North Stoneham Park: its
origin and development

by

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Summary

This report looks at the earliest origins of the deer park at North Stoneham. It traces how the park was accommodated into an already existing landscape, dating back to the Saxon period. There are also traces of Roman features within this landscape that may have also influenced its development.

Clues to the early landscape are given in a charter of A. D. 932 for North Stoneham. Support for inferences drawn from this document are given in other Saxon charters for neighbouring estates. These, together with cartographic and topological evidence, indicate that North Stoneham Common had been created as an area of common pasture by at least the middle Saxon period. An old trackway can be traced between the common and a farmstead apparently referred to on one of the charters. A Roman building on the site of this farmstead hints at earlier origins. This trackway was later used as the southern boundary of the medieval deer park.

The boundaries of the deer park are traced by fieldwork. These seem to be confirmed by documentary evidence from the sixteenth century as encompassing an area of about 32 hectares (80 acres). The development of the park is traced to the present day, and indicates that it was considerably expanded by the Fleming family after 1599. This expansion continued throughout the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

The evidence for a possible 2,000-year continuity of elements within the landscape at North Stoneham is not common in the United Kingdom. Although this landscape has been considerably damaged in the recent past by development, there is still a good case for conservation of the remaining areas. The ability to demonstrate long-term landscape survival and evolution as an educational resource could prove to be valuable, and protection of certain elements in this landscape is recommended.

North Stoneham Park: its origin and development

1.1 Introduction

The threat of development to the strategic gap between Eastleigh and Southampton has led to renewed interest in the history and landscape development of the area. This has been particularly focused on the area known as North Stoneham Park. By the nineteenth century this had developed into a designed ornamental landscape extending over more than 500 acres. The potential of this area is discussed in a recent report by Christopher Blandford Associates (April 1991). The origins of the Park can be traced back to a deer park recorded as belonging to the abbot of Hyde in 1334 (Patent Rolls 1330-34, 583). The survey by CBA suggests that the medieval park may have had boundaries similar to those shown on a estate plan of 1818. Recent research shows a much smaller extent for the abbot's park. It can be shown that the park was progressively expanded during the post-medieval period to its maximum extent at the time of the tithe map c. 1840. The earlier boundaries can be shown to have been influenced by landscape features that have survived from at least the Saxon period. These are identified as playing an important role in the development of settlement in the Southampton area, including the town itself, and should therefore be merited greater protection than they are currently given.

1.2 The region

The ancient estate, later the manor, of North Stoneham is largely a region of clays, with large patches of sand and gravel. It is considered poor agricultural land today. Modern land uses are restricted mainly to pastoral and woodland regimes.

The area was still characterised in the nineteenth century by extensive areas of common and managed woodland. Piecemeal development, both for housing and for industrial estates following the construction of the M27, threatens much of the region, although large areas of woodland survive for forestry.

2.1 The Saxon landscape (Figure 1)

To understand how North Stoneham has evolved as a landscape, it is necessary to understand the evidence that is available in the Saxon land charter of A.D. 932, whereby King Athelstan gave the estate to thegn Alfred (see Appendix 1 for a full text of the bounds). These lands were transferred to the New Minster (later Hyde Abbey) at Winchester soon after.

This document was studied by Grundy in the 1920s (1927, 242-47), but a recent examination of the area on the ground suggests a number of revisions are required. Analysis of the charter bounds suggests that North Stoneham was once of a much greater extent in the tenth century than later (Currie, forthcoming). This extended estate stretched northwards beyond the later manorial boundaries to include much of the historic sub-manors of Boyatt and Eastleigh (later in South Stoneham).

2.2 Saxon common-pasture

Local charter evidence indicates the presence of large extents of common pasture, and a series of 'ways' or roads throughout the study area. The charter bounds for North Stoneham of A.D. 932 indicates the presence of gated common pasture adjoining the boundary near the area now known as Southampton Common. Further common pasture with gated access is indicated by Saxon charters for neighbouring estates on Horton Heath, and land east of the River Itchen in South Stoneham in the later sub-manors of Allington, Shamblehurst and Townhill. The presence of gateways suggest that these existed for access, and they argue that the common pastures must have been surrounded by a stock-proof boundary to keep animals from wandering on to adjoining farmland (Currie forthcoming).

These early common pastures seem to have been the forerunners of later English commons. This would appear to suggest that within Saxon estates resources were shared, or held 'in common'. There has been much debate over the years as to the origins of common field agriculture, stretching back to Gray

(1915) and beyond. The local evidence seems to indicate that extensive areas of pasture were also held in common. They are first mentioned early in the tenth century, when they seem to be well-established entities. Over the course of the medieval period, rights were eroded, and much of the land was enclosed in private estates. Much of this is recorded in twelfth and thirteenth century documents as pressure on land intensified, but it must have began much earlier.

2.3 Saxon routeways and their relationship with common-pasture

Rackham has suggested origins of English commons as woodland-pasture where 'the pasture element gained the upper hand and grazing was sufficient to prevent the replacement of the trees' (1976, 136). He further notes that their later shapes taper '...away gradually into the roads which cross the common' (Rackham 1976, 139). A study of the local commons on the 1810 Ordnance Survey map demonstrates this tendency. It further shows that most of the ancient routeways of the area move across country by following stretches of common land wherever possible.

The Saxon charter evidence hints at a number of roads crossing the commons of the region. Many of these roads can be shown to correlate with routeways shown on the 1810 map. A major routeway was the road from North Stoneham Common to the Saxon port of Hamwic. There is a gate on the charter for North Stoneham of A.D. 932 roughly where the A33 enters Southampton Common. This gate is shown to be still present on the North Stoneham Enclosure Map of 1736 (HRO 102M71/E9).

North Stoneham Common was still a large area stretching from the southern end of Chandler's Ford to Southampton Common in the eighteenth century, and is recorded as covering 2,200 acres in 1736 (HRO 102M71/E9). The gate on the A.D. 932 charter suggests an exit point from the Common for a road following the line of the later A33. This road bends SSE near the southern end of Southampton Common. In order to pass into the later medieval town of Southampton, the road has to turn back due south. If the original line leaving the Common is followed it leads directly to the site of the earlier town of Hamwic. The alignment of this road suggests that it was one of the main provisioning routes into Hamwic, particularly for livestock direct from the extensive grazing lands of North Stoneham.

