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Cake and Cockhorse

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In his Editor's Introduction to Frank Emery's *The Oxfordshire Landscape* (1974), the late and great W.G. Hoskins made a passing reference to a "masterly study of a single parish", a monograph by Harry Thorpe entitled 'The Lord and the Landscape'. This dealt with the Warwickshire parish of Wormleighton, published in 1965 in the *Transactions of the Birmingham and Warwickshire Archaeological Society*. Forty-six years on, we are most grateful to the Society for granting us permission to reprint 'The Lord and the Landscape' (albeit with a more localised title) here in *Cake & Cockhorse*. In particular we appreciate the support of their President and Editor Dr Della Hooke, who has herself published results of her research on Wormleighton Anglo-Saxon Charter Bounds.

It is good news that the Bodleian Library has been able to acquire the archive of Cheney & Sons, Banbury printers from 1767 to 2001. A detailed history of the firm, *John Cheney and his descendants*, by Christopher Cheney *et al.*, appeared in 1936. In 1967 we published 'Cheney & Sons: Two centuries of printing in Banbury', by the same author (*C&CH*.3.9). More recently, our records series issued *The Banbury Chapbooks*, by Leo De Freitas (vol. 28, 2004). It is appropriate that our Society contributed towards the cost of acquisition.

Cover: Illustration on the title page of *John Cheney and his descendants.*

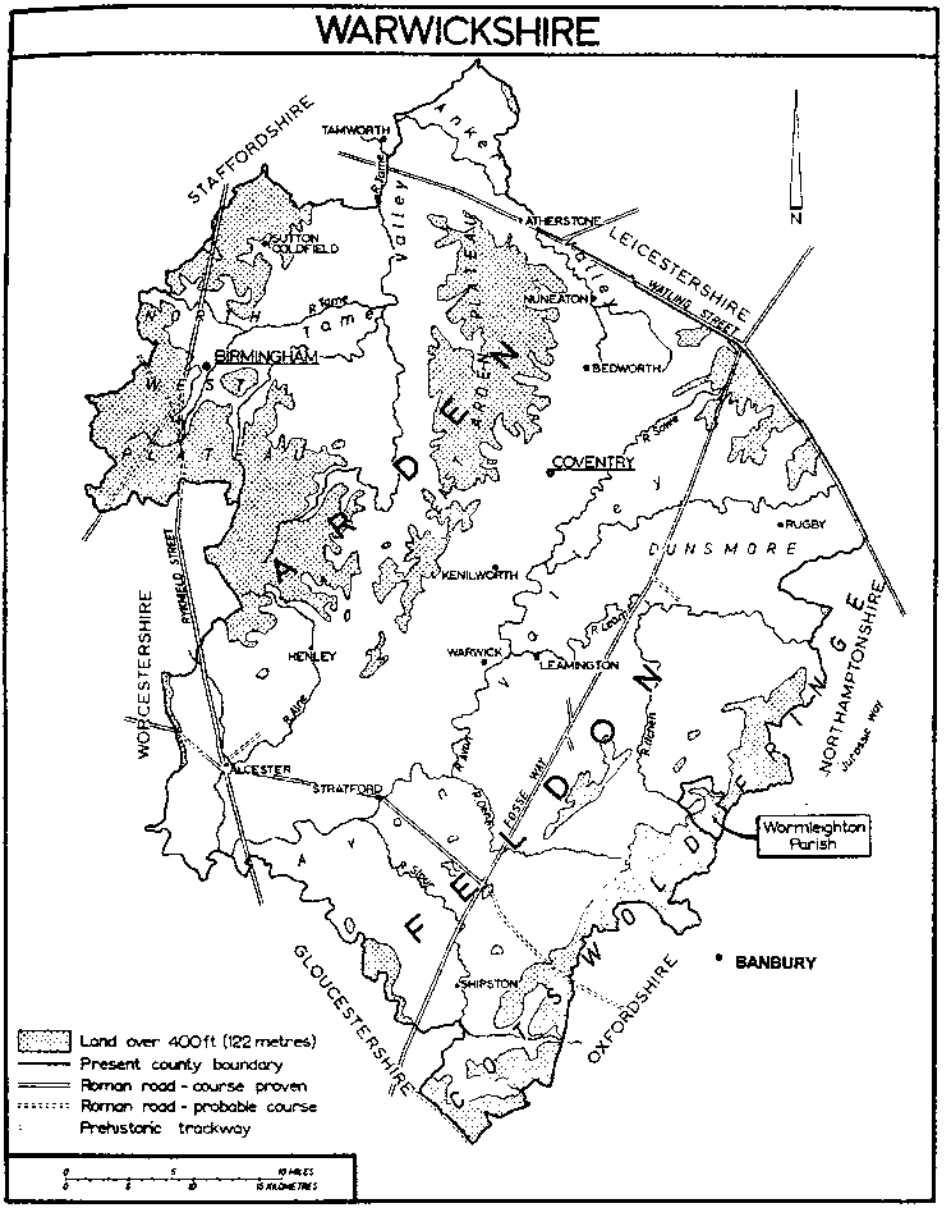


Fig. 1. Wormleighton: Location

WORMLEIGHTON:

The changing fortunes of a Warwickshire parish. Part One

The late Harry Thorpe, F.S.A.

First published in *The Transactions of the Birmingham & Warwickshire Archaeological Society*

EVERY settlement is unique, not simply in terms of its location on the earth's surface but more particularly because it represents the end product, as we see it today, of the intensive occupation by successive generations of a relatively small tract of land for varying periods of time. In its general adaptation to the broad physical, social, and economic patterns of the local region a settlement may have much in common with its neighbours, but within its own territorial unit appraisals of micro-physical conditions on the one hand and the influences of individual men, women, and their institutions on the other have often conspired to produce a distinctive personality, etched deeply on the landscape, for each town, village, hamlet, parish, or township. Whereas the lowly peasant had often little choice but to conform with local custom and practice, a lord of the manor had scope to influence the activities of a whole community and so might change the very look of the landscape itself. Wealthy, wise, and powerful lords with a long-established interest in, and sense of obligation towards, their lands and folk could encourage good farming and soften the blows of famine and disease. Dissolute lords, and particularly those whose manors changed hands frequently, might