A DEER PARK AT SEAGRAVE'S FARM, PENN

MILES GREEN

The first documentary reference to a deer park in Penn was made in 1977 in a study by L.M. Cantor and J. Hatherly in 'Records', and its probable location was identified a few years later. This present study describes the park in its 150 acres surrounding Seagrave's Farm, maps its remarkably well-preserved boundaries, and discusses its informative place and field-names. Its relationship to Segrave Manor is explained. Its earlier Old English name is identified as Heynton, 'a settlement enclosed for hunting', which it is proposed was once the hunting park for a royal Anglo-Saxon estate centred on Burnham, harbouring between 30 and 60 deer. The problems of management and high costs are discussed and closure by the 16th century, or earlier, is proposed.

INTRODUCTION

A study by L.M. Cantor and J. Hatherly found 52 documented parks in Buckinghamshire, but noted that it was almost certain that other parks were in existence of which no traces exist. The size of a park varied considerably, but was usually fairly small in Buckinghamshire in the early Middle Ages, only about 40 acres. They found a 1325 reference to one in Penn which contained a capital messuage and a dovecot, although they did not say where it was. There was also a park at Beaconsfield and another at Bulstrode in Gerrards Cross.[1]

The location of a probable park in Penn parish was identified not long afterwards and is recorded in the County's Historic Environment Record on an undated index card, no. 1458. It describes, 'an enclosure about ¾ mile long and ½ mile wide at its greatest extent, believed to be a medieval park pale with ditch on the inside of the bank throughout, possibly associated with Henry de Segrave…traced for 200yds along edge of Sandels Wood. The bank is 4-5m wide & 0.5-0.8m high, ditch is 3m wide & up to 0.5m deep – both well preserved. It has the appearance of a park pale, but could be a medieval coppice or woodland enclosure bank. Probably an estate boundary.'

Rackham notes that, typically, a deer park was often in excess of 100 acres and was roughly rectangular in shape with rounded corners. It lay on the edge of the manor with the parish boundary coinciding with part of the perimeter, and was on comparatively steep ground which was more difficult to cultivate, but where the woods necessary for hunting could also be exploited for their timber. It was securely enclosed by a ditch lying inside an earth bank which was topped by a wooden paling fence of cleft oak stakes set in the bank and nailed to rails, broken by gates.[2]

The deer park around Seagraves's Farm has all these features except, of course, no wooden fence has survived. The farm-house sits on top of a wooded hill near the eastern boundary of the parish of Penn, midway between Knotty Green and Winchmore Hill (Fig. 1). It is in the middle of a roughly rectangular 150 acres, around almost all of which runs a very visible earth bank with an internal ditch, still achieving a height difference of between two and six feet and some five yards wide. Profiles (Fig. 2) were measured in two places, and are illustrated by photographs (Figs 3 & 4). One corner of the park bank survives intact (Fig. 5).[3]

This physical evidence, together with the name of Park Grove adjacent to Seagraves Farm, immediately suggests a medieval deer park, and we shall see that this is confirmed by both field names and the historical record. The geological map (Fig. 6) shows a large circular area of Reading Beds ('mottled clay, sand with pebbles at base') underlying most of Park Grove near the present farmhouse. All the early settlement sites in Penn and Coleshill have this same geology which provides water.

Parks provided an enclosure where deer could be hunted, for fresh venison, a special dish for feasts and for honoured guests, as well as to enjoy the thrill of the chase. They were stocked with red, fallow and roe deer, but could also be used for
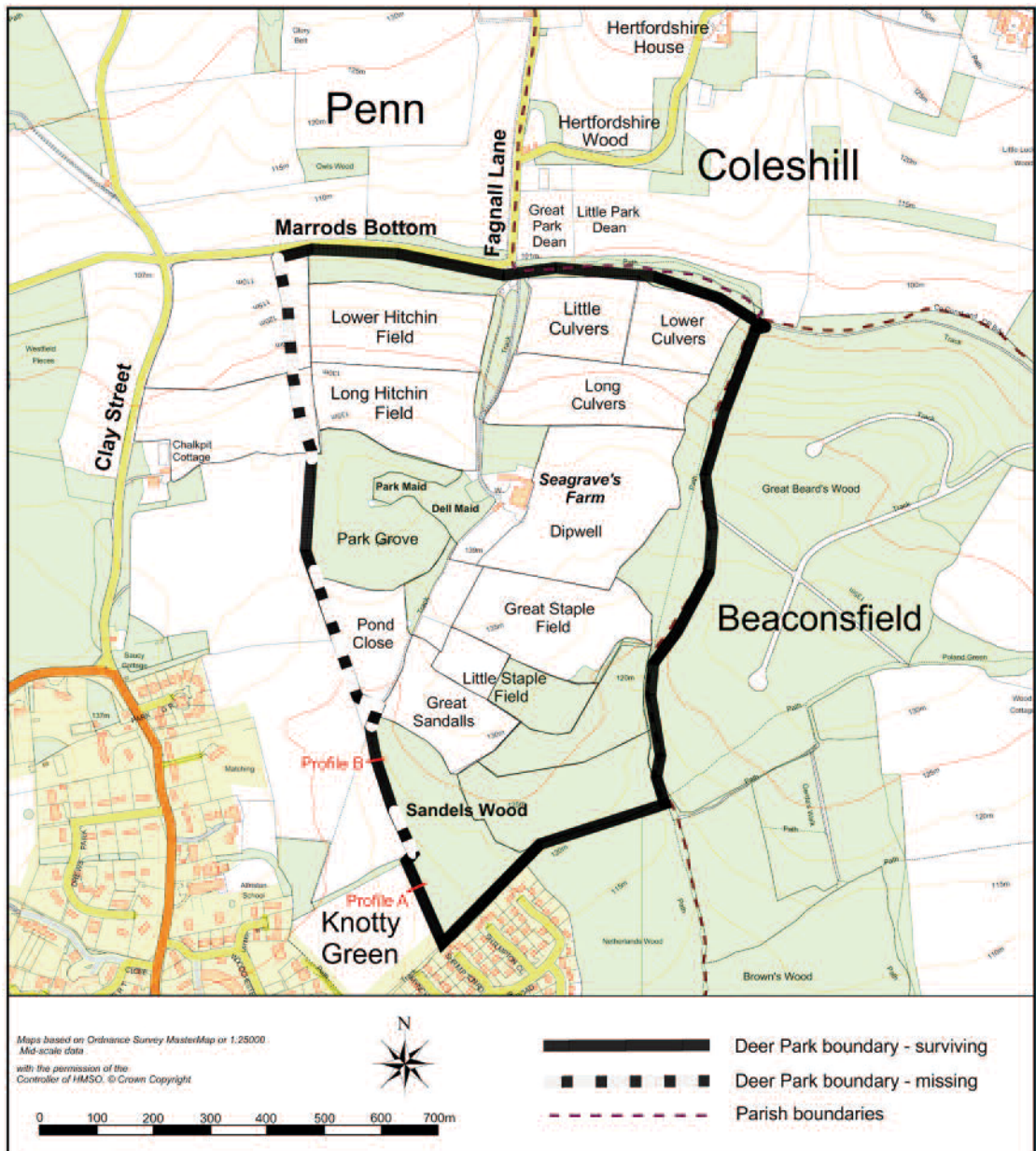
FIGURE 1 Location and extent of the deer park, with field names taken from the 1838 Penn Tithe Award, showing location of boundary profiles A & B

