

ANGLO-SAXON HARROW AND HAYES

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SUMMARY

There are several Anglo-Saxon charters relating to the ancient manors of Harrow and Hayes which have been used by scholars in various ways over the last century. This paper re-examines them as a group in their local context and finds evidence of the estates in which they had their genesis, suggests a closer identification of some boundaries and shows that some of the characteristics of a medieval manor were already apparent in Harrow. The meaning of each document is separately discussed below and an overall conclusion given at the end.

The documents use several terms—hides, cassatae, manentes and tributariae—to describe area, and since they concern a restricted locality during a limited period of time, they have been treated as equivalent to each other, at about 120 acres each. Whitelock equates hides and manentes in the 767 charter (Whitelock, 1955, 461).

THE CHARTERS

AD 757 *Aethelbald, King of Mercia to Wihtried and his wife Ansith*

Seven *manentes* in Middlesex in the *regio* called *Geddingas*, bounded on the south and west by *Fiscesburna*, extending north two *iugera* beyond the *via publica* and having on the east a stream called Lake which is the further of two streams. They are also to have the *Fiscesburna* and the estate is to be subject to ecclesiastical rule in perpetuity (Birch, 1885–99, 201; Kemble, 1847, 101; Gelling, 1979, 98).

The major point here is the location of this holding. Gelling (1979, 98) points out that *Yeading (Geddingas)* was the name of a *regio*, and that a *regio* may have been a very large district indeed. From the bounds mentioned she regards the seven *manentes* as being a little to the west of Twickenham, treating the *Fiscesburna* as the River Crane and the *via publica* as the Staines road. Older authorities (Bushell, 1893, 14; Elsey, 1953, 17; VCH Middx, 1971, 22), equate the holding with the present neighbourhood of that name, in the northern part of old Hayes and the southern part of Northolt, which centred in later times upon the junction of Willowtree and Yeading Lanes. This seems to be the more reasonable location.

Firstly there is the persistence of the name, for by 825 the word *Yeading* describes something less than a *regio* and more like a holding (see discussion of the Council of Clofesho below). Secondly, present day *Yeading* could be regarded as being something over one square mile in area (seven hides = $1\frac{1}{4}$ sq m). Moreover, the Crane, hereabouts called the *Yeading*, curves around its western and southern sides, while on its eastern it used to divide for some distance into two branches. Nowadays a road runs from Greenford (first reference AD 845—see Werhard's Will below) to the north of *Yeading*, where it forks and leads northward to Northolt, where there was a middle Saxon village (Lancaster, 1975, 339), and westward to Ruislip. The age of the road is not known, but old Roman roads cannot have been the only public highways in Saxon times.

A secondary point is Wihtried's agreement that the estate was to be subject to ecclesiastical authority in perpetuity. In AD 824 *Yeading* is found in the ownership of Cwoenthryth, Abbess of Southminster.

AD 767 *Offa, King of Mercia to Stidberht*

To Stidberht, a 'venerable man possessed of an abbot's charge', 30 hides in Middlesex between the holy place of the Gumenings