As well as these major routeways, there are a number of other trackways in the area that can be identified as having Saxon origins. The most interesting of these holloways is that known as Doncaster Drove, now an unmade track passing from Stoneham Lane (SU 443175) across an old ford on Monk's Brook to Wide Lane (SU 451175). On the 1810 map this track can be seen extending across what is now Southampton Airport to North Stoneham and Chickenhall Farms, on the edge of the Itchen watermeadows. Further study of the map shows that the track can be extended west via Stoneham Lane to another holloway alongside Trojan's Sports Club (SU 435170) that led to North Stoneham Common. In the post-medieval period, this route was used to bring stock from winter pasture on the common down to the meadows for their spring feed. Both Chickenhall and North Stoneham Farms stood close to the site of Roman buildings, indicating even older continuity to their positions.

The track has ancient origins. In the eighteenth century that part that passes from the common to Stoneham Lane acted as the boundary of a post-medieval deer park (HRO 102M71/E9). The practice of bringing stock down to spring pasture near the Itchen probably dates from Saxon times. In Domesday Book, North Stoneham is recorded as having 224 acres of meadow (Munby 1982, 6.8), one of the largest recorded extents in England. The track also terminates near a feature mentioned on the bounds of a Bishopstoke charter, dated A. D. 960, as the West Steth, the 'West Landing Place' (Grundy 1921, 114). As the Bishopstoke charter does not cross the Itchen to the west bank, it must be assumed that the 'West Landing Place' was on the North Stoneham bank. This adds up to suggest that Doncaster Drove was part of a stock-moving trackway. The landing place on the river suggests access from this area down river to Hamwic, and is further indication of a provisioning routeway to supply a major Saxon town.

2.4 Discussion of the Saxon landscape

This study has shown that the wide expanses of heathland on the west of the North Stoneham estate had been brought under an organised management from an early date. Early tenth century charter evidence on neighbouring estates suggest that commons had already been marked off from surrounding land, and that access was controlled by gates. Such management of common lands with gated access is indicated for North Stoneham Common in the tenth century.

Excavated bone evidence from Hamwic suggests that well-organised cattle farms were supplying the town with meat throughout the eighth and ninth centuries (Bourdillon 1980, 181-85). As North Stoneham can be shown to have had direct communication routes with Hamwic at this time, it must have had an important role in this supply.

There is a possibility that North and South Stoneham once formed one large estate, whose principal purpose came to be to provide food to an important mid-Saxon port. Detached portions of South Stoneham are evidenced at Weston, on the opposite bank of the river to Hamwic, as well as apparent rights of the church of South Stoneham within the town (Hase 1975). Charter evidence seems to suggest that transfer of lands between the north and south divisions were still incomplete in the tenth century. From the evidence that is available, a large single estate once stretched along both banks of the Itchen, from the estuary mouth up as far as the southern boundaries of Bishopstoke and Otterbourne. The subdivision of large Saxon estates, in the upper Itchen valley north of Winchester, from the eighth century has been demonstrated by Klingelhoffer (1990, 31-39). A similar pattern may have developed around Southampton, which had already been subdivided by the early tenth century.

Disruptions caused by viking raids are thought to be responsible for the decline of Hamwic. The charter evidence, which shows the granting of the Stonehams to church estates in Winchester, may be partly reflecting the shifting of power in the region northwards. As the economic basis of the Stonehams declined, so the urge to reorganise them and their boundaries must have been felt. This activity seems to coincides with the final decline of Hamwic, although there appears to be some delay before the process is completed, probably by the first half of the eleventh century (Currie forthcoming).

Settlement patterns in North Stoneham, and the surrounding area seems to have been well-established by the time of Domesday. Expansion from the late Saxon period put pressure on the predominantly cattle farming communities in the area. This is reflected in a decline in the rural hinterland's ability to provision late Saxon and medieval Southampton. This pressure is not apparently relieved until the sixteenth century (Bourdillon 1980, 185). From the time of the earliest records in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, continued assarting is recorded on lands that were formerly used for cattle pasture. The larger local landowners made efforts to obtain these rights for themselves, and to enclose the former commonly-held lands. Population pressure continued until the fourteenth century, when there was probably some relaxation in the demand for land. Extensive areas of common still surviving in 1810 suggests that either settlement retreated from the more marginal lands, or the situation reached an equilibrium in the late medieval period whereby remnants of the mid-Saxon system were allowed to survive (Currie forthcoming).

There is only limited evidence for open field systems in the area. The Saxon charter for South Stoneham suggests that there were open fields within this manor in the mid-eleventh century. These were probably within the manor of Portswood, as they are mentioned alongside the eyot of Port's Bridge (Grundy 1927, 250). There is no firm evidence for open fields within North Stoneham.

River navigation seems to have had an important role in the local economy. Saxon charters refer to the landing place at Bishopstoke, and a 'new river' somewhere near Swaythling (Grundy 1927, 250). These references probably refer to a two way trade, but it is most likely that the transport of provisions down river to Hamwic, and later Southampton, was the more important route.

3.1 The medieval period

By the time of Domesday Book, Eastleigh and Boyatt were recorded as settlements in their own right, and had probably been transferred from North Stoneham to South Stoneham. A study of settlement in the area has shown that dispersed pattern was the norm (Currie forthcoming). There is little sign of nucleation of villages, and it is unlikely that Beresford and Hurst's identification of North Stoneham as a deserted medieval village (1971, 189) can be substantiated. Settlement in North Stoneham follows a pattern characteristic of former woodland manors, and has been classified by Dyer (1990) as an 'interrupted row' settlement type. Here various hamlets or 'ends' are linked together by a common routeway. At North Stoneham, North End, Middle and the Church (End) are so linked. In many such manors, later expansion joins the ends together to form a continuous row village (Dyer 1991, 32-43). There is no evidence that this occurred at North Stoneham.

