmost Degree of Misery and Distress.

Parliament quickly set up a committee of inquiry, and arrests of the warehouse-men followed, excepting of course the principal, John Thomson, who had absconded. According to his later evidence, a year after the main enquiry, he had been advised by Grant (speaking privately but, since they were just outside the door, acting for the others) to go abroad - he suggested Russia where he had a brother - and to ensure "he took proper care of the papers" (Burroughs a little after said to burn all). This it was hoped would get rid of him "until the storm passed", trusting that they could all then depend on one another's honour. "They engaged that all their lives they would share their last shilling with each other".

Unfortunately for Grant and his partners, although Thomson did join his brother in Russia, he returned a year later, full of remorse, and placed himself at the mercy of the House, filling out the details of the co-partnership's affairs considerably more frankly than Grant had felt himself able to do. Robinson also had disappeared. In the meantime Grant was named in a session behind locked doors and arrested by the Serjeant at Arms. He was in custody within the House for a few weeks, partly to encourage him to be more forthcoming with the Committee, but on petitioning the House, "being in a bad state of health, and much affected by his present misfortune, his further imprisonment must prove exceedingly grievous" and still "conscious of his innocence", he was freed on bail. Soon after, an Act was passed forbidding him, and others, from leaving the kingdom (ie. England) for a year, to allow evidence to be gathered, and to prevent assets being transferred. By this time he was a bankrupt, at least within England.

Burroughs was not forthcoming at his examination and went to the Fleet Prison to reflect. Grant was ostensibly more open and self-proclaimably sincere - but seems to have needed persistent prodding to recollect some 3 or 4000 pounds owed to Thomson, and similarly over other matters. He admitted he had been advanced sums of money by Thomson, including the £12,000 for the Morven Mines in Scotland, but nothing beyond what he believed Thomson could advance from his own resources. There was much other evidence to show he both knew what was happening, and had connived in it, and it was clear, as expressed in the evidence of Thomas Jones, one of the warehouse men, that the warehouse was a public shop, and not a secure depository for the pledges, that many loans were upon fictitious certificates, and that Thomson had got money personally for cashing and certifying he had goods. Thomas Jones had approached Grant, but had been told he was mistaken in his fears.

On examination, pledges were found in the warehouse amounting in value to some £40,000, and there were assets of

another £10,000 at the office. Thomson and Robinson, both of whom went bankrupt, owed a further £47,000. This resulted in a loss of £421,825 against the total capital of £499,332 - in modern money, equivalent to hundreds of millions of pounds.

In May 1732 the House resolved that Grant had taken sums from the Corporation without pledges and without paying interest; was guilty of being concerned in a co-partnership in which the "Greatest Part of their Capital amounting to several hundred thousands of pounds" of the Corporation had been employed and embezzled; and that he had been concerned in the fraud. He was then expelled from the House, and a further Act set up a mechanism to recover as much of the money as possible from him and other participants.

Subsequently, because of his bankruptcy, Grant was sent to the Fleet, staying there during much of 1733, being only rescued by his friends (Hamilton 1946). Somehow he managed to hang on to his Monymusk Estate, whilst the Derbyshire Shares were then (fortunately for him) still tied into a trust to benefit his wife.

Grant returned to Monymusk in 1734, but spent some twenty years in an incessant struggle to clear his debts - a struggle very much reflected in his business relationships in Derbyshire.

THE DERBYSHIRE CONNECTIONS

According to Hopkinson (1960), Charles Potts was a freeholder at Eyam Edge, who in face of litigation, agreed with Richard Bagshawee to, in effect, exchange mining rights for shares in the mines on the Edge. He was also involved with Bagshawee at Castleton, at Oden, and had interests in Longcliffe and Knab Mines which were also at Castleton. Charles Potts had a house at Castleton, and the house and contents, mines, a lease on the Oldhay or Olda Smelting Mill at Totley and other effects of his estate were held in a trust at Potts' death for the benefit of his daughter, Anne Potts, who became Lady Grant two years later, with Anne and Richard Bagshawee of the Oakes as trustees. The value was something like £3000, £1620 of which was put into the hands of Sir Archibald by 1730, and a further £73 later. Of the remaining £1600, £900 was put into annuities, whilst £400 was due on the Partington estate at Dukinfield, Cheshire. It was many years before this was sold and the amount realised, but no doubt it paid rent.

His widow and relict, Mrs Dorothy Potts, née Macleod, stayed on at the Castleton house some time after Anne's marriage c.1727, but ultimately moved to London, to St. Georges in Hanover Square, after which the Castleton house was many years for sale, without a tenant. Dorothy Potts was related also to John Wright, later of Eyam Hall. He referred to her as Aunt and it seems likely Charles Potts was his guardian - Wright and his son Thomas were later to have close lead mining connections with Grant.

