



ENGLISH HERITAGE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION SERIES

17/2001

WEST WYCOMBE PARK
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

Part I

David McOmish, Cathy Tuck
David Went

SURVEY REPORT

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WEST WYCOMBE PARK
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View of the Cascade, Lake, Music Temple and Church Hill at West Wycombe Park, Buckinghamshire



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View of the Cascade and Music Temple on the lake at West Wycombe Park. The Church of St. Lawrence can be seen in the distance above the Music Temple.



1. INTRODUCTION

Between April 2000 and June 2001 English Heritage undertook an archaeological survey within the grounds and the hinterland of West Wycombe Park, the 18th century mansion of the Dashwood family situated immediately to the south of the eponymous Buckinghamshire village in the district of Wycombe. This analytical field survey, jointly funded by English Heritage and the National Trust, provides a complete record of visible archaeological features in three areas: the Pleasure Grounds, (set between the house and the village), the wider park (surrounding these gardens) and the hillside to the north of the village which is crowned by a prehistoric hillfort, the medieval parish church, mausoleum and later architectural features designed to provide a backdrop to the gardens. A detailed analysis of the architectural structures fell outwith the scope of this work and only summaries derived from other sources are included here.

The Pleasure Grounds were surveyed in detail at 1:1000 scale and include both the preserved designs of the 18th century gardens and remnant earthworks representing both earlier and later features. These were placed in a wider context through an assessment of the contiguous parkland; here recorded at a scale of 1:2500. To the north of the village, thorough recording at 1:1000 scale was undertaken on the visible archaeological features on Church Hill. Therefore, approximately 48 hectares were assessed at Level 3 standard (as defined in RCHME 1999, 3-4) with a further 112 hectares at Level 2; in total 160 hectares were included within the surveyed area.

This project, the first complete archaeological survey of the structure and setting of West Wycombe Park, will contribute to the process of understanding and managing the landscape, both in terms of the 18th century design and of the vestiges of earlier (and later) activity preserved within its limits. The survey was conducted by staff from the Archaeological Field Office in Cambridge, with the assistance of the National Trust Regional Office and the Dashwood Estate.

West Wycombe Park and its Pleasure Grounds are located immediately to the south of the village of West Wycombe within the Chiltern Hills about 4 kilometres to the north-west of the county town of High Wycombe. The park lies on the south side of a wide east-west vale, which coincidentally hosts the London-Oxford road (the present A40), and occupies the valley floor, rising to a height of 140m above Ordnance Datum (OD) on the north-facing slopes to the south of it. Two further dry valleys converge in the village and give access northwards into the Vale of Aylesbury via Princes Risborough, as well as the heartland of the Chiltern Hills beyond Hughenden (Fig 1).



The Pleasure Grounds are bounded on the south and west by a modern track; the main approach to West Wycombe House and access way to Sawmill House. This driveway separates the pasture fields flanking the River Wye to the north from current arable land which ascends the slope on the south. All of the land within the loop of this drive is under pasture, much of it cloaked with scrub and woodland. The north-western corner of the park is heavily planted with a mixed deciduous regime but a broad ride extends to the lake from the west providing a formal approach flanked on either side by woodland. The south-western corner of the park, which forms the skyline when viewed from the valley floor, contains a large beech wood and further narrow wooded plantations follow the southern park boundary to the east. The Pleasure Grounds cover an area of 23 hectares and have been laid out across the broad valley floor, extending up to the artificially enhanced terrace on the south which hosts West Wycombe House (Plate 1).



Plate 1:
*View across the lake
towards the lawn
and north front of
the house*



West Wycombe Park lies within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and the parkland, Pleasure Grounds and much of West Wycombe Hill are included in the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest (GD 1415, Grade I). The hillfort on the crown of West Wycombe Hill is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (Buckinghamshire 80); St Lawrence's Church (within the hillfort) is a Grade I Listed Building, as too is the adjacent Dashwood mausoleum and the eponymous country mansion within West Wycombe Park. A further twenty-two buildings and structures, Listed at grades II* and II, are included in the survey area. Many of the architectural features and related archaeological aspects are, however, recorded in the National Monuments Record (NMR) as SU 89 SW 6; 7; 8; 23; 24.

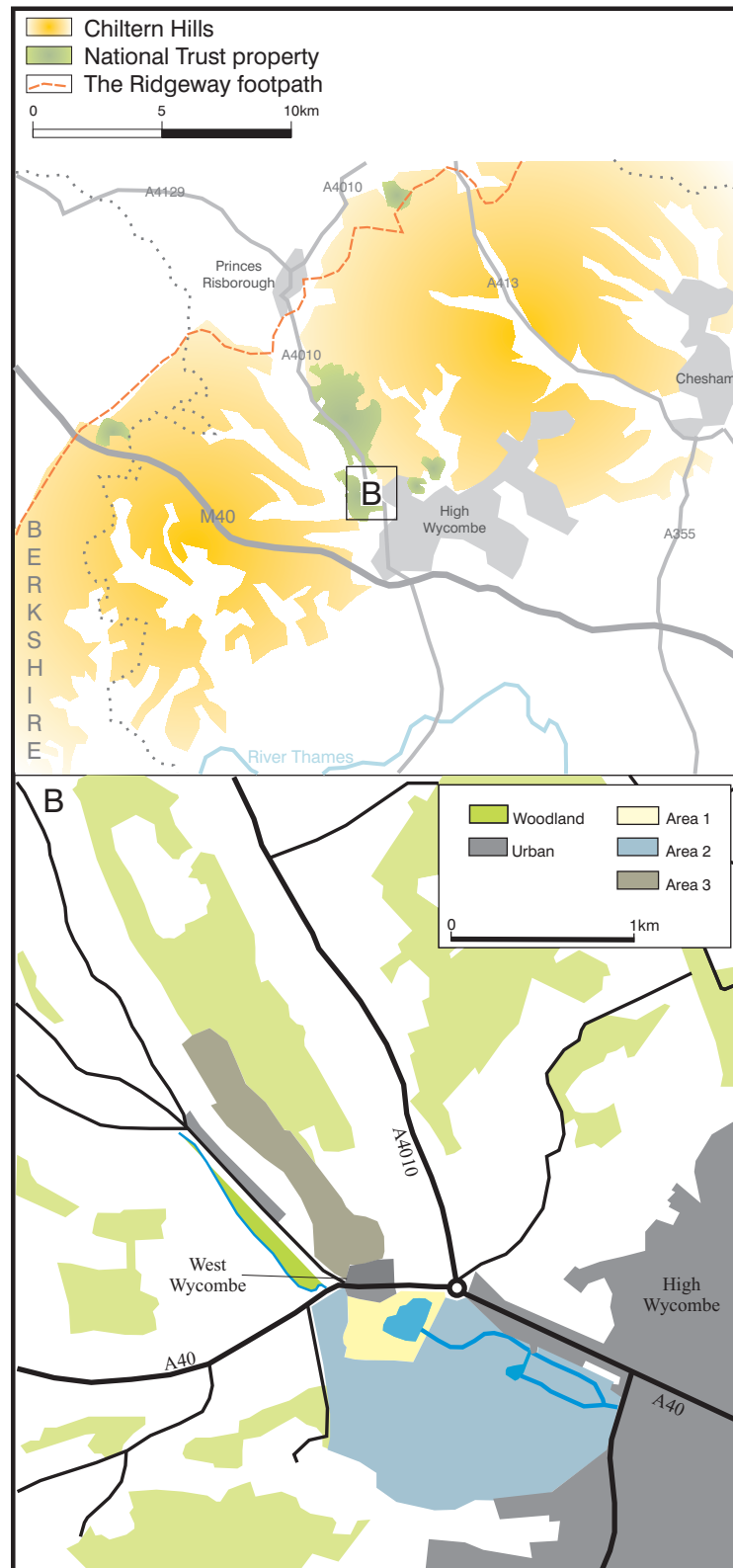


Figure 1:
Map showing the location of the three survey areas.



2. GEOLOGY, SOILS AND DRAINAGE

The underlying geology is dominated by lower chalk, with extensive coverage of stagnogleyic palaeo-argillic brown earths on the crests and upper slopes of the valleys, and well-drained rendzinas, calcareous alluvial soils and secondary deposits of flint gravel across the valley floors; all attesting to a lengthy history of arable exploitation.

The park sits at a point where the valley of the River Wye turns from an approximately north-south orientation to one aligned on a more east-west axis, as it flows eastwards to join the River Thames at Bourne End some 7km distant. The Wye valley is broad and flat in the vicinity of West Wycombe Park and reaches a maximum width here in excess of 600m (Plate 2).



Plate 2:
*View of the Wye
valley floor and
Church Hill.*

The original course of the Wye as it runs through the village, is now hard to discern through the effects of canalisation. It is likely that one of the main tributaries feeding the Wye rose on the valley floor close to the house and within the park itself, there are numerous palaeo-channels suggesting that the river along this stretch was slow-flowing and, indeed, prone to flooding.

Perhaps the biggest alteration to the drainage pattern of the area was made during the construction of the park in the early 18th century when an extensive area of former arable was enclosed and converted into an ornamental garden landscape. At this time the Wye



appears to have been diverted from a course which originally took it parallel, though outside, the park boundary. Two branches of the river emerge close to the north-western corner of the Pleasure Grounds; both flow east. The southernmost (known generally as the southern canal) follows a sinuous course to its outflow into the lake after a distance of 200m. The northern watercourse (the northern canal) mirrors the line of the park boundary for a short distance but after some 300m it makes an abrupt change in direction (Plate 3).



Plate 3:
*The course of
the northern
canal as it
skirts the
Temple of
Venus.*

The nature of the stream thereafter is markedly different being wider, deeper and more heavily ponded with evidence for at least one ornamental cascade structure. This stream then feeds into the lake but close to this, another branch of water issues to the north (in the fashion of a tail-race) and it must be assumed that this was an attempt to control the flow of water entering the lake. Close to the intersection with the main watercourse, a formal rectilinear pond has been created (Plate 4) and from here the main water channel follows a course parallel to the main park boundary and rejoins the River Wye further to the east.



Plate 4:
*Ornamental pond
fed by a leat from
the northern canal.*

The lake, resulting from grandiose 18th-century garden planning, is dammed along a straightened eastern face and the river emanates from close to its south-eastern corner. The river has been canalised in order to provide an ornamental water-feature to accompany the former semi-circular driveway approaching the house. To the east of this, the river meanders in a wide loop with a short projection towards Sawmill House where it forms a substantial millpond. This millpond is D-shaped and dammed along the eastern



side facing the house, with an outflow underlying the mill flowing to the east on a straightened course to its eventual linkage with the tail-race close to the eastern limit of the park. The tailrace may have been one of the original courses of the River Wye; again, in this area to the east of the Pleasure Grounds, there are numerous traces of palaeo-channels attesting to a very braided stream network. In the belt of woodland extending from Kitty's Lodge which flanks the park boundary on the north-east, there is a terraced walkway with a linear water channel on its south which extends eastwards before re-joining the main waterway.

There are no other watercourses present in the immediate area of the park. Although, slight ponding to the west of the present-day approach to the house (in the north-western corner of the surveyed area) may indicate the former presence of a stream or springline. Wider afield there are no other significant watercourses apart from the River Thames.



3. AN OUTLINE HISTORY OF WEST WYCOMBE PARK

Previous archaeological work and Documentary Sources

Within the survey area there are in excess of sixty archaeological features or discoveries itemised in the County Sites and Monuments Record (SMR), the National Monuments Record (NMR) and the National Trust Inventory (NTI). The numerous parkland and garden structures, ornamental or otherwise, are recorded in a variety of publications, including the English Heritage Listed Buildings inventory. These are mentioned in relevant sections of this report where they are described in greater detail.

There are records of only two previous detailed archaeological investigations within the park. In 1991, dredging within the lake and adjacent sections of the serpentine canals allowed rescue excavation and rapid recording of a number of early to mid 18th-century water management features and Romano-British gullies (A. Wainwright, pers. comm.). A limited geophysical survey on the lawn to the west of the house in 1998 revealed the foundations of at least one 18th-century building, partly examined during the subsequent excavation of a service trench (G. Marshall pers. comm.).

A recent archaeological watching brief during the laying of a pipe trench on Church Hill produced a single sherd of Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age pottery and evidence for at least two ditches lying outside the hillfort boundary, as well as graves and associated features within it (Poore 2000). The hillfort itself has received no formal archaeological investigation apart from an early and extremely limited descriptive survey published by the Royal Commission on Historical the Monuments of England (RCHM 1912, 318).

The Prehistoric and Romano-British periods

A chipped flint axe head found near Desborough Castle (1.5km to the east of the park) and two ground stone axes found on the ridge to the south of the park (at Sands and Toweridge Farm) indicate some settlement in, or movement through, these valleys in the Mesolithic and Neolithic periods (SMR:0153; NMR:SU 89 SW 9 & 6). Numerous Late Neolithic/Bronze Age barrows, visible as cropmarks or slight earthworks cross the floor of the adjacent valley to Princes Risborough at Saunderton, forming alignments which support the notion of contemporary communications networks leading north-east from West Wycombe through the escarpment and beyond into the Vale of Aylesbury. The Bronze Age is better represented, with numerous flint artefacts and some metal objects



suggesting a concentration of activity around the margins of West Wycombe Hill (SMR:1205, 5430, 5510) (Fig 2).

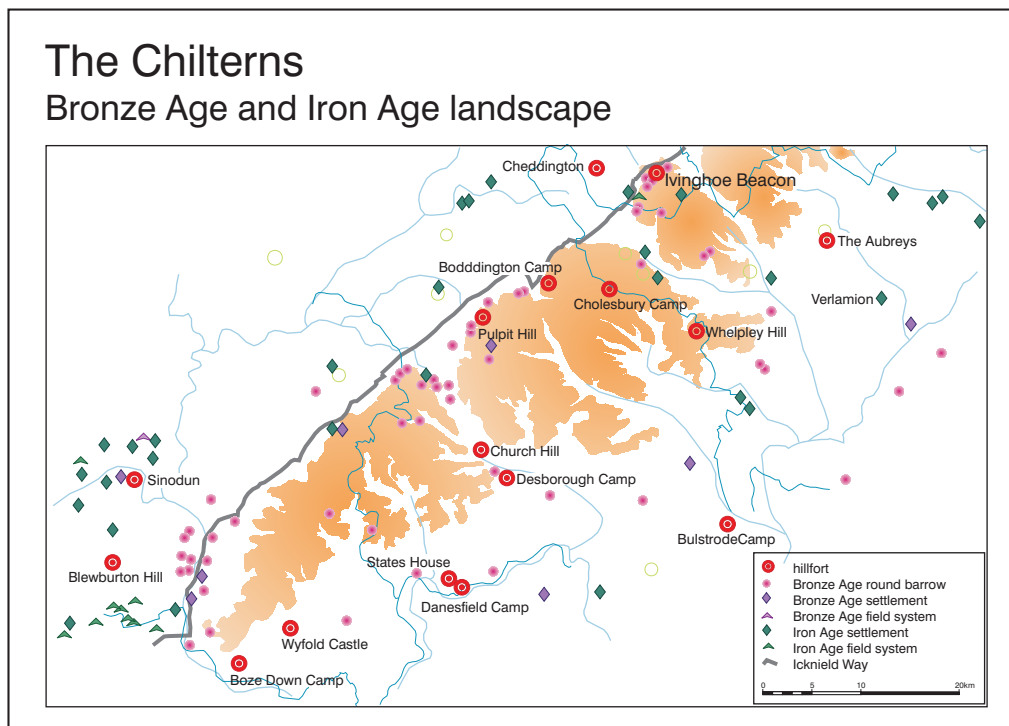


Figure 2:
Map showing the distribution of later prehistoric sites and monuments in the vicinity of Church Hill.

An extensive Mid to Late Iron Age settlement was partly excavated in the 1930s at Lodge Hill near Saunderton, some 8km north-east of West Wycombe. Broadly contemporary occupation at the southern end of the valley is suggested by the discoveries of part of a rotary quern a short distance to the north of the hillfort (SMR: 5732) and at least one La Tène I brooch found nearby (SMR:5540). Residual Late Iron Age pottery fragments have been recovered from Romano-British grave fills on the northern side of the River Wye to the east of the Pleasure Grounds (Farley & Wright 1979), but the most significant discoveries of this period are undoubtedly those made by metal detecting surveys around West Wycombe Hill. Since the late 1970s the South Bucks Metal Detector Club (SBMDC) has collected some 30 Late Iron Age coins (including both gold and silver staters) from a single field to the west of the hillfort which, together with further discoveries of coins and metal artefacts in adjoining fields, is sufficient to suggest the existence of a significant centre of trade or ritual activity or, simply, hoarding in the vicinity of the hillfort (Farley M 1995).

Romano-British occupation is also well represented by chance discoveries and metal detecting finds in and around West Wycombe, the latter concentrated to the west of West



Wycombe Hill where the majority of metal detecting has taken place. Despite the inherent fieldwork bias arising from the extent of the SBMDC's activities, the number of coins, articles of personal adornment and pottery fragments collected from the valley sides to the west of the hill suggests some continuity with earlier activities - perhaps the ongoing importance of a religious focus or even the existence of a Romano-British temple complex. Further discoveries point to less extensive utilisation of the eastern slopes of West Wycombe Hill and of the valley floor on the western side of Bradenham Road (A4010).

It has recently been suggested that a Roman road may have crossed the southern perimeter of the outer park, following the ridge between Piddington to the west and High Wycombe to the east (Morris, Hargreaves & Parker 1970), and a further Roman route might have been perpetuated in the former turnpike road between High Wycombe and West Wycombe, the line of which runs along the present north-eastern boundary of the park (Head 1974).

The existence of a Romano-British settlement at West Wycombe was first suggested by a local historian in 1934, who claimed (without citing any evidence) that the village was built over the site of a Roman villa (Harman 1934). Harman may have been persuaded by knowledge of local finds of pottery and building materials, and more recent discoveries certainly appear to substantiate his opinion. The nucleus of the Romano-British settlement at West Wycombe may have lain alongside the River Wye, perhaps towards the northern side of the 18th-century Pleasure Ground and within the wider park immediately to the east. Quantities of Romano-British pottery (mainly 2nd century Oxford-ware) and tile, together with several coins and brooches, were retrieved from silts dredged from the northern end of the ornamental lake in 1991 and several narrow gullies, also dateable to the 2nd century, were recorded in this area. Some three hundred metres downstream from the lake, similar artefacts were also discovered in the process of clearing a section of the River Wye also in 1991, confirming earlier reports of surface material collected from the adjacent field (A. Wainwright pers. comm.). This latter area lies in close proximity to a 4th century cemetery on the north side of the river (beyond the former turnpike road and the present park boundary) which was excavated prior to a housing development in 1978. Fourteen inhumations were found, all of which were presumed, on the basis of an east-west orientation and absence of grave goods, to have been buried with Christian rites (Farley and Wright 1979).

A villa complex would not be out of place in this sort of context. The proliferation of such sites within the Chiltern valleys is well established (Branigan 1967) and the pivotal position of West Wycombe Hill at the junction of several such valleys provides an ideal location. Further villas are known to have existed 5km and 8km to the north along the



Saunderton valley (SMR:0878, 0364) and within the Wye Valley at High Wycombe barely 4km to the east (Hartley 1959).

The Medieval Period

Little is known concerning early medieval occupation in the West Wycombe area, although a small number of Anglo-Saxon artefacts have been found in the locality, including several strap ends, buckles and an East Anglian primary sceat retrieved from the intensively metal-detected area to the west of West Wycombe Hill (SMR: 5510, 5720; Hill & Metcalf 1984). A silver coin of Offa, King of Mercia, was found in the park itself 'some years ago' (SMR:0623) and a late Saxon (Treheddle-style) silver hooked tag was discovered on the ridge to the south in 1989 (Farley 1991). The place-name of West Wycombe is first recorded in 944-6 (Ekwall 1940, 515) with the notable 'wyc' element (the River Wye being named after it). This is clearly an important place in the Anglo-Saxon period and this, to some extent, corroborates the archaeological evidence.

According to Domesday Book the manor of West Wycombe (*Wicumbe*) lies within the hundred of Desborough which took its name from the nearby hillfort of Desborough Castle, 1.5km to the south-east of West Wycombe House. Before the Conquest it was held by Stigand, but thereafter it passed to the Bishops of Winchester who held it until 1551 when it was surrendered to the crown. At the time of the survey, Bishop Walchelin was taxed at 19 hides, there being five hides and three plough lands within the demesne. Eight copyholders with 27 villeins occupied a further 19 plough lands, and the manor also controlled seven carucates of pasture and pannage in the woods for a thousand pigs (Page ed, 1925, 136).

The medieval manor and the parish were coterminous, with the population centred on the main village. A few small hamlets such as Chalvely and Fylendon (perpetuated by Chorely Farm and Fillendon Wood) and numerous outlying settlements were administered through a system of tithings. The manor's rent rolls, preserved from 1207 onwards, record a mixed economy dominated by pasture and woodland. Wool was the most important economic asset in the 13th century, returning 53s.9d in 1251. Pannage for pigs, suggesting continued management of extensive beech and oak woodland, was of only slightly lesser importance, valued at 51s.5d in the same year. Other entries reflect similar pastoral concerns, such as the monies for the upkeep of a dairy and wages for warreners (*ibid*, 137).



The early manor house, maintained by the Bishops' tenants, is likely to have been well appointed with barns, paddocks and outbuildings - one of which, a dovecote containing 200 doves, was mentioned in 1324 (ibid, 138). The precise location of the medieval manor house, however, remains unknown; although it probably stood within or close to the core of the village which was itself created specifically to increase the revenue to the Bishop's estate. The village was substantially rebuilt in the mid 16th century and again in the later 18th century, but still retains several buildings with 15th or even 14th century components, set within a system of property boundaries which perpetuate aspects of a typical regular row settlement.

The River Wye provided the manor with further assets, including three mills and an eel fishery mentioned in Domesday, the former appearing as 'Wythditch Mill', 'Pitmill' and 'Margery Mill' in documents of the 13th to 16th century (ibid, 139). The medieval bishops also maintained an extensive area of hunting parkland in the south of the parish, known as Wydington Park and still marked by the site of Widdington Park Wood.

