REWALKING THE TENTH-CENTURY PERAMBULATION OF WINSLOW MANOR

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Ted Bull will be remembered as one whose restless intellectual curiosty led him to make an intimate exploration of his home county, and to couple this with a most searching enquiry into the past of each feature. These gifts fitted him uniquely well to trace Old English charter bounds on the ground, and interpret them in terms of the modern topography. In this, his last paper for Records, *written with Julian Hunt, he does this for the tenth-century bounds of Winslow, recorded after St Albans Abbey was re-endowed in 948 and representing an attempt by the Abbey to reclaim the possessions granted it by King Offa in 792.*

INTRODUCTION

Dr Simon Keynes, of Trinity College, Cambridge, has brought to scholarly attention a 17th century transcript of a cartulary of the Abbey of St Albans in the Bibliotheque Royale, Brussels.[1] It is part of a transcript of several documents relating to English Benedictine abbeys made by the group of Jesuit scholars called Bollandists (after their founder, Jean Bolland, 1596–1665) who have published many volumes on the lives of the saints from 1643 onwards. Listed as Manuscript 157 in the eighteenth-century catalogue of the Bollandists' library at Antwerp,[2] it is entitled *Monasteria angliæ nonnulla antiqua eorumque historiæ*. It contains not only the Latin text of King Offa's grant of Winslow to St Albans Abbey, which was the subject of an earlier article by Dr Arnold Baines,[3] but also a hitherto unknown perambulation of the estate, written in Old English probably in the mid tenth century. The scribe who made the copy in the seventeenth century was probably unfamiliar with Old English and may have introduced errors of detail into his transcription.

Dr Keynes sent a copy of the perambulation to Dr Baines, who first made a further transcript, and then translated the whole into modern English.

Both transcript and translation are given below and the translation has been used by the present authors in following the tenth-century directions on the ground. Dr Baines suggests that the perambulation may have been made about 948, when the Abbey of St Albans was re-endowed. It may therefore represent an attempt to reclaim all of the Abbey's former property in the vicinity of Winslow, a hypothesis which helps explain why in one area it seems to include land which is now included in two neighbouring parishes.

Our knowledge of Winslow begins with the 792 grant by King Offa, comprising four estates, three of which have long been identified as Winslow, Granborough and Little Horwood. The remaining estate, named 'Lygetun' in 792, has not previously been identified, but the present authors equate this with the hamlet of Shipton. (See section 6 below & Appendix 2). Our knowledge of the medieval Manor of Winslow is based on a single volume of abstracts of fourteenth and fifteenth-century court rolls, compiled at St Albans and now preserved in Cambridge University Library.[4] Dr David Noy of the University of Wales, Lampeter, has translated these court rolls and made them available for this study.[5] They depict a unified manor comprising four villages, Winslow, Shipton, Granborough and Little Horwood. Each of the four villages has its

own set of three arable fields and the hundreds of land transactions recorded probably mention the names of the vast majority of the furlongs within these fields. On our field walks we carried photocopies of the 1599 Salden estate map,[6] which itself gives many furlong names in Winslow, Granborough, Shipton and Little Horwood; the 1844 Whaddon Chase enclosure map;[7] the 2" : 1 mile Ordnance survey draft map of 1813; and the First Edition 6": 1 mile of 1880. Mr Norman Saving of Winslow and Mrs Corinne Tereszczuk of Little Horwood accompanied us on many of our walks along the boundary, which were mainly undertaken in the dry summer of 1995. They provided good company and the necessary intellectual stimulation for us to complete the task and come to the conclusions offered below.

Following the tenth-century perambulation on the ground we were immediately impressed by its accuracy and its obvious intent to avoid ambiguous directions. It was clear that the boundaries described are largely those of the present parishes of Winslow, Granborough and Little Horwood. These village units evidently existed by the 10th century but the evidence suggests that they had been imposed on an earlier landscape of farm hamlets. Arable furlongs and common meadow are mentioned where they form part of the boundaries, suggesting that the medieval open-field system of agriculture was already established. There is no direct evidence, however, that Whaddon Chase, which later included about one third of the parish of Little Horwood, existed at this time. The road network shown on the 1599 Salden map also appears to be in place, though some of it has subsequently been rationalised.

Matthew Paris states that the (tenth-century) bounds of Winslow Manor were 20 miles in circumference.[8] We found they were 20½ miles, but perhaps they could measure distance better than us.

A number of related matters brought to our notice during this exercise are the subject of Appendices 1 and 2.

THE TENTH-CENTURY DOCUMENT

The following is Dr Baines' transcript of the original copy :

Ðis synt þa land gemære to wines hleawe. Ærest of cynemæres heafde, suð on þeod weg, west andlang þeodweges oþ þer hit cymeð to þam heafod æcere þe lið benoðan biþewealdes sæde oððe biþewældes hleawe. Suð andlang þæs æceres oð hit cymeð to wege, east myþer [nyþer] andland [andlang] weges þer hit cymð to þam mæd lande, þæs suþ be geweorpe eall þ yrþland in to wines hlawe [hleawe] hoð þer hit cymð in to fulan forda on swana burnan, west mid streame andlang burnan oððæt hit cymð on smalanbroc. Suþ andlang smalan broces oþ þer hit cymð to þære stræt, eft andlang stræt þongerihte on heort mere, þanone on heort hyll. & swa angerihte west to stapelum, þanone norþ andlang hean stræt, þæt on winter burnan, andlang winter burnan þ on swana burnan, andlang swaneburnan þ on dices pol, swa mid streame oþ þ on acald riþig of þam riþig upon acald wylle, andlang wylles to þam æwylme, þamon angerihte on dyddes hleaw þ swa eft on þeodweg west andlang weges þ nyþer on þæne mowen [niwan?] dic æfter þam dice, on kynemæres broc, up andlang broces þ hit cymeþ þar þæt riðig utt sceot adlang [andlang] þæs riðiges a æfter ruwan dene þ on þæne scortan dic.þanon norð þ forþ þ be weorpe on langan dic. & swa be dice to wuda. þæt nyþer ut on þ bec. æl wæter gefealle up be þam riðige þ on gateleage east wearde. þar up norþrihte andlang dices on þæne mycelan hean hryge. a be þam hryges þ hit cymeþ to þam gemær wege, andlang weges ut onbuton þer hit cymþ to þam hlaford leasan garan. Swa in myres gemære þer eft west on þeodweg.

This was translated as follows :

