

STONEHENGE WORLD HERITAGE SITE
LANDSCAPE PROJECT
EARTHWORKS AT LAKE AND WEST AMESBURY
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY REPORT

Mark Bowden



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Mark Bowden

NGR: SU 131 387 and SU 142 414

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SUMMARY

Two sets of medieval and early post-medieval earthworks on the southern boundary of the Stonehenge World Heritage Site, at Lake and West Amesbury, were investigated by the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England in 1986. This report, based on the original archive accounts with some additions resulting from subsequent research, has been prepared as part of English Heritage's Stonehenge WHS Landscape Project. The earthworks at Lake are located in Lake Bottom on the west bank of the River Avon, to the south-west of the existing settlement. They represent at least three phases of village settlement, originally a double row along the combe bottom. These remains are associated with – and in some cases overlie – earlier fields and have themselves been subsequently damaged by landscaping; depopulation of this part of the village may be associated with the gentrification of the landscape in the 17th century. There are also four prehistoric barrows. The medieval and post-medieval earthworks at West Amesbury represent the remains of a small number of properties arranged along the valley floor between the River Avon and the modern road. At the centre of the site these are overlain by garden features associated with West Amesbury House.

CONTRIBUTORS

The surveys were undertaken by Carezza Lewis, David McOmish and Paul Pattison. Carezza Lewis and Paul Pattison prepared archive accounts and this report has been written by Mark Bowden with the help of David Field and David McOmish. Sharon Bishop prepared Fig 1; the other figures are taken directly from the original archive drawings and are ©Crown copyright.NMR.

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English Heritage is grateful to the owners who allowed access for the survey work to take place.

ARCHIVE LOCATION

NMRC, The Engine House, Firefly Avenue, Swindon SN2 2EH

DATE OF SURVEY

June and October 1986

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
LAKE	2
Topography, geology and soils	2
History	2
The earthworks	3
Discussion	8
WEST OR LITTLE AMESBURY	10
Topography, geology and soils	10
History	10
The earthworks	11
Discussion	12
METHODOLOGY	14
REFERENCES	16
FIGURES	
Fig 1: Location map	1
Fig 2: Profiles of barrow Wilsford 87	6
Fig 3: Earthworks at Lake	18
Fig 4: Earthworks at West Amesbury	19
Table 1: Concordance of record numbers	15

Front cover image: The site of the medieval village at Lake from the west, with Lake House in the background, 15 September 2011

INTRODUCTION

Two sets of medieval and early post-medieval earthworks on the south-eastern boundary of the Stonehenge World Heritage Site, at Lake and West Amesbury (Fig 1), were investigated by the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England in 1986, as part of that organisation's programme of work in South Wiltshire. Reports on those investigations were prepared by Carenza Lewis and Paul Pattison in 1992 but remained as unpublished archive documents. This report is based on Lewis's and Pattison's work with some additions resulting from subsequent research and has been prepared as part of English Heritage's Stonehenge WHS Landscape Project.



Fig 1: Location map showing the earthworks at Lake and West Amesbury within the Stonehenge World Heritage Site (boundary shown by broken orange line).

LAKE

The earthworks surveyed by the RCHME in October 1986 are located in a roughly triangular block of land occupying a narrow chalk combe, Lake Bottom, on the west bank of the River Avon. These remains lie to the south of the existing settlement at Lake, which is close to the river, and to the south-west of Lake House. The extensive earthworks represent at least three phases of village settlement arranged as a double row along the combe bottom. These remains are associated with – and in some cases overlie – earlier fields and have themselves been subsequently damaged by landscaping, including the creation of an ornamental pond or canal; depopulation of this part of the village may be associated with the gentrification of the landscape in the 17th century. There are also four prehistoric barrows on the peripheries of the surveyed area, including the large and well preserved Wilsford 87 (Fig 2).

The earthworks, centred at NGR SU 131 387 in the parish of Wilsford-cum-Lake, are recorded in the National Monuments Record AMIE database under SU 13 NW 67 (Uid 218357). A number of features are recorded separately (see Table 1). Most of the surveyed area is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (no. 1010879) and part of a Registered Park & Garden (no. 1001237).

Topography, geology and soils

Lake Bottom is the southern part of Stonehenge Bottom, a valley that runs from close to Larkhill and meets the Avon valley at Lake; the part immediately north of Lake Bottom is known as Spring Bottom. The Bottom is now largely dry but is recorded as carrying a stream in the 19th century (Watts 1962, 213) or even 'within living memory' (Richards 1990, 211). A narrow strip on alluvial soils alongside the river, to the east of the survey area, is meadowland and much of this area was developed as water meadow in the 17th century (Watts 1962, 218). The underlying geology is Upper Chalk and Valley Gravel (Geological Survey of Great Britain, Sheet 298, 1976), supporting Andover 1 and 2 Association shallow, well drained calcareous silty soils, which are probably deeper in the bottom of the combe; these soils are good for cereals, dairying and stock raising; in the river valley to the east are shallow loamy Frome Association soils over alluvial flint gravel, which are also good for grazing (Soil Survey of England and Wales, Sheet 6, 1983). There were eight furlongs by one furlong of pasture in Wilsford at Domesday (Watts 1962, 217) and the survey area has been under pasture at least since the Tithe Award of 1846. At that time much of the surrounding land, including the field to the north, was under arable.