The present form of St Lawrence's Church largely reflects 18th-century renovations (Francis Lord le Despencer destroyed all of the old details of the church and reconstructed it in classical style) but it is likely that the walls of a 13th-century chancel and nave with aisles and a 14th-century tower survive embedded in its fabric. In 1251 the expenses of the manor included those entailed by enlarging the 'chapel' *by 10 feet, putting in new windows, whitewashing, &c.* Here, West Wycombe church is referred to as 'Haveringdune' and was assessed with Morton at £26 13s.4d in 1291 and at the Dissolution, some 300 years later, at £12 0s.0³/₄d.



4. THE POST-MEDIEVAL PERIOD AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF WEST WYCOMBE PARK

The post-Dissolution history of West Wycombe is adequately documented and summarised in previous publications (Dashwood 1987; Jackson-Stops 1974, 1984; Page ed 1925). Only a short synopsis is included here to provide essential background to the archaeological report.

In 1551 Bishop Poyntet surrendered West Wycombe manor to the Crown as part of an exchange of lands, and in the same year Edward VI granted the property to Sir Henry Seymour. Sir Robert Dormer is recorded as tenant in 1552, continuing a family tradition that had long existed under the Bishops of Winchester. The fortunes of the Dormer family were rising at this time, Sir Robert having acquired lands and properties in many parts of Hertfordshire and Buckinghamshire as a consequence of the demise of St. Albans Abbey. In 1598 Sir John Seymour transferred the title of West Wycombe to Thomas Flemynge, the solicitor general, who in turn sold the freehold to Robert Dormer in 1602. Dormer's grandson, also Robert, was created Earl of Caernarvon in 1628 and killed in 1644, shortly after the battle of Newbury. The family continued to hold West Wycombe until 1698 when the 2nd Earl sold the estate to Thomas Lewis, Alderman of the City of London.

The Dashwoods

In 1698 Alderman Lewis settled the property on his two brothers-in-law, Sir Samuel Dashwood and his younger brother Francis. This branch of the Dashwood family had amassed considerable wealth through mercantile interests in India and China in the latter years of the 17th century and had risen to positions of social prominence, not least through their financial support for the Glorious Revolution in 1688. Sir Samuel became Lord Mayor of London in 1702; Francis was knighted in the same year and created baronet in 1707.

In 1706 Francis Dashwood bought out Sir Samuel's share in West Wycombe; it may have been at about this time that the old manor house was abandoned in favour of a new building. The Dormer's house was probably no more than an enlarged version of the medieval manor, described by Langley (1797) as being '*built of brick, of no great extent*' and '*similar in appearance to Toweridge*' (the subsidiary manor house to the south, then a Tudor brick range). This modest house was presumably sufficient for the Dormer's



tenants, and required little in the way of a formal setting compared to their main residence, Ascott House near Wing, 28km to the north east. Prior to the Civil War Ascott was equipped with massive garden terraces, ornamental ponds and elaborate planting schemes.

The 1st baronet's new house at West Wycombe was located further south, in greater seclusion from the village, and survives as the nucleus of the present mansion. An estate map commissioned soon after his acquisition of the property might show this new building at an exaggerated scale - a five-bay house constructed in red brick with hipped roof and stone dressing, complete with a heavy Vanbrughian doorcase which was later relocated to the Temple of the Winds (Jackson-Stops 1974:1621).

Francis the 2nd baronet succeeded his father in 1724 at the age of 16, and spent most of the following decade pursuing an unusually extended version of the Grand Tour (Jackson-Stops 1984; Purchas 1994). On his return to England from a later tour of Italy in 1739 Francis established himself within the Prince of Wales' circle and the Opposition Party - from which groups members were later drawn to form his most famous club: the Knights of St. Francis of Wycombe, also known as the 'Monks of Medmenham' and later the 'Hell-Fire Club'. He also pursued a serious political career, serving as Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1762-3 and as Postmaster-General from 1766 until his death in 1781 (Jackson-Stops 1984).

The 2nd Baronet's Transformation of the House and Park

Plans showing a series of designs for square villas, probably by Morise Louis Jolivet and clearly influenced by Mereworth (the seat of the Earl of Westmorland) suggest that the 2nd baronet envisaged the total replacement of his father's house, but these plans came to nothing. Instead, starting in about 1748, he embarked on a sequence of enlargements and elaborations, continuing this transformation through various phases for the rest of his life. The north front comprising eleven bays in Palladian style, gained its present appearance by 1750 and is shown in one of William Hannan's paintings of the estate a few years later. The design can be attributed to Isaac Ware, who was credited with this work in Loundon's *History of Gardening* 1828 and was also responsible for Sir Francis' contemporary town house in Hanover Square. The supervising architect is likely to have been John Donowell, formerly Lord Burlington's draughtsman at Chiswick, who is noted as such in the 1771 edition of *Vitruvius Britannicus*. The south façade (Plate 5) and the east portico followed soon after, the latter completed by 1755. Drawings for the south front, almost certainly in Donowell's hand, survive; but the original designer was evidently someone of wider education and experience - perhaps Jolivet - who had trained



in the Académie Royale d'Architecture and later served as assistant to renowned architect Giovanni Niccolo Servandoni (Purchas 1994).



Plate 5:
The south facade of West Wycombe House. The line of the ha-ha can be seen in the foreground.

The Pleasure Grounds

The extent to which formal gardens existed around the 1st baronet's house is not recorded, although it has been suggested that a small lake may have been created prior to the 2nd baronet's inheritance in 1724 (Dashwood 1995). The present gardens, or Pleasure Grounds, which Jackson-Stops calls '*one of the most perfect expressions in England of the Natural Landscape school of gardening*' (1984, 25) are almost entirely the creation of the 2nd baronet.

Work started on the gardens shortly after Sir Francis' return from Greece in 1735 and a reasonably firm date for their establishment is given by Lord Grimston, who wrote of the:

'small but pleasant park, part of which was laid out in 1739, into walks which are beautified with water and wood' (Jackson-Stops 1974: 1618).



A map of the park by Jolivet (Fig 4), dated 1752, provides the first detailed depiction of the Pleasure Grounds and associated ornamental features including lodges and carefully designed wooded compartments. The garden structures not only provided visual punctuation but were also used as the venues for *fêtes champêtres* and spectacles, the most elaborate of which involved engagements between a small fleet of boats on the lake. Sir Francis' fleet consisted of four sailing vessels, the largest of which, a 60-ton barque named the *Snow*, is shown in two of Hannan's paintings (Plate 6). The *Snow* was fitted with cannon captured from a French privateer and used in mock engagements with a battery of guns arranged in a fort on the southern island (Aston 1991).



Plate 6:
Hannan's view of the house and lake with sailing vessels.
©Dashwood Estate

The Neo-Classical influence - later buildings and modifications to the Pleasure Grounds (1759-1781)

A second plan of the park, part of a wider map of the Wycombe Estate drawn by John Richardson in 1767 (Fig 5), shows the Pleasure Grounds largely unchanged but alterations to the main buildings and other structures anticipated a new architectural phase in the development of the Grounds.

An early example of this neo-classical phase is provided by the Temple of the Winds (Plate 7), located within the line of a ha-ha at the south-eastern corner of the gardens, so as to be highly visible from the eastern approach to the house. Originating as an icehouse,



the structure was comprehensively remodelled between 1755-59 by Donowell to resemble Revett's illustration of the Tower of the Winds at Athens. It is one of the earliest attempts in England to reproduce a monument of antiquity.



Plate 7:
*The Temple of
Winds viewed
from the
south-east.*

Some time around 1764, Donowell appears to have fallen from favour and to have been dismissed from the baronet's service. He was replaced by the architect mainly responsible for all new garden structures, Revett himself, recently returned from an expedition to Asia Minor which led to his influential publication *The Antiquities of Athens* (1762). In 1770 Revett's construction of the West Portico, based on his own illustrations of the Temple of Bacchus at Tios near Smyrna, signalled a major reorientation of the house. The south front, until this time the main entrance, was approached from the east. However, as the 1767 plan anticipates, the West Portico provided the new main entrance, requiring the relocation of the kitchens and stables and the development of a more impressive western drive.

Revett was also responsible for a number of other classically-inspired garden structures, including the Round Temple (an elaboration of an existing dovecote to the rear of the house); the Temple of Diana (situated to south of the West Portico); and the Music Temple (Plate 8) built on an island in the Lake between 1778-81, the latter serving as the new focal point of the gardens when viewed from the house.



Plate 8:
*Daniell's view of
the lake and the
Music Temple.*
©Dashwood Estate



Plate 9:
*The miniature
gothic church of St
Crispin's. The tall
tower provided an
eyecatcher from the
direction of the
gardens some
distance to the
south-west.*

The garden was also modified in this period, possibly by Thomas Cook, a pupil of Capability Brown. According to Langley (1797), Cook 'was employed for 10 or 12 years by Lord le Despenser, who left him a handsome annuity'. He remodelled the course of the Wye and many of the fields and closes further to the east

were subsumed within the enlarged park. Cook erected new park buildings – principally the Sawmill, Flora's Temple (later modified by Marshall Sisson) and the folly church known as St. Crispin's (Plate 9) – working largely to designs by Revett.



Beyond the Sawmill the river was dammed again to form a second smaller lake, with the issue passing eastwards under the Marlow Road and Revett's 'Pepperbox Bridge'. Cook's work appears to have involved the further 'naturalisation' of the landscape, as is apparent in the series of pictures by Daniell completed shortly before Sir Francis' death in 1781. Trees have become more established since the time of Hannan's illustrations, undergrowth and shrubs are abundant and less restrained, and formality has been replaced by a romantic view of nature, totally in keeping with the arcadian tone of the more recent neo-classical architecture.

Further alterations to the Park and Gardens.

The 2nd baronet died in 1781 and was succeeded at West Wycombe by Sir John Dashwood King, his half brother by his father's third wife (Jackson-Stops 1984). Dashwood-King's son (also named John) inherited the estate in 1796, and he engaged Humphry Repton to update the landscape. Repton's influence was, however, fairly minimal. His main impact was in the removal of the giant statues (William Penn; the Haymaker and his wife) from the roof of the Sawmill, and the spire from St. Crispin's, in order to correct these '*instances of false scale*'. Some '*useless and unmeaning buildings*' were also demolished, including perhaps the Temple of Venus, and the Orangery from the earlier layout. Otherwise, despite large claims made in Repton's 'Observations' (1803), work was largely confined to thinning trees (Jackson-Stops 1974a).

After Repton little further was done to modify the park, although the house was altered in a minimal fashion to accord with Victorian tastes and various ancillary buildings have been added or adapted according to the demands of estate management. In the 1920s the park's combination of surviving Rococo features and later naturalism was recognised as a unique mixture, and efforts since have largely been designed to retain this appearance. The house and the Pleasure Grounds were given to the National Trust by Sir John Dashwood, 10th baronet, in 1943. The contents of the house, and the estate of some 1,600 hectares, remain the property of the Dashwood family.

The present appearance of the park owes much to the many renovations undertaken by the late Sir Francis Dashwood, 11th baronet. In particular these included replantings aimed at recreating and maintaining the 18th century wooded compartments. In the later 20th century, dying elms were extensively replaced by lime. Both the Temple of Venus and Venus's Parlour (Plate 10) were rebuilt in 1982 by Quinlan Terry, who also designed the cricket pavilion, as well as a wooden bridge to cross the river below the cascade.



Plate 10:
*The Temple of
Venus and its
associated mound
and niche seen
from the south.*

A statue of a Roman horseman was erected as an ‘eye-catcher’ at the top of the ridge to the south of house and in 1987 a 17th-century statue of Britannia (previously housed in the Sphinxes temple) on an Ionic column was placed at the west end of the Broadwalk, in honour of the 60th birthday of Queen Elizabeth II.



5. EARLIER CARTOGRAPHIC SOURCES

A number of early cartographic sources depict the park and village at West Wycombe. Three principal maps offer a significant insight into the interpretation of the visible archaeology, not only within the Pleasure Grounds but further afield in the wider park landscape and its hinterland. The first of these dating to between 1689 and 1710 is anonymous but shows the manor of West Wycombe at a stage before the creation of the park. The other two important early maps are those of Jolivet (1752) and Richardson (1767) which document the massive changes wrought in the area by the creation of the landscape park and the continued reworking of the landscape. Other more recent maps have been consulted including 19th-century estate drawings as well as the Ordnance Survey 1st and 2nd editions of 1885 and 1921, respectively; a brief summary will also be offered of these.

Undated map of West Wycombe Manor (c1698-1710) (Fig 3)

The Buckinghamshire Record Office has dated this document to 1698, but there is no date shown on the original map (which is now held in West Wycombe House). There is little doubt, however, that it pre-dates the creation of the early 18th century park and so must originate between 1698 and 1710. This map depicts an essentially agrarian landscape composed of settlements, fields, tracks and woodland before the establishment of the landscape park, the impact of the Enclosure Act and the construction of the turnpike road in the 18th century.

On the map there are a number of important features, the most prominent being the site of the early house (Fig 3, A). This house is drawn overlarge and if it is the core of the present mansion, it is shown much too close to the village. There are a number of possible explanations for this. The Dashwood brothers acquired the property in 1698 and soon set about constructing a new mansion to replace the old manor house of the Dormer family. It seems to have been assumed (by earlier authors) that this map shows the new house built c1708-12. If so, then the map might post-date its construction. However, it is plausible that the map, intended primarily to record the extent of the newly acquired property, *anticipated* the construction of the new house on the site of the old mansion of the Dormer family, and was completed before the new building was even begun. In this scenario, the Georgian style of the house reflected the Dashwood's intention to construct in a style contrasting with the earlier Elizabethan house before a decision was taken to build the house on a new site further to the south. Dashwood (1987) concurred stating that the old mansion lay beneath the area of the Venus Temple and Wainwright



Figure 3:
The unattributed map of
1698-1710. The possible outline of
the landscape park is shown in grey



(pers. comm.) noted the same idea on various OS 1:2500 sheets (National Trust archive). Furthermore, an examination of the current Ordnance Survey map together with an assessment of the results from the earthwork survey, make it clear that this early map is a fairly accurate representation of the pre-park area.

The outline of the 18th century park is largely indistinguishable in the pattern of boundaries and roads depicted on the c1698 map but using a combination of archaeological survey and cartographic analysis, it does become possible to trace elements of its boundary (shown in grey on Fig 3). Perhaps the clearest correlation lies along the southern flank, on the ridge top overlooking the current house. Here, the park boundary follows the sinuous course of Toweridge Lane as it weaves through an area of woodland, known today as Sands Wood. Beyond this there is little association between the park boundary and that of tracks and fields shown on the map. It can be seen that to the west, Toweridge Lane, after making a substantial dog-leg, leads in the direction of Toweridge Common and from here extends north towards the village of West Wycombe. Its course is preserved in the line of the present day properties in the village and exits alongside The Swan Inn public house. To the north-east of Sands Wood, the Lane follows a much more sinuous course as it descends the slopes towards the river, snaking around earlier closes and field paddocks. On crossing the river it then extends further to the north and connects with the main West Wycombe - High Wycombe road. There is no documentary evidence to suggest the pre-existence of a formally enclosed park here before the early 18th century. But it is clear that the large loop of Toweridge Lane and the main road created an enclosed space that served as the core to the later landscape park.

The house is depicted within a large rectangular hedged compound and appears to be surrounded by a wooded garden. Two tree-lined avenues emanate from it; one to the south and a second, longer example, which was clearly the main approach to the house lies to the north-east. The main avenue leads off from the Wycombe road at an acute angle, avoiding and at a distance from, the village. This suggests that the village was already in existence when the main avenue was built.

The course of the River Wye is not particularly well defined on this map but it can be seen as a thin green line making its first appearance close to the north-eastern corner of the house paddock. From here it flows east, meandering to the south where it forms the boundary between a number of elongated fields. Thereafter, it arcs back to follow a more northerly course alongside the High Wycombe road.

The field pattern in the surrounding area clearly contains elements of an earlier, markedly varied, pattern. Many of the fields within the area that was eventually emparked are large and rectilinear; good examples of these can be seen immediately to the west of the house.



These fields, owned by the Dashwoods but leased to other tenants, cover large areas (*c*20 acres) and are irregularly shaped with sharp angle changes along their boundaries. This may indicate the enclosure of formerly open fields, with boundaries outlining former furlong strips. Field names in this area include ‘Stoney Field’ and ‘Iron Field’ suggesting, perhaps, an intractability of the soils here and additional field names, including ‘Chalk Pitt Close’ suggest uses other than arable. There is good survival of woodland, and it would appear that the ridge to the south of the house, as well as the slopes that ascend towards it, were particularly heavily covered. Again, the irregular nature of the field boundaries and the varied shapes of the fields themselves, especially clear in the area of Toweridge Common, might suggest that they had been created by piecemeal assarting from woodland probably some time in the later medieval period. Field name evidence, such as ‘Burching Close’ adds credence to this suggestion.

The field pattern along the course of the river is markedly different again. By way of contrast, fields are smaller, irregularly sized and much more elongated. This is seen clearly in the area close to the north-eastern corner of the park where a number of almost ‘strip-like’ closes lie on either side of the track which extends north from the ridge-top. The fields here run parallel to the river and may result from the irregular enclosure of river meadow.

The road and track network shown on the undated map displays a similar variation. The main thoroughfare to the west of the house, connecting the village of West Wycombe with Toweridge Common lies well to the east of the current road but it was clearly a route of some antiquity. The fields on either side of it are arranged on different alignments suggesting that the road existed before the open field system was enclosed. Many of the other tracks and roads depicted on the map are similarly integrated with the enclosure of the open fields and may have developed as tracks through the medieval open field systems. Others, notably those on the western fringe of the later emparked area, may plausibly have originated as woodland tracks which continued in use after assarting.

The settlement pattern consists of a mix of what appear to be planned village elements and more dispersed hamlets and isolated farms. The village of West Wycombe is depicted as a double-row settlement. The road from Toweridge Common interrupts the southern row close to its midpoint and some development appears to have spread along this route. Long tofts are shown to the rear of the south row but these have been truncated in the area around the Dormer/Dashwood house suggesting that its construction altered the line of existing properties.

The northern row survived as a more regular line of houses each with a standard sized toft. At least nine properties are shown here and the uniformity of layout as well as the



common size of house and property strongly suggests a planned origin. This row of properties is delimited at its eastern end by another route way that adjoins the Wycombe road. Similarly, settlement has developed along this and any northward development stops at the intersection with another lane extending along the backs of the properties on an east-west alignment. The road to the east of the village is unusually wide and there is a suspicion that it may have been an earlier green or market place with settlement encroaching on its western edge.

Three small properties are shown lying on the western side of the lane that extends south from the village towards Toweridge Common. These 'squatter' houses (Fig 3, B) have no attached plots of land and each sits within the line of the lane, though the western edge of the lane appears to swerve to accommodate them. Elsewhere, the other properties depicted indicate very dispersed settlement dominated by isolated farmsteads or smaller clusters of buildings. The majority of these lie alongside the Wycombe road or the other major routes through the countryside.

To the north of the village, the church is shown in isolation; it is un-named, although the hill here is referred to as 'Church Hill'. The church is depicted in much the same form as it currently survives as a single building with a tower at its western end. The hillfort is not shown but the boundaries which define the area immediately around the church appears much as it does today and encloses land that is shown as being virtually treeless and uncultivated. An absence of any other mapped features suggests that the trackways of presumably medieval date recorded during the survey which extended across this area were no longer in use; only a section to the north beyond the survey limits is recognised as a woodland track. To the north-west of the church, along the ridge top, smaller, irregularly shaped fields can be seen, often surrounded by woodland. As on Toweridge, to the south of the village, this field pattern may have stemmed from a process of assarting well established woodland.



Morise Louis Jolivet' s map of 1752 (Fig 4)

It is clear that in the decades immediately following the acquisition of West Wycombe by the Dashwoods, the estate underwent a profound transformation, primarily in the establishment of a new house and a programme of major landscape design. These changes are clearly depicted on the Jolivet map of 1752 and show an area vastly different from that recorded on the undated map which preceded it.

The 1752 map is often assumed to have been drafted following the completion of the straight 'Roman' avenue between High Wycombe and West Wycombe (the present A40), instigated by Sir Francis to provide rural employment during a period of agricultural depression, using chalk mined from the caves beneath West Wycombe Hill. However, although the map is marked with the 'New Road to High Wycomb', the route shown contains a distinct angle and runs close to the northern bow in the River Wye; this clearly depicts the earlier, more southerly, turnpike.

Gone is the largely agricultural landscape of the earlier map, to be replaced by a more formal, ornamental layout. The Jolivet map covers a smaller area than that of c1698, focussing in detail on the new house, its gardens, woodland walks and associated statuary and related buildings. The full extent of the park, south to Toweridge Lane is depicted but the map key overlies the village of West Wycombe.

The house lies well to the south of its earlier mapped position and is approached from the north-west along a newly-constructed drive leading directly from the crossroads at the western end of the village. A second, more circuitous route, approaches from Kitty's Lodge (Fig 4, A). This extends as a straight tree-lined avenue to the south alongside the lake; itself a recent development at the time of Jolivet's plan. The avenue seems to form the edge of this lake here but damage to the map makes this unclear. What is apparent is that after a short distance, the approach sweeps eastwards in a semi-circular loop, crossing the river by way of a footbridge (the abutments of which were uncovered in the 1980s) and then ascending the slope, again as a tree-lined avenue, towards a crossroads. From here, tree-lined drives lead to the cardinal points but the main approach turns 90° to the west and leads directly to West Wycombe House following the line of a now overgrown path through the belt of woodland to the east of the house, rather than alongside the ha-ha. Again it is tree-lined and flanked on the north by a belt of woodland and at the western end, close to the house, it arches in a semi-circle to the south of the main house entrance. A rectilinear lawn lies immediately to the south of the house, another larger example enclosed by a hedged boundary lies to the west, while to the east, what may be an enclosed floral garden is shown. On the slope to the north of the house a large trapezoidal lawn is defined on three sides by wooded compartments.



Figure 4:
Morise Louis Jolivet's
map of 1752.



In addition, a large triangular enclosure lies to the south west of the main house containing named kitchen gardens and kennels, and probably stables, kitchens and servant's quarters.

In close proximity to the house a number of other drives and walkways have been constructed and substantial parcels of woodland give added definition to these. Immediately to the north of the house, and extending on an east-west alignment, a wide drive is flanked to the north and south by woodland (Fig 4, B). This provided a clear line of sight to the east and west from the open area to the north of the house. The large woodland compartment on the north of this drive was traversed by other minor paths and held a menagerie. An additional linear clearing cut at an angle through this plantation provided a good vista north-east towards the lake (Fig 4, C). The lake is bounded on the east by the main approach to the house and its construction clearly resulted in a reorganisation of the existing drainage pattern. Water flow to the east from the lake was controlled via an elaborate and ornamental weir called the cascades. The lake was fed from the west by two new water channels on the north and south, and within it, three wooded islands are shown; the southernmost of these plays host to an ornamental structure known as the Fort.

