

FWP46

iwb 18/10/96, 6/11/96, 7/11/96

East Overton

Maps WOv□ & WOv,

The green line marks the presumed Saxon boundary and the light blue line marks the early C19th boundary between East Overton and Lockeridge, and between East and West Overton. The yellow is from the late C18th map.

Saxon

In 939 AD 15 hides of land at East Overton '*juxta dirivativus fluentium successibus ÆT CYNETAN in illo loco ubi ruricoli antiquo usu nomen indiderunt UFERAN TUN*' were granted to Wulfswyth, a nun, by King Æthelstan (S449). The Latin was translated by Brentnall as; 'by a series of offtakes from the Kennet in the place known of old to the local inhabitants as *Bank Farm*' (1938, 119).

Many of the northern features of the East Overton Saxon charter have been discussed elsewhere (Windows 1, 2-8). In the southern part of the estate, the charter begins of *cynetan to thon ellene*, from the Kennet to the elder tree. The starting point, judging from maps created some 1,000 years later, would have been somewhere along the straight(ened?) stretch of the Kennet along the north side of 'Stony Dean' (1; SU 141684) to the 90° bend in the Kennet SE of Lockeridge House (2; SU 145679).

From the bend one moved to the elder, which would have to have stood out, somewhere on the line from the Kennet to the top of the spur of land just to the W of Lockeridge village, otherwise it would not have been visible from both the river and Lockeridge Dene (the next landmark). The boundary line is reflected today in the curved fence from the banks of the Kennet at the 90° point along the eastern edge of the garden of Lockeridge Cottage (3), just west of the footpath west of the school. From the junction with the lane to West Overton, the early C19th maps show the boundary skirting Dene Farm, and following the lane east and then, at the T-junction, south into Lockeridge Dene. This places Dene Farm in East Overton, not Lockeridge. However, the Saxon charter does not suggest such a circuitous route, as from the elder we go *on wodnes dene*. This may indicate a straight line following the eastern edge of Long Field (4)/ White Barrow Field (5), as far as ?Dene Cottage (6) or straight to SU 146674 (the 147m mark). This puts Dene Farm in Lockeridge, but Dene House in East Overton.

From the Dene we go *thonne to wuda on maer wege*, the wood on the boundary, ?horse (*meah* = mare) or 'mere' way. A bridleway, ('horse way!'), climbs the hill across the lane from the eastern end of Lockeridge Dene (8) which is probably the successor of the boundary way. In the late 18th the boundary followed line 7 around a plot, called Beast Fields, divided into five fields, the corner of one was wooded (9; 1819 map), to rejoin the Saxon charter boundary at the pit (1819), now small copse, at SU 148671. This land was east of an area called Dean Closes to the south and Coney Fields to the north. The boundary follows this track into Wools Grove, the '*wuda*'. Grundy says this boundary way was 'probably a way along the balk of a ploughland' (?1926, 241).

The charter takes us *thonne on hys leage up to wodens dic on tifferthes geat*, to Hursley Bottom (11) then to Wansdyke to Tifferthe's Gate. Two routes are possible here. Either the boundary went to the eastern edge of Hursley Bottom (11&12; SU 148662) or it went east, around West Woods, as the early C19th maps show (14). Either way, the boundary meets Wansdyke at *tifferthes geat*, no doubt at the S corner of Wells' Copse and Little Wood to the gate at the western corner of Barrow Copse (13; SU 154656). As the AS bounds seem to indicate following Wansdayke, route 14

was chosen by Brentnall (1938, 127), which seems likely as this keeps Little Wood in East Overton, which it was in 1567 (and not in Lockeridge).

From the gate we travel *on withigmeres hege easte weardne*, the east side of the hedge at 'Willow Pond' and then *suth on butan Aethelferthes sette on thone stanihtan weg*, south about (round) Aethelferthe's dwelling to the stony way. If the previous gate is at SU 154656, then there is a pond next to the Long Barrow at SE corner of Barrow Copse (15; SU 157655). Brentnall believes that 'this point is exactly determinable. The pond lies beside the lane at the south end of Barrow Copse ...[and] is now called Pig-trough Pond' (*ibid*, 128). This is the pond in the trees, not the modern rectangular one just to its east.

If this interpretation is correct, then Aethelferthe's place lay to SW of the pond, around SU 155652 (16). By going south of the pond, out onto Heath Grounds, following the hedge line, we join up with the present parish boundary west of Bayardo Farm (17) at what was Days Cottage in 1811 (SU 155651). We then travel west, presumably skirting the edges of long-forgotten baulks, to join the road (18; SU 148652) from Draycot Farm to Lockeridge, the *stanihtan weg*. Is this the same Aethelferthe, down here at the southern end, as the *Aethelferthes* who had a *stane* named after him at the northern end of East Overton ? (see Window 1). A barn or farm, of unknown name, stood at SU 151652 (32) in 1819 and 1925, with its associated pond and farm track, the latter are still visible.