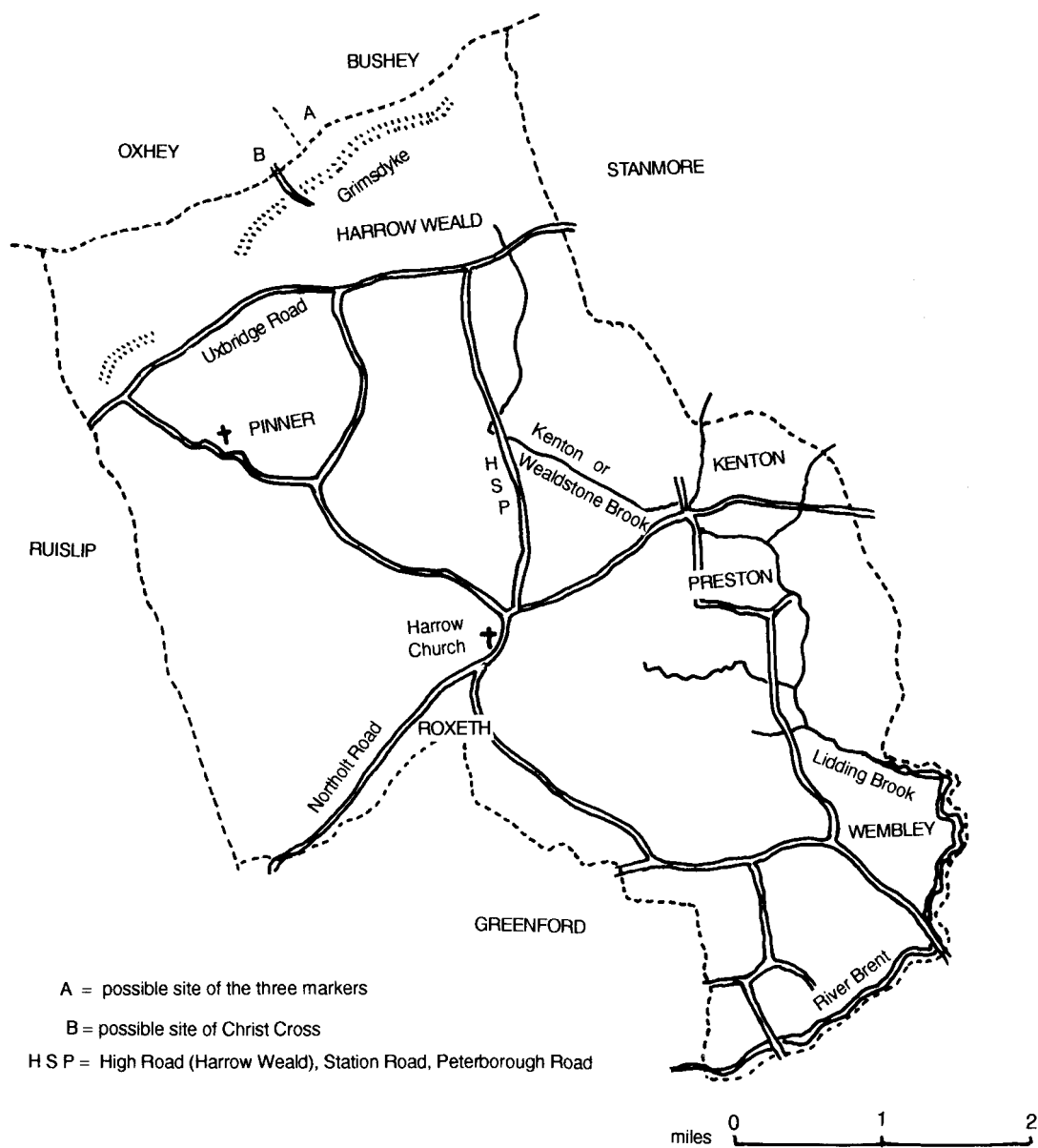


FIG 1 Manor of Harrow—18th Century topography (based on map in VCH Middlesex vol IV p171).

(*Gumeninga hergae*) and the Lidding, and six manentes ('et est VI manentium') east of the Lidding river, 'and the aforesaid Stidberht has given over to me in exchange the same number of hides, that is thirty, in a place called Wickham in Chiltern' (Birch, 1885–99,

201; Whitelock, 1955, 461; Bushell, 1894, 5–12).

Bushell's identification of *Gumeninga Herga* with Harrow Hill, and of the Lidding with the Kenton/Wealdstone Brook, the latter being subsequently confirmed by Halliday

