

NOTES

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE FIELD-NAMES

1. THE SURVIVAL OF ANGLO-SAXON PERSONAL NAMES

Although the corpus of field-name material being collected for the county seldom pre-dates the 1190s, and only increases to a substantial volume in the later thirteenth century, there are examples of the survival of Anglo-Saxon personal names long after 1066. These names provide a useful addition to the much better known names which appear in parish and other settlement names.¹ Although some of the latter were recorded before 1066, most appear for the first time in Domesday Book (1086) and later documents, making it impossible to be certain when the name was first coined. The same applies even more to field-names, with the added problem that a majority of the medieval names on record have not survived to the present-day, making it difficult to locate the land in question. A further problem is that Anglo-Saxon personal names clearly continued in use among the lower echelons of society after 1066. Not until the thirteenth century do names of French or Latin derivation seem to have become general among the peasantry.² Also, many individuals with Continental Germanic names came to England before and after 1066, some of which appear in the list below.

The names in Table 1 are those which appear to contain Anglo-Saxon/Germanic personal names, with their parish and date, often their sole recorded appearance. The "correct" form of the name is also given, along with the meaning of the field-name.

The apparent tendency for these names to occur in clusters within parishes no doubt owes more to document survival and the current state of data collection than the actual state of affairs in medieval Buckinghamshire. Nevertheless, this is already an interesting corpus of names. Allowing for duplication of the same name in different parishes, there are sixty-four personal names in this sample, of which nine are feminine and twelve (all masculine) are of probable or possible Continental

origin. The Toki with a croft in Stewkley is the sole example of an Old Norse name, although whether this reflects a pre- or post-1066 arrival is impossible to say. Allowing for the effects of scribes' Latin spelling on these names, some at least are likely to have arisen long before 1200.

Excluding the two names derived from unspecified princes and St. Helen's well at Oakley (itself an interesting evidence for a local holy well), these names fall into two similarly sized groups, one containing elements relating to human settlement and other activity (forty names), the other features relating to the natural landscape (thirty-two names). The element most frequently qualified by these personal names is OE *croft*, 'a small enclosed field, often with reference to a nearby dwelling', of which there are fifteen examples.³ Other elements relating to settlement are OE *hām* ('farm, village'), *worþ* ('enclosure'), *tūn* ('village, originally enclosure'), *haga* ('hedge, enclosure, house plot') and *cot* ('cottage'). All of these names may indicate settlements which have subsequently been lost, for example Warmstone in Waddesdon. Regrettably, the documents do not permit the location of these features to aid the modern field walker and archaeologist. Several names are indicative of field systems, for example, *æcer* ('plot of arable land'), furlong, *butte* (ME 'strip of land abutting a boundary') and headland. All are features of common- or open-field agriculture, whose origins have been much debated, and which may date from before or after Conquest. Other elements qualified by personal names range from a gate to trackways, even a bridge. The use of the female name Burghild for the Roman road though Boycott and Stowe is noteworthy. Beorhtmær's burials at Thornborough are not necessarily of the Anglo-Saxon period, but may be prehistoric or Roman tumuli, with or without later intrusive graves. In all cases the precise significance of using an individual's name is unclear. Direct ownership or tenancy may be indicated, or merely a reference to an adjoining