pasturing cattle, raising horses and feeding swine on beech masts and acorns, provided they did not interfere with the deer, as well as for sale of timber and deadwood for fuel. They often contained a lodge which housed the keeper or parker, who was an important manorial official, and quite frequently contained a fish pond and a dovecote. It was the secure enclosure which distinguished it from the other medieval hunting grounds; the royal forest, the chase allowed to a few great nobles on
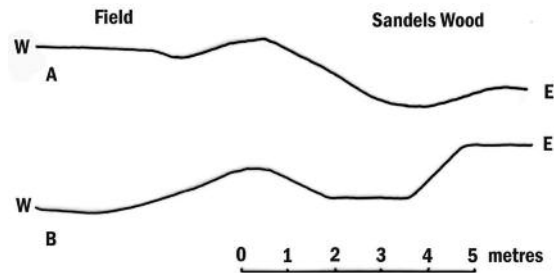
FIGURE 2 Boundary profiles A & B

FIGURE 3 Location of Profile A

their estates and the right of free warren to hunt smaller game on their estates which the Crown eventually granted to the majority of lords of the manor.

SEGRAVE'S MANOR

Segrave's Manor was only ¼ of a knight's fee, a small part of the 1¼ knight's fee for the whole Manor of Penn.[4] It was awarded to Stephen de Segrave in 1223 after Nicholas de la Penne was hanged for murdering a Beaconsfield neighbour resulting in the forfeiture of part of the manor.[5]

Stephen was then a baron of great wealth and influence, soon to be Constable of Dover and Warden of the Cinque Ports at a time of threatened invasion by the French, Chief Justice of the Court of King's Bench and Sheriff of Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire.[6] His manor in Penn represented only a tiny fraction of his property and there is no reason to suppose that he ever lived there or that there was ever a manor house of any substance. His connection with Penn seems to have been through his wife who was related to the Turvilles, overlords of the de la Pennes.[7] It may have been the existence of the deer park which aroused his interest in the first

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FIGURE 4 Location of Profile B. In the 18th-century, the former park boundary ditch was being used as a track to the farmhouse.

FIGURE 5 The only surviving corner of the roughly rectangular boundary bank & ditch. It is the SE corner, in woodland
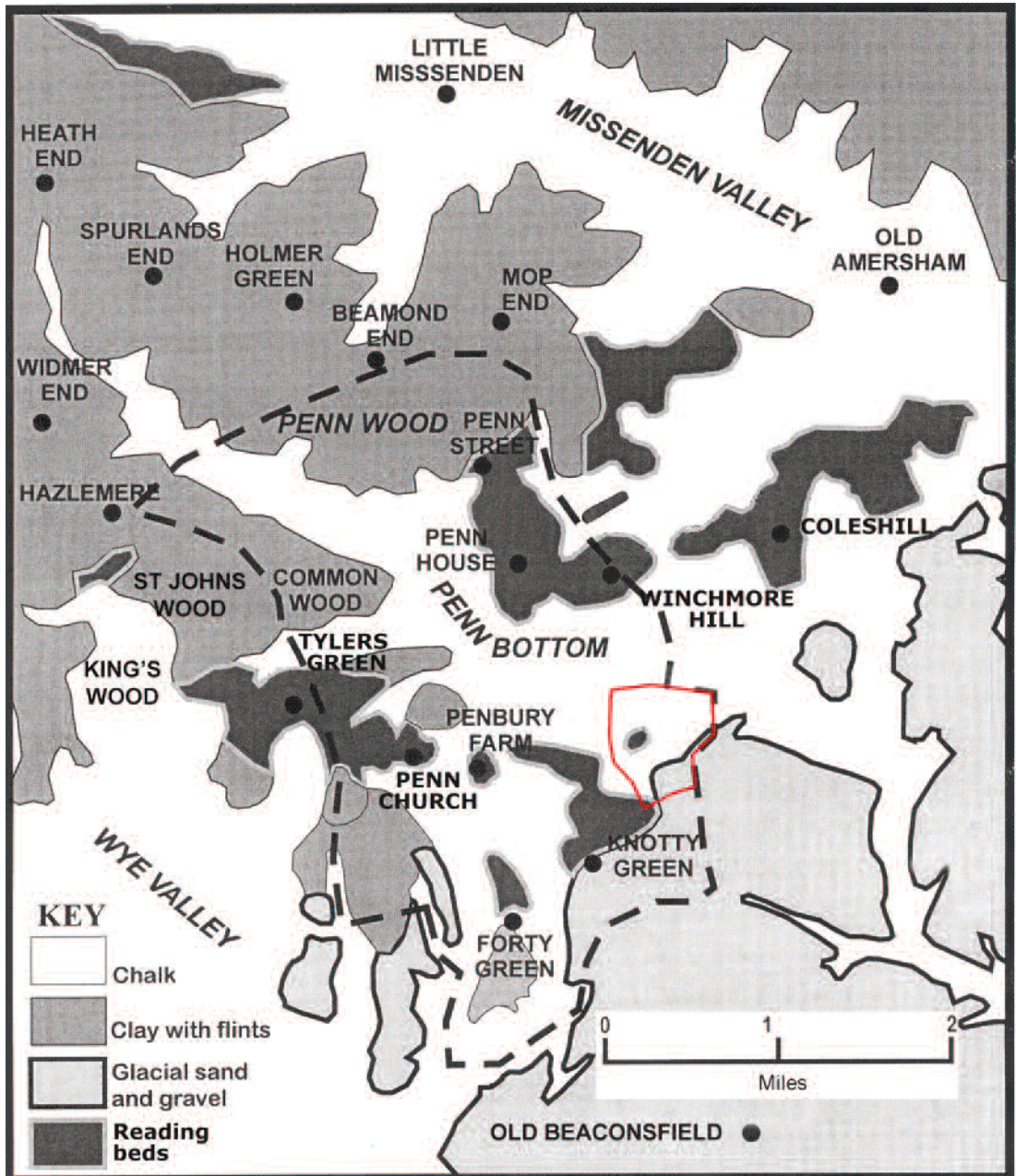
FIGURE 6 Geology of the deer park showing the Reading Beds which provide water for all the early settlements in the immediate area