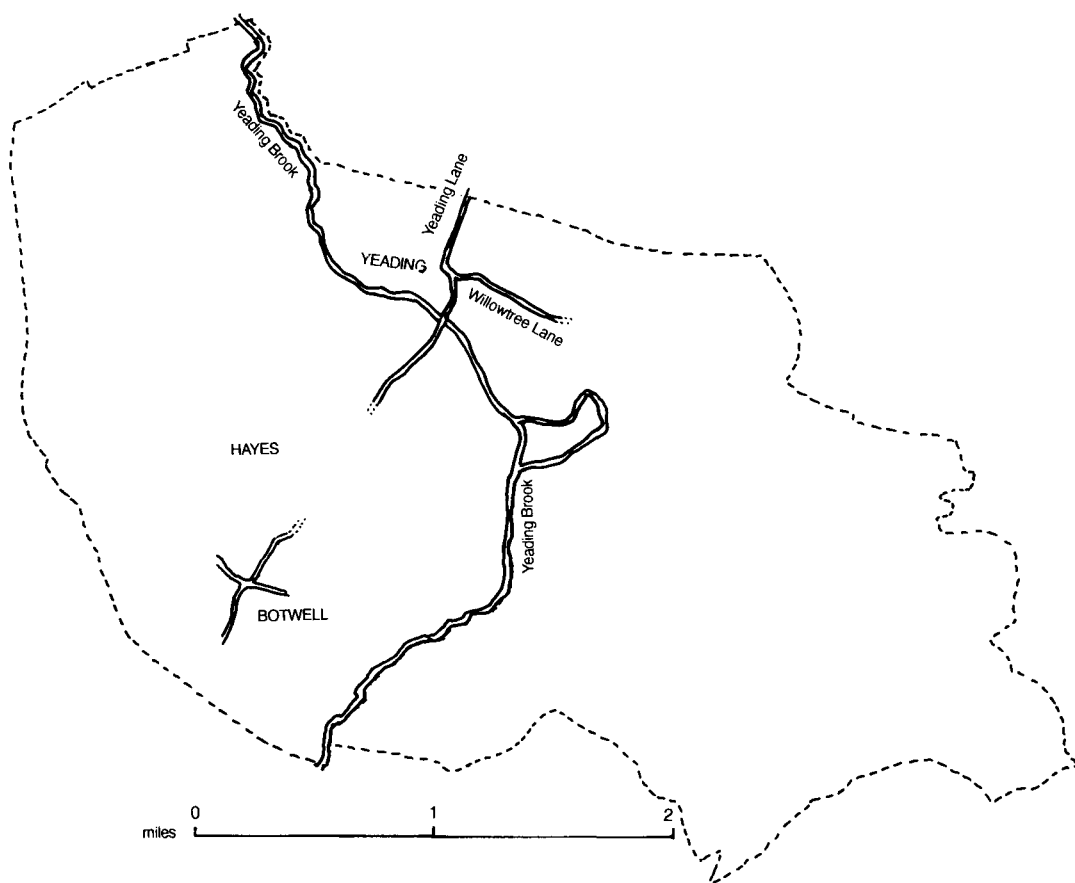


FIG 2 Manor of Hayes—topography about 1800 (based on map in VCH Middlesex vol IV p23).

(Druett, 1956, 25) places the 30 hides between those two features, and the six hides about where the hamlets of Preston and Uxendon used to be.

It is of considerable local interest to try to determine the area involved. Gelling (1979, 202) thinks the area so defined is too small to have contained 30 hides, but this is arguable. The exact location of the Lidding makes a little difference also (VCH Middx, 1971, 186 n. 38), for several tributaries combine here to form what is now, in its lower course, called the Brent, and it is by no means clear how far along its course the names Brent and Lidding were used in those days. If Wembley (about five hides in extent) is included in the 30 hides, they would still fit between Harrow Hill and the river; if it is

not included, the southern part of Harrow Weald would be well within the embrace of the tributary which runs northward close to Kenton Lane.

Whether Wembley was included is the next question. It is not mentioned by name until 825 (see Council of Clofesho below), by which date there would have been plenty of time for it to appear even if it did not exist in 767. It was a separate estate in 825, and since the land granted in 767 was almost certainly part of the Clofesho settlement, and as late as 801 was still one unit (see Pilheard's Endorsement below), it is most probable that Wembley was never part of the 36 hides.

The area covered by the present districts of Kenton, Alperton, and the eastern parts of Sudbury and central Harrow approximate to

the 30 hides, the district of Preston Road to the six.

Other questions arise. In 767 was the place actually named *Gumeninga Herga* included in Offa's grant? It is accepted that the name refers to a holy place on the hill top, but the wording of the charter seems to exclude it from the land granted. Did the name denote an area larger than the hill top? Given that the word *herga* means holy place this can hardly have been the case. Half a century or so later, at the Council of Clofesho, it clearly did cover a larger district, but it is much less clear whether the name applied to the land granted in 767 or to other land. (See discussion of Clofesho below.).

Is there any clue as to the extent to which this land was populated? North Middlesex was traditionally regarded as heavily forested in Saxon times, and not much settled. The document affords little positive evidence in any direction (though see Clofesho later). One house (*habitatio*), to the east of the Lidding Brook, is mentioned. References to dwellings are rare in charters, even, presumably, where many dwellings did exist. It is not to be expected that every building or steading on an estate would be mentioned, but does this perplexing solitary reference denote the only one in the whole 36 hides, or does it single out a chief residence fit for the owner? Was Stidberht going to be a pioneer in an empty estate, or was he taking over a going concern with a ready-made principal hall?

AD 801 Endorsement upon the 767 grant by Pilheard

'Now these deeds of gift or exchange by the aforesaid kings Aethelbald and Offa have come down to me. I, Pilheard, unworthy companion (*comis*) of Cenulf, king of the Mercians, having lawfully acquired them ... have paid money ... to the king for the privileges of these lands ... that is two hundred shillings and afterwards in my days and those of my successors thirty in every year' and, (quoting Whitelock) 'that they were to be free for ever from the rendering of all fiscal dues, works and burdens and also of

popular assemblies, except only 'price for price'; and they are nevertheless to be assessed for the three public dues, that is the construction of bridges and fortresses and the provision of five men for military service (Birch, 1885–99, 201; Whitelock, 1955, 461; Bushell, 1894, 5–12).

