
William Dugdale's Itinerary of his Tour of the Fens, May–June 1657

Edited and with an introduction by Frances Willmoth

Introduction

Born in Warwickshire in 1605, William Dugdale became one of the most committed antiquarians of the seventeenth century and a prolific author. His publications included *Monasticon Anglicanum* (1655–73), which was the first systematic survey of remnants of the monastic establishments dissolved in the previous century, and *The Antiquities of Warwickshire* (1656), which is still remembered as the first thorough and scholarly county history to be produced, a model for many later writers. His lavishly illustrated *History of St Paul's* (1658) is valuable as a record of the cathedral as it was before its destruction in the Great Fire of London.

Through the influence of antiquarian friends he was appointed to the college of arms in 1638, and his accommodation there and salary as a herald enabled him to continue other researches. He was in Oxford with the royal court in the 1640s, but following its capture in 1646 retired to his Warwickshire estate of Blyth Hall. He was not inactive in the decade that followed – as evidenced by that series of major publications – but with the Restoration was reappointed to the college of arms and thereafter focused his attention on juridical and heraldic matters. He was knighted and promoted to the office of Garter Principal King of Arms in 1677, some nine years before his death.

His *History of Imbanking and Drayning* (1662), I believe, should be allowed a modest but respectable place amongst his other historical works rather than dismissed as an anomaly. I have discussed the volume's genesis and nature in a previous article – 'Dugdale's History of Imbanking and Drayning: a "royalist" writer in the 1650s' (in *Historical Research*, 71 (1998), pp. 281–302) – so do not need to rehearse all the details again here. But a summary sketch may be useful, with some indication of how Dugdale's manuscript diary of his tour relates to the published volume.

There is also no need to repeat too many details of the story of seventeenth-century attempts to drain the Great Level of the Fens, which have appeared in print on numerous occasions. H. C. Darby's substantial contributions are well known (*The Draining of the Fens*, 1940, reprinted 1956 and 1968; *The Changing*

Fenland, 1983); L. E. Harris produced an account of Sir Cornelius Vermuyden's involvement (1954); others have discussed technological aspects or commented in more general terms; and very recently a comprehensive new book by Eric Hotchkiss Ash has been published (*The Draining of the Fens: Projectors, Popular Politics, and State Building in Early Modern England*, John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, Maryland, USA, 2017). All that is necessary here is to note that an attempt at a general drainage in the 1630s was ultimately declared unsuccessful, was followed by a period when King Charles I took control (which, for political reasons, proved short and equally unsuccessful), and then in 1649 was revived with the aid of a new Act of Parliament. This restored the rights of the original investors and allowed them seven years in which to complete the project. They duly met the terms laid down, obtained judgments of successful draining for different parts of the Level in 1651 and 1653, received and distributed their grants of Fen land and in 1656 were ready to declare everything finished and establish their company under a new form of government for the longer term.

They then chose to publicise and celebrate their achievement in two ways: one was that they approved the publication of Jonas Moore's sixteen-sheet wall-map of the Great Level, which was in preparation in 1657 and was probably published early in 1658; the other was that they commissioned William Dugdale to write a supportive history. The Restoration of the monarchy in 1660 ushered in a time of extreme uncertainty in many aspects of national life, not least for the drainage company, members of which were very well aware that their legal status and any semblance of authority to proceed relied upon what was now termed a "Pretended Act" passed by the previous regime. Dugdale's work thus gained an added significance in its ability to display historical and legal precedents for drainage work, and he gave it a title page emphasising its authoritative nature: *The History of Imbanking and Drayning of Divers Fenns and Marshes, Both in Foreign Parts and in this Kingdom; And of the Improvements Thereby. Extracted from Records, Manuscripts and other Authentick Testimonies*.

The book starts with a dedication to Charles II,

followed by an address "To the Reader" which descants upon the virtues of enclosure and agricultural improvement. The history then begins at the obvious beginning, with Creation, followed by brief forays into ancient Egypt, Bablyon, Greece and, at greater length, Rome. Attention thereafter turns to more modern times with a chapter on the "Belgique Provinces", a longer one on Holland, and three more, on Friesland, Zeeland and Holstein respectively. Dugdale here cites Sebastian Munster's *Cosmographia*, various recent histories of Flanders and of the Netherlands, and works by Bertius, Nennius and Polydore Virgil. He also acknowledges the help of a distinguished personal informant: "that learned Gentleman, Dr John Laet of Leyden". The chapters about "foreign parts" then conclude with one consisting of a single sentence about the Spaniards draining a lake in Mexico.

Over 150 further pages are taken up with an account of developments over the centuries in various parts of England outside the Great Level of the Fens. Priority is given to an examination of Romney Marsh, in Kent, where medieval laws, ordinances and customs associated with draining established precedents that were later consciously adopted and relied upon by many other undertakings. Dugdale suggests that the drainage of this area began in the time of the Romans. He goes on to describe similar enterprises in East Kent, the Thames marshes, Surrey, on the north bank of the Thames, in London suburbs (as they then were), in Essex (including Dagenham), Kent and Sussex, Somerset (Sedgemoor), Gloucestershire, Yorkshire (Hatfield and Holderness), Derbyshire (very briefly), Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire (the longest of these sections). A wide range of sources is cited, from printed works, government records and papers in private hands.

Dugdale then provides a lengthy account of the early history of the Great Level itself, "which extendeth it self from about Halton and Toynton in Lincolnshire, through a good part of six counties, viz. Lincolne, Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridge, Huntendon and Northampton; being in length no lesse than LX miles; and in breadth ... neer fourty miles ... excepting the Isle of Ely, and some few places of that kind; as also Holland in Lincolnshire and Marshland in Norfolk".

The first stage of this discussion must be recognised as one of the earliest systematic attempts at what would now be termed "landscape archaeology", combining geological observations at various soil-levels with the evidence of rooted trees and bushes found below layers of silt, a fossilised fish reported upon by Sir Robert Cotton, and ancient artefacts such as boats and a smith's forge, discovered through drainage excavations far below the present land surface. All these together Dugdale took to show that the whole region had once been dry land, had then been flooded by the sea, and had reached its current state by the silting-up of river outfalls. He identified the Romans as having constructed protective embankments and a causeway from Denver to Peterborough; their presence was revealed by coins, earthworks and urns.

The piecemeal drainage works of the medieval period, chiefly undertaken by the Fenland monasteries, are then described district by district, with the narrative being carried on into the sixteenth century where appropriate. Here again a wide variety of documentary sources is cited. The section concludes, after some two hundred pages, with a chapter on "Commissions and Statutes of Sewers", focusing particularly on the strengthened legal powers granted to the commissioners by Henry VIII, upon which their successors relied when large-scale drainage schemes were promoted.

Then, at long last, Dugdale approaches the era of most interest to his contemporaries. Chapter 54 (pp. 375–416) describes the progress of plans for a general draining of the Great Level, pursued from the late sixteenth century onwards. A General Drainage Act passed at the end of Elizabeth's reign led to the launching in 1605 of a scheme headed by Lord Chief Justice Popham, and to the first accurate assessment of land areas, in the shape of a map and survey made by William Hayward. Popham's associates were to be rewarded with shares in drained land, but their venture collapsed well before reaching any such conclusion, in the face of local opposition and a serious lack of funds. Further investigations, discussions and reviews followed, but did not result in any significant action until 1631, when a syndicate led by the 4th Earl of Bedford secured the right to proceed. Dugdale's account of the extensive work carried out in the 1630s remains of especial value because he had access to the company's own records from that period, which were subsequently lost (probably in the Great Fire of London). He also refers repeatedly to court records from sessions of sewers and to other official documents from the state papers.

Charles I's intervention to declare the work unsatisfactory and his abortive attempt to continue it are described as "that noble designe of this excellent Prince". A slightly less flattering gloss is put upon the resumption of the project, after the Civil War years, by the 5th Earl and his associates, as they proceeded by order of "that Convention ... then called by the name of a Parliament". The works subsequently completed in the North, Middle and South Levels (as convenient subdivisions of the Great Level) are very briefly listed; here again Dugdale must have drawn on the drainage company's records, and perhaps upon his own observations on his tour though that is never specifically acknowledged.

