

HEREFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL NEWS



HAN 74 2003

**WOOLHOPE CLUB
ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH SECTION**

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HAN

Herefordshire Archaeological News (HAN) is published by the Archaeological Research Section (ARS) of the Woolhope Field Naturalist's Club, Charity No. 521000. HAN is free to members of the Archaeological Section, who also receive a bi-annual Newsletter. HAN is also available for sale to non-members from Roz Lowe (address inside cover). - cost for HAN is £5.00, postage included.

Annual membership of the ARS is £5.00 - enquiries to Secretary. This is additional to membership of the Woolhope Club which is £13.00 single or £15.00 per couple annually - enquiries to the Hon. Sec:

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Notes for potential contributors to HAN

CONTENT & OVERALL STYLE

The Archaeological Research Section (**ARS**) is interested primarily in investigating ancient remains on or under the ground of Herefordshire and its boundaries. All articles published in HAN should be related to such physical or archaeological features, which may have been visited already in ARS field trips. Papers which consist solely of historical research, and which do not have the possibility of physical investigation, are more suitable for submission to the main Woolhope Club for consideration.

Contributors should only submit papers which state the reason **why** they have been written and **what** they are seeking to say. For example, it may be proposed that a farmhouse includes the remains of a medieval religious settlement. Physical evidence [stonework, earthworks, aerial photos, ground features relating to early maps etc.] should be described, as well as archival research. [ARS members would be delighted to carry out a field investigation for potential contributors who have a proposal based on local knowledge or archival evidence only.] Please do not include in your text lists of deeds, wills etc. unless they have a direct relevance to the point of your article. In any case, the details should be listed as footnotes or an appendix.

If you need any more information please contact any member of the Editorial committee. (addresses inside HAN69 onwards, or ARS newsletters 1998 onwards) Contributions should reach the editorial committee not later than 1st May if they are to be considered for publication in HAN for that year.

TEXT

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If you send a contribution on paper, it must be typed, unless very short. PLEASE make sure that the typewriter ribbon used is clear, and that you do not use creased paper. Corrections should be made in the margin in pencil and on no account should any be made in the actual text. The software used to scan your text does not like to find anything other than text, writing between the lines, or text which is crooked. Please number your pages lightly in pencil at the bottom, and leave good margins.

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Footnotes should be numbered consecutively throughout each article with figures in the superior position and outside punctuation marks. Footnotes should be typed on separate sheets at the end of the article.

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All **acknowledgements** should normally be omitted from the main text and placed in a paragraph headed 'Acknowledgements' at the end of the article,

Field Meeting to Hatfield by Rosamund Skelton

About 10 members met at Hatfield Church on a bright sunny day, 7 April 2002. The purpose of the meeting was to look at the field evidence for the location of the medieval settlements of Great and Little Hatfield which are recorded in the following documentary sources.

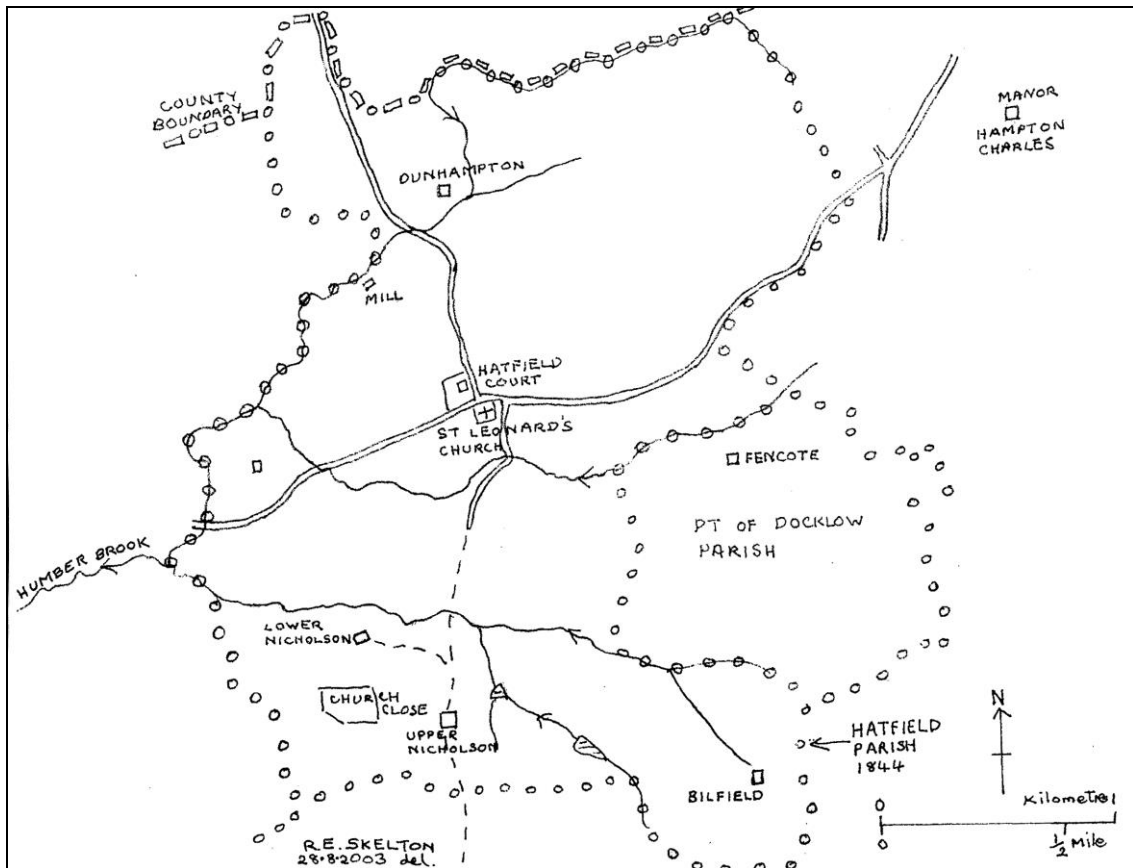


Figure 1 Sketch map of Hatfield

Domesday Book

These lands mentioned below lay in Leominster (lands) before 1066:

1.11 Hugh Donkey holds Hatfield. Leofled held it. 5 hides; of these 2 hides and one virgate paid tax. In lordship 3 ploughs. A reeve, 2 riding men, 2 Frenchmen and 8 smallholders with 6 ploughs; a further 2 men who hold nothing. Value before 1066 £ 4; now 100s.

1.27 William (of Ecouis) also holds Hatfield, and Ralph from him. Aelmer held it. 1/2 hide. In lordship 1 plough; 2 slaves. The value was 65d; now 8s.

The "Leominster Lands" are those originally belonging to Leominster Abbey which was dissolved in 1046. The main 80 hide manor of Leominster was held by the king having been held in the time of Edward by Queen Edith. However these "lands had already been separated from the main Leominster estate before 1066. The obvious deduction from the size of these two holdings is that the 5 hides represents Great Hatfield referred to in later medieval documents while Little Hatfield represents the 1/2 hide holding. It is interesting to note that both these holdings had increased in value since 1066. Another significant aspect of the Tithe Map parish of Hatfield is that up to 1815 it contained a large area of open unenclosed Common land. In fact this "common or waste land called Lockleys Heath" was shared by Hatfield parish and the hamlet of Hampton Charles which was part of the neighbouring parish of Bockleton and it was only in 1815 that the land owners and tenants agreed "that the western side of such Common didbelong to the Manor and Parish of Hatfield ... and that the Eastern and North Eastern part did ... belong to the Manor and Hamlet of Hampton Charles". The Commons were "separated by a sod line or trench lately put there for that purpose." (HRO L13/10) Both of the Lords of the Manors involved received 1/16 of the relevant commons. The name Hatfield

means "open heath land" and this common or waste land accounted for nearly a quarter of the acreage of the parish prior to 1815.

Documentary references to Chapels/Churches

The earliest reference is to the consecration of a burial ground at Hatfield about 1150 in the Leominster Priory Register folio 58. However the dues were still to be paid to Leominster and the chapel was not to be treated as a mother church.(i.e. the chapel was not entitled to the burial and other fees,) This probably means that only the very poor would be buried there. However the name of this chapel is not given.

Later in the middle ages two chapels were mentioned both in the Bishop's Registers and in Reading Abbey Cartulary. The dates of these references are as follows: Hatfeud Maiori and Hatfeud Minori both from the Reading Cartulary 1277-82. The 1291 Pope Nicholas's Taxation of Churches, throws some more interesting light on these two chapels/churches.

The Church of Great Hatfield

By 1291 Hatfeld Magna is called a church and it pays money to the Prior of Great Malvern and also a third part to the Prior of Leominster. The reference to the payment of a third part seems to contain a hint of an earlier situation when the church may have been a "minster" church with three priests which would have served a wide area around it and dating back probably to the missionary Anglo-Saxon period. One part remained with the original Anglo-Saxon founding monastery of Leominster, and two parts were given to Great Malvern Priory (Roger Chandos exchanged his lands in Hatfield for some of the Great Malvern Priory lands in Peterchurch roundabout 1120). In the 1291 taxation list the total value of Hatfeld Magna was £5 13s. 4 d., of which Leominster Priory received £1 17s. 9d ie. a third part and Great Malvern received the rest.

The Chapel of Little Hatfield

In the 1291 taxation List it is named as the Chapel of Hatfeld Parva and is not worth £4. Any Church or chapel worth less than £4 was not taxed. The portion which the Priory of Great Malvern received from the chapel was 10d. By 1340 the chapel had sufficient income to support a chaplain. In 1326 there is a reference in Bishop Orleton's Register to the lord of Little Hatfield (free chapel) Little Hatfield chapel was dedicated to St Leonard and is described as a non parochial chapel and also as a free chapel of the Weston family. In Bishop Swinfield Registers there is an institution of a priest to Hatfield Weston.

In 1336 in Bishop Charlton's Register, Roger de Longfield chaplain is instituted to the benefice of Little Hatfield by the patron John de Weston de Nicholston. In the Register of Bishop Lacy in 1419 it is called Little Hatfield Church, perhaps this indicates that by this time Great Hatfield church either no longer existed or was no longer used as a church. The present church of Hatfield is dedicated to St Leonard and built of good sandstone, the earliest work being of the 11th century and since it has the dedication of Little Hatfield Chapel it seems likely that it is the Little Hatfield Chapel.

The Location of Great Hatfield Church

In that case where was Great Hatfield Church with its possibly much earlier foundation in the Anglo-Saxon period? The record of a field name "Church Close" on the Tithe Map just to the south of Lower Nicholson Farm seems a possible location. We visited not only this field but also the other fields adjoining Lower Nicholson. Church Close has been ploughed for many years and shows no evidence of any foundations however, field 283 just to the north of the farmhouse is under long grass and looks rough and uneven, this seems a possible location for an earlier church.

On this site it would be clearly visible being high above the valleys to the north, an important consideration for a church possibly built to serve a much wider area than its later parish. Why did this church go out of use? One reason could be that Great Malvern Priory owned two thirds of this benefice and the whole of the benefice of little Hatfield Chapel. It would not be in their interests to have to maintain two churches where there was probably not much population particularly after the Black Death in 1346. If the earlier church was built of timber it would be quite logical to retain the later stone built church. The use of an unusual calccrete limestone in the lower courses of the east and north walls of the cow byres and big barn at Lower Nicholson

might indicate the reuse of stone from a nearby ruin, possibly the abandoned church? The rest of the cow byres and barn walls are built of sandstone or timber.

On the narrow strip of old pasture land alongside the cart track from Lower to Upper Nicholson there is some surviving evidence of at least two house platforms, the rest of the land where further house sites might be expected, has been ploughed and reseeded. This suggests that there might have been a hamlet or village here and the name of the patron of St Leonard's Church in 1336, John de Weston de Nicholston seems to confirm that he at least was living at Nicholston in 1336. Lower Nicholson Farmhouse is timber framed of square panels some of which have been infilled with stone at a later date. Its height suggest it was originally of one storey but a second storey has been inserted. Currently the roof retains its stone slates which may be original if it dates to the 17th century. The main chimney stack is external and a stone built building with a chimney and one row of timber framing on top of the stone has been added to the east end of the main house. The Farm buildings form an L shape to the north of the house and at a lower level and consist of a range of single height cow byres with rear and end walls of stone and the fronts mainly of timber, a two-storey hay barn with a range for housing horses and possibly cattle also attached. These seem likely to be of 18th century date with a later stone and brick and timber framed cart shed with granary over, of 19th century date. The farmhouse at Upper Nicholson appears to be a later building of sandstone the original building is of two large rooms on each side of a central front door opening onto a small hall where the staircase leads to the upper floor. On the right hand side is the parlour with cellar under but the partition with the hall is a well built timber wattle and daub wall. It is possible this is the last visible remains of an earlier timber framed house on this site.

A 19th century cross wing was added on the north side of the original house and this now contains the kitchen. There is a fine range of two storey stone farm buildings of the same period as the main house on the west side of the house with modern barns to the north. The Land Tax Returns indicate that from 1783 onwards Upper Nicholson was the larger of these two farms although in terms of Land Tax the difference was only 9s. right up to 1826, however in the 1843 Tithe Apportionment, while Upper Nicholson had about 175 acres, Lower Nicholson had shrunk to only about 23 acres, a very significant difference.