These are the boundaries of *(wines hleawe)* Winslow. First from the *(cynemdæres heafde)* head of the King's Boundary, south on the *(þeod weg)* public way, west along the public way as far as it comes to the *(heafod æcere)* head acre, which lies beneath the *(biþewealdes sæde)* by the wood sowing or *(biþewealdes hleawe)* the wood mound. South along the *(æceres)* acre as far as it comes to the way, east down along the way where it comes to the *(mæd lande)* meadowland, accordingly by the *(geweorpe)* bank of the *(yrþland)* arable land belonging to *(wines hlawe)* Winslow as far as it
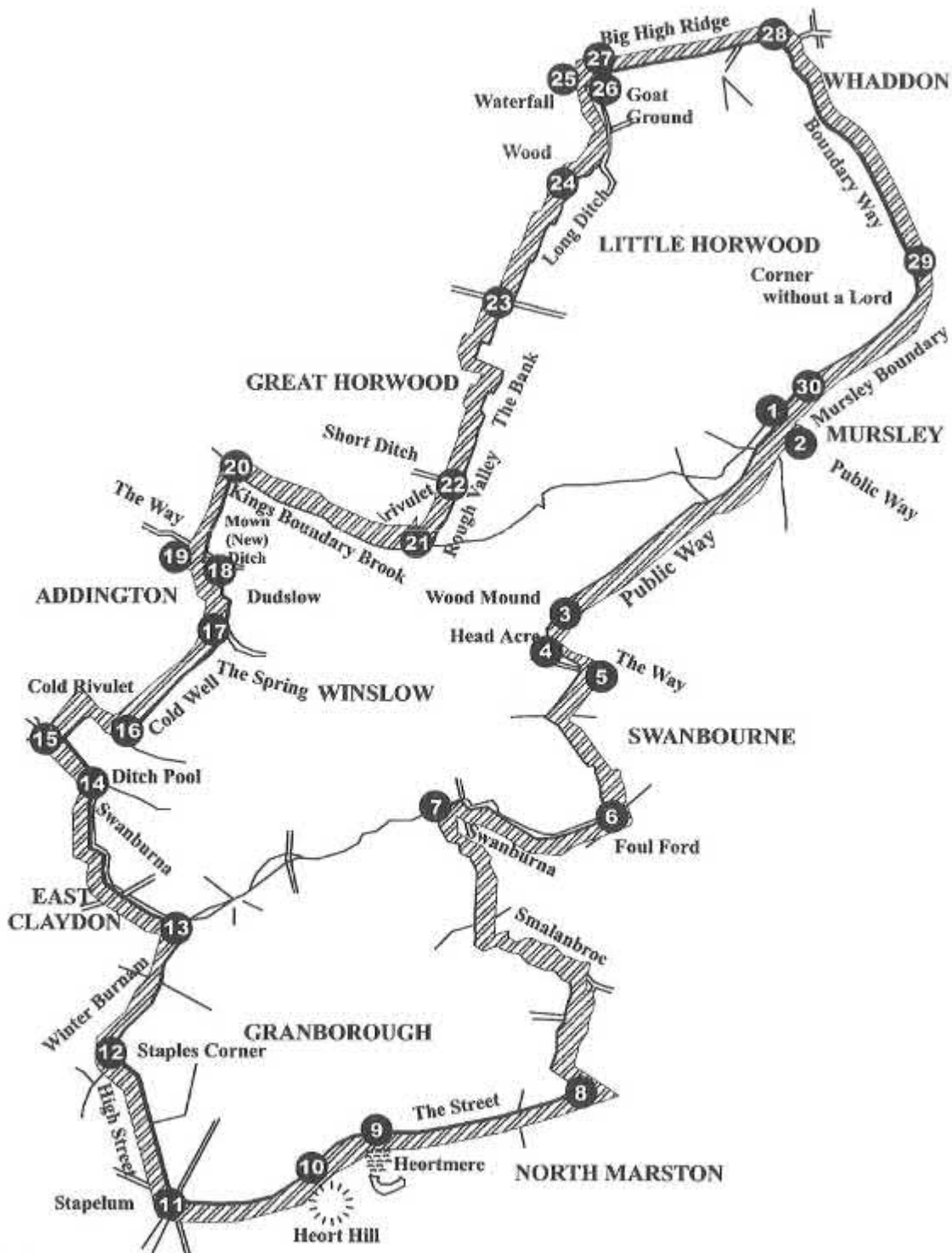
Fig. 1: Tenth-century perambulation of the manor of Winslow.

Big High Ridge

WHADDON

Waterfall

Goat
Ground

Wood

Boundary Way

Long Ditch

LITTLE HORWOOD

Corner
without a Lord

GREAT HORWOOD

The Bank

Mursley Boundary

Short Ditch

MURSLEY

rivulet

The Way

Kings Boundary Brook

Mown
(New)
Ditch

Rough Valley

Public Way

Public Way

ADDINGTON

Dudslow

Wood Mound

Head Acre

The Way

Cold Rivulet

Cold Well

The Spring

WINSLOW

SWANBOURNE

Ditch Pool

Foul Ford

Swanburna

Swanburna

EAST
CLAYDON

Smalanbroc

Winter Burnam

GRANBOROUGH

Staples Corner

High Street

The Street

NORTH MARSTON

Heortmere

Stapelum

Heort Hill

comes to the *(fulan forda)* foul ford on *(swanburna)* Swanbourne, west with the stream along the *(burnan)* stream until it comes to the *(smalanbroces)* Small Brook, south along *(smalanbroces)* Small Brook up to where it comes to the *(stræt)* street, then along the street straight to the *(heortmere)* Hart Mere from there to the *(heort hyll)* Hart Hill, and so straight on west to the *(stapelum)* posts/platform?, from there north along the *(hean stræt)* high street, then to the *(winter burnan)* Winter Burn to the *(swanbourne)* Swanbourne, along the *swanburnan* to the *(dices pol)* ditch pool, so with the stream as far as *(acald riðig)* cold rivulet, from the rivulet to the *(acald wylle)* cold well, along the well to the *(æwylme)* spring, thence straight to *(dyddes hleaw)* Dodslow, so thence to the public way. West along the way down to the *(mowen dic)* mown [New] ditch, after the ditch to the *(kynemæres broc)* King's boundary brook, up along the brook as it comes where the *(riþig)* rivulet shoots out, along the rivulet, following the *(ruwan dene)* rough valley to the *(scortan dic)* short ditch. Thence north forwards by the bank to the *(langan dic)* long ditch. And so by the ditch to the *(wuda)* wood. Thence down to the *(bec)* beck or *(wæter gefealle)* waterfall, then up by the rivulet to the *(gateleage)* gate clearing, eastward then up north straight along the ditch to the *(mycelan hean hryge)* big high ridge. Then by the ridge until it comes to the *(gemær wege)* boundary way, along the way out around where it comes to the *(hlaford leasan garan)* corner of the pasture that is without a lord. So on to *(myres gemæres)* Mursley boundary then west to the *(þeod weg)* public way.

PERAMBULATION

The map shown in Fig 1 shows the complete perambulation, with numbers relating to each section described in the above text. A description of each section follows:

1a From the head of the King's boundary. (SP8026 2964). Although this is the starting point of the perambulation, it was only found when we had given up trying to fit the start somewhere within the present boundary of Winslow and instead concentrated on where it would finish. The use of the 'King's' prefix on a brook that rises just over the Little Horwood border in Mursley, is interesting as later on (sections **19** and **20** below), there is mention of the 'King's Boundary Brook', which divides Winslow from Great Horwood. A possible explanation is that one of the three manors in Mursley may, like the Manor of Great Horwood, have been held from or by the King before the Conquest.[9] One suspects that the head of the brook was an area of marshy ground (or pool) immediately to the east of the public road.

1b. South along the public way. This section extends seven metres from the ford carrying the Little Horwood to Mursley Road over the brook as far as the old road to Shipton (SP8030 2958). This small section is along ground made up circa 1850 to form the approach of a railway bridge.

2. West along the public way to the Head Acre beneath the Wood Mound. This is along the course of the old road to Shipton, which was diverted to the other side of the railway line when the railway was constructed. The road rejoins its original course south of the railway. (SP8000 2928) Its diverted path can clearly be seen in the ploughing (Fig 2). The road continues as a modern bridleway to where it crosses the modern Winslow boundary, (SP7854 2813), which is judged to be the "Head Acre". Its antiquity is attested by its old names, "Fenway", the more eastern part and "Saltway" towards Shipton.[10] A low mound, probably of natural origin, 18 metres north-west, forms both a kink and a right angle in the present Winslow boundary. This has the modern name of Spring Corner; the first element usually relates to a coppiced wood. The mound is fact adjacent to a small spinney, but this wood is not shown on the Fortescue Estate Map.[11]

The course of stages 1–3 is not within the present Winslow Parish, but its inclusion places the whole of the former hamlets of Fentum, Varnham and possibly Foxton, in Winslow Manor (see Fig 3). These hamlets have now been divided among adjoining par-

Fig. 2: The course of the old road to Shipton shows clearly in the ploughed field. The photograph is taken from the Little Horwood to Mursley road looking towards Swanbourne Station.

ishes and this is discussed in greater detail in Appendix 1.

3. **South down the Acre until it comes to the Way.** From the "Head Acre" the present boundary heads due south until it comes to what would have been the full green swathe of the Winslow–Swanbourne Road [SP7850 2787].

4. **East along the Way until it comes to the Mead land (Meadow Lands).** The Way is the road from Buckingham which formerly by-passed Winslow, and is shown on the 1599 map.[12] When the road reaches the point where the present Winslow boundary turns south (SP7871 2784), it comes to the former meadow lands of Swanbourne, as witnessed by the still used names of Above Mead, The Mead, Longmeade & Bowmead.