It now appears rather odd that the whole account of activities in the 1650s runs to less than a page. The unexpected brevity can probably be explained by political considerations: Dugdale would not have wished to include more background material such as documents from state papers where those originated from the Cromwellian regime, or to write about opposition to the draining where that was suppressed by the presence of Cromwellian troops. Keeping the account so brief could perhaps help give the impression that everything that was done in the 1650s was uncontroversial and arose very naturally out of the

previous attempts at drainage. The account ends on a triumphant note with the final drainage adjudication of 1653.

Rather oddly, three further short chapters were then tacked on at the end of the book – on Lindsey Level, the East and West Fens and the Eight Hundred Fen, which are all in Lincolnshire. Some copies have a further nine pages presenting an Act of Parliament and other information on the draining of Ancholme Level in Lincolnshire, addenda which presumably became available very close to the time of the book's publication.

There is no record of what members of the drainage company thought of the *History* when it was published in 1662. One can only assume that they were happy with it, appreciating its length, breadth and scholarly solidity and recognising that the early chapters provided them with all the legal justification and historical precedent that they had been seeking. Shortly after its appearance they achieved their goal of securing permission to continue, with the passage of an Act of Parliament that authorised them to operate in perpetuity under the title of the Bedford Level Corporation. This was to endure until 1920. The *History* itself suffered a worse fate, as the copies that remained unsold in 1666, along with the stock of Dugdale's other publications, all went up in smoke in the Great Fire of London. The scale of the disaster for printers, publishers and booksellers was such that re-printing was not an option, and more than a century passed before the publication of a second edition².

The brevity of the printed account of the 1650s makes Dugdale's diary of his tour a particularly valuable document. It gives a vivid impression of the Fenland landscape immediately after the successful conclusion of the drainage enterprise, with details of new channels, new land ownership and plantations of new crops. In a sense this could be seen as the informal, verbal equivalent of the visual description provided by Jonas Moore's great 16-sheet wall-map. Dugdale himself obviously took an interest in maps, including a number of them in the *History*, and possibly he had Moore's help in assembling that selection; one, showing the Great Levell "Drained" (dramatically contrasting with another one showing it "Drowned") is a close relative of a single-sheet map produced by Moore for the drainage company in 1654. But how far Dugdale was aware of Moore's work on the new, much larger map is now impossible to ascertain.

He certainly undertook his task of inspection thoroughly, covering a great deal of ground in 18 days, as a glance at the map of the tour route supplied here will show (Fig. 1). That he went on from Cambridgeshire up through Lincolnshire to the Isle of Axholme indicates that he had done enough preliminary investigation to be aware of the importance of drainage enterprises in these areas and was planning to include discussion of them in his book, as in due course he did. The diary reveals what consistently close attention he paid to his surroundings as he travelled, though the Lincolnshire section is less de-

tailed than the one concerning the Great Level. Along with the new features that it was his official duty to emphasise, he noticed and noted surviving elements of the older landscape: old channels either remade or overgrown and useless, two former fortifications ("Belsars" near Willingham and another at Horsey Bridge near Peterborough³), old embankments and other earthworks. The last – around twenty of them – he invariably calls "tumuli", though probably quite a few, given their location, were in fact the spoil-heaps from former salterns. He also, inevitably given his authorship of *Monasticon*, carefully noted locations of former monastic establishments, as well as admiring the architecture of medieval churches.

Dugdale's personal tour seems to have influenced his published text only in very general terms. It might at least be said that it enabled him to write about the region with the confidence of one who understood its geography. He would no doubt have seen it as inappropriate to include comments of a more personal and informal kind amongst material that he was setting out to present with the utmost scholarly seriousness. But this means that the diary of his tour is a hugely valuable supplement. While it reflects the concerns attached to the author's commission from the drainage company, it is also redolent of his own antiquarian interests and preoccupations.

Text of Dugdale's Itinerary, 1657

from H. C. Darby, *The Draining of the Fens*, 2nd edn (Cambridge University Press, 1956), Appendix III (pp. 274–284), with the transcription corrected by reference to the original: British Museum Lansdowne MS. 722, ff. 29–38

I checked Darby's version against the manuscript on 10 Nov. 2014, and have subsequently double-checked it against digital photographs. The original is in poor condition and has been repaired using a tissue overlay, which does not help its legibility. Occasionally a word at the end of a line has been truncated by the pages being attached to guards.

*The entries are usually dated in the left margin, but these statements are not entirely accurate in the matter of matching a date to a day of the week. They are only correct from Monday 25 May onwards, which is right if one uses the Julian calendar. An accurate dating can also be found in some brief notes of the route kept by Elias Ashmole, who accompanied Dugdale on the trip though he is not mentioned in Dugdale's diary of the tour. Ashmole's notes have been published by R. T. Gunther, in *The Diary and Will of Elias Ashmole* (Oxford, 1927), pp. 59–60.*

The text runs from f. 29r to 38v, with f. 33v not used, so overall comprises 19 pp. in 11 openings. At f. 39v is a later note: "This is Sr. Wm Dugdale's handwriting". There is no reason to doubt this assertion. In his transcription, Darby has silently expanded quite a few abbreviations.