Hatfield Court Farm

The modern Hatfield Court is a Victorian mansion built on the site of Horsenet barn and fold. The original Hatfield Court and probable location of the half hide manor of Little Hatfield is on the site of Hatfield Court Farm. Later in the Middle Ages it was described as 1/10 of a Knights fee held of Kynardsley (Kinnersley Castle) HRO AA59/A/1. We looked at this from the adjoining roads. Photographs exist showing the ruins of a fine brick built Tudor mansion three floors high. This has now been completely demolished leaving only a later 19th stone built house with adjoining earlier outbuildings to the west. Some associated farm buildings of timber framing stand to the north of the house while other more modern buildings lie on the east side of the road from the house. On the south side of the farmhouse adjacent to the road is a very broad deep ditch which on the west side of the field enclosing the outbuildings turns north and runs along the west side of the field. On the east side of the road leading to Dunhampton is a big pond and it seems possible that this broad ditch may be the remains of a large medieval moat enclosing this site.

There is an interesting document dated 1718 regarding the lease of part of the mansion house by Timothy Geers of The Marsh (Bridge Sollars) to Joseph Burnam of Hatfield (HRO A95/6/5)

'Part of mansion house or Court of Hatfield and little parlour and chamber, over it the buttery, the Great Kitchen, the 'Dayry' houses and bakehouses, the Pantry and all the Chambers, rooms and corn chambers Over same, barns, buildings, orchards, lands, meadows, leasows and pastures, etc.

Reserved to lessor:-

Brick and stone part of the mansion, the cyder house, the Great Buttery, the Nursery Chamber, the Little Kitchen and court adjoining the two courts, gatehouse and great garden, two closes part of the orchard on the west of the garden wall, the inner stable and hay room adjoining, the pulse barn, piece of ground enclosed with a stone wall called the nursery, sufficient room for laying wood in the cold, the coach house and all wood timber and under-wood with free ingress, regress and egress for carriage etc.'

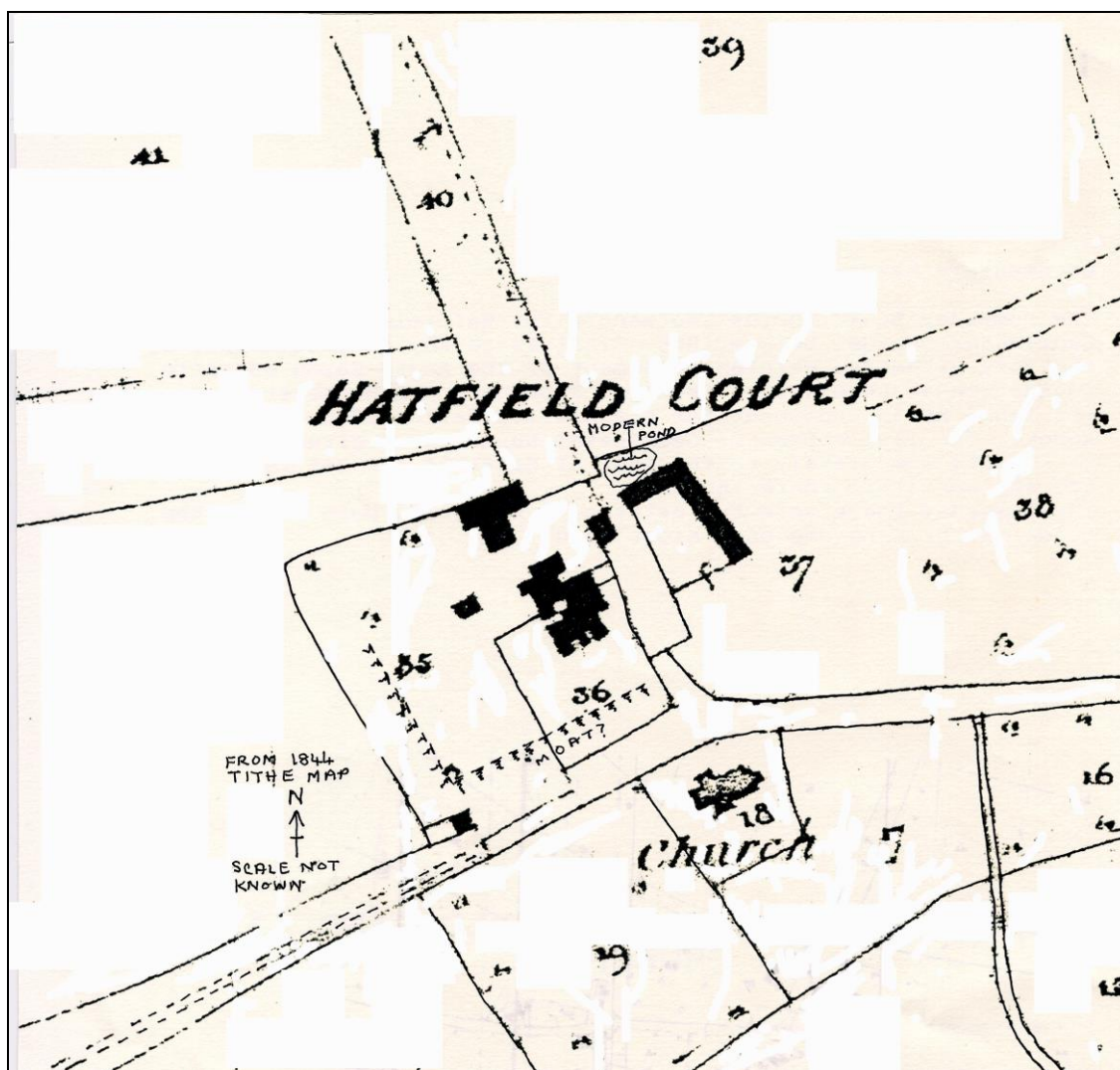


Figure 2 Hatfield Court and church from 1844 tithe map

The distinction made between the brick and stone part of the mansion seems to imply that the part leased out was timber-framed as indeed some of it still is behind the brick house. The other intriguing reference is to the "gatehouse" which suggests either a gatehouse into an enclosed courtyard or possibly a gatehouse across a moat. The detailed layout of the buildings on the Tithe Map of 1844 do not show any enclosed courtyards.

We then went to Dunhampton Farm for which there is a reference in 1243AD (Coplestone-Crow) indicating that the site is of considerable antiquity. The house itself is timber-framed with wattle and daub panels. The main block has small square panels of the 16th century to which a cross wing has been added on the SE side in the 17th century with larger panels. Later another wing was extended on the NE side.

The section is most grateful to Mr and Mrs T. Brooke, Charlotte Lusty and Mrs Ede Bell for their kind permission in giving access to their land and houses.

Field Meeting to Birtley, Walford, Letton and Newton and Byton by Margaret Feryok

On June 1, 2003 eight club members led by Margaret Feryok met at Lingen church. It was a mostly sunny day but with the occasional light shower. The main purpose of this meeting was to survey hedges in the hills of north-western Herefordshire. The group first went to Birtley, a hamlet about 1 mile north of Lingen church. Margaret wanted to look at Birtley Dyke and talk about some of the things she'd discovered about it. She had just finished doing a survey and desktop report about it for a post graduate course in practical archaeology at the University of Birmingham. She intends to publish her report in the Transactions of the Woolhope Club in future.



Figure 1 Birtley Toll Gate (Hereford Library)

The best material find was a photograph showing the toll gate which once stood where the gate crosses the road. It was unearthed at Hereford Library, a negative on an old piece of glass. There was no name or date but the building is unmistakable as part of the house which now stands at the cross roads. It was probably taken about 1877 when the toll road system came to an end and was possibly taken by Alfred Watkins. The group then walked up the little seen western side of the Dyke observing how it overlooks the valley to the south. There is not much bank on this side but the ditch is about 3 m wide and 1.5 m deep. Margaret explained that the site of a barn perched on the edge of the ditch was found to be a 17th century tobacco pipe kiln when local man John Griffiths erected the barn on the spot back in the 1920's, (see photograph opposite p. 130 Transactions of the Woolhope Naturalists Club 1930).

The group walked across to the eastern side of the Dyke and surveyed the hedge which ran along the southern side of the ditch. This entailed counting the number of different species of bushes which made up the hedge in a 30 metre length. This was an application of Hooper's rule which states that each different woody species represents 100 years of age in a hedge. The more species, the older the hedge. The hedge surveys were recorded on specially printed forms obtained from Herefordshire Biological Records Centre at the Shire Hall in Hereford. Rebecca Roseff, the SMR officer for Herefordshire Archaeology is especially interested in collecting these surveys to add to a database which one day may help us to understand the development of the countryside. The herbaceous plants below the

hedge were also counted. These are thought to be a better indicator of local environmental change.

The group marvelled at the great size of the Dyke on its eastern side. At its highest, the bank is nearly 4 m high from the bottom of the ditch and the ditch is 3 m deep on its southern side, away from the bank and about 2 m wide on the bottom at its narrowest, on the eastern end. Margaret explained that the size of the ditch had been increased by the erosion of water flowing down the hillside and because it had been used as a road to carry stone down from a quarry about 200 m to the south-east of the eastern end of the Dyke. A small bank which can be seen along the edge of the woods on Deerfold Hill may have connected with the Dyke and may be an old forest edge. A hedge line lower down the hillside which also respects the Dyke may be another old forest edge.

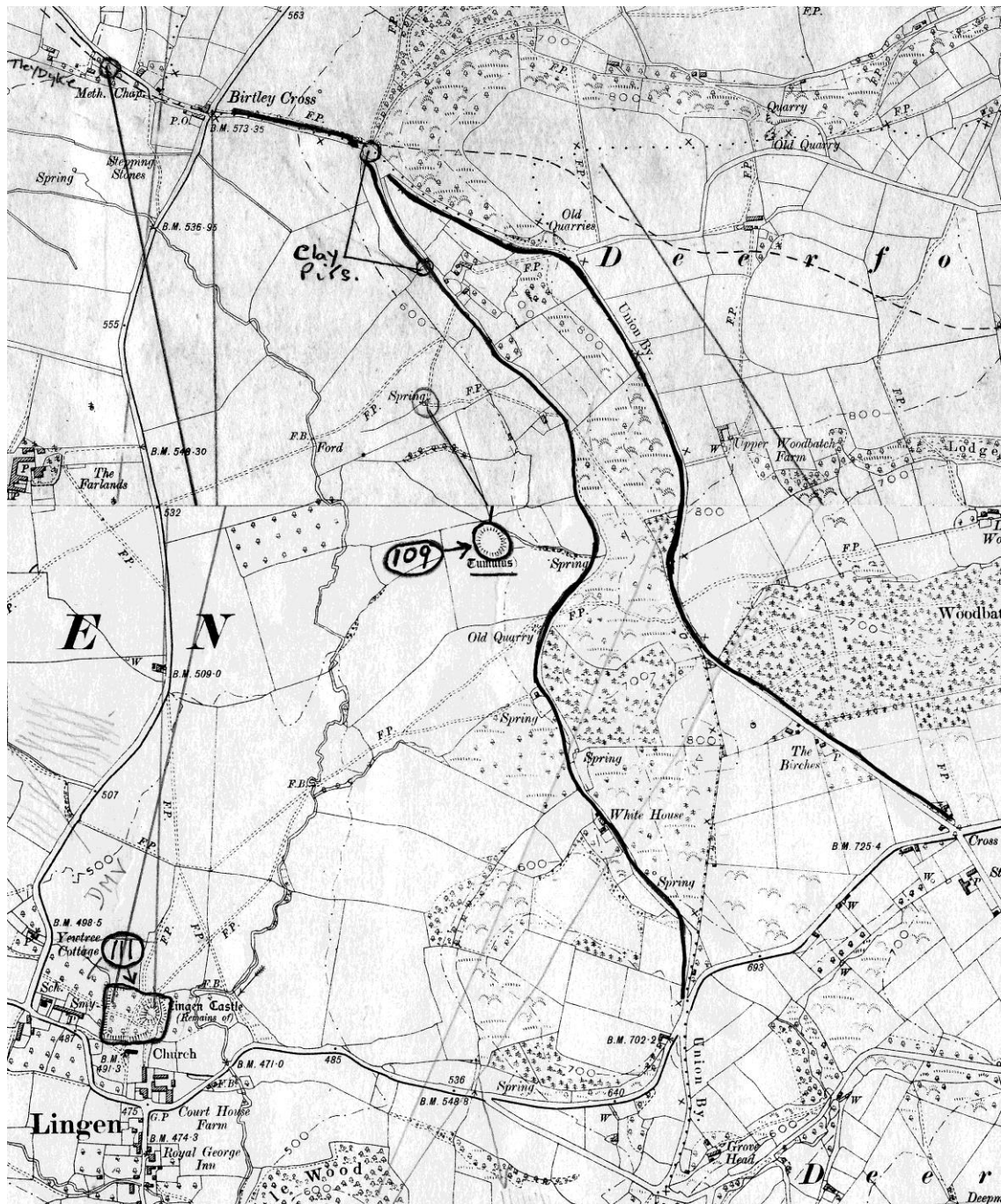


Figure 2 map of dyke showing old forest edges

The next stop on this excursion was at Lower Letton Farm to look at a collection of carved medieval stones probably taken from Wigmore Abbey 1.55 km to the east of the farm. These stones came to light when Margaret found another photograph at Hereford Library which showed the stones built into gate posts outside the farmhouse probably taken about 100 years ago again possibly by Alfred Watkins. David Morgan, the owner, had said that he was advised to take them down and bring them inside some years ago because the rain was dissolving the soft limestone sculptures. They are kept in his basement. They were shown on a television program about two years ago which was about an excavation at Wigmore Abbey, but Margaret hadn't known where they were until she'd seen the photographs. They were made in different periods and show a variety of forms from gothic type wall columns with elaborate leaf decoration in their capitols, to more celtic looking knot or twisted rope designs. One small animal looked like either a bird or an elephant. Mr. Morgan said there were other sculptures in the garden walls and on other farms around Leintwardine.