4.1 The Deer Park: origins (Figure 2)

Deer parks were common features in the medieval landscape. Most of the aristocracy possessed them, many created within a century or so of the Norman Conquest. Not only did the great secular lords aspire to own them, but wealthy churchmen also maintained deer parks, often on a grand scale. The bishops of Winchester were particularly well served, owning parks throughout Hampshire covering over 8,000 acres. Much has been written about the role of deer parks in providing enclosed pasture for deer and other animals, but they also contained rabbit warrens, fishponds and large extents of timber-producing woodland. More recent studies seem to suggest that parks were kept as much as status symbols as for their economic functions (Roberts 1988).

Monastic houses were generally slower to own landscape features for status (Currie 1989), but by the thirteenth century they were acquiring conspicuous luxuries such as parks and fishponds as readily as their secular counterparts. It is in this context that the park at North Stoneham can be seen.

In 1329 a royal licence granted free warren to the Abbot of Hyde in his manor of North Stoneham (Charter Rolls 3 Edward III, m. 16). 'Free warren' enabled a lord to hunt lesser game anywhere within his manor. In 1334 a deer park is first mentioned when an oyer and terminer is issued against certain miscreants who broke into the abbot's park at North Stoneham and stole his deer (Patent Rolls 1330-34, 583).

Little is known about the medieval park, and it is possible that its lack of mention until after the Dissolution of the monasteries indicates that it was a small park of minor importance. This is supported by references to it in the sixteenth century.

In 1545 the manor of North Stoneham passed to the Wriothesley earls of Southampton (HRO 5M53/230). This family was the greatest landowner of the age in Hampshire, controlling their extensive estates from their newly constructed mansion at Titchfield. They were largely absentee landlords at Stoneham, letting the estate, including the demesne lands, to tenants. A rental of 1546-47 records the lands and tenants of the manor.

Here it recorded that William Veyre and his son, Giles manage the estate for the Wriothesleys, holding court for them 'in the hall called The Parlour'. Pasture lands called 'Le Parke' and 'Le Lawnys' are leased to John Knolls [sic], the tenant of Chickenhall Farm, at an annual rent of 40 shillings (HRO 5M53/764). The area known as 'le lawnys' survived until 1818 when it is recorded as field number 262, covering 45 acres, to the south of the trackway extending from the Common to Stoneham Lane. It does not appear to have been incorporated into the post-medieval park until 1818.

Confirmation that the medieval park was relatively small in area is given in a document of 1599 transferring the manor to Thomas Fleming. Here the park is recorded as leased to Henry Knowles, comprising 80 acres of 'arable land, pasture and wood-ground...' (HRO 5M53/441).

4.2 The Deer Park: medieval boundaries (Figures 2 and 3)

Recent fieldwork has traced considerable portions of the boundary of the medieval park. That this had not been recognised earlier can be explained by its overgrown nature, and the erroneous belief that the medieval and post-medieval boundaries were similar.

The boundary was first recognised following the present property division between Wellington Sports Ground (owned by the University of Southampton) and the land of Eastleigh and District Angling Club to the south of Shrubbery Pond. The present fence-line stands on the crest of a broad bank, up to two metres high and over six metres wide. Although the ground on the side of the Sports Ground has been subjected to levelling, there are still traces of a wide ditch on the south side of the bank. Internal ditches are common features of medieval deer park boundaries, as they prevent the deer from leaping the bank or 'pale'. This orientation suggested that the park was south of this boundary. The bank survives for a length of about 220 metres from SU 43851732 to SU 43631730. It was previously assumed that the manor house had originated as a lodge within the park (Currie 1989, 10). It can now be shown to be later feature outside the earliest park.

Having discovered this surviving stretch, it is possible to conjecture the boundary eastwards towards the church. The present boundary follows the line of an old ha-ha, and it can be assumed that this reuses the internal ditch of the earlier park. Direct connection between the ha-ha and the unaltered boundary has been obliterated by later disturbances. When Shrubbery Pond was extended after 1818 to create a vista from the new mansion to the church, a bay in the south-east corner of the pond was dug. A dam had to be built around this bay to connect it with that part of the earlier dam left untouched. In doing this earth was thrown into the western end of the ha-ha, cutting it off from earlier boundary.

More recently, Eastleigh and District Angling Club have rebuilt the dam of Shrubbery Pond returning it to its pre-1818 shape, and backfilling the south-east bay. This has led to more earth being dumped over the line of the earlier boundary.

Dumping in the ditch around this area by University staff has caused Eastleigh and District to cut through the medieval bank at SU 43851732 to allow any water flowing through the ditch to pass around this obstruction. Although water does not normally flow along this ditch, the Angling Club need to use it as an emergency overflow in event of flooding. At the west end of the surviving medieval bank it can be observed how the dam of Park Pond has been built over the earlier bank.

It is assumed that the park pale moved west over the stream valley which was later flooded to create the ponds. There is no trace of the pale on the south side of the ponds, nor could it be seen when Park Pond was drained down in 1990. It is therefore probable that it followed the approximate line of the later dam, and is partly incorporated therein.

The bank does not reappear until SU 43381742 where it can be observed heading south-west from the remains of the brick terracing of the 1818 house. Although the bank can not be traced from the point that it has been built over by the dam of Park Pond, there are slight traces to suggest its line. From just to the west of the current overflow to Park Pond (SU 43501740), there is a terrace overlooking the pond. This is one of the 'embankments' recorded by Prosser in 1839:

'Below these terraces [the brick terraces on which the house stood] is an ornamental piece of water, formed about ten years ago, and supplied by springs in the park, the bold declivities forming embankments being planted with American shrubs....' (1839, part IX).

The steepness of this 'embankment' on its south side is such that it would seem to be artificial. Although this was probably largely the work of landscapers after 1818, it is very likely that they were recutting an existing bank. This bank continues in a westerly direction under the brick terraces of the 1818 house. As the medieval pale begins again from the corner of one of these terraces, it can be assumed the pale followed this line also. The line of the surviving pale follows the top of the old stream valley side, and from this it hints that the vanished pale just discussed sought to follow this line also once it had crossed the stream valley somewhere under the present dam to Park Pond.