5. **Along the bank of the Arable Field belonging to Winslow as far as it comes to the foul ford on the Swanbourne.** The course is along the existing boundary of Winslow, where there is a bank which is a distinct division between ridge and furrow and meadow land. This is best illustrated in the aerial photograph (Figure 5). This means that the open-field furlongs were in place in the 10th century, although whether these belonged to a unified village system or were part of smaller hamletised field systems cannot be ascertained. Three interesting facets of this stretch, which is mapped in Figure 4, are noted below:

a). The boundary must have been formed after the open field furlongs had become established and it must have been adopted as part of some manorial agreement with Swanbourne. Not only is it a completely man-made feature, but a natural stream val-
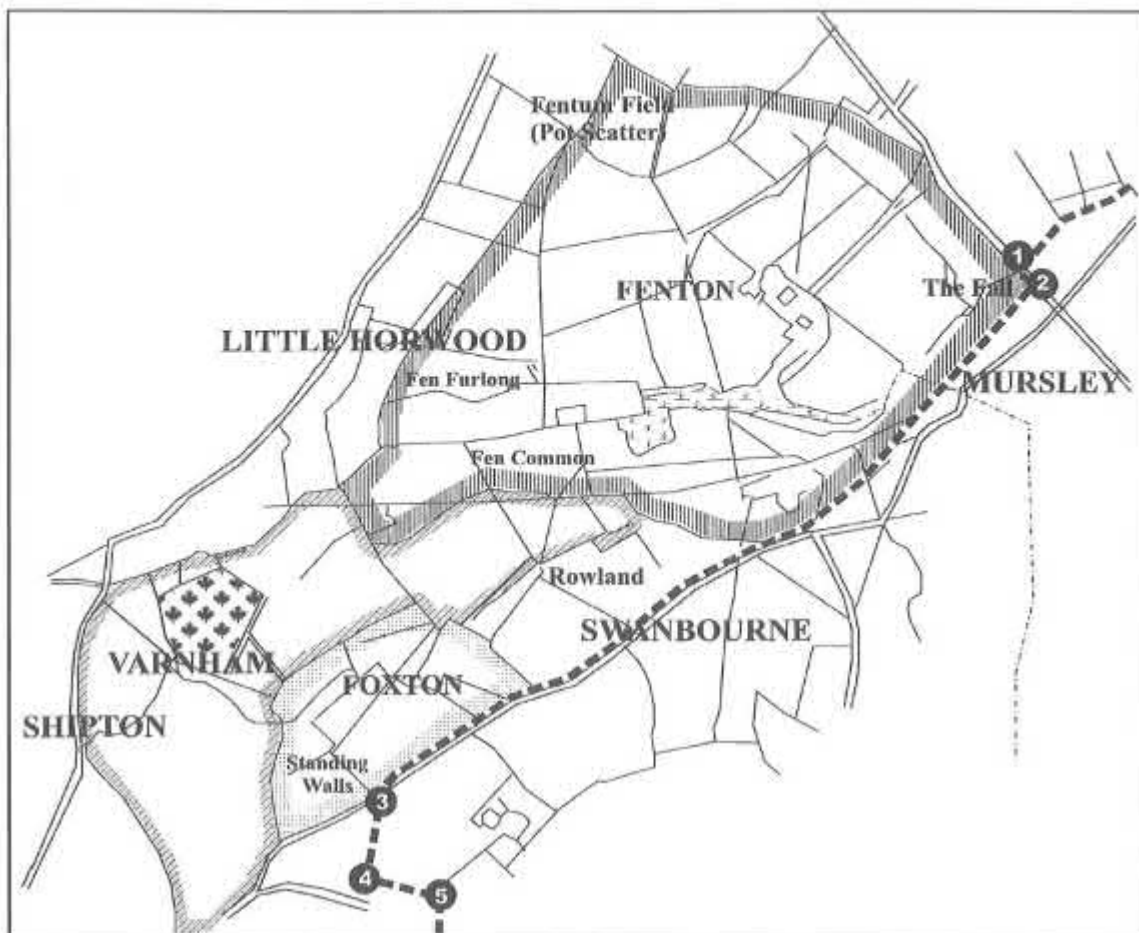
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Fig. 3: The boundary of Winslow Manor, from its start at "the head of the king's boundary" to the "foul (i.e. dirty) ford on the Swanburn". The position of the hamlet of Fenton is shown, E of Little Horwood. Hamlet boundaries are inferred from furlong and field boundaries, and are necessarily conjectural.

ley, ideal for a boundary, runs parallel within 100 metres on the Swanbourne side.

b). The existing boundary is distinctly curved to form a point in the direction of Winslow where it crosses the old Shipton to Swanbourne road, which although now a footpath, was in use as a road in 1599.[13] The fact that it curves both ways from here suggests a junction, with one arm following the existing footpath to join the 'Way' (see 4 above) near Swanbourne, and the other arm turning south to Littleton. (see c. below)

c). The southern part of this stretch passes through an area known as Littleton, both in Shipton and Swanbourne.[14] The court rolls contain many references to a furlong called Littleton (or Littledon) in Shipton,[15] some with spellings that are similar to Lygetune, the fourth, and so far unidentified estate, grated by King Offa to St Albans Abbey in 792. This is discussed at length in Appendix 2.

In pre-enclosure times the Foul Ford (SP789 266) carried the road from Granborough to Swanbourne and, although now a footpath, this uses a footbridge some 8 metres from the ford. Before the 10th century the ford would have had greater importance, as other tracks to the settlement of 'Littleton' may have crossed the stream here.
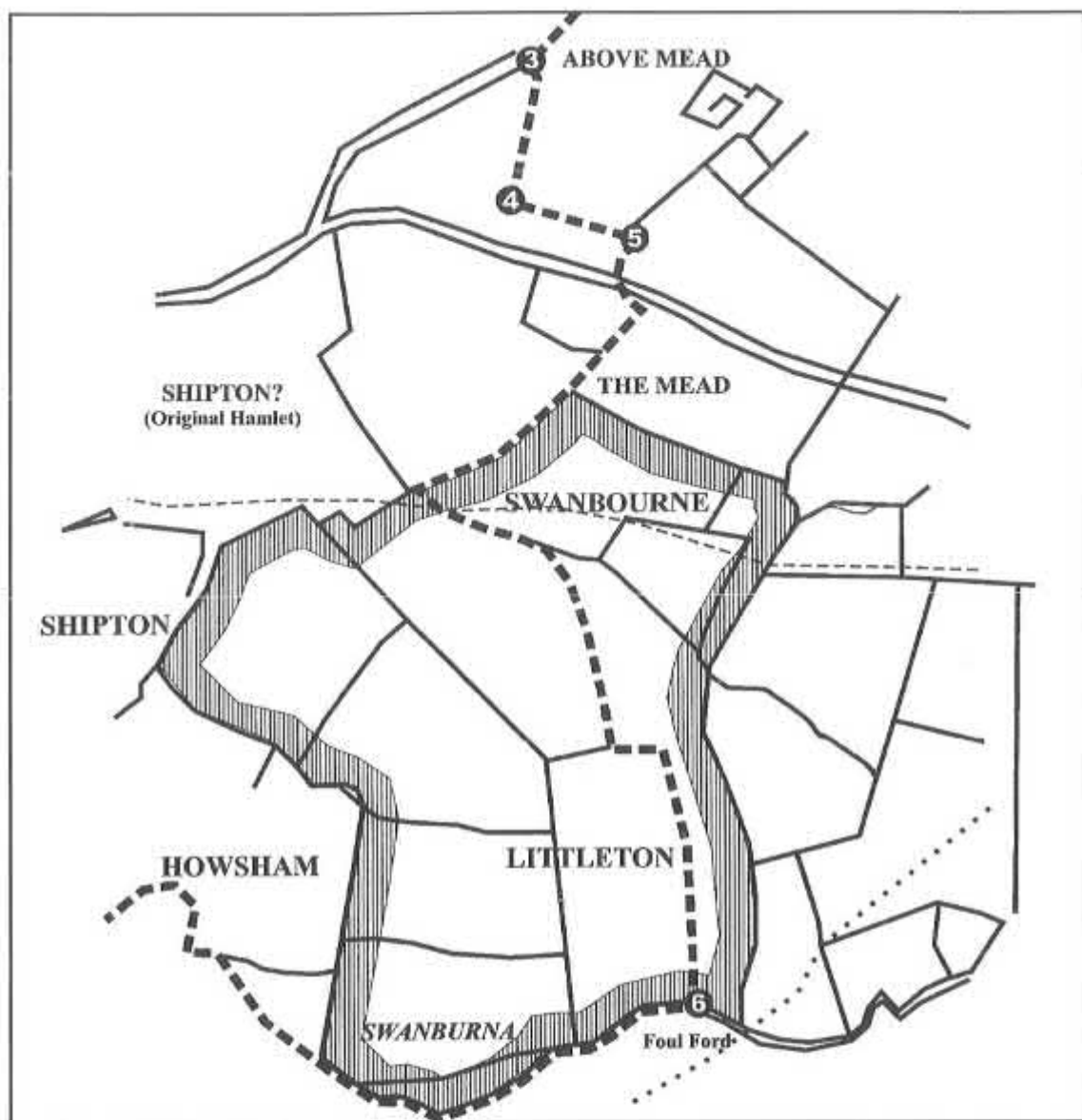
Fig. 4: The probable position of the fourth, and so far unidentified, estate called 'Littleton', granted to St Albans by King Offa in 792. See Appendix II, below. Hamlet boundaries conjectural.