Following the Draycott-Lockeridge 'stony way', we meet Wansdyke (19; SU147654). Here we join the boundary with West Overton, where, according to its charter (S784), we are at *Eadgardes gete*, near *langan sceagan*, long 'shaw', whereas the East Overton charter does not note a *gete*, but *smalan leage*, small or narrow lea, instead. This was presumably a wood which lay next to the lane (20), as one did in 1816, or lay at the southern end of Pickrudge, which in the late C18th contained little wood. The boundary therefore followed the track from Gopher Hill, crossing Wansdyke at SU 147654 and, continuing along the lane, goes to the east of Pickrudge and Pumphrey Wood, known until the mid-C19th as *Chichangles Ground*. We are thus going *thurh scyt hangran and lang thaes weges to them hlince*, through Scyt Hangran (?sloping woods or corner wood, Gover *et al*, 1939, 306), along the path to the lynch. Before being associated with the family of Edward Pumphrey at the end of the C18th, Pumphrey Woods was known as *Cheecheangles* (1542 Survey, G. M. Young, WPNS, 306), and as *Upper Chichangles* and *Lower Chichangles* on the enclosure award maps. As such, Chichangles is likely to be derived from *scyt hangran* (*ibid*).

As the boundary follows a 'path to the lynch' through woodland, let us look firstly at the path and secondly at the lynch. The '*Wege*' in question would seem to be the hollow which skirts the northern edge of Pumphrey Wood and which is now a public footpath. Signs of the path's position as a boundary are evident by the HM (Henry Meux) stones along its south-western side and its rôle as the tithing boundary. Following this path, one reaches open pasture today at SU 143666 (22), but in the C10th the Saxons may well have encountered ploughland. Here, a thin strip of hedge, baulk and trees remains today, the remnants of the Saxon *hlince* (visited 24/3/95 - shown as the northern edge of *Allen's Higher Ground* [AHG] on 1794 map).

Although the track continued straight on from point 22 (25), the estate boundary follows the hedge line (21), *to west heafnod*, to West Headlands, marked by two standing stones in 1784 (26). Being headlands this line demarcates the western limits of the ploughland of East Overton in the C10th (*west heafnod*). The curved, almost semi-circular turn the hedge takes north-westwards down the hill to the road is, as Brentnall notes, where 'the modern boundary makes an extraordinary loop round a hole' (1938, 134). Indeed it could be the *crundel*, Brentnall continued, mentioned in the West Overton charter. Unfortunately, during our visit we saw no sign of a pond, pit or quarry, nor is one apparent on any of the maps studied. However, as Brentnall rightly says, this is the tithing boundary (marked on the ground with another HM stone at the 'loop' and with stones in the hedge down to the road) and probably therefore descended from the Saxon boundary.

Thonne north ofer dune on thaet riht gemaere, north over the down, to the straight balk/boundary. The clear candidate for a headland marking the western boundary would be the hedge visible at SU 132668 (27), marking the tithing boundary and the northern edge of the strip called '*Lewis's Ground*' on the 1784/93 maps. The boundary thus follows the hedgeline down Boreham Down, across the Alton Barnes to Lockeridge road and (north-east) up the hill to this distinctive hedge. The *dune* (28) is called *scyfling dune* in the West Overton charter. In 1312 *Schulflydon* is noted (Kepson notes from Winchester archives).

From there we go *to tune*, then to the *tun*; the forerunner of South Farm in modern West Overton, entering at SU 131678 where a stone (29; 1938 map, but not on any later ones, and not there now) may mark the village entrance from the south. Indeed this stone could be the equivalent to the *dunnan stan with foran tham burg gete* of West Overton which once marked the northern gate. On the other hand, it may be the same stone being referred to in both charters.

From the farm we go *on cynetan on sealt ham*, to the Kennet and to the Salt House. To the E of the stone one follows the path marked on the SMR map (SU 132677; through the 1977 housing estate!), passing west of South Farm (30) and across what is now the main street E-W through West Overton. Here one joins the modern footpath which follows the side of the wall (demarcating the land belonging to the Vicarage), down to a foot-bridge over the Kennet, referred to as '*Four bridges*' on the 1794 map and marked on the new Pathfinder map as '*The Withy Bed*'. The Salt House would probably have been in the area called '*Home Mead*' on the 1794 map, around SU 131682 (31). A building at this point would explain the kink in the fence line from the A4 to the Kennet. Presumably this Salt House was to preserve fish caught in the Kennet for the owner and her entourage. As far as I know there are no deposits of natural rock salt in this area, so the salt was presumably sea salt, brought up from the Solent or from the Bristol Channel.

This is the western boundary of the C10th estate of East Overton. By taking this route through the modern day village of West Overton, it illustrates how the village of East Overton must have lain to the east, undoubtedly around the church of (West) Overton. The rest of the charter is discussed elsewhere.