In London, Grant and his family seem to have stayed for some time with Mrs Potts, who had a house and allowance settled on her. Characteristically, an agreement was drawn up for this - Mrs Potts may well, by now, have known of her son-in-laws ways, but Grant was always careful to ensure he received his due, even if less careful about debts and promises made to others:

Mrs Potts out of affection and regard agrees to keep Sir Archibald's two sons in board, washing and cloathes and linnens . . . for £12 per annum each . . . and £3 for the whole of the timethe present wet nurse shall stay. Also to keep Sir Archibald and his wife and maid at £17 per annum each, and Sir Archibald's two daughters at £17 for all but cloathes . . . Sir

Bradshaw Engine 1/48 Magclough Sough 1/12
New Engine 1/48 Crosslow Rake 1/12

For a time around 1730, Grant, had Mrs Potts' nephew, Thomas Tipping, then clearly only in his teens, staying with her. He was soon after to become Grant's Derbyshire agent or manager. Thomas Tipping's mother, Eli (zabeth?) Macleod, Mrs Potts' sister, was still alive, and lived at Castleton.

Both Dorothy Potts and Anne Grant seemed generally to have been content (or too overwhelmed) to allow Grant to manage their affairs - he was always in financial need from the time of the marriage, and it was doubtless advantageous to him - though on one occasion Dorothy Potts asked Wright to check her position. Bagshawee was far from sanguine about Grant and the Trust for his wife, and on one occasion arranged for seizure of Grant's goods when the quarterly payments from him were overdue, though these were bought back by Mrs Potts. Bagshawee vigorously resisted any move by Grant to get Anne Potts' estate completely in his hands (which proved fortunate for Grant at the time of his bankruptcy), including an "amicable" suit in Chancery. At her death in 1742 the benefit of the Potts' Estate passed to their children, including Archibald (II), then aged 11 years, and difficulties again arose.

It is clear that Grant, at that time, was still in considerable financial difficulties, with his estate in sequestration under a factor appointed by his creditors to ensure that interest was paid to them. As administrator of his son's estate, it was not long before Grant had entered into a bond for some £1800 to acquire control of the estate, paying interest on it. Grant wished to be allowed to control this interest, in order, he claimed, to be able to pay for his son's education. Both the factor and Bagshawee - whom Grant described as a "cautious, timorous, country gentleman", refused to allow this, but Grant obtained a legal opinion in his favour for the period of his son's puberty. Relations between Bagshawee and himself were undoubtedly strained because of the restrictions of the Trust, and this almost certainly had an effect on their business relationships also. Nevertheless a civilised veneer was kept up, and Bagshawee maintained his interest in the younger Archibald. In one of his last acts before his death, and at the time of the young Archibald's majority, Bagshawee wrote to Grant that he had called on his son with the intention of introducing him to the Duke of Devonshire and Lord Hartington, but young Archibald was just leaving for a tour of France. By this time the financial difficulties were possibly abating somewhat.

After Lady Grant died the Potts interest passed to the son, and was held in trust by Grant, presumably until early 1753 when he attained his majority. There is a suggestion, in 1749, by John Wright that Archibald II was a pleasingly compliant son, sober and regular, and with the "greatest happiness that youth can be blessed with, an early command over their passions". Although other concerns were given up soon after 1753, Archibald II, and his son in turn, Archibald (III) maintained their Derbyshire mining shares, probably unwisely, into the mid-19th century.

THE DERBYSHIRE MINING BUSINESS

Grant probably had no practical experience of mining before he married Anne Potts, though he had bought mining shares as part of his general business dealings but thereafter was in effect a shareholder in several substantial mines at Eyam Edge and of Oden at Castleton, plus several lesser.

Miners Engine 1/12 Old Engine 1/48
Middletons Engine 1/24 Founder Meers 1/12
Mills Engine 1/24 Takers Meers 1/12
Moorwoods Engine 1/24 Lords Meer at Founder Ground

At Oden there was 1/3 of 5½ shares (24ths) and 1/12th of 1/48th (which combined add up to 5/64ths., though such a vulgar fraction would not have been used in the accounting). There was also an ore house on Eyam Edge for the Potts' share of the ore, and any bought from other shareholders. This had been built about 1725/26, from whence ore was sent to the Olda Mill at Totley. This was leased by Potts, and, subsequently, the Grants, from Joseph Banks of Ashover.