A large wide drive approaches the lake from the west (Fig 4, D). Small wooded enclosures lie on its south side but to the north a much denser cluster of ornamental woodland is depicted. Within this narrow belt of woodland, delimited on the north by the northern canal, lies a complex series of paths and walkways and, at the eastern end, the ornamental mound and structure known as the 'Venus Temple'. Immediately to the south of the mound lies the '*Venus Parlour*' and to the north a semi-circular loop in the northern canal adds symmetry to the ornamental arrangement here. Other notable garden features include the 'Bouling Green' with a curved (amphitheatre-like) feature on the adjacent lake side close to the north-western edge of the lake and the '*Greenhouse*' on the park boundary to the north of the Venus Temple. The area between the lake and the northern park boundary plays host to at least two walks; one meandering through a narrow belt of trees on the edge of the lake, the other leading directly to '*Daphne's Temple*'.

The river flows from the lake to the east and is ponded in a large loop abutting a recently constructed road. Within this loop of the river an island sconce, 'The Citadel', has been built (Fig 4, E).

In the wider landscape the most notable aspect is the encroachment of woodland on the ridge to the south of the house. By the time of depiction this has engulfed much of the



ridge, but the line of the earlier road (now shown as a 'Y'-shaped track) can still be seen (Fig 4, F). Other rides and tracks, some tree-lined, have been built with, in particular, one prominent drive giving good views to the south. The remains of earlier field boundaries, tracks and quarries are also shown. Church Hill is labelled in the lower right hand corner of Jolivet's map but not shown in its entirety. Although by this time the main park had undergone extensive re-modelling, the Mausoleum was not constructed on Church Hill until 1764-5. This being the case it seems likely that any landscaping of the southern hill slope had not yet been undertaken when Jolivet was commissioned to cartographically record the estate, and perhaps for this reason Church Hill was not included on his map.



John Richardson's Estate Map 1767 (Fig 5)

Richardson's map post-dates Jolivet's by 12 years yet the estate seems to have undergone another remarkable transformation. This could mean that either the Dashwoods spent a vast sum of money re-arranging the estate, or that elements of one (or both) of the earlier plans are fictitious.

This plan covers a much wider area than Jolivet's, taking in the park and a larger portion of the rural landscape surrounding it. It is apparent that the house and its associated Pleasure Grounds now sit within a larger parkland setting. Two park boundaries are depicted on Richardson's map. The first of these, defining the larger park, is marked on the east by the straight track leading south from the millpond towards Toweridge Lane. The park boundary is delimited by the village of West Wycombe and the main road on the north and by Toweridge Lane on the south. To the west the boundary is marked by the track leading south to Toweridge Common. Within this larger park lies the Pleasure Ground and house, enclosed by the main approaches on the east, west and south.

The Pleasure Grounds are defined on the north by the road and edge of West Wycombe village and elsewhere by the earlier approach routes shown by Jolivet. It is marked at each corner by a monumental structure: a lodge at the north-west; Daphne's Temple at the north-east; the Temple of the Winds on the south-east and; the main house itself on the south-west. The majority of the elements depicted on Jolivet's map are reproduced. The principal approach to the house still led from Daphne's Temple via the crescentic loop south across the river before a sharp right-angled turn at the Temple of the Winds towards the house. The semi-circular approach route to the south of the house survives and a carriage turning area is apparent close to the entrance. In addition, many of the drives, rides and parterres in the immediate vicinity of the house are still present. The house itself remains unchanged from the earlier depiction but a more formal track surrounds it on the west and south. Additional plantations can be seen, primarily in the area of the southern canal and a number of walks and paths through these have been shown. The form of the lake remains unchanged but the northern canal has been narrowed and, possibly, straightened. The southern canal appears to have been widened and lengthened but much of the area between the two arms has seen little alteration. A number of garden features first noted on Jolivet's plan are shown here, too. The '*Bowling Green*' close to the north-west corner of the lake survives as does the greenhouse a short distance to the west. A detached garden leads along the northern boundary of the park from Kitty's Lodge to a point close to the millpond. This is a narrow belt of woodland and within it there is one circuitous pathway.



Figure 5:
Richardson's Estate Map
of 1767 (© Dashwood Estate)



In the area to the west of the millpond (the larger park), the field pattern is largely unchanged from that shown on the map of c1698.

The Mausoleum with an attendant avenue of trees is depicted by Richardson for the first time, sited adjacent to the church on Church Hill. Detail on the church bears witness to alterations carried out by Sir Francis around 1751-3 which included the addition of a huge guided globe at the top of the tower. A further single, roofed building with a tower is also shown in approximately the position of the caves, themselves dug in the middle of the 18th century to provide raw material for the construction of the turnpike road to High Wycombe. Given the apparent general accuracy of the map this structure seems to be placed slightly further west than the present caves, located in the centre of an ‘Old Quarry’ which is shown on the 2nd edition Ordnance Survey map, and is clearly of different design to the existing cave entrance. The hillfort is not clearly depicted but is likely to be defined by the roughly oval shaped scarp enclosing the church (Fig 6).



Figure 6:
*The outline of
the hillfort as
depicted by
Richardson in
1767.*

The hilltop is still largely deforested although there is a noticeable increase in the number of trees shown on the southern slope compared to the map of c1698. In contrast, the wider field pattern on Church Hill is, again, largely unchanged from that shown on the late 17th-century plan.



Other Earlier Cartographic Sources

Druge's Map of 1849 (Fig 7)

This is a highly schematised plan of the parish of West Wycombe in 1849. Much of the detail of both the larger park and the Pleasure Grounds remains unchanged from Richardson's map. Notably, however, the road network has altered and the course of the main road to High Wycombe now lies outside the park boundary. Sawmill House is shown and is approached by one main avenue to the west. Apart from the lodges none of the other garden features noted earlier have been shown here. The church and mausoleum are shown on Church Hill and the outline of the hillfort is depicted for the first time possibly reflecting a growing interest in antiquarian matters. Druge has also included numerous trackways traversing the hilltop enclosure which were omitted from earlier maps; it is possible that they were taken back into use but perhaps more likely that change in depiction is due to different cartographic perspectives. The caves, for example, are absent. The wider field pattern in the area around the church is relatively unchanged from that depicted at earlier stages.



Figure 7:
Druge's map of 1849



Ordnance Survey 1st Edition (1885); 2nd Edition (1900); VCH Bucks plan (1908); revised 25inch (1922) (Figs 8; 9; 10 & 11)

The layout of the current park is largely that recorded on the earliest Ordnance Survey coverage. Perhaps the most important omission, however, is the D-shaped loop of the eastern drive. On these early maps the fenceline continues in a straight line from Daphne's Temple southwards alongside the lake to the Temple of the Winds. Other rectilinear fenced paddocks are shown in this area on the 2nd edition. Many of the plantations shown on earlier maps are again depicted but often without the accompanying paths and tracks; and although the Broadwalk is shown, the Temple of Venus and its associated features are absent.

On the south shore of the lake the two angular wooded compartments appear to have largely disappeared by the time of the 1885 survey and the area is shown as being only partly wooded.

In the wider park, the road from the house to Sawmill House is shown, as is the Citadel island, although not named as such. Many of the earlier field boundaries are drawn as tree-lines, but no trace of the earlier road to Toweridge Common is apparent.

The hillfort on Church Hill is shown as a hachured earthwork labelled '*camp*' and the mausoleum, caves and church have also been surveyed with the addition, for the first time, of the term 'Grave Yard'. A double tree-lined avenue leads to the mausoleum from the south-east and a number of tracks to the north and west of the hillfort are indicated on both early OS maps. A sub-circular feature shown as 'Old Quarry' lies immediately to the west of the caves. The hill still has only sparse tree coverage which is concentrated mainly on the southern slopes. With the exception of the appearance of the property known as '*Windyhaugh*' to the north of the church and a development of the village perimeter at the southwest foot of the hill that resembles closely its present form, no major boundary changes are discernible.

Another early depiction of the hillfort in Church Hill is shown in the VCH Bucks II (Fig 8) (Page 1908, 28). Here, the hillfort is drawn very much as it survives to the present day but it is notable that this plan fails to illustrate an entrance break across the inner rampart on the north-east. The large conglomerate boulder that currently resides in the ditch to the west of the entrance has been recorded as lying a considerable distance to the north of the hillfort.

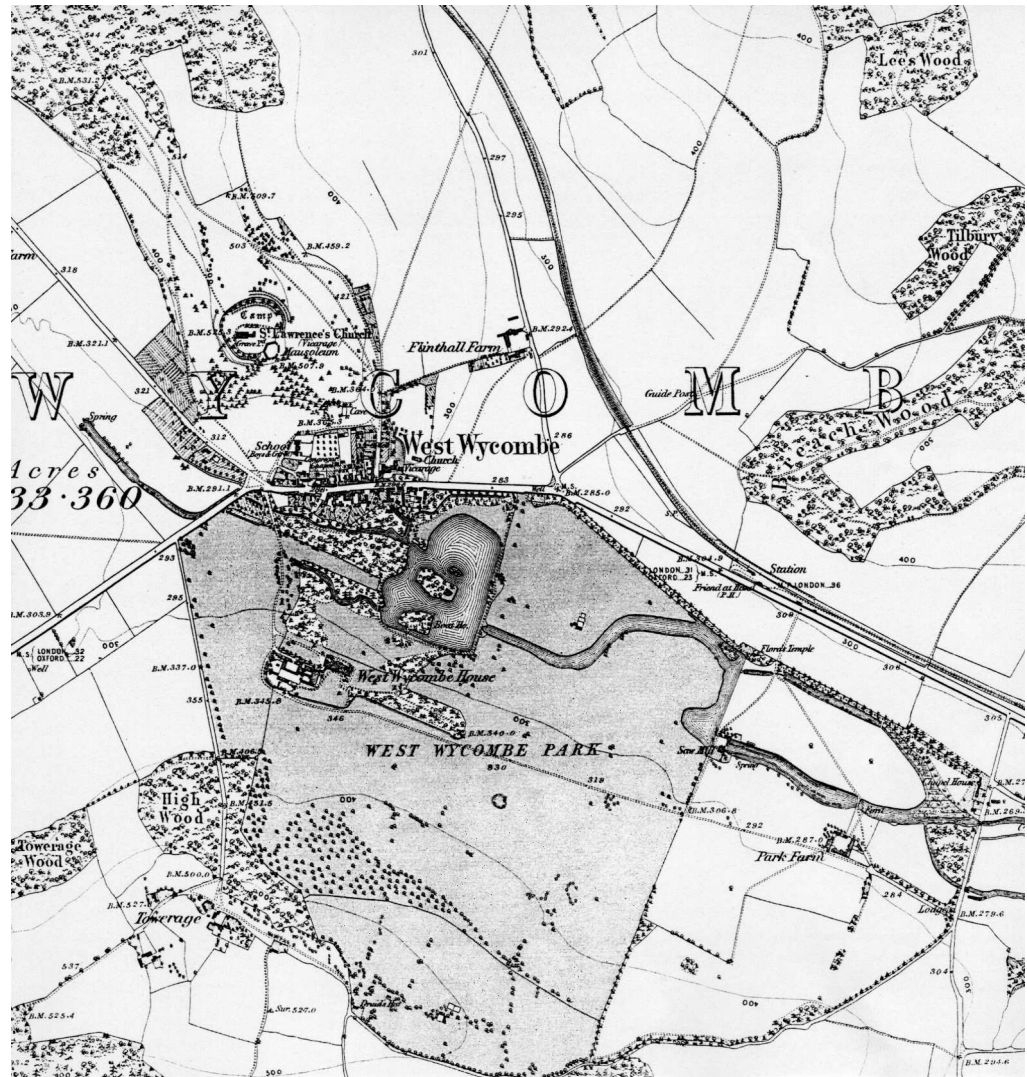


Figure 8:
*The Ordnance
Survey 1st edition
map of 1885.*

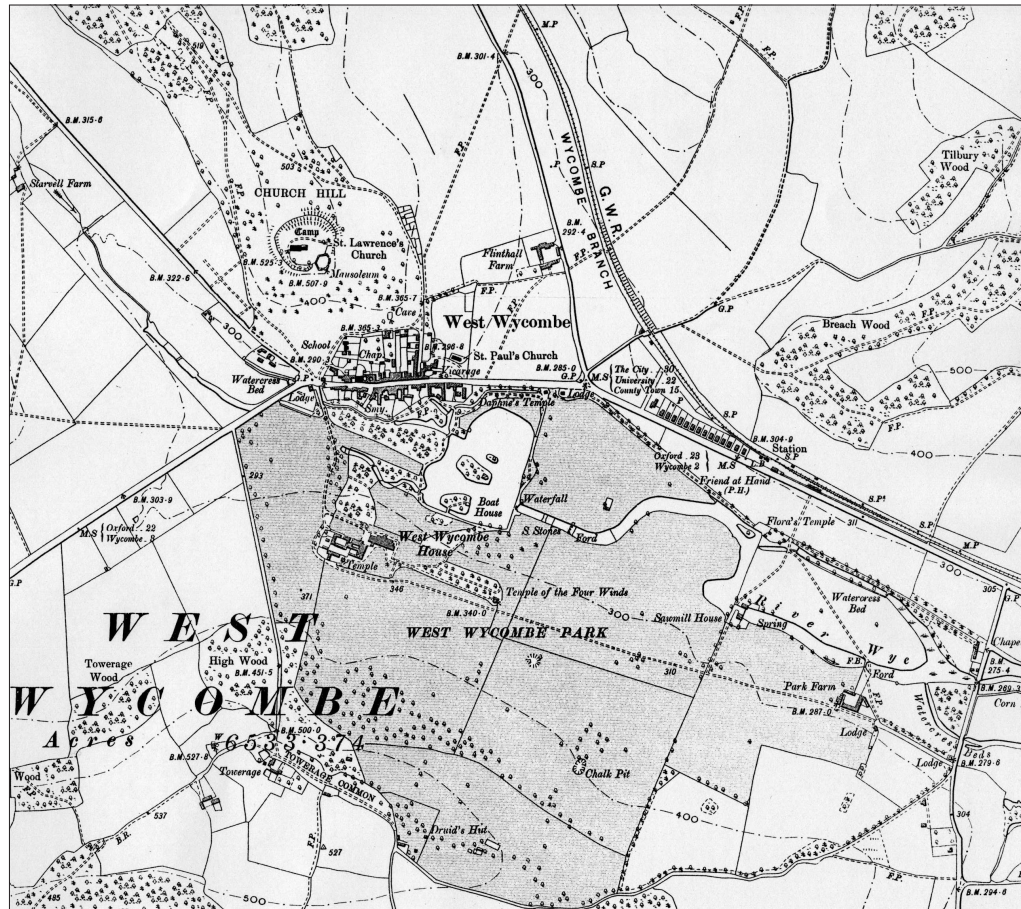


Figure 9:
The Ordnance
Survey 2nd edition
map of c1900.

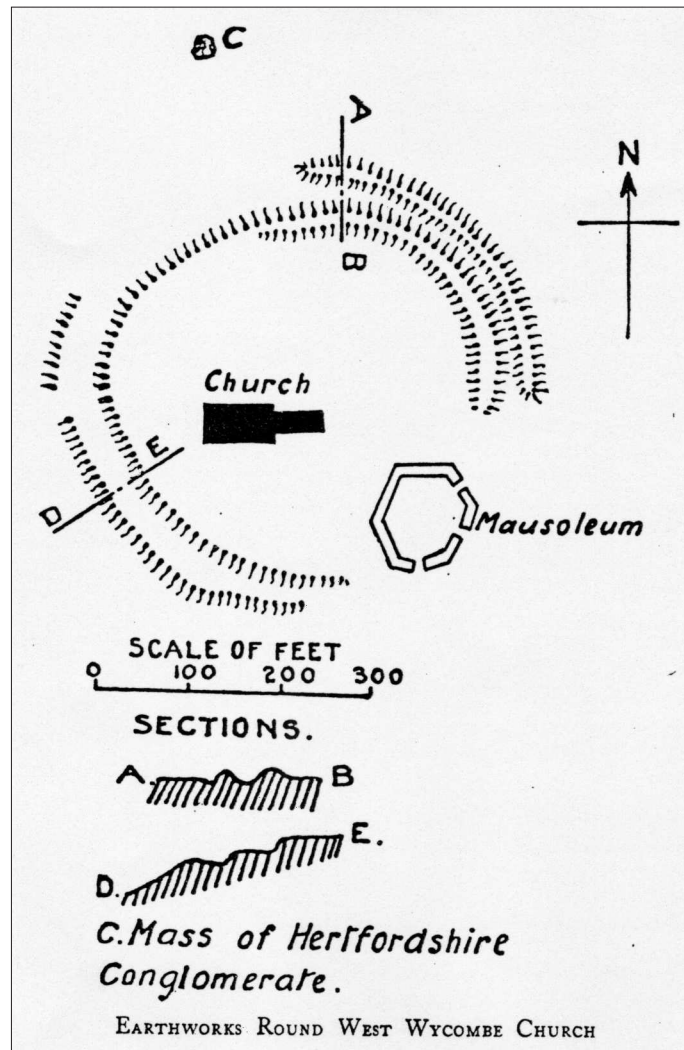


Figure 10:
The 1908 survey of
the hillfort.

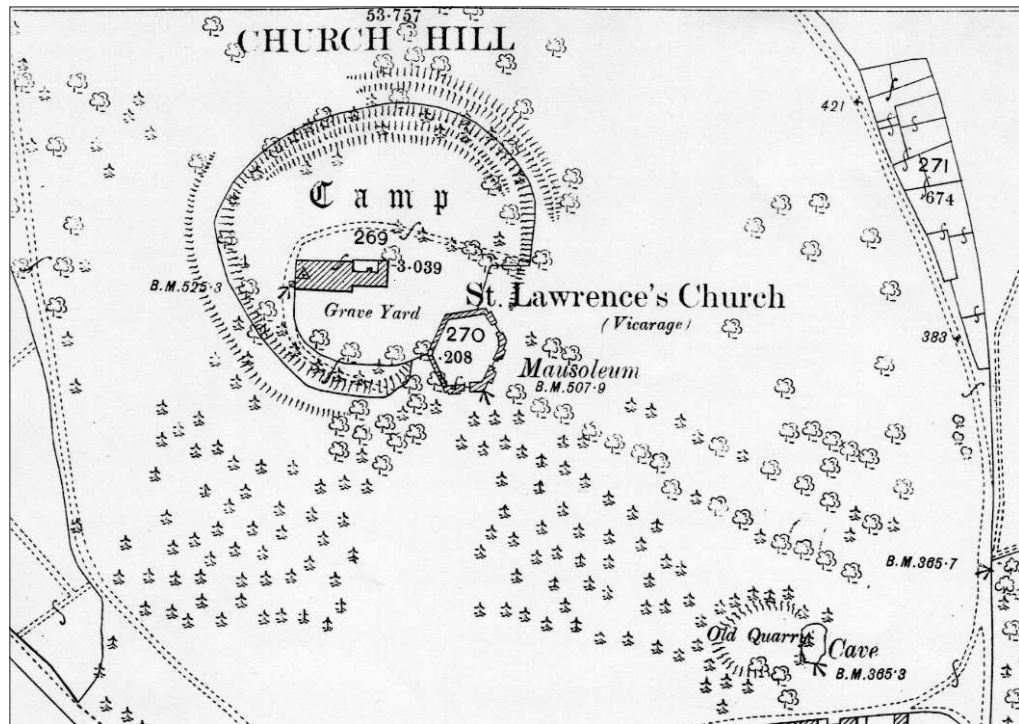


Figure 11:
The Ordnance
Survey 25inch plan
of the hillfort on
Church Hill.



WEST WYCOMBE PARK

PART II

THE EARTHWORK SURVEYS



6. THE EARTHWORK SURVEYS

The only previous landscape survey work at West Wycombe was that of Angus Wainwright of the National Trust (inf. ex. Gary Marshall). Wainwright's work included sketch plots of archaeological features recorded around the park and in the vicinity of the hillfort on Church Hill. Features noted included lynchets of a medieval field system and other pre-park earthworks, as well as related ornamental garden features. The results of this work form the basis for a comprehensive National Trust database relating to the properties at West Wycombe. Therefore, the assessments outlined here and carried out by English Heritage represent the first detailed analytical earthwork surveys to have been undertaken on the West Wycombe Estate.

This section of the report is sub-divided into three component parts listed by area. In each part the results of the surveys are outlined in detail and followed by a general discussion of the archaeological remains within the recorded areas. In the following accounts, all archaeological features are named and assigned key letters for ease of orientation.

Area 1: The Pleasure Grounds (Figs 12 - 15)

Detailed survey was carried out in the Pleasure Grounds immediately surrounding the house (Fig 12). A total of 22.5 hectares were recorded at a scale of 1:1000, enabling many of the more ephemeral archaeological features to be noted as well as the prominent earthwork components. In addition, the basic outline of surviving garden structures (buildings and lodges) was recorded as was the position of all mature trees and the extent of dense patches of vegetation.

As with so many areas of formal parkland, there is an assumption that most of the antecedent landscape features have been swept away during episodes of conversion to garden and subsequent alterations. Whilst this is largely true of the remains recorded at West Wycombe, which are dominated by the surviving traces of 18th-century gardens, earlier elements can be seen, albeit in a highly fragmentary condition. In general, however, earthwork survival is poor within the area of the Pleasure Grounds, only the large garden terraces and associated features survive to any substantial degree, and continued wear-and-tear in the park is having an impact upon early features.



The southern boundary of the Pleasure Grounds is marked by a well-preserved ha-ha consisting of a brick wall standing to a height of 1.2m fronted (on the south) by an asymmetrical ditch 4m wide which narrows to a basal width of 1m (Plate 11) (Fig 13, A).



Plate 11:
The line of the ha-ha to the south of West Wycombe House as it approaches the Temple of the Winds.