Domesday

The Bishop of Winchester held *Ovretone* in 1086 and it paid geld for 15 hides. The land here was for the support of the monks at Winchester, so the land had been transferred from Wulfswyth, or her predecessors, to Winchester at some point in the preceding 150 years. There was land for 7 ploughs, of which 8½ hides and 2 ploughs were in demesne, though the Geld Roll gave the Bishop 8¼ hides (*i.e.* ½ hide/2 virgates less). The *demesne* of East Overton was worth £8 in the time of Edward, but when the Bishop received it it was worth £6.

The number of villeins was not entered, but they must have had the remaining 5 ploughs. There were 15 acres of meadow, the pasture was 8 furlongs long by 4 broad and the woodland 5 furlongs long by 2 broad. If a furlong is taken as 220 yards (201m.), then the area of pasture may have been in the region of 1600m by 800m, giving an area of 128 ha. (316 ac) and the woodland 1km by 400m, giving an area of 40 ha. (100 ac). The woodland within the tithing of East Overton today, around Wools Grove, Wells' Copse and Little Wood as far as Wansdyke covers an area of approximately 90 ha. (222 ac). In fact I am trying to make a questionable calculation fit the present piece of woodland, which, of course, it now does. Whatever the usefulness of this, it is fairly certain that the woodland in 1086 covered a long, fairly narrow area, probably at the very southern tip of the East Overton estate, not unlike today. In addition, the rectangular area of pasture, being twice its width in length, covered an area roughly three times that of the woodland. Naturally, given a bit of tweaking, this area can be made to cover the downland, which we know was pasture in the C9th, north of Down Barn. The meadow, along the banks of the Kennet,

covered 15 acres. This leaves the arable in the Fore Hill and south of the village on Bitham Barrow Hill.

Lockeridge - The next part of the Domesday entry is interesting. It says 'Of the same land, Durand held 2 hides all but $\frac{1}{2}$ a virgate. He who held it in the time of King Edward could not be separated from the church. It was and was still worth 20s.' The difficulty here is *of the same land*. This may indicate that Durand held 2 hides of the East Overton land from the Bishop, but then the Bishop would have an estate of just under 13 hides, not 15. The alternative is that the land, though considered to be at *Ovretone*, is in fact a separate parcel. The latter is more likely as, if one takes out the *demesne* land and that belonging to Durand, then only 4 hides less $\frac{1}{2}$ virgate remain out of *demense* in East Overton in 1086. This leaves only 28% ($4\frac{1}{4}$ hides) of the land for the non-demense land.

If Durand's land is a separate parcel, however, then $6\frac{1}{2}$ hides ($15 - 8\frac{1}{2}$) remain out of demense, leaving 43% ($6\frac{1}{2}$ hides). Considering 5 ploughs are involved *hors demesne*, it would seem more likely that they worked 43% (leaving the manor's 2 ploughs working 57%), rather than 28% (leaving the manor's 2 ploughs working 72%!). In conclusion, this 2 hides all but $\frac{1}{2}$ a virgate has to be regarded as a separate parcel of land, and not part of the 15 hides. The reference to 'could not be separated from the church' remains to be explained, nor the identity of 'he who held it'.

The Geld Rolls records Durand as having $1\frac{1}{2}$ hides in *demesne* in the Selkley Hundred, one hide of which we know was in the *Locherige demesne*. The other $\frac{1}{2}$ hide is unaccounted for, though it may be that, of this estate of just less than 2 hides in East Overton, the remaining $\frac{1}{2}$ a hide was in *demesne*, possibly a *demesne* separate from the Bishop's at *Ovretone*. Durand in fact had 2 hides of land in *Locherige* (including the one acre of *demense* land), worth 30s. With this c.2 hides in East Overton worth 20s, Durand's total would thus be about 4 hides worth 50s, of which one, possibly $1\frac{1}{2}$, were in *demesne*.

Whatever the exactitudes of the size and nature of Durand's land holding, it is no doubt its position which is significant. We have a 15 hide Winchester estate with the lord of the adjoining land unit, Lockeridge, with claim to c.2 hides of it. Moreover, he already owns 2 hides in Lockeridge and can thus be regarded as an important local land owner (compare Fyfield with 5 hides). It is thus fairly certain that over the years to come the two land units would be amalgamated. If one takes the separate parcel in the Saxon charter as belonging to Durand in the late 11th C, as I argue (see Lockeridge), then it is the thin stretch of land north of the Kennet up the downland slopes which was 'Of the same land, Durand held 2 hides all but $\frac{1}{2}$ a virgate'.

The Manor

By 1086, the estate of East Overton had been assigned by the bishop for the support of the monks of the Old Minster (VCH xi, 188). In 1210 the manors of East Overton and Fyfield were economically independent, being valued at £16 and £8 respectively, though in 1309 the manors were interdependent and valued at £116. Also in 1210, the demesne flock numbered 300, by 1299 the combined flock of Fyf and EOv was 717 ewes, 400 hoggasters and 322 lambs. The folds were at Audley's Cottage, Raddon and Hackpen. In 1567 the sheep were stinted 100 to the yardland (VCH xi, 194).