neglect or abuse their peasantry to the point where the hardy fled to growing towns while the weak were hard pressed to scrape even a bare living from the soil. In this article the growth and prosperity of an English village, Wormleighton in Warwickshire, is traced from Anglo-Saxon times to the Norman Conquest and beyond, until suddenly at the end of the fifteenth century the settlement was destroyed in order that its arable lands could be used as pastures for sheep and cattle. The depopulated manor was then purchased in 1506 by an energetic and ambitious Warwickshire sheep-farmer, called John Spencer, who not only re-established the village but quickly amassed great wealth in livestock and land in the surrounding area. After John Spencer was knighted soon after 1518, the family became one of the leading titled families in England. The manor of Wormleighton has remained in the possession of the Spencers until the present day, and I am greatly indebted to the 7th Earl Spencer of Althorp for kindly allowing me to consult the fine collection of maps and documents relating to Wormleighton in the muniment room at Althorp. With the aid of these documents it has been possible to study in some detail the historical geography of Wormleighton from the late fifteenth century onward. The influence of the great family is still strongly discernible in the village today, though several of their farms have been sold since 1924 to cover death duties.

REGIONAL SETTING

The parish of Wormleighton, with an area of 2,451 acres and a present population around 150 of whom about 110 live in the nucleated village itself, lies on the borders

of south-east Warwickshire, its boundaries abutting both Oxfordshire and Northamptonshire to the east (Fig. 1). From the heavily dissected scarp slope of the Cotswolds embracing the eastern half of the parish, the land drops gently from a height of about 515 ft. around the village itself to 315 ft. on its western boundary. The sharp break of slope between the Cotswold Fringe and the broad plain of the Feldon of south Warwickshire coincides with a geological contrast between the resistant, dark-brown Middle Lias Marlstone above 500 ft. and the heavy, impervious greyish-brown Lower Lias Clay below (Fig. 2). Numerous springs, fed by seepage through the porous Marlstone and the glacial sands and gravels that occasionally overlie it, appear along the scarpfoot and contribute to the headstreams of the river Itchen draining northward to the Leam and Avon. A long narrow spur slightly exceeding 400 ft. curves westward from the village of Wormleighton and divides the lower land into a northern and a southern block. From the latter, movement south-eastward across the Cotswold scarp was rendered easy by the Fenny Compton gap, due partly to headward erosion of dip-slope streams like the Clayholme Brook draining to the Cherwell (Fig. 2) and partly to downcutting associated with an overflow of glacial Lake Harrison.[1] This gap was to be used successively by road, canal, and railway leading south towards London.