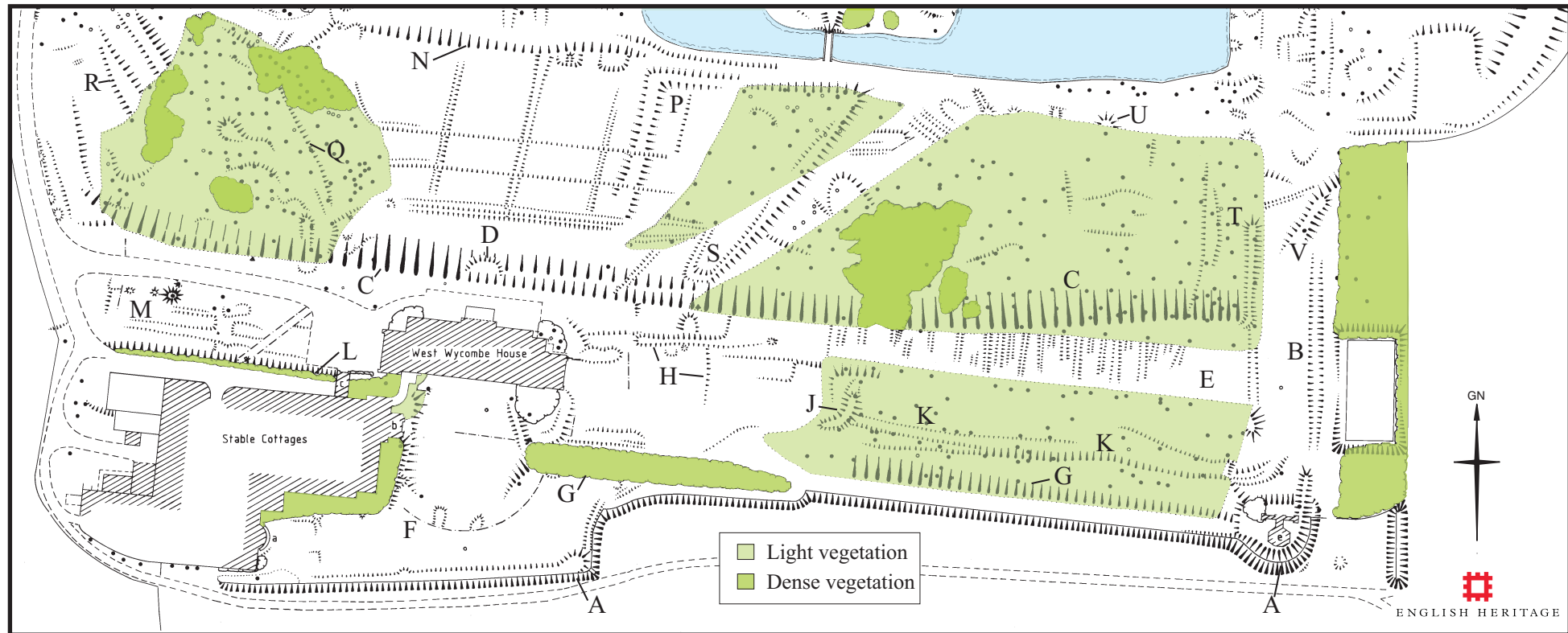
It extends for a length of 430m from the area of the Stable Cottages towards the Temple of the Winds which it encircles before leading to the north for a distance of 15m. Its course further to the north is unclear but the narrow ditch 5m wide and up to 0.2m deep which lies immediately to the west of the Tennis Court, undoubtedly marks the line (Fig 13, B). This ha-ha is depicted on Richardson's map of 1767 where it is shown to mark the southern and easternmost boundary of the Pleasure Grounds; its depicted line further to the north suggests that it has been disturbed by subsequent developments.



Plate 12:
The massive terraced scarp to the north of West Wycombe House.

West Wycombe House stands on a massive levelled platform defined along its northern edge by a large, east-west oriented, north-facing scarp (Fig 13, C and Plate 12). This stands to a height in excess of 3m where best preserved, on the stretch immediately to the north of the house. In places, the slope of the scarp displays a prominent break some 1-2m above the base. This is seen most clearly on the length closest to the house and further east. The break may result from the levelling up process as part of the terrace preparations but it may also mark the position of a wall shown at this point on Jolivet's plan. With this in mind, it is possible that a semi-circular platform cut into the scarp face immediately opposite the north entrance to the house, is part of the gate structure noted on this plan (Fig 13, D). The terrace scarp extends from a point close to the present-day western route to the house, 0.4km eastwards to an abrupt termination at the edge of the drive leading to the Temple of the Winds; this scarp is, again, visible in the fields to the east beyond the Pleasure Grounds. This substantial feature is not marked on any of the

Figure 13:
*Detail plan of area
 to the north and east
 of West Wycombe House*





early garden plans but it flanks the northern side of the avenue leading to the east of the house and depicted by both Jolivet and Richardson (Fig 13, E).

In addition, Richardson also shows it to have been accompanied by walling at its western end. Earthwork survey in this area indicates, however, that the scarp extends further to the west than shown on the 1767 map. Likewise, it is in approximately the correct position to have formed the southern limit of the large wooded compartment hosting the Menagerie lying a short distance to the north-east of the house and shown on Jolivet's plan. There are indications, however, that this feature has a significantly longer history than previously thought. Careful consideration of the pre-park plan of 1698-1710 suggests that it follows the line of a much earlier field boundary, separating the fields owned at that time by Dashwood but tenanted to others (see Fig 3). A number of other linear garden features are probably re-used pre-park field boundaries and these will be detailed below.

The lawn to the south of the house has been terraced into the natural slope and now survives as a levelled area delimited on the south by a semi-circular arc at the base of the natural slope (Fig 13, F). This correlates well with earlier cartographic sources. Jolivet shows a curving line of trees here continuing the line of the avenue from the east and Richardson depicts a D-shaped wooded compartment. The lawn is flanked by scarps on the east and west with the latter being the more substantial, standing to a height of 1m. However, it is unclear if these relate to the features noted on the two plans since there has been much later activity in this area. The lawn to the east of the house extends for a distance of 90m and is flanked on the south by a flower border which masks a substantial 2m high scarp (Plate 13) (Fig 13, G).

This north-facing scarp continues further to the east for a distance of 130m where it survives along the southern boundary of the wooded compartment. It has been truncated by landscaping presumably associated with the construction of the Temple of the Winds. This scarp is undoubtedly part of the layout depicted on Richardson's map and is likely to be the narrow strip shown extending on the southern side of the Pleasure Grounds' boundary, from the Temple of the Winds to the D-shaped compartment to the south of the house. This feature may also mark the southern line of the avenue leading to the house on Jolivet's map. Richardson's survey also shows a floral garden on the lawn to the east of the house but no trace of this survives, however, elements of the pathway that enclosed it on the north can still be seen. Its course is indicated by at least two short lengths of bank 4m in width and standing to a height of 0.2m, as well as other intermittent ledges which extend from the north-eastern corner of the house parallel to the main terrace scarp for some 80m (Fig 13, H).



Plate 13:
The east portico of West Wycombe House. The scarp (13, G) can be seen on the left of this photograph; the house terrace on the right.

The elongated woodland compartment that lies along the southern border of the Pleasure Grounds is shown, again, on Richardson's plan and also, although very much narrower, on Jolivet's. Its western end is marked by a pronounced curving bank 14m in length, 6m wide to a height of 0.4m which correlates with the position of a feature marked on Richardson's map, and possibly, also, the western boundary of the compartment shown on the Jolivet drawing (Fig 13, J). It is shown as a path on Druge's map of 1849. The northern boundary of the woodland appears to have been delimited by another pronounced scarp of which only a short length of 17m was surveyed due to vegetational constraints. This scarp, which runs parallel to its neighbour on the north at a distance of 16m, stands to a height of 0.4m and represents the woodland boundary feature noted on all 18th and 19th century plans of the park. Centrally within this woodland there is a narrow linear pathway running for a distance of 140m. It is defined at its western end by a shallow hollow way, 5m wide and 0.2m deep but further to the east its course is marked by a poorly defined double-lynchet track 5 – 10m wide (Fig 13, K). This path is shown on Druge's plan and overlies that depicted (more sinuously) on Richardson's. There is also a strong likelihood that this path follows the northern line of the eastern driveway to the house, shown on Jolivet.



Plate 14:
*View from the house
looking eastwards. The
line of a cleared drive
can be seen as well as
the house terrace scarp.*

The small area of lawn to the west of the house is defined on the south by a sharp slope 1.5m high which extends for some 80m (Fig 13, L). This may be the northern edge of the triangular shaped range of ancillary structures depicted here by Jolivet. Several large tree mounds can be seen on the platform, predominantly at its western end, and a number of other earthworks point to activity in this area. A slight transverse scarp marks the western end of the lawn. However, the most prominent feature is a rectilinear hollow 5m wide and 0.1m deep which is aligned directly on the west front of the house, flanked on either side by low spread banks and broken by one major causeway (Fig 13, M). This may be the site of an earlier parterre or other similar garden feature. More prosaically, it may be associated, simply, with the line of a fence depicted by Druge.

The trapezoidal shaped lawn to the north of the house is flanked to the east and west by wooded compartments carefully placed so as to channel lines of view and create suitable vistas from the terrace. Low banks and other linear features laid out in a grid pattern repeatedly traverse the lawn; these are drains of pre-19th century date. The lawn is bounded on the north by a scarp 1m high that extends from a point close to the corner of the lake for a distance of 100m to the west (Fig 13, N). This, the remnant of a path (shown originally on Richardson's map) along the southern edge of the lake, is a surviving component of the pre-park enclosed field system, as is the L-shaped bank 8m wide surviving to a height of 0.3m on the eastern side of the lawn (Fig 13, P). To the north, and sitting in the loop of the southern canal closest to the lake, a 0.2m high scarp (Fig 12, A)



defines the boundary of another wooded compartment detailed by Richardson. Two elongated mounds in this area mark the former locations of trees, as does the small contiguous circular embankment (Fig 12, B & C).

The area between the lawn and the current western drive to the house is heavily wooded with three compartments identifiable. The largest of these, closest to the main terrace scarp correlates approximately with that shown by Richardson, itself an alteration of a smaller plantation surveyed by Jolivet which has been extended a short distance to the east. A slight linear feature, no more than 0.2m in height, is the remnant of a path which formed the edge of the compartment in the mid-18th century (Fig 13, Q). Other, shallow and intermittent earthworks within the compartment also relate to earlier paths and tracks. Two low banks approaching from the north-west defined a superficial hollow way some 10m wide and up to 0.2m in depth which may be the remains of a pathway shown by Richardson (Fig 13, R). Alternatively, the hollow way may mark the position of an earlier formal approach, perhaps that depicted on the Richardson plan, though this would bring it on a course much too close to the house. On balance, however, it is considered that these earthworks are more likely to have been part of the earlier, much wider, formal drive to the house, shown by Jolivet.

The two remaining compartments in this area are recent developments and although occupying the site of plantations shown on Jolivet's and Richardson's surveys, they bear no resemblance to either of these. Minor earthworks within them probably relate to recent tree planting.

The area to the east of the lawn is enclosed by two woodland compartments which are separated by an angled clearing providing a good vista from the house to the north-east, closely mirroring that depicted by both Jolivet and Richardson (Plate 15).



Plate 15:
*View north-eastwards
from the house to the
cascade, through the
angled clearing.*



A pronounced embankment 3 - 6m wide and standing to a height of 0.3m lies at an angle across this clearing and the return of the bank on the south suggests that, originally, it formed an enclosure, perhaps a woodland compartment (Fig 13, S). Indeed, it may be that this earthwork represents the eastern limit of the compartment shown on the earlier plans. Other linear scarps close to or within the compartment are continuations of the recent drainage features noted to the west.

The larger woodland compartment has been heavily disturbed by management activities relating to recent tree planting and felling and much of the ground is now covered in a thick layer of leaf litter. As a consequence of this, no sign of the Menagerie shown here by Jolivet now survives above ground. The eastern limit of the compartment is defined by a low bank 4m wide that extends for 40m and several metres to the west, another slight bank on a similar alignment, is the remnant of a path recorded by Jolivet and Richardson (Fig 13, T). Numerous fragmentary earthworks survive around the periphery of the compartment and one of these, a low semi-circular bank (Fig 13, U) midway along the northern boundary, may relate to the position of a statue, now lost, but which is shown by Richardson to have stood at this point in a small niche in the woodland.



Plate 16:
*The Music Temple
built on the middle
island in the lake.*

The ride leading north from the Temple of the Winds is traversed by a number of minor earthworks, the most prominent of these is a low wide bank standing to a height of 0.4m which extends for 20m (Fig 13, V). The presence of a large oak on its crest indicates that it is of some antiquity, and it may be a remnant of the earlier field system. This ride follows the line of Jolivet's tree-lined avenue, and the earthwork may also have formed part of this.

The lake is roughly D-shaped in outline



and covers an area of 4.3 hectares. It is shown for the first time in 1752 but it is likely that an earlier, smaller version, had been established before this date. Within the lake there are three artificially created islands. The northernmost is C-shaped, covers an area of 774 sq m., and was very heavily overgrown when surveyed; nonetheless, a small mound 1m high and 10m in diameter was noted. The middle island has an elongated oval outline, 40m wide by 85m long. Two circular mounds were recorded, one at each end of the island. The larger, easterly, mound has a diameter of 34m and reaches a height of 1.2m. It has been surmounted by the Music Temple (Plate 16), built between 1778 and 1782 to act as an ‘eye-catcher’ from the driveway to the east of the gardens. It is notable that these mounds, together with that at the Temple of Venus, form a straight visual line; their layout has been carefully planned. The smaller, westerly mound, has a diameter of 16m and stands 1m high. A third, smaller circular mound lies on the northern shore of the

island between the two larger examples.

The southernmost island is the only one accessible by foot, across a bridge built in the late 18th or early 19th century (Plate 17). Access from this bridge leads, by way of a raised causeway, towards a heavily disturbed circular mound 30m in diameter and 1.3m high.

The north-eastern tip of this sub-rectangular island is demarcated by a low, spread bank (Fig 12, D) standing to a height of 0.3m, to the east of which lies the Boat House. Within this area, the associated earthwork bank provides good corroborative evidence for the presence of the Fort shown here by Jolivet.



Plate 17:
This 18th/19th-century footbridge connects the southern island with the shore.

The westerly approach to the lake includes a large ride, 33m wide and currently 230m in length, known as the ‘Broadwalk’. This is depicted on both the Jolivet and (slightly narrower) Richardson drawings; on the earlier plan it is shown extending further to the west. At the present western end a statue raised in honour of Elizabeth II’s 60th birthday



Plate 18:
*View eastwards
along the
Broadwalk. The
statue of Elizabeth II
stands on an Ionic
column in the
foreground.*

has been placed on an Ionic column (Fig 12, E and Plate 18). A central raised spine 15m wide, 0.2m in height extends from the intersection with the modern road on the west eastwards for a distance of 100m (Fig 12, F). This cambered surface, possibly an earlier walkway along the ride, abuts a pronounced but heavily disturbed platform at its eastern limit. The platform (Fig 14, A) is defined by a north-west facing sinuous scarp 0.4m high that extends for a distance of 45m. The walkway continues eastwards over this and here a number of very slight linear scarps continue its alignment close to the edge of the lake. The platform is a relatively prominent feature when viewed along the line of the drive and covering an area of, at least, 500 sq m., it must represent the remains of a once substantial structure. Survey suggests that this may be the site of the earlier, Dormer residence. There is much anecdotal evidence to place it in this general location and this is given further credence after a consideration of its depiction and location on the 1698-1710 map.

The southern canal extends westwards from the lake for a distance of 210m. It is 10m wide and crossed now by two bridges, the Flint Bridge, close to the junction with the lake and the Upper Bridge further to the west, both built in the late 18th/early 19th century. A third bridge, shown by Jolivet and Richardson crossing at the angle of the loop, no longer exists. A small plantation lies along the northern side of this canal and is flanked by the Broadwalk. This area has been heavily disturbed and much dumping has taken place, presumably related to dredging of the nearby canal. A plantation is shown here in both the Jolivet and Richardson surveys, with that on the latter being more extensive and less geometrically formal in its layout.



Figure 14:
*Details of the
area around the
Temple of Venus.*

The area to the north of the Broadwalk is similarly heavily wooded. Again, this accords well with earlier sources but in this instance the woodland plays host to a wide range of archaeological and architectural features. The most prominent of these is the northern canal which extends westwards from the lake for a distance of 320m. The bridge (Fig 14, B) at its midpoint marks an abrupt change in its course and profile. To the east, the canal is 11m wide and follows a gently curving course to the lake. Some 15m before its junction with the lake another arm of water leads to the north (Fig 14, C) and, in turn, feeds into a rectilinear pond depicted for the first time on the Ordnance Survey 1st edition



of 1885. This follows the line of a leat which once fed the pond to the south of the greenhouse shown on both the Jolivet and Richardson drawings.



Plate 19:
*The mound and
Temple of Venus
seen from the
north-east.*

On the western side of the bridge, the canal is narrower with an average width of 4m and follows a more sinuous course leading towards an area close to the main entrance to the



park. This stretch of the canal certainly post-dates the Richardson survey of 1767, indeed, it follows the line of a path marked on this plan; at an earlier period the river flowed out from the park to the north-west at the junction with the bridge. The area of woodland framed by the northern canal and the Broadwalk contains a dense concentration of earthworks and built structures. The majority of these are slight and many are partly covered by a deep layering of leaf mould and others may simply be the result of earthmoving associated with the creation and maintenance of the woodland here. The best-preserved feature in this section of the park is undoubtedly the mound of the Temple of Venus (Fig 14, D and Plate 19).

This is oval with a basal diameter of 28m rising 2.5m to a flat-topped summit upon which the circular temple has been built. A semi-circular niche has been cut into the southern arc of the mound which is now fronted by an oval clearing in the woodland. Within this clearing there are a number of slight earthworks the most prominent of which is a bank 5m wide and standing to a height of 0.2m, aligned on an east-west axis (Fig 14, E). This may be part of a square enclosure surrounding the Temple of Venus depicted on maps from the mid-18th century onwards. Other elements of this enclosure can be seen as slight scarps leading northwards from the northern arc of the mound. No trace of the mapped flanking triangular parterres can now be seen. To the south of the bank, numerous indeterminate earthworks indicate significant activity but the exact form of this cannot be ascertained. This is the area, however, that played host to the Venus Parlour drawn on both the Jolivet and Richardson maps as a circular opening in the woodland canopy and decorated with a number of statues, vases and figurines. These maps also show this woodland compartment to contain at least one central walk to the west of the Temple of Venus, with branches leading off at right angles along its line. Surviving fragments of this network of paths can be seen, including the sharply-angled bank 130m to the west of the Temple of Venus and another intermittent length of bank lying 40m to the south-west of the mound (Fig 14, F).

Closer to the western limit of this woodland compartment a number of ephemeral linear features aligned north-east to south-west can be seen (Fig 12, G). Those closest to the northern canal, and apparently succeeded by it, consist of an easterly bank 5m wide and 0.2m high separated from a 6m wide ditch. The ditch is itself flanked by another slight bank on the west. These features are truncated by a path but further to the south another slight ditch, on the same alignment, terminates at the junction with the Broadwalk. Extending the line of these earthworks to the north-east would bring it on to the path alongside the Swan Inn, already identified as the course of the pre-park road which leads south to Toweridge Common; this suggests that the earthworks within this area of woodland are the surviving remnants of this earlier routeway.



The area between the northern canal and the park boundary is very heavily wooded and vegetational constraints precluded comprehensive survey here. Nonetheless, close to the north-western limit of the woodland, a small bank 5m wide and 0.3m high was recorded along the edge of the stream and at least two minor banks emanate from this (Fig 12, H). Although disturbed and set within dense woodland, these earthworks correlate with the rear of a possible village property shown on Jolivet's survey and partly overlain by the map key.

In the area of woodland to the north of the Temple of Venus an elongated curved mound aligned roughly east-west lies some 10m above the canal edge (Fig 14, G). A short distance to the east another smaller, circular mound survives to a height of 0.4m. It is noteworthy that on both mid-18th century plans, a path following a semi-circular arc occupies this position and although there has been much recent ground disturbance in this area, the surveyed earthworks may relate to this former pathway. To the north of this, a third small circular mound lies close to the south-west corner of the rectilinear pond in an area which once held another pond associated with a greenhouse shown on Jolivet and Richardson's plans. The mound may result from demolition or alteration work on the pond here, however, it forms a straight line with the elongated mound to the south and that of the Temple of Venus, so it is plausibly part of a previously undocumented garden layout in this area.



Plate 20:
Daphne's Temple.

A dense wooded compartment flanks the boundary of the park to the north of the lake but the strip between this and the lake is prone to water-logging making the interpretation of earthworks here difficult. This belt of woodland is shown on the Jolivet map but is most clearly depicted on Richardson's where there are a number of still extant features. The arm of water fed from the northern canal flows directly into the woods here and it is obvious that the final 110m of its course (the approach to Daphne's Temple) has been straightened (Fig 12, J). Daphne's Temple (Plate 20) sits on a pronounced sub-circular platform 27m in diameter and 1.2m high and



forms the focus for the walkway leading to it from the west. A substantial scarp (Fig 12, K) 1m high flanks the northern line of the stream, marking the outer edge of a formal path 4m wide that extended along the boundary of the park towards the Temple. To the south of the stream short intermittent lengths of the trackway (Fig 12, L) recorded by Jolivet and Richardson are visible leading from the bridge above the bifurcation feeding the rectilinear pond. Where best preserved it consists of a slight bank 0.2m high and 2m wide with shallow ditching on its northern side. This trackway continued further to the south where it lay alongside the eastern side of the lake; its course is still identifiable as a terrace defined by an east-facing scarp 0.3m high, set 10m back from the edge of the lake. This route was re-used repeatedly in subsequent years and is shown on all maps up to and

beyond the Ordnance Survey 2nd edition.

A cluster of earthworks at the north-western limit of the lake to the north of the Walton Bridge mark the site of the 'Bouling Green' and associated structures first recorded by Jolivet. No trace of the green survives but the large looping bank (Fig 12, M) 30m in length standing to a height of 1.5m and located close to the junction of the northern canal and the lake is likely to be the site of the raised flower bed or plantation shown on Jolivet's plan.