place. The Penn family had bought back Segrave's Manor and all its land by the early 17th century.[8]

The present Seagrave's Farm (Fig. 7) was, as far as we know, never the site of the manor house. It is Grade II listed, described as '16/17th-century timber-framed and brick with T-plan gabled cross-wing at west end'. John Chenevix-Trench examined the farm-house in detail and established that it had been rebuilt using many of the timbers from a medieval predecessor with a span of only 17ft 6 inches and commented that this was a good deal smaller than the average manor house and more consistent with a hunting lodge.[9] There is also a listed timber-framed 18th-century barn. The manor was administered by a bailiff and by a visiting steward from a modest roadside house on Church Road, Penn, about ¼ mile from Penn Church, still called the Manor House, which performed the role of a home farm.[10] The unassuming frontage conceals a 17th or 18th-century interior.

FIELD NAMES

The field names recorded for Seagrave's Farm in the 1838 Penn Tithe Award are surprisingly relevant and helpful to the case for a deer park, although their evidential value is considerably reduced by the lack of medieval examples of any of the names. With that caveat in mind, they not only support the presence of a park, they also confirm a dovecot and a pond, and even reveal enclosed land excluded from the common field crop rotation system. The field names have been added to a modern map, since the field boundaries are almost unchanged since 1838 (Fig. 1).

Park Maid – From OE *mæd*, a meadow.[11] The meadow and pond are now overgrown with trees.
Park Grove – is not named in the Tithe Award, which groups all the woodland under the one heading of Seagrave Wood totaling almost 40 acres. Later OS maps (e.g. 1897) name Park Grove and show it as 12.5 acres.

FIGURE 7 Seagrave's Farm: the farmhouse today

Great & Little Park Dean – These two field names are in Coleshill parish adjacent to the north-east corner of the park.[12] Dean is from OE *denu*, valley.

Culvers – From OE *culfre*, a dove, often found in field names. A dovecot was usually a circular building with a turret or lantern and a revolving ladder pivoted about the central pillar allowed eggs to be taken as well as birds for their meat.[13]

Hitchin Field – From OE *inheche*. Describes land taken in from the crop rotation system of the common fields, usually by a partial inclosure; or OE *heccing*, 'part of field ploughed and sown while the remainder lies fallow'.[14] The 1838 Tithe map records all the fields within the boundaries of the park as arable, except for the meadows around the two ponds.

Dip Well – a deep well or spring. The name is still used, but there is no well. The farmer reports a circular depression not far from the farmhouse with a totally different soil, presumably used to fill the dip.

Pond Close – There is still a pond, although it has been overgrown and has dried out

Staple Field – From OE *stapol, 'post, pillar'*. Probably refers to one or more big sarsen stones which are often found in local fields.[15] There is a pond in the SE corner.

Sandalls – From OE *sand healh*, meaning sandy land in a corner formed by a bend.[16] The farmer describes it as 'like a beach'. The geological map (Fig. 6) shows the southern two-fifths of the park are on glacial sand and gravel and there are a number of deep pits in the wood, presumably dug out for sand. Sandels Wood is the modern name.[17]

BOUNDARIES OF THE PARK

The boundaries of the park are shown on Fig. 1. The perimeter is a little over 2 miles long and the only three significant gaps in the boundary bank and ditch are indicated by dotted lines. They are all on the west side where two lengths have been ploughed out to enlarge the adjoining fields, and where parts of the Sandels Wood boundary have been taken into the adjoining field, probably because the ditch was later used as a track to the farm-house. The boundary follows contour lines surprisingly closely along three sides – the valley of Marrod's Bottom to the north, and shallow valleys to the west and east. The southern boundary follows Finch Lane, a long-established track leading from Knotty Green to the Amersham road and on to Chalfont St Giles.

The only place where no bank or ditch survives and there is any question of where the boundary ran is between Park Grove and Marrods Bottom. The uncertainty is because the western end of the bank and ditch along Marrod's Bottom now ends abruptly with no sign of any corner, but the dotted boundary line shown in Fig. 1 can be relied on because:

a) It roughly matches the woodland edge shown on the two earliest maps, Rocque's map of 1761 (Fig. 8) and Jefferys' map of 1766–8 (Fig. 9), and the relevant part of the more detailed 1838 Penn Tithe Map.

b) As elsewhere, it follows the shallow valley marked by the contours

c) It meets Marrods Bottom at precisely the point where the lane widens suddenly, presumably because it was no longer restricted by a bank and ditch

There was a short-lived expansion of the woodland perimeter to extend further west along Marrods Bottom and beside Clay Street, which is shown on maps from 1800 to 1852, e.g. Bryant's map of 1824 (Fig. 10)[18], but by 1875 the large-scale Ordnance Survey map shows only the woodland which we see today. The missing length of the park boundary was taken out by 1852. There is no reason to suppose that the extended perimeter was ever the boundary of the park.