The endorsement clearly identifies Stidberht's lands as one entity still in AD 801. Although the legality of Pilheard's title is recognised, it is curious that the grant had previously been made to a man of the church, because land did not often pass from ecclesiastical into lay hands. The presumption must be that Stidberht held for his life only. Perhaps Pilheard acquired it by re-grant from the king, though the wording does not suggest this.

The system of land ownership was still in flux. At that time only the king could convey land to an individual or institution for his or its private benefit. Land was valuable for the income which arose from it, and it benefitted the king by the render of some of its produce to him, assessed in various ways, by taxes, and by the profits of justice. Upon granting it to a follower, some or all of these would be lost to the king, diminishing both his own income and the stock of land which could be granted to others. Earlier practice had been to make grants for the life of the grantee only, which was, in effect, the right only to the profit of the land, and not a conveyance of the land at all, most certainly not in perpetuity. This suited well the function of such grants, which was to reward, or secure, the loyalty of men to their leader. Heritable grants were not seen as achieving this.

Ecclesiastical establishments were the earliest beneficiaries of perpetual endowments because of their need for assured economic support beyond the length of one life, and they appear to have enjoyed all of the income arising therefrom.

The proof of endowment was a written charter, called a book, witnessed by kings, sub-kings and bishops, and the land was categorised as bookland. In the later part of the 8th century bookland was gradually extended to laymen, but with the reservation to the king of fundamental taxes or dues;

invariably these included the three great dues, later called the *trinoda necessitas*, which were enumerated in Pilheard's Endorsement, and sometimes other dues or services. At the same time religious beneficiaries began to find themselves also subjected to the *trinoda necessitas*. Very occasionally, the recipient's right to bequeath was added. Kings were jealous of their power to bestow land; Offa is known to have rescinded a grant by a sub-king who had not secured his prior approval. (Stenton, 1950, Chapter IX; Finberg, 1974, 99, 120, 136.)

Historians have valued Pilheard's Endorsement for the early example it provides of heritable tenure, of the reservation of the *trinoda necessitas*, and of the exemption from the claims of the popular assembly.

The meaning of this last term is not clear. Whitelock (1955, 461) looks upon it as a forerunner of the hundred court. She and Finberg (1974, 139) regard the exemption as the grant of justiciary powers to Pilheard, that is, the right to hold his own court for dealing with offences within his estate and to receive the fines imposed, instead of the offences being dealt with by the popular assembly, but Stenton (1950, 485–6) points out that it may merely make him the recipient of fines awarded by the popular assembly.

The document has implications for local history. For Pilheard's expenditure to have been worthwhile, there must have been income to be had from the estate, and this bespeaks a significant amount of settlement, not an uncultivated waste. So also does the popular assembly, even if it were not held on his estate.

The grant surely amounted to a private lordship, and an early one at that. If Whitelock and Finberg are correct, the elements of manorial organisation are beginning to appear. Pilheard, described as a companion of the king, was probably a retainer of noble birth, a position consistent with a grant of this kind.

There is a further point. The opening line of the Endorsement refers to charters of gift or exchange made by the kings Aethelbald, predecessor of Offa, and Offa himself. The

exchange of 767 is Offa's, but of Aethelbald's there is no record. Elsey (1953, 16) thinks that Aethelbald's act would take the first mention of the district further back in time, and Gelling (1979, 202) regards it as concerning land in the Harrow area, but it seems more logical to see it as the original grant of land in Chiltern which Stidberht exchanged with Offa in 767. It would also justify the expression 'by gift or exchange'.

AD 790 or 795 *Offa, King of Mercia to Archbishop Aethelheard*

A grant of 60 *tributariae* at Hayes and Yeading for the repair of the cathedral, and land elsewhere for the brethren's clothing (Birch, 1885–99, 265; Kemble, 1847, 159).

This charter is regarded as spurious by Gelling (1979, 205), Brooks (1984, 320) and Bushell (1893, 27), the latter attributing it to the late 11th century. One argument which supports this is that the area of Hayes given here is so close to the 59 hides of Domesday that it pre-empts the addition of seven hides at Yeading in 825, five hides at Botwell in 831, and Werhard's 32 hides in c. 832, unless the lands had been lost, by revocation or spoliation, almost immediately after Offa's gift.