To the east of the lake the majority of earthworks



Figure 15:
Detail of area to the east of the lake cascade.



correlate with ornamental garden features, paths and tracks as well as raised beds shown on the 18th century maps. There are also the remains of more recent field boundaries and tracks. Little survives now of the formal drive leading from Kitty's Lodge south towards the Temple of the Winds. Its course, perhaps that depicted by Jolivet, is marked at its northern end by a single avenue of trees (Fig 15, A), planted parallel to and 8m from the water's edge. Occasional paired trees survive giving an overall avenue width of 8m and length, from Lodge to Temple, of 490m. It is clear from both the Jolivet and Richardson maps that the drive leading south here took an elaborate D-shaped diversion, crossing the river and then ascending the slope to the south. The Jolivet plan suggests that the drive was laid out to a rigid geometric pattern but the earthwork survey illustrates a much gentler curve to the drive, providing a better fit with Richardson's depiction. A low spread bank 14m wide and 0.3m high lies parallel with the curving fenceline to the north of the river and extends for a length of 60m ending in a rounded terminal (Fig 15, B). A possible continuation of the drive can be seen to the north-west where two parallel but heavily disturbed scarps (Fig 15, C) 0.2m high lie on the same alignment as the main bank to the south-east. To the south of the river the bank again follows the inner line of the fence but here it is much better-preserved standing to a height of 0.4m (Fig 15, D). It is wider, too, at 20m and has a sharp square terminal above the river. These banks may have flanked the inner side of the drive around the semi-circle, alternatively, they may have been raised beds set alongside the drive in this area and recorded by Richardson. Pronounced earthworks survive adjacent to the cascade; the most prominent, the looping bank (Fig 15, E) which lies on the southern side of the weir, extends to the south-east from the cascade for a distance of 25m and stands to a height of 1m. Hannan illustrates (c1752-3) a rusticated arch flanked by massive piles of rocks at this point (Plate 21) and it is possible that the earthworks are the remnants of this or can be attributed to their alteration and ultimate removal.



Plate 21:
Hannan's illustration of the cascade, lake and church. Formal wooded compartments and lines of trees appear to have been planted on the slopes to the south of the church
© Dashwood Estate



Slighter earthworks within the D-shaped diversion have been heavily disturbed by later activities. To the north of the river, the fenceline running parallel to the eastern lake edge is shown on Ordnance Survey 1st and 2nd editions to have continued south, directly towards the river, its route is picked out now by superficial scarps (Fig 15, F). Other poorly-defined sub-circular and rectilinear features in this area may be associated with the raised beds shown here on Richardson's plan. To the south of the river a much more regular arrangement of earthworks is present, most notably a rectangular platform, 55m x 30m in area (Fig 15, G). It is on the same alignment as the tennis court and plantation on its southern side and has been terraced into the natural slope on the south and east where an L-shaped scarp stands to a height of 0.2m. The northern edge survives as a built-up ledge 0.5m high, close to the stream. A low wide bank delimits the western extent and there are minor undulations on the level terrace itself. Other more geometric scarps about this terrace to the east and taken together the platform and surrounding features strongly resemble those of a formal garden built, possibly, to embellish what must already have been an elaborate and ornate area defined by the semi-circular drive crossing the river. Caution should be exercised though since a regular arrangement of paddocks and field boundaries is depicted here on the Ordnance Survey 2nd edition. Furthermore, aerial photographs taken on 27th May 1947 (Plate 22) show that the lake at this time extended as



Plate 22:
*Aerial Photograph
showing the flooded
D-shaped area to the
east of the cascade.*



far as the curving eastern limit of the D-shaped fenceline and a number of the minor earthworks are possibly associated with this ponding.



Area 2 The Wider Parkland (Figs 16 & 17)

The Pleasure Grounds at West Wycombe now lie within the north-western corner of a much larger holding covering an area in excess of 112 hectares. This area, termed the wider parkland, extends east-west, from the Pepperpot Bridge on Marlow Road to the present day route leading to Toweridge Common more than 1.5km away. On the north the park boundary lies against the current road leading from Oxford to High Wycombe and extends to the crest of the ridge close to the Druid's Hut, some 800m to the south.

Within this wider setting there are a number of important ornamental features and significant architectural structures have been carefully placed at selected locations around the area. In addition, there are at least three substantial residences; Park Farm (Fig 16, A) (built by Revett in 1770), the nearby contemporary Round Lodge (Fig 16, B), and most notably, Sawmill House (Fig 16, C) which has an associated millpond and other earthwork components (Plate 23).



Plate 23:
*Sawmill House and
millpond viewed
from the west.*

Elsewhere are the remains of a number of episodes of activity, many of which pre-date the emparking at West Wycombe. Good evidence also survives of the endeavours of a number of landscape architects and gardeners from the mid-18th century to the present day.



The chronological development of the larger park at West Wycombe is unclear but the formal boundary was certainly in existence by the late 18th century (*c*1770). The majority of the buildings at the furthest limits of the park, including Park Farm and the chapel known as St Crispin's (Fig 16, D), date from this time, but there is good evidence to suggest that before this date a narrow addition had been made to the Pleasure Grounds on the north-east.

The elongated strip of land (Fig 16, E) that extends to the south-east from Kitty's Lodge, a building contemporary with the adjacent Daphne's Temple, plays host to a detached garden which terminated at its southern end with an island scone known as the 'Citadel' (Fig 16, F). The Citadel, shown on Jolivet's plan of 1752 but possibly pre-dating this by at least two decades, survives as an oval platform flanked by the river on the north and south. It measures 90m in length and is 10m at its widest point. The island is enclosed by a very low earth wall and the current form correlates well with its depiction on Richardson's map but contrasts markedly with the earlier description by Jolivet. On this the main island, shown mid-stream, is embellished with minor bastions on the north, south and west with a more elaborate diamond-shaped bastion at the east end; it is uncertain, however, if the Fort was ever built to the specifications outlined on Jolivet's drawing.

The approach from Kitty's Lodge to the Citadel is by way of a track which leads through a broad belt of woodland running along the park boundary at this point. Within this wood there is a canalised stream, the western limits of which are now lost. This is shown on the Ordnance Survey 1st and 2nd editions as having originated further to the west, in close proximity to the canal leading to Daphne's Temple and which is presumed to have fed the waterway beyond Kitty's Lodge. A well-preserved terraced pathway, 3-5m wide and 0.3m high, may be a former formal walk through the woods running parallel to the current walled park boundary. It lies immediately to the north of the canal and leads south-eastwards towards Flora's Temple built by Revett in the 1770s, therefore post-dating the creation of this detached garden. A much more circuitous path is shown here on Richardson's plan but this has almost certainly been destroyed by the creation of the canal. Other earthworks in this location, most notably the 0.3m high scarp (Fig 16, G) which lies close to the junction between the Polo Ground and the belt of woodland, are likely to be relict drainage/river channels pre-dating the creation of the landscape park.

The park boundary shown on Richardson's map of 1767 extends south from the eastern edge of the millpond (Sawmill House had not yet been built at this stage) to an intersection with Toweridge Lane 850m distant. A particularly well preserved section of this boundary can be seen to the south of Sawmill House (Plate 24). Here, a ditch 6m wide and 1.3m deep survives for a length of 140m and is truncated on the south by the track which leads from the main house to Park Farm. Its present form owes much to the



work of the late Sir Francis Dashwood who removed the old haha here and demolished the remains of the brick and flint retaining wall to the east (R. Wheeler pers. Comm.). The line of the park boundary continued to the south, its course now followed by the current fenceline that ascends the hill.



Plate 24:
*Possible line of the
park boundary shown
on Richardson's map
of 1767.*

The current western boundary to the park, delimited by the road that leads to Toweridge Common, had certainly been established by the time of Richardson's map. On this plan, and indeed, on Jolivet's earlier version, the park pale is flanked internally by a line of trees terminating on the north at the road junction with a larger plantation. Survey in this area revealed a large conical mound heavily cloaked by dense vegetation (Fig 16, P). The mound has a basal diameter of 22m rising to a height in excess of 3m. The summit is not particularly level and ill-defined minor scarps attest to some form of activity. The mound is now clear of trees but at an earlier stage the avenue led directly across it: there are two very large tree stumps on its slopes. This suggests that the feature is of some antiquity and contradicts local anecdotal suggestions that the mound is of very recent origin. It is currently used as a dump for assorted rubbish and there are substantial deposits of modern brick, tile and bonfire debris on its slopes. In addition to this, however, there are large quantities of flint and fragments of earlier hand-made brick. The date and function of the mound remain unknown but there are two alternatives. The first interpretation is that it is a prehistoric burial mound possibly of Late Neolithic or Early Bronze Age date. If so, it is



a large example and a remarkable survival but it lacks associated features including, importantly, a surrounding ditch. Locally, there are a number of similar round barrows but the majority of these lie on higher slopes, are smaller in size and most have been levelled by ploughing. Barrows placed on or close to valley floors are rare but not unknown and those found in these sorts of locales very often make use of what little topography there is; being placed on natural raised plinths, presumably to avoid the effects of flooding or to use water to isolate the burial. It is potentially interesting to note that this mound does, indeed, sit upon a low plinth set above the valley floor.

The second interpretation of the mound is that it was used as either an ‘eyecatcher’ or a prospect mound during one of the 18th or 19th-century garden layouts. However, there are a number of problems with this suggestion. The most significant being that the mound makes its first mapped appearance only in recent times: it is omitted from all of the earliest cartographic sources, including 1st and 2nd series Ordnance Survey editions, although this may be because of its location at the time within a dense plantation.

Views from the mound are not particularly spectacular. There is a good sight-line to the west portico of the house (Plate 25) and good views, vegetation permitting, would have been obtained of the possible garden terraces on the slopes below the hillfort, 300m to the north-east. Disconcertingly, the mound sits eccentrically within the avenue flanking the western park boundary shown on the 18th-century maps, suggesting that it may already have existed when this avenue was constructed. However, the mound can be clearly seen from a wide area in the north-western sector of the park and it is especially prominent



Plate 25:
*View from the Cricket
pitch mound towards
the west entrance of
the house.*



from the north-east, on the Cricket Pitch. Therefore, it is plausible that it may have formed an 'eyecatcher' at the western end of the Broadwalk shown on Jolivet's plan. The southern line of the Broadwalk is reflected in the current northern boundary to the Cricket Pitch and the slight ditched linear feature which lies parallel to it, 40m to the north, marks its northern edge. The shallow earthworks on the crest of the mound may mark the former position of a structure in much the same fashion as that at the Temple of Venus as they are of similar scale.

The earthworks in the north-eastern corner of the park, stretching between Flora's Temple and St Crispin's chapel display the same characteristics as those in the detached garden to the west and it is suggested here that a similar purpose lay behind their construction. The principal feature noted is a terraced path 2 - 5m wide defined by a south-facing scarp 0.3m high which extends along the length of the park perimeter. It is first observed 10m to the east of the track serving Sawmill House and continues for a distance of 420m directly towards St Crispin's and its attached garden, the focal point of the walkway. This detached garden is undated (it is absent on both the Jolivet and Richardson maps) but is likely to belong to a phase in the late 18th century at a time when



Plate 26:
The ruined 'boathouse' or gothic folly in the garden to the south of St Crispins.

the gothic church provided an eye-catcher from the direction of the Pleasure Grounds. The detached garden is enclosed on the east by the present day park boundary wall and on the west by a fenceline immediately within which

lies a low bank 3m wide at the base and 1m high. This bank is the remains of a ruined wall which extended from the south-west corner of St Crispin's for a distance of 40m towards a building referred to by a number of authors as a boathouse. A now dry water channel, 3m wide and 1.4m deep does lie on the south of this structure but the building appears to have been left in a deliberately ruinous condition in the style, perhaps, of a gothic folly at the southern limit of the garden (Plate 26).



To the west of St Crispin's another scarp, extending parallel to the main terraced path above it, flanks the northern side of the river. It stands to a maximum height of 1.2m and follows the watercourse until this meanders and then turns to follow a more south-easterly course. However, the scarp (Fig 16, H) does not alter its alignment and continues for another 60m to the east closely mirroring the park boundary. A short length of hollowing, 4m wide and 0.3m deep, can be seen near its eastern terminal suggesting that it was either an earlier water channel or, possibly, a hollow way. The alignment of the pre-park road to West Wycombe is unknown at this point but by matching surviving earthworks and field boundaries with those depicted on the 1698-1710 map, it is possible that this possible hollow way is indeed a remnant of the earlier route. Furthermore, it would appear that for a considerable distance, at least as far west as Flora's Temple, the pre-turnpike road lies close to or on the line of the river.

The English Heritage earthwork survey of the wider parkland also produced good evidence for pre-park activity, predominantly in the form of field boundaries and tracks. The earliest phases of these may be of prehistoric or Romano-British origin and can be seen most clearly on the summit of the ridge to the east of the Druid's Hut where a fragmentary series of lynchets may be the remains of a 'Celtic' field system (Fig 17). These have been heavily over-ploughed and are consequently now very slight but two low banks 12m wide (Fig 17, A) which lie to the north of Druid's Hut indicate that the system was laid out here on a roughly north-south axis. The two banks are 80m apart and a third approximately parallel bank (Fig 17, B) lies 90m further to the east thus suggesting that the average field width is close to 85m. The two easternmost lynchets abut another field edge, on this occasion south-facing, aligned east-west and standing to a height of 0.2m (Fig 17, C). Other slight lynchets spring from this at right-angles indicating that this field system extended further to the south. No other traces of clearly identifiable 'Celtic' field system have been noted in the wider parkland but it is plausible that a number of the medieval and later field boundaries have re-used earlier lynchets.

The route of the pre-park road which leads from the Swan Inn, south to Toweridge, and is shown on the map of 1698-1710, can clearly be seen in the woodland to the south of the house. It survives as a deep and wide hollow way which bifurcates to the east and west and flanks Toweridge Common (Fig 16, J). The western arm, which has been interrupted by the establishment of a woodland ride aligned directly on the southern façade of the house, leads south-west for 200m but that on the east extends along the ridge top and ultimately connects with the main Wycombe road to the north of Park Farm. Traces of this route survive in the ploughed field to the east of Druid's Hut and have truncated elements of the pre-existing 'Celtic' field system. The road in this area consists of a shallow hollow way 12m wide and 0.2m deep defined on either side by low banks (Fig 17, D).

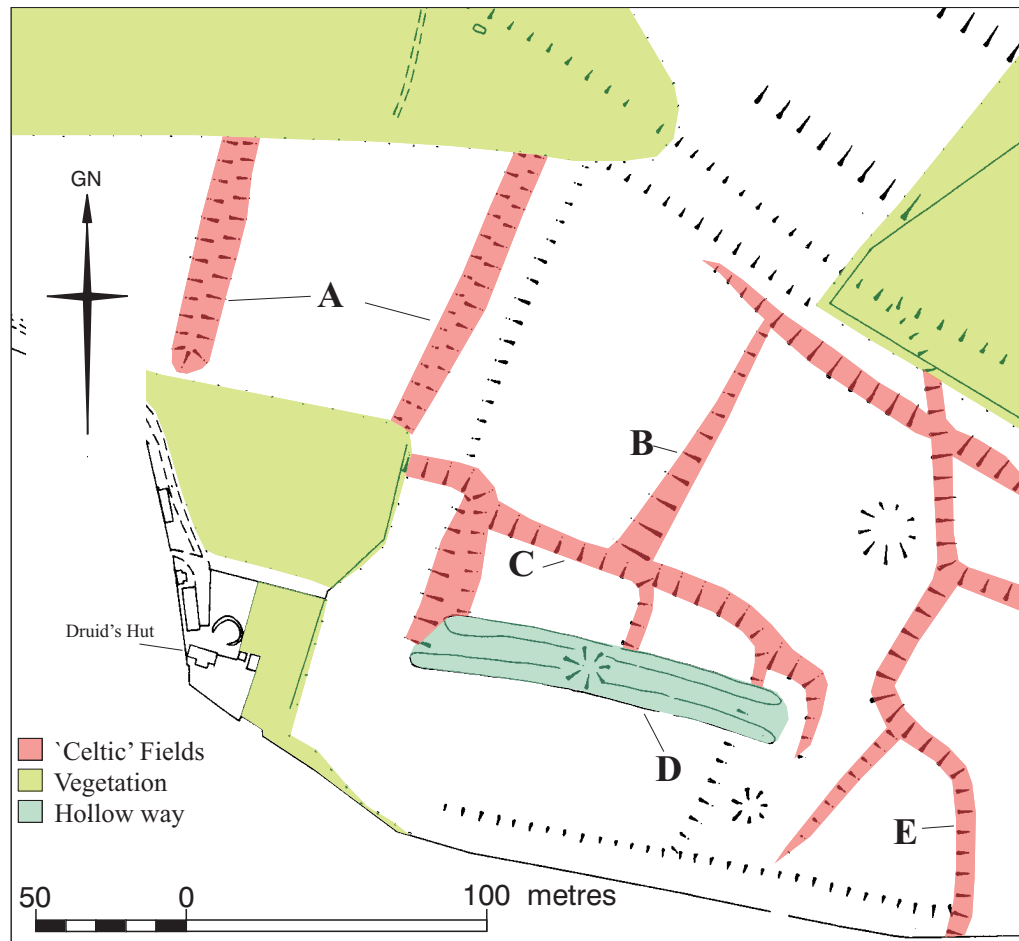


Figure 17:
*Detail of 'Celtic Fields
and hollow way to the
east of Druid's Hut.*

A 140m long section is interrupted at its midway point by a circular pit 18m in diameter and 1m deep. There is much building debris in this area, including brick, flint and slate and this position seems to accord with that of a small building shown at this point on Richardson's map and still in use at the time of the Ordnance Survey 2nd edition. The sinuous scarp (Fig 17, E) immediately to the east of the hollow way marks the course of this early road and other elements of it survive in the belt of woodland that extends from the south towards the Round Lodge and Park Farm. Here, however, the track appears to be raised rather than hollowed and a cambered surface 14m wide and 0.2m high is present (Fig 16, K).

Throughout the wider parkland elements of the field system depicted on the 1698-1710 map, as well as that of Richardson, can be seen (see Plate 27). Most are now slight scarps rarely surviving above 0.4m high. The best preserved of these embanked fields and paddocks lie in the fields to the west of the main drive leading to the house, in the area of the Cricket Pitch. Immediately to the east of the house the two large terraced scarps, that formed the upper and lower limits of the drive approaching from the east, extend to the east for a further 320m (Fig 16, L). The most northerly of the two is clearly part of the



late-17th century field pattern and there are traces of broad ridge-and-furrow cultivation on the level surface to the south. Fragments of ridge-and-furrow cultivation can be seen in the fields to the south of the Cricket Pitch. Other minor scarps in this area possibly also relate to former cultivation but at least one feature in the woodland to the west of the early road bifurcation is a coppice bank (Fig 16, M) clearly shown on the 1698-1710 survey. Many of the existing belts of woodland in the southern section of the park are bounded by shallow scarps or slight banks and these may be the remains of woodland boundaries or, alternatively, lynchets marking the edges of ploughland adjacent to the woods.



Plate 27:
*Aerial Photograph of
the park taken in 1946.
The remains of earlier
field boundaries and
cultivation can be seen
as minor striations.*

There are a number of large pits scattered throughout the area of the wider park. The majority of these are found on the north-facing slopes to the south of the house and may be of some antiquity. Field-name evidence from the 1698-1710 map, including 'Stoney Field', 'Iron Field' and 'Chalk Pitt Close', suggests that quarrying to provide building material and lime for the arable fields was well established at this time. The pits are all of a similar size, generally 18 - 40m wide at the surface narrowing to a basal width of 5m at a depth, in places, of 2m. All are now isolated hollows with no evidence for associated access tracks.

Few traces of other rural industry survive in the park. However, the present survey noted a number of potential saw-pits, predominantly in the areas of woodland in the south-western corner of the park. These consist generally of rectilinear hollows 2 - 5m in length, 2m wide and straight-sided to depths of 0.4m. Two larger examples were noted



on the northern border of the plantation to the west of the modern avenue in the south-west corner (Fig 16, N). These are much more substantial features, up to 8m in length and 4m wide, but less deeply defined at a depth of 0.3m. No charcoal burning platforms were noted in association with the saw-pits.



Area 3 Church Hill (Figs 18 - 21)

The final phase of fieldwork at West Wycombe focussed on the multi-period remains evident on the chalk ridge lying to the north of the park. Approximately 26 hectares extending over a distance of 1.5 kilometres north from the village were investigated at a scale of 1:1000 and the remains of a number of periods of activity were recorded. The most prominent and best known of these, the hillfort, can now be seen to sit within a near contemporary landscape that included fragments of associated ‘Celtic’ fields. Later land use in the form of hollow ways, field boundaries, cultivation traces, woodland boundaries and quarrying, is also well attested. In addition, a number of structures including the Church of St Lawrence and the Mausoleum were noted as well as potential ornamental garden structures of 18th-century date.

The Hillfort (Fig 19, 20 and Plate 28)



The hillfort on Church Hill at West Wycombe covers an area of just over 1 hectare (2.41 acres), has a maximum internal diameter of 120m and is enclosed in places by two massive ramparts with a deep medial ditch. It sits in an imposing position at the southern end of a chalk ridge, and at a height of nearly 80m above the valley floor at the apex of the Wye Valley and the Vale of Aylesbury. From here the hillfort would not only have commanded impressive views over much of the surrounding countryside and across



towards the hillfort of Desborough Castle, but would also have been highly visible to anyone passing along either of the valleys beneath.