TABLE 1 Field names containing Anglo-Saxon personal names

<i>Parish</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Field-Name</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
Beachampton	c1250	Leuwoldesdich	Leofwald's ditch [2]
Beaconsfield	>1203	Aldredeshacch	Ealdred's gate
	1412	Aldredesstreehe	Ealdred's street
	>1203	Algaescrofte	Ælfgar's croft
	1491	Babbecroft	Babba's croft
Bierton/Broughton	c1250	Syremannescrofte	Sireman's croft [2]
Bledlow	1248	Dodegrave	Dudda's grove
Boarstall	1252	Luewynslade	Leofwin's valley
Boycott	1300	Buggerode	Burghild's road [1]
Brill ??	1353	Edbrythesham	Eadberht's farm
Burnham/Hitcham	1219	Duddesmere	Dudda's pool
Chalfont St. Peter	1360	Derwaynsheye	Deorwine's enclosure
	>1331	Dyddesworth	Dudda/Dyddda's encl.
	1324	Elfrichsdeler	Ælfric's dell
Chicheley	c1170	Cadeworthe	Cada's enclosure
	c1170	Cuculmesho	Cwichelm's spur of land
Denham	1437	Doddersmore	Dodda's moor
	1375	Gladwyneslade	Gladwin's valley [2]
	1313	Hereboldeslak	Herebald's stream [2]
Edlesborough	1236	Dottesdune	Dot's hill
Ellesborough	c1190	Wibaldeslake	Wigbeald's stream
Great Missenden	13th/14th	Ernaldescroft	Earnweald's croft
Hanslope	1212	Godwinescroft	Godwine's croft
Hartwell	1358	Astanesnull	?Ælftsan's hill
	1329	Colewyneslake	Colwine's stream
	?13th	Herewardesacre	Hereward's acre
	c1270	Wolfeysham	Wulfsgie's farm
	14th	Wygodesforlong	Wigod's furlong
	c1270	Elsedecrofte	?Ælfswith's croft [1]
Hartwell or Stone	t.Hy3/Ed1	Wyustanesmore	Wul[f]stan's moor
Hawridge	1235	Peogsmore	Pe[a]ga's moor [1]
Horsenden	c1190	Waldeucroft	Waltheof's croft [2]
Iver	1374	Athelyngbycche	prince's point/angle
Kimbles	<1246	Ailwieshulle	Ælfwig's hill
Kimbles	c1217	Lefsismerse	Leofsgie's marsh
	1205–15	Thedulueshulle	Theodwulf's hill [2]
Lillingstone Dayrell	1288–9	Edrichestort	Eadric's corner
Little Missenden	end 13th	Baldwynescroft	Baldwin's croft
Long Crendon	1348	Godrichesbrokelonde	Godric's brook land
Newton Longville	1310	Astulfbuttes	Ast[w]ulf's strip/ridge
	1310	Codduscroft & le Buttez	Codd's croft
	1310	Godwyneswerd	Godwine's enclosure
Oakley	c1260	St. Eilina well	St. Helen's well [1]
Pitstone	c1605	Bachmundeswelle	Bæcmund's spring [2]
Princes Risborough	1270–1	Colgermescroft	Colgrim's croft [2]
Salden	c1252	Adelmorslad	Æthelmær's valley
	c1252	Euesestanyhurst	?Eofestan's wood
	1241	Herlauecroft	Herlaf's croft [2]

TABLE 1 *continued*

<i>Parish</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Field-Name</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
Shalstone	L13th	Godwyneaker	Godwine's acre
Shenley Brook End	1369	Brygthwysheg	Beorhtwin's hedge
Stewkley	1196	Tidboldeston	Tidbald's village
	1218	Tokiescroft	Toki's croft [2]
	14th	Wynsmerehull	Winemar's hill
Stoke Poges	14th	Wynsmerehull	Winemar's hill
Stone	c1270	Ordewysfurlong	Ordwig's furlong
Stony Stratford	1344	Heymundecote	Haimund's cottage [2]
Stowe	1226	Buggilderode	Burghild's road [1]
Tattenhoe	<1225	Wlrenecroft	Wulfrun's croft [1]
Thornborough	1210×9	Alwaldesdene	Ælfwald's valley
	1240×6	Algoreslade	Ælfgar's valley
	124050	Brithmeresburieles	Beorhtmær's burials
	1240×51	Herewardishegg'	Hereward's hedge
Tyringham/Filgrave	1222	Athelingwellefurlong	prince's spring furl.
	1222	Haroldescroft	Harold's croft [1]
Waddesdon	early 13th	Wermodestune	Wærmōd's village
Walton	1296	Afladebruge	Ælfæd's bridge [1]
Wendover	>1237	Oswithsdene	Oswith's valley [1]
Westbury	1317	Blechemanfurlong	Blæcman's furlong
	1305	Dawenildefifacre	Denehild's 5 acres [1]
Whaddon	1219	Ailueuascruche	Ælfeva's cross [1]
Willen	1299×1300	Wykemanne Crofte	?Wicman's croft
Wolverton	1198–1248	Adelhondeshul	?Æthelhun's hill
	1198–1248	Adhermundeswelle	Æthelmund's spring
	1198–1248	Estridiforlong	Astrith's furlong [1]
	1265	Heremundeswell	Heremund's spring [2]
	1230×48	Merewynshauedlondesende	Merewine's headland

Notes: 1 Female name; 2 Probable or possible Continental name

owner/tenant.