History

Lake is not mentioned by name in Domesday but is probably included as one of the assessments for Wilsford, both of which consisted of one hide before the conquest (Thorn and Thorn 1979, 22.2, 42.7). It is possible that the holding of Hugh d'Avranches (with land for one plough held in demesne, two slaves and three cottagers and valued at 40 shillings) may have included the land that came into the hands of the Earl of Salisbury by the early 12th century and which probably included Lake (Watts 1962, 214). Tenants of the manor were the Cotel family and then the Palton family but there were also smaller holdings of the Auchel

and later Trenchard families, and land belonging to the chapel (*see below*) (Duke *nd*; Watts 1962, 217). Settlement was certainly present by 1289, when it was recorded as 'Lak', meaning 'side channel of a river' (Gelling and Cole 2000, 20). In 1325 the manor was sold by the Countess of Salisbury to Hugh le Despencer and on his death it reverted to the crown. In 1496 the manor came into the hands of the Guild and Fraternity of St Anne of Croscombe, Somerset. In 1548 the capital messuage and appurtenances were leased to Michael Duke and others. In 1579 the overlordship was acquired by George Duke, who also acquired the Bradenstoke property (*see below*) in 1599 and in whose family the manor remained until 1897 (Watts 1962, 218).

In 1334 Lake was assessed at 80 shillings for the 'fifteenths and tenths' tax; this is the second highest assessment in the Hundred of Underditch and nearly twice the sum raised from Wilsford (Beresford 1959a, 302). In 1377 Lake was included with Wilsford in the Poll Tax returns, with a total of 53 tax payers in the two settlements (Beresford 1959b, 311). Only in 1841 is there a separate Census return for Lake – 74 people occupied 13 houses at that time (Watts 1962, 219). There was a mill from at least the time of Domesday until about 1895 (*ibid*, 220).

A chapel is recorded at Lake in the early 12th century, when it was granted by William, son of Edward of Salisbury, to Bradenstoke Priory; Richard Cotel added one yardland; the property later included a barn (Duke 1915a, 489; Watts 1962, 214, 216). The chapel fell into disuse before the 16th century and was apparently ruinous in 1546; the site of this chapel is said to have been found in the gardens of Lake House in the 19th century (Watts 1962, 221) but the precise location is not recorded. Lake was a separate tithing in 1843 but the hamlet of Lake is now included in Wilsford-cum-Lake parish, with a parish church at Wilsford.

The Earthworks

The earthworks (Fig 3) lie mainly in a large, triangular field which forms the western vista of Lake House and has been landscaped, probably in the early 17th century, by the creation of a pond or canal, the planting of ornamental trees and possibly the creation of other structures. It is shown as parkland on William and Henry Doidge's 1752 map of Lake (1811 copy, Wiltshire Heritage Centre 1552/2/2/4H), and Andrews and Dury's map of 1773 (WANHS 1952). This area retains its parkland character, with several veteran trees still standing. The surveyed area within this field can be divided into two parts, the first comprising the settlement remains and the second comprising remains of fields, trackways and a barrow. The later parkland features fall within both parts; tree-throw holes, for instance, which derive at least in part from ornamental planting, are found across the entire area. The other earthworks lie to the north in a cultivated field and in the area between Fatcher's (now 'The Bungalow') and Hungerford Cottages.

Settlement

The remains of a number of properties are arranged either side of a central hollow way (A-C-B), bounded on the north by the present east-west track (D-E) and on the south by the steep natural slope of the

combe side. An earlier arrangement of regular, narrow village properties has been damaged at its east end by post-medieval landscaping and overlain at its west end by later settlement, comprising larger enclosed areas, each combining two or more of the earlier tofts.

The most prominent feature is the central hollow way (**A-B**) which extends for 230m along the combe bottom and forms the main village street, though it must also have been, at least seasonally, for much of its history a watercourse. To the west of (**A**) it has been in-filled and its line is marked by a slight east-west oriented, north-facing scarp. To the east of (**A**) it extends in a more-or-less straight line for c185m to (**C**). From (**C**) it changes direction and extends north-east to (**B**). Between (**C**) and (**B**) the hollow way has been widened as an ornamental pond or canal. An edging of split flint nodules is visible along the north side of (**C-B**). The ground within the hollowed area is boggy and standing water collects in winter. The pond or canal measures 140m long by 5-12m wide and is up to 2.0m deep; it is marked clearly on the Doidge's map (1752) and also on Andrews and Dury's map (1773). A kink in the line of the hollow way immediately east of (**C**) is probably also associated with the creation of this pond.