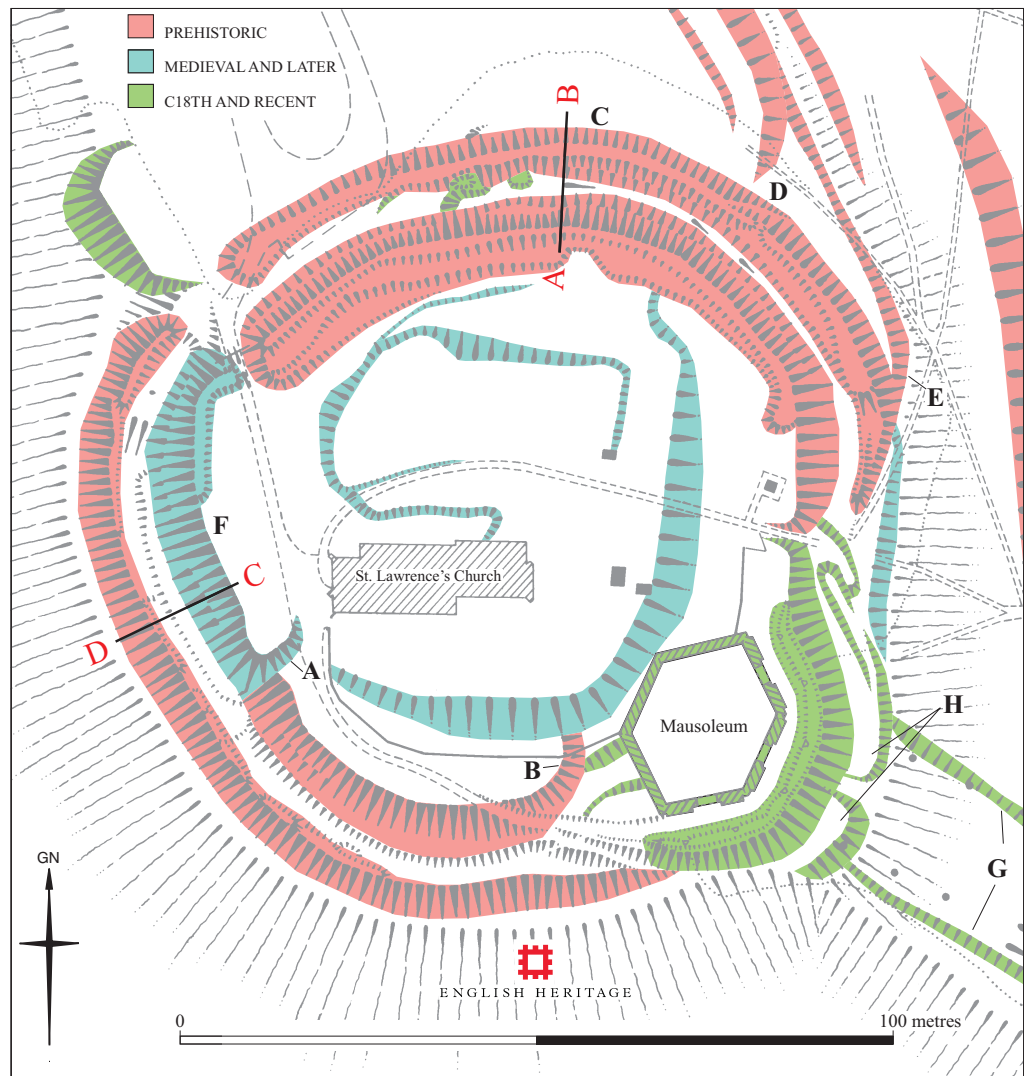


Figure 19:
Detail plan of the hillfort

The hillfort, which is roughly circular in plan, has substantial defensive earthworks on all sides, the nature of which varies in response to the topographical requirements of the site. From the end of the ridge the land slopes steeply away on all but the north sides, the gradient on the west being the most severe - a feature that has clearly influenced the monument's form. There are two breaches through the hillfort boundary; one in the north-west, the other on the south-east and later alterations arising from changes in land use have resulted in a degradation of the ramparts. Indeed, all traces of original earthworks in the south-east quadrant have been obliterated during the construction of the mausoleum by Sir Francis Dashwood between 1764-5. The hillfort interior has been



similarly re-modelled and provides a dramatic location for St. Lawrence's Church, believed to have originated in the 13th century and which gives the hill its name.

The Hillfort Boundary

To the south and west where the natural slope is steepest the defences comprise a massive double scarp separated by a wide berm that has been terraced into the hillside (Figure 20).

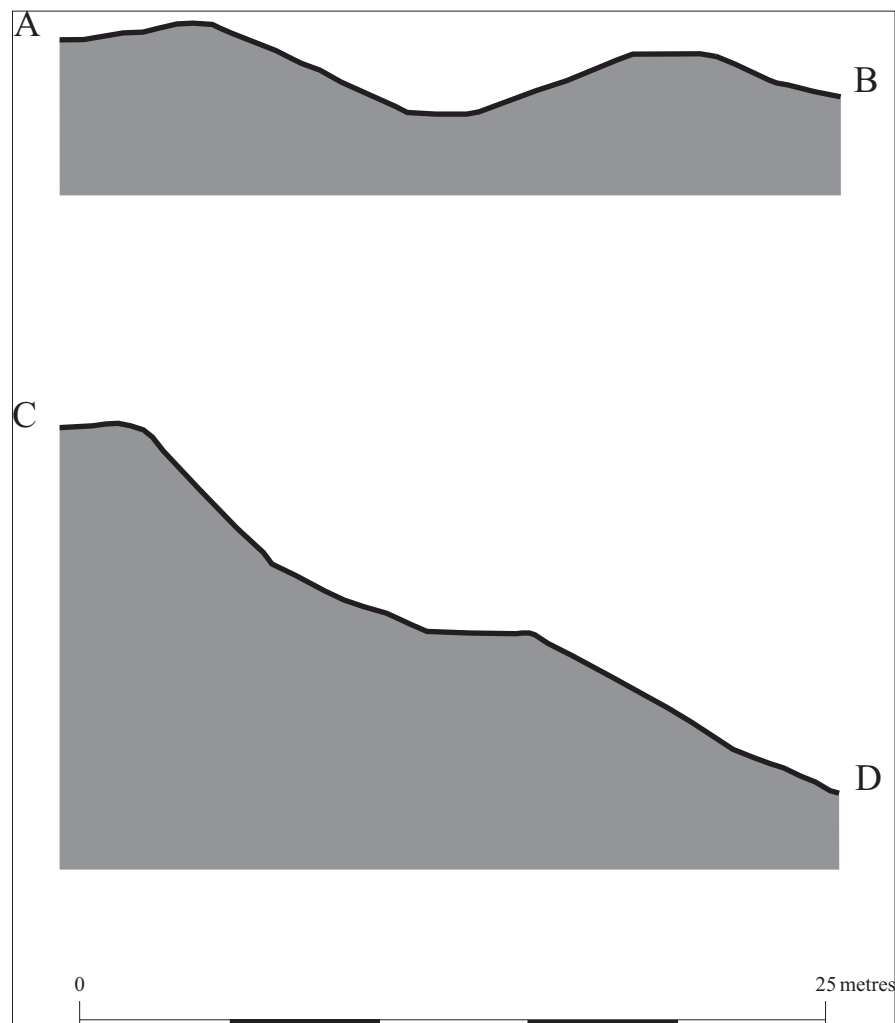


Figure 20:
*Profiles across the
hillfort boundary.*

In contrast, on the more gentle northern and eastern approaches along the natural ridge, the nature of the boundary is markedly different. Here, a substantial inner bank is flanked externally by a deep and narrow ditch with a pronounced outer bank. This morphological variation is most apparent either side of the potential north-western entrance gap. To the west of this the hillfort boundary consists largely of two massive scarps with an intervening terrace (Plate 29).



Plate 29:
The upper scarp of the hillfort enclosure boundary to the west of the northern 'entrance'.



The upper scarp stands to a height of 3m above ground level and all traces of any substantial accompanying rampart have now been removed, possibly during landscaping associated with the creation and maintenance of the church and its church yard. Only a very slight length of indeterminate bank 0.3m high and 2m wide can now be seen close to the

entrance but this is unlikely to be the original rampart. This relatively straight-edged scarp extends for a distance of 60m to the south and here, opposite the church, it turns sharply uphill with a slight step 0.2m high (Fig 19, A) marking a continuation to the entrance. If this is indeed, the line of the inner rampart, it has been overlain by a considerable amount of material dumped to create a level terrace associated with the church and graveyard. To the south, the scarp is less sharply defined with a lesser slope angle and stands now to a height of 2.5m. This section curves gently to the south-east for a distance of 60m but at its southern limit it has been damaged by the construction of the Mausoleum in the 18th century. However, the in-turned scarp 0.7m in height at (Fig 19, B) may be an original feature of the hillfort as it lies, for the most part, outside both the church and Mausoleum boundaries. Along the entire western section of the hillfort a break of slope, on average 1m above the base of the scarp, suggests that there has been further modification or damage from later activity.

The inner scarp is flanked by a broad and level terrace 3 – 6m wide, cut into the natural slope and which now hosts the modern footpath. There is no surviving evidence that points to the presence of a ditch here and the occasional slight transverse steps 0.3m high along its course derive from the underlying natural topography.

The outer scarp is much less substantial than the inner example and stands to a height of 2.5m externally above a break of slope. The slight ledge 1-2m wide that separates this scarp from the steep slope outside it clearly indicates that it has been formed by a simple process of cutting into the natural ground surface. In places, this scarp is accompanied by slight lengths of bank generally 2 -4m wide, standing to a height of 0.2m. However, on approach to the north-western entrance gap, a better preserved section of bank can be seen surviving here to a height of 0.5m and width of 4m for a distance of 10m. This may



be the remnants of a once more extensive rampart and it is tempting to speculate that its absence or insubstantial character elsewhere, is related to later activity and its subsequent removal along this section of the hillfort boundary; perhaps associated with the construction of the churchyard platform and alteration of the inner rampart.

The Mausoleum now occupies the entire south-eastern quadrant of the hillfort and has obscured any trace of the original defensive earthworks. It stands upon a vast semi-circular platform of built-up ground 50m in width that is defined by a scarp 2.2m high. Much lake dredging material was dumped here in the 1970s to consolidate the platform (R. Wheeler, pers. Comm.). The modern footpath cuts diagonally through the ramparts to the west of the Mausoleum and is terraced into the slope for a distance of 30m.

The nature of the hillfort boundary changes markedly to the north-east of the Mausoleum. For a distance of 100m, leading to the north-western entrance gap, the enclosure is defined by two large banks with a medial ditch. This is the weakest point on the ridge top and it is likely that the topography has influenced the form and strength of the banks and ditches here. The inner bank is the most substantial and survives to a width at its base of 8m; this narrows to a level and flat-topped crest 2m wide and survey suggests that it was constructed in a series of short, straight lengths. It stands to a height of 3.8m above ditch bottom but only 0.5m (Plate 30) above the internal ground level and is best preserved at its north-western terminal where it broadens out somewhat and is also slightly raised.



Plate 30:
*The slight inner
rampart scarp close to
the southern 'entrance'.*



Plate 31:
*The break of slope
on the face of the
inner rampart.*

The rampart is absent for a length of 25m leading to the south-eastern breach. There is no hint now of an internal quarry scoop, instead the rampart tail is flanked by a slight scarp 0.3m high that is similarly absent close to the south-eastern gap. This scarp may have been heavily altered by activities relating to the graveyard

but its location and close association with the hillfort boundary suggest that it was originally part of the rampart. The outer face of this rampart shows evidence of a strong break of slope 1.0 to 1.5m above the base with smaller stretches of narrow ledging observable elsewhere (Plate 31). The ditch is narrow and flat-bottomed with few undulations along its course; those that were noted relate directly to the underlying natural topography (Plate 32).



Plate 32:
*The line of the ditch
along its approach to
the southern 'entrance'.*



The external bank, though impressive, is less substantial than the inner example. Where best preserved, on the stretch south from (Fig 19, C), the rampart stands to a height of 2.2m above ditch bottom and 1.4m above external ground level. To the west of (Fig 19, C) it has been severely degraded by the construction of a car parking space but elsewhere it can be seen to be flat-topped with a width of 1 -3m on its crest. Between (Fig 19, C) and (D), the inner face of this bank is broken by a break of slope 1m above the ditch bottom but to the south, this widens out to form a substantial berm 2.0 to 2.5m wide. The stepped form of this rampart, together with similar features noted on the inner bank, possibly indicates a phase of refurbishment, although it is not clear whether this was associated with other alterations to the hillfort defences or with later modifications to the interior.

A small platform measuring 1.4m x 3.7m with an associated shallow scoop 2.1m x 5m lies immediately to the west of (Fig 19, C) on the inner face of the outer bank. These are clearly of much more recent origin and this platform together with a number of minor pits in the immediate vicinity, point to small-scale military activity here.

Entrances

The obvious approach to the hillfort for everyday traffic would have been via the ridge from the north and the gap here, is indeed, located in a suitable position for an original entrance (Plate 33).

This simple entrance is 5m wide but the width between the ditch terminals is greater, probably due to recent damage. Although the ditch does not continue across this entrance, a low bank linking the terminals of the inner rampart is evident. This would suggest that either this entrance is a later breach through a once continuous feature or that there has been an attempt at some stage to block an earlier entrance. The presence of external ditches found during excavation (Poore, 2000) and the slightest traces of an outer bank beyond the existing ramparts, suggests a more complex sequence of enclosure and refurbishment than that surviving above ground. The first ditch lay 19.5m beyond the main rampart and appeared, from the short section excavated, to be aligned south-west – north-east. It had filled gradually from side slippage before being completely back-filled with chalky loam, perhaps through a process of over-ploughing. The second ditch lay much closer to the extant rampart and had a single deliberate fill of chalky loam containing fragments of ceramic tile. Both ditches were tentatively interpreted as being contemporary with the hillfort and would therefore have precluded the use of this entrance at some stage. The tile fragments in the second ditch suggest a medieval in-fill date, in keeping with the suggestion here that the east entrance was blocked off and a later, secondary breach was made in the ramparts at this point. These later phases in the sequence involve the deliberate in-filling of the external ditches found during excavation. It is suggested that this may have taken place in conjunction with a blocking of the



original east entrance, perhaps when the hillfort underwent a major change in use with the construction in its interior of the medieval church.



Plate 33:
*The possible entrance
break on the north-west.*

Although the existing breach in the hillfort circuit to the north of the Mausoleum platform has been used in recent times to provide access to the church and graveyard, there is a suspicion that it may have originally been a much earlier entrance into the hillfort (Plate 34).

Both rampart terminals, either side of the break, are noticeably wider, higher and appear in-turned but subsequent alterations and damage have made the positive identification of an early entrance here difficult. The scarps immediately below the access point to the churchyard may relate to more recent use of this entrance but the low scarp, 0.3m in height that extends northwards from (Fig 19, E) for a distance of 70m may define an early approach to the entrance.



Plate 34:
*The rampart breach
on the south-east.*

The Hillfort Interior

The hillfort interior has been extensively re-modelled and none of the existing earthworks are attributable to the Iron Age occupation. Dominated by a vast platform 75m x 60m defined by an L-shaped scarp 1m high, this is now the location of St. Lawrence's Church (Plate 35) and its attendant graveyard. The present church stands on the site of, indeed incorporates material from, a much earlier 13th century structure.

To the north of the church is a further raised platform 55m x 30m and 0.5m in height. It is possible that these represent early features but in the absence of more substantial earthwork evidence or excavation this is purely conjectural. It is certain, however, that the hillfort rampart around (Fig 19, F) has been truncated to create a level interior, probably as part of the medieval modifications. During the recent excavation of a pipeline trench through the churchyard it was noted that the original graveyard or plough-soil within the interior was overlain by a layer of loam, 0.4m thick containing a high proportion of chalk blocks, which was interpreted as a layer of re-deposited ground using material from the rampart. Further east the sub-topsoil layer was composed only of natural chalk (Poore, 2000).



The graveyard is bounded on the south-west side by a curving brick wall 2m in height. This may be of some antiquity since a destroyed section of it was encountered within the pipeline trench, thought to have been modified during the 18th-century. Three large sarcophagus-style tombs lie to the east of the church. The survival of any further, more ephemeral, earthworks has been precluded by the long-established use of the interior as a burial ground. St. Lawrence's Church is oriented roughly east-west, measures 41m in length and between 11m and 14m in width. It stands on the site of a much earlier, Norman church, parts of which survive in the existing fabric. The lower portion of the west tower is believed to date to the Norman period although the height of the tower has subsequently been increased. The main Chancel structure, however, together with some architectural details and internal fittings are of 13th century date.

In the mid-18th century Sir Francis Dashwood drastically altered the entire area circumscribed by the hillfort on Church Hill by the construction of the Mausoleum and a re-modelling of the church. It may have been at this time that the inner rampart was reduced in order to provide material for levelling the interior, and the ground level may have been truncated around the present church – suggested by the presence of graves barely 0.3m below the modern surface (Poore, 2000).



Plate 35:
*The west tower of St
Lawrence's Church.*

Probably between 1740-3 and certainly no later than 1757, the original Norman tower was heightened by the addition of a second storey. The Nave, too, was rebuilt between 1751-63. The interior was lavishly re-decorated with Corinthian columns, an elaborate plaster cornice, and richly painted ceiling and wall friezes. In 1765 Giovanni Borgnis was commissioned to paint both the low ceiling in the chancel and the wall above the chancel arch, the latter painted with a Royal achievement of arms. The stone floor is of black and white marble with a centrepiece in the shape of a twelve-pointed star defined



in the original building. Indeed his refurbishment scheme is thought to have been modelled on the 3rd century *Temple of the Sun* in Palmyra (Dashwood 1987, 221).

“Visitors accustomed to the austere and simple beauty of English Norman interiors are often astounded by the magnificence of this interior with its vast red porphyry columns against yellow ochre walls, its richly ornamented frieze and splendid ceiling in a geometric pattern of circles and hexagons painted to look like plaster”

(Dashwood 1987, 221).

Between 1751 and 1753 a great gilded sphere was added to the top of the church tower. This sphere, made of wood covered in gold leaf and measuring 2.4m (8 feet) in diameter, held seating inside for up to six people and is similar in appearance to the *Ball of Fortune* which sits atop a tower where the Giudecca and Grand Canals in Venice meet.

“ [John]...Wilkes wrote of the golden ball: it is the best globe tavern I was ever in – I admire likewise the silence and secrecy which reigns in that great globe, undisturbed but by his jolly songs very unfit for the profane ears of the world below”

(Ibid, 221).

As well as entertaining within the globe, Dashwood evidently used the structure as a source of private entertainment:

“Sir Francis used to signal through the portholes by heliograph (a mirror device for reflecting the rays of the sun) to his friend John Norris in an identical tower with a golden ball which the latter had erected at Camberley, 34 miles away – one of the earliest examples of overland signalling by this means”

The purpose of these alterations was clearly to provide not just a place of worship but a monument that could be seen and admired from the valley below, whilst at the same time providing an exceptional private view point.

“The new road, which was on a straight line to Wycombe, was also intended to provide a three-mile vista of the church tower capped with its glittering ball on top of the hill”

(Ibid, 153-4)



John Wilkes, Member of Parliament for Aylesbury –

“the church he [Sir Francis] has just built on the top of a hillfort the convenience and devotion of the town at the bottom of it...this is the first church which has ever been built for a prospect”

(Ibid, 221-2).

Wooden steps leading from the top of the church tower up inside the ball have now been removed and the ball is empty.

To the south-east of the church, between 1764 and 1765, Sir Francis Dashwood also constructed a massive private Mausoleum. A vast, roofless, hexagonal structure, the Mausoleum has maximum dimensions of 41m (on a north-north-east alignment) by 30m (on the west-north-west axis). It was built by John Bastard the Younger of Blandford probably to a design by Revett and is now a Grade I listed building (Plate 36).

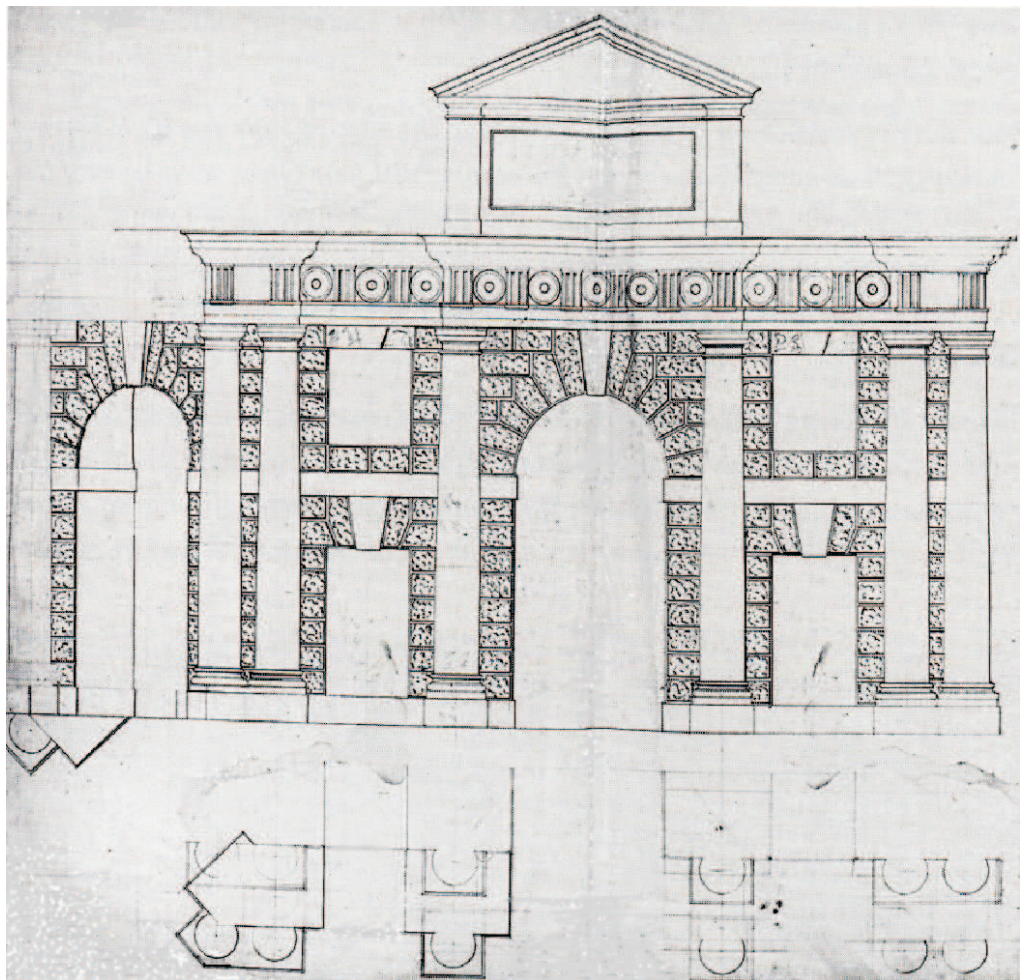


Plate 36:
*Early design for the
Dashwood Mausoleum
on Church Hill.*



The walls, of grey flint rubble ashlar, are punctuated by open Roman arches – three to a side – each of which is separated from the next by massive attached stucco Roman columns (repetitions of the single archway at the Temple of Apollo). The panelled parapet is surmounted by stone urns grouped in threes at each apex of the hexagon. The Mausoleum was approached via a tree-lined avenue (Fig 19, G) which led up the hillside to the south-east and is flanked on the south-west by a substantial scarp up to 1.2m in height (Plate 37). The avenue is depicted on Richardson’s 1767 map, and is certainly



Plate 37:
*The tree-lined approach
to the Mausoleum viewed
from the south-east.*

included on early Ordnance Survey maps (OS 2nd edition 1900). Trees still stand on the alignment of the original avenue, although these, presumably, are the result of more recent re-planting, perhaps as part of King George’s Jubilee celebrations of 1935 (R. Wheeler, pers. comm.). At the top of the avenue a pair of symmetrical scarps are positioned to either side of the main Mausoleum entrance. Approximately 0.3m in height these turn towards the entrance and are probably the remnants of a formal staired approach to the building (Fig 19, H).