The surviving pale extends from the corner of the brick terrace described above (SU 43381742) south-west to SU 43281730, a distance of about 150 metres. The pale here is up to five metres across and 1.2m high. On the north side a small stream has been channelled into a ditch following its line. There is a steep drop down into the valley containing Park Pond on the south. Although there is no trace of an internal ditch, this can be explained. Either the valley side was so steep that the ditch was not considered necessary, or landscaping to create the terraces along the north side of the lake in the 1820s has removed all trace of it. This stretch is heavily overgrown, and has some of the largest trees in the area growing on the pale bank.

At SU 43281730 the pale stops. It is here that the conjectured line of the pale would have crossed the valley. Although the ditch containing the small stream continues downhill to empty into the pond, it would appear that the pale has been levelled by landscaping on the north side of Park Pond. As the line of the pale would have passed through an area that was flooded by the pond when it was at its original extent, it is not expected that traces would remain.

By crossing the valley it is possible to pick up the pale on the south side of the valley continuing on the previous south-west alignment. The pale has become very badly degraded here, and is heavily covered in moss. It is about three metres across, and up to 0.5m high in places, but shows signs of a longer period of neglect than elsewhere. There is a ditch on the south side, and a number of very large trees grow from the bank, including a particularly fine beech. There is some evidence of minor quarrying (probably gravel diggings) on the line of the bank. This stretch can be traced through the woods from SU 43201723 uphill to the corner of the number 3 tee on the golf course (SU 43161715), a distance of about one hundred metres. The pale disappears under the modern earthwork serving as the number 3 tee.

There are very faint traces of the bank continuing southwards across the golf course at this point, but it has been extensively levelled. Only a large oak on the barest traces of the bank south of the tee suggest that it has turned southwards from its earlier course. Following this alignment for a short distance finds the eastern boundary of a small plot of land opposite the site of a building known as Park Cottage on the 1897 Ordnance Survey map (it is referred to as the Dog Kennel (1818), and the Keeper's House (1840) on earlier maps). The boundary here becomes a typical post-medieval hedge boundary: a narrow

bank, with traces of a ditch on the east side. The undergrowth along its line was too dense for detailed examination. Further access to this property could not be obtained.

The pale seems to have turned south to follow the edge of this presumably later plot. The location of a building here traditionally ascribed to a park keeper may suggest that this, and not the manor house, was the site of the medieval lodge. However, this is not conclusive, and the site may be entirely of post-medieval origins.

Although the southern boundary is uncertain, an old trackway extending from the Common to Stoneham Lane seems to pre-date the creation of the park. As the northern boundary appears to swing round and meet this track, it is probable that it would have been respected, particularly as it can be shown to have continued in use throughout the post-medieval period.

This trackway has been tarmacked, and the fields around it levelled to make sports fields. Little survives of any original features to support a thesis that it was the southern boundary of the medieval park. Two minor clues can be seen, but they should be viewed with caution. The first of these is a stream following the course of the road. On the northern boundary the edge of the park followed a stream for a while, and it was common for ancient boundaries to follow such features. For a short stretch of the modern road there is a length of a broad ditch on the north (deer park) side of the road. This starts at approximately SU 43911699, and extends to SU 43891700, a distance of about 30m. Elsewhere this ditch has been levelled, or obviously recut.

It is thought the boundary extended to Stoneham Lane, although Taylor's map of 1759 seems to show the boundary following a trackway leading behind the church. Although this is a possibility, the loss of the triangular area between this track, the road to the Common and Stoneham Lane would remove some fifteen acres from the proposed extent of the medieval park. As will be seen below, this does not fit the evidence.

If it can be assumed Stoneham Lane formed the eastern boundary, there are few clues left on the ground to support this. Again levelling for playing fields along this edge has removed all traces of the important inner face of this boundary. The bank appears to have dropped steeply down into Stoneham Lane. This may suggest that the bank here was once a substantial boundary akin to a park pale, but it could also be explained by the fact that Stoneham Lane is a deeply cut holloway.

The last clue to the line of the original boundary can be found in the churchyard. At present the churchyard wall revets a higher ground level within the yard than on the road side. Again this can be explained by the nature of Stoneham Lane, but approximately mid-way between the entrance to the churchyard and its southern edge, a change in the construction of the revetting wall can be clearly observed. In line with this change and heading west, a low bank can be observed running across the yard. Much of this bank has been obscured by later grave digging, but two large trees stand on the alignment.

This observation is supported by documentary evidence. In 1868 the churchyard was extended by taking in a small part of the park. Although this area is slightly less than an acre, a plan shows that the old boundary clearly followed the line of the low bank noted above (HRO 102M71/T162). The boundary must have then gone behind the church to join up with the line taken by the later ha-ha, thus completing the conjectured circuit.

If this boundary is accepted, the area encompassed covers approximately 77 acres. Considering the closeness of this measurement to the 80 acre extent of 1599, and the variable way in which acreage was measured in the past, it can be considered that the bounds of the medieval park have been determined.

A further clue that the association of this area with the park is correct, comes from the mid-sixteenth century rental ascribing 'le park' to the tenure of John Knolls. Knolls also held an area known as 'le lawnys'(HRO 5M53/764), but seems to have held no further land outside of the sub-manor of Chickenhall, on the eastern edge of the manor near the River Itchen. The name, 'le lawnys' survived until 1818 when it is the name of a field of 45 acres on the south side of the track thought to be the southern boundary of the deer park. As 'le parke' and 'le lawnys' are at some distance from Knolls' holding, it might be expected that they might form closely associated blocks of land.

4.3 The Deer Park: later expansion (Figures 4-7)

Knolls held the park as pasture. The association of the park and 'le lawnys' with a trackway that was thought to be a connecting route between the pasture of North Stoneham Common and the spring

pastures of the Itchen valley around the 'West Landing Place' can not be coincidental. Knolls' holding Chickenhall is believed to be the site of the Saxon 'landing place' on the Itchen. It seems therefore that in the mid-sixteenth century Knolls had pasture on the Common and in the park, with a well-establish stock-moving trackway connecting this to his main holding on the Itchen.