Oliver Rackham discovered that whilst not every park was wooded, about one in two was compartmented with internal banks separating trees and grazing to allow coppicing and re-growth protected from browsing animals. Where there were trees but no compartmenting, the trees would be pollarded to protect the re-growth.[19] The present Seagrave's Farm does have a number of internal field and wood banks, but they are mostly very modest in size and seem unlikely to be contemporary with the deer park.

PARISH AND COUNTY BOUNDARIES

Rackham concluded that many parish boundaries were very ancient indeed, often going back beyond the Anglo-Saxons to Roman and Iron Age estates,
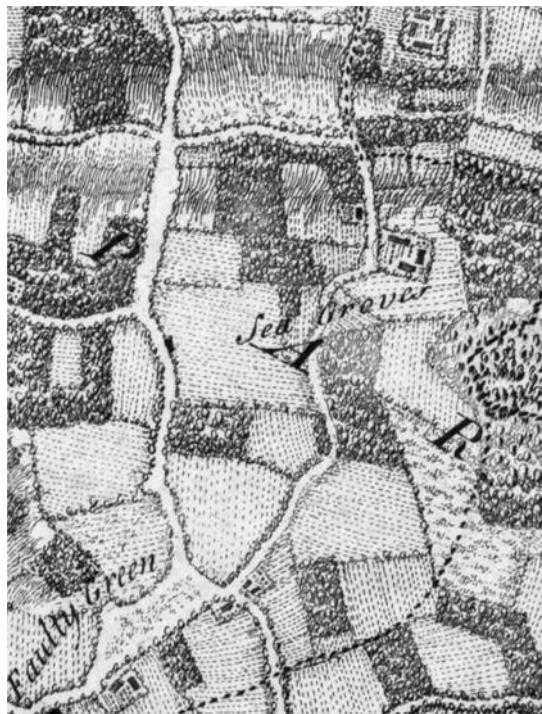
Figure 8 Rocque's map, 1761 (top left)

Figure 9 Jefferys' map 1766–8 (top right)

Figure 10 Bryant's map, 1824, showing an extended woodland perimeter to the west. Seagrave's Farm is mistakenly shown as Ledgrove Farm (left)

and that they typically followed topographical features and roads. Boundaries 'froze' in about 1180 and were very seldom changed thereafter until modern times. However, he found that one reason for making changes before 1180 was to conform to the shape of a deer park.[20] The Penn parish boundary, which is entirely based on topographical features, follows contours for almost all its length, but at the foot of Fagnall Lane where it meets the boundary of the park, instead of following a shallow valley straight on to Seagraves Farm-house, it unexpectedly makes an uncharacteristic sharp right-angled turn for 500yds east along the valley bottom before turning sharply south again up another shallow valley.

This could be an example of the parish boundary conforming to the shape of a later deer park, and if so, it may have happened before *c*.900. The Penn parish boundary with Coleshill and Beaconsfield, which is the north-eastern and eastern boundary of the deer park, was also the county boundary with a detached part of Hertfordshire until 1844. It has been proposed that this boundary was established in *c*.900 when Coleshill was occupied by Scandinavian settlers from Tring.[21] This was long before the first reference to either Hertfordshire (1011) or Buckinghamshire (1014). It seems less probable that a county boundary would be adjusted for the benefit of a deer park which in turn suggests that the deer park may have preceded the county boundary.

The Coleshill southern boundary with Penn and Beaconsfield was marked by a series of markers as evidenced by the name Marrod's Bottom (OE *maere*, boundary; OE *rod*, a cross or *rodde*, corresponding to Norw *rodda*, meaning a boundary pole).[22] A reference in the Missenden Cartulary of 1272 gives the earlier name for the valley bottom as 'Maldemareputh', which translates as a 'gravelly narrow-bottomed boundary valley'.[23]

HEYNTON

In 1325, on the occasion of the death of Sir John de Segrave, lord of Segrave's Manor in Penn, a sworn jury of local inhabitants described the extent of the Manor. The jury's description included reference to a park containing a capital messuage and a dovecote. [24] Nearly a century earlier, in 1243, Ida de Hastings, the widow of Stephen de Segrave, had claimed a dower of several manors including the 'manor of La Penne and 4 markates of rent in Heynton'.[25] Ekwall gives ME *hay*, as 'forest fenced off for hunting' from OE *hæg*, 'enclosed piece of land'. This gives the name Heynton the meaning of a *tun* or settlement enclosed for hunting. John Chenevix-Trench, then Editor of *Records*, first made this suggestion to me and I later discussed it with Margaret Gelling, who suggested a parallel in Hainton in Lincolnshire which was *Heintuna* in *c*.1115 and *Hainton* in *c*.1197, for which Ekwall suggested OE *haegen*, or its like, meaning 'enclosure'. Ekwall adds that Layamon (an English priest and author of a poem narrating the history of Britain in *c*.1190), uses *hain* in the sense of 'enclosure, park'.[26] We see the same sense in the medieval term 'winter heyning' for when parks were closed to all other stock in order to preserve food supplies for the deer.[27]

Thus it would seem that Heynton was the earlier name for the deer park that we now know as Seagrave's and this conclusion is supported by what we know of its later history. We have noted that in 1243 Heynton was let for a rent of 4 marks (£2-13s-4d). We also know from an account of Segrave's Manor that in 1372 Reginald Molyns was in arrears of rent of £2 for an unspecified holding.[28] Sir Reginald Malyns held Frieth and part of Hambleden Manor when he died in 1384.[29] Cantor and Hatherly noted that 'the great majority of Buckinghamshire parks were held by local worthies such as John de Moleyns', who in 1336 was granted a licence from the Crown to enclose and make a park in 100 acres of pasture in Beaconsfield, Burnham and Cippenham, close to where he lived at Stoke Poges, as well as in several other places.[30] He was supervisor of the King's castles and is buried in the chancel of St Giles, Stoke Poges. It seems likely that Reginald was of the same family as John de Moleyns and was his successor as tenant of Heynton.