AD 825 *The Record of the Council of Clofesho*

Archbishop Wulfred accepted from the Abbess of Southminster

a hundred hides of land in these four places, namely Harrow, Herefrething Land, and Wembley and Yeading and she was to deliver to him all land-books whether granted to her or of earlier date, with the same rights of enjoyment which she herself had previously possessed to have and to hold in perpetuity, and after his death to leave to whomsoever he should choose. Moreover the king ... freed such part of this aforesaid gift of land, as had not previously been so freed, and in like manner as other land at Harrow had already been made free; and so it stands recorded in another charter. But ... the title deeds of forty-seven hides in three places were not surrendered, to wit, at

Bookland, and at Wembley and at Herefrething Land.

A year or two later the deeds were handed over to the archbishop and 'she added to the aforesaid land at Harrow an estate of four hides in extent'. (Birch, 1885-99, 384; Kemble, 1847, 220; Bushell, 1894, 10).

The Council of Clofesho ended many years of tension between the archbishops of Canterbury and the kings of Mercia. Part of the solution was the award of these lands to Archbishop Wulfred out of the holdings of Cwoenthryth, Abbess of Southminster, who was the daughter and heiress of the deceased Coenulf of Mercia, the king with whom the dispute had been sharpest. How and when Cwoenthryth had acquired the land is not known, though the natural assumption is that it was by her father's gift. The wording indicates that some was granted by making existing charters over to her, and some by direct award. Most authorities consider that the above lands are all in the Harrow area, except for Yeading, and may be equated with the Domesday manor of Harrow. It should be noted that they were granted specifically to Wulfred, that they were a heritable tenure, and that the extension of freedom to the whole was presumably an extension of the freedom bought by Pilheard.

The local historian is interested in identifying them more closely, as Bushell began to do in *Harrow Octocentenary Tracts*.

Four named estates made up the initial 100 hides. Of these, Yeading, seven hides, was in Hayes, and Harrow and Herefrething Land were exclusive of Yeading and Wembley. Included somewhere were the 36 hides of Stidberht and Pilheard, and they must have been in either Harrow or Herefrething Land. Cwoenthryth's first delivery of 53 hides could have included Harrow and Yeading, but not Wembley or Herefrething Land. Her delayed second delivery of 47 hides included Wembley, Herefrething Land and Bookland, which latter might have included Harrow or Yeading.

It is possible to read the account of Clofesho as indicating on the one hand that Cwoenthryth had books for all of the 100

hides, and on the other that she had title deeds for only the 47 hides of the second delivery. On either reading, 'Bookland', Wembley and Herefrething Land are all bookland by definition. Yeading was clearly not Herefrething Land, but it could be included in Bookland. If Pilheard's bookland is also included in it, then none of the 47 hides is left as Herefrething Land.

Consider the arithmetic for Cwoenthryth's second delivery of 47 hides;

Wembley, probably,	5 hides
Bookland, probably, Yeading,	7 hides
Herefrething Land, probably,	
Pilheard's,	35 hides
	—
	47

The closeness of the area of Herefrething Land to that of Pilheard's estate suggests an answer that seems too easy, but a few other points support the view that they may have been one and the same.

First, Stidberht's original holding lay between *Gumeninga Hergae* and the Lidding Brook and therefore presumably excluded the former. The holy site (*herga*) may later have given its name, not to the adjoining holding of Stidberht, but to the one in which it stood, that is, to Harrow. Secondly, no earlier name has been found for the estate of Stidberht and Pilheard. Thirdly, if Cwoenthryth's initial delivery of 53 hides comprised the land described as Harrow, and if there were only one book for it (or possibly no books) it may have been easier for her to hand those 53 over earlier than the 47 for which she had to gather together the deeds. It would also be easy for her to add 'to the aforesaid land at Harrow' (it sounds very close by) the four hides which were compensation for her delay.

Against this must be set the use of the name Harrow to describe the whole 100 hides in the passage where the king extends freedom to all of it.

On this basis the 53 hides seem to have been the estate called Harrow in the first part of the record and would be represented by that part of the present borough of Harrow which lies west of say Northolt Road, High Street, (Harrow), Peterborough Road, Station Road, High Road (Harrow Weald),

and then north of Uxbridge Road from that point eastward. The holding called Wembley would be represented by Wembley Hill and Wembley Park. Herefrething Land would be represented by the original holding of Stidberht.

