

CARLTON PLACE NAMES

The sixth volume of the survey of the place-names of Leicestershire has just been published*. The name *Carlton* is thought to be a partly Scandinavianised form of the Old English *Ceorlenatum*, derived from the plural form of *ceorl* meaning churl or free peasant with *tun* meaning a farmstead, village or estate – *Ceorl (en) a tun* – the village of free peasants.

In Old Norse *karl* means a freeman of the lower class while *tun* means a farmstead. It is therefore significant that the earliest documentary references to the village are *Karlintone* (1202), *Karleton*, *Karilton* (1200-1250), and *Kareltun* (1250). *Carletone* is first recorded in 1277, followed by *Carleton* (1279), and *Carlton* (1387). The *tun* ending is shared with many local villages, and often indicated that the settlement was part of a larger estate.

The name *Bufton* derives from the Old English *abufan* – *tun* meaning above the settlement.

The specific name *St Andrew's Church* is noted from 1877, but the earlier name of *St Michael's Church* (in *Nichols* 1795-1811) is not listed. The church was originally a chapelry of *Market Bosworth*, and was described in 1220 as *capellam de Karleton* in the *Matriculus* of *Hugh de Wells*. In this connection, the field names *Michael Meadow*, *Michaels Close*, and *Michaels meadow* might refer to church land rather than a family with the surname *Michael*.

The name *Friezeland* first appears in 1252 as *Freseleye*, deriving from the Old English *Frisa* or *Fresa* meaning a native of *Friesland* (in the NW Netherlands), and possibly the Old English *leah* meaning a woodland clearing. The name of *Lineage Farm* derives from *lin*, the Old English and Old Norse word for flax, and means the place where flax grows.

Field names are a rich source of information on topography, taxation, land use and ownership. Many field names date from before 1750, and some probably date back to the days of the open-field system – for example *the midle fielde*, *the Northe fielde*, *the common pasture*, and *Frisbees hadland*. The latter derives from the Old English *heafod-land* meaning a headland left to turn the plough, either belonging to a family with the surname *Frisby*, or from *Frisby*, or both. *The Ten Lands* meant a close formed by ten lands or selions of a former great open field.

Shackerstone Walk was previously known as *Occupation Road*, a common name which often meant a private road for the use of the occupiers of the land, and signified an access road through what had been a great open field before enclosure took place.

The Stone pitt fielde, *stonpitt furlong* (both 1625) and *stonpit hedge* (1621) refer to the *Stone Pits Field* (for location see the map in *Little Lane*). *Bull hoke* (1625) and *Bull hoke furlong* (1621) deriving from the Old English *hoc* meaning a hook or projecting piece of ground later evolved into *Bull's Nook* from the Middle English *nok* meaning a nook of land (now 7 and 9 *Main St*). *Pinfold Close* (1635) was the *pinfold*, where straying livestock would be corralled and kept (now *Field Farm*).



Two field names in Carlton – *The Bugnall* and *Goblen's Flat* – together with *Goblin Flat* in Market Bosworth, and *The Goblin* in Shackerstone are said to be associated with a local superstition to do with hobgoblins. I have not come across this before, and would welcome information about any local tales or superstitions involving goblins or similar legendary creatures.

The Place-name Survey is based on documentary sources, but the list does not include the mysterious Hoop Hall, or Hoop Hall Gate which are only known from a Turnpike Act (see the last issue). The survey does not include house or farm names, so there is no reference to Carlton Hall or Carlton Manor, or to names which have not been written down such as Harry's Grave or Nanny Sand's Corner.

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