Parks multiplied in the 12th century, probably because fallow deer, which were much easier to confine than roe deer, were introduced by the Normans. In Buckinghamshire, 41 out of 52 parks were either formed or mentioned for the first time in the period 1200–1350. From the 13th century onwards, a royal license was often obtained for a new or enlarged park, but was not essential unless it might interfere with the Crown's forest rights.[31] No such license has been found for Segrave's Manor in Penn, although a family of such promi-

nence would have easily been able to acquire one if necessary. In 1296, John de Segrave did receive a grant of free warren from the Crown 'in all his demesne lands in La Penne'.[32] This gave him the right to hunt the smaller game, foxes, hares, rabbits, wildcats, pheasants and partridges. Together with a dovecote, the park would have provided many of the needs of a lord's table.

A ROYAL ANGLO-SAXON ESTATE

Domesday Book records only two parks in the county, both in the Forest of Bernwood, but none in the Chilterns.[33] This does not mean they were not there. There was no requirement to list parks in Domesday returns and even if a park was originally noted, Domesday Book is the summary of much more detailed surveys which have not survived. It generally only records the total amount of geld and where it was paid, so because Penn's geld was paid through Taplow, none of the individual detail for Penn has survived. Later records show Penn was recorded with Taplow and was already well-established by the Conquest as a 5-hide unit and assessed for 1¼ Knight's fees.[34]

The Anglo-Saxons were vastly enthusiastic huntsmen, but they did not formally define or restrict hunting grounds as did the Normans.[35] Forest is an Old French word for which there is no direct Saxon equivalent. It seems an unlikely proposition that in the hilly, wooded Chilterns, so particularly suited for hunting, they had no deer parks. We have already noted that Cantor and Hatherly acknowledge that it is almost certain that unrecorded parks existed in Buckinghamshire from the time of the Domesday Survey onwards.

The earlier discussion of the significance of the alignment of the combined parish/county boundary with the park boundary led to the suggestion that the park might already have been established by *c.*900. The realization that the park had an Old English name adds considerable weight to this proposition. The Anglo-Saxon lord of Penn did not survive the Conquest and it seems more likely that the new Norman lord inherited the park with the Old English name than that he created and named it. The Norman fashion for deer parks began to penetrate England just before the Conquest so it is possible that Heynton dates from then, but Domesday Book also shows that before the Conquest the Chiltern Hundreds of Burnham,

Stoke and Desborough were a royal estate in the process of being split up amongst royal thanes and the Church.[36]

Arnold Baines maintained that the earliest record of a royal connection with the Chiltern Hundreds was of Wycombe in 767 when King Offa of Mercia acquired '30 hides in *ciltinne* in the place called *wichama',* in exchange for 30 hides in Harrow. Margaret Gelling was equally convinced, on place-name grounds, that that the reference was to Wicham in the district of Chiltington in Sussex, but the later hideage record does not support her argument.[37] Be that as it may, a century later, when King Alfred of Wessex (871–99) made his will, he instructed that all his booklands should be kept in his family, preferably in the male line.[38] In 1014, one of his descendants, the Atheling Athelstan, eldest son of King Ethelred, made his will in which he besought his father to confirm his bequests of his estate at Marlow, which he had bought from his father for 250 mancuses of gold, to the church where he was to be buried and of an estate at a hitherto unidentified Hambleden to Elfmaer who already held it.[39] Arnold Baines has firmly identified Athelstan's Hambleden with the Buckinghamshire parish of Hambleden on the Thames close to Marlow.[40] These two estates were much the largest of the very few in the Chiltern Hundreds that had no royal connection in 1066.

King Alfred's will included a so far unidentified Burnham which he left to his nephew in his will and for which the Buckinghamshire Burnham must be a strong candidate. Margaret Gelling has established that it is a recognized feature for the place which is central to a great composite estate to have a topographical name and to contain a number of outlying settlements with habitative, particularly –ton names indicating the role they played in the economy of the estate. Burnham, 'village by the stream', which is now thought to be a very early Anglo-Saxon place-name going back to *c.*600, is an obvious candidate Six of these *–tons* were located around the site of Burnham manor house which preceded the present Burnham Abbey. Eton, 'river settlement', has been found elsewhere to denote a village which played a special local function in relation to the river in the economy of a multiple estate, such as controlling ferry operations across the Thames. Garston, north of Beaconsfield, a former hamlet of Burnham, could be thought of as the grass or grazing settlement[41], and Heynton

in Penn as the hunting settlement. There was also an Upton, Weston and Coldnorton. This proposition was discussed with Margaret Gelling and met with her agreement.[42] She observes that the –*ton* element was probably in very common use for a long period which excluded both the earliest and the latest periods of formation of major place-names.[43] It only became common after *c*.730 and may reflect settlement reorganization as larger multiple estates began to be split up.