The neatness and simplicity of the north eastern, northern and western boundaries of the later manor of Harrow are highly suggestive of an early date of fixing. In medieval times the borders of Harrow manor and Harrow parish coincided and there is nothing to show that they differed significantly before 1547, the date of the first written survey of Harrow.¹ (The first reliable map was drawn in 1759 for Lord Northwick by Isaac Messeder.²) The handing over by Cwoenthryth may have formed the borders. The figure of 100 hides tends to the view that she cut off a lump of land to make up a round number. If the above analysis of estates is correct one can see the 100 hides being put together from separate estates in the east and south, that is Wembley and Herefrething Land, where the boundaries of Harrow are more irregular, but still fairly simple, with the balance being made up from Cwoenthryth's other lands, the northern and western boundaries looking almost as though they had been drawn with a ruler. Such straight lines are easily struck if the ownership on either side is the same. They could, of course, have been in place when Cwoenthryth herself acquired the land; after Clofesho there is no more suitable occasion at which the western boundary is likely to have been made, since there is no evidence whatever that the size of Harrow was reduced between then and Domesday Book.

There may have been other factors affecting the northern boundary of Harrow (see discussion of the charter of AD 1007 below), but consideration of the western boundary brings Ruislip, which adjoins it, into the picture. There are no early charters for Ruislip. It is remarkable, however, how similar was the use of land on either side of the boundary in medieval times. From north to south, first woodland, then common pasture (presumably won from the woodland), then private holdings, and lastly the

common fields, march side by side. This may be no more than a matching topography leading to parallel types of development, but it also prompts the question as to whether the boundary was part of a deliberately fair sharing out of resources between two estates. While not suggesting any organisation at this date such as the later open field system, the north-south line of division may be a recognition that the land on either side at the southern end was already cleared and suitable for grazing or cropping.

AD 831 *Wiglaf, King of Mercia to Archbishop Wulfred*

Grant of five *cassatae* at Botwell free of all but the three common dues and single payments. Boundaries include Harlington and Lullings Tree to the west, and land in Hayes belonging to the archbishop to the east (Birch, 1885–99, 400; Kemble, 1847, 227).

This shows that Wulfred already owned some land in Hayes, possibly in the Norwood area if the bounds are credible. Gelling (1979, 207) thinks that present day Harlington is inconsistent with these bounds, but this is not necessarily so. The document is of local interest in showing that the Domesday size of Hayes had not previously been completed, and reinforces doubt about the genuineness of Offa's charter of AD 790 or 795.

AD 832–c. 850 *The will of Werhard*

I restore to the monks of Christ Church ... those lands ... which I have hitherto held at the gift of ... Archbishop Wulfred my kinsman ... for the archbishop enjoined me so to do because he had bought these lands and had acquired them with great labour ... Harrow 100 hides and four hides ... and this he commanded 'Let there be given daily to each of five poor persons at Harrow ... as much food as may reasonably appear sufficient for their needs, and let there be given yearly to each of such poor persons 26 pence wherewith to purchase clothing' ... I also, the priest Werhard, give to the above named Christ Church ... 32 hides of my own private property called Hayes, which I have power to leave to

whom I will ... (Birch, 1885–99, 402; Kemble, 1847, 230; Bushell, 1893, 18–22).

The authorities regard this document as genuine, as a misdated Latin version of a vernacular original with references to the monks of Christ Church interpolated subsequently. In Werhard's day the community at Christ Church Cathedral consisted, not of monks, who were only introduced there in 997 after the monastic revival, but of semi-regular clerics (Smith, 1943, 1–2). Harrow was retrieved by Archbishop Lanfranc about 1070 for the see, not for the monastery (Du Boulay, 1966, 42).

Wulfred's motive in bequeathing a life interest in the property to Werhard, rather than in passing it directly to the see or to the community, has puzzled scholars, the most favoured theory being that he wished to bestow personal benefit upon his relative (Bushell, 1893, 18–22; Brooks, 1984, 141). Werhard was one of the heads of that clerical community at Christ Church by the time of Wulfred's death in 832, having been promoted rapidly since 824, when he appears to have been a mere deacon. Brooks sees Werhard as a potential, though ultimately a failed, candidate for the archiepiscopal office itself. He thinks also that these two kinsmen were Mercians and that their local connections brought the Middlesex estates to Canterbury.

The 104 hides at Harrow, as the whole of this estate is now called, are usually accepted as being the same as those awarded to Wulfred at Clofesho; the description is virtually identical, and little time has gone by.

Wulfred's provision for alms does not reappear in history, but it offers a reasonable case for there being a place in Harrow, perhaps a centre of worship, from which they could be organised and distributed. In an estate as large as Harrow, especially one owned by a churchman of wealth and standing, it is to be expected that a building would have been provided for the benefit of the inhabitants when attending divine service, a lesser church, perhaps. The site of the old holy shrine might have been taken over for this purpose, giving new meaning and new life to the name Harrow.