WORMLEIGHTON BEFORE THE DEPOPULATION OF 1499

Dense forest, with a high proportion of oak, covered most of Warwickshire in Neolithic times and this was true of the Wormleighton area, particularly on the heavy clays. By Early Iron Age times a good deal of clearing and settlement had taken place both along the river terrace sands and gravels of the Avon valley, and around a line of Celtic hill forts following the scarp-top of the Cotswolds. The prehistoric trackway, known to archaeologists as the Jurassic Way,[2] that ran diagonally across England linking these hill forts appears to have crossed the Fenny Compton gap near Wormleighton, perhaps following in part the course of the Anglo-Saxon 'Ridge Way' shown in Fig. 2. But although some clearing may have occurred along the trackway, there is no evidence for settlement around Wormleighton before the Anglo-Saxon colonization. Although during the Roman occupation a great arterial road, the Fosse Way (Fig. 1), was constructed south of the Avon and many settlements sprang up along it, there is as yet little evidence for the spread of Romano-British population across the densely wooded Lower Lias Clays into the Cotswold Fringe. Scattered finds, such as pottery and coins, along the valleys of the rivers Itchen and Dene may encourage one to look more closely for evidence of Roman settlement around Wormleighton, but, apart from a wooden coffin associated with Roman coins[3] found between Wormleighton and Stoneton, nothing has so far come to light.

When the Anglo-Saxon settlers entered Warwickshire about A.D. 500 they were quick to take advantage of land already cleared in Romano-British times,

[1] G. H. Dury, 'A 400 feet bench in south-east Warwickshire', *Proceedings Geologists' Association*, lxii (1951), 167; 'A note on the Upper Cherwell', *Journal Northamptonshire Natural History Society*, xxxii (1953), 193. See also W. W. Bishop, 'The Pleistocene geology and geomorphology of three gaps in the Midland Jurassic Escarpment', *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London*, ccxli, no. 682 (1958), 255–306.

[2] O. G. S. Crawford, *Archaeology in the Field* (1953), ch. 7.

[3] *The Victoria History of the Counties of England*, Warwickshire, i (1904), 249.