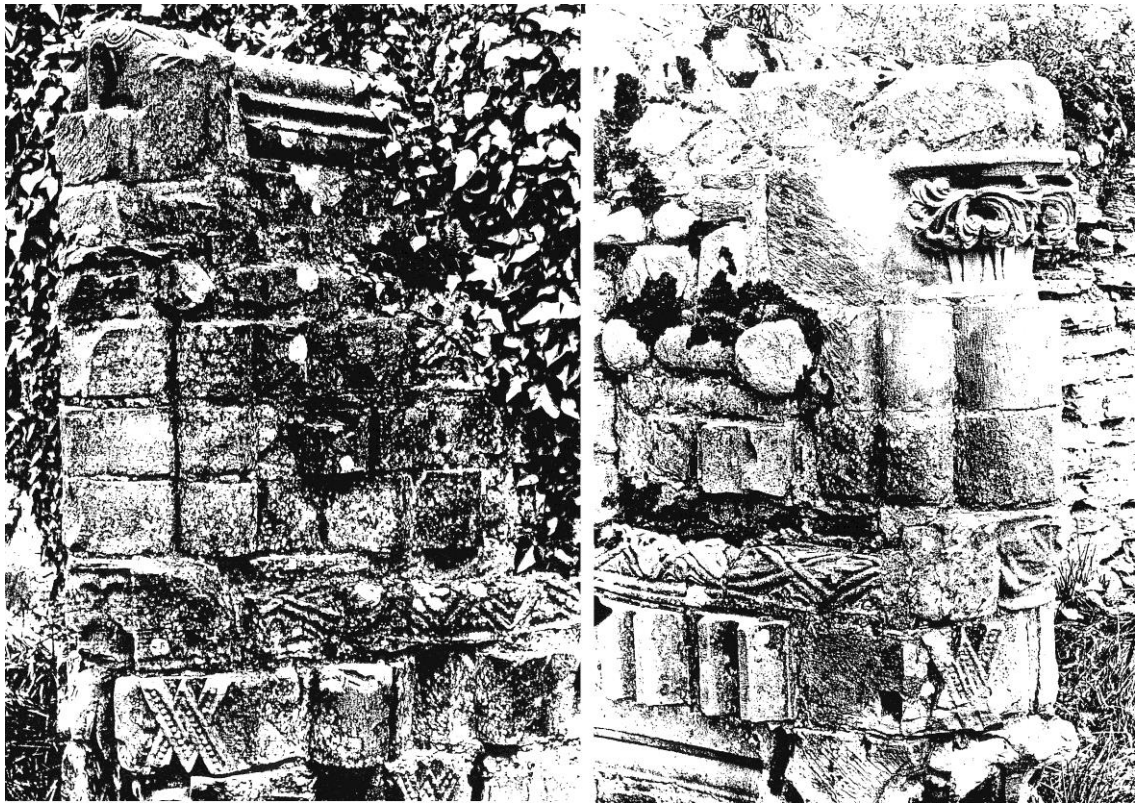


Figure 3 Sculptured stones now at Lower Letton Farm (Alfred Watkins?)

After looking at the sculptures, the group went up to the top of Deerfold Hill to look at hedges on an old deer park bank which runs around the edge of Wigmore Rolls. the place which was looked at, SO 3387 2687, near Lodge Farm, was not actually surrounding woodland anymore. The forest had shrunk. The group was going to look at another possible deer park boundary later in the day and it was thought helpful to see a real one first. the bank on the side of the road was less than a metre high and not very convincing as a stock proof boundary. Penny Oliver, who used to work for the Countryside Commission had brought maps she had made showing where the enclosures were. The hedges around these areas should be less than 200 years old and be more species poor than the other older hedges. Other factors which can act to increase the number of species seen in a hedge are the number of species which were planted in the first place and its proximity to woodland which can also increase the number of species colonising a hedgerow. The mild, wet climate of the Welsh Marches can also have the same effect. A great deal more surveying needs to be done in different types of landscape before a judgement can be made on all these factors.

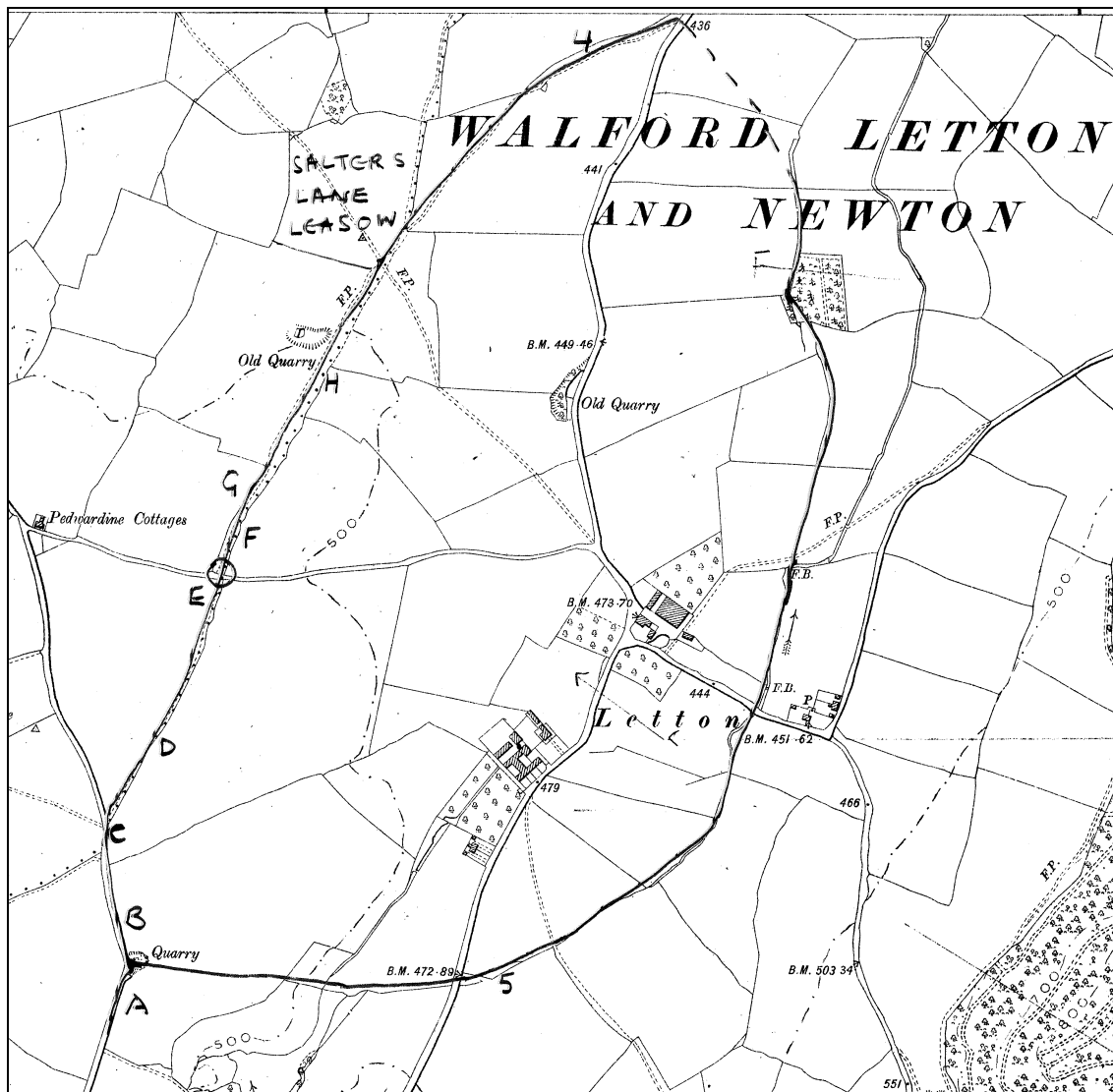


Figure 4 Possible deer park boundary showing hedges which have been surveyed

After lunch, which was taken at a pub in Leintwardine, the group went back to Letton to investigate a possible deer park boundary. It was seen on an aerial photograph Margaret had obtained from the National Monument Record in Swindon via Rebecca Roseff. It is a large oblong enclosure centred on Upper and Lower Letton Farms. The intention was to survey the hedges and examine the features which made up this enclosure.

At its northern end, on the Lingen -Walton road, it could be seen as part of a field boundary with a hedge of small trees. It appeared as an uneven bank about 1.5 m high with an outer tree filled ditch which was wide enough to be a road. About one third of the way south down the field, at SO 3378727137, it bent southwards and crossed the field going south-westwards. Here it is a bank with a ditch on the inside, like a deer park boundary should be. There were great veteran oaks on either side of the ditch which had clearly been used as a road as well. Large pollarded oaks occur regularly on all of the fields in this area showing that it was once been part of the park of Brampton Bryan Estate, 1.2 km to the north-west of Lower Letton Farm. Rosamund Skelton subsequently discovered that the field to the west of the field containing the ditch is called Salter's Lane Leasow which indicates that the road could be an old salt road and of great antiquity. The parish boundary also runs down this line, which adds weight to that interpretation, though this does not help its interpretation as a deer park boundary. The lettering on the map refers to hedges which were examined.

The enclosure edge follows the old road or path, which can be distinctly seen in the hedgerow until it meets a farm track which runs between Pedwardine and

Letton at SO 33738 27052. Note Salters Lane Leasow and the junction of the two roads circled on figure 4). South of this point, it continues as a double hedge line. When it reaches the road between Birtley and Brampton Bryan it turns more due south and runs along the eastern side of the road until it comes to a small disused quarry at SO 33721 26991.

Here the hedge line changes direction and turns south-eastwards. The line of the enclosure then disappears as it curves across a potato field but picks up again when it meets a stream at SO 33745 26986. It follows the stream, curving around to the north-east, crossing the Lingen-Walton road and continues to follow the stream northwards, passing to the east of Upper and Lower Letton farmhouses until it reaches SO 33824 27052. Here the stream turns toward the east while the enclosure continues northwards and can be seen crossing the now ploughed field as a low bank, looking like a ploughed out field boundary. When it reaches SO 33827083, the site of a mill according to David Morgan, it joins another water course and runs along the western side of a small plantation. At SO 33828 27100, it turns toward the north-west, leaving the line of the water course. From here the line is only indicated by one great oak, until it reaches the northern, pointed end at SO 3381327138. It is unfortunately that this enclosure changes its guise so often along its path. It may be an early enclosure for the herding of stock rather than a deer park boundary, but perhaps further aerial photography may solve the mystery of whether it is something, and what it is.

After looking at the ditch and hedge at its northern end, the group drove down and looked at its southern end, near where it crosses the Lingen-Walton road, and observed through the hedge a steep bank which runs along the eastern side of the stream which forms the south-eastern portion of the enclosure. This is important physical evidence supporting the idea of a deer park because the bank would have allowed the deer access to the stream but kept them in the park.

Because of some delay, it was decided that the group did not have time to see the rest of the enclosure as Margaret had arranged to survey the hedges at a small holding called Brickhouse Farm on the edge of Byton Moor near Presteigne 7 km south of Letton. The Moor is an SSSI and the small farm is entirely organic so it was hoped that some rare plants might be seen. The group walked down through the meadows seeing several seldom seen flowers but the star attraction, the marsh orchid, which could be recognised by its black spotty leaves, was not yet in flower. The group surveyed six hedges, most of which ran from the lower slopes of Wapley Hill, down to the edge of the bog. Byton or Combe Moor is a group of small holdings carved out of the edge of what is a common. The house plots are somewhat haphazard but resemble burgage plots running along the northern side of the main road between Presteigne and Shobdon. (See figure 5)

No particularly interesting plants were found although there was a greater number of under storey species in these hedges than there had been at Birtley and Letton. Rosamund Skelton did call attention to a low mound on the eastern edge of the moor, north of the farm at SO 33675 26342, which she thought looked like a barrow. If it is a barrow it is in a strange place. This part of the Lugg Valley gets no sun in the winter, being under the shadow of Wapley Hill to the south. It is also right on the edge of the bog. With heavy rainfall it would get flooded. At about 5 o'clock the meeting broke up. The next day Margaret went back and surveyed hedges on the western side of the enclosure which there hadn't been time to do the day before.