To the north of (**C-B**) and perpendicular to it, are a number of poorly defined banks and scarps, oriented north-west to south-east; these appear to be the remains of boundaries defining several properties arranged along the north side of the hollow way. The earthworks in this area have been considerably damaged by activities associated with the creation of the pond but they seem to represent a maximum of seven properties, each measuring c20m wide and 30-40m long. Any continuation of these tofts to the north of the present track (**D-E**) has been obliterated by ploughing. To the south-east of (**C-B**) a long but irregular north-facing scarp (**F-G**), cutting into the hillside, is associated with a number of irregular hollows and smaller scarps in the area between it and the pond. This scarp was a field boundary in the 19th century (extending to **H** – OS 6 inch 1st edition 1886). The hollows and minor scarps appear to be the result of quarrying, dumping and other earthmoving activities associated with the construction of the pond and possibly the farm buildings beyond it. Immediately to the south-east of (**C**) a hollowed area (**J**), measuring 40m long by 30m wide, contains the well-defined remains of a substantial rectangular building, 18m long and 7m wide, with a sub-division at its southern end. This building, larger than the surviving medieval village houses and set deliberately within a slight hollow at the end of the pond, may be part of the early post-medieval re-modelling of the site; it might be a fishing lodge, for instance.

The earthworks to the west of (**C**) are in a better state of preservation and the remains of a number of enclosures and structures are clearly evident. To the south of (**A-C**) a large trapezoidal block, measuring 195m by 60-90m, extends between the main hollow way (**A-C**) and a lynchet way (**G-H**), a back lane that also became an extension of (**F-G**), the 19th-century field boundary. The enclosed block is divided into three large units defined by north-south banks. The westernmost unit is approximately twice the width of either of the others and may have originally formed two units which were subsequently amalgamated. Each of the units is divided into two by a north-facing scarp 28-32m south of (**A-C**). To the south of this the enclosed areas are devoid of major earthworks but display faint traces of plough ridges. To the north each

unit contains earthwork remains of several well defined structures and small yards fronting on to the main hollow way (A-C). Each unit contains the remains of one particularly well defined, rectangular, sub-divided building measuring 14-15m long and 5-6m wide. These appear to be the remains of the main house in each unit. Other structural traces are the remains of barns and other ancillary agricultural buildings.

It is probable that this block of three farmsteads overlies earlier peasant properties but if so the substantial later earthworks have obliterated any traces of the earlier arrangement within the demarcated block. However, it is possible that the linear scarps and hollows which cut into the hillside immediately south of (G-H) represent the ends of earlier property boundaries. Alternatively, these features could be the result of squatter occupation or quarrying; they seem to be served by the back lane (G-H). (There are very substantial quarries (not surveyed) in the wooded area to the south of H.) The terraced platform to the east at (K) is morphologically similar and may have the same origin. Approximately 24 m west of (A-H) and parallel to it is a slight bank which may be the remains of an earlier property boundary surviving beyond the block of later farmsteads. This bank is interrupted by a confusion of hollows cutting into the hillside, which appear to be the result of quarrying but might overlie the sites of robbed-out buildings. This quarrying is late because it has also damaged a post-medieval plantation boundary surviving as a bank running south from (D). North-facing lynchets to the south of the quarried area underlie the banks and could be the remains of prehistoric fields.

Twenty metres to the east of (A) is a circular hollowed platform on top of the boundary bank marking the westernmost farmstead and alongside the street. It has been suggested that this might be the remains of a dovecot. This is unlikely in a medieval context as dovecots were strictly reserved to the lords of manors and all the evidence here suggests that the manorial curia was at the other end of the settlement, on the site of the present Lake House. However, this circular feature seems to be a late addition, overlying the pre-existing boundary bank, and it could therefore be an early post-medieval dovecot associated with the other ornamental parkland features noted.

The earthworks north of the village street (A-C) are similar to those to the south in both their form and their good state of preservation. The remains of several well defined buildings are clearly visible, associated with property boundaries and the slighter hollows and banks of ancillary structures. The appearance and layout of the earthworks in this area suggests that they are likely to be contemporary with those farmsteads to the south of the village street. Traces of slight banks extending between (A-C) and the modern track (D-E) but angled obliquely to (A-C) could be the remains of earlier property boundaries, perhaps conforming to earlier landscape features (such as prehistoric field lynchets) that are now lost. Linear features to the north of the modern track around Hungerford Cottages suggest that, as would be expected, the properties on this side of the street also extended back up the slope; they display traces of possible cultivation (though as this area was laid out as allotments in the 19th century, at least some of these earthworks probably relate to that period) and end on a lynchet way (L-M), a back lane mirroring the one on the south side (G-H).