These were heady years for the Eyam Mines and for Oden at Castleton. The latter between 1722 and 1736 (Rieuwerts 1976 p.46) produced some 30,589 loads of ore, about 2000 loads a year (some 500 tons) valued at around 21/- to 23/- a load), with the three years 1727-29 at about 4000 loads a year. Profits must have been especially good - probably 25-30% of the gross revenue - so the 5/64ths would have yielded perhaps £100 annually, over £200 in the especially good years. At Eyam Edge at all the mines in which Potts and the Grants had an interest, between March 1728 and September 1733 for which detailed quarterly figures are available (SRO GD345/824), some 25,354 loads were produced - almost 4000 loads per year. A 1/36th share in each and all was calculated as producing a gross profit of £1048. Since the most productive mine was Miners Engine (including the East End) in which he had a 1/12 share, the Grants probably received dividends from their shareholdings together of at least £2000, or £300-400 a year. Whilst the Eyam and Oden income was doubtless very gratifying for Lady Anne Grant (assuming that she received it), it was not a large sum for Sir Archibald to place against his debts at the crucial period of bankruptcy c.1727-28. It may, however, have helped convince him of the potential profits in mining, and have encouraged him to be the sole or main partner in his Knab and Longcliffe mines at Castleton, and the Strontian Mine in Scotland, though each was to remind him the account book has two sides, with the debit side often very prominent.

Bagshawee predominated in the management of both the Eyam and Oden mines. Notwithstanding Grant's taunts, made later in life, that Bagshawee was cautious and timorous, he was locally a dominating character, even though not in permanent control of a majority of shares in the mines. It was thus necessary for Grant to deal with him in both business and family affairs. It might have been advantageous for him to have allowed Bagshawee to control his mining affairs, and perhaps even his other affairs in Derbyshire, but this was only briefly considered, even though they became dauntingly complex to control at a distance.

ROBERT CHARLESWORTH

To begin with the Potts' Estate business continued as before, using Robert Charlesworth of Castleton, Gentleman, and shareholder at Oden, as his agent, steward and attorney. At his death in 1735, Thomas Charlesworth, the son, took over. His role was much reduced, and some of the Grant affairs were taken over by Thomas Tipping.

The mill at Olda continued work, with Grant taking up the share of ore from the Castleton and Eyam Mines, and buying some from others. In 1729-30 Charlesworth was asked to supply details of how the mill and the smelting business worked, including how much it would cost to (re)build a smelting mill - about £100 more or less, was Charlesworth's estimate, and it is clear that Grant was concerned at the costs there. Although there was a guaranteed supply of ore from both Eyam and Castleton, the small share owned by the Grants plus a quarter of

the lot (and cope money) from Eyam and Stoney Middleton did not amount to much, and it was probably not easy to compete with other smelters and ore buyers such as Milnes of Chesterfield. Competition for ore was less based on price than on influence with shareholders, and to whom they could be persuaded to sell their portions of ore. Grant was very remotely placed in this respect.

Some of the details of the business are of interest. Ore in 1732-33 was conveyed from the mines on Eyam Edge on horses, and at about 60 lb per Eyam dish of ore, each horse carried four dishes, in all about 240lb, at about 1½d a mile. Grant noticed that 353 grove loads (9 dishes per load of ore) took only 792 horse loads in the accounts, instead of the 794 he computed: of the many, often pettyfoggingly minor details, Charlesworth knew the answer to this one - they did not mind if they were undercharged. Others were harder to answer, and it is clear that Grant went through the accounts with a fine toothcomb - perhaps at that time, some of which was spent in the Fleet, he had little else to do!

At Olda Mill he found it took 11½ dishes to produce one pig (8 pigs per fodder). Smelting a fodder cost about 4/-, with smith(ing) at 2d, washing and knocking of slags 1/4, firestone for the hearth 1/-, white coal at most 7/-, and smelting of slags a further 32/-, giving an actual cost per fother produced of about 32/-. To this stage the slags belonged to the owner of the ore, but beyond this the slags could be smelted again "first old work" costing 11/3 per pig, and second old work 21-28/- a pig. This suggests in some cases it was possible to have four stages of smelting before the slag was considered finally exhausted. From the mill, lead was conveyed "23 long miles" at 17/2 per fodder, presumably to Bawtry or Stockwith. Pigs were notionally of 24 stones, so the at-mill fother was 2688 lb. An unusual item in costs was the prosecution of a man who was transported for stealing lead on the road to Bawtry - every mill was assessed £1-13-4 towards the cost of prosecution.