Before Beaconsfield attained a separate identity Burnham stretched right up to the southern boundary of Coleshill and presumably then included Penn which has always been part of Burnham Hundred. Although the formal use of the term 'Hundred' as an administrative or military area of 100 hides, dates from the 9th and 10th centuries many groups of hundreds have been found to have their origins in earlier Anglo-Saxon land-units originally dependant on royal vills. Burnham Hundred has been proposed as an identifiable 'primary unit' of *Cilternsaetan,* 'the Chiltern dwellers', a component in the late seventh-century Tribal Hidage totals.[44] Penn's link with Taplow seems to represent a further stage in the break up of the original royal estate, probably arising from the need to link the beacon/look out point at Penn with the defensive *burh* or fort established by Alfred or his father at Shaftsey on an island in the Thames near Hedsor.[45]

Hunting was part of the royal and noble way of life in the later Anglo-Saxon period at least and services connected with hunting and deer hedge making were an essential part of royal tribute. John Blair remarks that most Anglo-Saxon kings found hunting more congenial than high politics.[46] Apart from the much-prized venison, hunting also provided the best possible training in mounted warfare: how to read the country during a high-speed pursuit over varied ground, how to give orders to other riders, and how to use weapons to kill. But involvement in hunting was not confined to the king and his nobles. Important thegns would have lesser thegns under them and there was a widespread and important class of lesser thegns known as *geneats* whose obligations were carefully set out and included making deer hedges for their lord.[47] Further down the social scale, the most universal and perhaps the oldest form of payment of rents and dues was by basic labour on the lord's house or for the upkeep of his hunting.[48] The enormous labour involved in digging by hand Heynton's 2-mile park boundary to make a bank with an 8 or 9 foot fall into the ditch and top it with oak posts and fence would seem to require a far larger and more dedicated work force than the resources of the small vill or parish of Penn could provide, with an estimated Domesday population of about 100 and therefore only some 30-plus males of working age.[49]

ANGLO-SAXON PLACE-NAME EVIDENCE

John Blair noted that the very fragmentary evidence for Anglo-Saxon landscape arrangements is mostly provided by place-names and the few surviving boundary descriptions. He quoted only two specific references to parks in Oxfordshire and only two in Surrey. He concluded however, that where charter boundaries mention a *haga* they were referring to an enclosure, probably of a park-like character.[50] Similarly in Berkshire, Della Hooke found that the *haga* type of fence was seemingly associated with the management and capture of deer and occurred most frequently in the charter boundaries of the south of Berkshire. She suggested that these *haga* features were likely to be substantial and were commonly found in little-developed, often densely wooded regions later known to have been used for hunting or as game reserves and may have already demarcated parts of the woodland set aside for such purposes.[51] Ekwall proposed that OE *haga*, means 'fence, fenced enclosure', a very similar meaning to the OE *haegen,* or its like, which he suggested underlies the name Heynton.[52]

The most recent thinking on pre-Conquest deer parks comes to very similar conclusions. In a series of essays edited by Robert Liddiard, we find him quoted as arguing that 'the origin of the medieval park should perhaps be sought in the pre-Conquest landscape and that places described as *haiae* and *hagan* were probably little different in role and physical form from later medieval parks. Also that 'hay' (Latin *haia*; OE *haga*) is now recognised as a term used to define a hunting enclosure and is probably synonomous with *parcus* (park) in Domesday Book. Liddiard remarks in his Introduction that a chronological development also seems apparent, in which large areas known as 'hays' also seem to have given way to the smaller parks.[53] One of the essayists suggests that *haiae* and *hagan* were

most probably intermittent boundary structures….enabling animals to come and go (presumably to confine deer temporarily before a hunt), and that this would explain Liddiard's observation that Domesday Book often records *haiae* in the plural, whereas parks are referred to in the singular.[54] We do know from a reference to a *hlyp geat*, which was a gate in an enclosure that deer can leap into but not out of, in other words a deer leap, that there were permanent enclosures.[55]

MANAGEMENT OF A DEER PARK[56]

Only about one in five of the wealthier gentry families could afford a deer park, but they were not just a rich man's indulgence. They were often efficiently managed units fulfilling, as we have already noted, a number of different woodland and agricultural purposes. The deer were managed skilfully and intelligently based on a close and accurate observation of their habits. There may have been as many as 3,200 parks at different times in medieval England, but there was a widespread reluctance to keep detailed records of this prestigious activity and they are very poorly documented in manorial accounts and other records. The two fleeting records so far found for Heynton are what might be expected, although the Segrave Manor Court rolls, which run from 1486 onwards, have not yet been closely examined for any reference to the park.[57]

Deer are voracious eaters all year round, eating their own body weight in fresh forage every 10-14 days. Grass is an important part of their diet and most parks kept carefully tended grass lawns for grazing. The roughly even balance of woodland and open ground that we see in 'Heynton' today may have been much the same in the medieval deer park, but with grass where there are now arable fields. In winter, deer browse was cut from deciduous and evergreen trees, with hay and sometimes oats provided in mangers or feeding troughs, possibly under cover. Throughout the year, priority would generally be given to the welfare of the deer and of their need for forage and access. The most common remedy against winter starvation was simply to exclude other stock competing for the same food. This was a practice known as 'winter heyning', an unexpected confirmation of the meaning of the place name Heynton. Considerable effort was also made to ensure the provision of fresh water from ponds and streams.

On many estates the regular hunting was by servants with only occasional forays by the lord and his guests. There is increasing doubt among park historians about whether deer were actually hunted on horseback in parks, rather than being kept within them and the selected animal then being released to be chased cross-country. Robert Liddiard points out that red deer, for instance, can run for up to 22 miles when being pursued: within a park that would mean an awful lot of going round in circles! He is clear that hunting *par force de chiens* (the chasing down of a single deer over the course of a day and its ritualistic killing and dismemberment) was simply impossible within the bounds of a park. This was not the case for 'drive' or 'bow and stable' hunting, where animals were steered towards stationary hunters armed with bows and in pre-prepared positions or hides.[58]

Parks could, and did, support considerable herds of deer. Their number depended on its size and on how many the owner needed for his household, for gifts alive or dead, and for hunting for sport. Too many deer increased the chance of malnutrition and disease whereas fewer encouraged greater weight and health. A very rough guess for a 150 acre park such as Heynton, based on a combination of the very patchy medieval records of a few large landowners, on a handful of poaching figures and on the numbers ordered to be killed or as gifts by landowners, suggests a total of some 60 deer, of which perhaps 10% would be hunted annually.