The landscape features qualified by personal names are an equally heterogeneous group. They include valleys (OE *slæd*, *dell* (also a pit), *demu*), water features (OE *mere* (pool), *lacu* (slow-flowing stream), *broc* (stream), *wielle* (spring), *mor* (moor, marshy ground), *mersc* (marsh)) and hills (OE *hoh* (spur), *dūn*, *hyll*). Personal attributions of natural features may reflect individual rather than communal ownership, although it is unclear whether such names arose within or outside a field system.

This group of field-names shows that the use of Anglo-Saxon names continued long after the Conquest, whether they were coined before 1066 or in the period down to 1200–50 when local peasant families began to use names of Latin or Norman-French origin, including many saints' names. As

such they provide a valuable insight into an obscure period of the county's history, for example showing evidence of lost settlements and the development of the open-field system. As the collection of field-names progresses, it is likely that more such names will appear. Unfortunately the subsequent loss of the great majority of these names, often through enclosure and abandonment of settlements, means that we cannot locate the features in question, while the absence of early written references makes it impossible to pinpoint their precise origins.

2. CROSSES & CRUCIFIXES

Roadside crucifixes and shrines are a still common feature in many European countries, but the evidence of Buckinghamshire field-names suggests that they were equally widespread locally

in the pre-Reformation countryside.

There is a handful of names containing the Old English compound *cristel-mæl* ‘cross, crucifix’, which occurs elsewhere chiefly in charter boundaries (e.g. Hawkrigde Wood, Shellingford and Blewbury/Aston/Moreton in Berkshire). There are three examples so far in this county: *Crist[en]jemel* (Shalstone 1255–1289), *Cristemele in Bettelouwe* (Aylesbury 1291), and possibly *Cristemereshulle/Cristenhulle* (Thornborough 1240–1290). The Aylesbury example is doubly interesting as the crucifix is linked with a burial mound, containing the OE personal name *Betti*. Such mounds are usually prehistoric, but may also date from the Anglo-Saxon period (e.g. Taplow), or represent later burials intruded into an existing mound. Although these references postdate the Conquest by many years, it seems likely that they provide instances of crosses in the Anglo-Saxon landscape.

Other possible crosses/shrines in the landscape are those appearing in field-names as *Crutch* or *Crouch*. This is from Middle English *crouche* ‘a cross’ (OE *crūc*). Examples so far collected are detailed in Table 2.

Only three of these names are from medieval sources, and many are apparently in current usage, having been collected from oral surveys in the

1970s. Those where the name occurs in both early and late forms may represent the same feature with a change of affix. Landscape crosses were clearly to be found across the whole county, and other examples are doubtless awaiting discovery. There seems to be a tendency for the name to be pronounced “crutch” in the Chilterns and “crouch” elsewhere, although more data are needed to validate this generalisation.

3. “PLAY” SITES

Playing fields or recreation grounds are a ubiquitous feature in the modern landscape, both in urban areas and in most villages. They are generally the product of the last hundred years or so, and although named on larger-scale maps are not strictly place-names. Early examples do, however, occur in the corpus of Buckinghamshire field-names so far collected, which suggests that the setting aside of land for “leisure” has a long pedigree.

Foremost among them are the world-famous playing fields of Eton College, where the battle of Waterloo was allegedly won and where generations of the nation’s leaders learned to “play up and play the game”. The College was founded by Henry VI in 1440, and the Playing Leaze (meadowland) is mentioned as early as 1516, the Playing Field from 1564, replacing the earlier version by the end of the 16th century. Since the 18th century the form has been Playing Fields. Here, of course, there is a direct link between the school and the area set aside for sport.

Other examples are very scarce, and of purely local significance. Marsworth had a Play Ground in 1809, the only example such a name so far noted between the 16th and 20th centuries. Several parishes have much earlier examples however (Table 3).

TABLE 2 Field names relating to crosses / crucifixes

Beaconsfield	1846	Crutch[es] Bottom
Chalfont St. Giles	1841	Crutches Wood
Chalfont St. Giles	1841	Crutchets, Furt/Mid/Hit
Chesham	1843	Crouch Field
Chesham	c1765	Crouch Furlong
East Claydon	1265–82	Crouchweye
Great Kimble	1805	Crouch, New
Great Kimble	1286	Crutch Furlong
Great Missenden	1839	Crutch Field
Halton	1840	Crutches Close/Wood
High Wycombe	1848	Crutch Field U/L
Hughenden	1851	Crutch Close
Hughenden	16th	Crutch Field, Upper
Linslade	1980	Crouches Field
Long Crendon	1887	Crutch Furlong
Newton Longville	1310	Crouchfurlong
North Crawley	1683	Crouches
Soulbury	1772	Crouches Field
Thornborough	1977	Crouchway
Wendover	1842	Crouch Field
Wendover	1909	Crutch Hill
Westbury	1843	Crouch Coppice