Regarding Hayes, one significant point is

that Werhard has 32 hides in his own heritable tenure there which he bequeaths also, and he does not, as with the Harrow lands, state that he obtained them from Wulfred (who held land at Hayes in 831). Werhard's hides may have formed the last piece of the Hayes jigsaw.

AD 845 *Werhard and Werenberht in exchange*

This exchange of lands, that is of two hides ... for the convenience of us both ... I, Werenberht .. do convey one *cassate* of land of my own private property to Werhard in exchange for other similar land which also lies within the area of that which is called Roxeth by the inhabitants ... which land formerly appertained to the well-known place called Greenford. (Birch, 1885–99, 448; Bushell, 1893, 23–24; Gelling, 1979, 209).

Both pieces of land are stated to lie in Roxeth, which was part of medieval Harrow, but the ambiguity of the wording makes it unclear whether one hide, and if so which, or whether both hides, had once belonged to Greenford, although situated within Roxeth. The comprehensive terms of Werhard's will make it almost certain that his land at Roxeth was part of the estate entrusted to him by Wulfred. In this case, why should Werenberht, a layman, have had a hide in Harrow? Roxeth is at the southern edge of Harrow, however, and can be considered to have been contiguous with Greenford. The two hides may have been at the edges of these estates whose boundaries were consolidated by the exchange. Possibly the exchange occurred after Werhard had made his will, though he may still have passed it on with Harrow.

Gelling raises the possibility of the document indicating that these two separated estates of only one hide each represent land farmed individually as opposed to communally.

The place names are of great local interest; Roxeth, the third oldest name in Harrow, has been forced out of use by the blander South Harrow, and Greenford is now in Ealing.

AD 793 *Offa, King of Mercia to St Alban's Abbey*

'... at Cassio 34 *mansiones*' free of all except military service and the established public dues. (Birch, 1885–99, 267; Kemble, 1847, 162; Gelling, 1979, 162).

This charter is considered dubious, though Gelling thinks that the first third, which includes the disposition, may be genuine. A grant of that land by Offa is referred to in the following charter.

AD 1007 *King Aethelred to St Alban's Abbey*

A grant of land including 'the place called Oxhey', formerly owned as of royal right by Offa, king of the Mercians, granted by him to the abbey, and unlawfully taken away from the abbey by Leofsin. The bounds of the land are then set out in the vernacular (Kemble, 1847, 1306; Napier & Stevenson, 1895, 11).

These are the landmarks to Oxhey and to Batchworth; first from Watford to Woodworth (or Puda's worth); from Woodworth to Mapletree gate; from that gate to East-corner (hale) at the three bounds (*thrym gemaeron*); from those bounds to the Christ-cross (*cyrstelmaele*); from that Christ-cross to the slender oak tree; from that oak to Hoar thorn; from that thorn to the hollow (*defe|dyfe*); from that hollow to the birch-glade; from that glade to Cuthelming tree (*beam*); from that tree to the stile; from that stile to R..dingwell; from that well/spring (*wylle*) to Coln-bridge/island.³

These two documents concern the northern boundary of Harrow. The later is the only one of all those under review which describes boundaries, and those given for Oxhey appear to include the present Oxhey and Batchworth, which were in the medieval hundred of Cassio. There is no reference to adjoining places or owners, and for the part contiguous with Harrow all but one of the markers (most of them were trees) are now impossible to find. The east corner, however, has been fairly identified as the south east corner of Oxhey, which these days abuts Bushey to the east and Harrow Weald to the south. Moreover, in 1007 there were three

markers at this point, implying that three estates met here, of which one must undoubtedly have been Harrow, and it is reasonable to infer that Harrow extended this far north and that its boundary was in place by 1007.

The northern boundary of Harrow, as noted earlier, is straight and it is noticeable how the border between Hertfordshire and Middlesex, whose date of definition is unknown, but which coincides with this boundary of Harrow, loses that straightness to the west of Harrow. Using the previous arguments, it should be an early border or one made between lands in common ownership. If the earlier charter of 793 has a basis of fact, it would reinforce the view that the kings of Mercia were busy awarding land on both sides of the boundary during these decades (some to Cwoenthryth, perhaps).

The next marker after the east corner was a 'Christ-cross', which might have been a freestanding crucifix or an engraving on a post or stone. It is tempting to put two and two together and locate it where Oxhey Lane, which runs from Harrow to Watford, crosses the Harrow-Oxhey boundary—in earlier centuries this was a major route—and the cross may have been a waymarker.