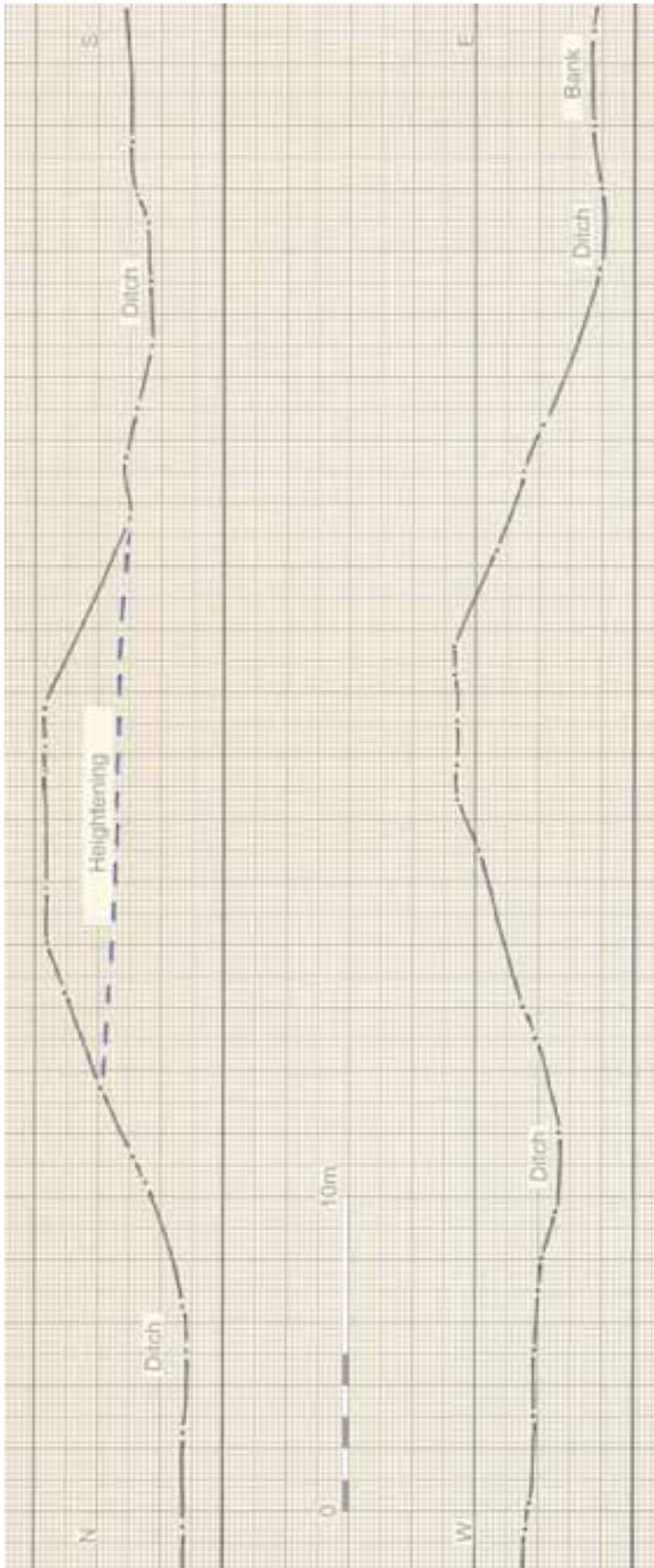


Fig 2: Profiles of Barrow Wilsford 87, drawn in 1986 (re-labelled). © Crown copyright.NMR

Fields, tracks and barrows

These features lie largely to the south of those previously described, occupying the steep side of the combe and bounded on the north, at the foot of the slope, by the line of the 19th-century boundary marked by (F-G-H).

In the eastern part of this area, to the south-east of (F-G), several slight banks oriented north-west to south-east are probably the remains of prehistoric field boundaries, which may have subsequently formed the boundaries to medieval properties located along the south side of the village street (B-C), though any visible remains of those properties in the combe bottom have been obliterated by later activity.

Above the steepest part of the slope, at (N) are a number of slight lynchets, 0.5m – 1.0m high, running west-south-west to east-north-east, following the contours. These represent more than one phase of ploughing, as some of the lynchets are cut by others. They all overlie a wide, low scarp oriented north-west to south-east, which appears to be another prehistoric field boundary. The lynchets themselves are cut by a hollow way which extends south-south-east from (P). This forms the southern part of a hollow way which continues down the combe side via (G), where it joins several other hollow ways traversing the slope, to meet the village street at (C). At the extreme south of the surveyed area a number of slight linear features oriented north-north-west to south-south-east overlie faint traces of south-west to north-east lynchets and probably represent another episode of ploughing. Traces of linear scarps at (Q) are parallel to the modern road and are associated with a tree-lined avenue extending towards Lake House. Further to the north-east a hollow curving along the edge of the road south-east from (F) may mark an earlier alignment of the road. Alternatively it could be the remains of a ha-ha around Lake House but it is probably too close to the house to have performed this function. The road was in its present location by the time of the Doidges' survey in the mid 18th century (WHC 1552/2/2/4H).

Near the southernmost corner of the surveyed area is the substantial mound of barrow Wilsford 87, recorded by Grinsell as a bowl barrow (1957, 199) but which should possibly be re-classified as a bell barrow. The mound is surrounded by a ditch and slight external bank and has an overall diameter of 27m; it stands to a maximum height of 4.6m above the ditch bottom. The profile of the mound displays a distinct step, the result of the construction of a recent secondary, conical mound on top of the more rounded prehistoric mound (Fig 2). The material for the secondary mound was probably derived from the ditch, which displays a sharp profile suggesting a recent cut. It is likely that the secondary mound was raised to provide an impressive prospect mount to enhance the views both to and from Lake House. A slight trench on the western side of the mound might be the site of an antiquarian excavation (though none is recorded and the post-medieval mound enhancement might render such activity unlikely) or it may have been an access route to the top of the mound. Though the barrow ditch in its current form is recent, the presence of an external bank suggests that both it and the ditch are prehistoric in origin.