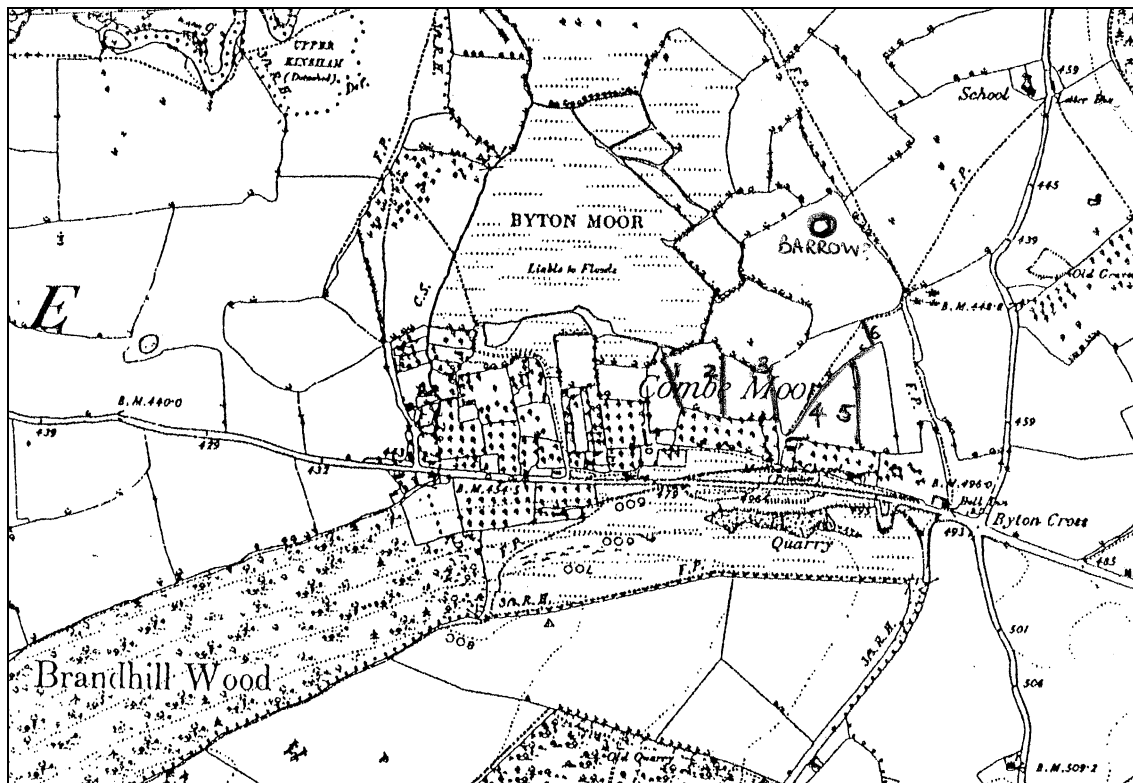


Figure 5 Combe Morre hedges survey (1-5) and possible barrow site

Field Meeting to Goodrich by Roz Lowe

This meeting was held on 5 August 2003, and replaced at short notice the Farm Buildings Survey which was to have been led by Rosamund Skelton. The theme of the field visit was Sir Samuel Meyrick, and buildings he owned in Goodrich. Roz has much material about Sir Samuel and Goodrich Court which was not included in her book on the subject. Members should however consult it for more information and illustrations.¹ The day was unpleasantly hot, and owing to illness only four members attended. This was a shame, as we had permission to visit the rooms at Flanesford Priory, now arranged as holiday apartments and so not usually open for viewing.

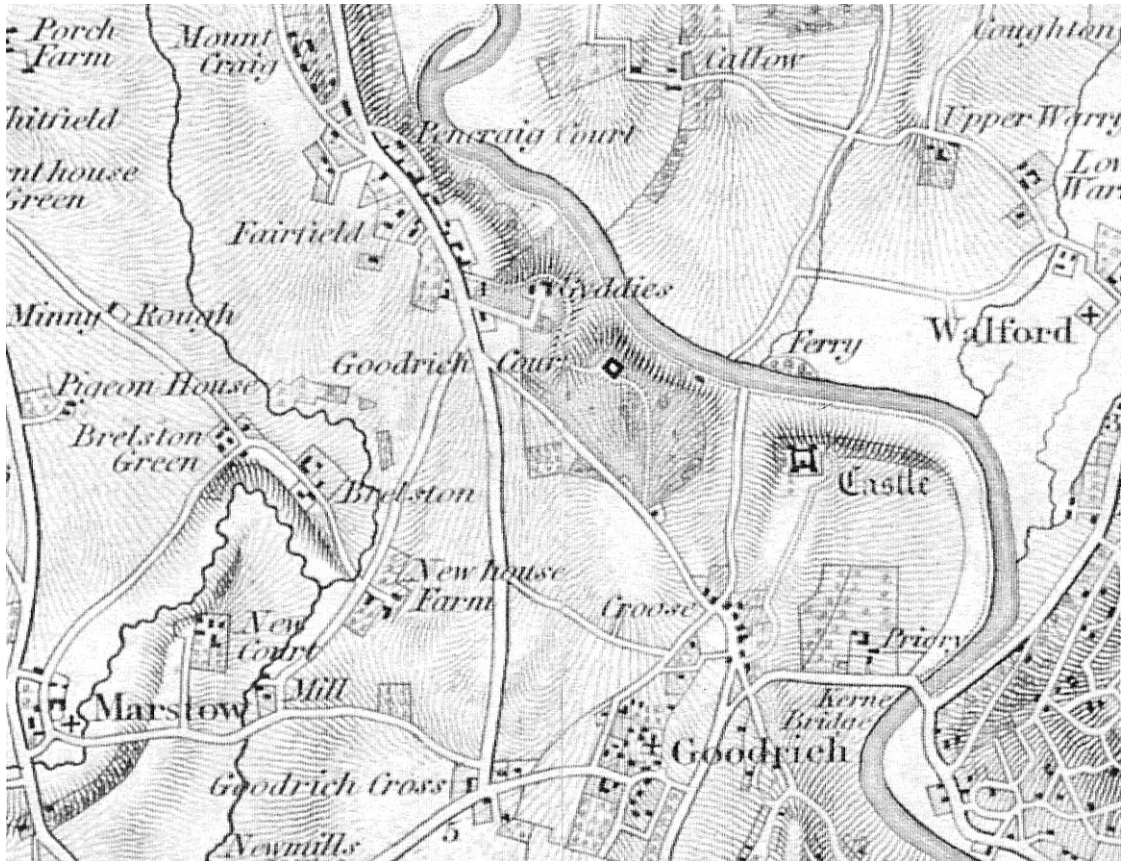


Figure 1. 1832 map showing Flanesford Priory, Goodrich church and Goodrich Court

As members had parked opposite **Goodrich Village Hall**, in the middle of the cluster of houses at Croose, we took the opportunity to look around it. It is substantially built in brick and stone, with leaded light bay windows, one full height, and towering chimneys, all in a Tudorbethan style. The Moffatt family, who succeeded the Meyricks at Goodrich Court, built it as a village reading room in 1884, at the same time as they built the stables on the road near Goodrich Court. Inside there are two large meeting rooms, both with fine stone fireplaces, and carved beams rest on stone corbels supporting the floor above. It is listed, and the village is proud to have such a fine building, but there is the inevitable high insurance premium to be found. From the road it is not possible to see the large hall which was added on the back in the 1970s, to allow productions by Goodrich's flourishing amateur dramatic society.

Flanesford Priory was acquired by Sir Samuel Meyrick on 2 February 1848, just two months before his death. He had cast envious eyes over the Priory estate in 1823, when he had first visited Goodrich and determined to buy both the castle and the priory.² Although the castle never came into his hands, it must have given him satisfaction to gain the priory, as he had much material on it. He was pursuing the

¹ Rosalind Lowe, *Sir Samuel Meyrick & Goodrich Court*, Logaston Press May 2003.

² Bodleian Lib Douce MSS d24 f149

original foundation deed, which he believed had been held by Peter Le Neve, sometime Norroy King of Arms at the College of Heralds.¹



Figure 2 Goodrich Village Hall (R Lowe)

At the time that Meyrick purchased the priory estate, it was in private hands, having been sold by the Lord of the Manor of Goodrich in 1736. The priory was dedicated to St. John the Baptist, and was a late foundation of Augustinian Canons Regular by Richard Talbot in 1346, an earlier lord of Goodrich, who endowed it with the farmland as well as mills in Lydbrook and other property, some of which had already been assigned by Talbot for certain chaplains to serve a chantry within the liberty of the castle of Goodrich, according to Duncumb.²

It had a bare 200 years of existence before being shut down by Henry VIII during the dissolution of the monasteries, when it was brought back into the manorial demesne lands as George Talbot, the 4th Earl of Shrewsbury, was granted it for one twentieth of a knight's fee of £1 9s 1¾d. It has been suggested that the priory never really prospered and became large because of the onset of the Black Death so soon after its foundation, which changed so much of the social structure of the country. Certainly it fell foul of Henry VIII's 1536 *Act for the Dissolution of Smaller Monasteries*, which affected those with an annual value of less than £200, and/or less than 12 monks or nuns. Flanesford's value was £15 8s 9d.

The site of the priory is a good example of the universal importance of a good location. [See figure 3]. Along this section of the Wye valley which runs between wooded hills it is possible to predict where early house sites will be located – above the flood plain surrounded by alluvial farmland. Examples are Roman dwellings at Hadnock, Huntsham and Courtfield. During excavation for farm buildings an

¹ Bodleian Lib Phillipps-Robinson letters d.143 f62-3

² Hundred of Wormelow p94

archaeological watching brief established there was evidence of the area being levelled to provide a level area for the priory buildings. Residual Roman material was found in that levelling material.¹ Whether this was residual Roman building material is important, as all local fields produce pottery evidence of Roman occupation, and the Bishopswood hoard of Roman coins was found just over the Wye. The site is particularly favourable for agriculture – the priory estate has always commanded a high price when sold, being compact, well-drained and fertile. Most importantly, it has a spring above the priory site, which was utilised to fill the monastic fish pond next to the buildings. Although the site of the spring is now lost among the crops in the field, in wet weather it is easy to see. Until Kerne Bridge was built over the site of the ford across the Wye, the road down to the ford led from the lane to the castle down near the spring [see figure 4]. The owner of the Priory Farm bungalow still has the pump used to draw the water.

One interesting point about the priory's foundation is that the site is already called 'Flansford' in 1346. The name is curious – it may be an instance of an English-Welsh conjunction derivation, which has been identified by Margaret Gelling in the Marches. The two elements could be Welsh *llan* [church or enclosure] or some other unknown word joined to English *ford* or Welsh *ffordd* [way] - the Welsh for ford is *rhyd*. If the word was wholly Welsh it should be *fforddillan*, but it could possibly be derived from *llan-ffordd* or *llan's ford*. The hard 'd' would suggest the latter. The next ford upstream from Flanesford is very near, and is the important Goodrich passage below Goodrich Castle, after which Walford [*Welsh-ford*] is supposedly named. Earlier forms of the name have yet to be identified, but it may be a reflection of one of the early Welsh 'llan' sites in the Goodrich area. However, this explanation is so simplistic one hesitates even to consider it.

There are scant details about the history of Flanesford during the two centuries of its existence. Occasionally there are notices in the bishops' registers of appointments of new clergy there, and in the 1397 Visitation of Goodrich Thomas, the prior, was reported for being incontinent with Joan the wife of John Taelour. After the dissolution it would seem that George Talbot, the lord of the manor, had been required to support the priest of a chantry at Flanesford – in fact, the last prior, Robert Foster or Froster. Inquisitions taken in 1585 concerning the possessions of the priory go into some detail on the subject – see appendix. The priory buildings gradually came to be used as part of the farm, and a new farmhouse was built.



Figure 3 Early 20th century Woolhope Club photo of Flanesford – little changed from Bonnor's 1799 engraving.

¹ English Heritage Pastscape site for Flanesford

[illegible]

The detail of the 1718 estate map and the 1731 map show buildings are similar, but the castle is rather rudimentary on both, so how much the 1731 priory plan can be relied upon is questionable.