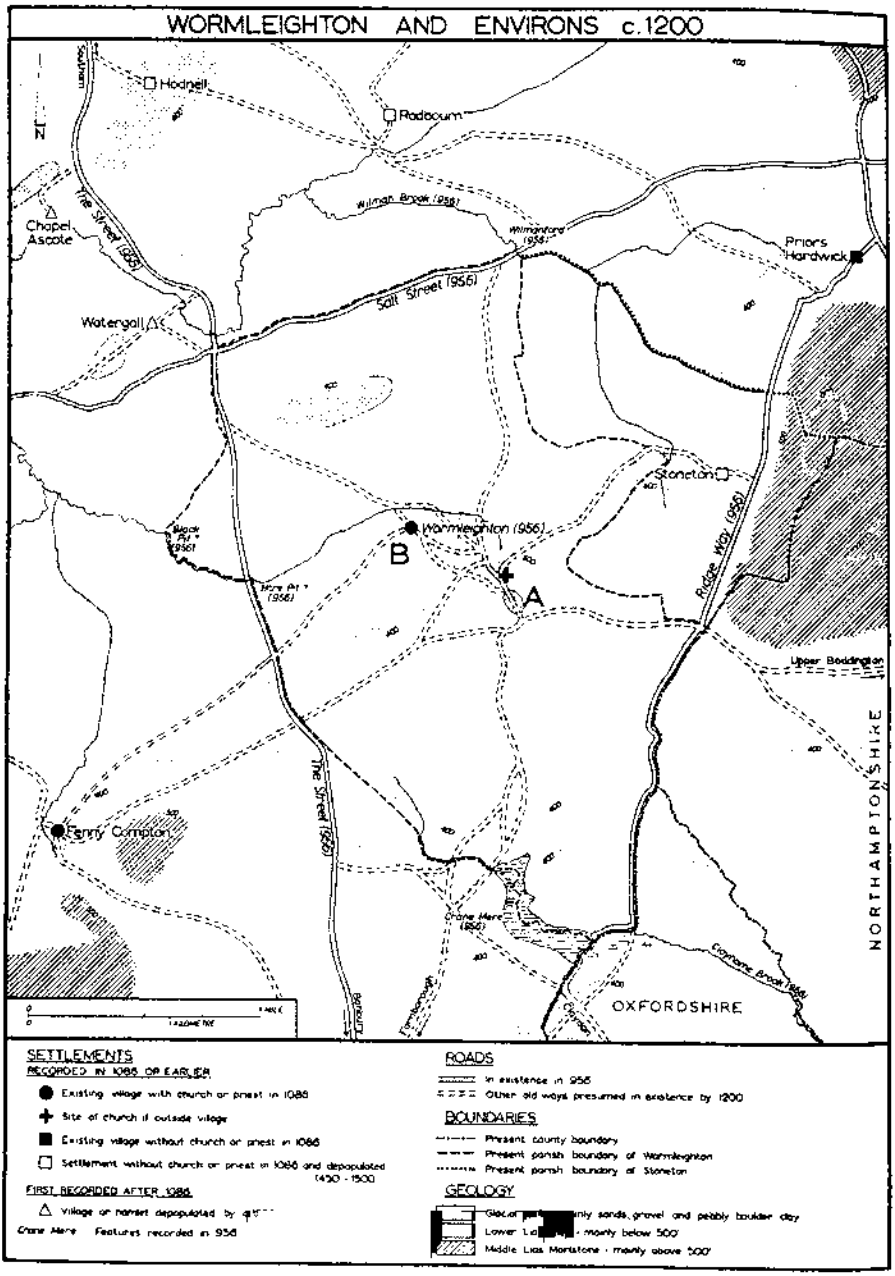

WORMLEIGHTON AND ENVIRONS c.1200
N
Hodnell
Radcourn
Chapel Ascote
Watergall
Priors Hardwick
Salt Street (956)
Wilmon Brook (956)
Wilmington (956)
The Street (956)
Stoneton
Wormleighton (956)
B
A
Ridge Way (956)
Upper Boddington
Ferry Compton
Crane Mere (956)
Crayfarne Brook (956)
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE
OXFORDSHIRE
SETTLEMENTS
RECORDED IN 1086 OR EARLIER
Existing village with church or priest in 1086
Site of church if outside village
Existing village without church or priest in 1086
Settlement without church or priest in 1086 and depopulated (1450 - 1500)
FIRST RECORDED AFTER 1086
Village or hamlet depopulated by
Crane Mere Features recorded in 956
ROADS
In existence in 956
Other old ways presumed in existence by 1200
BOUNDARIES
Present county boundary
Present parish boundary of Wormleighton
Present parish boundary of Stoneton
GEOLOGY
Middle Lias Marlstone - mainly above 500'

Fig. 2

particularly along the Avon Terrace Belt but also along the line of a great road like the Fosse. Their expansion southward from the Avon valley, with its numerous Anglo-Saxon cemeteries, towards the Cotswold scarp was both early and vigorous, and was associated with the establishment of strongly nucleated villages with distinctive Anglo-Saxon place-names, many having characteristic endings in *-ton* and *-ham*. Regional differentiation within Warwickshire was now becoming marked, for whereas the Avon Terrace Belt and the Feldon to the south were to be closely settled, the Forest of Arden to the north contained relatively few major settlements and the scattered hamlets, with distinctive clearing names ending in *-ley*, *-worth*, and *-field*, so typical of the region today, were to come into being only later as small groups of venturesome settlers spread north into the dense oak wood making individual hedged clearings.[1] This distinction was deemed worthy of comment by topographers such as Leland and Dugdale centuries later and still remains strong today.[2]

Anglo-Saxon settlement at Wormleighton appears to have been associated with a small group of colonists, one of whom, called *Wilma* or *Wilmund*, gave his name not only to the present village but, as we shall see, also to other topographic features in the vicinity. The earliest form of the name *Wilman lehttune* (Wilma's kitchen-garden) appears in a charter[3] of King Eadwy dated 956, granting an estate to Earl Ælfhere. The ancient boundaries of the land-holding, which are very carefully recorded in this and other charters,[4] can still be identified within reasonable limits on the ground today and have been plotted on Fig. 2. The perambulation begins at *Cranmere* (presumably Crane Mere), which almost certainly occupied a small depression in the clays of the Fenny Compton gap since utilized as a reservoir to provide water for the Oxford Canal. The mere was actually larger than the reservoir, as the extent of alluvium plotted from field-work and also shown on the unpublished 6-in. sheets of the Geological Survey[5] confirms. Further support for its location is provided by the current place-name Granmore Hill for the rising ground south of the depression, while the stream issuing from the mere in 956 was called *Cranmeres broc* or *Claeihæma broc* (Clayhome Brook) which today flows by the village of Claydon![6] From the mere the boundary ran along 'the street', which appears to be the road from Southam to Banbury, to a 'hore pit' (mud hole) and a 'black pit' which presumably were pools on or adjoining the little stream flowing west. Thereafter the boundary followed the