As well as indicating long-term continuity in the landscape of North Stoneham, this suggests that the park was being used to pasture animals such as cattle and sheep in the sixteenth century. It seems that during the period of the absentee lordship of the Wriothesleys (1538-99), the park had ceased to be used exclusively as a deer park. This is further indicated in the document transferring the manor to the Flemings in 1599, when 'the Parke' is referred to as 'arable land, pasture and wood-ground' (HRO 5M53/441). It is possible that this change in regime may have occurred in the later medieval period, and may partly explain lack of mentions at this time. That is, the abbot had leased the park to tenants who used it for more general farming.

There would appear to have been no attempt to revive the status of the park until the arrival of the Flemings. An inventory of 1638, on the death of Thomas Fleming II, shows that a considerable mansion had been constructed by the family at North Stoneham. This document lists at least 29 rooms in the house, plus ten possible outbuildings (HRO 1638A058/2). Further work on the gardens, which then contained at least three ponds, is recorded between 1680 and 1683 (HRO 102M71/E2-3). From this it might be expected that parkland would have been attached to the house as part of the status landscape around a residence of such substance.

The earliest extent of the park dates from the enclosure map of 1736, which shows a similar boundary for the area designated specifically as the 'deer park' as that shown on the survey of 1818. It might be expected that the area known as the 'Avenue', sixty acres plus to the north of the mansion, was also incorporated within the 'park' by this time. However, it should be noted that some surveys are careful to distinguish between the area known as 'The Park' (which includes the Avenue) and the 'deer park' (which does not include the Avenue). Where discrepancy appears between surveys over the extent of the park, it may derive from a confusion between the Park, as an overall concept, and the 'deer park' as a specific unit within it. For convenience, this survey suggests that the Avenue, although part of the larger 'park', was never part of the deer park area.

The 1736 Enclosure Map for part of North Stoneham Common shows the west boundary of the 'deer park' identical to that shown on the survey of 1818. This shows that the deer park had been expanded from the 80 acres of the mid-sixteenth century to at least 300 acres by this date. This map does not show the full extent however, merely the western boundary with the Common (HRO 102M71/E9).

The first map to depict the full extent of the park is Taylor's map of 1759 (Figure 4). This is a county map, and should be viewed with caution, as it is nearer a pictorial representation than an accurate plan. This map highlights the problem of definition outlined above. It shows what appears to be a wooden fence, or pale, around the entire park, not just that area designated as the deer park. This seems to include the Avenue, which was never enclosed in a pale as far as can be determined. Curiously, it seems to omit that triangular area in the south-east corner of the park discussed earlier (see page 11). Taylor is the only survey to exclude this area.

There are a number of possible explanations for this. The most obvious is that Taylor is inaccurate. This seems to be supported by his inclusion of the Avenue within the paled area. His scale and the pictorial representation of features do not inspire confidence. However, it is possible that John Knolls used this track as a short cut across the park to take his stock to his farm at Chickenhall, and the land to its east became enclosed as a separate field. This may have become detached from the main body of the park, and was not reincorporated until after 1759. Knolls' use of the park as pasture for cattle and sheep might argue that the park was temporarily disemparked in the sixteenth century, and divided into separate fields. The third possibility is that this path was the eastern boundary of the medieval park, and although the sixteenth century extent of 80 acres argues against this, it can not be entirely dismissed.

The next depiction of the deer park is Milne's map of 1791 (Figure 5). This shows the extent of the deer park follows the western boundary of 1736, the northern boundary of the 1818 map, the road from the Common to Stoneham Lane as its southern boundary, and Stoneham Lane as its eastern edge. The triangular piece of land in the south-east corner is now incorporated in the park, but the Avenue is excluded. The boundary incorporates not only the house, but the church. On first impression, this can be dismissed as an error, but Prosser, writing in 1839 says that the church 'stands within the east boundary of the park' (1839, part IX). Such minor anomalies suggest that it must have been a matter of opinion exactly where the boundaries ended at this date, and discrepancies between maps were as much personal interpretation as statements of fact.

The first edition of the Ordnance Survey (one inch to the mile) of c. 1810 does not show any great detail, and only gives the overall extent of the park, including not only the Avenue, but Summergate Wood (now Home Wood) and Wood field to its west, and the meadow strips on its east side. It is debatable whether these fields were ever thought to be part of the park.

The 1818 map is the first detailed survey (Figure 6). This was made to coincide with the demolition of the old house near the church, and the building of a new mansion nearer the centre of the park. This survey also highlights the discrepancy between the area held to be part of the park. The map itself adds the area known as the Avenue and the Lawn to the 'park'. The award contradicts this information. Only that area given number 183a is called the 'park' here; the Avenue is recorded separately as number 187. As the outline of 183a coincides with the area shown on the map of 1791 (with the exception of the area around the church and the house), it might be assumed that 183a is showing the outline of the deer park. As these are also largely coincident with those boundaries shown in 1736, it might be assumed that this was the area of the post-medieval deer park before 1818.

There is one major addition shown, and that is the area south of the track to the Common. This area, formerly known as the 'Lawn' is incorporated into the park for the first time. That this had only just been done is indicated by a separate map in the same survey, showing this part of the park divided up into three fields: 'The Lawn', 'Six Acres' and 'Bunney Field'. All are listed as 'cultivated' (SRO D/2 639).

That the above was not an error, and the 'Lawn' had been incorporated into the deer park is confirmed by the tithe map (Figure 7). This is described in the Award's text as being c. 1840, although it was not confirmed until 1846. Here the 'deer park' and the 'Avenue' are recorded separately. An internal boundary (shown on the 1736 map with gated access) has now become the western boundary of the area called the 'deer park'. That part that was formerly part of 183a, but now shown to the west of the deer park, had been enlarged by incorporating a former fir plantation and other woodland, and is depicted as the 'Upper Park and Rough Ground'. It is uncertain whether this was still thought of as part of the deer park or not. It is probable that this internal division, shown to exist since at least 1736, was invoked during timber planting cycles to keep deer away from young trees, but could be dispensed with once the trees were sufficiently grown.