Decay of the mill - it had been out of action for a time as early as 1730, then repaired - and a lease renewal, plus an assessment of the likely profits from smelting by Tom Tipping his then agent, made Grant consider carefully, and about 1737, following a visit by his brother Francis, he gave the mill up. The lead was sent to Hull where it was shipped to London or, perhaps, Holland, by Charlesworth and Edge, suggesting that ceasing smelting was probably more a blow to Thomas Charlesworth than it was to Grant. There is a growing note of asperity by 1730 in letters from Grant to Charlesworth, and the detailed figures for Eyam Edge Mines' production considered above had to be got from Mr Milnes of Chesterfield, via John Wright of Eyam, since both Bagshawee and Charlesworth were in dispute with Grant and not communicating.

FFRANCIS POTTS

What might be termed the outdoor work at Castleton was done by Francis Potts, who first took instructions from Charlesworth, then acted directly for Grant. By 1743 this arrangement came to grief, with Potts, clearly a relative through Lady Grant, writing to Grant (26th September):

Sir, According to your order I have looked at Castleton after your mines and sent you an account for last year whereby you see what the mines have lost . . . As you have been pleased to discharge me for looking after your affairs the ore ever since the end of the account lies at the mines and the wages unpaid hope you will allow me something for looking to the mines for the last year

and on a note at the bottom suggesting the miners had got what

recompense they could!

Sir, I have found no materials at the mine for your share having no money to buy any withall.

THOMAS TIPPING

Thomas and Robert Tipping were the sons of Eli Macleod, sister of Lady Anne Grant. They were presumably the sons of an earlier marriage, and in 1733 Eli was in abject poverty and wrote to Grant for relief, suggesting she had again been widowed:

I am in so much trouble, I do not know what I must do unless your honour will be so kind as to assist me. I am in so much debt I cannot get out of the house . . . Mr Rogers I am indebted to so he does just what he pleases with me . . . the grove gets profit every reckoning and I hope it will pay your honour very soon . . .

In a letter from Castleton written in early 1730, to Grant his uncle by marriage, Thomas Tipping asked if there was hope of some minor business position. As a result, the Grants had taken in Thomas to their London home, and clothed him and kept him, to determine his capacity. According to "the case against Thomas Tipping" drawn up by Grant some thirteen years later, when he was about to dismiss him, on arrival he had had but an indifferent education, and Grant advised close application to reading, writing and accounts, but he did not make the progress expected.

To give him some business experience Grant sent him to assist with the Strontian Mine in Argyle, where Grant had despatched a number of Derbyshire miners to open up the mine. He had bought the mine in 1729 for just over £50, and by 1731 had expended something like £200 on it, so it was only a small venture, little more than a trial. Not long after, the miners, some of whom, like William Drabble, had worked on the Eyam mines, were having a hard time. The mine was remote, communications poor, the weather often appalling, and food and supplies not easily obtained, even when Grant deigned to allow them any money. Unpaid and without money they were unable to leave, but equally not willing to work, and it must have been a most difficult assignment for a young man, though perhaps he got off to a reasonable start by bringing some money with him. Grant himself went to Strontian in August 1730, and in a letter to his wife complained

We have had more difficulties here than I imagined possible from the bad weather and ill nature and villany of the people

The mine closed, or at least payments ceased, in late 1731 or early 1732. By early 1733 Tipping was back in Castleton, and wrote to Grant offering himself in any position. His experience in Scotland had clearly scarred him, and he would rather

it was anything but mining, for I never was used to climbing down shafts in my life, for I durst not go down shafts 20 or 30 fathoms if they would give me the best grove in the Peak, for we had no such thing at Strontian . . . (where the entry was by adits at different levels up the steep hillside) . . . but to take their (ie. others) opinion I could do pretty well and think it is a very good business. Smelting I should take some delight in and if there was any prospect of it I would take a great deal of pain to make myself master of it.

In reply, Grant told him to busy himself learning the business of mining and smelting, and to apply to John Hall of Castleton, the overseer of the Oden Mine, for a position as an agent. The duties were clearly not very remunerative, since in the following

January Robert Tipping wrote to Grant on behalf of himself (requesting £5) and his brother (Thomas - who needed £15). However, two years later he began acting for Grant as his Derbyshire agent at the Eyam Mines, at first assisting Charlesworth, and then when Robert Charlesworth died, becoming the factor and attorney to Thomas Charlesworth, clearing-up the mining affairs. From Grant he was paid £20 a year, and he probably also received some emolument from Charlesworth, whilst expenses were claimed for attending mining meetings or going to the smelting mill etc, which together must have been effective in lifting him from the life of poverty with his mother.