TABLE 3 Field names relating to playing

Thornton	1273	Plestedehul
Ashendon	1850	Plested's Ground
Ashendon	1624	Plested's Ground
Thornborough	1240×7	Pleystede
Haversham	1373	Pleystow [toft]
Thornborough	1313×31	Pleystowe
Thornborough	1243×50	Pleystude
Long Crendon	1521–2	Plaistow Croft

These names contain the Old English compounds *pleg-stede* 'play place' and *pleg-stow* 'sport place, place where people gathered for play'. The latter has given rise to fully fledged settlement names, for example Plaistow in several counties. In Buckinghamshire the names were clearly of purely local significance, with examples from the medieval period. Note that Ground in the Marsworth and Ashendon examples denotes a field, in the latter taking its name from a much earlier Playstead. Playstead and Playstow are used interchangeably at Thornborough. At Long Crendon and Haversham, small enclosures were apparently set aside for play. It is unfortunately impossible to know what play the villagers engaged in, although festivities associated with the church calendar are probably amongst them, together with May Day and relics from the pre-Christian past. Other examples are no doubt likely to be discovered in medieval and later sources, even if it is highly unusual for them to survive the upheavals of enclosure to link up with their modern successors, in function of not in location.

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REFERENCES

1. For further discussion of personal names used in parish/settlement names see K.A. Bailey, 'Buckinghamshire Parish Names', *Recs. Bucks.* **40** (1998–2000), 55–71; A. Mawer & F.M. Stenton *The Place-Names of Buckinghamshire* (1925).
2. See for example the Hundred Rolls (*Rotuli Hundredorum temp. hen III et Edw I* Record Commissioners 2 vols. 1812–1818) and A.C. Chibnall ed. *Early Taxation Records* Bucks. Record Soc. **14** (1966).
3. For all of the place-name elements discussed below and in the following notes, see A.H. Smith *The Place-Name Elements* (2 vols. 1956), also the more recent volumes on *The Vocabulary of English Place-Names* (D. Parsons et al., Nottingham 1997ff.), which have reached as far as Cock-Pit.

A BUCKINGHAMSHIRE MAGNA CARTA

On 18 December 2007, Sotheby's in New York sold an original Magna Carta dating from 1297 for \$21.32 million¹. The vendor was the Perot Foundation, an American institution founded by the businessman and sometime presidential candidate Mr H. Ross Perot, who had purchased it from the Brudenell MSS at Deene Park, Northamptonshire, in 1983. The Foundation subsequently lent the document to the US National Archives and Records Administration in Washington, where it was placed on permanent display. As the only occasion on which an original Magna Carta has been offered at auction, the 2007 sale made international news – but the document has strong Buckinghamshire connections, which also make the event worthy of record in this journal. This article is largely derived from Sotheby's sale catalogue (with the kind permission of Sotheby's, New York, and of the author, Professor Nicholas Vincent of the University of East Anglia), though any errors of fact or interpretation are entirely my own.²

First issued by King John after his meeting at Runnymede with baronial rebels in June 1215, the charter, which soon became known on account of its size as Magna Carta, or 'Great Charter', enshrined numerous concessions to the rebels, some traditional, others setting unprecedented restrictions on royal power. Initially, it was something of a failure: it was annulled by Pope Innocent III in August and did not put an end to the civil war. However, after John's death the following year, its potential value was recognized by the guardians of his son and successor, the nine-year-old King Henry III. In November 1216, they re-issued the charter, albeit with considerable modifications, as a manifesto of future good government. They did so again in November 1217, after the final defeat of the invasion of Louis, son of the French king. Magna Carta, together with the Forest Charter first issued in 1217, became recognized as a touchstone of communal liberties and privileges guaranteeing the king's free subjects against royal tyranny. It was re-issued by the Crown several times in the thirteenth century as a means of defusing tensions and

resolving conflicts. Such re-issues occurred in 1225, 1265, 1297 and finally 1300, while on many other occasions the king issued letters promising to respect Magna Carta without the text itself being re-issued.