It is interesting to compare this rough guess with a deer park today. Although a wire fence has greatly simplified containment by replacing the labour-intensive oak fence, bank and ditch, the care and feeding needs of the deer remain much the same. A well-stocked park would normally contain one animal per 5 acres, with a ratio of 3 females to 1 male. However, it is not unusual to have twice as many deer, which then require a good deal of supplementary feeding. Nowadays this means scientifically produced protein foods or hay and in the winter, beans and root vegetables. This suggests that Heynton's 150 acres could sustain a deer population of between 30 and 60.[59]

Managing a deer park was a troublesome and expensive business involving a considerable investment in labour and materials. The wooden boundary fence on top of the bank, had to achieve a height of 8 or 9 feet above the ditch, or even more depending on the terrain, and deer would jump over

or squeeze through any weak point. The park keeper would be expected to make a daily tour of inspection and arrange for repairs on the spot. Fencing was the main regular item, but there could be many additional costs such as the complete re-fencing of a park, building a new lodge or a hay barn, or digging a pond. Wages of the parker and other officers and any purchase of deer were on top of that. The rent of 4 marks (£2-13s-4d) paid for Heynton in 1243 was thus only a small part of its running costs.

The End of the Deer Park

Labour shortages following the Black Death epidemics, from 1348–50 onwards, made deer parks more and more difficult to maintain and they gradually fell into disuse and were converted to more ordinary woodland and agricultural purposes. An estimated 70% of the some 3,200 parks which existed at their peak in 1300 were still working in the mid to late-1400s.[60] Cantor and Hatherly found there was no set pattern to the life and eventual fate of the medieval hunting enclosure, but generally they were becoming less common by about 1500 and disparkment took place quite commonly in the 16th and 17th centuries, especially during the Civil War period.[61] There is an early 17th-century description of Seagrave's Farm as 'an old awncyen farme house', which suggests that it had ceased to be a deer park by the 16th century or earlier.[62]

Acknowledgements

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Notes

1 L.M. Cantor and J. Hatherly, 'The medieval parks of Buckinghamshire', *Recs Bucks* **20** pt 3 (1977), 434, 439, 445.

2 Oliver Rackham, *The history of the countryside* (1993), 122–6, 145.

3 I am deeply indebted to Mike Farley, former Associate Editor of *Records*, for his expertise both in measuring and drawing the profiles and for his constructive criticism of earlier drafts of the text.

4 Although early manorial records spell the name as Segrave, by 1738 the Court Rolls as well as all map-makers from the earliest in 1761, had added an 'a'. This later spelling has been used except where medieval records are quoted.

5 *Curia Regis Rolls* (1223), 509; *Cal Inq. Misc.* vol. 1, 608, 186; *Feet of Fines* (1223), 13 and (1224), 23.

6 J. Gilbert Jenkins, *History of Penn* (1935), 11.

7 See fn. 25 below.

8 *Victoria County History* III, (1925), 238. William Penn acquired Segrave's Manor in 1607.

9 Personal communication.

10 BM Add 9411, f205, a letter dated 9 August 1802 from the Rev. John Middleton to Lysons, author of *Magna Britannica*, in which he described the Seagraves Manor House, as 'but a small cottage in the Village of Penn'. J. Gilbert Jenkins, *op.cit.*, 40, 41, 49, 50.

11 E.Ekwall, *English Place-names* (Oxford 1959), 311.

12 1844 Amersham Tithe Award.

13 John Field, *A history of English Field-Names* (1993), 207–8, and *English Field names, a Dictionary* (Guernsey 1989), 57.

14 John Field, *A history of English Field-Names*, 17–18 and *English Field names, a Dictionary* (1989), 105.

15 E.Ekwall, *op.cit.*, 439.

16 *Ibid.*, 403, 212.

17 The Tithe map shows the adjacent wood names to the south as Landalls and Lansall, but this would seem to be scribal error.

18 The extended woodland perimeter is also shown on: *Plan of the environs of the village of Penn, March 1800*, by T. Birch, Major 16th: (or Queens) Lt Dragoons, Royal Collection, St James's Palace; *Penn Tithe Map, 1838*; and

Penn Inclosure Award map B, 1855.

19 Oliver Rackham, *op. cit*., 125.

20 *Ibid*., 19, 125, 145.

21 John Chenevix-Trench, 'Coleshill & the settlement of the Chilterns', *Recs Bucks* **19**, Pt 3, 1973, 253–4. The whole of Coleshill parish and the northern part of Beaconsfield down to Ledborough Lane were a detached part of Hertfordshire. This Hertfordshire enclave is shown on Saxton's 1574 map of Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire & Berkshire.

22 E.Ekwall, *op.cit.,* 390.

23 John Chenevix-Trench, 'Fields and farms in a hilltop village', *Recs Bucks* **20** Pt 3, 1977, 411, 418. He explains Mareputh as OE *maere*, boundary; OE *pytt*, pit or hollow, commonly applied to a narrow-bottomed valley. He also proposes 'Malde' as OE *mael*, a cross, but OE *rod*, a cross and OE *cruc*, a cross are both used close by in the same valley. It is tentatively suggested that Malde is a later corruption of an unfamiliar OE word, *mealu*, meaning a stony, gravelly ridge, which accords with the geological map's description as dry valley deposits of river gravels (A.H. Smith, *The Place-Name elements* 2, 35).

24 L.M. Cantor and J. Hatherly, *op.cit*., 445, 450, quote *Inq. post mortem*, Edw. II, C.134/97/4. Gilbert Jenkins, in his *History of Penn* (1935), 33, 184, appears to be quoting from the same source which he gives as *Inq. post mortem*, Edw. II, vol ii, p.427, but he does not mention a deer park. However, he may well have missed it because the original document consists of some 20 membranes of closely written parchments some of which are faded or badly stained. *VCH* III, 238 records mention of a dovecot under *Chan.Inq.p.m*.19 Edw. II, no. 88, 91.

25 Anita Travers (ed.) *Bucks Feet of Fines 1259–1307*, Bucks. Rec. Soc. **25** (1989), 677. Ida de Hastings provides a clue to the Segrave presence in Penn since Matilda de Hastings held land in Penn in dower in 1188 and 1222 as the widow of the de la Pennes' overlord, William de Turville.

