

## WP54

lwb 19/11/96

# Windows 6 & 7

### Overview

For Window 6, at the northern end of this study area, little information from the maps available has been forthcoming in comparison to Window 7. This is unsurprising considering this area was, and seems has been for at least 1,000 years, downland. The long use of this area for grazing is reflected in the name 'Lockeridge Tenants Down' (18), 'Hackpin Cow Down', 'Hackpin Sheep Down' (late C18th) or 'East Overton Farm Down' in 1819 (17), which appears as 'Ray Down' in 1773 and 1885, but which today is called 'Overton Down'. The only feature noted on the maps is a hut (7), shown in this area in 1819, marking the junction of Hackpin Sheep Down and Lockeridge Tennants Down, near the Overton Down Experimental Earthwork (around SU 130705). A dotted line is shown on the map of 1819 from the corner of the drove by Parson's Penning to this hut (8). Such lines seem to indicate a known field boundary, though possibly this was no longer visible on the ground. However, a clear line was marked on the late 18th century map to show the boundary between Hackpin Cow Down and Hackpin Sheep Down at the same point as this dotted line. Clearly the hut, though probably not old, marked an ancient land division between the Overton grazing land and that of Lockeridge.

The parish boundary between Fyfield and West Overton is well indicated on the late 18th century and 1819 maps, though the junction with the fence line just to the north of Window 7 appears to show the line travelling directly west (15) instead of north, as is the case at present. A portion of land, called 'Five Acres' in 1819 and also noted as an enclosed area in the late 18th century, juts out into Lockeridge Tenants Down (18), again just north of Window 7. This appears to be within Fyfield. Certainly at Inclosure (1821) the boundary seems to have been straightened (6), so perhaps at the same time 'Five Acres' was exchanged with West Overton for a similar area of land. To the south of this rather confusing junction of Fyfield and Lockeridge is a line, marked on the 1819 map, as 'Watkins's Gizzard' (4).

The boundary between the tithings of Fyfield and Lockeridge (3) is marked on the late 18th century and 1819 maps. In 1819 there is an additional line marked across the field between the parish boundary to the north and the tithing boundary to the south. This is noted as 'East Overton and Lockeridge Farm Land ... Poor Rates' (16) and takes several 90° turns like the other bounds, seemingly marked by posts or standing stones.

In the south-west corner of Window 7 is Down Barn (12), a house now being renovated for holiday lettings. In 1773 it was called 'New Barn', though on the late 18th century map it is shown, it is not named. In 1819 one has the name 'Down Barn' for the first time. Here, the barn is shown as slightly L-shaped, enclosed to the north with a gate between the fence on the left and the side of the barn. A gate allowed access into the enclosed yard, just to the right of latter gate. The whole is aligned east-west and had a square pond in front with a smaller building to the right, also in its own enclosure.

To the north of Down Barn, an enclosed area is clearly marked in 1819 (10). It had a fence around it, with two gates (9) and a square pond to its north-west, just outside the enclosure. To the south-east of this enclosure, that is to say to the SW of ODXII, a gate led into East Overton Farm Down with what appears to have been a small enclosure, shown stippled on the map, in the SE corner (14). To the south of Down Barn turnips were growing in 1819 (21), though the field to the east was 'fallows' (22). The dry valley of Pickledean was noted in the Earl of Pembroke's Survey in 1562 as *unun clausum vocatum Pykkeldean* with 12 acres (11), it was referred to as 'Pickel Dean Bottom' in

1705, Pickle Dean Bottom in the late 18th century, Pickle Deans in 1819 and Piggie Dean in 1885. A 'Furlong called Paddle Drove' is noted in the Terrier of 1671, placed between the descriptions of 'White Hill' and 'Fore Hill'. In 1705 the reference is to 'Pattel Drove' which covers 6 acres. Presumably, Paddle Drove refers to the lower end of Pickledean, around 'Stony Bottom'. There is also mention of 'Bum Furlong' (1671) or 'one single acre called Bum Acre' (1705) in this area.

To the south-east of Down Barn, down the shallow valley of Pickledean past three gates (9), Pickledean Barn stood (13), though in 1773 it was called 'Old Barn' (as opposed to the 'New Barn' up the valley), and called 'Pickle Dean' in 1819. Then it was drawn as U-shaped, aligned west-east, in a square enclosure with gates at the top left-hand corner, centre right and bottom left-hand corner. In the late 18th century, the field to the south of Pickledean Barn was called 'Pickle Dean Cow Down' (35), with 'Vickers Bush' (1671) or 'Vicars Field' (1819; 36) next to it, south of what is today called 'New Shed'. Viacr's Field lay at the northern end of 'Forehill' (1562).