What does it mean to speak of an original Magna Carta? King John did not, of course, sign Magna Carta at Runnymede, for royal documents at this period were authenticated by seal, not signature, nor was the charter sealed there and then. The writing and sealing of royal documents was a bureaucratic process in which the king played no personal part, and in the case of Magna Carta this process would have taken place in the king's chancery only after the Runnymede meeting. Nor is it correct to imagine that there was a single Magna Carta that can be pointed to as *the* original. In order for it to be promulgated around the country, many copies (engrossments) of the 1215 charter – perhaps as many as forty – would have to have been produced, all equally original and authentic. Four of these have survived: two are now in the British Library and one each in the archives of Salisbury and Lincoln Cathedrals. While it must be assumed that there would have been a written document at Runnymede to which the king signified his assent, possibly by touching it or passing the hem of his garment over it, this Magna Carta prototype has not survived.

It may be supposed that a similar number of original engrossments would have been produced at each subsequent re-issue of Magna Carta, the vast majority of which have not survived either. In fact, there are in total only seventeen surviving original engrossments of Magna Carta from the whole period 1215–1297, with a further five dating from the final re-issue in 1300. In format they are all single membranes of parchment to which royal seals (most now lost) were appended, but they differ from each other in many ways: in shape and size, in the type of seal used, and in the method by which the seal was attached. Moreover, the texts of the different re-issues vary, and there are often discrepancies between individual engrossments

within each re-issue. Therefore, each one of the score or so of original engrossments that have come down to us, along with those contemporary copies that survive, assists our understanding of the diplomatic history of Magna Carta.

The reason for the re-issue of Magna Carta and the Forest Charter in 1297 lies in the cumulative financial difficulties facing King Edward I as a result of his military campaigns in Wales, Scotland and Gascony. The financial measures required to finance and supply the new professional armies with which Edward waged his wars, and the concomitant increase in the machinery of the state, created discontent that came to a head in the Parliament of 1297. New taxes imposed early that year led to conflict with both clergy and laity, which had to be dealt with by the regency council after Edward sailed to the continent in August. Following the summoning of Parliament in October and the English defeat by William Wallace at Stirling Bridge, the regency council was forced to come to terms with Parliament and re-issue in full the texts of Magna Carta and the Forest Charter.

The 1297 Magna Carta was issued in the form of an *inspeximus* by letters patent of Edward I, dated Westminster, 12 October 1297. It recites in full the text of the 1225 re-issue, though in fact it does not match exactly any of the surviving engrossments of the 1225 charter, being taken, apparently, from an inferior cartulary or statute-book copy. It was probably the first time that the full texts of Magna Carta and the Forest Charter had been despatched to the counties since 1265, and its long-term significance is that it was the first time an official copy of both charters was enrolled by the chancery on to the Statute Rolls, thereby enshrining them within English law. As with the first grant of Magna Carta in 1215, the re-issue of the charters in 1297 failed to resolve the crisis, leading to a further, and final, re-issue of both charters in 1300.

The document under discussion is one of four surviving engrossments from that 1297 re-issue, the others now being held at The National Archives (TNA) in Kew, London Metropolitan Archives and Parliament House in Canberra, Australia. It is, of course, in medieval Latin, written in sixty-eight lines of text on a parchment measuring approximately 14 × 16 inches. It is sealed on a fold at the foot of the parchment using a parchment tag, on which are the remnants of the wax seal. The seal has been identified as the small seal of Edward I,

used as a seal of absence by the regency council, the Great Seal being with the king in Flanders.

THE BUCKINGHAMSHIRE CONNECTIONS

On the front of the parchment fold, at the bottom of the document, are written two significant notes: the word *Buk'*, to the left of the seal tag, and to the right, the words *tradatur Rogero Hodelyn de Newport*: 'it is to be given to Roger Hodelyn of Newport [Pagnell]'. The former undoubtedly identifies this document as an original, perhaps as the sole original, exemplar of the 1297 re-issue dispatched to the county of Buckingham. This is rare, but not unique, for similar notes appear on two of the three other surviving engrossments of the 1297 Magna Carta: the one still preserved in the archives of the Corporation of London at the London Metropolitan Archives was directed to London (*London'*), while the one now in Canberra was directed to Surrey (*Surr'*), as indeed was the sole surviving 1297 Forest Charter, now in the British Library.