The Flemings ceased to live at North Stoneham before the end of the nineteenth century. Fishing on the ponds near the house was leased to Southampton Piscatorials Angling Society from 1898, and the records of this club indicate that the estate had become run down. Regular vandalism is recorded from the 1920s (Minute Books, Southampton P. A. S.). A golf course was created in the western part of the park by 1905. In the mid-twentieth century, just before much of the area was converted in playing fields, that part of the park outside of the Golf Course was used to graze cattle, mainly from Park Farm. This has been an equestrian centre since the early 1970s, utilising only those fields around the Avenue as pasture.

4.4 The deer park: conclusions

The boundaries of the earliest deer park at North Stoneham can now be traced. These can be shown to follow prominent local features, both existing naturally, in the form of streams and valley sides, and man-made, such as the old track from North Stoneham Common to Stoneham Lane. This latter feature shows that the park was made to fit into a pre-existing landscape of some considerable antiquity. Routeways dating from at least the middle Saxon period can be traced linking Stoneham Common with the town of Hamwic, and with the 'west landing place' on the Itchen (probably near Chickenhall Farm and North Stoneham Farms). Close association of these latter settlements with two known sites of Roman buildings may suggest even longer continuity.

After a period of possible neglect in the sixteenth century when the park was let to tenants for stock-pasturing, it was considerably expanded as a setting for a major country residence. A substantial mansion belonging to the Flemings existed from at least 1638, and it is possible the larger park dates from this period. It is not until 1736 that the first evidence is recorded of this greater extent, although a number of additions can be traced between this date and 1846, when the park reached its maximum extent.

Discrepancies between the area of the park depicted on maps between 1759 and 1846 seem to be explained by a confusion of definitions. Some maps seem to depict only that part of the park designated for deer, whilst others include all that area laid out as an ornamental landscape. A number of surveys

seem to suggest that areas of the park fulfilled different functions. The area known as the Avenue, to the north of both houses, seems to have been exclusively an ornamental landscape. That area to the south and west of the houses, incorporating the medieval park, was designated a deer park. Finally the area in the far west beyond a gated internal boundary was probably used for timber production, with the deer only being allowed to roam here when the trees were sufficiently grown.

5.1 Overall Conclusions and Recommendations

North Stoneham Park and its surrounding landscape can be shown to contain features that demonstrate a remarkable continuity of land use which stretches from the Roman period to the present day. This landscape is almost unique at present in that it is one of the few ancient manors in England where development can be traced in an almost uninterrupted line for two thousand years. It is unfortunate that these discoveries should be made only after much of the landscape has already been destroyed, or seriously damaged.

Considering the importance of this landscape to the provisioning of Saxon Southampton, it should be afforded greater merit as part of that city's heritage than its present status affords. Efforts should be made to prevent any future deprivations, and attempts should be made to bring as much of this landscape into public ownership as possible for use as a recreational, and above all, unique educational resource that it represents. There are few other places in the United Kingdom where such unbroken continuity in the landscape can be demonstrated to the public.

6.1. Appendix 1 (see Figure 1)

Boundary marks given on Saxon charter: A.D. 932, King Athelstan to thegn Alfred, 12 hides at (North) Stoneham; document records transfer to New Minster, Winchester soon after (Grundy 1927, 242-47).

1. Aerest of Swaethelingforda, Starting with the ford at Swaythling (the present ford by the Fleming Arms).

2. West to Smerebrocesforda, west to the ford of the brook of slimy mud.

3. And thanon westweard andlang Herespathes to Hrumbroces Aewelme, and then west along the road to Soot Brook (the road is the present Burgess Road).

4. And swa forith andlang Weges on suthhealfe Gaetes Hlaewe that hit cymth to Feower Treowum, and so along the way on the south side of the low (tumulus) of the gate until it comes to four trees (this is near the entrance to Southampton Common).

5. Thonon thanen north andlang Herespathes to Gythrices Wille, then north along the way to Gythric's Spring (towards Chilworth).

6. And swa forth andlang Weges oth hit cymth to Fearnbedde, and so on along the track until it comes to the Fern Bed.

7. Thanon easton thet Slaed oth hit cymth to Holan Broce, then east on to the slade until it comes to the Hollow Brook.

8. Thonne thanon north andlanh Holan Broce oth tha Sand Pyttas, then north along Hollow Brook as far as the Sand Pits.

9. Thanon on Byrewege (Byrwey? Berwey) oth hit cymth on Cytanbroces Aelwilme, then on to the way of the camp? until it comes to the Great Spring (the bounds have come along the approximate line of the 1810 boundary between Chilworth and North Stoneham to the upper reaches of Monk's Brook near Ram Alley).

10. And swa andlang Broces oth hit cymth to Ippingwanne (Uppyngehamme, Ippnghamme), and so along the Brook until it comes to the farm of the Uppings (along the line of the brook to near where Upland's Farm was).

11. Thonne suth be Efist oth thaet slaede tha scit to Maeran Broce (Mernbrok, Mernbrok), then south by the overhanging edge of the wood until the slade that runs to the boundary brook.

12. Andlang Broces oth hit cymth to Waergithforda (Wergford), and along the brook to Wergith's ford (probably back to Monk's Brook near Eastleigh Fire Station).

13. Thanon on gerihte to Eastlea (Wearden), then straight on to Eastleigh (this is probably Little Eastleigh Farm).

14. Thone north swa se Haga scyt to Baranleage northwearden, then north as the hedge runs to Bare Lea on its north side (north from Eastleigh along the approximate edge of Boyatt Wood on to Otterbourne/Allbrook Hill).

15. Thonne thanon north oth hit cymth to there Fotyhtan Aec, then north until it comes to the footed oak.

16. And swa suth andlange Straete, and south along the street (south along the Roman road from Winchester to Clausentum).

17. Oth hit cymth to Grenan Leage, on until it comes to Green Lea (the Roman road passes through Boyatt Farm; this is probably Green Lea).

18. Thon thaer east and suth oth hiy cymth to Cynninges Dic, then east and south until it comes to King's Dyke (an old holloway passes from Boyatt south of Ham Farm to a watercourse known today as the Black Dyke).

19. Andlange thaere Dic oth hio hygth ongean Mucelinge Meade, and along the Dyke until it comes to the bend against the meadow of Mucel's family (there is a notable bend in the River Itchen just north of where the Black Dyke enters it).