The ancient earthwork called Grimdsyke lies very close to the Oxhey line at its eastern point and then curves away to the south west. The failure to use it as part of the Oxhey boundary surely indicates that it was already within Harrow and that, if it had ever had any significance as an estate boundary, then such significance had passed.

DISCUSSION

It now remains to draw together the strands which show the genesis of the Archbishop of Canterbury's Middlesex manors.

Harrow was in one ownership, Cwoenthryth's, before Wulfred acquired it, and in her hands the land may have been more extensive. As a private unit it was put together from three estates thus:

AD 767, 36 hides, possibly Herefrething Land, originating with Stidberht sometime owned by Pilheard and later by Cwoenthryth.

AD 801–824, 5 hides, Wembley is in Cwoenthryth's hands; 53 hides, Harrow (approximately 53 or more) is in Cwoenthryth's hands; that is 94 hides, compared with 100 at Domesday.

Wulfred acquired it in one piece at Clofesho, recorded in 825, with the possibility that Roxeth was added at Werhard's death, and the whole of it was designated by the name of Harrow. Heritable tenure was extended to all of it, with economic and justiciary powers as full as any granted in those days. The boundaries remained largely unchanged until the present century. The western boundary in particular suggests that the later, medieval, use of land along its course was already possible. Not much was wanting to convert Harrow into the typical medieval manor.

As to Hayes, most of it, perhaps all of it, was accumulated in four lots as follows:

AD 757 7 hides at Yeading, originating with Wihfred. In AD 832 5 hides at Botwell, from Wiglaf. By AD 832–50 32 hides at Hayes held by Werhard, plus: by AD 831 an unknown number of hides at Hayes already in Wulfred's hands that is 44 hides and more, compared with 59 at Domesday.

These four lots came into Canterbury ownership between the earlier of the date of Clofesho or the date when Wulfred acquired his unknown number of hides, and the death of Werhard, which occurred in 845 or later.

There is nothing to show how Hayes was organised, except that the freedoms granted to the 100 hides at Clofesho presumably extended to Yeading, which was later a physical part of Hayes.

Generally, Brooks's view that the collection of Middlesex lands resulted from Wulfred's policy rather than 'the occasional and arbitrary piety' of Mercian kings, is very plausible (Brooks, 1984, 139). He thinks not only that Wulfred and Werhard may have been Mercians or Middle Saxons, but that Wihfred and Werenberht may have been of the same family, bearing in mind the alliterative names.

How continuous was the archbishopric's ownership of Hayes and Harrow, both of which were in the ownership of the see in

1086? Wulfred's diversion of most of these Middlesex possessions (as well as others elsewhere) through Werhard is curious, but may indeed have been intended to assist the career of a relative or protégé. Whether the lands were intended for the see thereafter or for the establishment which later became the monastery is also unsure in view of the doubtful references to the monks in the document of 793 and in Werhard's will.

Hayes was owned by the see in 1066, and there is no evidence of any break of ownership between then and the date of Werhard's will.

Harrow in 1066 was in the hands of Leofwin Godwinson, earl from 1057 of most of the land around London, including Middlesex. He fell at the battle of Hastings beside his brother, Harold II, and Archbishop Lanfranc had successfully reclaimed Harrow for the see before 1086. This success is strong support for the view that Harrow had always belonged to the archbishopric. No documentary evidence has been found to show when the archbishopric lost Harrow. However, Archbishop Eadsige (1038–50) had parted with many estates in Kent to Earl Godwin, father of Leofwin, all of which were recovered by Lanfranc (Du Boulay, 1966, 42), and why should not the manor of Harrow, also recovered by Lanfranc, have gone the same way, passing through the house of Wessex to Godwin's son Leofwin?

Church ownership and control until a late stage is a likelihood that is reinforced by the cohesiveness of Harrow's borders. The apparent continuity of the boundaries through the disturbed later Anglo-Saxon period is remarkable, but it is not so surprising to find this in ecclesiastical property, for church land was not dispersed by inheritance but anxiously kept, with the title deeds, under its own control.

The documents in this group illuminate a period when the kings of Mercia were apportioning large pieces of Middlesex. They show how early some estate boundaries were set out, and how well they have survived, and that some of the characteristics of the manor of Harrow were present from that early date.

NOTES

¹ GLRO Acc. 1052.

² GLRO Acc. 643, 2nd deposit, Messeder Map A.

³ I am indebted to John Dodgson of The English Place Name Survey, and also to Jane Roberts of Kings College London, for their help in translating the Anglo-Saxon. The larger part of the wording is theirs.

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