However, the direction to Roger Hodelyn seems to be a unique case of a surviving Magna Carta with a direction to a named individual. Where other names of individuals appear on engrossments of Magna Carta, they seem to be those of chancery officials. In this document, for example, the name *Stowe* appears at the end of the final line: this is the name of the senior chancery official responsible for warranting the document, possibly identifiable as John de Stowe, who appears on many chancery documents issued between 1290 and 1310.

No such person as Roger Hodelyn appears in the records of central government at this period, suggesting that he is to be identified in some sense as a representative of the community of the shire of Buckingham, or more likely as a bailiff or dependent officer of the sheriff of Buckinghamshire, perhaps with particular responsibility for Newport Pagnell, which had long been a centre of royal administration in Buckinghamshire, and a place where the general eyre convened. By coincidence, there survives on the close rolls at TNA a mandate from the regency council to the sheriff of Buckinghamshire ordering him to cause the re-issued Magna Carta and Forest Charter to be proclaimed 'throughout his bailiwick in whatever places he shall see fit'.³

Little is known about Roger, but as Roger

Hodelin he appears in the Feet of Fines for Buckinghamshire, in connection with a final concord relating to a message in Newport Pagnell in 1295, not as a party to the action but in an endorsement putting in his own claim.⁴ It may also be noted that a Roger Hodelyne appears in the 1332 subsidy roll for Buckinghamshire, in the list for Newport Pagnell. He is assessed at five shillings, the joint third-highest figure in the list of 85 names.⁵ As this is some 35 years after the Magna Carta, it may be doubted whether it is the same Roger, but there is a strong possibility of a near family relationship. Roger Hodelin is also mentioned in the catalogue description of a petition held in TNA complaining about Richard Warde, sheriff of Buckinghamshire, 1334–6, for abuses in the three hundreds of Newport, although Roger's role is not clear from the catalogue, whether as complainant or complained against.⁶

THE BRUDENELLS

Though Deene Park in Northamptonshire became the principal residence of the Brudenell family in the sixteenth century, they have had close historical links with Buckinghamshire ever since William Brudenell of Aynho, Northamptonshire, married Alice, heiress to the manor of Raans in Amersham, in the mid fourteenth century. He and his successors acquired other Buckinghamshire manors, but lived at the manor house of Raans at Amersham Common until their move to Deene Park.⁷

It is not known when or from whom the 1297 Magna Carta was acquired by the Brudenell family. Indeed, it cannot be identified with certainty as being in their possession until the nineteenth century, when it was stamped with their mark showing the family motto, *En Grace Affie*. However, it is almost certain that it came to the family either before or during the time of Sir Thomas Brudenell (1578–1663), created Baron Brudenell of Stonton in 1628 and Earl of Cardigan in 1661. As a noted antiquary, he was precisely the sort of person who would have been eager to acquire medieval antiquities such as Magna Carta, and who would certainly have been in a position either to track down an original Magna Carta for himself, or to recognize and appreciate the significance of one already in his family's archives. He is known to have used public records in the Tower of London, the Chapter House at Westminster, the

Temple Church and elsewhere. He also used the private library of another antiquary, Sir Robert Cotton, who purchased not one, but two, engrossments of Magna Carta: the two 1215 originals now held in the British Library. That the charter was at Deene Park by this time is suggested by one of the endorsements, which in a confident hand appearing to date from Sir Thomas's time, reads 'Magna Carta', a correct identification but also perhaps a proud boast that Sir Thomas possessed his own copy of a charter of enormous significance, already regarded as an object of surpassing rarity.

However, there are at least three of Sir Thomas Brudenell's forebears, whose position or interests might have given them the knowledge and opportunity to acquire the 1297 charter: Edmund Brudenell (d. c.1425), an official in the courts of king's bench and common pleas, in Buckinghamshire a commissioner of array in 1403, justice of the peace and knight of the shire, and son of the William who acquired Raans manor; William's great-grandson Sir Robert Brudenell (c.1461–1531), chief justice of the common pleas; and Sir Robert's son Sir Thomas (c.1497–1549), who like his grandson and namesake, the first Earl of Cardigan, was a keen amateur historian who appears to have pursued his own archival research.