² The Duty & Office of a Land Steward 1731

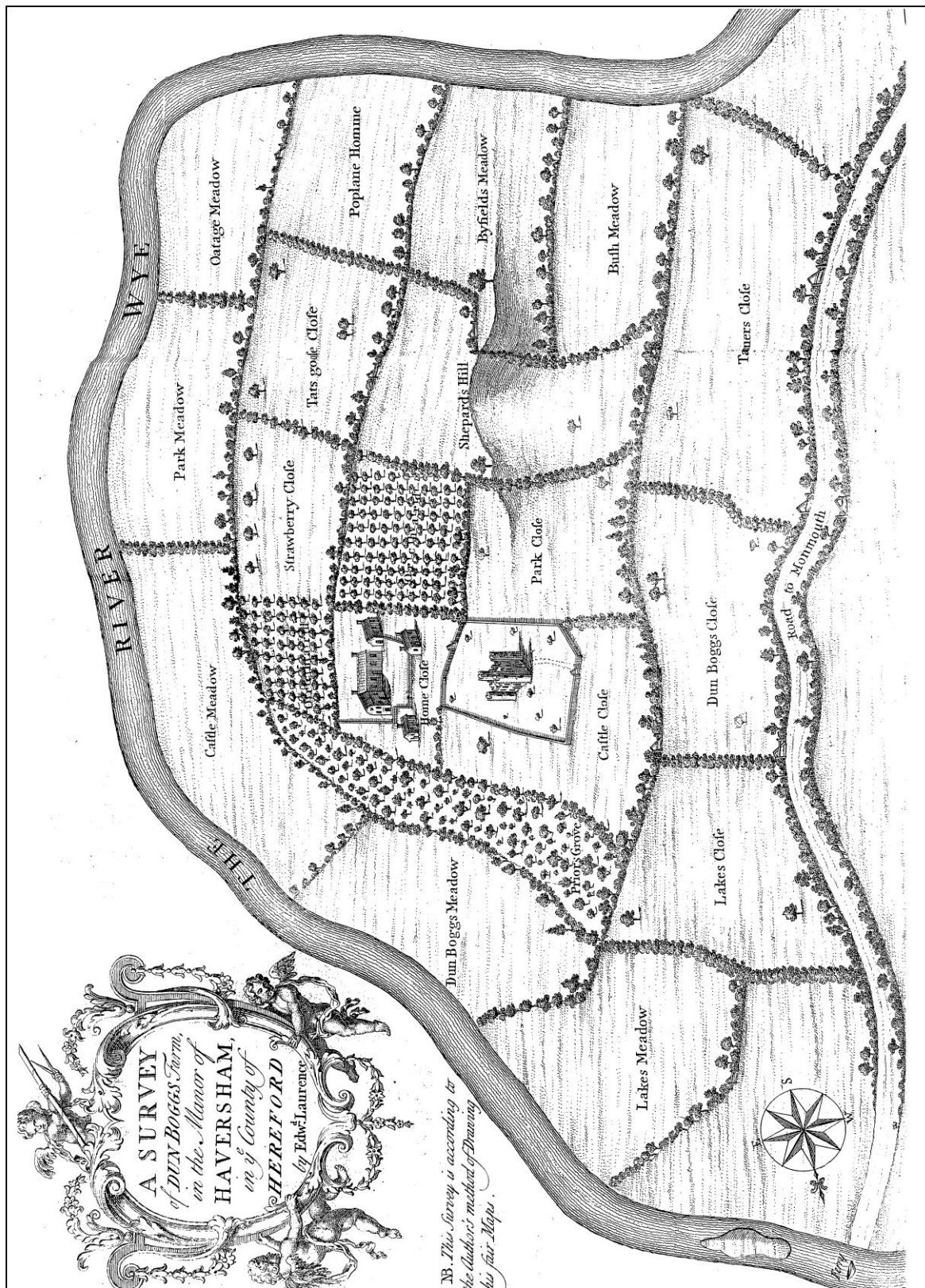


Figure 6 Edward Laurence's 1731 plan of the priory estate alias 'Dun Boggs in Haversham'

There are a number of Sites & Monuments Records (SMRs) for Flanesford. In SMR 24979, a plan dating from 1704 is mentioned, but no reference is given.

An early engraving made for Bonnor's Itinerary in 1799 shows the view of the priory from the road to be substantially unchanged today. At some time before this a large barn door had been cut in the south wall of the main standing building – which was

either the refectory or the prior's lodging – though the remains of a further window replaced by the barn door can be seen today. Again according to Duncumb, the 'walls of the house remain, and have been re-roofed with tiles in recent times and gable crosses put up. [By 'house' Duncumb means the monastic range] There is a plan of the priory buildings on the sale particulars of the Priory estate for 1847, shown below in figure 7.

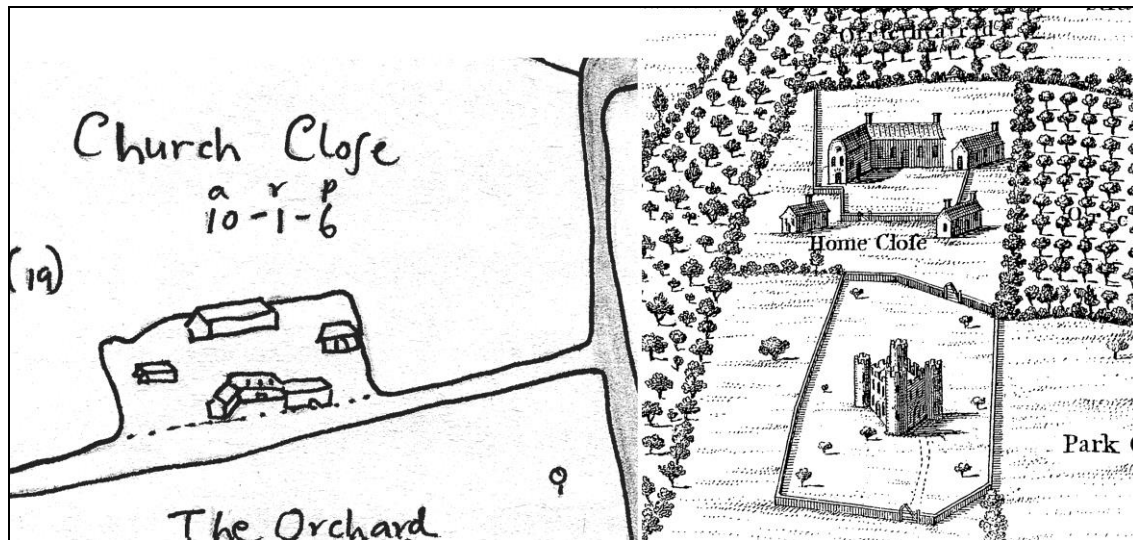


Figure 6 Comparison of the two representations of the priory from the 1718 & 1731 maps

The area marked 290 on the plan is believed to be the location of the cloister, from previously identified scars left by the cloister wall on the standing building – we did not see this as the area is now part of the farm yard behind. Large modern farm buildings on concrete bases now lie behind the cloister, and will have covered any graveyard which might lie behind. The priory buildings were rescued from dereliction in the 1980's and converted into holiday apartments. The guests at the modern priory apartments have an introductory talk every Sunday morning, given by Mike Barnard. We would like to thank him for then taking us around the largest apartment in the complex, which is entered on the left (west) of the main barn door, now glassed in.

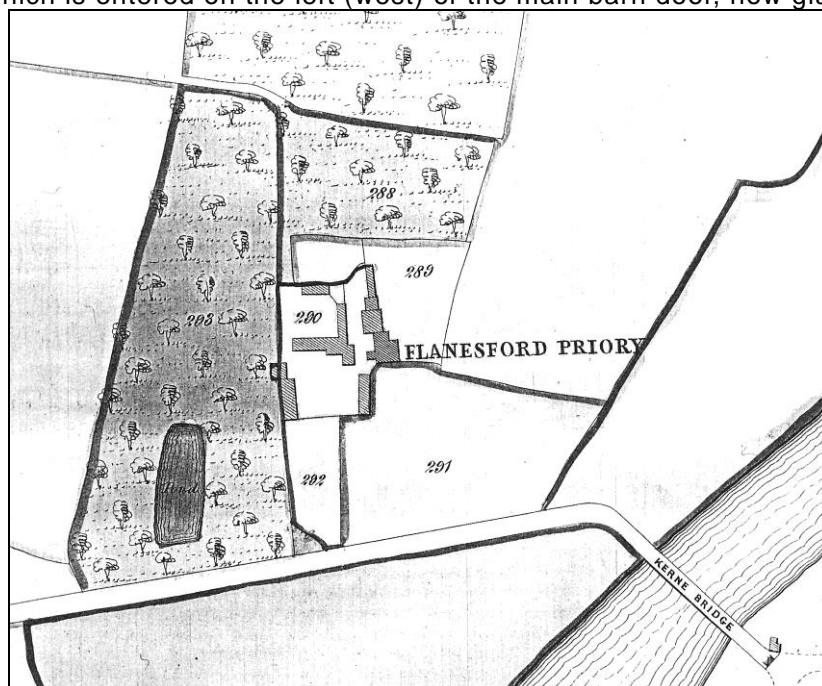


Figure 7 Detail of plan of Priory estate 1847 (HRO)

On the ground floor is a bedroom with a lancet window, and then stairs lead to a sitting room whose window forms the upper part of the 'barn door window'. This leads to a dining room which stretches right to the roof, and contains some original features. An inserted staircase leads to a bedroom which has been inserted over the sitting room. On this floor one's head is level with the large tie-beam some 25 feet long. It's quite clear that this tie-beam, if original, must have been taken down and re-erected at some time, possibly in the late 18th century, as there are stamped carpenter's marks on the members. The roof is supported on a king-post which is probably late 18th C or later. However, the tie beam may be original and the wall-plate also. The building is now sub-divided, so we were unable to look at roof timbers belonging to other bays.

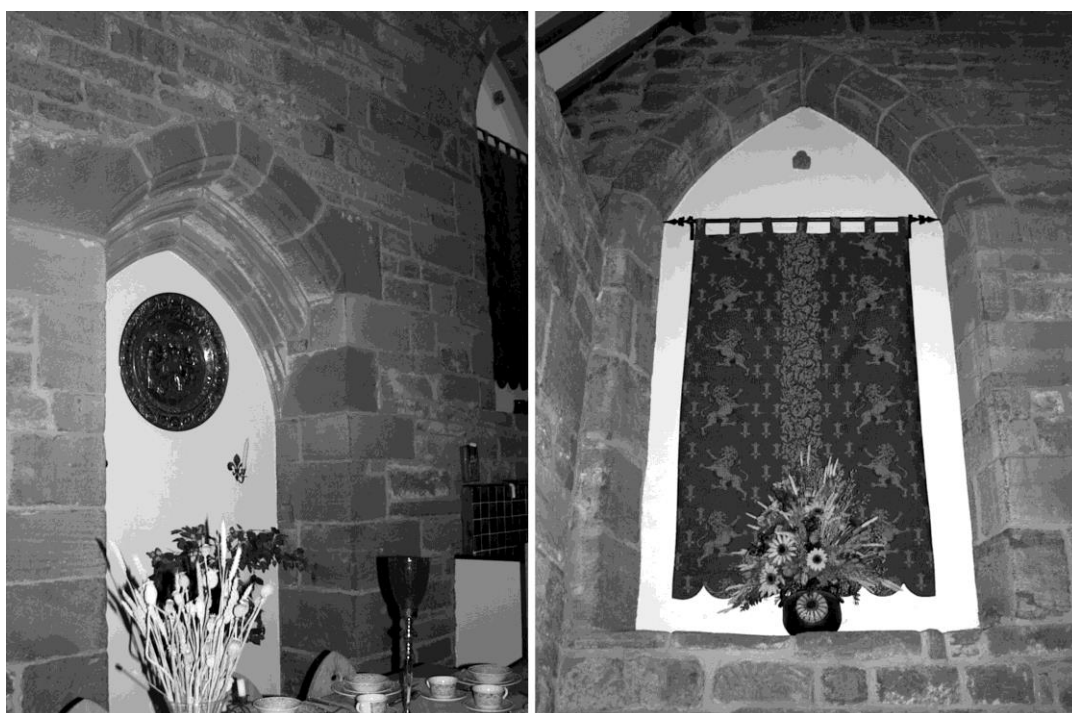


Figure 8 First floor west doorway and window in main building

At the time of the field visit we were unable to visit the apartment on the other (west) side of the doorway in figure 8, as holidaymakers were in residence. On a later visit I took a photograph of the doorway – figure 10. This can be compared with a drawing by George Shaw the architect, Sir Samuel Meyrick's friend, was recently found in Hereford Library in a scrapbook originally belonging to Thomas William King, the herald. Presumably it was drawn on Friday, 28 August 1840 when Shaw visited the priory with Sir Samuel and two other friends, Kirkmann and King, as mentioned in King's journal at the College of Arms. It shows the west entrance to the upper floor of the standing building – figure 9.

Shaw drew only the niche on the left of the doorway, as shown in the recent photograph, but there is also one on the right, now in a mutilated condition, which probably was the case in 1840. As can be seen in Figure 8, there is an arched window to the right (north) of the doorway, and in fact one on the left also out of shot. On the other side of the wall the arch has been filled in to make a square headed window opening (both windows). From the fact that the current roof line in the western block (present in the 1799 engraving) cuts across the top of the window arch, and that inbuilt stone corbels on either side of the niches and doorway would also have meant a floor which would have cut across the arched windows, one can postulate with some confidence that the niches and entrance door would probably have been protected from the weather by a porch above a flight of stairs.

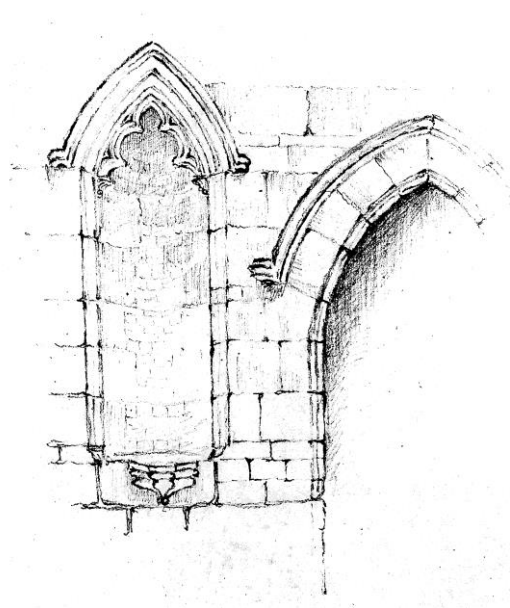


Figure 9 Shaw's drawing



Figure 10 Same doorway today

There are many localities which could have supplied the red sandstone to build the priory buildings, but as there are a number of blocks of the hard-wearing local quartz agglomerate found on Coppet Hill, it no doubt came from one of the many small quarries there as the lord owned the land. There is evidence of extension of the original priory building to make a wing on the east of the surviving range.