[1] For a detailed account of the colonization of Arden and Feldon *vide* H. Thorpe, 'The Growth of Settlement before the Norman Conquest', *Birmingham and its Regional Setting: A Scientific Survey* (British Association Handbook, 1950), 87–112.

[2] *Vide* Lucy Toulmin Smith (ed.), *The Itinerary of John Leland* (1906–10), ii. 47–51, and v. 155–6 for an account of Arden and Feldon, *c.* 1540; also William Dugdale, *The Antiquities of Warwickshire* (1656), Preface b3.

[3] W. de G. Birch, *Cartularium Saxonicum* (1885–93), nos. 956–7. See also A. Mawer and F. M. Stenton, *The Place-Names of Warwickshire* (English Place-Name Society, xiii. 1936), 275, and *Victoria County History of Warwickshire*, v (1949), 218. E. Ekwall, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Place-Names*, 4th edn. (1960), considers that the first element may be a river-name *Wilme* or *Wielme* from O.E. *wielm* meaning 'flowing', and that the second element is O.E. *lēactūn* signifying '*tūn* where leeks grow'.

[4] A. S. Napier and W. H. Stevenson, *The Crawford Collection of Early Charters* (1895), 19–20, give details of grants of land at Ladbroke and Radbourn, adjoining Wormleighton, by King Æthelred to Ealdorman Leolwine around 998.

[5] Photostat copies of 6-in. sheets SP.45.SW and SP.45.SE. can be obtained from the Geological Survey, London.

[6] M. Gelling, *The Place-Names of Oxfordshire* (English Place-Name Society, vols. 23, 24, 1953–4), 418; E. Ekwall, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Place-Names*, 4th edn. (1960), 110.

sealt straet (Salt Street)[1] eastward to *Wilmanford*, where it crossed *Wylman broce* (Wilman Brook), and so to join the *hricweg* (Ridge Way) running from north to south along the scarp-foot to cross the Cranmere Brook just east of the mere. It will be clear from Fig. 2 that these boundaries agree remarkably closely with those of the later parish established in the post-Norman period, indicating that here, as elsewhere, many of our local administrative units are territorially of great antiquity. The extent of the land unit of Wormleighton in 956 was somewhat larger than the present parish, as it appears then to have included Stoneton, now a separate parish of significantly 'immature' shape (Fig. 2). Both places remained closely linked for many centuries and were still considered as one land-holding when the first large-scale map was made in 1634 for Lord Spencer (Fig. 6).

Wormleighton was just one of a great cluster of Anglo-Saxon villages and hamlets in the Feldon, the majority lying only one or two miles apart. Of its neighbours shown on Fig. 2, Fenny Compton[2] records in its name both the location of the settlement in a valley (combe) at the scarp-foot and the water-holding character of the Lower Lias Clays that receive copious spring-line water from the base of the Marlstone. Stoneton to the east may have derived its name, 'stone farm', from rock exposures or from actual quarrying along the scarp, while Radbourn (*Hreodburna* = 'reed stream' in 998) described the reed-fringed brook near by. Further reference to the damp conditions of the clay land is contained in the name, Watergall, signifying soggy, infertile, ground. By contrast, Hodnell ('Hoda's hill') appears to have taken its name from the wise choice made by a colonist called Hoda of a dry-sand and gravel-capped hill rising above 400 ft. as the site of his dwelling. Ascote probably means simply 'Eadstan's cottage(s)', the association with a chapel coming much later. The grant of land at Wormleighton in 956 tells us nothing about the precise location of the village or hamlet. An attractive site for settlement was provided by the small flat-topped hill marked *A* on Fig. 2. Here the site was dry and wells could be sunk into the small expanse of glacial sands and gravels capping the hill which slightly exceeded 500 ft. It is not unlikely that some early occupation did take place here, but, from evidence to be given later, it would seem that the main settlement actually occupied site *B* (Fig. 2) in a shallow valley in the Lower Lias Clays just to the north-west of *A*. Field work has shown that *B* was not a particularly damp site, despite its position on the clays, and it had the advantage of good spring water issuing from the base of the sands and gravels below *A* and feeding northward into a small stream.