The Mausoleum was built with a legacy of £500 left to Sir Francis by his uncle and guardian, George Bubb Doddington, Baron of Melcombe Regis, with instruction ‘to build an arch, temple, column or additional room at whichever of His Lordship’s seats was likely to remain the longest.’ The Mausoleum was completed in 1765 at a cost of £495 5s.3d (Dashwood 1987, 223) and dedicated to the memory of its benefactor. The



interior walls have memorial inscriptions and niches for the funeral urns of the Dashwood family and friends. Extensive restoration work was carried out by the West Wycombe Estate in 1956 with the addition of drainage and flood-lighting. A series of small scarps, 0.4m in height, around the base of the Mausoleum to the south and east are associated with these later works.



The Wider Landscape (Fig 18)

The area included in the English Heritage survey of Church Hill is defined by a field boundary the perimeter of which is cartographically depicted in more or less its current form from the late 17th century onwards. This is attributable to the fact that this area has not been subjected to the same changes and boundary alterations as the surrounding fields, nor was it forested to provide a harvestable supply of timber for the rapidly expanding furniture trade at nearby High Wycombe in the mid-19th century.

Earthworks here attest to a long history of land use, the earliest possibly being contemporary with the occupation of the hillfort. These survive despite the area having been heavily cultivated, indeed many of the earthworks relate to agrarian activities with a history spanning from potentially as early as the Iron Age or Romano-British period to post-Second World War. The wider landscape is dominated by a series of field systems, possibly Iron Age in origin, interspersed with a network of tracks and pathways, and it will be examined in three parts: the slopes to the east of the hillfort between the modern car park and the Mausoleum avenue; the slopes to the north-west as bounded by the survey limits; and the south-facing hillside defined by Chorley Road, West Wycombe Hill Road and the caves to the east.

The slopes to the east of the hillfort are terraced by a series of broad, parallel scarps which were originally the remains of a 'Celtic' field system. At a height of between 0.2m and 2.0m these lynchets are oriented on a roughly north-south axis and curve gently, following the contour of the hill. Two of these scarps display a right-angled turn at the northern end, continuing against the contour, and define the edges of former fields. Other scarps at a much narrower interval of 20m-30m are clearly associated with the cultivation of this slope, but these are likely to be of medieval date, further evidence of which is provided by the presence here of straight, narrow, ridge-and-furrow ploughing.

Two scarps at (Fig 18, A) 0.3 – 1.2m in height extend along the top of the ridge above the field system on a roughly north-south orientation and may represent a terraced trackway 6m in width associated either with access to the east entrance of the hillfort or with the later, medieval landscape. The terrace aligns with the modern driveway to the house called 'Windyhaugh' to the north though this does not appear to be a route of any great antiquity. At the base of the slope, to the east of the hillfort, a number of sharply defined trackways cut diagonally across the gradient (Fig 18, B).

The second area to be discussed lies to the north and west of the hillfort and comprises a multi-phase aggregate field system with terraced tracks and hollow ways, one of which leads directly to an area of quarrying to the north of 'Windyhaugh'.



A trackway (Fig 18, C) is defined by a scarp 0.4m in height that extends in a north-westerly direction with a slight angle-change at the midpoint; beyond this it survives as a double scarp. This change in direction corresponds with a field edge defined by a low bank, 10m wide and 0.2m high, leading to the north-east and forming a right-angle with the trackway. The hillside to the north of the bank and east of the track is terraced by broad cultivation lynchets parallel to the track typically 0.3m high and just 10m apart. These are overlain by a later woodland boundary (Fig 18, D) comprising a sinuous bank 3m wide and 0.5m in height with attendant ditch, 2.8m wide at a depth of 0.4m. This boundary clearly post-dates the earlier field system and is shown in its current position on all the map sources discussed above, suggesting that it may be medieval in origin.

From this woodland boundary two medieval hollow ways extend south (Fig 18, E & F). The first closely follows the modern field edge – and western limit of the survey – whilst the second follows the earlier terraced trackway for a distance of 60m before converging with the first some 50m beyond. A steep scarp up to 2m in height, again probably medieval in date and shown in this position on early maps, defines the modern field edge almost as far as Chorley Road. This hollow way is flanked, for the most part, on the east by a lynchet, 1.4m in height which defines the lower limit of the medieval re-use of the early field system, as evidenced by the presence of narrow ridge-and-furrow ploughing.

From the main hollow way another arm branches north towards an area of surface quarrying (Fig 18, G). Here, a series of irregular scoops and hollows up to 1.5m in depth represent a process of flint or chalk extraction of medieval or later date.

Another woodland boundary (Fig 18, H) presumably pre-dating the quarry, dog-legs around it, though its line perpetuated by the modern fence on the north. Similar in construction to the one described above, this feature comprises a well-formed bank 3.2m-4.2m wide and 0.7m in height. North of the dog-leg the bank is flanked by a ditch 2.0m wide and 0.4m in depth. The hollow way clearly cuts through the boundary, which is also overlain at the angle-change by a small platform or mound 5m in diameter and 0.1m high. This may be no more than an accumulation of material around the base of a former tree.

Further lynchetting is visible as a scarp 0.6m high (Fig 18, J) that extends from a point close to the north-western entrance of the hillfort along the break of slope for a distance of 160m. Again it curves to fit the contour of the ridge and is a single isolated remnant of what must have been a fairly dispersed and disconnected pattern of fields. Alternatively, however, it may be associated with a process of ‘levelling-up’ the ridge top in this area in recent times to provide a flattened approach route to the church.

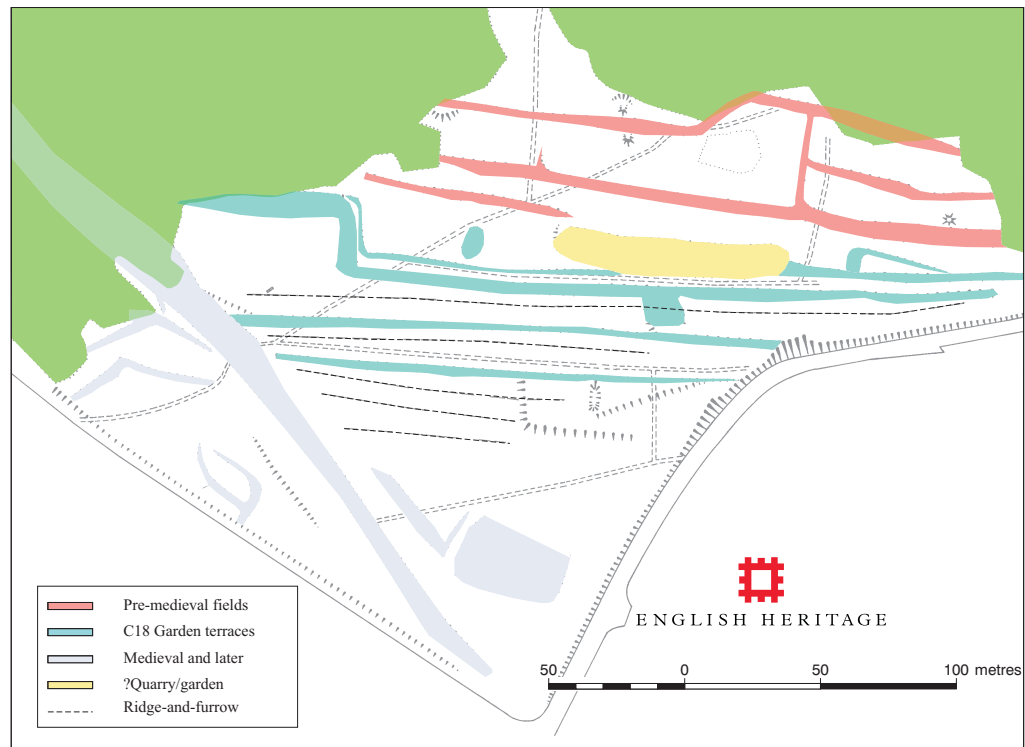


Figure 21:
Detail plan of the slopes to the south of the hillfort

A massive scarp 0.3-2.4m, immediately to the north of the north-western hillfort entrance and defining a platform 10m x 30m in area, is likely to result from later alteration and may be associated with the 18th century modifications of the hilltop (Fig 18, K).

From the point of convergence of the two medieval hollow ways they continue south as one feature terraced into the natural slope at a width of 2.0-3.1m. Flanked downhill by a contemporary boundary scarp, here 1.4m in height, and the modern fence, the track curves gently with the contour of the hill onto the southern slopes – and the third and final area to be discussed (Fig 21).

The hollow way extends to the modern junction of the Chorley and West Wycombe Hill Roads and is first shown on Richardson's map of 1767. To the east the south-facing slope of Church Hill hosts a series of terraced scarps. Up to four can be seen, aligned roughly south-west to north-east and 1m in height and are separated by regular intervals of 25m. As elsewhere on Church Hill these appear to have originated as lynchets of an Iron Age or Romano-British field system and occasional sharp angle-changes mark the corners of small fields (Fig 21, A). Also, as in other instances, there is evidence of ridge-and-furrow of medieval and more recent date, particularly on the low-lying slopes closest to the modern road junction (Fig 21, B).



A low sub-rectangular platform (Fig 21, C) was recorded in the angle between the two modern roads. Defined by a U-shaped scarp 0.3m high with an internal counterscarp, the platform measures some 12m x 23m. At least one house is depicted in this position on the c1698 estate map suggesting that the platform represents the remains of a former structure, indeed the counterscarp may relate to subterranean wall footings.

An area of surface quarrying (presumably for chalk for foundations of houses in the village and roads) surviving as irregular scoops in the natural slope can be seen to the east of the entrance to the caves. Apparently not previously cartographically depicted this hollow in the natural slope is 25m wide and 3m deep. A similar area is shown, however, to the west of the caves on the 1921 Ordnance Survey map as 'Old Quarry'. This could not be accessed during the present survey due to prohibitive vegetation cover. That these quarries were in existence in 1748 seems likely since it was the presence of scooped depressions here that influenced Dashwood's choice of location for his excavated caves. Early open-cast quarrying is shown in this location on one of Hannan's paintings dating to the 1750s (Plate 21).



The Caves

Successive harvest failures between 1748 and 1750 caused serious local unemployment in West Wycombe. Sir Francis Dashwood aimed to alleviate the hardship experienced as a result of this by employing men to quarry chalk from Church Hill to use in foundations for a new main road between West Wycombe and High Wycombe. The mining was carried out between 1748 and 1752 so as to excavate a network of labyrinthine tunnels and caves running for c0.25 miles under Church Hill. A U-shaped retaining wall of flint rubble was constructed at the back of a large open courtyard with a gothic arched entrance to the caves and a series of pointed niches. The whole was intended to be seen from West Wycombe House as an eye-catcher in the style of a gothic church. Although depicted on Richardson's map of 1767 the structure does not appear to be shown in its present form and may have been significantly altered at a later date. The caves are Listed Grade II*.

As part of the 18th-century alterations to Church Hill it appears that a number of the south-facing field lynchets were re-crafted into a series of ornamental scarps (Fig 21, D and Plate 21). One of Hannan's illustrations of the park (1752-3) depicts a series of landscaped wooded compartments and avenues of trees on the slopes to the south of the Church possibly designed to be viewed from the prospect mound by the cricket pavilion, a broad terraced platform 10m wide and 60m long may have been part of this ornamental scheme. However, the irregular nature of the terrace suggests it may have originated as another area of quarrying or, alternatively, been quarried at some later stage.



7. DISCUSSION

The English Heritage survey concentrated solely on an analysis of the visible archaeological features at West Wycombe. It is clear from this that the recorded remains cover at least 2500 years and that this span may be considerably wider if more reliable dates were available for some of the earliest identifiable components. It is likely that the earliest surviving structure is the mound that lies close to the north-western corner of the wider park. This may pre-date the 18th-century avenue that extends to the south and, morphologically, it resembles other round barrows built in similar locations nearby. Such a pre-existing mound could easily have been incorporated into the garden layout in the 18th century but without additional invasive investigation, it is impossible to be unequivocal about this.

The skyline to the north of the village and park at West Wycombe is visually dominated by the Iron Age hillfort upon Church Hill. Church Hill lies at the head of a spur defined by two re-entrant valleys on the southern edge of the Chilterns and commands extensive views in all directions from the ridge top. It occupies the highest point in the survey area and although its enclosing boundary has been slighted by the construction of the Mausoleum on the south-east and on the south-west by activities associated with the church and its graveyard. The hillfort sits in isolation on the ridge but there are good views to its nearest contemporary neighbour; the larger hillfort of Desborough Castle some 1.5km to the east. Beyond this the nearest possibly contemporary enclosure, the hillfort at Pulpit Hill, lies 10km to the north. A dense Iron Age settlement pattern is evident and other settlements in close proximity would undoubtedly have been occupied at the same time as the hillfort, but no earthworks of these now survive.

No dating evidence for the hillfort is available but a construction date within the first half of the first millennium BC could be inferred from evidence from excavations on other Chilterns hillforts. As with a number of other local sites, the hillfort covers a small internal area but is furnished with at least two substantial ramparts best seen on the eastern arc of the enclosure. Recently, the creation of a car park has destroyed the outer bank on the level approach from the north-west but excavation here suggested that a ditch lay outside the outer rampart; other, ill-defined, ditched features were also noted here during this excavation. The hillfort boundary, which still presents a formidable earthwork, has been heavily damaged on its south-western section and the two concentric ramparts have been reduced to two parallel terraces. The uppermost clearly relates to spoil dumping possibly associated with the development of the graveyard and church but the outer terrace is an original feature. This is commonly seen at other hillforts which share a similar topographical setting and where the outer rampart consists simply of a



sharp terrace excavated into a steep natural slope. The terrace when viewed from outside or from the valley floor gives the impression of being a large rampart and this *trompe l'oeil* effect must have been part of the original constructional intent. Regardless, the hillfort boundary seems disproportionately large for such a small internal area and the ramparts must have been designed to create an overwhelming impression of strength and probably prestige. This is not reflected in the form of the entrances, of which the northernmost appears to be original but which consist, simply, of gaps in the line of the banks and ditches. A lengthy sequence of development can be postulated at the hillfort for there is good evidence of boundary refurbishment and entrance modification. The refurbishment is most obvious on the eastern line of the hillfort and it is tempting to relate this to the creation of the second entrance close to the Mausoleum. More prosaically, however, this gap may have been cut to provide access to the Church within the interior. The views from this south-eastern entrance are spectacular and dominated by vistas along the surrounding river valleys to the north-east and south-east towards High Wycombe. Interestingly, this entrance looks out directly towards Desborough Castle.

The construction and maintenance of the massive hillfort boundary on Church Hill would have been an onerous task for those involved. This together with its commanding location and monumental presence contrast with other contemporary settlements and mark it out as a special place. It is unclear whether or not it acted as a settlement at any stage or if it had another, non-secular, function. Here, it is worth recalling that in the fields to the west of the fort, the South Bucks Metal Detector Club has collected a large number of Late Iron Age coins and other artefacts which led Farley to suggest the existence nearby of an important trade or ritual centre (Farley, 1995). Likewise, the putative date of the refurbishment suggested by the berm or step on the ramparts along the eastern section, is unknown but it undoubtedly reflected a continued or renewed importance for this site.

There is a strong likelihood that much of the pre-medieval field system noted during the survey may be in part contemporary with occupation of the hillfort. Traces of a grid-like 'Celtic' field system were noted to the north, south and east of the fort as well as further afield on the ridge-top close to Druid's Hut at the southern limit of the surveyed area. These ancient fields survive as slight earthworks in a fragile state; those near Toweridge Lane are being actively degraded by continued cultivation. The early fields are fragmentary and it is now difficult to estimate field size with any degree of certainty but those that can be reconstructed suggest that each paddock enclosed approximately at least 45 – 60 m². On analogy with other areas of better-dated 'Celtic' fields on the Berkshire and Wiltshire chalklands, this would suggest a Romano-British date. It is unlikely that the 'Celtic' fields noted throughout the surveyed area are part of the same system as they do not share a similar alignment. The survey evidence suggests that rather than belonging to a much larger coaxial layout of fields (i.e. conjoined fields that shared the same axis or



orientation, often ignored the underlying topography and covered areas as large as 3 sq km), they were compact groups of fields covering much smaller areas whose layout was heavily dictated by the prevailing lie of the land.

Many of these early agrarian features appear to have been reused during the Medieval period when much of the area was part of an open field system organised and administered as a series of tithings. The identification of the boundaries to these tithings was beyond the scope of this report but the 1698-1710 map shows a number of identifiable blocks of land, each outlined by roads and tracks, which possibly represent these medieval landholdings. The earlier, gridded, field pattern can be seen on the slopes to the east of the hillfort. Here, however, the lynchets are much more substantial than others elsewhere and they have been reused and given added definition by cultivation during the Medieval period. The remains of broad ridge-and-furrow cultivation can be seen and some of this ploughing has encroached upon the outer bank of the hillfort. Ridge-and-furrow was noted also on the slopes to the south of the hillfort, and at a number of locales within the park itself. In the area to the west of the main approach to the house, slight traces of narrower ridging were noted.

This agrarian, landscape is well documented on the anonymous map of 1698-1710 which shows the area on the eve of its dislocation and conversion to enclosed landscape park. This remarkably detailed map has been shown by the English Heritage survey to have a surprisingly high degree of accuracy. A short stretch of the pre-turnpike road between High and West Wycombe was noted close to St Crispin's. Further to the west, however, it has been obliterated by later reordering of the drainage system (the river may have reused the line of the road between St Crispin's and Flora's Temple) and the creation of the park boundary. Field size and shape depicted on this plan accord well with the fragmented remains recorded during the survey but it is additionally noteworthy for its depiction of the pre-Dashwood house. As discussed previously there had been a concern that the location shown on the map was incorrect, however, survey does suggest that the earlier house lay somewhat to the north of its current location and that the large irregularly shaped platform midway along the Broadwalk is likely to mark its position.

The gardens at West Wycombe provide an illustration of many of the trends seen during the 18th and 19th centuries in garden and landscape design. This period witnessed a move away from the more geometrical, formulaic, gardens of the late 17th- early 18th-century towards a more naturalistic setting for garden structures and walks. This can be clearly seen in the 18th century gardens at West Wycombe. Hints of a more formal geometric design, including long drives and approach avenues suggestive of a more regular layout can be seen. Rigid lawns and parterres, apart from those set around the house, are absent at this time. Instead, landscape architects created a more open parkland albeit one that was heavily structured with contrived views and vistas as well as a lake and carefully



planted wooded compartments. In addition, a wide range of statuary and other buildings were incorporated in the grounds, often connected by discrete walkways, offering the visitor a well choreographed route through the garden. This ‘naturalistic’, setting for the landscape park at West Wycombe was embellished towards the end of the 18th century with the further enclosure of large areas to the east of the house. This must have entailed a change in the nature of land use in these areas but the presence of ridge-and-furrow suggests that cultivation continued here, possibly in the manner of a *ferme ornee*. Many of the most fundamental changes were recorded on the two much cited maps of Jolivet (1752) and Richardson (1767). These maps, of course, documented the state of the park at the time of their survey but there is a suspicion that many of the features recorded were ‘works in progress’ or an idealised view of the park. This is particularly true of the Jolivet map with its rigid ornamental layout and it is plausible that many of the features and structures outlined in 1752 were regarded as proposals rather than a true depiction. Survey certainly confirmed a stronger correlation between those features mapped by Richardson and those visible on the ground today.

Jolivet’s plan depicts a highly organised, almost geometric, planned layout to the park and its gardens incorporating formal tree-lined avenues, plantations with circuitous walks, the large lake and several ornate garden structures such as Lodges and Temples. No evidence now survives for the triangular, fort-like, range of ancillary buildings shown close to the south-west corner of the house. Much of this area is now under plough and those sections closest to the house would now be incorporated within the present day stable and walled gardens. Fieldwork also suggests that the approach to the east of the lake may have been markedly less hemispherical than depicted; this may be due, however, to later alterations. Vegetational constraints meant that it wasn’t possible to ascertain whether or not the Citadel, which lay on the northern shore of a second lake constructed some distance to the east of the larger example, was fortified with elaborate bastions as shown by Jolivet. Its location as depicted was confirmed and the island is enclosed by a low earthen bank without any of the embellishments shown on the Jolivet survey. A number of the features shown in close proximity to the Temple of Venus could not be found; these include the ‘Bouling Green’ and the Greenhouse but, again, later activity could well have removed all trace of them. In contrast, many of the garden features depicted by Jolivet can be confirmed by the English Heritage survey including the main avenue approaches to the house as well as other minor paths and tracks winding through the Pleasure Grounds. Slight traces of the western drive to the house were noted during the survey and this can be seen to lie somewhat to the east of the current approach route although starting from the same point on the park boundary on the north-west. The lake, its islands and the Broadwalk are as depicted and remains of the formal drives to the east of the lake and house were also recorded. The plantations to the east of the house retain much of the same character today but no trace could be found of the ‘menagerie’ in the copse on the south shore of the lake. The area to the north of the house and flanked by the Broadwalk and the western drive are now more heavily planted than when recorded



by Jolivet. Further afield much of the pattern of drives, tracks, paths and clearings depicted by Jolivet on the ridge to the south of the house, has also been confirmed.

There is a great deal of correlation between the landscape garden layout shown on the Richardson map and the features noted during the English Heritage survey. Indeed, as might be expected, the correlation is stronger. Most notably, the tracks, lawns, parterres and plantations shown by Richardson accord well with the recent survey. Again, a number of structures are absent, including the Bowling Green and the Greenhouse, although in both cases this appears to be simply because they have been obliterated by more recent activity or constructions. The eastern drive with its less geometric D-shaped loop across the river fits well with the surviving ground evidence as does the western approach to the house, traces of which were observed to the west of the current road. In the wider parkland the detached garden extending from Kitty's Lodge to the Citadel was recorded and the well-preserved remains of the park boundary, leading south to the ridge top, survived intermittently in a few places. Field boundaries outside the park appear to have been accurately surveyed by Richardson as they correlate well with the current survey. Earlier boundaries in the proximity of Druid's Hut, shown as lines of trees or edges of vegetation, are similarly correctly located. To the north of the village the Church and Mausoleum are shown on Church Hill but the hillfort is indicated merely by generalised oval scarping.