6. **West on the Swanbourne until it comes to the Smalbrook.** The route is along the bank of the Claydon Brook on the present border of Winslow, until it meets the the brook which forms the border of Swanbourne and Granborough. (SP7762 2668). The name Suanburna was used in the 792 Offa Charter[16] when describing the bounds of Granborough, but appears to have been lost in the Middle Ages when it is referred to in charters as 'the river'. The present local name is Claydon Brook, but this is probably modern.

7. **South along the Smalbrook until it comes to the Street.** The perambulation continues on the present Granborough/Swanbourne boundary

Fig. 5: The aerial photograph (c 1947) shows the bank of Winslow with the arable ridge and furrow on the right of the dotted line and the mead lands (meadow) on the left. *(Photograph in County Museum)*

up the Small Brook until it comes to the junction between the Granborough and North Marston boundaries (SP7862 2459). Although of modest size, this brook forms boundaries for much of its length, (e.g. Swanbourne/North Marston, Hoggeston/North Marston and Oving/North Marston) and served the former settlements of Oakham and Crandon. Its name is verified in the Winslow court rolls, where Smallbrook in Granborough is mentioned 6 times in the 50-year period between 1327 & 1377.[17]

The finish of this stage is the Street discussed below.

8–10. Along the Street straight to Heortmere / Heorthill / *Stapelum*. These three destinations are joined by following the 'Street', a long winding feature along the southern boundary of Granborough, which may be considerably older than the Roman Road it joins at *Stapelum*

(SP7552 2382). Here it also meets such a number of other roads and tracks[18] that the place must have had been significant in some way. Although it is shown on the 1599 map[19] the street disappeared before enclosure, probably in the early 18th century as a result of manorial decision,[20] which is surprising as it had obvious local importance. Perhaps this became possible after the disappearance of the hamlets it formerly served, but it is odd that not even a footpath survives. A single occurrence of the name Herthullelanendon in Granborough in a Winslow court roll of 1431 is the only record found that refers to the Street.

No direct evidence of Heortmere has been found, though the name Heorthill is well known and is the hill now known as Windmill Hill. Some 400 metres east of the hill is a large horseshoe shaped pond (SP7710 2406). In the winter of 1994, after heavy rain, this area flooded from the pond to a point close to the

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Fig. 6a: A modern farm sign for Staplers Piece Farm. The location of the multi-junction point referred to as Stapelum is indicated by the arrow.

Granborough boundary and, in spite of extensive drainage cuts and pipes, remained like this for a week, demonstrating that before such drainage, it is likely that this was a significant stretch of water. This possibility, together with the existence of a lakeside hamlet, is reinforced by the oft-repeated name 'Mershamfurlong' in the Winslow Court Rolls.[21]

Heorthill is shown as Harts Hill on the 1599 map,[22] even though it then had a windmill located on it, and there is a Heart Hill Furlong mentioned in the North Marston Enclosure Award,[23] In Granborough there was a Harthillend and a Harthillhawden.[24]

The name Staple is the name of an area, best indicated in Fig 6a by the present sign for the new Staples Farm within 100 metres of Stapelum. The Granborough court rolls talk of the 'Staple',[25] and Staples Corner is at the

northern extent of section **11** below. The word has been interpreted as a post and this is quite feasible at such an important junction. The Oxford English Dictionary defines the early use as something raised, e.g. a raised platform (*Beowulf 926*), and again it is feasible to think of such a platform as a former meeting place for Waddesdon Hundred. The spot where the Street met the Roman road is known as Deadman,s Corner, probably because it was a traditional place for a gallows, and another definition given for Staple is a gallows post.

11. **From there north along the High Street to the Winter Burn.** The High Street is the Roman road which forms the western boundary of Granborough, from Deadman's Corner as far as Staples Corner where it meets the Winterburn brook. (SP7510 2498) Its authenticity as a Roman engineered road is not in doubt, but it has always been a mystery where

it went after it disappears when reaching the Winter Burn.. It appeared to us that such a road would have existed when the open field systems were laid out and that they must have respected such a road. Thus began a separate project that may considerably enhance our knowlege of the Roman period in North Buckinghamshire, but that is the subject of a future paper. The road south of Deadman's Corner was a major stage coach route in the eighteenth century, but the coaches turned off the road at that corner, and the remaining section, which forms the Granborough / Hogshaw boundary, is partly traversed by a footpath, and has disappeared altogether at its northern end.

12. With the Winter Burn to the Swanbourne. The name Winter Burn is confirmed on the Claydon Estate Map kept in the Estate Office, which records Winter Burn Meadows, for the fields alongside the brook. Its name could be taken to mean a stream that only flows in the winter months, but this is not so today, as witnessed by the flow of water in the very dry wummer of 1995. The winding course of the brook is the present boundary between East Claydon and Granborough and also had the name of 'West Brook' in 1433.[26] The point where the Winter Burn joins the Swanbourne (SP7566 2488), is shown as Mill Hook in 1599,[27] probably signifying a water mill near to the junction of the streams.

13 & 14. Along the Swanbourne to the *dices pol* [ditch pool], so with the stream as far as *acald riðig* [Cold Rivulet] Throughout the perambulation each description marks a point where there is an alternative, thus with these sections, one travels down stream and each stream which joins is noted i.e. the Ditch Pool and the Cold Rivulet. The 1599 map[28] clearly shows the two streams that join, although it does not name them. The parish bulges westward along the Swanbourne, and this general area is today called Demoram.[29] Damoram was the name of one of Winslow's three open fields. It was spelt Deneburgham or Denburnham in the 13th century[30] and Damerham in 1599.[31] The name is also found on the other side of the Swanbourne in Claydon, and almost certainly is the last rem-

nant of another riverside hamlet largely absorbed into Winslow.

The Ditchpool is the first stream to enter the Swanbourne on our journey down-stream, and the perambulation instructs us to ignore it and continue with the main stream.

As the term ditch suggests, this stream runs in a man-made course, which today is largely piped, until it reaches a small pool on the Swanbourne. The name persisted and references are made to the Dikepool, Dikepole and Dykepool in the 14th century.[32] The amount of water it carries is not inconsiderable and as it flows through a furlong called Dammerham Slade, it could well have been the source of drinking water for the conjectured hamlet.

The second stream to enter the Swanbourne is the Cold Rivulet (SP7476 2738) and this we are told to follow.