THE AMERICAN DIMENSION

When the Brudenells' Magna Carta was sold to a buyer from the United States in 1983 (for about £1.25 million), the sale inevitably aroused controversy, and the government temporarily withheld an export licence to allow a matching sum to be raised to keep it in the United Kingdom. This proved not to be possible, and the export licence was approved in 1984.⁸ However, ever since the seventeenth century, American jurists and politicians had revered Magna Carta as a guarantor of their liberties as much as the English did, and it strongly influenced both the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. Indeed, twice in the twentieth century, the British and American governments had held discussions about donating to the United States one of the engrossments of Magna Carta in public ownership. The suggestion first came up during World War II and again in the course of the preparations for celebrating the American Bicentennial in 1976. Both these negotiations had both foundered on the refusal of public institutions in

Britain to surrender one of their precious possessions, so private sale was perhaps the only option if the United States was to acquire its own Magna Carta. There was indeed a precedent for this in the purchase by the Australian government in 1953 of a 1297 Magna Carta that belonged to Bruton School, Somerset. This remains the only other original Magna Carta held outside England.

At Sotheby's auction in New York in 2007, the 1297 Magna Carta was purchased by Mr David Rubenstein, an American lawyer and businessman, who promised to allow it to remain in the US National Archives and Records Administration.⁹ It can now be seen on their website, complete with its directions to Buckinghamshire and Roger Hodelin of Newport Pagnell.