The wider parkland underwent fundamental changes towards the end of the 18th century, possibly under the guidance of Thomas Cook. Much of the area to the east of the Pleasure Grounds was subsumed within a larger park whose boundary forms the present-day perimeter. The northern boundary of the park is defined by a buttressed wall built largely in brick but with sections of brick and flint combined. In this area the wall is flanked internally by a levelled pathway clearly employed as a walkway leading at different stages to Kitty's Lodge and St Crispin's but there is a suspicion that the walkway initially formed part of a terrace or earthwork park pale that pre-dated the current wall. The enlargement of the park in the late 1760s caused the abandonment of some of the arable fields to the east of Sawmill House but the presence of narrow ridge-and-furrow suggests that cultivation did continue at a later stage. Earthwork survey, however, recorded many of the former field boundaries as well as the route of the pre-park road which led north from Toweridge. Survey also revealed that a substantial walled enclosure was attached to St Crispin's on its south side and that this contained two buildings one of which, the boathouse, may have played a part as detached structure in the style of a gothic folly.

The results of the English Heritage survey presented here represent the first assessment of the archaeological and historical resource within the current National Trust holdings at West Wycombe. An area close to 160 hectares has now been evaluated in greater detail than any previous work on the estate thus enabling a thorough understanding of the local



landscape development. The remains are laid out across an area of marked topographical diversity ranging from low-lying valley floor, gently sloping hillsides as well as chalk spurs, and this is reflected in the range of archaeological features noted during the English Heritage survey.

Detailed work at a scale of 1:1000 was undertaken within Pleasure Grounds and on Church Hill and an area of 112 hectares within the wider park was recorded at 1:2500. This work charts the evolving nature of the landscape here, and depicts the ebb and flow of rural communities over millennia and the dramatic emergence of the enclosed landscape park, its house and associated gardens. This marked an abrupt disjuncture with what preceded it but it is clear that within the wider park there has been considerable reuse of earlier features and this pattern of development, abandonment and reuse, repeated on numerous occasions throughout the entire area of survey, provides the key to an understanding of the development of the landscape at West Wycombe.



8. SURVEY AND RESEARCH METHODS

The survey at West Wycombe Park was undertaken by staff from the English Heritage Cambridge office during the period April 2000 to June 2001. Fieldwork was carried out principally by David McOmish, Cathy Tuck and David Went with assistance on various occasions by Louise Barker and Wayne Cocroft. Adam Menuge provided a summary on a number of the buildings within the park.

A variety of survey techniques were employed including taped measurements from established control points, but the vast majority of survey information was captured using a Wild Leica T805 Electronic theodolite with integral EDM. In addition, much of the wider parkland was recorded using Trimble GPS downloaded via Trimble Geomatics Office software and as a result all of the survey data is now stored digitally.

The report represents the combined efforts of David McOmish, Cathy Tuck and David Went. The earthwork analysis was undertaken by David McOmish and Cathy Tuck and David Went provided the documentary details as well as a commentary on the earlier cartographic sources. Comments, ideas and unpublished survey data were gratefully received from Richard Wheeler and Gary Marshall (The National Trust) and have been incorporated in the text. All of the figures were prepared by David McOmish and Cathy Tuck using AutoCAD 2000 and CorelDraw 9 software and the report was assembled by David McOmish using Corel Ventura software. Photography was by Alun Bull and Cathy Tuck.

We would like to express our gratitude to Edward Dashwood, for his kind permission to use material in his copyright and to other staff at the West Wycombe Estate Office for their help during the project. Thanks are also due to staff of the National Trust at Hughenden Manor for allowing us access to their West Wycombe archive.

The site archive and copies of this report have been deposited in the archive of English Heritage at The National Monuments Record Centre, Kemble Drive, Swindon, SN2 2GZ (under record nos NMR SU 89 SW 6; 7; 8; 23; and 24), and further enquiries should be directed here.

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9. APPENDIX 1

GAZETTEER OF STRUCTURES

THE PLEASURE GROUNDS

Early structures 1739-69

(1) Kitty's Lodge and **(2) Daphne's Temple**, were erected to flank the original main entrance to the north of the house, and were designed to appear together as twin lodges viewed from the road. Kitty's Lodge (also known as the North Lodge) is a square two storey building, with a tiled pyramid roof, eaves-level entablature (with pulvinated frieze and modillion cornice) and a main doorway to the west surrounded by an eared architrave. Other elevations have single sash windows to each floor. Daphne's Temple (to the east) presents a symmetrical (blind) façade to the north, concealing an Ionic portico which forms a principal eye-catcher from the lake. Both buildings appear on the 1752 survey and were probably the work of Donowell (Pevsner & Williamson 1994:736; Jackson-Stops 1974a:1620; LB 10/15 II*, 10/16 II*).

(3) West Lodge

Located at the western entrance to the park, the West Lodge appears on the Jolivet map alongside a straight avenue linking the road to the domestic ranges on the west of the house. The lodge was retained after Revett changed the orientation of the house (*c*1770) and the western carriageway became the principal approach. It consists of two storeys, finished in stucco with chamfered and bonded quoins. The hipped slate roof rises from modillion cornice to a ball finial. The main 6-panel door faces east from a surround of engaged Doric columns with pediment. The adjacent red brick gate piers (with stone pineapple finials) and secondary piers (with ball finials) have been repositioned away from the present road (LB 9/17 II*).

(4) Cascade.

The cascade provides the main outlet for the River Wye on the eastern side of the Great Lake. Marked on Jolivet's survey, the original cascade was a massive affair. Hannan's illustrations *c*1752-3 depict a rusticated arch flanked by huge piles of rocks, framing a series of steps and basins and containing a reclining lead figure of Neptune (probably by John Cheere). The structure was removed around 1770, possibly by Thomas Cook, and replaced with a more subdued design consisting of two rectangular piers to either side of



low segmental arches and a shallow tiered waterfall. The later cascade was restored in 1969, at which time the reclining lead nymphs on each pier were replaced with fibreglass copies. The Cascade contains a small waterwheel (*c*1770) used to pump water to the house via a cistern in the Temple of the Winds (6) (Jackson Stops 1984:27; Pevsner & Williamson 1994:735; LB 10/330 II).

(5) Venus Temple and Parlour.

The Venus Temple is situated on a large conical earthen mound between the Broadwalk and the northern serpentine canal. The present temple, a circular arrangement of ionic columns beneath a dome, is a replica based on illustrations by Hannan (1753) and designed by Quinlan Terry in 1982. The original temple (demolished *c*1819) is marked in this location by Jolivet and may have been built to his designs. At the foot of the mound on the south side is the Venus Parlour. The semi-circular flint and brick façade is also a partial reconstruction by Terry based on Jolivet's surviving drawings. The central oval niche is probably original. Records of work on the steps and plinths in front of this 'cave' place its construction in 1748-9 (Jackson-Stops 1974: 1619, Pevsner & Williamson 1994:736; LB 9/311 II).

The 1752 and 1767 maps show the temple at the southern edge of a circular enclosure or planting regime, probably containing a number of statues, vases and figurines mentioned in an inventory of 1781 (Dashwood 1987:225-6). This enclosure was flanked by symmetrical triangular parterres to the east and west, and mirrored by a semi-circular or horseshoe-shaped clearing to the north of the mound.

(6) Temple of the Winds.

The Temple of the Winds is an early feature set in direct line with the original carriageway which followed a tree-lined avenue up the slope from the cascade before turning through 90 degrees to approach the south front of the house. The structure was built between 1755-59 (probably by Donowell) to resemble Stuart and Revett's illustration of the Tower of the Winds at Athens. Essentially a five storey octagonal tower (to reflect the eight classical winds) in brick, flint and stucco, the structure is considered to be one of the earliest attempts in England to reproduce a monument of antiquity. The main doorway is overlarge, with a broken segmental pediment, and is thought to have originated as the south entrance to the early (*c*1710) house. The flint screen of arches and obelisks to the south can be attributed to Donowell as it closely resembles a drawing in his hand entitled 'Temple of Winter at the Bottom'. It provides the entrance to an earlier icehouse retained beneath the tower (Purchas 1995; LB 10/323 II*).



(7) Temple of Apollo.

The Temple of Apollo is a tall arch with ashlar impostes, archivault and keystone intended as the entrance to the stables at a time when the main approach to the house arrived at the east front. It shares similarities with the East Portico and was probably built by Donowell shortly before his dismissal in 1764. After Revett built the West Portico (c1770), the arch was redesigned as a temple, with an additional rear alcove (the Exhedra) housing a statue of Apollo Belvedere and screening the new domestic ranges to the rear of the house. The temple is also known as the Cockpit Arch – having once held cages in the arch and a sandpit below for cockfighting. The entablature above the arch is inscribed ‘*Liberati Amici Liaeq (ue) Sac (rum)*’ (Sacred to Liberty and Friendship) – the motto of the Hell-Fire Club (Cornforth 1972:31; Jackson-Stops 1974a:1620, 1984:26; Pevsner & Williamson 1994:733; LB10/323, 10/324 II*).

(8) Lead Waterspout & Dam

The dam, located to the north of the North Bridge (19), controls the water level in the canal along the north side of the Great Lake, and regulates the flow of water from this source into the northern spur of the north canal. It is brick-built, with a central lead casting providing two ornate waterspouts in addition to four unadorned pipe outlets. It may be depicted on the Jolivet map and is certainly of mid 18th century origin.

Demolished early structures

(9) Greenhouse.

The Greenhouse is noted on the 1752 Jolivet map (listed as ‘H’) and mentioned in the diaries of Thomas Phillibrown after his visit to the park in 1754 (Jackson-Stops 1974a). It was located alongside the northern boundary of the Pleasure Grounds to the north of the Venus Temple. The structure is shown in considerable detail on Richardson’s village survey of 1767 - a continuous row of glazed chambers set alongside a long single-storey building with a pitched roof. The building extended northwards from a specifically indented section of the boundary wall, impinging on the grounds of a house then occupied by Thomas Francis. Nothing of this structure survives above ground and the boundary wall has been remodelled.

(10) Circular Pond.

A small circular feature shown on Jolivet’s and Richardson’s maps to the south of the Greenhouse may be a pond, possibly that in which Phillibrown (1754) noted ‘great numbers of gold and silver fish from India’ (Jackson-Stops 1974a: 1620). If indeed a



pond, it may have been subsumed within a later spur from the northern canal (added by the time of the Ordnance Survey 25 inch first edition in 1878).

(11) The Fort

A Fort is listed on the 1752 map (No.2) although its position has been lost to damage and deterioration. Hannan's paintings of broadly similar date – from the Cascade ('Lake and Hill') and from the Broadwalk ('Lake and Park') – show a small box-like fort with a crenellated parapet at the north-eastern corner of the southern island (near the present boathouse). It does not appear on Richardson's map of 1767.

(12) Menagerie

A menagerie is identified by the letter 'c' on the 1752 map. It is depicted as a triangular compartment in the woods to the east of the house, south of the eastern walk, approached by several minor paths. The area is divided into four unequal plots, at least one of which is shown containing a minor building.

(13) The 'Walton' Bridge

The Walton Bridge was located across the northern canal near the Venus Temple. Depicted by Hannan around 1752, the timber lattice bridge was designed to resemble (in miniature) Etheridge's bridge at Walton-on-Thames, once the longest timber span in Europe. Daniel's painting of the Island Temple (c1781) shows a replacement bridge in brick and flint. A facsimile of the original bridge (designed by Quinlan Terry and named the 'Edward Bridge' after the present baronet) was constructed across the river to the east of the Cascade in 1985 (Jackson-Stops 1974a:1620; Pevsner & Williamson 1994: 735-6).

Later structures c1770-1800

(14) Temple of Diana (now the Temple of the Sphinxes)

Situated immediately to the west of the West Portico and protruding from the outer wall of the stable courtyard, the Temple of Diana is essentially a pedimented alcove flanked by Tuscan pillasters. The Arms of the City of London on the shield held by the statue of Diana to the rear of the alcove indicate that this piece may have been inherited from the 2nd Baronet's uncle, Sir Samuel Dashwood, Lord Mayor of London in 1702. The temple shares similarities with the small pavilions at the parish church of Ayot St Lawrence in Hertfordshire, built by Revett (for Sir Lionel Lyde) in 1778. It is certainly a near contemporary of the West Portico (also known as the Temple of Bacchus) built by Revett in 1770. The lead sphinxes flanking the steps are probably by John Cheere, who appears



in the accounts in the 1770s. (Jackson-Stops 1974b:1684; Pevsner & Williamson 1994:729; LB10/325 II*).

(15) The Music (or Island) Temple

The Temple of Music was built to designs by Revett, one of whose drawings for the building is kept in the Bodleian Library, Oxford. Construction took place between 1778 and 1782, although the temple is shown complete in one of Thomas Daniell's painting of 1781. Situated on the eastern end of the middle island (and therefore accessible only by boat), the temple provided a new focal point for the garden when viewed from the house. The semi-circular east front mirrors the curvature of the shoreline and is fully elaborated with a loggia of unfluted columns, originally with capitals taken from Stuart and Revett's illustrations of the Tower of the Winds published in *Antiquities of Athens* 1762. The square, brick-faced western front was not intended to be seen and remains concealed by trees. The temple contains a single fully enclosed room at ground level. Below lies an elaborate basement with several rooms linked by barrel vaulted passageways entered from the concealed western end. Evidently this was intended for the preparation of food and the unobtrusive movement of servants (Pevsner & Williamson 1994:735; Purchas 1995; LB10/8 II*).

(16) The Round Temple

Situated between the Temple of Apollo and the ha-ha on the south side of the main house, the Round Temple is an elaboration of an earlier circular dovecote, set on the boundary of the stables and domestic ranges. Revett added a pyramid roof and enclosed the eastern elevation with a quarter circle Tuscan colonnade intended to give impression of a full circuit. Revett's drawings for the temple, c1775, are to be found in the house. This *tempietto* acts as the opposing terminal to the Temple of the Winds at the other end of the ha-ha. (Jackson-Stops 1974b:1684; Pevsner & Williamson 1994:734).

(17) Flint Bridge

A late 18th or early 19th century bridge spans the southern canal near the south western corner of the Great Lake. It consists of flint rubble facing over brick-built single segmental arch and parapet, and may be the same structure as illustrated in 1793 (LB 10/326 II).

(18) Upper Bridge

This is similar to the Flint Bridge, but with ashlar parapet coping. It is located mid-way along the southern canal (LB 10327 II).



(19) South Bridge

This is a late 18th or early 19th century bridge of two arches between the south island and southern lake shore. It is brick-built with flint rubble facings and a limestone parapet (LB 10/329 II).

(20) North Bridge

This is a hump-backed single arch bridge, brick-built with flint rubble facing and limestone parapet coping, spanning the north canal near the Venus Temple (5). It was evidently designed to replace the Walton Bridge (8) which Hannah showed in this position in 1752. The new bridge is depicted in Daniell's 1781 painting of the Music Temple (LB 10/328 II).

Modern Structures

(21) Venus Temple (see (5))

(22) Britannia Column

This is an ionic column placed on the centre line of the Broadwalk towards the main driveway. It was erected by Sir Francis Dashwood in 1987 to commemorate the Queen's 60th birthday, the column is topped with a lead figure of Britannia (Hall 1998).

(23) The Boathouse

Present on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey 25 inch County Series (1878) the boathouse has probably been renewed on more than one occasion. The wooden twin pillared façade was added by Sir Francis Dashwood c1980.

(24) The White Bridge

A small timber bridge with tall fenced parapets featuring the initial 'M', commissioned by Sir Francis Dashwood, 11th Baronet, in honour of his wife, Lady Marcella. The bridge, located across the small canal to the north of the Venus Temple (5) is to a design by David Hicks based on an example built for Lord Burlington at Chiswick (Dashwood 1987:226).



PARKLAND

Early structures 1739-69

(25) The Citadel

The Jolivet map depicts and lists a citadel set on an island within the river to the east of the Cascade. An elevation plan of the citadel by Jolivet (perhaps not shown as finally constructed) also exists (Purchas 1994). The citadel as depicted on the map comprised an elongated diamond-shaped island set in line with the watercourse, topped by a fort with triangular bastions at the north, south and west corners. A more elaborate diamond-shaped bastion is depicted at the east end of the structure and there is a suggestion of a continuous parapet. It may have been constructed as a folly or as the setting for spectacles and amusements, but the fort's location at the nearest point to the original Oxford-London road and its mid 18th century replacement hints at the possibility of a more serious intent. The citadel, if it was ever built, seems to have been demolished by the time of the 1767 map. Richardson depicts the island as an irregular oval, tapering slightly to the east, with no signs of former structures.

(26) Druid's Hut

Located on the southern boundary of the park near Toweridge Common, the Druid's Hut is thought to have been constructed c1735-9, perhaps to serve as a shooting lodge. This plain two storey cottage, built in flint with red brick dressing, belongs to the National Trust (Pevsner & Williamson 1994:734, LB10/18 II).

(27) The Hermitage

Now known as 'Thatch' and in private ownership, the Hermitage lies within the southern park boundary west of the Druid's Hut (26), and may have shared a similar function. The Hermitage is a thatched timber framed cottage with brick nogging, originating in the 18th or possibly the late 17th century (Pevsner & Williamson 1994:334; LB 10/19 II).

Later structures c1770-1881

(28) Temple of Flora

This small temple designed by Revett is located within the enlarged park of the later 18th century, east of the Citadel island (16) and north of the relief channel which circumvents the Sawmill (29). The temple is a square-plan stuccoed brick tower, three storeys high with pedimented fronts to east and west. A flint arch to the east contains the entrance, and



the west front (facing the house) houses an open first floor loggia. The whole is flanked by a three-storey façade in flint rubble and red brick with small obelisk pinnacles (Jackson-Stops 1974b:1685; Pevsner & Williamson 1994:737; LBII 10/14 II*, 10/341 II). It was remodelled by Marshall Sisson on the 1940/50s (R. Wheeler, pers. comm.).

(29) The Sawmill

This comprises three structures in brick and flint displaying few classical influences which presumably enforced some considerable modifications to the water course from the Cascade (4). The central mill house and the flanking pavilions are symmetrical, three storeys high and linked by arcaded parapets. The hipped roofs were originally surmounted by gigantic statues: William Penn above the mill and a haymaker and his wife above the side pavilions. These were criticised by Repton as ‘instances of false scale’ and removed c1800 (Jackson-Stops 1974b:1685; Pevsner & Williamson 1994:737; LBII 10/9 II*).

(30) St. Crispin’s

A miniature Gothic church (in fact a shoemaker’s cottage – hence its ‘dedication’ to the patron saint of cobblers) located alongside the Marlow Road (Chapel Lane) on the eastern boundary of the park. The tall tower and spire provided a further eye-catcher from the direction of the gardens and a suitably tranquil and rustic backdrop for Thomas Cook’s second lake – as shown in Daniell’s picture of 1781. The style is an unlikely one for Revett, although the preliminary design appears to be in his hand. Repton’s concerns regarding perspective led to the removal of the spire c1800 (Jackson-Stops 1974b:1685; LB 10/13 II).

(31) Gothic Alcove

A small alcove with pointed archway located slightly south of St. Crispin’s (30) and similarly shown in Daniell’s 1781 view of the new lake. The ruins of this structure (perhaps also the work of Nicholas Revett) are still visible (Jackson-Stops 1974b: 1685).

(32) The Pepperpot Bridge

Located to the south of the Gothic Alcove (31), this bridge on the Marlow Road (Chapel Lane) also served as the dam regulating the level of the lower lake. Designed by Revett, the brick and flint rubble bridge is far from neo-classical and the two square turrets (the Pepperboxes) on the western side are decidedly Italianate, rather in the same manner as the Sawmill pavilions (29) (Jackson-Stops 1974b:1685; LB 10/12 II). The structure of the Pepperboxes Bridge was demolished in the 1930s, and a flat road deck substituted. A new façade on the upstream side was built in the 1980s at the instigation of the National Trust (R. Wheeler, pers. comm.).



(33) Park Farm

This is a functional but highly elaborated farmhouse attributed to Revett, set to the south of the River Wye between the Sawmill (29) and the Pepperpot Bridge (32). The building includes three three-storey polygonal towers flanking a three-bay centre, originally open as an arch, but later filled in. At an earlier stage it consisted of two towers with a lean-to roof between, giving it a more ‘castle-like’ appearance. The pitched roof was added before 1950. It was termed ‘Don Quixote’s Castle’ in 1781 (Jackson-Stops 1974b:1685; Pevsner & Williamson 1994:736; LB 10/10 II).

(34) The Round Lodge

The Round Lodge is a curious asymmetrical building located to the south of Park Farm on the driveway leading to the eastern park entrance. The structure is not round, although the eastern side is curved in a quarter circle and therefore gives this impression when viewed from the entrance. The building may be a deliberate simulation of a gun tower, the fortress-like appearance certainly enhanced by the use of only two small round-headed windows on this elevation. (Jackson-Stops 1974b:1685; Pevsner & Williamson 1994:736; LB 10/11 II).

Modern Structures

(35) The Equestrian Statue

The Equestrian statue is located on the skyline to the south of the house, within a fresh rendition of the treeless avenue to Toweridge, shown on the Jolivet and Richardson plans but afterwards allowed to disappear. The statue, a fibreglass reproduction of a Roman horseman originally made as a film prop for Elstree Studios, was acquired by Sir Francis Dashwood, 11th baronet (Hall 1998; Dashwood 1987:231).

(36) The Edward Bridge

This facsimile of the timber ‘Walton’ Bridge (13), illustrated by Hannan c1753, was located across the River Wye to the east of the Cascade. The bridge was commissioned by Sir Francis Dashwood, 11th Baronet, designed by Quinlan Terry in 1985 and named after Edward Dashwood, now Sir Edward Dashwood, 12th baronet (Dashwood 1987: 227).



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A map of the Seat of S^r Francis Dashwood, Kn and Baronet at Westwycomb in the County of Bucks. Inscribed by his most Dutifull servant Morice Lewes Jolivet^{Arch}

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A map of the Manor of WEST WYCOMBE in the county of Bucks belonging to The Right Hon Sr Francis Baron Le Despencer. Accurately surveyed by John Richardson of Burnham Bucks 1767. MaR 36/3, r (original in Dashwood estate).

A Plan of WEST-WYCOMBE TOWN in the county of Bucks. Taken A.D. 1767 (probably Richardson). MaR 36/4 (original in Dashwood estate).



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