The junction of the two manors appears to have taken place in the later C13th (ibid), though the prior of St. Swithun's had withdrawn his manors of East Overton and Fyfield from the Selkley Hundred and included them in his own hundred of Elstub in the early C13th. As such, he held right of gallows in East Ov in 1234 & 1275. Although, the prior claimed the manor of Fyfield in 1243, there seems to have been some dispute over the ownership of the manor of East Overton in the late C13th as, in 1284, St Swithun's gave up any right to the advowson of Overton (including Fyfield) in favour of the bishop of Winchester, in return for the Bishop's acknowledgement of the priory's lordship over the manors of East Overton, Fyfield and Alton. In 1291, the priory appropriated Overton church and its chapels (VCH xi, 198-9), which would imply the bishop had agreed to the proposal 7 years earlier.

With the evidence from the account rolls ceasing after 1318, one has to make do with fragments of evidence and from the evidence from villages and manors elsewhere. The Black Death of 1348-9 probably killed over 40% of the population nationally and locally, and in Wiltshire and elsewhere, this and other factors produced a long term period of lowness of population until about the end of the C15. Initially it would have led to desertion of cottages, but in the late C14 and C15 individual tenants were accumulating holdings and these would have opened up gaps in the existing village settlements and occasionally, as at Shaw, produced village desertion itself (Crowley 1975, 10-11; Hare 1994, 165-8). What evidence we have for Overton is largely about

development of demesne farming rather than about the peasantry and reflects both elements of continuity and of change.

While no manorial accounts have yet been found to compare with those of the earlier period, some indications as to the scale of the demesne agriculture can be found from the stockbook of the priory from 1389-1392. It provides us with a snapshot image of the pastoral farming of a great estate at the peak of its activity, reflecting the continued demand for wool and food both from the priory itself and from the increased prosperity of much of the chalklands based upon the growth of the cloth industry in south and west Wiltshire (Hare 1976). The stock book tells us nothing directly about arable production, but it is clear that this continued on a similar scale to before. There is no significant fall in the number of horses and oxen compared with the earlier figures suggesting that the work required of them remained comparable. There may have been a decline in the area of arable cultivation, as at Enford (BL Harl. R1. X/7), but it would not have been great. The cattle herds also remained comparable to those of the early C14, but both pigs and sheep showed signs of substantial growth of demesne production. Thus by 1390, the number of pigs had over doubled from an average of 48 to 133, and Overton then possessed the second largest herd on the cathedral estates, only the great home farm of Barton Priors with 4 more pigs exceeding it (WCL Stockbook, f.16).

While sheep flocks did not reach their exceptional levels of 1248, they nevertheless showed a substantial growth from the high levels of the early C14 figures, showing an increase of 12%. It may not be clear when such growth occurred and it could already have been happening at the end of the previous period, the flock growing to 1,882 in 1318, but what is apparent, as elsewhere on the estate, is that sheep farming was continuing on a very large scale. With the exception of Barton Priors, Overton possessed the largest sheep flock on the priory's estates in 1390, no mean achievement on an estate with 20,357 sheep. Another earlier indication of the continued importance to the manorial economy of wool may be seen from the Receiver's Account for the priory for 1334/5. At Overton, 83% of the receipts of the manor came from wool sales. Such a figure exaggerates the importance of wool as it would underestimate the full value of the manor by excluding the grain and livestock sent to the priory for its consumption (although some of this would have been the product of the sheep flocks). Nevertheless, it provides us with an indication of the importance of wool and sheep on this estate. Of the other Wiltshire manors, wool generated 46% of the manorial receipts of Enford, 26% at Alton, 12% at Stockton and 10% at Wroughton. Such variations reflected the differing size of the tenant rental, as well as the scale of the sheep farming and of liveries of food to Winchester. In 1340, Overton, with 80 sheep, was one of the largest providers of kebb sheep, which were fattened and sent for meat to the cathedral priory (Hanna 1954, 48). The evident large-scale activity of such sheep farming at Overton in middle and late C14 would have continued to ensure an important role for Raddon.