In common with other settlements in the vicinity the inhabitants of Wormleighton probably practised mixed farming, having large open arable fields on the cleared clay lands of the valley with extensive grazings for cattle, sheep, and swine on the higher ground adjoining to the east. At first plentiful timber was available for fuel and for construction purposes, but as population grew, clearing in the Feldon generally and in Wormleighton in particular appears to have proceeded so vigorously that by

[1] This 'salt street' ran from Priors Marston through Stratford-upon-Avon to the brine springs at Droitwich in Worcestershire. See F. T. S. Houghton, 'Salt-Ways', *Transactions Birmingham Archaeological Society*, liv (1932), 1–17 and map, Pl. 4.

[2] For the meaning of these and other Warwickshire place-names see *The Place-Names of Warwickshire*, op. cit.

Domesday times the landscape had already become markedly 'open', and in succeeding centuries wood was very scarce. The road south through the Fenny Compton gap, and the Ridge Way which it intersected, ensured that Wormleighton did not suffer from isolation, while the Salt Street from Droitwich brought in not only salt, so important for preserving meat and fish, but other commodities too. During the period of Scandinavian invasions Warwickshire eventually lay on the border between resistant Anglo-Saxon England to the west and the Danelaw to the east, the frontier between the two closely following the line of the great Roman road, the Watling Street, which later formed the north-eastern boundary of the county (Fig. 1). Whereas Danish influence on settlement along the eastern fringe of Warwickshire was slight and sporadic, in the adjoining counties of Northamptonshire and Leicestershire to the east it was very strong as the place-names indicate. There is no evidence to show whether Wormleighton was attacked at this time, but together with other places it was probably called upon to contribute in men, money, and goods to the defence of the shire and particularly of the Hundred of *Honesberie* to which it apparently belonged.

The charter of 956 is preserved in the cartulary of Abingdon, and it appears from a later charter[1] that the estate belonged to the Abbey for a period in the eleventh century, though they had lost it by 1066. From that remarkable national survey, Domesday Book, prepared for William of Normandy in 1086, one can obtain a good general picture of the social and economic geography of the vill of Wormleighton twenty years after the Norman Conquest. Unfortunately we know virtually nothing about the fate and changing fortunes of the local Anglo-Saxon lords and their peasantry during the early years of the Norman occupation. For example, we do not know whether those who had supported King Harold at the Battle of Hastings continued to organize local resistance for a time and whether their villages suffered in consequence. From the Domesday evidence it would seem that Norman control was quickly asserted in Wormleighton and neighbouring vills, and judging by the general paucity of Norman defensive works[2] of motte and bailey type in the area peaceful conditions quickly obtained. At the time of the Domesday Survey Wormleighton was divided into three estates, the largest of which was still in the hands of an English lord by the name of Turchil of Warwick who had granted it to a tenant called Warin who may or may not have lived in the village.[3] The size of Turchil's holding was 3 hides, a hide[4] being a conventional assessment unit comprising, in Warwickshire, 4 virgates. The remaining two estates were in Norman hands; that of the Count of Meulan, which comprised 1½ hides, was leased to a tenant called Gilbert; that of Geoffrey de Mandeville, amounting to only ¾ hide, was held by someone known as William.

Consolidating the information for the three estates in order to obtain an overall picture for the entire vill, one finds that there were no less than 14½ ploughlands in

[1] D. Whitelock (ed.), *English Historical Documents*, i (1955), 537–9.

[2] See *Victoria County History of Warwickshire*, i. 345–406.

[3] The complete Domesday entries for Wormleighton are given in *Victoria County History of Warwickshire*, i. 316, 324, 335.

[4] Although a nominal figure of 120 acres is often stated as the approximate size of a hide, one should emphasize that the unit varied considerably from region to region. As the assessment was imposed from above, it would be rash to rely on the hidage as an index of the relative prosperity of different areas. See *Victoria County History of Warwickshire*, i. 208.