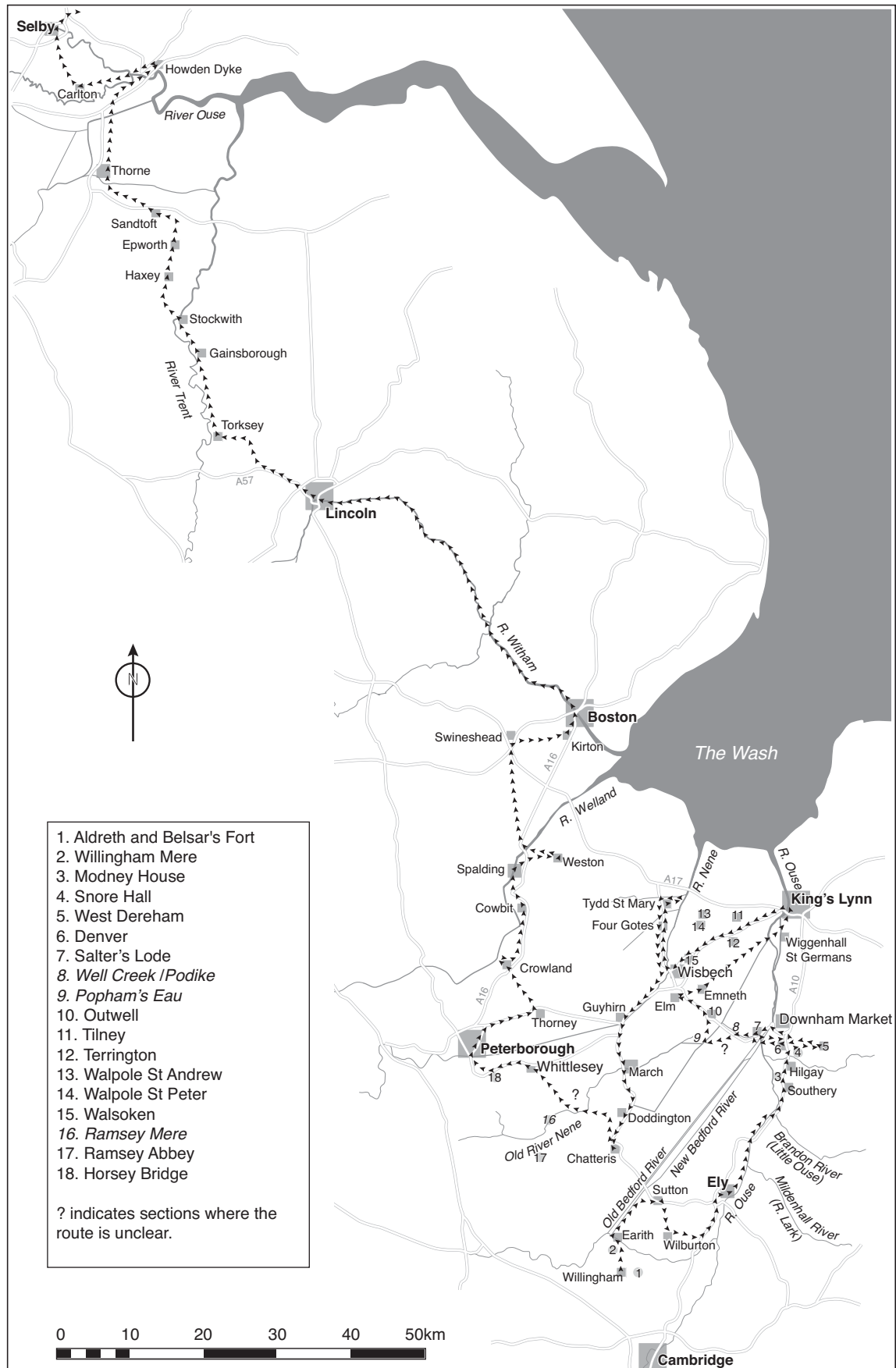


Figure 1. William Dugdale's route through the fens in 1657.

A^o 1657**Things observable in our Itinerarie begun from London 19^o Maij 1657**

[margin, in a different hand: Will Dugdales Diary in Order for his hystory of Fenne drayning]

Wednesday 21^o Maij

At the entrance upon Audrey Causey⁴ is part of a circular Fort, covering neere 3 acres of ground, which retained the name of Belsers, and is reputed by tradition to be one of those places of defence, which were made by King William the Conqueror, when he beleagured the Isle of Ely⁵.

This Causey is about 30 feet wide, and high rayseed with gravell; and extends it self from the before specified Fort, unto the village called *Audrey*, over a fenn of neere two mile broad, which village of Audrey is at the foot of the high land of the Isle of Ely.

Not farr off[f] the middle of this causey, the channell of Old Ouse thwarteth it; over which a very eminent Bridge of timber is built.

In the fen on both sides of this causey⁶, were extraordinary numbers of cattell, feeding; the richness of the soile affording them sufficient pasturage.

On the right hand as we passed over it, we saw *Denny Abbey*⁷, about 3 miles distant.

At the end of the Causey we turned on the left hand, and forded over that which is now called the channell of the old Ouse at a place called *Willingham gravell*; in our passage to which forde we saw a fair plantation of Onyons, Peas and Hempe, in a place called *Ewell fenn*, made by Colonell Castle⁸. And it was told us that the last yeare Onyons were sold there for £30 an acre.

Thence we went up the banke of the same chanell of *Ouse* till we came to *Erith*, where a sasse⁹ is made, to let Boats pass down towards Ely.

Here at this sasse we saw two new rivers made for conveying the water of *Ouse* a neerer way towards Linne¹⁰; the one of those, that which lyes north west, is called *Bedford River*¹¹, in regard that Francis Earle of Bedford¹² was the principall person in the Adventure for the making of it, being 70 foot wide, and 22 miles long.

The other River¹³, being made by the present Adventurers, containeth 100 foot in bredth, and reacheth to *Salthers load*, as Bedford River does. On which last River, as we were credibly informed, there were no less than 11000 men sometimes employed at worke, at a time.

Neere this Sasse we saw an Hermitage¹⁴ made of Brick and Stone which is covered with lead.

A little before we came to the before specified Sasse, we passed by the skirt of *Willingham Mere* (leaving it on our left hand) which meere since this diverting

the course of *Ouse*, and the inundations thereof so prevented, is now become well nigh drayned.¹⁵

And that, for the better keeping in the waters of *Ouse* within Channell, there is a large banke rayseed from *Erith* for the space of 4 miles, on the North-east side thereof, to keepe it from overflowing the levell, lying on the right hand thereof; the other side not needing any, in regard it is toward the high ground.

Passing down the side of this new river from *Erith*, we observed the banks to be about 8 or 9 feet high, from the brinke of the water. And for about 3 miles from *Erith*, turning through the fen on the right hand over a Causey called *Sutton gravell*, we came to Sutton (Fig. 2, Plate 7); and thence, over a moorish fen, where turffs for fuell are digged, we came to *Wilberton*, Mr. Anthony Hammond's house¹⁶, and lodged there that night.

Thursday 22^o Maij

The next day we went to *Ely* (being about 4 miles from *Wilberton*) and having stayed there a while, to view the Church and the towne, we passed from thence by the Deanerie, where we saw on our left hand a large heape of earth, *artificially* rayseed, which seemeth to have been the *Keepe* of some Castle¹⁷ anciently there. Thence going over Ely-bridge, on the south side of the towne, we tooke our course on the banke of *Ouse* till we came to a new Sasse, about a mile below, which is called *Ely hards*: So to the fall of *Mildnall river* into *Ouse*, where we passed over a Bridge.

Then about 2 miles further, by the banke of *Ouse*, we crossed the old Course of *Brandon River*, now scarce discernable¹⁸; neere which we saw a rich plantation of Coleseed, on our right hand¹⁹; then about half a mile further, we ferried over the River *Ouse* at a ferry called *Mildnall Drove*.

About 2 miles lower (continuing our journey on the northern bank of *Ouse*, and passing by divers rich plantations of Hempe, flax, oats, wheat etc.) we came to Sir *Edward Partridge his plantation*²⁰ of fruit Trees of all sorts, and Garden stufte: and likewise of Woad. And thence by severall rich plantations of flax, Hempe, Coleseed etc. to the mouth of *Brandon River*; and so half a mile further²¹ to *Suthrey ferry*; and so to *Suthrey* that night.²²

Friday 23^o Maij

From *Suthrey* to *Modney house*²³ (sometime a Cell to Ramsey Abbey). Thence to *Helgay*²⁴. Thence over *Stoke river*, (or *Wissey-river*) to *Snore Hall* (Sir Henry Skipwiths house)²⁵. Thence to *Dereham Abbey*²⁶. Thence to *Denver*. Thence to *Salthers load*, where we saw two great Sasses, a large Sluse betwixt them, all standing upon the course of the *old Ouse*.²⁷

Here at *Salthers load* we saw those two rivers²⁸, which are cut from *Erith*, fall into the *Ouse*: Whereof the one, viz. the new *Ouse*, hath a double channell²⁹ for the better reception of the water in the time of floods, for the space of 6 miles above.



Figure 2. The New Bedford River and Ouse Washes, Sutton Gault. Photo Frances Willmoth. See also Plate 7.

At the end of *Bedford River*, a little before it falls into Ouse is a strong Sluse of brick and stone.

Neere this there falls an ancient stream into Ouse, called W[ell] Creeke or *Podyke*, up which, from Ouse, divers small vessells do passe to Outwell, *March*, *Wittlesey* and *Peterborough*.³⁰ Neere the mouth of which there is a strong Sasse built of good free-stone.³¹

That evening we returned to *Denver*.³²

Sat 24^o Maij³³

From *Denver*, through *Downham Market*, we came to *Downham bridge*, over *Downham Ea*, which is a new cut fr[om] *Salthers load*, 120 foot wide, and containeth about 4 miles length, viz. from *Salthers load* to *Stow-bridge*, where it falls into Ouse.³⁴

A little above *Downham bridge*, were taken up at the ma[king] of that River, great store of Firr trees, it being a moore there which the workmen did digg.

Thence being entred the limits of *Marshland*, we kept up on our left hand to the bank called *Po-dike*³⁵; and about 2 miles from *Downham bridge*³⁶, came to the entrance of *Pophams Ea* (which is a straight cut, beginning above *Upwelle*)³⁷; where we saw a large Sluse through the said bank of *Po dike* to let the water, in flood times, into *Marshland*, for the easing of the *Podike* streame. Which water, having soe passed the same Sluse, is carried by two Cutts or Channells³⁸ but doe meet again in one, neere *Stow*, where they fall into Ouse.