Figure 11 Junction of surviving range and east wing showing extension

The east range of buildings as one enters the complex is now laid out as a bar, but includes a massive cider press, certainly ancient.

After leaving the priory, we headed back into Goodrich to take some coffee at the pub called *Ye Hostelrie*. Meyrick converted an original dwelling which was probably 17th century in origin into a Gothic edifice, adding on a substantial range of public rooms on two floors. The story of *Ye Hostelrie* is related in HAN72, and in my Meyrick biography. In the passageway into the bar, there is a copy of a drawing which was assumed to be an earlier design for *Ye Hostelrie* by Edward Blore. It is in the British Library, and unfortunately cannot be reproduced for copyright reasons. however, it is

an L-shaped building, with the entrance tower as built at *Ye Hostelrie* in the angle of the 'L'. I have come to the conclusion that it is probably an early design for a lodge to Goodrich Court. One of Meyrick's friends claimed that Meyrick, and not Blore, had designed *Ye Hostelrie* from an ancient manuscript. If so, it's possible that this other building was designed to be the South Lodge to Goodrich Court, lying about half a mile from *Ye Hostelrie*. [Unfortunately, Meyrick was quite capable of passing off Blore's design as his own!] Meyrick was unable in his lifetime to buy the lodge site, which housed an ancient farm buildings complex called Bryngwyn. It was left to the Moffatts to build the Edwardian-style lodge which exists there now.

In view of the soaring temperatures, members agreed that the best place for our picnic was in the church porch. The church had been beautifully decorated for a wedding the previous day, and we ate our sandwiches almost overpowered by the scent of lilies. We had visited St. Giles in 2001 (see HAN72), but there are specific Meyrick connections with the church. Meyrick had arranged for the only table tomb in the church, believed to be that of a member of the Talbot family, to be moved to accommodate a new pew for himself. This process caused the tomb to be shortened by one of its arcades, either by accident or more likely because in its new position it would have juttred out too far into the walkway to the left of the altar. Fortunately Bonnor had engraved it at the end of the 18th century, and so we can see what it would have looked like. The pews of Meyrick's time were done away with in a 'modernisation' designed by J. P. Seddon in 1870, when the roof was also rebuilt, and unfortunately no plan has been found of them before this time.



Figure 12 *Ye Hostelrie*

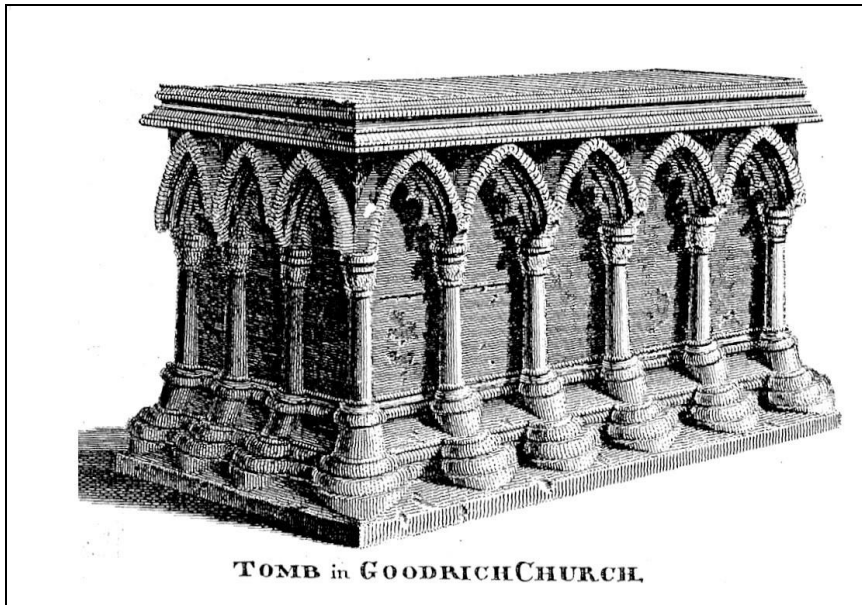


Figure 13 The Talbot tomb before Meyrick's alteration

There are other Goodrich Court connections inside the church. When Goodrich Court was pulled down in 1950, a large quantity of relatively modern linenfold panelling was given to the church by Mrs. Trafford, Goodrich Court's owner. This has been used to line the walls all around. There are three Dutch style brass chandeliers, which appear on an early photograph of the drawing room at Goodrich Court, too poor to reproduce. Harold, the son of George Moffatt who bought Goodrich Court from the Meyrick family, was a very talented amateur woodcarver, and one of his side tables is in the vestry.



Figure 14 Stairs at Goodrich church made in 1843

We went outside to look at Meyrick's grave. It lies close to the north side of the church, and is surrounded by iron railings. Sir Samuel was not the first occupant – he was preceded by his only child Llewelyn, who died in February 1837 aged 32. Sir Samuel died on 2nd April 1848, and was buried on the 8th April. The flat tombstone on the grave is not the original, which was so badly worn that a new one was provided by the Meyrick Society after World War II. Hard against the tomb on the north lies a flat stone which is always reclaimed by grass after clearing. This belongs to Mary Coward, Samuel's housekeeper. It was not possible to include in the Meyrick biography an interesting snippet from one of his letters about the little stone staircase which leads to a raised doorway on the outside of the tower. Without this information it could well have been thought to be older. Meyrick wrote to his friend George Shaw on 28th November 1843: 'They are going to put a stone stair-case with an iron rail in front of the tower of our church for the bell ringers and break a doorway through. The parson and the Treasurers of the Charity wished to consult me (humbug comp:) in reality to have it in their power to say it was sanctioned by me. I told them they should put a small circular or octagonal tower at the angle of the large one with a newel staircase within it. This was overruled, and next time you see our church you will be disgusted.'

We had permission to look at the site of Goodrich Court, and compare its condition today with that in the mid 1960's, as we had copies of photographs taken then given to us by the current owners. In turn these can be compared with the photographs in the book *Felsted in Herefordshire*, taken when Felsted School was evacuated to Goodrich Court during World War II. Dr. (later Sir) Samuel had wanted to buy Goodrich Castle from the Ladies of the Manor, but after a number of years of fruitless negotiation he had to settle for building his own castle, Goodrich Court. I have recently found in Hereford Library his thoughts on how he would use the existing 'rooms' at the castle for himself – unfortunately too late to be included in my book.

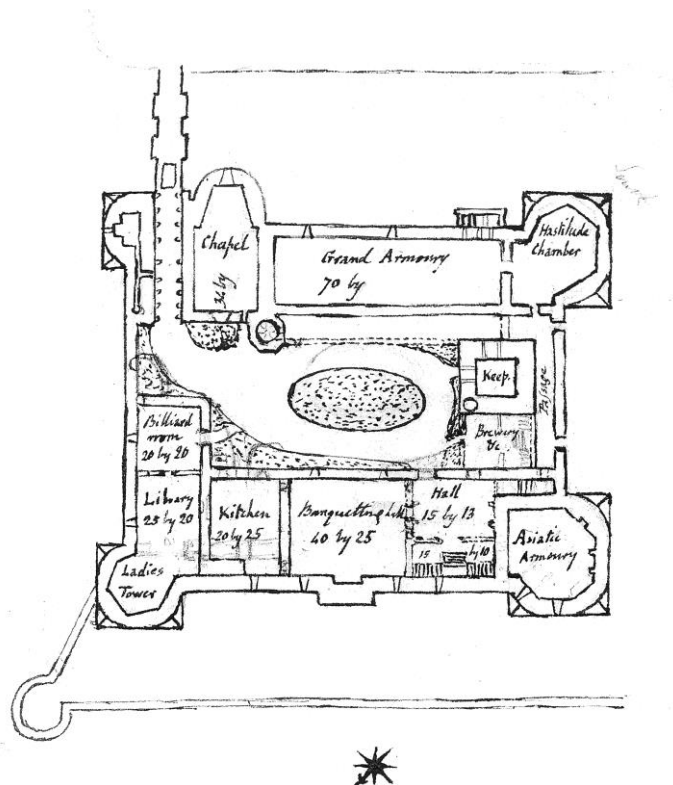


Figure 15 Meyrick's plan for Goodrich Castle (in his own hand) drawn in 1827

To orientate yourself, the entrance is to the left of the chapel, which he planned to retain. He had already planned a Grand Armoury, Hastilude Chamber and Asiatic Armoury which were to found in Goodrich Court, and also a Billiard room which was

part of the Banqueting Hall at the Court. His version of Goodrich Castle would still be standing today, no doubt.

The Court was built on a headland which slopes sharply away on three sides – those facing Pencraig, the Wye and Goodrich Castle. On the steepest slopes there has always been woodland, albeit controlled by coppicing. Now the trees have grown up, augmented by self-sown sycamores, trees which had not arrived in this country when Goodrich Court was built. The ornamental gardens which stretched away in the direction of the castle have been totally over-run. Only the initial flight of steps shown in Figure 13 is visible.

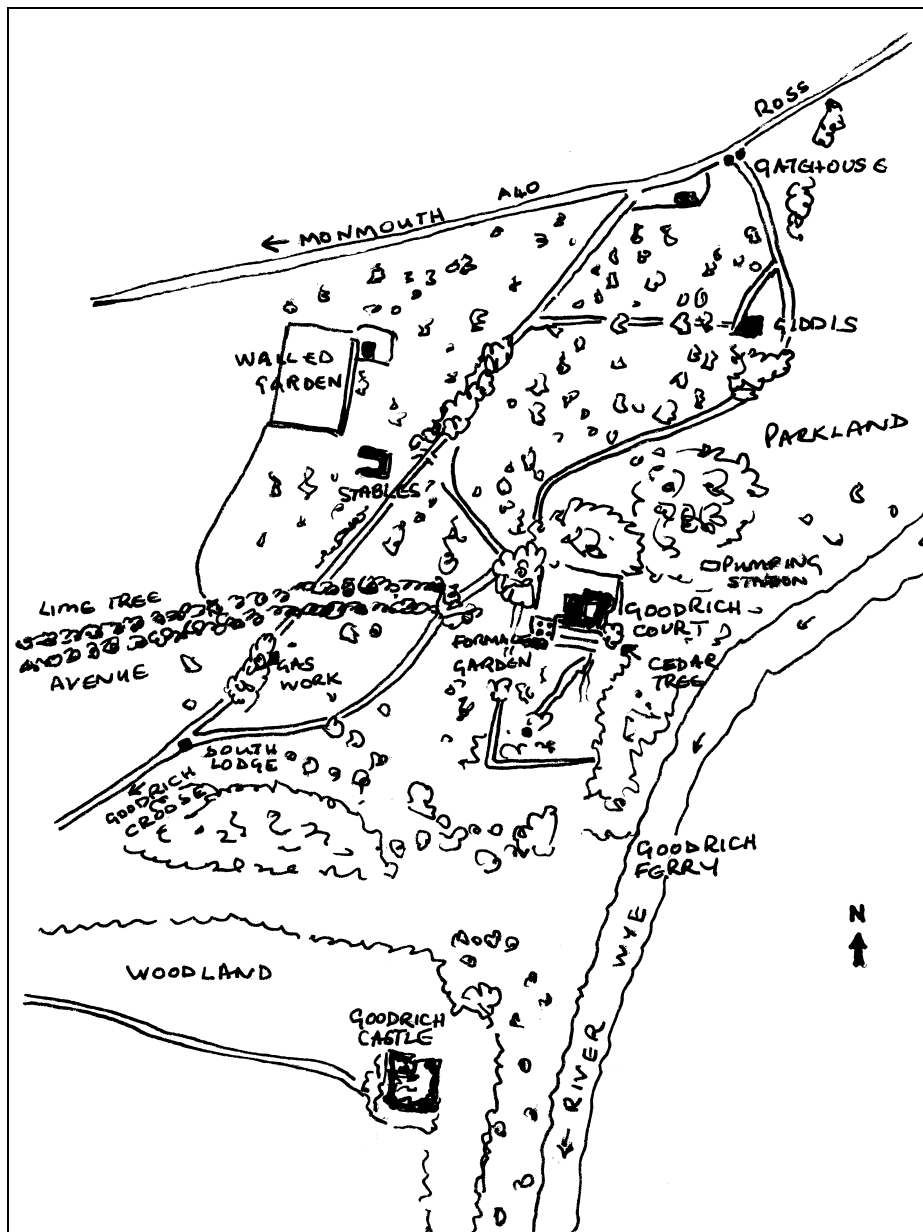


Figure 16 Sketch plan from 1947 aerial photo of the Court & castle

From the lawn in front of the Court, there was a magnificent vista of the Malverns, Ross, Howle Hill and Goodrich Castle. After the demolition of the Court, Mrs Trafford's daughters built a small bungalow on the lawn. Many photographs of the Court show a magnificent cedar tree, and this still exists next to the bungalow. Although we know that Llewelyn Meyrick planted quite mature trees, it seems that in spite of its size it can only be about 180 years old.