15. From the (Cold) Rivulet to the *acald wylle* [cold stream]. Without doubt the Cold Rivulet has now been straightened from its natural course, but as it carries the boundary between Addington and Winslow, this would have been in antiquity. Again, on the principle that we remain with the stream until there is a junction, we continue until a stream enters from the north. This is called the Cold Stream, (SP7526 2722) which we are required to follow northwards whilst the Cold Rivulet continues east where it was probably a main source of water for the settlement of Winslow.

16. Along the (Cold) Stream to the Spring. The 'well' referred to in the text was an Old English name for a stream (not a well) and still forms the boundary between Addington and Winslow. It runs along a straight engineered course, and suggests that many of the smaller streams had been ditched by the tenth-century. It retains the 'cold' prefix although it rises in a completely different part of Winslow from the Cold Rivulet.

The Spring(s) still exist(s) as two or three small ponds (SP601 2814) which provide a flow of water. The old Winslow to Addington footpath

passed by the Spring. Immediately to the south of the spring the water course is interrupted by a railway cutting. It is diverted to rejoin its original course south of the railway, at a point where water joins from a stream that rises on Orwellhill.

There are nine references in the fourteenth-century court rolls to the West Well and seven to Westwellride or riddy. Orwellhill appears in Winslow seven times,[33] and also in the Addington Glebe Terriers.[34]

The source of the Cold Well is somewhere near Cricketers Row (approx. SP773 280) on the Elmfield estate on the Northeast side of Winslow, where there was once a deep pond, and where the furlong name of Coldam occurs. Nearer central Winslow, on the course of the stream, was Cold Bath Spinney.[35] (approx SP771 281). As with the common names of *Coldharbour* and *Caldecotte*, no satisfactory explanation can be given other than it was a chilly place or that the waters came chilled from a spring. (Coldharbour has been explained as 'a place where there was shelter but as fine'.)

17. **Thence straight to *(dyddes hleaw)* Dudslow and so thence to the Way.** Dudslow (Dodslow or Dodderslow in the fourteenth century)[36] was a furlong within the open field system, its second element suggesting a mound or tumulus. There is no natural feature here which could answer this description. There is also a problem with location. The Old English text makes it quite clear that Dudslow is immediately south of the (Buckingham) Way, whereas Dudslow Furlong in the open field was immediately north of the Way. This may mean that the road bisected the area, or that the furlong name originated because it lay next to Dudslow. The existing boundary has a meander just before the Way, which is also respected by a footpath (centre SP7620 2845) as though they were going around something, but what it was we shall never know, as the area enclosed has had mineral deposits extracted, probably in the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century. The present boundary meets the Buckingham road (The Way) at SP7608 2860.

Some 400 metres on the Addington side of the boundary from the postulated position of Dudslow, Roman and early medieval pottery indicates a former settlement. This area also produced Neolithic material.[37]

18. **West along the way down to the *(mowen dic)* mown ditch.** The Way is commented on in 5 above. Here it still forms the Winslow boundary until the Mown Ditch at SP7594 2864. A bend on the west side of the boundary coincides with the location of the settlement mentioned in 17 above.

The 1599 map[38] confirms the location of the ditch as beginning where the present boundary turns northwards from the way, but calls it the Newen Ditch (rather than the Mowen Ditch). We claim 'Mowen' to be a mistake in the seventeenth-century copy, but the presence of such a mistake reinforces the belief that the scribe who produced the copy was working from either the original or an early copy. The name Newendich, or more commonly Newenditch appears at least 6 times in the fourteenth-Century Court Rolls.[39] (From OE *niwanðic*)

19. **After the ditch to the *(kynemæres broc)* King's Boundary brook.** The assumption here is that this means going along the ditch with the present Winslow/Addington boundary, rather than just crossing it. The presence of a New Ditch pre-supposes that at some point prior to the mid-tenth century, this boundary has been redefined. If we look at a number of Winslow's boundaries we see that it is likely that Addington, Winslow and the northern part of Swanbourne were at one time a single unit.

Parts of a wide ditch and bank have survived at the southern end of the New Ditch, enough to suggest that it was purely a defining earthwork, and had only a secondary use as a drainage channel. It comes to the brook at SP7610 2934.

20. **Up along the (King's Boundary) brook as it comes to where the *(riðig)* rivulet shoots out.** This stretch is up the stream as far as where the brook is joined by a small stream from the north, (SP7761 282962) which is the point

Fig. 6b: The bank referred to in the text (section 22) has largely been lost in the construction of a World War II airfield; however one segment remains to show that originally it was a significant earthwork.

where the present Winslow, Great Horwood and Little Horwood boundaries meet.

We have previously offered in **1.** above an explanation regarding the brook's 'King's' prefix, when bounding Great Horwood.

We saw the point where the rivulet shoots out twice, once in the winter, when it was an accurate description, and once in the summer when it was without any water. Perhaps this is irrelevant, as the construction of a World War II airfield completely changed the drainage of the area from whence the stream comes.

21. **Along the rivulet, following the** *(ruwan dene)* **rough valley to the** *(scortan dic)* **short ditch.** Following the present boundary between Little and Great Horwood, the stream flows through a small but pronounced valley which gradually fades away some 600 metres to the north. Us-

ing the early Ordnance Survey 6" map we could see that this part of the present boundary follows the slight meanders of a natural stream to about SP 7782 2931, where it begins to jig around open-field furlongs. Later Ordnance maps show the boundary somewhat straightened, probably to follow the re-cut and realigned stream.

When the boundary reaches the man-made furlong demarcations, one can assume that this is the point where the short ditch is either crossed or followed, but as explained in **22–23** below, we are entering an area where there are few clues.

22 & 23. **Thence north forwards by the bank to the** *(langan dic)* **long ditch, and so by the ditch to the** *(wuda)* **wood.** The greater part of the landscape here has been forever altered by the construction of a World War II aerodrome

for bomber aircraft. An immense area was flattened or filled to produce a level surface, ringed by runways standing on 20 foot of foundation. No trace of any boundary feature, whether it be hedge, ditch or bank has survived. Everywhere else on our perambulation there has been some form of evidence to substantiate our route. Here, with the exception of start and finish point (rough valley and wood), and a small length of bank (Figure 6b), we are left to presume that the tenth-century boundary followed the present boundary between the Horwoods.

Logic dictates that this boundary is unchanged. Both this perambulation and the earlier grant by King Offa[40] include Little Horwood and exclude Great Horwood. The division of the two Horwoods had already happened. Without doubt the present course of the boundary, zigzagging around the furlongs, was a result of the furlongs being in place when the boundary was agreed. If the boundary had been agreed before the open-field furlongs were in place, then it would either have followed some natural feature or a ditch /bank and the village furlongs would be neatly arranged on either side. We can thus conclude that the two features which the charter tells us to follow i.e. the bank and the long ditch, are man-made features set between the furlongs on the course of the present boundary.

The start of these sections is the short ditch, which the document implies that we cross rather than follow, and we have stated that it is probably at the point where the 'natural' course of the rivulet ends and the first furlong boundary starts. This is reinforced by the 1813 Ordnance Survey 2" map[41] which shows a ditch/stream running from this point southeast eventually to join the 'King's boundary brook' at the Little Horwood Bridge. Some caution is required as the surveying was not of the standard of later O.S maps.

The only evidence for 'the bank' is the short length of bank shown in the photograph Fig. 6b., which is located at SP7810 2348. This looks exactly right, but again some caution is needed, as this area has had a lot of earth

moving when bomb dumps were constructed for the aerodrome.

Just north of this bank the boundary crosses the Little Horwood brook, which is not mentioned in the text. From the brook, the boundary goes uphill to an area of many springs, and as we would have been able to see the wood at the top of the hill, this is conjectured to be the long ditch. Only one of the boundary ditches today carries water, but modern drains now pipe the water away from the springs in several directions. It is entirely likely that a well-maintained ditch along the boundary would be required or the adjoining furlongs would revert to bog.

The wood would have been reached when the long ditch crossed the Little to Great Horwood road at SP7861 3136. See 24 below.