Going up *Podike*, we observed it to be faced with brick for the space of 2 miles or more, for the better strengthening the banks. And above half a mile

short of *Outwell*, we saw where a great breche was made in Anno 1647, through the violence of the water and windes, by reason that the bank of *Churchfield*³⁹ did put it on, to presse more there, than in any other place.

At *Outwell*, we saw where the antient streame of Ouse went towards *Wisbeche*, betwene great banks, of a large distance asunder; but now almost filled by the silt of the tides, and made dry ground.

Passing from *Outwell* towards *Elme* we saw how the land on each side the way, had been drayned, by a multitude of ditches out of which the earth had been cast to rayse the ground like a ridge: and, before we came to *Elme*, we saw the banks widened in severall places, like great Bays, which are supposed to have been so stretcht out, by reason of some breaches, heretofore made there, when the course of the greater River Ouse went that way into the Sea. From *Elme* to *Emney*: and from *Emney*, over the *Smethe*⁴⁰ to *German bridge*, over *Ouse*; where tis observable that the floore of the Church, vizt. *Wiggenhall S. Germans*⁴¹ is at least 8 foot below the high water marke of Ouse (Fig. 3, Plate 8).

Thence to *Linne*⁴², there being, on our right and left hand many large bankes, for gayning the grounds, and defending them from the overflowings of the water.

Note that this water was antiently called *Wiggenhall Ea* before the River of *Ouse*, by filling up the Channell of *Wisbeche*, forced its passage this way: and it is observable that the Chanell here at *Linne*, by reason of the conflux of that and other Rivers, which now,



Figure 3. Wighenhall St Germans. Photo John Sutton <<http://www.geograph.org.uk/photo/3712041>>, license for re-use <<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0/>>. See also Plate 8.

and of long time have made their way at this out-fall, is soe excessively widened, that it hath worn away one of the parish Churches of old *Linne*, so that the b[odies] lying in the graves in that Churchyard, are daylie washt by the Tides.⁴³

Munday 25^o Maij

Passing over the ferry to *Old Linne* (Fig. 4, Plate 9) we come into *Marshland*, a rich and fruitful country, through which we passed to *Wisbeche*; taking our course, for a great part of the way, upon the Sea-banke, where we observed, that the marshes lying without the said banke, are now much higher than the ground within (about 3 feet for the most part). Neere a place called the *Crosse Keys*, we saw, without the Sea banke, two *Tumuli*, but that Marsh had formerly been within another Sea-bank which the violence of the River had long since worne away.

In this days journey we veiwed the Churches of *Tilney*, *Tirington*, *Walpoole St Andrew*, *Walpoole St Peter*, and *Walsokne*; all built with excellent workmanship, especially *Walpoole St Peter*.⁴⁴

At the east end of *Tilney* chancell in the churchyard is a grave stone, about 8 foot in length, which they report to be the Tombstone of one *Hickofrix*, who encountered a Giant with a Cart wheel for his sheild, and the Axtree for his weapon: which Giant kept the *Smethe* (a great common belonging to the seven towns of *Marshland*) and overcame the same Giant, as the tale goes. *St Frederick*⁴⁵ might recover by law the right of *Comon* for them.⁴⁶

[marginal note by Darby: "there is a badly written note in the margin at this paragraph". It's in a bigger,

sloppier hand but could still be Dugdale's. I read:

Q if this is not the Tower of *St Fredderick Tylney* mentioned by me ... Monuments⁴⁷

Pag: & that note neaver saith his tomb 8 feet long

Q if these hills were not rather cast up for the inhabitants to retire to in inundations.]

On the south side of *Walpoole* we saw a very large *Tumulus*, and having passed through *Walsokne*, we came over the great Sea banke of *Ouse* into a large plaine, in which the Sea had antiently ebbd and flowed to *Wisbeche* etc. and by the sides of this vast banke we beheld two or three great heapes of earth, which seeme to be *Tumuli*; and soe we lodged at *Wisbeche* that night.

At *Wisbeche* the river *Nen* cometh downe, which we passed over; and soe leaving *Leverington* on our left hand, neere which (without the compass of the old Sea banks) we beheld two very large *Tumuli*, we kept on towards *Tyd*, and in our passage, saw the old course of *Nen*, as also the new cut⁴⁸, where it now runneth, which was made by the Adventurers: and likewise the place where that great *Sasse* of *Stonework* stood, which was made by the Earle of *Bedford* and cost £7000 at least⁴⁹; but now pulled down, as useless, and disposed of to Mr Secretary *Thurlow*, towards his building of that fair new house in *Wisbeche*, which stands where the old Castle was⁵⁰.

This was on our right hand. Then we kept down along the Seabank to the 4 Goats, a place where the water passeth through the old Sea banke; and then came to a large cut called the *Shire-draine* which divideth *Cambridgeshire* from *Lincolnshire*: on which drayne



Figure 4. The Lynn Ferry across the River Ouse. Photo Dr. Susan Oosthuizen. See also Plate 9.

is, at the Bridge we passed over, a faire Sasse, made by the Adventurers. Thence we went to *Tyd St. Maries*, along the same old Sea banke; which we observed to be soe broad at the top that in most places, three carts might pass abreast. Thence we turned back, and on the right hand coasted over to a high banke, heretofore made for the defence of the inner marshes, and soon after came to two Sluces, neere the mouth of the River that passeth from *Wisbeche* to the Sea: which Sluces do let out the water from that drayne called *Shire-Drayne*, into the said River. And soe passing up towards *Wisbeche*, rode by the side of a large and high bank, lately made by the said Adventurers on the West side of the river, for defence of the Marshes lying on the west side of it, from inundation.

In this our passage, we observed, within a flight shoot of the before mentioned Sluces, where the late King Charles erected a costly sluice, with strong Timber works; which strangely sunk, and was swallowed up into the earth. And going by the River side, towards *Wisbeche*, found the Channell which runneth up from the said sluices to *Wisbeche* to be a new one, and made in a straight line, by the Adventurers.

Tuesday 26. Maij

From *Wisbeche*, we went the next morning to *Guyhyrne*, by the side of the river of *Nene*, which now, at the charge of the Adventurers, comes in a straight cutt. And on our left hand, about a mile before we came to *Guyhyrne*, went by the side of a large waste, which hath been made lately by the Adventurers, for

the easing of the Channell in a flood time, by reception of a great proportion of water.

At *Guyhyrne* we saw that Cutt, which cometh from *Peterborough*, and conveyeth the river of *Nene* thither, called *Mortons leame*, in regard it was made at the charge of *John Morton*, sometime Bpp of Ely.⁵¹

And from thence we coasted on the left hand to *March Bridge*, where we saw the old passage of the River *Nene*, which is still made use of by Boats and Barges, for Coales and other Commodities.

About half a mile short of *March*, we saw the vestigia of that gravelly Causey, which cometh from *Denver* (neere *Salthers lode*) and runns up to *Peterborough*.⁵² And half a mile South of *March Church*, we saw 3 Tumuli, whereof one is of a very great magnitude.

Thence we came to *Dudington* and there lodged at Mr. Payton's house.⁵³

Wednesday 27^o Maij

From *Dudington* we went to *Charteriz*, where there is no vestigia of the Monasterie now left; one Mr Gascoyne who dwelleth there, having transformed it into a new house.⁵⁴

Thence, back again, about a mile off[f], we passed over a Bridge, where 2 cutts are, the one 30 foote wide, the other 40: which cutts are called *Vermudens Ea*, in regard that they were designed by *Sir Cornelius Vermuden* (an eminent man for this drayning worke)⁵⁵ and were made to carry the over plus water of *Nene*,

into *Bedford river*, being about xi miles: but they are now wholly useless, and doe grow up aga[ine] in regard they have no current to scour them.

Passing downe the droveway, between these two Cuttes, we thwarted the old Course of *Ouse*, now almost grown up, in re[gard] no water goeth that way.