At the time of survey three other possible barrows were visible as earthworks, soilmarks and cropmarks in the cultivated field to the north of the main earthworks. A low oval mound (**R**), measuring 20m long and 1.6m wide, stands 0.75m high. A concentration of flint nodules was noted over the area of the mound. This barrow seems to be shown on the Doidges' 1752 map of Lake. About 100m to the south a small ring ditch (**S**), measuring c1.4m in diameter, was visible for a short time as a vivid green circle in the germinating crop of turnips. Slightly to the west a larger ring ditch (**T**), measuring c3.4m in diameter, showed as a soilmark for an equally short length of time. A spread of lighter coloured material and stone in the centre of this ring ditch, and its large diameter, suggests that it may be the site of a disc barrow.

Discussion

The earliest activity at Lake visible in the current landscape is the construction of a scatter of round barrows on either side of Lake Bottom, close to the point where it debouches into the Avon valley. Though Wilsford **87** is on the end of a spur, this seems to be part of a riverine distribution, linked perhaps with Wilsford barrows 84, 84a, 85 (a pond barrow) and 86 (Grinsell 1957, 199, 225), further north along Spring Bottom. It is notable that the pronounced high ridge running south from Coneybury Hill and dividing Spring Bottom/Lake Bottom from the Avon valley is apparently almost devoid of barrows, the ring ditches of Wilsford 95, 96 and 97 being the only known sites; other ring ditches, Wilsford 94, 98 and 99 (RCHME 1979, 3), are placed well down the slopes on either side. This apparent lack of barrows places this ridge in marked contrast to other main ridges within the WHS, all of which support major barrow cemeteries. Here the focus seems to be the (perhaps seasonally) stream-bearing valley. None of these barrows is dated but an Early Bronze Age origin for the group can be assumed, especially if the re-classification of Wilsford **87** as a bell barrow and the suggestion that barrow (**T**) was a disc barrow are accepted.

Later prehistoric endeavour was apparently limited to the laying out, and possibly cultivation, of fields but any evidence for other activity might have been destroyed by later works. Some of the prehistoric field boundaries themselves seem to have been subsumed by medieval boundaries which followed the earlier alignments. (The apparently wholesale adoption of a possibly prehistoric field system by medieval farmers can be seen at Bardolfeston, Puddletown, Dorset, for example (RCHME 1970, 229-30, pl 183).)

The medieval settlement at Lake was established by the 13th century and probably much earlier, and comprised a double row of properties laid out along either side of a village 'street' which must, for part of the year at least, have been a flowing stream; this is an arrangement seen at other chalk downland medieval settlements, such as Richardson, Winterbourne Bassett, Wiltshire, for instance (NMR SU 07 SE 23), and raises questions about how such 'streets' were actually used. The manorial curia, including chapel and mill, was at the eastern end of the settlement close to the river. At some time the morphology of the village was changed by the creation of enclosed farmsteads overlying some of the earlier properties; whether this change was imposed from above or negotiated among the villagers, it will have been a major disruption to patterns of life. These farmsteads were themselves possibly subject to alteration through amalgamation of holdings, which argues for a certain degree of longevity. It is possible that these horizons of change mark a

time when the population of the village was in decline, in the 14th century for instance, though possible squatter settlement and/or quarrying can also be identified along the backs of the village properties.

A further and even more disruptive change occurred when the settlement was removed, probably in the 17th century, to its current location alongside the river (for the historic buildings of Lake see Lane 2011, especially 70-3), and its former site laid out as a garden and pleasure ground for the new Lake House, replacing the manor house. This involved ornamental planting and the creation of avenues and a canal. The latter destroyed part of the village street, emphasising to the displaced villagers the permanence of the new arrangement. It is possible, however, that the village had been substantially deserted before this time (Hare 1994, 165). The ornamental grounds may have included subsidiary buildings, such as a fishing lodge and a dovecot. Fishing is more associated in the 17th century with a 'quietist', puritan (or at least protestant) cast of mind than with royalists such as the Duke family, owners of Lake (Duke 1915b), but the division is by no means clear-cut (Everson 2007, 114-20, and references therein) so maybe in this case the structure by the canal can be so regarded, rather than being seen simply as a more generic garden building. Dovecots at this period were often placed away from the main house, so the doves were not unnecessarily disturbed and had a clear field of view so that they could see any approaching birds of prey; a dovecot should nevertheless be visible from the house, for security reasons (McCann 1991, 125, 127); the location suggested here would fit these requirements. A further embellishment of the landscape probably undertaken in the 17th or 18th centuries was the raising of the mound of barrow Wilsford **87** to form a prospect mount; again, this is a treatment of ancient earthworks that can be mirrored in many other places, not least in the case of the Marlborough Mount in the 17th century (Field *et al*/2001, 197-202); the Neolithic origin of that Mount has now been established (Leary 2011).