The stock book suggests that, as in most other ecclesiastical manors of the chalklands of Wiltshire, demesne agriculture continued with little change at the end of the C14. Thereafter, evidence is even more fragmentary. In 1419, the Wroughton accounts show hay being taken from the manor to the lord's ewe flocks at Overton (WCL. Box 53 Wroughton). At some point the lord leased out the demesne of Overton, and a likely date, based upon the chronology of similar but better documented manors, would be in the second quarter of the C15. Here, as elsewhere on such large chalkland estates in Wessex, the leased demesne did not originally include the sheep flocks, these continuing to be run and financed by the lord (Hare 1985, 85-6). Here this final stage of the process of retreat from direct farming occurred at some time after 1453 when there was still a breeding flock here and lambs were sent to Barton Priors (Greatrex 1972, E1:xxxv).

iwb - Clearly, throughout the C14 and C15 demesne agriculture certainly continued, as did the grazing of large sheep flocks. The reference to Raddon in 1496 suggests it continued to play an important role in the manorial economy of Overton throughout this period. On the 20th April 1496, the prior leased the manor of Overton to Robert

Wroughton and his wife Agnes. Robert is described as 'a resident instructor of music and grammar [and is] classed as generous with regard to [his] eating arrangements' (Greatrex, 1978, xxxii). This grant included the demesne land which had not already been leased, and rectory tithes, as well as 457 wethers (value 18d each), 12 rams and 350 ewes (value 16d each). The lease was to run for 20 years, with an annual rent of £33 14s 11d payable in 3 instalments. Many items were released to the farmers on that day, including wheat, barley and oats, 5 horses, a bull, 10 oxen, 3 cows, the sheep, 7 geese, 6 capons, 1 cock and 5 hens, straw and chaff, 10 cartloads of good hay from the shephouse in the grange at Raddon, 2 ploughs, 2 coulter, 2 ploughshares and 2 drails ('toothed iron on fore-end of plough-team, to which chain was attached' [ibid, 247]), chains, yokes, 2 paddell ('for freeing the plough of the soil' [ibid]), 8 corn sacks, 1 ironbound dry measure, 1 sieve, 1 riddle ('iron-meshed sieve' [ibid]), 2 forks, a hoe, milkpail, brazen pot, shovel, tables and chairs, a pig-trough, a rennyngsate, a bucket, cord, 3 harrows with iron spikes, 120 hurdles for the lord's fold, 4 locks for the doors of the buildings in the courtyard. Naturally, when the steward and treasurer of the St Swithun estates visit, they have to be housed and fed. In addition, 'the farmers must maintain and repair all the buildings and earthen walls on the sites of both manor and rectory ...while the prior and convent will be responsible for any large timber work and stone work on the buildings, for tiling and slating' (ibid, 189-190).

By 1496 the process had become complete, and a copy of the lease of the manor to Robert Wroughton was included in the priory register (Greatrex 1978, 189-90). It was a stock and land lease, the tenant being provided with a substantial contribution to the manor's requirements for livestock, grain and farm equipment, which would be returned at the end of the lease. As such it shows the mixture of the arable and pastoral economy typical of sheep corn husbandry of this area, and shows a continuation of largescale demesne agriculture. The breakdown of the grain provided (15 quarters of wheat, 40 quarters of barley and 10 quarters of oats) with its relatively low amount of oats may reflect a longer term trend, whereby the decline of population and shrinkage of arable may have led to a particularly sharp fall in oats production. The lease also included 819 sheep and 10 cartloads of hay in the lord's sheephouse in the grange at Raddon, showing that this remained an important centre for sheep production. The terms of the lease also suggest that some of the manorial buildings had followed a trend found elsewhere in the area and shifted from thatch roofs to slate, or more likely here, tile roofs (Hare 1991).

The lease of his successor, Thomas Goddard, was enrolled in 1512 (WCL Register D&C. f. ?). He also gives an idea of the large scale agriculture that was continuing despite the end of direct involvement by the old ecclesiastical landlord. Thomas was one of a family who achieved wealth and prosperity as large-scale lessees of demesnes. They were probably involved in trade as well as agriculture and leased various manors in the Marlborough area in the C15. Above all, they leased the large manors of Aldbourne for most of the later C15 and those of Ogbourne in 1460 and again at the beginning of the C16. Their wealth was reflected in their high tax assessments in 1524 (one being assessed with goods to the value of £440 and another at £640) and one was described as gentleman. Farmers' wills did not refer to all their sheep, only those which formed part of specific bequests, but John Goddard of Ogbourne was to refer to 1,100 sheep in three flocks, giving us a minimum figure for the scale of his sheep farming. The Goddards leased several manors in a compressed area and the acquisition of Overton was part of this. They were wealthy farmers who could have continued the large-scale farming of Overton, despite the retreat of the cathedral priory from direct involvement in agriculture (Hare 1981, 9-13). The 1562 (VCH says 1567!!) Survey of the lands of William, First Earl of Pembroke, shows the continuity of this lease. The large-scale capitalist estate economy, established by the priors of St. Swithun in the C13, was passed on to their lessees and ultimately was to be unaffected by the Dissolution and the loss of Overton to the successors of the priors of St. Swithun.