Roger Betteridge

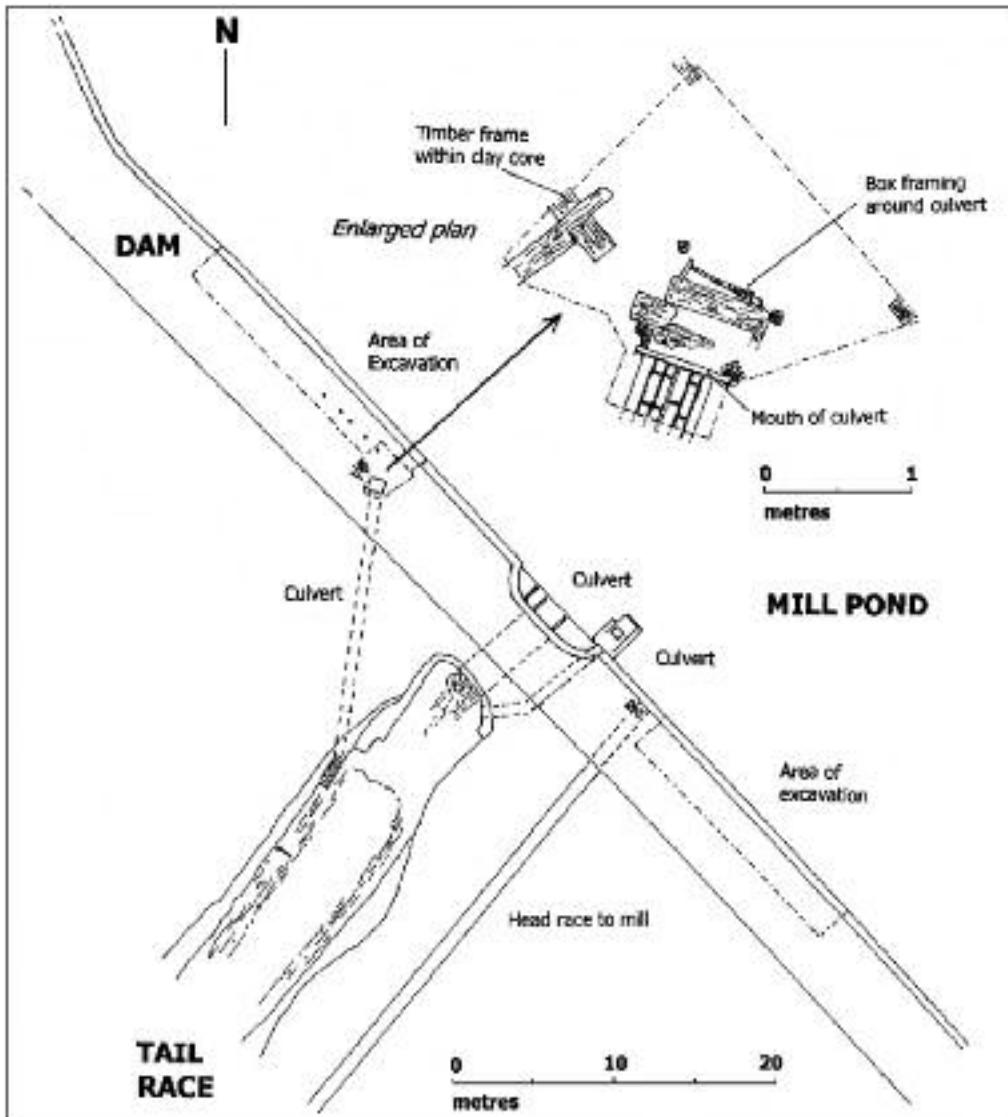
NOTES

1. *The Times*, 19 December 2007.
2. A copy of the catalogue (54pp.), downloaded from Sotheby's website in 2007, is held in the Archive Searchroom (Box File 6) at the Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies. It includes the full Latin text with an English translation and a physical description of the document; background information includes a census of all surviving engrossments of Magna Carta and contemporary copies, and articles on the history of Magna Carta, the crisis of 1297, the Brudenells' ownership of this document, and the history of the attempts by both the United States and Australia to acquire an original Magna Carta.
3. *Calendar of Close Rolls, 1296–1302*, 137 (an undated order, but copied on to the dorse of a membrane of the Close Roll, the other side of which records letters of 5–13 November 1297: TNA ref. C54/114, m. 2d).
4. Anita Travers (ed.), *A Calendar of the Feet of Fines for Buckinghamshire, 1259–1307* (Buckinghamshire Record Society, Vol. 25 (1989), 73, no. 462).
5. A. C. Chibnall (ed.), *Early Taxation Returns* (Buckinghamshire Record Society, Vol. 14 (1961), 94).
6. TNA ref. SC8/92 (catalogue entry).
7. For a history of the Brudenell family, see Joan Wake, *The Brudenells of Deene* (London, 1953).
8. *The Times*, 19 March 1983, 29 September 1984, 4 October 1984.
9. *The Times*, 19 December 2007.

STOWE LANDSCAPE GARDENS, HOME FARM MILL POND

The mill pond at Home Farm, Stowe (NGR SP 6698 3708), was acquired by the National Trust in 1995 when it purchased several hundred acres of farmland in order to protect the views to the north of the gardens. At that time the pond was

completely choked with reeds and scrub and hardly befitted Stanley Freese's 1930s description of '...a beautiful lake bedecked with water lilies and forming an exceptionally fine and picturesque mill-pond in parklike surroundings'. The Trust



therefore undertook to restore the appearance of the pond in 2002 when it was drained, dredged of silts, and the brick dam partially rebuilt. A watching brief over these works (Oxford Archaeology 2003) resulted in the recovery of information relating to the sluice supplying the sawmill, and also the original cast-iron sluice gate forming the main outlet for draining the pond.

Structural problems subsequently developed in the dam, leading to the collapse of two major sections in 2007. These sections were rebuilt on concrete footings and secured with ground anchors; the excavations facilitating the rebuilding of the wall exposed the original clay core to the dam. A further phase of repair was necessary in 2008 when a large vertical chasm appeared in the core of the dam behind the wall. The chasm penetrated to a depth of about three metres, revealing the mouth of a brick culvert encased within the clay core of the dam. The existence of this culvert had previously been known about as its downstream continuation can be seen in the side of the stream below the pond: indeed, the water seeping into the chasm was exiting via this culvert.

In order to seal the mouth of the culvert and prevent further seepage a hole measuring 2.4×1.8 m was machine excavated, and though rather perilous an archaeological watching brief was maintained by the Trust over these works. The main findings to arise from the watching brief were that the mouth of the culvert appeared to be framed by a timber box construction, and though very little of this structure remained, it appeared to form a vertical 'well' or shaft, perhaps to drain off excess water from the pond during periods of heavy rainfall. The second main observation was that

embedded within the clay core is a box framework of oak timbers with the uprights anchored into horizontal plates and secured with a mortice and tenon joint. Samples were taken from these timbers for dendrochronology dating and returned felling dates between 1819 and 1834. As these timbers lie within the core of the dam they are likely to provide a date for its construction. They are also likely to provide a date for the construction of the mill at Home Farm, though it is almost certain that the existing building sits on the site of an earlier mill.

As an aside, it is worth recording that during the 2002 works a number of timber planks were pulled out of the silts. These showed evidence of pit-sawing, suggesting that prior to the mill being converted to a sawmill there may have been a sawpit on site. Samples taken for dendrochronology dating gave a date range of between 1892 and 1909. It is possible that the planks may have been deliberately immersed in order to remove the sap from the timber. Although this method is no longer used, there are several historic references to this practice, including John Evelyn in 1670.

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