WEST OR LITTLE AMESBURY

The poorly preserved medieval and post-medieval earthworks at West Amesbury lie on the north-west bank of the River Avon. They represent the remains of a small number of properties arranged along the valley floor on alluvium between the river and the modern road. At the centre of the site these are overlain by garden features associated with West Amesbury House. The settlement today is small and lies, with the exception of Moor Hatches House, to the north of the Amesbury-Wilsford road.

The earthworks, centred at SU 142 414 in Amesbury parish, are recorded in the NMR AMIE database under SU 14 SW 508, having been surveyed by the RCHME in June 1986. A number of buildings and other structures, several of which are Listed, are recorded separately (see Table 1). Only that part of the area crossed by the Stonehenge Avenue is designated as an Ancient Monument.

Topography, geology and soils

The earthworks lie entirely on the valley floor at about 67m OD. The geology and soils are very similar to those described above for Lake, though Smith noted the presence of patches of Coombe Rock, Greensand and loessic soil (1973, 42, 46, fig 4).

History

West Amesbury is not specifically mentioned in Domesday, when it was presumably included in one of the two entries for Amesbury. The tenurial history of the several manors at Amesbury has been studied in some detail (Pugh 1947; 1948). The earliest surviving mention of West Amesbury is in 1205 (Crowley 1995, 27). It is likely that West Amesbury belonged originally to one of the manors held by the Earls of Salisbury; in 1207 a parcel of land there was held by Patrick de Montfort, a sub-tenant of the Longespées (Pugh 1948, 81). In 1268, 105 acres in West Amesbury was given to Amesbury Priory and there are several subsequent references to property in West Amesbury belonging to the Priory (ibid, 104-5; Pugh 1956, 246). (The 1268 document is, incidentally, the first record of any substantial local property held by the Priory and this is the only land they held in what is now the WHS.) In the mid 17th century the Priory manor lay mainly in West Amesbury (Pugh 1948, 106). The West Amesbury property of Patrick de Montfort descended via the Pauncefote family to the Dawbenys in the 15th century (ibid, 108-9) but there were other properties, sometimes referred to as 'manors', in West Amesbury. In the 16th century the West Amesbury manors were united and in the 17th they passed to the Washington family and then to the Haywards, friends of William Stukeley, who wrote, 'The precise spot of ground where Stonehenge stands is in the lordship of West or Little Amesbury the possession of the Rev Mr Hayward who may at present be called the Archdruid of the Island' (Pugh 1947, xx). Bryan King gave a slightly different version of the wording of this note (1874, 228) and Long listed the 'owners' of Stonehenge from 1620 until 1870 (1876, 237). Although the Amesbury manors were merged into one estate, held by the Duke of Queensbury in 1734 (and eventually by the Antrobus family), the Flitcroft maps of 1726 preserve many of the field names of the former manors, enabling their boundaries to be reconstructed with some degree of confidence.

Both cartographic and documentary evidence suggest that the manor of the present village of West Amesbury, with its manor house at West Amesbury House, is Dawbenys manor. The field names show the Dawbeny lands concentrated west of the Avon, extending to Normanton in the south, Stonehenge in the west and north along the western side of Vespasian's Camp; the land of West Amesbury Farm in 1841 occupied much the same area. It is consistently referred to as West or Little Amesbury from 1429 (Pugh 1947, xi, 20).

Open fields, common meadows and common pastures for sheep and cattle are mentioned in the 13th century, and in the 14th century there were three open fields with generous sheep stints; mills are mentioned in 1328 and 1428; the floated water meadows were probably first constructed in the mid 17th century (Crowley 1995, 42-3, 45). The population of West Amesbury is difficult to assess, as it is frequently included with other units for tax purposes. In 1332 six individuals at West Amesbury paid 28 shillings (Crowley 1989, 109) and in 1377 there were 43 taxpayers in West Amesbury and Normanton (Beresford 1959b, 306). As Normanton paid substantially less than West Amesbury in 1334 – 12 shillings as against 28 shillings – (Beresford 1959a, 297) it is possible to suggest that the majority of the 1377 taxpayers were in the latter. The 1841 census recorded 65 people at West Amesbury (Saunders 1959, 339).

The earthworks

The earthworks lie in three blocks located in two fields (Fig 4).

The first block comprises poorly preserved remains occupying the western field. A well defined bank (**A-B**) parallel to the modern road appears to delimit the north side of the earthworks. A number of poorly preserved and intermittent banks and linear scarps extending perpendicular to (**A-B**) are the remains of boundaries defining a maximum of five properties measuring 15-20m wide, arranged along the south side of the existing road. Several slight sub-rectangular hollows within the northern ends of the defined properties may be the sites of buildings. The earthworks have been damaged at their south-western ends by erosion caused by water flow through the marshy ground; water meadows (not surveyed) extend to the south-west of the marshy channel. (The 18th or 19th century hatches for drowning the water meadows survive at Moor Hatches House.) Several large hollows cutting into the south-eastern edge of the area are the result of the recent removal of material alongside the water channel immediately to the south.