At the further end of this drove we saw *Ramsey Mere*, on ou[r] right-hand, within half a flight shoot) and *Ramsey Abbey*.⁵⁶ I meane the place where it stood, being now Mr *Henry Cromwell's* seat⁵⁷, on our left hand somewhat above a mile and a half distant.

And then we passed over a ferry, and so rode to *Wittlesey*, le[aving] the famous cut called *King's Delfe*, or *Sword dike* (made by *Canutus*⁵⁸) on our left hand: which delfe is, for the space of about 2 miles now scoured: But then, going over a Bridge where is a straight cut made from thence to *Wittlesey*, we left the delfe on our left hand, a great deale; for it went directly to *Peterborough*.

At *Wittlesey*, we passed over an old drayne, which hath heretofore been usefull for boats and Barges, but now not soe in regard of the diversion of the Rivers, and new draynes made by the Adventurers.

In the Church of *Wittlesey*⁵⁹ is nothing considerable, by reason the windows are defaced, and glazed with white glasse.

But on the South side of *Wittlesey* (about a quarter of a mile from the Church) we saw a fine plantation of fruit Trees, willows, and other vegetables, made by *Colonell Underwood* (one of the Adventurers)⁶⁰ which is inclosed with regular dikes, and hath in it divers Fish ponds.

from *Wittlesey* we went to *Peterborough*, through succeeding rich grounds, both corn and meadow; and at *Horsey bridge* (a mile short of *Peterborough*) saw an old large and strong Fort⁶¹ which the Parliament Forces, by new scouring the ditches thereof had repayred, in the time of the late troubles.

About a mile below *Peterborough*, beginneth the Cutt which carryeth the river *Nene* to *Guy hyrne* which Cutt is called *Morton's Leame*⁶²; but hath lately been scoured by the Adventurers, and made somewhat wider and deeper than it was originally.

Thursday 28th May

We passed from *Peterborough*⁶³, where on the east part of the Towne, we thwarted a very deep Channel, long since cut out through firme and high grounds, with wonderfull cost and labour, as may seeme by the large banks on either side thereof: which Channell is called *Carr dike*, and runneth up Northwestwards ... [sic] into the River *Welland*.⁶⁴

About a myle and a half from *Peterborough*, we left *Oxney* (sometime a cell to *Peterborough*)⁶⁵ on our right hand and scarce halfe a mile farther, *Iberie*, a like Cell (or rather Grange)⁶⁶ on our left; where had been a Barne of a very vast bigness and length, as by

that part of it yet standing, and walls of the rest, may seeme.

Thence, within less than a mile, crossing the cutt called *Bull-dike*, or *Cat-water*, we came to *Thorney*, where there is nothing remayning of the famous *Abby*⁶⁷, sometime standing there excepting a few scattering ruines, which serve only to show that the structure thereof was most noble and magnificent: As also a part of the *Abby Church*, and the body thereof from the Crosse to the west end; but the Iles, which sided it are utterly gone, and the roof taken much lower than it originally was. The pillars of which part, so standing, do show it to be of the same time, for the structure, as *Peterborough Minster* was, viz. about King *Henry the first's* reigne.

This Iland whereon the *Abby* stood, is about 300 Acres in extnt. I meane that which was heretofore high ground, and was bordered with the Fenns, but the Fens now environing it, are by the Adventurers draynings, made so drye, that there are of all sorts of corne and grasse, now growing thereon, the greatest plenty imaginable.

From *Thorney* we passed on Northwards till we came to a Causey, which is the utmost extent of the territories belonging to the *Abby of Crowland*⁶⁸; and going then on the right hand almost a mile, along the same Causey, came to the skirts of *Holland*, where the banke, called *South-ea banke* beginneth; the Houses there being called *Dousedale*, and the banke running up, on the left hand, called *Dousedale banke*.

From this place we turned back againe, and keeping on the direct way to *Crouland*, observed almost all the ground on our righte hand this Causey overspread with Alders, which now, by the drayning, is sunke almost two foote, soe that the roots of these Alders have but a very shallow footing in the earth.

And on our left hand neere the same Causey (about 2 miles before we came to *Crouland*) we saw the pedestal of one of the *St. Guthlak's crosses*⁶⁹, and a piece of the shaft thereof; but thrown down and broken.

At *Crouland* we observed the Bridge, which is triangular, (a very notable peice of work)⁷⁰ and that part of the *Abby Church*⁷¹, which is now standing, viz. the west end from the Cross; which hath a costly roofoe of timber, most richly gilt, as if it were newly done.

The Church standeth so low, that, before the drayning, there was noe passage to it in some wet seasons, but by Boates; nor doth the area of it lye much higher than the levell of the water in the winter season. Of the *Abby* it selfe⁷², which stood on the south side thereof, there is not one stone left that is to be seene. And at the East end of the Churchyard, I saw some trenches, where the foundation of the Quire had been; in which, as I was told, there were at the taking up the said foundation, great and strong piles of wood found, on which it had been layd.

From *Crouland*, we came to *Cubbit*⁷³, where a little before we entered the towne, we saw a Tumulus (neere

the way) on our right hand: and two miles short of *Spalding*, we saw another Tumulus, more large, close by the way side, on the right hand: and soe we kept on our course to *Spalding*, along the banke of Welland; a great part whereof, viz. from *Crowland* for above 4 miles, is now newly rayseed to a much greater bignesse and height, than it hath been, by the present Adventurers; by which means all the Fen on the right hand, which lyeth within the Adventurers Levell, is well drayned: but that on the otherside towards *Deping*, called *Deepin fen*, is for the most part under water⁷⁴.

[margin:] Friday 29 Maij

We went from *Spalding*, and kept along the great Seabanke about 3 miles, (till we came opposite to *Wickham grange*;) and then turning back, we passed over a streame, called the River of *Glene*, to a place called *Durgate*; where we saw a Tumulus on our left hand the way [*sic* – presumaby ‘by the way’ was intended]. Thence to *Swinstede*⁷⁵, where there is no appearance of any of the Abby; but all that is left of it, converted into other buildings. Thence towards *Kirton*, where (short of the Church⁷⁶ about a mile) we saw two large Tumuli, whereof that on our right hand was for the most part digged downe: and beyond *Kirton*, about a mile, we passed by another Tumulus, a very large one, where a great Ashe now groweth.

Soe keeping in our course to *Boston*, (neere the Towne) we passed over a great Sluce, called *Skirbeck Sluce*⁷⁷; at the erecting whereof, there was taken up, 16 foot deepe in the ground, a *Smyth’s forge*, and all his tooles, with Horse shooes and other things made of Iron, as we were told by those that saw them.

[margin:] Saturday 30^o Maij

From *Boston* we rode to *Lincoln*, passing over a large Fen which adjoyneth to *Boston*, and extendeth to *Leveringham*, through which there is a large drayne, lately scoured; which cometh down to *Skirbeck Sluce*, above mentioned.

Being on the Hill at *Lincoln*, we saw the course of the *Witham river*, which goeth from *Lincoln* to *Boston*; but it is now very narrow and of little depth. On the North west side of *Lincoln*, beyond the Hill, lyeth a large Fen, which extendeth to *Torksey*; through which, there is an antient drayne made, called *Fosse dike*⁷⁸: but the water coming into this drayne from *Saxelby*⁷⁹, south east wards, passeth into *Witham*, and soe runneth away to *Boston*; soe that *Saxelby* seemeth to be the highest ground in all that Fen in regard that from thence, part of the water comes to *Lincoln*; and part, the contrary way to *Torksey*. They say, that in digging of this Fen, after the first spade grasse they come to moore, about 18 inches thick; then to sand.