In 1541 Winchester chapter received a royal grant of the manor of East Overton, which it reconveyed to the crown in 1547 who subsequently granted it to Sir William

Herbert, First Earl of Pembroke (1551). Thus the earl of Pembroke held East and West Overton, Lockeridge and Fyfield. The demesne of East Overton was leased to farmers from at least the C16th, contained a considerable acreage in Fyfield in 1567. From the Survey of the Earl of Pembroke Thome Wroughton, described as *Generosi*, holds the manor from Richard Kingsmill (CHECK LATIN Straton 258) and Thomas Goddard lives in the rectory. In the same document we have mention of the 'Dyllinge' and 'Roddons close', as well as 'Roddon Cowdowne que est pastura valde bona', 'Iez Corner de Roddon Cowelease', 'Roddon Copice yate' and 'Catteborowgh per Roddon Somerdown ad Stanchslade'.

In 1682 the manor was sold to William Clarke, whose son, John, sold it to Francis Hawes, who, when the South Sea Bubble burst, found it sold to the Duke of Marlborough in 1726. It passed to Charles Spencer (d 1758), thereafter it descended with this title to John Spener-Churchill (d 1883). In 1866 it was sold to R. C. Long and when he died his brothers sold it, in 1870, to the Meux estate, which also included Lockeridge, Fyfield, Glebe and Clatford Park Farms and West Woods. Estate sold in 1920s to Olympia Agricultural Co. Ltd and since 1971 farmed in partnership between R.G.F. and R. Swanton. West Woods, however, was bought by the Forestry Commission and some downland was owned in 1977 by J.V. Bloomfield. Before the division into North and South Farms, the original manor house, from where the estate was farmed, is presumed to be the Old Manor, west of church (VCH xi, 188-9; see VCH xi, 199-201 for details of church).

Before Inclosure some reorganisation took place as the manorial estate was divided into North and South Farms on either side of the Bath road probably c.1800. At Inclosure in 1821, the lord of East Overton was allotted some 800ac in the East Overton tithing, 500 in the Fyfield chapelry and 218 from the manor there. In the later 19th and early 20th centuries both Overton and Fyfield downs were exploited, as part of the Meux estates in north Wilts, for sporting purposes (VCH i, 195).

The Tenants

In 1332 there were 29 tax payers paying a total of 75s 8½d in *Overtone* and *Fifhyde*, including Lucy atte Dene, Alice atte Toumbe and Avice atte Asshe, as well as Philip and Henry atte Watere (Crowley 1989, 59). From the *Nona Inquisitions* of 1342 a Philip Atwater is mentioned amongst the parishioners of the church at Overton. This document details the attempts by the King's agents to extract a ninth of corn, wool and lambs from each parish to help finance the war with France. The reaction of the parishioners is non too enthusiastic; those of East Overton claim they can give nothing 'because they all live by agriculture', those at Alton Priors are in difficulty because of the 'many sheep and lambs died there by the severity of the winter last past'. Henry Tailor was vicar of Overton in 1351 (Greatrex 1978, 2), in 1419 the post was held by William Basyng (ibid, 61), in 1433 it was Thomas Newenham (ibid, 70) who was replaced by John Hobbys in 1459 (ibid, 113). The survey of 1567 names 27 people, including Thomas Apjean, 'alias Johnson Clericus', (Straton 1909, 251-62)

The Village

The *Vicaridge Howse* comprised of 'one Dwelling House with an Orchard, a Garden, and Court or Barton, a Barne, a Stable and several Closes of Pasture or Mead' in 1588, but in 1671 the 'Vicridge' had a 'house, a Parlor Hall and Kitching, one Barne of fower Bayes and a Stable'. The George was first mentioned in 1736, though no mention of it after 1827 has been found. The New Inn, first mentioned in 1814, had changed its name to the Bell Inn by 1823 (VCH xi, 185). The road north of Bittam and Long Fields, south of the village (46), was constructed between 1816 and 1819. Prior to its construction, however, the line of this 'New Road' was partly a back lane, though on the whole it was a completely new venture. The roads through the SVR are discernible on the late 18th maps, though by the 1810s they appear to have gone out of use. The sketch in red on Map EOV (1) shows their position. The eastern end of the

lane south of the Old Manor was lengthened to incorporate part of the churchyard in c.1877 (VCH xi, 184). South Farm has a south range dating from the C17, with extensions north, east and south dating from c.1800. North Farm was begun in 1801 (VCH xi, 185).

The vicar, Charles Hoyle, gave James Fowler, the smith, a plot of land in King's Close at Inclosure in 1821 where Fowler had recently built a 'smith's shop' next to a timber yard. This plot was bounded on the south by 'Overton Street'. The 1819 map shows a 'Blacksmith's Ground', east of the church, though this is not part of King's Close.