The main part of East Overton's eastern side was bordered, in the tenth century, by a *lamba paeth*, a lambs' path, which came down the east side of Pickledean. Just as today, it is clear sheep-farming was an important part of the local economy in the tenth century. Perhaps the sheep were have been driven down off the Downs, along the trackway (S449 - *andlang weges*) through the natural funnel of Pickledean, into the *slaed* or flat valley bottom land (S449, around SU 143684, Smith 1970 ii, 127). It is possible that, after being gathered along the Kennet, they were then taken along the hollow way to market.

To the east of ODXII, in the fields called 'Whithill' in 1562, covering 30 acres, or 'White Hill' in 1671 (33) and 'Lockeridge Field' (27), the area was 'fallows' (19) or growing 'wheat' in 1819 (20). A track crossed this land, from north to south, on the A&D map of 1773 (38). The eastern side of East Overton Farm Down, which was also the boundary between East Overton and Lockeridge was demarcated in Saxon times by a *wege* (41), which went south to the lynchets (1 & 39; SU 136703; S449). Thus the A&D track would seem to be the obvious continuation of the *hric wege* (41) of the Saxon charter, following as it does the ridge of Fyfield Field down into the village. The boundary track is reflected in the approximate line of the present footpath, alongside the western edge of the gallops (from SU 127714 to SU 134701), though the path is no longer visible crossing White Hill Field today. This path was an important one, more so, it seems, than the *herpoth* which may have only been used intermittently, as the former appears on all the early maps of this area, crossing the downland and London-Bath road, before reaching Fyfield, whereas the modern Ridgeway is not always shown.

The Saxon charter followed the lynchets during its outline of the downland and four dairy farms (39), with the main body of the land unit crossing *west and south ofer thaet yrdland on Pyttel Dene* (33 & 40). The way the charter picks its way across the lynchets and armland is reflected in the way the tithing boundary between East Overton and Lockeridge, and the parish boundary between West Overton and Fyfield, turn, seemingly for no reason, at right-angles across what is now an open field. Clearly the slopes north, and possibly south of the river were under plough in the tenth century; indeed the mention of lynchets and headlands, which would take time to build up, indicates that these areas had been under the plough for some time.

Of further note are the interesting bends, shown on the late 18th century map, in the division line between Lockeridge Field and the downland area, that is to say where White Hill meets the fence line at ODXII (34). The northern edge of White Hill was certainly not a straight one, unlike today, as it turns 90° several times, probably mirroring a noticeable line on the ground. Whether this follows lynchets since ploughed out, the lynchets which remain visible today or even the building platform areas of ODXII, is impossible to tell on a map of this scale.

To the north-west of Down Barn the area was called 'The Down Field' (23), all of which was fallow, and, further west, abutting the Ridgeway, the 'Down' (25) in 1819. Directly west of Down Barn, south of The Down Field, an enclosed parcel of land was referred to as 'Old Park Grounds' (26). Two decades earlier, however, this land (Down, The Down Field & Old Park Grounds) was divided into five smaller areas called 'Lower New Broke' (28), 'Lower New Leaze' (29), 'Upper New Leaze' (30), 'Upper New Broke' (31) and, up against the far western edge of East Overton, 'Park Grounds' (32). A small mound is shown on the early 20th century 25" map in 'Lower New Broke', although by this time this field was no longer known as such.

These names would indicate this land had recently been turned from downland pasture to arable. Of note, are the fields called 'Park Grounds' and 'Old Park Grounds'. This would suggest this area, bounded in the north by a fence coming west from Down Barn and in the south by the boundary with West Overton, was emparked. There are no written records of a park in this corner of the tithing of East Overton. This 'lost' park seems to have stretched from the Ridgeway to Down Barn as, in the late 18th century, 'Park Grounds' lay well to the west of what was 'Old Park Grounds' in 1819; in fact it is the area known as 'Lower New Leaze' and 'Upper New Leaze' in the late 18th century which are referred to as 'Old Park Grounds' in 1819.

The *twegen dunne stanas* of the West Overton charter refer to two stones between Colta's barrow and Scrope's pit, and are not mentioned in the East Overton one. It is possible that the two standing stones in the hedge south of Down Barn (42 - SU 129695) are these two, having been moved to their present positions from the boundary hedge near the *crundel* (SU 125694) some time, as they were not singled out on the 1819 map, after 1820.

A track running from Avebury was noted on the 1773 A&D map at the northern part of Down Field, running past Down Barn ('New Barn'). This area south of Parson's Penning had a Drove way through it in 1819 (24), which is still visible between the two modern fences today. This area was called 'New Forest' by Smith in 1885, though there is no evidence that it was ever such. To the south, the boundary between East and West Overton (2) is well marked on the detailed maps, and all show the interesting turns of the fence line at the northern end of West Overton.