[margin:] Munday [1]^o Junij

From *Lincoln* we rode to *Torksey*; for the space of 4 miles at least, along an old Roman way, which we met with about 3 miles beyond *Lincoln*, Northwards. This way (as by the ridge upon the high grounds, ap-

peareth) runneth west-north-west, and East South East; but we followed it no farther than *Littleborough Ferry*, upon *Trent*, where a Romane station hath been, as t’is sayd, and many coynes found there. When we came to *Torksey*, we found the ruines of the *Priorie*⁸⁰, about halfe a Bow shoot Eastwards from the parish Church⁸¹; and a house[?] the place where the *Nunnery of Fosse*⁸² stood, which is about a quarter of a mile southwards from *Torksey*, neare the bridge called *Fosse bridge*, under which that antient drayne, beginning at *Lincoln* and going downe through *Saxelby*, runneth. Neere which Bridge, viz. lesse than a Bow shoot, the said drayne commonly called *Fosse dike*, entreth into the river *Trent*.

In the mid way betwixt the site of that Nunnery, and *Torksey Church*, I saw a Tumulus, upon the edge of the high ground, not much above a stones cast from the *Trent*. Thence we went to *Gaynesborough*⁸³.

Tuesday 2^o Junij

From *Gaynesborough* we rode to *Stokwith ferry*⁸⁴ (downe *Trent* above 4 miles) and in our passage observed two Tumuli within half a mile of *Gaynesborough*. From this towne, on the southern bank of *Trent*, there is a very large Bank, which continueth till it comes below *Burton Stather*, being made for the defence of all that countrey, from drowning, when the tides are high: And on the other side, are also Bankes for defence of the meadows from the like inundation; but not soe large or soe high.

Passing over *Stokwith Ferry*, we went over a wooden bridge immediately, which standeth upon the river *Idel*; which River doth enter into the *Trent* there, that being the skirt of the Isle of *Axholme*. And so turning on the left hand, up the streame of that River found it bank’t very high on either side. This bank we rode on, for a while, and then turned over the large fenny flat on the right hand thereof, which is now drayned; and observed above the midst thereof two great banks, which were intended heretofore, as it seemed for the conveyance of some considerable water, into the *Trent*; but are broke of.⁸⁵

Thence we went to *Axey* the principal town of the said Island of *Axholme*, and whence it tooke the name: which town standeth (like *Ely*) on high ground. Thence to *Epworth*, where the Lords *Moubray* had heretofore a fair mannour house, on the south side the Churchyard, now utterly ruined⁸⁶, so that corn groweth where it stood. Below this town about half a mile south east wards, is *Melwood*, where the monastery of the *Carthusians*, founded by the Lord *Moubray*, stood. And Eastward from *Epworth* about a mile are still some remaining ruines of a strong Castle, at a place called *Ouston*; which Castle was also belonging to that famly of *Moubray*.

From *Epworth*, we passed over a great flat, to *Santoft*, where there is a Chapell (very ruinous) built about 20 years since by those French and Dutch, who adventured in the improving of this Isle, by drayning.⁸⁷

Thence we followed a large draine, there made; having passed a bridge over a longe new cutt, made when that chapel was built, which is called the *Dutchman's draine*, and extendeth from [sic] downe to the River *Trent*.

After this, keeping on our course towards *Thurne*, we passed by 4 windmills, used for bruising of Rapeseed, and making oyle thereof: which Rapeseed flourisheth much in this rich fenny country, now it is thus drayned.⁸⁸

Before we came to *Thurne*, we met with a new Cutt, where the river *Idell* now runneth.

And no sooner were passed *Thurne*, but we came to two very large new bankes, betwixt which the River of *Done*, is restrayned from drowning the countreys, on each side; on which banke we rode till we came to *Howden dike*, a place of very great note; for the current passeth in two large Channells, betwixt two mighty banks there, down to a Bridge of wood, where meeting againe they goe downe in a broad and deep cutt, betwixt the like banks to *Howden*.⁸⁹

Being passed over this bridge, we came, within a quarter of a mile, to a place, called *Turnbridge*; where is a Sasse upon the river *Done*. Thence to *Carelton*, and so to *Selby*.

[margin:] Wednesday 3 Junij

From *Selby* we rode to *Yorke*.

[margin:] Thursday 4. Junij

From *Yorke* to *Rotheram*, by Pountfret.

[margin:] Friday 5 Junij

From *Rotheram* to *Derby*.

[margin:] Saturday 6^o Junij

From *Derby* to *Blyth Hall*.

[Darby here includes an inscription from Wisbech church, which is transcribed in the ms. at f. 33]

Endnotes

1. A facsimile of this extraordinarily impressive map has been published as *Jonas Moore's Mapp of the Great Levell of the Fenns, 1658, [with] accompanying text by Frances Willmoth and Elizabeth Stazicker*, Cambridgeshire Records Society, 23, 2016.
2. The second edition was compiled by C. N. Cole (1772) and part of another by George W. Lemon (Lynn and London, 1792).
3. Belsars Fort, previously "Belassis" – Scheduled Monument 1010368 – is now judged to be a "medieval ringwork constructed on top of a prehistoric enclosure and with associated remains of part of a medieval field system". *Heritage Gateway*, Cambridgeshire HER <http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MCB2256&resourceID=1000> [accessed 22 Jan. 2015]. For a plan and description of the fort at Horsey Bridge near Stanground (similar to the Bulwark at Earith) see <http://www.huntingdonshire.info/history/2_5_other_earthworks.htm>.
4. Aldreth Causeway, a very ancient trackway. As Dugdale goes on to indicate, it provided access to the Isle of Ely from the south.
5. The traditional association with William the Conqueror is still accepted as plausible (see n. 3 above). It is marked on Jonas Moore's *Mapp* as "A Round fort made by W.C."
6. Jonas Moore's *Mapp* shows that after crossing the (unnamed) bridge Dugdale would have seen "Ewell Fenn" on the left of the causeway and "Homes and Church Fenn in Haddenham" on his right.
7. Founded in 1159 as a Benedictine monastery, in 1170 Denny was taken over by the Knights Templars. After the Templars' suppression for alleged heresy in 1308, it became a convent of Franciscan nuns known as the Poor Clares. Following the dissolution of the nunnery in 1539 by Henry VIII, it became a farmhouse. Substantial remnants of the abbey buildings are still visible and are now accompanied by a Farmland Museum. 'Waterbeach: Manors and other estates', in *A History of the County of Cambridge and the Isle of Ely: Volume 9, Chesterton, Northstowe, and Papworth Hundreds*, ed. A P M Wright and C P Lewis (London, 1989), pp. 243–248. *British History Online* <<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/cambs/vol9/pp243-248>> [accessed 8 April 2017].
8. Robert Castle of East Hatley, Cambs., a colonel in the parliamentary army; he was closely involved in the management of the 1650s drainage company. For his biography see 'Jonas Moore's *Mapp* (n. 1 above) pp. 46–47.
9. A "sasse" was a lock (a term derived from Dutch). This was Hermitage Lock, which still exists, though it has been several times rebuilt since the 17th century.
10. King's Lynn, so designated from the time of Henry VIII but still commonly simply called "Lynn".
11. Now known as the Old Bedford River; it was dug in the 1630s.
12. Francis Russell, 4th Earl of Bedford (1593–1641), was the chief promoter of the 1630s drainage scheme. His son William succeeded him as 5th Earl and later Duke.
13. Now known as the New Bedford River or Hundred Foot River.
14. A medieval building, now vanished.
15. The Victoria County History says it was fully drained by the 1720s: 'Willingham: Introduction', *A History of the County of Cambridge and the Isle of Ely: Volume 9: Chesterton, Northstowe, and Papworth Hundreds* (1989), pp. 398–402. Accessed 6 August 2014 through *British History Online* <<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=15509>>.
16. Ham(m)ond (1608–61) was a leading member of the drainage company, having subscribed to the Indenture of Fourteen Parts in 1631; he was one of the Committee of Comptroll in the 1650s, helped supervise work on the ground, and from 1653 was Conservator of the South Level. In 1656 he was nominated as one of the Lords of the Level and a Jurat. See *Jonas Moore's Mapp* (n. 1 above), pp. 66–68. His connection with Wilburton arose through his being a great-nephew of Sir Miles Sandys, 1st Bart. (1563–1645), who had his principal seat there.
17. Ely Castle was a motte-and-bailey construction built in 1070, in wood, rebuilt in stone in 1140 and demolished soon after 1268. The mound survives in Cherry Hill Park, and artefacts excavated from it in 2002 are in Ely Museum. <<http://www.castlesuncovered.com/england/elycastle.html>>.