26 E. Ekwall, *op.cit*., 211.

27 Jean Birrell, 'Deer and deer farming in Medieval England', *Agricultural History Review* **40** (1992), 117.

28 J.Gilbert Jenkins, *op.cit*., 47.

29 *Victoria County History* III (1969), 50, 51.

VCH gives five different spellings, Moleyns, Molyns, Molins, Malyns, Malyn and assumes they are all the same name.

30 L.M. Cantor and J. Hatherly, *op.cit*., 433; Michael Reed, *The Buckinghamshire Landscape*, (1979), 130.

31 Oliver Rackham*, op.cit*., 123.

32 *Cal. Charter Rolls* (1296), vol. 2, 465.

33 John Morris (ed.), Domesday Book Buckinghamshire (1978): Long Crendon – 'woodland for 100 pigs and a park there for woodland beasts'. Oakley – 'woodland for 200 pigs if it were not for the King's park in which it lies'.

34 Miles Green, *Penn before the Conquest in the context of the Chiltern Region of Buckinghamshire* (1995), Unpublished MSt dissertation, Kellogg College, Oxford, 5–8.

35 Oliver Rackham, *op.cit*., 130.

36 John Morris (ed.), *op.cit*. Queen Edith, the widow of the Confessor and Harold's sister, held Amersham, Hughenden, Eton, Upton, Wexham, Hedgerley, large parts of Chesham and parts of Little Marlow and Iver. Her men held High Wycombe and the rest of Chesham. These estates, together with those on the Buckinghamshire border of the Oxfordshire Chilterns, made up the largest concentration of her estates in England (David Hill, *An Atlas of Anglo-Saxon England* (1981), 102). The King held Wendover, and his men held Burnham, Beaconsfield, Hitcham, Langley Marish, Wraysbury, Chalfont St Giles, Medenham, Great Missenden, Ibstone and Bradenham, most of Iver, half of Little Marlow and a small part of Amersham. Earl/King Harold held Wooburn and Princes Risborough and his men held Taplow with Penn, Stoke Poges, Boveney, Ditton and parts of Datchet, Fulmer and Saunderton. The Church held West Wycombe, Denham and Horton.

37 Margaret Gelling, *The Early Charters of the Thames Valley* (1979), 98–9. The Sussex alternative does not fit nearly as neatly since whereas Domesday Book shows Wycombe with 30 hides in 1086, Wicham had only 3 hides. John Morris (ed.), *Domesday Book, Sussex*, (1976), shows E. and W. Chiltington about 20 miles apart, each with 9 hides. Wicham is roughly centered between them about 7 miles to the south.

38 *English Historical Documents*, I, c.500–1042,

D,Whitelock (ed.), (2nd ed., 1979), 536–7.

39 *Ibid.*, 593–5.

40 Arnold Baines, 'Hambleden the bent valley', *Recs Bucks* **37** (1995), 138.

41 John Chenevix-Trench, 'Coleshill and the settlement of the Chilterns', *Recs Bucks* **19** pt 3 (1973), 243. E. Ekwall, *op.cit.*, 193, proposes 'grazing farm' from OE *gaerstun*.

42 Miles Green, *op.cit.*, 20–21. Margaret Gelling, *Signposts to the Past* (Chichester 1978), 113, 125 and *Place-Names in the Landscape* (Oxford 1984), 20, and discussed at a meeting with her on 12 Aug 1995.

43 Margaret Gelling, *Signposts to the past* (1978), 126.

44 Keith Bailey, 'Early Anglo-Saxon territorial organization in Buckinghamshire and its neighbours', *Recs Bucks* **36** (1994), 130, 139. Leslie W. Hepple & Alison M. Doggett, *The Chilterns* (Chichester 1994), 54, 61, 63, provided useful background for this and the preceding paragraph.

45 Miles Green, *op.cit.*, 38–42.

46 John Blair, *Anglo-Saxon Oxfordshire* (1994), 110.

47 Rosamond Faith, *The English peasantry and the growth of lordship* (1997), 102.

48 Pauline Stafford, *Unification and Conquest, A political and social history of England in the tenth and eleventh centuries* (1989), 204.

49 This estimate of population is a careful one, using the 1522 Muster Return checked by Wrigley & Schofield's national graph 1522-1801 as a base, then going back via 1460 Peter's Pence, 1377 Poll Tax, 1332 tax of moveable's and Domesday Book. Miller & Hatcher's assumptions for the effect of Black Death, tax evasion and the untaxed poor were used where appropriate.

50 John Blair, *Anglo-Saxon Oxfordshire* (Stroud 1994), 125–6, 130, and *Early Medieval Surrey* (1991), 9, 55.

51 Della Hooke, 'Regional variation in southern and central England in the Anglo-Saxon period and its relationship to land units and settlement' in *Anglo-Saxon settlements* (Cowley 1988), Della Hooke (ed.), 145, 148.

52 E. Ekwall *op.cit.*, 210–11. Underlying a hypothetical form OE *haegen,* he gives OHG, OLG *hagan* 'a kind of thornbush' and G *hain* 'grove'.

53 Robert Liddiard (ed.), *The Medieval Park: new perspectives* (Macclesfield 2007), 60, 171, 8.

54 Naomi Sykes, 'Animal bones and animal parks', *The Medieval Park: new perspectives*, Robert Liddiard (ed.), 60–61.

55 John West, *Village Records,* (1982), 210.

56 Much of this section is taken from Jean Birrell, 'Deer and deer farming in Medieval England', *Agricultural History Review* **40** (1992), 26.

57 The Court Rolls are in the County Record Office.

58 Robert Liddiard, *op.cit*, 4, 5.

59 I am grateful to Richard Turner, who is much involved in deer parks today, for this comparison.

60 Aleksander Pluskowski, 'The social constitution of medieval park ecosystems: an interdisciplinary perspective', *The Medieval Park: New Perspectives*, Robert Liddiard (ed.), (2007), 76.

61 J.M. Hatherly and L.M. Cantor, 'The Medieval parks of Berkshire', *Berks. Archaeol J* **70** (1979–80), 67–71.

62 My file note regrettably omits the source of this useful description.