Wood

In 1299 there is a reference to Burham Wood in the manorial records for East Overton. In the late C18th Wools Grove was a coppice on the 'Tenants Down', a down which included Hursley Bottom. According to the Survey of 1567, Lytle Wood, 16a., was planted with oaks and hazel in 1555, and Wools Grove, 40a, similarly planted, in 1561. However, this appears to represent the replanting of new woodland (with the felling of exhausted woodland) as an earlier wood grew in the same area. This is demonstrated by the references to *Woveseyegrove* in the C14th (Gover et al, 306). With such early references, Wools Grove and Little Wood may well be remnant woodland from Domesday Savernake. In the late C18th/early C19th, East Overton comprised of Wools Grove and Little Wood, and interestingly 'J Wells Coppice', which today is simply Wells' Copse (SU 151661), indicating it was named after a local owner. Wells' Coppice was planted between 1567, as it is not noted in the Survey, and the 1770s. A Farmer Wells is noted in the Terrier of 1704/5.

Withigmeres hege (S449, Willowpond Hedge, SU 157655), which would have been a useful source of wood for fires and hurdles, and for berries and plants was in all probability a fairly sizeable hedge in the C10th given that it was chosen as a boundary marker. Hursley Bottom (1816 and modern OS maps), was called *ers lege* (S784) and *hyrs leage* (S449) in the tenth C, Hurseley in 1567, Husley Bottom in 1773 and 1885, and Tenants Down in the late C18th (Gover et al, 306). It cuts Wools Grove and Wells Coppice and, being a lea, may, therefore, not to have been wooded for a millenium. Barrow Copse was wooded in the late C18th, though the trees were felled between 1816 and 1819 (15; SU 157655). The area was replanted in 18XX??. The wooded area in 1815/16 is shaded pink and the open areas yellow on map EOv (2). It is worth noting the woodland follows the banks, shown as black lines on the modern 1:25000 map, which remain visible today.

After Lockeridge & E.Ov. were acquired by the D of M, the woodland, augmented by a considerable acreage in Fyfield in the later C19th, was husbanded for sporting & economic purposes. In 1906 West Woods was 718a. The wooded area between Haeth Plantation and Strawberry Ground was called Brickkiln Copse in 1925, and east of Barrow Copse, an aviary (45) stood. The cottage just south of the modern Poultry Farm was called Spye Park in 1820 (Gover et al, 37) and in 1925. The 1925 25" map notes a 'Stone' (BM 712.1) at the gap in Wansdyke at the SW corner of Heath Plantation (19; could be HM estate or earlier).

Fields & Downland

The references to fields in the manors of Overton and Fyfield in the records of the Bishop of Winchester are as follows; Northfield (1287), Westfield (*passim*), Munkfield (1280), Eastfield (*passim*), Southfield (1311 & 1312), Northfield at Scrufeleput (1312; Scrope's Pit?), La inlonde and above the church (1312), Wyte'hull (1316), Hardeston (1312), Curtelynych at Fyfield and above the church there (1312), La Worglound (Fyfield, 1312). There was also a Munkmede (1248), Gravelesputte (1312) and Modayslynch (1312), and a virgate of land in Lokrigg (1309).

The Pembroke Survey of 1567 notes Banesclose, Coteclose, Uphouseclose, Overhouseclose, Cokkes close, Laneclose, Deane close, Wyllesclos, Mylhayes close, Roddons close, Pykkeldean close, Deane close, Westclose, Houseclose, Paynters croft, Wayland, Ryeland, Coneysfeld, Hylhouse, Hylleclos, Lyllebones/Lylbornes, Puthay, Temple Hays, Bourdland, Stonydeane (2ac) a pasture called Sheldford and a *Cotagium* called Mawdyes. The fields were Forehill, Whithill, Baresfeld, Suthfeld, Estfeld and Northfeld and the meadows were called Horsemeade, Pittneymeade and Brodemeade.

There was pasture at Lyphams, Hackpen, Rodden Cowedowne and Dyllinge, with the *communis pastura*, used by the manorial tenants all year round, at Priors Ball, Full Ridge and Hurseley, estimated at 100a, which all lay, I assume, south of the Lockeridge road on what is called Tenants Down in the late 18th/early 19th centuries. The tenantry sheep downs were on Broad, 34a. and Little, 8a., Downs. The tenants had *intercommunicabunt* in Baresfelde (in the west) and from Old Bury to Stony Deane and Connyfelde. After 11th November the farmer at East Overton was entitled to Audley's Down (80ac) in Fyfield (Straton 1909, 254-64).

In the Terrier of Glebe Lands of 1671, the areas mentioned are Bittom, Blacksmith, Whiteway, White Field, Dean Cloas Field, Whitslade Field, Redhill, Pound Field, Gibstone, Temple Downe, Cattenbarrow, Paddle Drove, Fore Hill, Vickaers Bush, Bum Furlong, Hackpin Farme Downe and Meadow Ground. In 1704/5, we have Comon Pread (*sic*), Broad Mead, Gibson Furlong, Stanley, Bittons, Hatchets Gate, Barrows Fields, Pound Field, Longfield. Long Hedge, Whiteway and Head Acre were in Hatchets Gate Field, Whiteslade was in Long Field, with Candle Acre, Barrow Acre (with a barrow) and another Head Acre in Baron (Barrow?) Field. Pan Furlong was in Red Hill. Catton Barow contained at least 22ac of arable.