Figure 17 Goodrich Court NE corner

The only part of the former ornamental garden which still exists is laid out in front of a substantial stone summer house, built in 1910, which has recently been modernised. The gates which led into this from the drive are now at the College of Arms in London. Odd stones which survived the demolition have been used to line the beds, and elegant steps lead out through a wrought iron gate into a tangle of sycamores. Some of the stones from the Court were so large that they could not be carted away, but lie rolled over the edge towards their original quarry above the Wye. It is hoped to find them and photograph them in the winter.



Figure 18 Felsted boys on steps now overgrown: Cedar tree and ornamental garden



Figure 19 Sycamore pressing at gate to formal garden 2003



Figure 20 Cedar tree in Goodrich Court garden 1965

The last part of the field visit was to going to be to look at the remains of the water pumping station on the banks of the Wye, below Goodrich court. This was built to supply the Court from the river when supplies from Sir Samuel Meyrick's original water tanks proved inadequate. It is quite easy to walk down a private track to the river, but it is very steep and quite unsuitable for a hot day.



Figure 21 Pumping station below Goodrich Court 2003

The pumping station (at SO 5720 2045) has deteriorated rapidly since I last visited it about six years ago. At that time a lot of the walls were still standing, albeit with self-sown trees inside the building. Now there is only one small section upright, and the bricks are piled up neatly ready, one surmises, for removal.

I would like to thank Sunterra Grand Vacation Club and Mike Barnard at Flanesford, Mr N Roper and Mr. & Mrs. Seal at Goodrich Court for their kind permission to visit their properties.

**Appendix: Public Record Office
E178/2891 28 Eliz [1585]**

Concerning the foundation of a chantry in 30 Hen VIII (1538) and possessions of the late priory of St John the Baptist Flanesford. [Document is difficult to read.]

Richard Vaughan of Penoxton?? in the Countie of Hereford husbandman said he knew priory of Flanesford and knew it by that name by the space of ? yeres but never? herd it called by the name of St John the Baptiste of Flanesford. said that he did know one Sir Robt Foster? herd tell he was the last pryor of Flanesford he hath herd saie there is certan land in Gootridge adjoining to the said Priory of Flanesforde to belong to the said prior and also certan other lande in the pshe of Whitchurch knoweth not but that it is in the tenure of the Earl of Shrewsbury.

Willm Tayler of Whitchurch age of 3 score & sixteen. Says that he knows the priory by the name of St John the Baptiste by the space of ? yeres Knew Foster or Froster to be last prior of priory. Knows lands belonging to priory lying in Goodrich contayning about 40 acres also one gryste mill in Whitchurch and certen land meadow wood and pasture in Whitchurch 100 acres or thereabout And also one meadow in Walford 7? acres now in poss of Earl of Shrewsbury also herde say that certen lande in Payneswyck in co Glouc did also belong to Priory ..and also did knowe of gryste mill in Ludbrook on co Glouc belonged to Pryory and also of a cottage and one acre of land at Manselle Hope now in the possession of one Thomas Chiles? The land in Goodrich is in possession of Earl of Shrewsbury and also that the said mille and certan lands meadowe and pasture called the wayere [weare] and long meadow in Whitchurch are likewise in poss of E of S and the reysidewe of the said land in Whitchurche called the Byblins are in the possession of John Appowell ofyiner? And that one wood called Gouldsmythes wood in Gannrewe is likewise in the possession of the saide Earle and the residue of the saide land in Gannerewe called the killyeastes [later called killyards or kilnyards] are in the possession of Moore Ap guillim gent. He says that within a yeare of two of the dissolution of the said Pryory there was a Chantry errected by the then Earl of Shrewsbury in the place of the said late Pryory. he said that he did know that the said Robt Foster or Froster to be the first Chantry priest placed in the said Chantry farm that the saide Robt Foster did there continewe prieste by the space of two or three yeares or thereabouts. He had it credibly said that the said Foster did sing or say masse in the said Chantry for the space of two or three yeares but he hadn't seen this. Doesn't know when these ceased. He doesn't know how many yeares before the reign of King Edward VI chantry was still going on. He knew that the said chantry priest received issues of [all property] but didn't know when this ceased. Said he didn't know any chantry priest called Taylor nor did he know anyone to succeed Foster.

Elbrycke Tayler of Whitchurche yeo 3 score & 18 Knew Flanesford as St John the Baptist for three score yeares. Knew Foster. Knew 14 acres land of land in Goodrich one field called the Pryory field 10a in poss Earl of Shrewsbury pasture called the Vagers 1 meadow called long meadow one mill called cutt mill pasture called Byblins in poss of John Appowell etc [property as given before]

Elbrycke Gardner of Hunderton aged three score yeares and 10 knew name 3 score yeares about...fourscore acres in Goodrich knew chantry but did not know how many years mass was sung . He said he held certaine land called Pooledie of the ? of the said Foster after he was placed in the said chantry ..he paid 20/- year to the prieste for the same ground.

Stones in Garden of Hampton House, Hampton Bishop by Roz Lowe

I am a regular visitor to Hampton House, a residential home for the elderly in Church Lane, Hampton Bishop (SO 5590 3805). Last year an overgrown rockery in the front garden was cleared, and I was interested to see that some eroded, carved stones had been used in making a small sunken feature. The house lies just over the road from Hampton Bishop church, and it is possible that they were removed by the owner of Hampton House to his garden at some time after the church was restored in the 19th century.

Information about all churches which were altered with funds from The Incorporated Church Building Society can be found on the internet on www.churchplansonline.org, which also shows low resolution plans, where these have been photographed already for the on-line project. The ICBS was founded in 1818 to provide funds for the building and enlargement of Anglican churches throughout England and Wales. It was the principal voluntary Society for promoting the building and restoration of churches throughout the most active period of church building since the Middle Ages.

In 1982 the administration of the Society was transferred to the Historic Churches Preservation Trust. Whilst the ICBS continues to give grants for church building under this new administration, the ICBS archive was deposited in Lambeth Palace Library between 1974 and 1990. The archive includes over 15,000 files relating to applications by parishes for grants from the Society. The earliest file is dated 1818 and the latest 1982. Individual files may include application forms, correspondence, plans, building specifications, engravings or artists' impressions, certificates of satisfactory completion, parochial subscription lists, parish magazines, and photographs (from 1867 onwards). There are also minute books. A plan showing Hampton Bishop church after the alterations which took place in 1864-6 is available on the site, but of low resolution so it cannot be read in detail.



Figure 1 (above) part of upturned column



Figure 2 (right above) bowl with decorated rim



Figure 3 (right below) ribbed stone



Figure 4 (above) shows one of a pair of moulded stones, perhaps part of columns, holding up a stone slab as a seat.

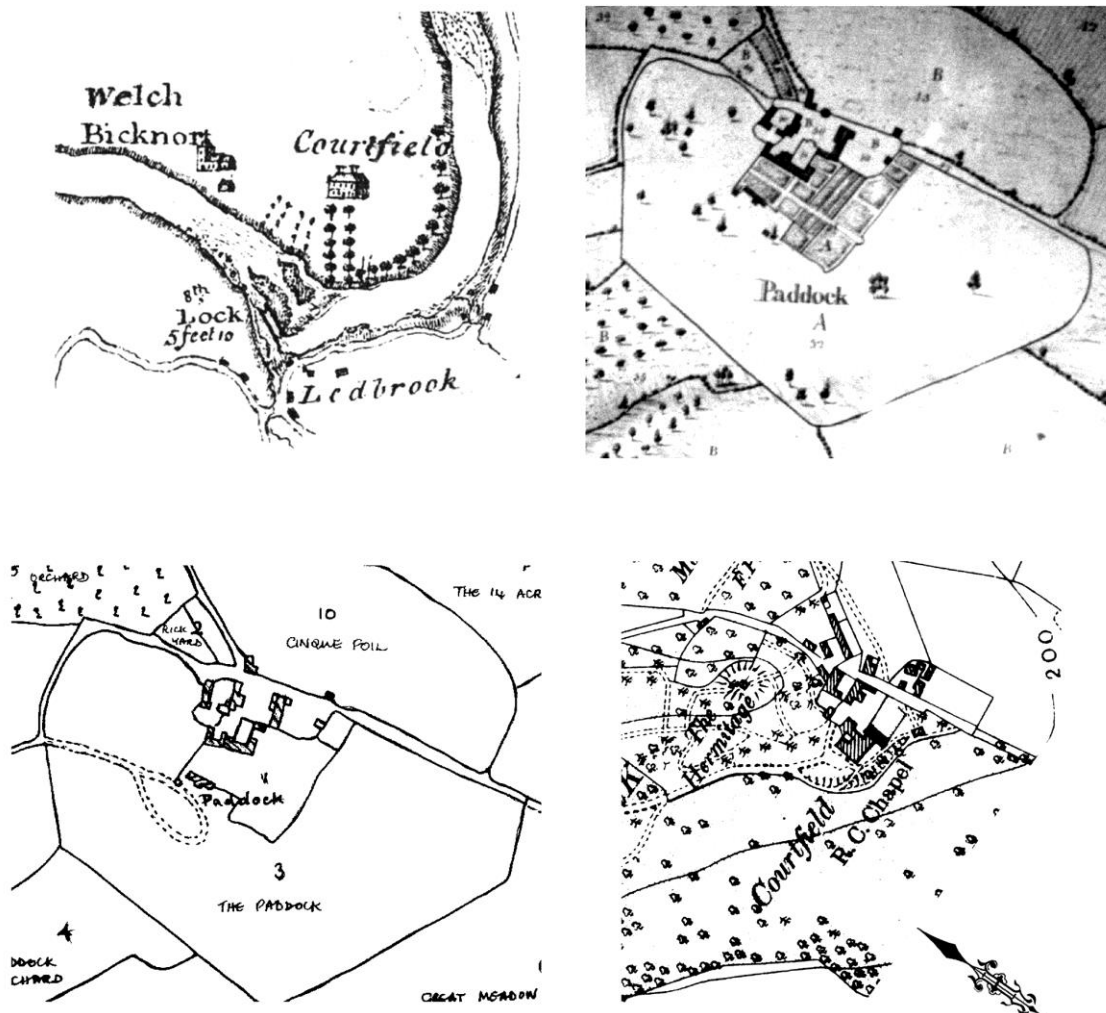


Figure 5 (above) is a mutilated bird, maybe a pelican. It could be an old garden ornament, of course.

To give an idea of the scale of the objects, they are all about 20 to 25 cm high. The bowl is about 50-60cm in diameter. There are also some carved stones holding up a birdbath, but they look less weathered.

The Ornamental Garden at Courtfield, Welsh Bicknor by Roz Lowe

In February 1999 the ARS paid a field visit to Courtfield in Welsh Bicknor (SO 598 175), where we were led around the building and grounds by Father Fox of the Mill Hill Brothers – see HAN70 for the visit report. At that time the earliest map of Courtfield that had been found to illustrate the report was the tithe map of 1840. Recently I was kindly given permission by the Vaughan family to photograph a large estate map of Courtfield and Welsh Bicknor dating from 1792.



The illustrations above are: top left - Isaac Taylor map 1763: top right - 1792 map: bottom left - tithe map circa 1840: bottom right - 1884 OS map.

The 1792 map was photographed under difficult conditions – it is behind thick glass, and reflections were a problem. However, the reproduction of Courtfield itself is good enough to show the gardens postulated in HAN70, and to show how surprisingly extensive they were. What is also apparent is that the tithe map was almost certainly copied directly from the 1792 map, with minimal alterations as necessary. What is more surprising is that the plan of Courtfield itself – the 'E' shaped block - is virtually unaltered according to the tithe map. The front of the house now faces west, where a massive front block was added to the old building. It was believed that this was done in the years up to 1820, but it must be later unless the tithe map lies. It is also clear that the house as depicted in 1792 lies at the back of the modern house, but that the northmost block of the old house was separated before the OS map was drawn, to allow carriages to drive through into the yard. Some buildings which lay on the west

side of the garden have disappeared – with the extension to the west they would have been too close to the new front door.

Almost certainly, the Courtfield mansion was originally entered from the east, the entrance drive circling the motte and bailey – see HAN70 for details of this. Isaac Taylor shows an avenue of trees leading up from the Wye crossing below to a mansion – but this may just be common form as he shows other houses in this way also. However, it is certain that the Wye crossing was a common thoroughfare when passable, and was used to bring materials from the Forest of Dean over Coppet Hill to Goodrich. The black block on the OS map is the Roman Catholic chapel which was attached to the east of the old house, and it appears to join on to the most southerly 'leg' of the 'E' of the original house – it is this part of the house which is said to date from the time of Henry Vth's association with Courtfield. No full historical survey of Courtfield has been done, but there is plenty of material for consideration – a doorway marooned halfway up a wall, for example. Unfortunately when footings for a modern residence block were dug to the east of the chapel the foundations of the large building that had been there in 1792 were probably obliterated.