18. The newer Brandon River lies some distance further north (see below). The channel that was "scarce discernable" was probably the one marked on Moore's *Mapp* as Depney Lode, which is shown as meeting the Ouse just south of Mildenhall Drove.
19. Presumably in the adventurers' lots in Whelpmoor, just north of Mildenhall Drove.
20. "Severalls to Sir Edward Partrich" are marked on Jonas Moore's 1658 *Mapp*, sheet 7, on the west bank of the Ouse just north of Littleport Mow Fen. Their edge is marked by a row of trees.
21. The phrase "to the mouth of Brandon River; and so half a mile further" is an insertion above the line.
22. Dugdale does not say where he stayed, but Ashmole's notes helpfully do: "to Mr Moores at Southery", arriving at 6 p.m. Jonas Moore may have moved back to London fairly soon after this visit.
23. See 'Houses of Benedictine monks: The priory of Modeney', in *A History of the County of Norfolk*: Volume 2, ed. William Page (London, 1906), p. 349 <<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/norfolk/vol2/p349>> [accessed 23 January 2015]. It was indeed a cell of Ramsey Abbey, and stood "in the parish of Hilgay, about a mile southwest of the church, near the River Ouse". On Moore's 1658 *Mapp*, "Modney Ground" appears here.
24. Now Hilgay.
25. Moore's 1658 *Mapp* shows "Snour Hall" on the north bank of Roxam Drain where it runs parallel to the River Wissey, with "Capt Skipwiths Fenn to the west of it and "Inbanked grounds of Sir Edmd Skipwith Esqr" nearby on the western side of the Ouse. It is also spelled "Snowre Hall". According to Kelly's 1933 directory (under Fordham parish), the manor house there was rebuilt by Sir Ralph Skipwith (1605–60) in 1651; a previous house on the site is reputed to have given Charles I shelter in 1646, before he gave himself up to the Scots.
26. West Dereham Abbey, a house of Premonstratensian canons, was founded in 1188, dissolved in 1539, and given by Henry VIII to Thomas Dereham of Crimplesham; the Dereham family was still there in 1657.
27. Salter's Lode is now the name of a settlement on the west bank of the Ouse, where the Old and New Bedford Rivers finish, but in the 17th century it often seems to have been applied to the whole complex on both sides of the river, including the eastern part we now call Denver Sluices.
28. That is, the Old and New Bedford Rivers.
29. Dugdale seems to have misunderstood something here. There is no doubling of the channel marked on Moore's *Mapp*. The space provided for the reception of floodwaters was the "Washland" between the Old and New Bedford Rivers, which narrows as they approach Denver.
30. Well Creek was a tributary of the Well Stream, which was a major channel before alterations elsewhere, in the medieval period and later, reduced its water levels.
31. This was installed in the 1630s: Darby, p. 42.
32. Ashmole notes that they visited Edward Barber. In the National Archives is the will of Edward Barber of Denver, 1679. He was lord of West-hall manor from 1660.
33. Altered from "23^o".
34. The 1650s drainage company had planned to call this "St John's Drain", after the prominent lawyer and politician Oliver St John (a Lord Chief Justice and a member of his relative Oliver Cromwell's Council of State, 1649–1653), but he declined the honour.
35. That is the "New Podyke Bancke" on Moore's 1658 *Mapp*, running along "Well Creeke" from Outwell to Nordelph and then to Salter's Lode; the line of "Old Podyke bancke" is marked on the northern edge of the *Mapp*, curving down from Stow, on the Ouse, to Outwell.
36. At Nordelph.
37. Dug in the first decade of the 17th century by an otherwise abortive drainage enterprise headed by Lord Chief Justice Popham. See H. C. Darby (1956), pp. 31–32. It connects the Nene with Well Creek.
38. Labelled "Marshland Cutt inbanked" on Moore's *Mapp* but soon to become known as "The Tongs Drain", from its double-channelled shape – looking like fire-tongs to which the dead straight Downham Ea was the poker. Historians have sometimes rendered it "Tong's Drain" as though named after a person, but this is misleading.
39. On Moore's *Mapp* the area immediately south and east of Outwell is rather elaborately labelled "Church Feild", with a pair of lines on its eastern side (one continuous, one dotted) marked "Banks". The bank meets Well Creek/the New Podyke just below a feature labelled "Navigable Sass" (i.e., a lock).
40. See below. An area east of Emneth is marked as "Marshland Smeeth" on modern maps.
41. The phrase "vizt. Wiggshall S. Germans" is an insertion in the margin. Wiggshall had four ancient churches – St Germain, St Peter, St Mary and St Mary Magdalen – all lying close to the banks of the Ouse. Of these, the first and last remain in use. St Germain was a Bishop of Paris. See <<http://www.norfolkchurches.co.uk/>>.
42. Ashmole notes that before arriving in Lynn they called upon Lawrence Oxborow (Oxborough) at Hackbech Hall, Emneth. He was the grandson of Thomas Oxborough, who was MP for Lynn earlier in the century and a highly influential man locally.
43. Possibly the church of St Edmund, which was demolished by flooding in the 13C and flooded again in the 17C [according to advice from Norfolk Record Office staff].
44. These churches are: All Saints, Tilney (1180); St Clements, Terrington; Walpole St Andrew; Walpole St Peter; and All Saints, Walsoken (1146). See <<http://www.norfolkchurches.co.uk/>>.
45. It is not clear why Dugdale thought the church at Tilney was associated with "St Frederick", who is not otherwise recorded as a saint.
46. This sentence is an insertion between the lines.
47. Dugdale's "Book of Monuments" or "Book of Draughts", compiled in 1640–41 with illustrations by William Sedgewick, survives (incompletely) in BL Add. MS 71474.
48. "The Old course" of the Nene and "The New" appear at the top edge of the second sheet of Moore's *Mapp*.
49. The phrase "Earle of Bedford and cost £7000 at least" is an insertion, substituted for the deleted "late King Charles".
50. John Thurloe (1616–68) was Secretary of State to Oliver Cromwell and an MP. The house he had built at Wisbech – on the old Castle site that had formerly belonged to the Bishop – was demolished towards the end of the 18th century and replaced in the early 19th with a much less imposing building, which still stands. All that survives from Thurloe's time is pair of stone gateposts.
51. Morton (c. 1420–1500) was appointed Bishop of Ely on 8 August 1478 and consecrated on 31 January 1479. He held the post until 1486. The Leam dates from the start of his tenure. Darby (1956), p. 41.