In 1719 some of the common meadows and open fields of East Overton were enclosed and in 1728 the East Overton manor contained Hackpen and 'Roddon' downs, 276ac, Hursley down, 26ac and a tenantry down of 101ac (VCH xi, 195). By 1728 some subdivision had taken place as there were North, Yonder, South, Vicar's, Coneys, Long, Bittam, Hatch Yatt, White Barrow and Pound Fields. By the late C18th, areas in East Overton included Hackpin Cow Down, Hackpin Sheep Down, Lower New Broke, Park Grounds, Upper New Broke, Upper Lower New Leaze, The Fore Hill, White Hill and Cattan Barrow north of the river and Pound (44), Long (4), Bittam (32), Hatch Yatt (33), White Barrow (5), Coney's Field (7) and Tenants Down south of it (34). Long Field was under wheat in 1819, Bittam was fallow or grassed, Hatch Yatt was partly fallow and partly 'saintfoin' and White Barrow was fallow. A drove (43) is marked on the 1819 map, indicating Boreham Down was pasture. Coneys Field no doubt shows where the priory of St. Swithun's had its warren after being granted the right to free warrening within their *demesne* land in 1300 (VCH xi, 188). Between 1816 and 1819, a 'New Inclosure', now called Parson's Penning, took 37½ a of Downland into arable.

The SVR of East Overton lie in a field called Ring Close in 1819. To the east of the church lay four plots called Pound Field (44) and north of the church was Blacksmiths Ground (35). Between the river and the village street, the land was divided into Vicarage Meadow (36) and George Mead (37; nearest the George Inn), with 'Osiers' by the Kennet (38). South of North Farm lay Broad Mead (39) and Marlbro' Mead (40). The area by the Saxon Salt House (31) was called East Croft and by the George Inn, George Mead (41). Just north of the A4 was Worthy Lands (42). Around Lockeridge Dairy, which appears to lie on the site of Mall House (A&D, 1773), lay Standly Dry Mead, Gibson Furlong and Standly Meads. At Inclosure the four large fields south of the village became one, allotted to the Duke of Marlborough, with the vicar taking the land around Dene (Glebe) Farm (the modern fence line shows his allotment). In 1856 North Farm and Fyfield Farm were worked together.

The River Kennet & Water

Water needed to be contained, especially on the higher chalk land. A *mæer*, or pool, is recorded in the Saxon charter of East Overton, and there was also a pond, with

willows around it, at the easternmost edge of East Overton, which is probably reflected in the pond still visible near the Long Barrow at SU 157655. In 1567 the common well was called 'Comon Wells' (Straton 1909, 262).

see 'Saxon' above for Salt House by Kennet

At parliamentary inclosure in 1821 arrangements were made to pay the owner of the mill in the neighbouring tithing of West Overton, Edward Pumphrey, £27 at Michelmas yearly for turning out of the mill dam to irrigate the water-meadows of East Overton, partitioned into 7 'stems' on either side of the Kennet, from 1st December to the 5th April and again from the 5th May until the 1st of July. The stems were owned by the Earl of Pembroke in WOv (1st & 2nd) and in EOv the vicar and the D of M owned the 3rd, with the 4 remaining owned by D of M. The map of 1819 shows much of this canalisation work had been done by then, indeed the Act for Inclosing Canals in the Tythings of EOv & Lock...' is dated June 1814 (WRO 79a/1).

'The Commissioners ...order and direct that the several brooks, streams, ditches, watercourses, funnels and bridges ...shall at all times from henceforth be sufficiently deepened, widened, cleansed, scoured and kept in repair by and at the expense of the respective owners or occupiers'

'Main float south of the Kennet, depth 3', breadth 8', starts at dam at WOv mill, 60yds above mill, through Home Ground to public road there leading from WOv to Bath Road then passing by means of a tunnel or culvert under Road, through Home Meadow, thence along an aquaduct made over the Lake there through Meadow and over Symbourne Close to public road to EOv to the Bath Road and passing by means of a tunnel or culvert under Road through Broad Meadow and Pound Field ...varying a little in its direction through an old inclosure called Stanley's Meadow then inclining a little to the Sward and Ew?? over this allotment near the ditch of an Inclosure called West Close ..from North Meadow to Water Gates or Sluices at West End of Waylings Meadow, Lower Field and Lockeridge Meadow from whence it falls into the said River Kennet'. Another water gate to NW corner of Waylings.

1st stem floated 4 days & 4 nights

3rd to 7th floated 2 days & 2 nights 1/12 to 4/4

5/5 to 1/7; 2 days & 2 nights for each stem to continue in regular succession

Inclosure notes;

- 'Watery Lane' (Frog Street?)

- 'Lake or Ozier bed belonging to the Duke' by the West/East Ov ford/boundary.