24. **Thence down to the** *(bec) beck* **or** *(wæter gefealle)* **waterfall.** Our last instructions got us to the wood, and the above is interpreted as instructing us to follow the (outside) of the wood until we come to a hollow[42] with a stream. The wood was known in the 19th century as Witmans Grove, and was at that time already encroached upon by common around all its edges. It was cut down shortly after the Great Horwood enclosure of 1841, which provided the opportunity to straighten the boundary which had originally been the edge of the wood. It now corresponds with a straightened Little Horwood to Nash road. Figure 7 shows a reconstruction of the area in the earlier Middle Ages using both the Great Horwood Enclosure Award map and the 1599 (Fortescue or Salden) map.

If we follow the 'bank' of the wood we begin to go downhill in a northerly direction, until we come to a stream in a small valley (SP7886 3220), which rises in Waterfalls Spinney to the east, and tumbles across Shucklow Gate Common to the valley on its westward course. (See Fig. 7). We leave the Wood at this point.

25. **Then up by the rivulet to the** *(gateleage)* **[goat ground] or [gate clearing] eastward.** These are two most likely translations of *gateleage*, and whilst both are feasible within the context
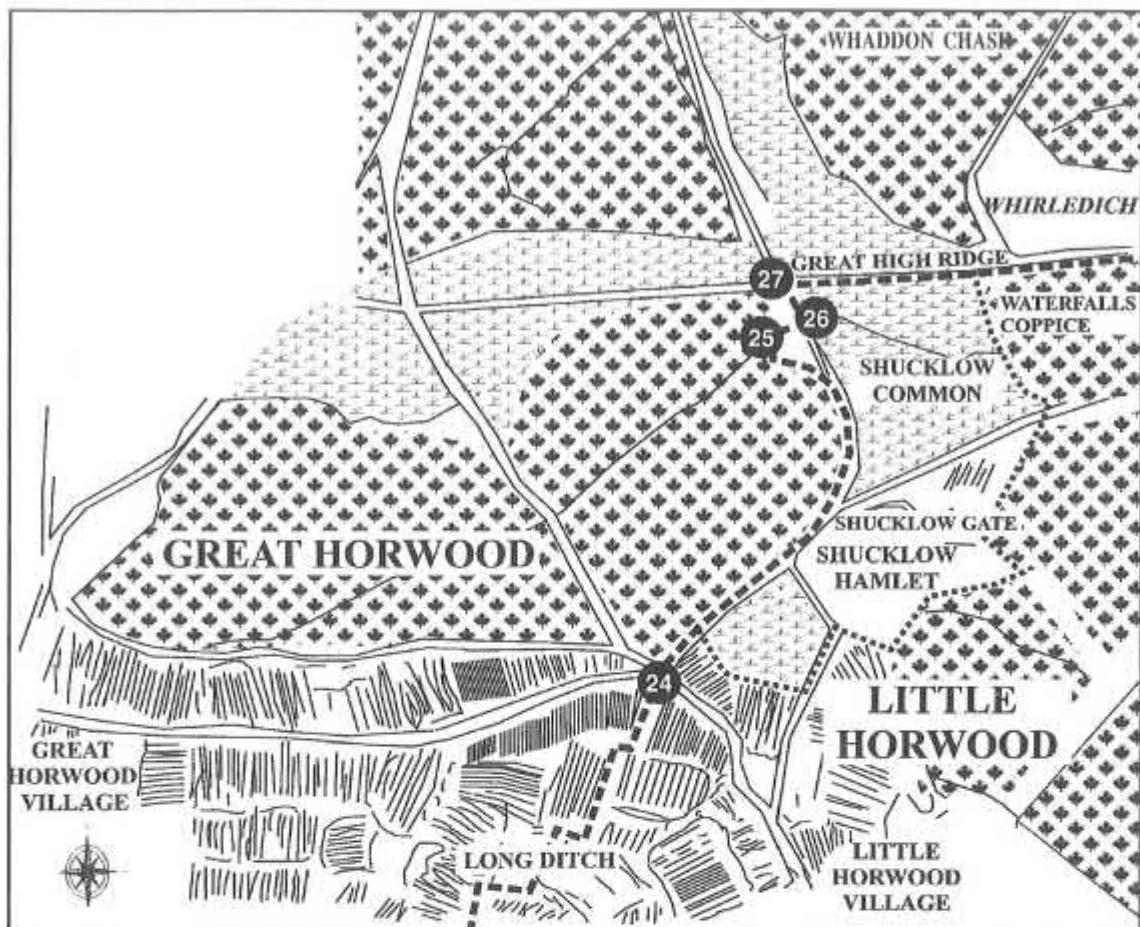
102

Fig. 7: The area from the long ditch to the 'great high ridge' adjacent to Shucklow in the tenth century. The Forest known as Whaddon Chase appears to have been started shortly after the end of the Roman Period. Disaforestation started early and it is not possible to say how much had been cleared for common, meadow or arable by the tenth century. The extent shown on the map can therefore only be conjectural.

of the perambulation, gate clearing is more likely, as the stream comes via Shucklow Gate[43] Common, which undoubtedly was a small common created to support the hamlet of Shucklow.

From the wood the brook was followed up-stream towards the east for only 100 metres until it came to the bank around Shucklow Common at SP7893 3226.

26. **Then up north straight along the ditch to the *(mycelan hean hryge)* big high ridge.** Along the Shucklow Common bank northwards for 80 metres we come to the Romanised road between Magiovinium and Thornborough Bridge which at this point runs in an east-west direction along a high ridge. (SP7888 3223).

Both the Fortescue and early Whaddon Chase maps show a dotted boundary (bank?) and confirm that at this time there was no road from Little Horwood/Shucklow to Nash. This appears to be a product of the Great Horwood Enclosure, although it is suspected that some form of right of way pre-existed.[44]

27. Then ever by the ridge until it comes to the (gemær wege) boundary way. The road which follows along the ridge, was confirmed as Roman by Mr A Phillips, the then Archaeological Survey Officer of the Ordnance Survey, by using an aerial survey to find the road's course in places where it has wandered from its original line.[45] Its westward heading takes it to Thornborough Bridge where it meets, amongst other roads, the High Street, which was discussed in **11** above. An earlier Iron Age road also crossed the river here, and may have been part of an earlier 'ridgeway' which was later Romanised. Certainly, our road to Magiovinium is composed of a number of fairly straight sections to form a large bow, rather than the more usual practice of trying to adhere to a straight surveyed route.

This section of the road is the present boundary between Little and Great Horwood, which demonstrates clearly how Little Horwood was 'carved' out of the Horwood 'block'. Its course has to cross the 'Gullet', a steep sided valley, and it was here that the "Manor of Mychel Horwood at Whirledich in the Priors Wood stood until pulled down by Sir Ralph Rochford so that he could live near to God and the Church"[46] at Great Horwood. A deserted hamlet by the side of the road and the more substantial earthworks of a large structure[47] may confirm this statement, and perhaps give a date for the nucleation of the village, which judging from the number of divided hamlets, was under way at the time of our charter.

On the west side of the Gully, as it is known today, the road comes to a point where three separate parts of the 'Whaddon Chase' forest meet. (SP3020 3264) These were later to be known as the Old Chase, the Priors Wood and the Abbots Wood. Whether all these woods were there at the time of the perambulation is problematical, as much of the Chase shows signs of ridge & furrow, pointing to an arable use prior to its being made forest. However, we can be fairly certain that at least two did exist, as the boundary way of our perambulation can only be interpreted as the boundary between what came to be known as the Old Chase and the Abbots Woods. Today at this place the boundaries of Great and Little Horwood and Whaddon meet.

28. Along the (boundary) Way out around where it comes to the (hlaford leasan garan) corner without a lord. The northern end starts along the fence or bank between two areas of Whaddon Chase which were known as Hassocks Coppice and Hogpound Coppice at the time of the enclosure of the Chase, in a curve towards the south, probably along the course of a long-gone track.