Next to the cartouche on the 1792 map there are two buildings, shown left. They could be just decorative whimsies. There is a drawing of Welsh Bicknor church in Gwent Record Office, made before the 19th century rebuilding, which shows a small two-block church without a spire but with a slender tower with a roof – just the same as is shown in Isaac Taylor's 1763 map. It's possible that the 1792 illustration is of Ruardean church, which does have a tall spire – the Vaughans owned extensive lands in Ruardean. The ancient gateway next to the drawing of the church is even more interesting, but unidentified – Ruardean castle, perhaps.

There are many other interesting features on the 1792 map, but these will have to await the chance to take a better photograph.

Field Meeting to Staunton-on-Arrow by Rosamund Skelton

A small group met on a sunny day, April 6th 2003, at the Church in Staunton –on-Arrow to consider possible identifications for the Anglo-Saxon Charter boundaries of Staunton. This was a grant by King Edgar to his thegn Ealhstan in 958 AD of 6 hides. There have been a number of suggestions as to the identification of this boundary, the first was by Lord Rennell of Rodd; the second by Frank Noble; and a third by Beryl Lewis in a lecture to the Woolhope Club on the 3rd October 1998, which is shortly to be published.

Lord Rennell chose to identify the various features of the boundary in an anti-clockwise direction whereas elsewhere in the country it has usually been found that such charter boundaries run in a clockwise direction. In fact both Frank Noble and Beryl Lewis were able to arrive at relatively satisfactory results using the clockwise direction. In this field trip we went out to look at a number of the possible identifications around the boundary using the clockwise direction.

“The mill ford” is the first location mentioned and looking at the Arrow there is a possible mill site at GR 369.600 although this is fed by a leat and is not on the river, so it probably is much later location than the one we are looking for, but even the earlier mill ford was probably on the river in the vicinity of either this mill or another slightly further downstream at GR 371.596 where the modern parish boundary joins the river.

“Washford” is the next site and the Tithe Map of 1839 records a field called “Upper Wash Croft” at GR 360.603, it seems feasible that there may have been a ford some where near, particularly as a footpath leads down to the river by this field although its destination now is a footbridge over the river further down. The relocation of the bridge away from the fording place is probably at a narrower crossing place.

“From Washford along the Arrow around the top of ‘holaneige’”. “Holaneige” could be interpreted as “island lying in a deep hollow” or possibly “a deep hollow island”. The southern portion of the parish lies on a area of boulder clay and the ice has created some interesting land forms here, one of which is a deep broad bottomed basin west of Denby Hall at GR345.607 almost entirely surrounded by steep slopes. Because it is not a normal valley created by running water it still is inclined to be marshy with poor drainage. It is a very striking feature but does lie a long way from the river unless the feature gave its name to the whole area around it.

“From holaneige top onto the top of the oak edge then along the top of the oak edge to the forward line of the snaedway”. The oak edge is probably where the parish boundary follows the 230 m contour around the hill leading to Weobley Ash Wood. “Snaed” can mean a detached piece of ground, so presumably the road led to a detached piece of ground. There is an old track along the north side of Green Lane Wood and Burcher Wood and vestiges of the track are discernable as it comes down a ploughed field to cross the B4355 and this is in an appropriate location for ‘the snaedway’ and is also along the line of the parish boundary.

“From the snaedway around ‘heanlege’ to the oak bridge”. “Heanlege” may mean either the high or long clearing in a wood. The similarity of the name to that of the modern farm at Highland makes it seem likely that the ‘heanlege’ lay to the north and west of the modern Highland. Finding an “oak bridge” near here is not so easy, there are two possible locations which would allow a logical link to the next section of the boundary. One is at the bridge by ‘Broadford’ or alternatively higher up the same stream at GR 336.615 a point to which a footpath is heading on the north side of the B4355. This stops short before reaching the stream because of the building of the railway beside the stream, however there is evidence of a track way continuing up to Highland on the same alignment on the Tithe Map before the building of the railway.

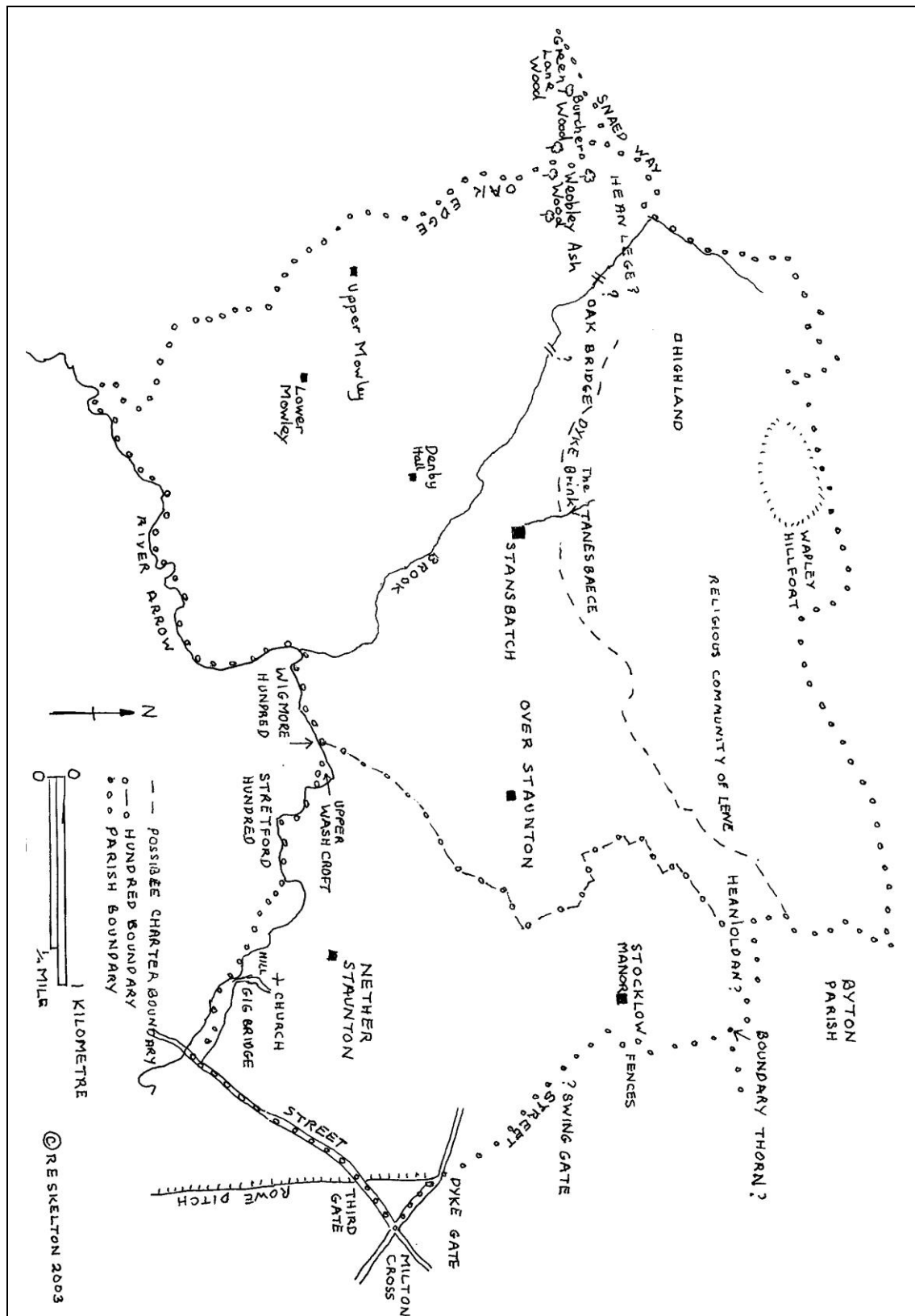


Figure 1 Map of the bounds of the Staunton estate

“Up along the brook then to the dyke.” If the dyke is a bank rather than a water-filled ditch then a suitable bank is still partially visible in the landscape lying on the south side of fields called Near Brink, Far Near Brink and The Brink on the Tithe map. To make the boundary as described connect with this dyke requires a small brook flowing

off Wapley Hill. Nowadays it is likely that this has been culverted or drained through field drainage as nothing is visible on the map.

“Along the dyke to tanes baece” – Stansbatch, an existing settlement, seems to offer a good identification for this location and the bank south of “The Brink” leads to it. However the meaning of “tanesbaec” is not clear: “tan” is a twig, a sprout, a shoot, or possibly a stake, while “baece” maybe either a stream or a valley. The later conversion of “baece” to “batch” in the surviving name suggests that “valley of the shoots” (coppice growth?) might be an appropriate interpretation.

“From tanes baece along the boundary fence then to the boundary of the religious community of lene”. Frank Noble identified the land of the religious community of lene as Osbern son of Richard’s manor of ‘Wapletone’ which “lay in Leominster before 1066” - that is it was part of the lands of Leominster Abbey before it was dissolved in 1046. Bruce Coplestone-Crow lists later spellings of Wapletone as “Wappelyth (1304) and “Wapelethe” (1399) and suggests that this name incorporates Old English “hlith” used in Shropshire and Herefordshire for a distinctive type of concave hill-slope, and that the name “wapol” is variously interpreted as ‘marsh’ or ‘spring’. The SE slopes of Wapley Hill still has a scattering of ponds which probably represent “kettleholes” surviving from the Ice Age in this glaciated landscape. This two hide manor had a population of one riding man, one villager and 22 smallholders with a total of 6 ploughs in 1086. The site of the settlement of Wapletone has been lost although in this remote location it may be that these people lived in scattered dwellings, but its proximity to the Welsh Border would make this dangerous. In 1086 Osbern son of Richard also owned the neighbouring 4 hide manor of Staunton identified in the 12th century Balliol manuscript of the Domesday Book as “Vure Stanton’ et Maldelega” later Over Staunton and Mowley. As a result the boundary between Wapley and Staunton is difficult to identify. In the field there is a curving bank still partially identifiable where the field boundaries have not been ploughed out which can also be seen on the Tithe Map running south of field numbers 129 Godding’s Wood, 128 and 129 Bosley Field and 125 Well Piece. This just might represent an ancient boundary such as the Lene community’s boundary.

Frank Noble suggested that the 4 hide manor of Over Staunton and Mowley combined with the 2 hide manor of Nether Staunton and Stocklow held by Ralph Mortimer in 1086 represents the original “6 manentes” of the Anglo-Saxon Charter. Interestingly the division between these two manors has survived because each manor lay in a different medieval Hundred and the hundred boundary is shown on the Tithe Map. Nether Staunton and Stocklow had a listed population of 6 villagers and 3 smallholders with 4 ploughs in 1086 while Over Staunton and Mowley had 6 villagers, 4 smallholders with 4 ploughs, 4 slaves and 2 ploughs in lordship. It seems strange that the more marginal 2 hide manor of Wapley had as many ploughs as the 4 hide manor of Over Staunton and a far greater number of smallholders making a larger number of people on the ground. It would be interesting to know what additional jobs the smallholders did, were they charcoal burners or perhaps woodmen?

“From the Lene community’s boundary then to Aethelwold’s hedge. From Aethelwold’s hedge to ‘heanoldan’”. A suggested interpretation for “heanoldan” is “the high place of the deer” and the field name Henley Bank on the Tithe Map may give a rough indication of its location.

“From heanoldan to the boundary thorn”, Frank Noble considered the boundary thorn was likely to be at the meeting place of the modern parishes of Pembridge, Byton and Staunton. The only other meeting point of boundaries is where Over Staunton and Nether Staunton meet on the Byton parish boundary.

“From the boundary thorn along the fences to the swing gate.” This seems to be a somewhat enclosed landscape with fences and it may well be where the parish boundary passes in a series of right angle bends close to the site of Stocklow Manor,

the swing gate no doubt being located where the enclosed cultivated land ended on the "street".

"From the swing gate along the street to the dyke gate". "Street" is a term usually applied to Roman or paved roads and the dyke gate is perhaps the most securely identified point in the whole charter boundary, being the point where the Rowe Ditch crosses the Roman road. In order that the swing gate may be on a "street" the Roman road would have to continue straight up to Stocklow Manor along the present parish boundary.

"From the dyke gate to the third gate. Then along the street then back to mill ford". I would suggest that the boundary follows the Rowe Ditch to the third gate on the second Roman road which comes SW from Milton Cross, because if it had continued as the modern parish boundary does down the street to Milton Cross it would have said so. A long stretch of Roman road brings the boundary near to the River Arrow and a side road leading to various mill sites on either side of the modern Gig Bridge. The convergence of two paths from the south side of the river on Gig Bridge may indicate that this is an old crossing point a possible location for "the mill ford" as there is a mill nearby.

This completes the boundary, but it would be nice to be able to identify the "holaneige" and the location of the old Wapley Manor more securely.

After lunch, with permission we drove up to Wapley hillfort. We looked at the interior of the hillfort which is clear of trees, revealing evidence of old ridge and furrow cultivation with pillow mounds superimposed on the old cultivation. The fine inturned entrance on the south side of the hillfort could be clearly seen, but the northern corner of the fort was overgrown with bracken and bramble making it very difficult to see. The exit of a modern path at the west corner enabled us to see the substantial banks hidden in the wood. We returned via the more recent quarry hole and the site of the spring or well. The existence of the well makes it possible that the interior of the hillfort may have been cultivated and occupied in Anglo-Saxon times.

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