The second block comprises slight but well preserved earthworks in the western part of the field to the south and south-east of West Amesbury House, delimited on the east by a sharply defined bank (**C-D**). These earthworks represent the remains of a garden. To the west of (**C-D**), which appears to be the remains of a wall (and is shown as a boundary on the Amesbury Tithe map (1841), Lane 2011, fig 31), several low banks define a number of small rectangular compartments, some of which might be ornamental beds. These are integrated to the north-west with similar slight banks extending towards the ornamental gates at (**E**), though the gates have apparently been moved forward from a position at the front entrance of

the house (Lane 2011, 61-2, fig 40). These banks appear to be the remains of an ornamental avenue running south from the gates and opposite the front door of the main block of West Amesbury House, indicated on Andrews and Dury's map of 1773. Slight traces of associated terraces immediately south-west of the gates also appear to form part of the gardens but have been confused by later activity in this area, notably the construction of a recent wall (F) and the removal of a large tree (G). In the southern part of this area a series of ridges (H) are the result of cultivation, possibly during the Second World War (aerial photograph I069/UK 915/3200). These overlie the Stonehenge Avenue; however, recent excavation by the Stonehenge Riverside Project has demonstrated a considerable depth of medieval cultivation and other activity in this area which had already removed any surface trace of the Avenue here (Parker Pearson *et al* 2010).

The third block of earthworks lies to the east of bank (C-D) and comprises poorly preserved and mostly amorphous scarps around a patch of marshy ground (J). An attempt seems to have been made to reclaim this area by dumping material to raise the ground level. The most clearly defined earthwork is a substantial sub-rectangular hollow south-east of (C); this may be the site of a post-medieval building. A number of scarps extending perpendicular to the current road may be the remains of property boundaries but their degraded condition makes positive identification impossible. A number of slight, smoothly defined ridges at the eastern side of the field may be the remains of ridge-and-furrow, perhaps overlying traces of earlier fields or property boundaries; they have been worn by traffic using the field gate. A scarp near the fence to the south of these ridges is natural.

Discussion

The Stonehenge Avenue to the north of West Amesbury House was excavated in 1973 (Smith 1973), uncovering overlying remains of Iron Age to post-medieval date, and its terminal above the Avon was examined in 2009, giving rise to the unexpected discovery of a henge monument on the river bank (Parker Pearson *et al* 2010). All the prehistoric remains were buried beneath a considerable depth of soil, up to about 1m, arising largely from medieval horticulture or cultivation.

The earthworks of medieval settlement at West Amesbury are fragmentary and indicate little more than the probable location of a few abandoned properties and a relatively small area of cultivation. The population of West Amesbury seems, from the available documentary evidence, to have been relatively stable for several hundred years; the earthworks of abandoned properties therefore probably represent settlement shift rather than shrinkage.

Slightly better preserved earthworks mark the site of formal gardens between West Amesbury House and the river, but even these have been subject to considerable later disturbance; the position of an ornamental avenue and some rectangular parterres can be suggested, but little else. The location of these garden remains and the surviving ornamental gates suggest the possibility that the public road once passed to the north of West Amesbury House along the line of the existing back lane. However, Andrews and Dury

(1773) show the road in its present position (though with an extension to a ford just beyond the eastern edge of the surveyed area – **K-K**); they also show what appears to be a square garden compartment immediately adjoining the east side of West Amesbury House (**L**) (WANHS 1952). In the 18th century there were fords across the River Avon to west and east of the settlement (Andrews and Dury and Flitcroft maps). A possible building platform (near **C**) was also noted; its size, orientation and location suggest a post-medieval, rather than earlier, date but it is not shown on any extant maps. For further information on the historic buildings of West Amesbury see Lane 2011 (especially 61-5).

METHODOLOGY

In common with surveys undertaken at the time, the earthworks at Lake and West Amesbury were surveyed by the establishment of a control framework using an electronic theodolite and EDM; detail was then supplied into the control using tape-and-offset methods.

In the case of West Amesbury it should be noted that there was long grass over much of the area at the time of survey and some minor earthworks may have been missed. It should also be noted that Vespasian's Camp was not included in the survey and the depiction of the earthworks of the south-western extremity of the hillfort on Fig 4 is derived from an earlier small-scale survey.