52. Sometimes called "Fen Causeway". The Norfolk Heritage Explorer ([at <www.heritage.norfolk.gov.uk>](http://www.heritage.norfolk.gov.uk)) credits Dugdale with being the first to record the existence of this feature, but gives a date of 1772 so must be referring to his reprinted *History of Embanking and Drayning* of that date. Its full route has not been identified.
53. John Peyton of Doddington was to be made a Baronet in 1660 (d. 1661).
54. The nunnery at Chatteris was a small Benedictine foundation dating from the early 11th century: 'Houses of Benedictine nuns: Abbey of Chatteris', in *A History of the County of Cambridge and the Isle of Ely: Volume 2*, ed. L F Salzman (London, 1948), pp. 220–223. *British History Online* [\[http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/cambs/vol2/pp220-223\]](http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/cambs/vol2/pp220-223) [accessed 11 April 2017]. The *VCH* also notes that one George Gascoyne turned the old nunnery buildings into a house, but the manor had a complex history and it changed hands soon after Dugdale saw it. No trace survives.
55. These two channels were labelled with Vermu(y)den's name on Jonas Moore's *Mapp*, and are still in existence.
56. Ramsey, founded in the 10th century, was one of the most important Benedictine monasteries in England: 'Houses of Benedictine monks: The abbey of Ramsey', in *A History of the County of Huntingdon: Volume 1*, ed. William Page, Granville Proby and H E Norris (London, 1926), pp. 377–385. *British History Online* [\[http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/hunts/vol1/pp377-385\]](http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/hunts/vol1/pp377-385) [accessed 11 April 2017].
57. Henry Cromwell (1625–73) dropped the Cromwell surname after the Restoration and became "Mr Williams": [\[http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1660-1690/member/cromwell-henry-1625-73\]](http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1660-1690/member/cromwell-henry-1625-73) [accessed 11 April 2017]. As a local magnate and MP, he was a very consistent opponent of Fen drainage.
58. On Moore's *Mapp*, there is a channel clearly marked: "Knutus his dyke – Kings delf – Sword dyke". It begins just East of Horsey bridge, takes an initially curving line, then straightens out, going SE; after it has crossed Bevill's Leam and Underwood's Drain it continues on the same straightish line, labelled "Delf dyke and the way from Whittlesey to Ramsey". Modern scholarship suggests the channel predated Canute – there is charter evidence of its existence from c. 972. (Dr Susan Oosthuizen pers. comm.)
59. Whittlesey has two medieval churches, St Mary's and St Andrew's. Given his route into Whittlesey from Ramsey, Dugdale probably saw St Andrew's.
60. Col. Francis Underwood (c. 1610–77) lived at Whittlesey. Mark Noble in his *Memoirs of the Protectoral-house of Cromwell* (1787), says of Underwood: "He was a great favourite of Oliver, the Protector, to whom he was probably known before the civil war broke out. Oliver ... gave him a commission ... [in] 1643. He rose to the rank of major, colonel and lastly lieutenant colonel. So early as June 8, 1648, he was appointed governor of Whittlesey and Crowland ... He was certainly a useful person to his party, but his government was odious from his severity." For a details of his involvement in drainage, see *Jonas Moore's Mapp* (n. 1 above), pp. 109–111.
61. See n. 3 above.
62. See above (n. 51).
63. Ashmole's notes indicate that at 9.30 a.m., shortly after leaving Peterborough, they called upon the Lord Chief Justice Oliver St John (1598–1673) at Thorp (Longthorpe). He had very recently built a new house there.
64. Details of Carr Dyke can be found at: <http://www.lincstothepast.com/Car-Dyke-in-Lincolnshire/236246.record?pt=5>. It was indeed an ancient channel, possibly Roman and probably with multiple uses – as a boundary, as a catchwater drainage channel for upland water and, in some sections, as a means of transport.
65. Oxney Priory was a small Benedictine establishment, with a chapel dedicated to the Virgin Mary. It was in existence by the reign of Edward I. See [\[http://www.pastscape.org/hob.aspx?hob_id=352071\]](http://www.pastscape.org/hob.aspx?hob_id=352071).
66. Apparently not recorded as a monastic house; Dugdale must be right that it was simply a grange.
67. Thorney Abbey was a grand Benedictine foundation, established in the 970s and substantially remodelled in the 11th–12th centuries. The church, dedicated to St Mary and St Botolph, still survives. After the Dissolution the monastic lands passed into the hands of the Russell family, Earls of Bedford.
68. Crowland was a Benedictine Abbey, first founded in the eighth century around the shrine of St Guthlac. As one of the richest of the East Anglian monasteries, it enjoyed a prosperous life from the twelfth century until the Dissolution. See [\[https://www.crowlandabbey.org.uk/history/\]](https://www.crowlandabbey.org.uk/history/).
69. These were set up as boundary markers for the Crowland Abbey lands. One partially survives, and is on the Listed Buildings register: [\[http://www.britishlisted-buildings.co.uk/en-197969-st-guthlacs-cross-crowland-lincolnshire#.WLQJX1Pctv4\]](http://www.britishlisted-buildings.co.uk/en-197969-st-guthlacs-cross-crowland-lincolnshire#.WLQJX1Pctv4).
70. This 14th-century stone footbridge still stands. It used to cross the River Welland, but the channel has long since become dry. It was built with three piers and consequently sometimes called Trinity Bridge. See [\[http://www.rodcollins.com/wordpress/crowland-bridge-trinity-bridge-in-lincolnshire\]](http://www.rodcollins.com/wordpress/crowland-bridge-trinity-bridge-in-lincolnshire).
71. Dedicated to St Mary, St Bartholomew and St Guthlac.
72. 'Houses of Benedictine monks: The abbey of Crowland', in *A History of the County of Lincoln: Volume 2*, ed. William Page (London, 1906), pp. 105–118. *British History Online* [\[http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/lincs/vol2/pp105-118\]](http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/lincs/vol2/pp105-118) [accessed 14 April 2017].
73. Cowbit.
74. Deeping Fen had a long history of failed drainage projects.
75. There is a place called Swinstead in Lincolnshire, but it's a long way from Dugdale's apparent route. He must have in fact meant Swineshead, which is closer to Kirton and which once had a monastic house: 'Houses of Cistercian monks: The abbey of Swineshead', in *A History of the County of Lincoln: Vol. 2*, ed. William Page (London, 1906), pp. 145–146 [\[http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/lincs/vol2/pp145-146\]](http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/lincs/vol2/pp145-146) [accessed 21 April 2015].
76. Dedicated to St Peter and St Paul, the present building dates from the 12th century onwards.
77. Skirbeck is a mile or so south of Boston.
78. In existence in the 12th century and possibly very much older, the Foss Dyke connected the Trent at Torksey to Lincoln.
79. Today Saxilby.
80. The priory of St Leonard at Torksey was a small establishment founded in the 12th century: 'Houses of Austin canons: The priory of Torksey', in *A History of the County of Lincoln: Volume 2*, ed. William Page (London, 1906), pp. 170–171. *British History Online* [\[http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/lincs/vol2/pp170-171\]](http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/lincs/vol2/pp170-171) [accessed 13 April 2017].
81. St Peter's. A "bowshot" or "bow shoot", in general

- parlance, can be assumed to be between 50 and 75 yards <<https://sizes.com/units/bowshot.htm>>, though much longer distances have been recorded.
82. A Cistercian foundation of 12th-century date. Noted in Dugdale's *Monasticon*, vol. 4, pp. 292–95. Brief details are at <http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MLI52540&resourceID=1006>.
 83. Between Lincoln and Gainsborough, Ashmole notes, they went "to Mr Dodsworth at Burton", arriving there at 7 p.m. so presumably staying there for the night. Burton Gate or Gate Burton is a village a few miles south of Gainsborough, but who Mr Dodsworth was I have been unable to establish.
 84. An inn called the Ferry House marks where a ferry linked the settlements of East and West Stockwith.
 85. For a few years from 1626 onwards, Cornelius Vermuyden was in charge of a drainage scheme for Hatfield Chase and the Isle of Axholme. The plan and inevitable subsequent problems are summarised in L. E. Harris, *Vermuyden and the Fens* (London, 1953), pp. 48–53.
 86. The Mowbrays owned the manor of Epworth from the late 11th century to the death of their last male heir (the 16th Baron) in 1476. They regarded it as their principal seat, although they had estates in several other counties. See <<http://www.axholme.info/the-mowbray-family.html>>. By the seventeenth century it was the property of the Crown.
 87. Vermuyden brought over a workforce and settlers from the continent and obtained permission to build a chapel for them. His chief associates agreed to contribute funds to support a bilingual minister. Details can be found in Thomas Allen, *The history of the county of Lincoln: from the earliest period to the present time*, 2 vols in 1 (London: J. Saunders, Jr., 1833–34, vol. 1, p. 43.
 88. Rapeseed (coleseed) oil was used in the woollen industry.
 89. Embanking the Don as a single channel was not a success, causing more difficulties than it solved. To tackle these, Vermuyden and his associates were forced to construct the two additional channels Dugdale saw, which remain today.

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