20. Northwearde ut on Icenan, northwards out on to the Itchen.

21. Thon swa Icenan scyt oth hit gymth foran ongean Hierderwylles Aewylm, then down the Itchen until it comes opposite the place where the Herdsman's Spring gushes forth (a small stream enters the Itchen from the east just above Gater's Mill; the 1810 boundary leaves the river to head west at this point).

22. Thanon weast to Scortan Thorne, then west to the Low Thorn Tree.

23. Thanon suth to thane Herepathe the lyth to Mannes Brycge, then south to the road which runs to Mansbridge (the present road from Swaythling to Mansbridge).

7.1 Appendix 2: corrections to 'North Stoneham Park. Historic landscape survey and outline proposals for future management' by Chris Blandford Associates

Contents page

Appendix A Redrawing of Tithe Award Map and Whitcher's Survey by Currie.

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page 3

para 3.1: 'Woodward (3) considered that this referred to both North and South Stoneham.

Woodward is 'Woodward et al', but there is no need to reference this work as it is wrong. Munby (1982) clearly shows separate entries in Domesday for North and South Stoneham. Reference to incorrect and outdated works (Woodward et al wrote before 1839!) is inappropriate.

para 3.2: 'Currie (6) considers.....'

This is incorrectly quoted. Currie does not say North Stoneham is the site of a DMV. He says isolated churches are common in Hampshire in settlements of a dispersed nature. Beresford and Hurst (1971) say that North Stoneham is the potential site of a DMV on account of the isolated church. Currie is arguing against this. He says 'there is not sufficient space here to allow a full discussion of the settlement pattern at North Stoneham, but there is some evidence that this may have been of a dispersed nature' (1989, 10).

More detailed research by Currie (Currie forthcoming b) shows that North Stoneham is a settlement type known as an 'interrupted row' after Dyer (1990). That is a series of hamlets following a specific route. In this case, North End, Middle and the Church (End). This settlement type is characteristic of dispersed settlement in former 'woodland' parishes. The hamlets sometimes expand along the row to join up and form a 'nucleated row' village. There is no evidence that this occurred at North Stoneham.

para 3.3: The text quotes Duthy (1839) as saying the abbot of Hyde was given a licence to empark in 1334.

This is incorrect. Duthy has misquoted his source. In the Patent Rolls for 1334 it is recorded that miscreants broke into the abbot's park and stole his deer (Patent Rolls 1330-34, 583). The grant was for an 'oyer and terminer' to be brought against the culprits so that they could be brought to justice. This reference shows that the park already existed in 1334.

As with Woodward (para 3.1), it is not advisable to quote antiquarian sources without checking their sources. They are notoriously unreliable.

para 3.3: 'The medieval park may well have had the same boundaries as the earliest known map'

More recent fieldwork and documentary research has shown that this was not the case. The medieval park was much smaller that its post-medieval successors, although it was incorporated entirely within the later area.

para 3.4: 'During the draining of Shrubbery Pond in 1988, timber revetment was discovered which was likely to be mid/late sixteenth century (6)'

The reference quoted (Currie) does not say this. He says 'Such revetments are recorded in sixteenth and seventeenth century treatises on fishpond building although there is considerable evidence that such techniques were in use in the medieval period' and 'Two such revetments were revealed by archaeology at separate ponds at Southwick Priory. Both were thought to be post-medieval, the earliest possibly dating from c. 1550'(1989, 10).

Currie is clearly referring to a similar pond at Southwick which dated to the mid-sixteenth century, not to North Stoneham.

para 3.4: The next sentence says 'Currie suggests earlier use as a medieval fish pond is probable....'

Currie does not say this. In his conclusion he makes the general statement that 'medieval deer parks almost invariably contained fishponds that were frequently re-used as ornamental features in post-

medieval designs' (1989, 10). He does not associate this statement with the Shrubbery Pond. It was the smaller pond to the west of Shrubbery Pond that was within the medieval deer park.

page 6

para 5.2: ' Milne's map... would appear to be inaccurate'

If Taylor, Milne and Whitcher's maps are studied carefully, they show a gradual increase in the area of the park from 1759 to 1818. There is some confusion as to what constitutes 'park' in these surveys. Taylor seems to include the northern area known as the Avenue on later maps within the park. The other maps are showing the area known as the deer park as the 'park'. It is a confusion of definitions, not necessarily inaccuracy in the map. Milne's depiction can be shown to be accurate, as far as can be determined, by recent research which locates the earlier extents of the park. This research suggests that it is Taylor's map that is the odd one out.

This misinterpretation misses the vital evidence for the development (growth of) of the deer park area 1759-1818.

para 5.3: repeats the misquote that the revetment of the Shrubbery Pond is 'of possible sixteenth century date'.

The source they refer to has been badly misread.

para 5.4: 'Two other features.....'

The paragraph discusses three features. It jumps from the Ice House to the Walled Garden, and has missed a sentence out. 'Although not shown on a plan until 1806...' seems to refer to the Ice House, but they are discussing the walled garden.

They refer to the ha-ha saying that it probably dates from the later eighteenth century (which is correct), but then later make a point of contradicting themselves, and saying it dates from 1818 (see para 6.1).

The Ice House was not discovered by Mr Halett, it is referred to in the publication M. Ellis, Ice and Icehouses through the ages with a gazetteer for Hampshire, 1982.

page 8

para 6.1: Another misquote from Currie. They say 'Currie considers....(the site of the earlier house is) ..adjacent to the ha-ha'

Currie does not say this. In the published version of the paper the writers of the CBA report are quoting, he says 'As the ha-ha faces south, the house must have been to the north-west of the church. This means that the disturbed area.... immediately to the south of Park Farm can be confirmed as the house site' (Currie 1991, 11). The ha-ha is due west of the church.

para 6.1: The claim that the ha-ha was 'probably constructed to keep deer out of the new gardens extending from the new ...House to Temple Lodge' (that is after 1818) is incorrect.