His study of writing and accounts had, at least, left him with a clear hand, and his work is neatly laid out, indeed unusually so for the period, but dispute between them was probably inevitable. It had the usual cause, shortage of money and in June 1739 Tipping wrote to Lady Anne Grant, which suggests matters between Grant and Tipping were already strained. Tipping had the excuse that his concern was for was the Potts' Estate. He wrote in a formal way with Edensor as his address,

Madam, I shall take care to see you paid what is due to you before I part with your account. I don't know what Sir Archibald designs to do here. I have no money in my hands to pay anyone, and there is £50 wages to the groovers which is unpaid as it has been this long time. They wont be put off much longer. I've sent you two accounts about a month ago. There is £60 due, but as you say, what is accounts without money.

The letter was endorsed by an angry Sir Archibald, " I will never write him more, which is effectual discharge", claiming that Tipping had failed to pay both the groovers and Mrs Potts, despite having the money in hand, but in fact Tipping was kept on, perhaps because of Lady Anne, and the difficulty of replacing him. At the root of this was the position of the mines, with a substantial fall in lead prices for a decade after 1736, and poor results at both Oden (Rieuwerts 1976) and Miners Engine (Willies 1992 p.225).

Low production and prices probably had much to do, also, with the ending of smelting at the Olda Mill, with which Tipping was for a time involved. In 1738 Tipping was instructed to consider if any advantage remained over smelting as opposed to selling of the ore, and following a visit by Francis Grant, that aspect of the business ended. *

In 1741/42, Grant carefully audited all Tipping's accounts since 1735 - thirteen in all, and drew up a list of 21 errors and refused to settle the accounts claiming because it was Tipping's errors, he ought not to re-imburse him for the journey Tipping had made to Monymusk! None of the errors seem large, and no doubt were vexacious, but Grant was always a keen auditor, and frequently used the device of finding an error as a means of delaying payment.

Grant then employed George Langstaffe, the Stoney Middleton and Eyam Barmaster and agent to Sir William Abdy, to go through the errors with Tipping: he reported that Tipping accepted most of the errors and was inclined to be reasonable - but insisted on payment of his salary since his appointment to his dismissal, and the £15/15s still owed to him for the journey to Scotland! Attempts to get John Hall and Joseph Wilson, overseers at the Oden Mine, to take over Grant's affairs were apparently refused - "from their (undisclosed) expressions,

* The mill was then taken over by Richard Bagshawee who introduced the cupola method of smelting there with little success (Willies 1971).

neither wished to meddle" in them, and Langstaffe recommended a "good understanding may again be established" between them, but by August 1743 Tipping had had enough:

Hope account will give complete satisfaction . . . altered nothing but my salary, journey into Scotland, Mr Wright's money, and the pig of lead which I think is nothing but what is right. I too opine it honorable that I would have the account settled in a friendly way"

Seven months later a Mr Buxton wrote to Grant

Whilst Mr Tipping had charge of your Derbyshire concerns the rent was regularly paid (on land at Castleton), but since I have not had the opportunity of obtaining anything

He was not the only one to have such difficulties.

A TIME OF CONFUSION 1743-48

After Tipping departed, Grant's concerns appear to have been split up between several people: in September 1746 Grant noted that he had left all to Bagshawee's management, and later accounts show "Mr Bagshawee for Mr Grant" in a list for the disposal of ore, but on 21 December 1747 Bagshawee wrote to Grant that Hall had quit the business of keeping the reckoning and paying the wages at the Eyam Mines, "so it is necessary for you to employ someone to to take care of your affairs there as well as Castleton". In his reply Grant included a notice giving authority for John Hall to manage his affairs, including the disposal of the Castleton House and the Partington estate in Cheshire. Grant was also minded to give the business to John Wright of Eyam Hall in February 1747, but it is not clear if this was done immediately, though the later recriminations suggest he was acting in this way early the next year, and in late 1749 Wright noted his "account were ready". Langstaffe managed some aspects, and in 1748 Tom Tipping again seems to have had some involvement, since he "had not called Langstaffe to account for not allowing him the current price". Thomas Wright offered to manage all of Grant's Derbyshire affairs in 1750, and was appointed.

Partly this confusion was due to internal politics between various shareholders, and partly to Grant's tardiness in forwarding money, which came to a head during these years.

GEORGE LANGSTAFFE AND JOHN AND THOMAS WRIGHT

In the 1740s and early 50s Grant's financial position remained very weak, sometimes disastrously weak. An itemised list of Grant's debts in 1748 amounted to £27,794-13-00, which reflected a reduction the previous year of some £3697-9-00, and he was desperately trying to realise assets (he listed about £10,000 as suitable for disposal) to reduce this level of indebtedness (SRO. GD 345/847/28). The relationship and problems between Grant and his Derbyshire agents co-incided with this desperate position, and were unusually difficult.