At Steart Hill (SP8042 3170) the boundary comes to a clearing where roads from all parts of the forest met, and where by tradition the forest court was held. Here the boundary joins and continues with the present Whaddon-to-Mursley road, which, in its southward course is a meandering linear track, probably of great antiquity. (The Viatore's[48] claim that this is of Roman origin is thought unlikely.)

On the road southward from Steart Hill there are a number of points of interest. The boundary passes close to the find site of the Whaddon Chase Hoard and, of more significance, to a moated site at SP8114 3150, with a considerable amount of desertion visible on aerial photographs. With a nearby deserted settlement at Upper Salden, on either side of the dividing stream between Whaddon and Mursley, it looks as though there was significant settlement here in the early medieval period. The boundary turns away from the road at Crabtree Gate Lodge, (Crabbetron in the fourteenth century)[49] at the point where a series of small fields called Abbots Mead Closes appear on the edge of the Chase (see **30** below).

In his original translation Dr Baines considered that the Old English text **hlaford leasan garan** meant 'the corner of the lord's pasture'. This would fit in perfectly with the features on the ground. However, after consultation with Dr Margaret Gelling,[50] Dr Baines changed this to read 'the corner without a lord'. This is far more difficult to explain, but it suggests that an area of land which went with Crabtree Gate was without suzerainty at that time. It may well only refer to the small triangle of land between the hedge of Abbots Mead and the junction of Weasel Lane with the Whaddon/Mursley road.

29. So on *(myres gemæres)* Mursley? boundary. Although the word 'myres' was considered to mean Mursley before we knew which section of the boundary the perambulation here referred to, there is a possibility that it means 'new' boundary. Because it does indeed follow the Mursley boundary in this stretch, the former is considered the correct translation.

The boundary is curious. The dozen or so small fields around the southern end of the Abbots Woods, known as the Abbots Mead, give the impression that they were assarted from the wood, possibly earlier than the 10th Century. A closer inspection may not support this view. With ridge and furrow visible over much of the Chase during periods of snow-melt, evidence of Roman and Saxon settlement, and the fact that the creation of the Chase woods seems to have included land from many villages whose bounds were already in place, suggests a later Saxon origin. The Southern boundary of the Abbots Woods was a natural stream which also formed the southern boundary of the adjacent Old Chase Woods, and the Abbots Meadows were on the southern side of this stream. As there is no evidence that they were ever included in the Lordship of the Chase, it is quite feasible that they were retained by Horwood at the time the woods were established.

The old east-west road which is in part the present boundary between Little Horwood and Mursley goes under various names on the 1599 Map; it is Salt Street in Winslow, Fen Way in Mursley and Little Horwood, and Salden Way further west. (See **1** above). The present name of Weasel Lane certainly dates to the early eighteenth century and could be earlier, possibly deriving from Esel lane or Asses lane. The map distinctly shows the road south of the southern edge of the meadows, i.e. the southern edge of Little Horwood. This is important as it explains why the charter refers to another village's boundary, rather than the instruction to proceed along a public highway, because the boundary hedge of the meadows was the boundary with Mursley. The meadow hedge continued until it came to an arable furlong of Little Horwood at SP 8053 2990.

30. Then west to the *(þeod weg)* public way. The boundary where the meadows stop continues west for about 350 metres on the head of a small stream which we have covered on **1.** above. Here it joins the public road at the start of our perambulation.

CONCLUSIONS

Although our source document was a seventeenth-century copy, its unblemished use of somewhat colloquial Late Old English testifies to its authenticity. The document itself is logical, precise and concise; it being no mean feat to describe over 20 miles of complex boundaries in a virtual foolproof text of no more than 200 words. A comprehensive local knowledge is combined with a considerable skill in writing boundary documents.

Perhaps the most amazing thing is the demonstration that the framework of eighteenth-century pre-enclosure Bucks was almost complete in the tenth century. The movement towards creating semi-autonomous self-supporting village units was virtually complete, with most of the border hamlets allocated one way or the other. A whole series of such hamlets were picked up on our perambulation; the only ones not yet divided were Fentum, Varnham and Foxton.

The lack of any settlement detail in the document does not help us to draw any conclusions about whether or not the movement towards creating a single nucleated settlement in each unit had begun, but the inference that a great many of the border hamlets were divided among fixed village units suggest that it had.

Like all good historical exercises, this raised more questions than it gave answers, and we hope some of them will be the subject of further projects.

APPENDIX 1.
TERRITORY WITHIN THE PERAMBULATION THAT IS NOW IN OTHER PARISHES

There is a block of land shown in figure 3. and consisting of at least three hamlets, Fenton,

Varnham and Foxton. All of these have since been divided between the adjacent parishes of Mursley & Swanbourne.

FENTON (VENTUM)

Fenton is the best documented, having been mentioned in King Offa's Charter giving the manor of Winslow to the Abbey of St Albans. This gave the Abbey 'Scuccanhlau vel Fenntuun' in the woods of 'Horwudu'; (the *vel* meaning 'call it which you will').[51] Both Shucklow and Fenton would appear to be hamlets within the Little Horwood boundaries, but separate from the settlement which is the present village and certainly existed at that time.[52] If Matthew Paris can be believed, Little Horwood Manor itself was given to the Abbey at a later date.[53]

Shucklow is fairly well documented and we know its boundaries, and that in the eighteenth century it comprised 216 acres consisting of 10 acres arable, 6 acres meadow & 200 acres pasture[54] According to Bryant's map,[55] it also included Waterfalls Coppice, another 37 acres. In total this was about 15% of the total area of Little Horwood. We do not have such precise information about Fenton, but numerous records[56] allow us to construct its probable size and shape. Perhaps the most important aspect is that there are three separate but interconnected elements: the Fen or Fen Common, which is the name given to a large tract of marshy common within a valley formed in the upper reaches of the brook that is now the boundary between Little Horwood and Mursley/Swanbourne/Shipton; Fenton (or *Ventum*) the farm, or hamlet of the Fen, preserved as a medieval furlong and later a field name; and Fenton Dene (or *Ventonsdene*), which survived as an open field furlong, presumably on the valley side.

As can be seen in Fig 3, Fenton settlement is located near the present village of Little Horwood. Its location is known both by modern field names[57] and from the enclosure award.[58] The area contains a scatter of late Roman pottery indicating settlement during that period, interestingly similar to that found at Shucklow, where continuity can be established.[59] The former road from Little Horwood to Swanbourne, now a footway, passed through the Fenton site.

If, as is thought likely, the hamlet was divided among the three villages, it may reflect proportional grazing rights on Fenton Common.

VARNHAM (FARNHAM)

Most of Varnham is in Shipton, where it gave its name to one of the three common fields[60]. Varnham furlong in Swanbourne is within the area claimed by the perambulation.[61] Shipton also has a furlong (within Varnham Field?) called Farnhamside and another called Farnham Dene.[62] The latter was presumably on the side of the valley adjoining the Fen.

Using the more common fourteenth-century version of the name, Farnham, this is usually interpreted as the farm in the ferns, often connected with rough ground. This was not true in medieval times when Varnham was open-field arable land. Other than the name, there is no evidence of any settlement. (See Foxton below)

FOXTON

Although there is less evidence for a hamlet than with Fenton and Varnham, Foxton was within the area claimed by the perambulation and survived as a furlong name in both Swanbourne and Shipton.

The fairly late furlong name, Standing Walls in Varnham field[63] next to Foxton Furlong may well record a settlement site associated with Foxton. Foxton occurs as a village name in both Cambridgeshire and Leicestershire, where its meaning is said to be Fox Farm.[64]

SUPPOSITION

If we conclude that these three place names represent three separate settlements, each with its own distinct area of land, then it is apparent that they were of unequal size. Also, although their names all survived within the open fields, this does not mean that all three existed at the same time, nor does it tell us if they were independent units or components of some larger grouping.

There is irrefutable evidence that the creation of

a semi-autonomous village (or estate) was a process that took a long time, and that it eventually led to the creation of a single nucleated settlement within that village, but we really can only guess at what the settlement structure was before this process begun. It is tempting to build a hierarchy on the evidence of Winslow. Here we have the very small unit (Foxton) within one three times its size (Varnham), also within one three times its size (Shipton) which is one third of the complete village unit. (Winslow). Far more work on a far larger area needs to be undertaken before such theories can be advanced with any degree of confidence.