When the vista from the new house to the church was constructed, the Shrubbery Pond had to be remodelled so that the line of sight ran the length of the pond. This is clearly shown by comparing the 1818 map with the 1846 tithe map. Between these dates, the Shrubbery Pond was extended eastwards along a protruding bay to clear a line to the church. This required the dam to be breached here, and rebuilt to encompass the new part of the pond. Examination on the ground shows clearly that the earth excavated from the pond was thrown into the ha-ha, partially backfilling it in this area. This work weakened the old dam, and was a source of trouble from then on. Problems with the dam leaking as a result of this work are recorded in the Minute Books of Southampton Piscatorials Angling Club from 1898-1905.

As the vista must have been created soon after 1818, it is unlikely that the landscapers would have backfilled part of a ha-ha that they had just made. This suggests the ha-ha dates from the eighteenth century, as part of improvements to the grounds as an informal landscape. The bricks seem to confirm this; they are Harley type 5.1 (Harley 1974, 76), normally dated to the later eighteenth century, although found from 1730-40 at Castle Bromwich Hall, West Midlands (Locock 1990).

para 6.1 and 6.3: The claim that the house was on the site of Park Farm needs treating with much caution.

In para 6.1 they claim Currie says it lies further south-east. On Figure 13 this is shown as 'P'. Again they have misread Currie. He says 'the disturbed area .... in the woods immediately south of Park Farm can be confirmed as the house site'. 'P' on their figure is 100 metres away from the area Currie suggests. There is much archaeological and documentary evidence to support Currie's statement that has not been considered by CBA.

Firstly, the position Currie designates as the site of the house, contains an earthwork platform of some substance aligned east-west. This stands almost a metre higher than the surrounding land, but is partly obscured by undergrowth. On this earthwork are a number of large fragments of very high quality stonework, some of it elaborately carved. The capitals seen here come from a late seventeenth or eighteenth-century building (Jude James pers. comm.). The earthwork is so formed because it is the site of a substantial building, of that there can be no question.

Secondly, there is documentary evidence for the site of the house close to the ponds. The CBA survey admits that Milles says the house is 'in a bottom', but try to argue that this observer, and Brayley and Britton, who say the house was sited 'low', were wrong. A 'bottom' is an historic rural expression for a stream valley, the implication being the house was in a stream valley. The contract of 1683 to build a wall, quoted by Currie (1989, 10) to encompass a pond 'before your front door' suggests ponds in the immediate vicinity of the house. A pond in the farmyard on the 1896 25 inch OS map (sheet LVII.15) might be that referred to, as might ponds in the vicinity of the Shrubbery Pond.

A slightly earlier contract (1680) to demolish the wall to the 'Great Garden' and rebuild it also refers to a pond in its vicinity (HRO 102M71/E2). The arguments CBA use regarding the alignment of the Avenue equally apply to the earthwork site just to the south of Park Farm. The dimensions given in the contracts suggest that the house is more likely to lay on the site of the earthwork. It would be unwise to ignore such a prominent feature as the possible site of the house, particularly as it matches the contemporary descriptions of Brayley and Britton (1805: 'seated rather low') and Milles (1735-43: 'in a bottom') better than the slightly more elevated Park Farm.

The identification of the house site is a complex affair. Recent researches have identified new documentation that throws much light on the subject. This includes references in the sixteenth century to an outbuilding next to the church, and an early seventeenth inventory detailing the contents of the manor house and its outbuildings. The latter was clearly a substantial building at this date, with a very large number of outbuildings individually recorded. The area these buildings would have covered must have been extensive, and may have stretched from the area of the present farmyard of Park Farm to the outbuilding by the church.

CBA have not seen the detail of this documentation, and should avoid categorical statements about the site of the house, when the evidence they are basing their opinion on is so limited.

para 6.4: They continue to misidentify the house site designated by Currie as being close to the later Temple Lodge.

This is not what Currie says. He says the old house was immediately south of Park Farm.

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para 7.3: CBA say Shrubbery Pond is from Brown's design.

As there is good reason to suggest this pond is adapted from earlier ponds 'may be from Brown's design' would be more appropriate.

page 11

para 7.9: The report records the Gardener's Magazine recording an 'old avenue' of chestnuts that had once led to the old manor still remaining in 1835. CBA argue that this avenue was from the east.

The North Avenue, although seeming to be of old limes, led out on to a road later known as Chestnut Avenue. Although weak evidence, it urges caution for CBA's argument. Caution is further suggested about using girth as a determination of age of these limes (see para 9.8.1)

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para 9.2.1: Walled Garden

In CBA's discussion of the Walled Garden no mention is made of the brickwork in the walls. This is a vital clue to its date. The earliest bricks are Harley type 5.1, indicating a late 18th century date.

This dating, plus the normal late 18th century practice of keeping the kitchen garden away from the house, further suggests that the original manor house is 'in the bottom'. That is nearer the stream than the Park Farm they suggest.

para 9.2.4: The report says of the site of the 1818 house 'The retaining wall [singular] for the terracing is....on its southern edge'

There are two retaining walls (plural) on the southern edge, indicating the terracing was on two levels. This is shown on the 1896 map with steps leading on to the lower terrace.

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para 9.2.5: 'Currie's proposed site is shown at P on Figure 13.'

As indicated above, the writers' have misread Currie's work. He does not propose this site. He says the old house was 'immediately south of Park Farm' (1989, 10; 1991, 11).

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para 9.8.1: CBA use girth measurements to suggest an age in excess of 250 years for limes in Avenue Park.

Girth is a poor method to determine age as growth is very dependent on soil type and fertility. Unpollarded limes generally are mature at 150 years, and between then and 350 years shed branches as they gradually die (Rackham 1976, 23-29). Like hedge dating, girth measurement to determine age is considered an unscientific method by many academics. Further, there is little sign that the limes here are shedding branches in any quantity. On this evidence they are unlikely to be more than 150-200 years old.

para 9.9.1: 'A substantial bank and ditch (M, Figure 13)....may well be part of the medieval park pale'

Recent fieldwork has proved this to be false. This boundary would not be considered 'substantial' by medieval standards. It has the dimensions and form of a typical post-medieval copse bank, up to 0.5m high and 2m wide, from base to base. This boundary does, however, seem to form part of the boundary of the post-medieval deer park, as shown in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

End of report

No acknowledgements are recorded. This is polite practice.

Figures 13-15

These should be amended accordingly, with regard to the corrections noted above.

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