John Wright of Eyam Hall, it may be remembered, had furnished lists of the Eyam Mines production and profits as early as 1733 when Mr Bagshawee and Robert Charlesworth were (independently) in dispute with Grant. John Wright was a nephew (or cousin) of Lady Anne Grant, and it is likely that the friendly connection was maintained, but it certainly began to flourish about 1746 or 1747, Wright was concerned in both the Eyam Mines and the Oden Mine, and clearly felt that affairs there were not proceeding as well as they might, and, as usual

during difficult times everything came under scrutiny, as Wright wrote to Grant in February 1747:

The mines at present are but indifferent . . . little or no profit and am afraid the partners will not be satisfied with the profitts going forward to clear the arrears . . .

Mr Langstaffe never had your ore at Oden, John Hall disposed of it, 'tis said to his son, but the price I do not know. There is strange management at Oden, and if your affairs admit of taking a Derbyshire journey, it might be possible to put things on a different footing.

Where profits and losses were normally settled at each reckoning, arrears normally could only come from one or more partners having failed to pay-up, so clearing arrears had to be done at the other partners expense, thus Wright's doubts. The friendly relationship between the two families is demonstrated in a postscript to his letter - the table linen sent by Grant to Wright's wife had fallen into the hands of highlanders. On the rear of the letter Grant made a note to propose Wright for the management of his mines, with someone under him, and that a note should be written to Hall (one of the overseers at Oden), which later comments emanating from Hall suggest he did.

Soon after, Langstaffe seems to have recommended a practical miner, called Bacon, to both Wright and Grant as suitable as a mining agent, and in July 1747, Thomas Wright, on behalf of his father who was ill, wrote

My father and some of the partners at Oden are for making a regulation there, they have too great reason to complain of the overseers for they have set their copes to their relations at too great a price, and have had the ore at their own price, which is considerably under the worth it could have been sold for . . . Mr Bacon was sent to go down (Oden). Some copers had been set at 2/-, some 3/- a load too much to get ore, so he was desired to be at the setting next bargain (time) and did set some copes at 2/- some 3/- less a load than at the previous quarter. If you will join with Mr Radcliffe and my father there will be a majority against Mr Bagshawe, and then I hope the mine will get a handsome profit, but with John Hall and Joseph Wilson, I am afraid there never will be a profit.

Mr Bacon had clearly made a considerable impact. The regulation referred to was probably similar in intent to those issued somewhat earlier at Eyam Edge (see Willies 1992), which limited the powers of the overseers and increased the control on the workforce. As John Hall was currently considering buying the Potts' house at Castleton, which had been empty some 20 years by this time, it was probably not a prudent time to combine to dismiss him.

As might be expected, all this was not pleasing to Bagshawee. On the 8th of August 1747 in a letter to Grant:

As to Oden Mr Wright has complained to Mr Radcliffe and Mr Jackson . . . I met em all and heard all the complaints which proved nothing and as for Bacon setting copes etc. to the advantage of the proprietors is without any foundation. When you come you can hear all and determine for yourself.

Bagshawee also took the opportunity to criticise Bacon and Wright, for the latter had put Bacon into the house (the Potts' House at Castleton) and Bacon had opened some of the windows (to air the house) without consulting anyone. This appears to be Wright trying to sell the house, but this and other actions there were soon to cause trouble between Grant and the Wrights.

This makes it clear that Wright and/or his son had indeed been

appointed to manage some of Grant's Derbyshire affairs. He was soon angling to do more, and, as well as keeping the pressure on at Oden, in the general backbiting, took every opportunity to denigrate Langstaffe. On the 3rd of December 1747 (Wright to Grant):

Ye abuses at Oden are not yet made apparent . . . but they are . . . to Mr Radcliffe and Mr Jackson as well as the rest of the partners, except Mr Bagshawe who has the lots and tythe and has smelted his own ore, therefore has not been under the same circumstances. There has for many years been a combination among ye ore-baggers at Oden, vizt. Milnes, Wilson and Hall . . . villanously treated.

and refers to the prospective visit by Bacon. Then, only two days later:

Bacon . . . enquired into the price of ore . . . 18/1 a load upon which he informed my son the ore was very much undersold, and advised them to take it out of Wilson's hands . . . did so. It was then sold immediately for 20/-. Although there was no advance in the price of lead it kept at that till the last measure day at Oden when Halls raised the price to 25/6. You may judge from this how villainously we have been treated, for when the price of ore was 17/- the price of lead was as at present.