APPENDIX 2.
LYGETUN; THE FOURTH ESTATE IN THE 792 WINSLOW CHARTER

Along with the estates of Winslow (*Wineshlauue*), Little Horwood (*Scuccanhlau* and *Fenntuns* in the wood of Horwood) and Granborough (*Scelfdune* and *Baldingcotum*, confirmed by the bounds stated), the manor had a fourth estate of 5 hides at Lygetune. Until now the location of this last estate was unknown, and has been the subject of much speculation,. including that in the Bedfordshire *V C H* which linked it with Luton. Arnold Baines in his paper on the 792 Charter[65] comes very close to the solution when he states that the estates should be arranged clockwise around Winslow starting with the south, and this could indicate Swanbourne. He failed to make the final step of recognising the semi-autonomous 5-hide part of Winslow, called Shipton, which is next to Swanbourne, as a likely candidate.

Although, in recorded history, Shipton has always been a part of Winslow, it had its own field system and as people they were quite capable of independent action. During the 1381 peasant insurrection, on finding that the men of Winslow and Granborough had recovered confiscated hand mills from the abbey, the men of Shipton and Little Horwood went and recovered theirs.

Littleton, with its host of early forms and spellings (Littledon, Smallerton & Litelsutdon [14th

century], Liddenton [17th century], Lytenton [18th century]), was two adjoining furlongs, one in Shipton and one in Swanbourne on the 1599 Salden Map. A field in Swanbourne still retains the name of Littleton. Previously in the text we stated that the boundary between the two villages was artificial and that a perfectly good natural boundary ran immediately adjacent to the present 'furlong edge' boundary (see Fig 4). This suggests some manorial 'carve up' before the middle of the tenth century, but probably after the end of the eighth century, when the name Lygetun was used to describe the whole of the Shipton village estate.

It is not suggested that Littleton was ever more than a 'building block' hamlet in the Shipton village unit; within the unit were a number of other hamlets (Varnham, Foxton, Reton, Howsham & Shipton itself are five possible hide-sized farms/hamlets), but this would not be any impediment to its being used to describe the whole unit. It would seem that, although hamlets had names, the village/estate, of which they formed part, often did not. Thus one of the difficulties met in drafting early charters like the 792 Charter was in describing such units and often having to resort to one or two names of component hamlets; Examples are Shucklow & Fenton, two (non-adjoining) parts of Little Horwood, and Scelfdune and Baldingcotum, two unidentified hamlets in Granborough.

In the autumn of 1996, the opportunity was taken to fieldwalk the area of Littleton. The actual fields of Littleton, in both Swanbourne and Shipton lie in a low valley and have the appearance of being flood meadow. Although these fields showed no sign of occupation, the adjoining higher ground to the north-west near the old Shipton-Swanbourne road had a confined scatter of pottery indicating former settlement. The whole of this material was of Romano-British date. This is identical to material found at both Fenton and Shucklow (see above), and why all of these sites, known to have been in existence up to the eighth century, appear to contain only evidence of earlier occupation, demands explanation (but the middle-Saxom period is all but a ceramic locality).

1. Dr S. Keynes, 'A lost cartulary of St Albans Abbey', in *Anglo-Saxon England* Vol. 22, pp233–239.

2. Brussels, Bibliothèque des Bollandistes, Boll 23, and Brussels, Bibiothèque Royale, 21583–8,146r–185r.

3. A. H. J. Baines, 'The Winslow Charter of 792 and the Boundaries of Granborough' *Recs Bucks.* 22, 1980, pp1–18.

4. Cambridge Univ. Library Ref- Manuscript DD/7/22

5. Dr Noy has written the rolls into a computer programme that can find and quantify both tenant and furlong names. This facility has been extensively used in producing this paper and is the source of all references regarding Winslow Court rolls in the text.

6. BRO. Salden Map, so called because Sir John Forkscue, whose 1599 estate it describes, had his principle seat at Salden in Mursley. Milton Keynes Archaeological Unit Copy made from photographs of lost original

7. *BRO.* IR 100/Q.

8. Sir William Dugdale, *Monasticon Anglicanum* 1819. Vol 1, p179

9. *VCH* 1. p249- Alward, a thane of King Edward. held Horwood.

10. Salden Map as above. (Note 6)

11. Salden Map as above.

12. Salden Map as above

13. Salden Map as above

14. K. Reading, 1994, *A History of Swanbourne, a village of many names*, end paper. Salden Map as above

15. See note 5.

16. See A. H. J. Baines as above.

17. See note 5.

18. A H J Baines as above. p7

19. Salden Map as above.

20. Of direct relevance is a communication between the Lord of the Manor and Earl Verney dated 3 June 1746. "Lowndes and his sisters came in. He was very liberal with his tongue about Claydon and said that the Granborough and Swanbourne people had lost their spirit, for formerly they would not suffer any roads to be stopped up and the Oxon road lay through the middle of East Claydon field to his knowledge and much more to the same purpose." – *Verney Letters of the 18th Century*, Margaret Maria, Lady Verney. 1930 Vol 2, p255.

21. See note 5 above.

22. Salden Map.

23. *BRO* ref NA/279R. Fennimore. Reconstruction of enclosure map

24. See note 5

25. See note 5

26. See note 5

27. Salden Map (see note 6)

28. Salden Map

29. N. A. Saving, *Glimpses of past days, being a historical survey on the town & parish of Winslow cum Shipton*. p59.

30. See note 5

31. Salden Map

32. See note 5

33. See note 5

34. *BRO.* Addington Diocesan Glebe Terriers, Ref D/A/GT, Box 1, Folder 1.

35. Local information from Mr N Saving of Winslow.

36. See note 5.

37. County Antiquity Survey Nos 2926, 2927 and 4015

38. Salden Map (see note 6)

39. See note 5

40. See A. H. J. Baines as above.

41. 35 O.S. draft 2" map of 1802. Copy in Bucks Section of the County Library, Aylesbury.

42. A definition in the Greater Oxford Dictionary with the same root as beck (stream or rivulet [mainly northern]) means a valley bottom through which a stream flows, which has a more general distribution. This perfectly fits the topography.

43. Salden Map

44. A curved road to Nash is shown on the 1802, 2" O.S map. This is after Little Horwood Enclosure when it might have been added, but prior to the Whaddon Chase or Great Horwood enclosure.

45. Viatores *Roman roads of the South-East Midlands*. p309, (1964, Victor Gollancz).

46. G. Eland. 'The Annual Progress at New College' *Recs Bucks*, Vol 13, p86 &106.

47. County Antiquity Survey Nos 32 & 219

48. Viatores as above. Charles Green, a co-author, states that a section of this road was part of Roman road 169A which ran from Londinium to Leckhamstead and probably beyond.

49. See note 5 above.

50. Dr Margaret Gelling of Birmingham University.

51. Arnold Baines as above.

52. Iron Age, Roman and Late Saxon remains have been found in both Woodend and Churchend of Little Horwood within areas of Medieval desertion.

53. *VCH* 1925. *The Victoria History of England, Buckinghamshire*, III, 376

54. Trespass doc. re Shucklow. *BRO.* BAS 370/22/2 No19.

55. Bryant's Map of Buckinhamshire of 1824.

56. *BRO* – Mursley pre-enclosure map. Swanbourne pre-enclosure map. Pond Farm, Lt. Horwood Sale catalogue. Also Salden Map.

57. *BRO* Pond Farm Lt Horwood Sale Cataologue.

58. Little Horwood Enclosure Map reconstruction. (with Julian Hunt). Compiled from enclosure award in *B.R.O*

59. Salden Map (note 6)

60. *BRO* Swanbourne pre-enclosure map

61. See note 5

62. See note 5

63. Salden Map. (note 6)

64. M. Currie, *Dictionary of British Place Names*.

65. See A. H. J. Baines above.