Name	NMR number	NMR Uid	Designation List no	NGR
<i>Lake</i>				
Settlement remains	SU 13 NW 67	218357	1010879	SU 131 387
Lake House	SU 13 NW 37	218297	1183238	SU 1338 3896
Barrow Wilsford 87	SU 13 NW 38	218300	1010879	SU 1320 3866
Lake Chapel	SU 13 NW 62	218352	-	Uncertain
Lake park & gardens	SU 13 NW 81	619080	1001237	-
Barrow R	SU 13 NW 93	1066513	1010882	SU 1316 3907
Barrow T	SU 13 NW 94	1066514	1010883	SU 1309 3905
Barrow S	SU 13 NW 95	1066515	1010884	SU 1317 3898
<i>West Amesbury</i>				
Settlement/garden remains	SU 14 SW 508	1004209	-	SU 142 414
Later structures overlying Stonehenge Avenue	SU 14 SW 222	959434	-	SU 1418 4153
Stonehenge Avenue	SU 14 SW 275	858883	1010140	-
West Amesbury House	SU 14 SW 631	1123010	1318515	SU 1422 4149
Moor Hatches House	SU 14 SW 636	1123211	-	SU 1415 4143
Gate piers	SU 14 SW 725	1146981	1131032	SU 1422 4146
Moor hatches	SU 14 SW 728	1146979	-	SU 1415 4143

Table 1: concordance of record numbers. Note: the table does not include all Listed Buildings or minor features within the areas covered.

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Fig 3: Earthworks at Lake, 1986, reduced from original survey drawing at 1:1000. © Crown copyright. NMR

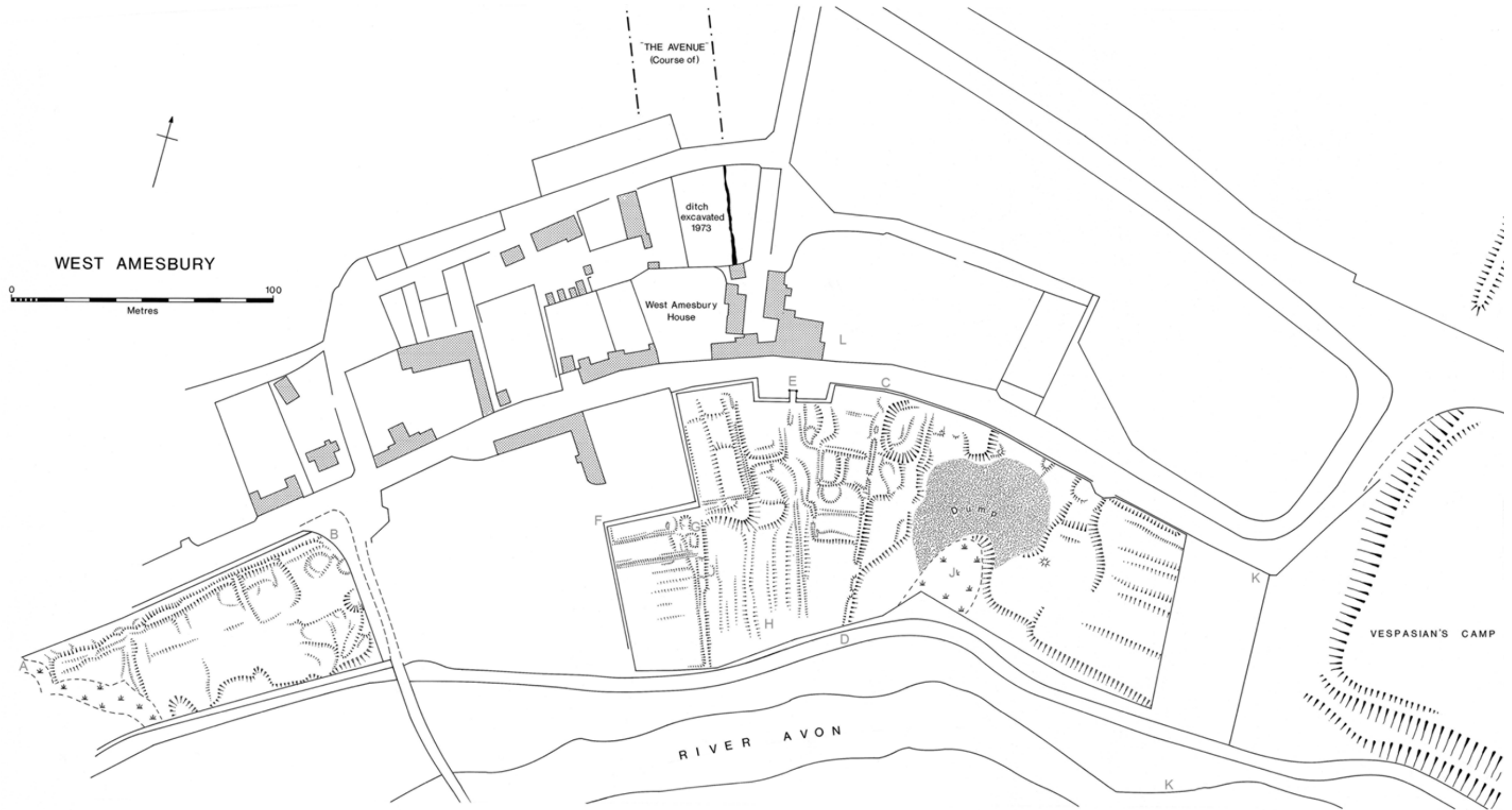


Fig 4: Earthworks at West Amesbury, 1986, reduced from original survey drawing at 1:1000. © Crown copyright.NMR



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