

There is about twenty Officers family's, and

n he desire very much to settle in this kingdom.

and to imploy good workmen, and Artisans,

rey may not over-charge y Nation, so

charitable as to receive them in their dispersion

and it is that they may be grateful, & ina.

prospect to procure all y benefit possible to y

more ease to all y expences of y Kingdom,

to support y ordinary, & extraordinary charges

thereof, to behave themselves, according

to y Cans, & customs of y Country, to live

with vnion, and well agree with y inhabi=

tants thereof, imploying them without any

distinction in their works, and to lead such

a life that they may never have any reason

to complain against them, in a word to

That place which seems to them most

convenient for this design, is y Forest of

Phawood between Notting ham, & Manifeld,

this Forest belong's to y King, it is forty miles round, part of it are woods of high trees,

become ons same Geople

Nation, to contribute freely, and with

manufacture some thing on other, so that

( sort sword ther good Gentlemen all french refugees,

## INTRODUCTION

The ways that people interact with trees and woods have varied dramatically through time and from place to place. Today many are concerned about the loss of woodland and might agree with Lord Byron's Childe Harold in relishing the forest where 'mortal foot hath ne'er or rarely been' and oppose this to the solitude to be found in 'the crowd, the hurry, the shock' of society.

Others find forests threatening and troubling: indeed woodland clearance has often been celebrated as a sign of increasing population and a surrogate for civilisation.

Nottinghamshire has an exceptionally rich heritage of woods and forests. In the east of the county there are many ancient woodlands formerly vital for fuel and timber and now valued and managed for nature conservation. Towards the west, Sherwood, one of the most famous forests in the world, has a dynamic history of monastic and royal power in the medieval period, and later the rise of powerful aristocratic estates and state forestry.

The word forest conjures up images of places dominated by trees and wildness, of sylvan nature untouched by the hands of humans. But the reality of forest history is much more complicated. There was no direct connection between the idea of forest and the concept of woodland: medieval forests were administrative units more akin to a modern national park than extensive areas of planted trees.

Forests are sites where the competing interests and demands of villagers, aristocrats, farmers and kings have been played out over centuries. Rather than natural woodlands, they are places dominated by the management of wild and domesticated animals, and by the

commercial control of trees. But they are also places of myth whose landscapes and legends have provided inspiration to poets, novelists and painters.

Right: Robin Hood and His Adventures by Paul Creswick, (London, c1903). East Midlands Special Collection. Not 1.S16 CRE



Above: Plea for 20 French officers and their families and other French refugees (probably Protestant Hugenots) to build a village in Sherwood Forest under the protection of the Duke of Newcastle as Chief Ranger; c1680s. Papers of the Holles Family in the Portland (Welbeck) Collection, Pw 2/613

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