I have spoken to Mr Langstaffe about the price of Eyam Edge ore. His answer was, twas Halls malice, and he did not doubt he could satisfy you very easily

Bagshawee was very circumspect about Langstaffe, and the price he had been obtaining or giving for the Eyam Edge ores, and wrote, 21 December 1747, that he had never had dealings with Mr Langstaffe over ore buying, and did not know what arrangement Grant had made with him. More importantly he began to gently but pointedly chide Grant over arrears at the mines on Eyam Edge, notably Miners Engine

I have nothing from you nor Mr Gardom . . . there is a prospect of the east part of the mines being advantageous . . . I hope you will take care to come and settle it. . . . what Mr Wright and Mr Tipping will do in the arrears for (the miners') wages I see not . . . pretty large . . . but for regard for you . . .

this last phrase clearly suggesting that legal action to recover the money was overdue. Since Eyam Edge was out of the jurisdiction of the Barmoot Courts, taking action over unpaid accounts was not the simple procedure of arresting the shares and related proportion of ore that it was in customary areas, and nor did the defaulter have the possibility of simply walking away providing he was willing to forfeit his shares in all mines in the area. In February action was indeed taken against Gardom in Chancery over his debt of £400 at Miners Engine, and his stocks were forcibly sold to pay off the arrears. There is an implication in Bagshawee's letter that Tipping was responsible for at least some of the arrears, but whether this was as agent to Grant is not clear. Although Wright may have been behind with his own calls, it is clear he was paying (or not paying) Grants calls. This was a quite usual procedure, but agents not surprisingly soon became tired of paying out without timely re-imburement.

Wright however continued his campaign against Langstaffe, perhaps calculating that by handling more of Grant's affairs, he would gain income to place against outgoings. In January 1748:

"I have failed to get the accounts from the Barmaster . . . Langstaffe did not know if he had any accounts to settle with you, having done so with Hall . . . I think a threatening letter from you directed to himself might be of service"

Langstaffe was clearly angry about Wright, and in June 1748:

... would have answered earlier but that I was resolved to try how far the ill-grounded malice of Mr Wright would extend. He has broke off all correspondence and has publicly declared he would do me a prejudice if ever it lay in his power. Upon what motive I am not capable of judging. I solemnly declare I never wished him or any of his family any damage, on the contrary I am willing at all times to do anything in my power to serve them.

In the meantime more pressures were put on Grant to provide cash to fulfill his obligations. Bagshawee wrote to him on the 8th of May 1748 advising him not to rely on anything said by Gardom, and as to Grant's affairs at the mines, he would do all he could - but - there had been a meeting of the partners and Mr Wright and (another - illegible) had bills against Grant amounting to over £398, "both of which was found" (ie. agreed as definitely owed), and if he (Wright) gets a grant of possession "cannot see how I can prevent them taking possession, so you must take some method to make it up". On the 28th of the same month, Bagshawee wrote regarding Oden, which, since it was in the High Peak King's Field, was under the customary laws. There the ore had been arrested in the Barmoot Court, probably by the unpaid miners or suppliers, and could not be sold, causing considerable loss to the partners. The probable loss of the defaulting shares as a consequence was not directly mentioned, but Grant would certainly be aware of the likelihood. However, since the mine was clearly not making a profit at that time, it is likely both that the other proprietors would not wish to shoulder the burden of the payment of past calls on Grant, plus a greater proportion of present and future costs. Also Bagshawee still retained his friendly interest, even if not legal interest, in the Potts' Estate - now, six years after Lady Anne Grant's death, for the benefit of their children, who were the proper beneficiaries of the Miners Engine and Oden Mines.

In August Bagshawee again wrote to Grant, this time in courteous but unequivocal terms;

Except you find some method of immediately raising the money you (may) expect there is no avoiding the possession of the mines ... the Court (the Barmoot) will be held very speedily

Grant immediately wrote to his agents, including Thomas Wright and a Mr Shaw of Manchester who handled the Potts Partington Estate, for money, and at about the same time instituted a delaying action, in the form of a memorial, over claims against him regarding Miners Engine, of which 1/12 was held for the children "who are infants (whose) mother is dead" (the elder - Archibald II was about 16 at this time, and there were one or two daughters also). The charges due on the mine were caused since

it was deprived of ore, and which the misfortunes of their father prevented his enabling them to clear ... by which the poor infants will lose their right ... though there is enough ore on bank (ie. at the mine surface) to pay their proportions. He is informed the dispute is occasioned by a mis-representation of facts to the Lords ... not likely to come to a speedy issue, tho at vast expence

This professional lawyer's (ie. Grant's) masterpiece of half-truths, evasions and threats went on to request that the trial might be put off using the privilege of the Lords, or (equally unlikely to occur) asking that they put on a speedy trial as otherwise it would be ruinous to them, or to "favour them in such shape that they may not be hurt". What actually happened is not known, but the tactic succeeded, and somehow the money was eventually raised to keep the mines.

John Wright, the father, wrote to Grant in December, apologising for not replying to his September letter. He had been unable to get accounts out of Mr Langstaffe, who, following his brother's death, had been away up north a great deal. - adding it was not civil usage which would make him act an honest part.

I wonder that Mr Bagshawee should send you such menacing letters, you may depend upon it that nothing shall happen to your disadvantage about the mines ... he's been the ruin of some of his partners, and will, I think, be a plague to the rest of us as long as he lives.

The Wrights' actions over the considerable amounts due to them from Grant only emerge in a later long complaint against them, as usual, written in the third person by Grant in 1756 and it is possible some of their actions only came to Grant's notice later. They had earlier drawn his attention to the deteriorating state of the Castleton house and its furniture for want of fires and use, and had presumably put Bacon in because of this, and went on to suggest the furnishings be sold in order to pay the charges on the mines. Thomas Wright accordingly sold the furnishings,

except for some which he carried to his own house, which Sir Archibald would frankly have given him, but used the money himself which he had raised from the sale, by which Sir Archibald's mines were threatened with forfeiture and to prevent which Sir Archibald was obliged to make the provision tho then very inconvenient for him.

That the details came out later, is suggested in that Thomas Wright had voluntarily taken on the management of Grant's mines, thus leaving himself open to long waits for his money, but both had confidence enough in each other for Wright to offer his services in 1750, as an attorney, for the whole of the Derbyshire affairs, as a result of which Grant made him his agent for "three counties" ie, Derbyshire, Cheshire (the Partington Estate), and Lancashire, from which William Shaw managed the Partington Estate. Within a couple of years, however, Wright had obviously tired enough of the hazards of managing his mines that he had put those affairs into George Barker's hands.

The normal consequence of relationships with Grant did not follow until 1756, when amidst protestations of friendship and continuing amity towards the Wright family, Grant brought up a long list of complaints. Wrights, father and son, had settled accounts satisfactorily regarding the moneys owed on the mines (probably mainly owed by Grant!), with Grant relying solely on Thomas' signature (clearly Grant was more respectful with Wright than he had been with Tipping), and Grant had not charged Wright with interest on moneys outstanding, but the balance on the accounts was still outstanding, "notwithstanding many earnest but friendly requests by letter". He had entrusted Wright to receive revenues from his estates and even to sell the Partington Estate, thus offending William Shaw, but none of these affairs was accomplished, and neither were the accounts and states available to Grant. If he could not get justice voluntarily, he would obtain satisfaction by "means just tho' disagreeable", and the consequence would be expensive and disagreeable to both. The Wright's response is not available, but can be anticipated.

Under the management of the Barkers and later Wyatt (Willies 1983), the Derbyshire mining affairs proved much more friendly, perhaps since Archibald II must have had an increasing role in them. In 1754 Grant had an appraisal made of his mines including Oden by George Heyward, whose appointment as overseer he later supported at Miners Engine, and despite mixed prospects was encouraged enough to continue his involvement. In a postscript to his report, Heyward added his masters had

desired him to "let you know Mr Leek is much impatient about non-payment of bills".

CONCLUSIONS

Sir Archibald Grant was probably an extreme example of a "carping maintainer" in the Derbyshire mines, quick to grasp profits, and quicker still to complain and apportion blame to others, though he was far from alone in being tardy in paying their debts. Partly this was due to the system of not normally allowing retention of profits in good reckonings against poorer, though any serious shareholder in mines must have been aware that investment would sometimes need to be made, and that losses were a normal feature of high risk adventuring. Grant was a person with a plausible manner, but underneath, an unpleasant persona, at least outside his immediate family, carping and far from straightforward in his business relationships, of which the lead mining is only a sample. Even by the litigious standards of his time, he was always ready to invoke or more likely, to threaten to invoke the law against others, and his papers show a constant involvement in legal suits.

He was part of a rush of Scots to London to take advantage of the 1707 Union of England with Scotland, and in his early life developed into an unscrupulous villain, who in trusting his fellow thieves may have suffered himself by the same means he was prepared to inflict on others: his early career with those of his colleagues, if conducted nowadays, would undoubtedly finally fill the columns of both "tabloid" and "serious" newspapers. Parallels with modern ethical standards, in politics and business, might easily be drawn, and it may perhaps be reassuring that we do not appear to be any worse nowadays than in the past!

Difficult as he himself was, his Derbyshire difficulties reflect also the very great problems of remote business management, where formal training was still very rare, perhaps especially in England as compared to Scotland; and where all too often a remote shareholder was looked on as a goose to be plucked.

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