Wormleighton worked by 23 ploughteams, of which 7 belonged to the three demesnes and 16 to the ordinary folk. The intensive nature of arable land-use not only in Wormleighton but in the Feldon of Warwickshire as a whole in Domesday times has already been clearly demonstrated by Professor R. H. Kinvig in a fine series of distribution maps which merit careful study.[1] It is interesting to find that the number of recorded ploughteams was considerably in excess of the number of recorded ploughlands, and one wonders whether this indicates that the arable land was being very intensively worked at this time. If this were so, one would like to know whether the fertility of the soil was standing up to such intensive farming, but the Survey is unfortunately silent on such matters. Whereas plentiful woodland is recorded for vills in the Forest of Arden, north of the Avon, it is significant that none is recorded for Wormleighton and neighbouring vills, which again suggests that much clearing for arable and pasture had indeed taken place. The value of the vill had also increased considerably since just before the Conquest, when the three parts were worth 130 *s.*, to 305 *s.* in 1086, though whether this considerable increase was entirely due to more intensive land-use or to harsh reassessment is unfortunately not known. In view of the apparent prosperity of Wormleighton in 1086 it is rather surprising to find that no mill is recorded there, whereas they were common in comparable vills in other parts of the Feldon.

Some measure of the importance of livestock in Wormleighton may be gained from the reference to 45 acres of meadow, providing the valuable hay crop on which cattle and sheep depended for supplementary feed in the harsh winter months following Martinmas. The principal meadows no doubt occupied the wetter clay land bordering the stream flowing just to the north of the village, with a second source around Crane Mere (Fig. 2). If one includes the three tenants of the separate estates, who may not necessarily have lived in Wormleighton, the total recorded population amounted to fifty, made up of 30 villeins, 8 bordars, 6 serfs, 1 priest, and 2 Frenchmen besides the three tenants. Assuming that the majority of these were heads of families, the total population of Wormleighton in 1086 must have been between 200 and 250, which is greater than that of today. The reference to two Frenchmen within Turchil's estate suggests that a small number of Norman folk had already entered the settlement, perhaps in the capacity of overseers. From the mention of a priest in both Wormleighton and Fenny Compton it would seem probable that a church had been established in each village, that at Wormleighton presumably occupying its present site on the hill overlooking the old village (*B* in Fig. 2). The sharp separation of church and village may appear unusual, but in Warwickshire there is nothing exceptional in this, for the churches at Warmington, Avon Dassett, and Burton Dassett, all close to Wormleighton, stand aloof on the hill above the old village. The present Church of St. Peter at Wormleighton contains remnants of an early twelfth-century structure in the surviving angles of the original nave, but no Anglo-Saxon material has come to light.[2] Presumably the early church, perhaps merely a wooden building, was rebuilt

[1] R. H. Kinvig, 'The Birmingham District in Domesday Times', *Birmingham and its Regional Setting* (1950), 113–134; see also his chapter on Warwickshire in H. C. Darby and I. B. Terrett (eds.), *The Domesday Geography of Midland England* (1954), 270–308.

[2] *Victoria County History of Warwickshire*, v (1949), 221–4.

soon after the Norman Conquest to conform more closely with the architectural standards of the foreign lord.

In the century following the Domesday Survey the three separate manors in Wormleighton continued in being, but nothing more is heard of the Mandeville holding after 1221. The two remaining holdings appear to have been consolidated and their overlordship passed entirely into Norman hands, first to Henry de Newburgh, Earl of Warwick, and then to the Crown. Henry I seems to have granted the manor to his Chamberlain, Geoffrey de Clinton, whose son later gave the church of Wormleighton to Kenilworth Priory.[1] The high degree of organization that the Normans brought to their new land holdings, especially in the early years following the Conquest when the aim in the first flush of victory was to make their manors as profitable as possible, no doubt gave rise as we have seen to some increase in farming efficiency and intensity in Wormleighton and elsewhere. With the coming of peace and prosperity population numbers in many villages increased, being accompanied in some cases by the establishment of dependent hamlets. From the twelfth century onward the opportunities for expansion and further colonization were particularly good north of the Avon where large tracts of Arden woodland still remained to be cleared and settled.[2] In the Feldon, however, one suspects that not only was *Lebensraum* already considerably reduced, but also that the carrying capacity of many soils, particularly those of the heavy Lower Lias Clays intensively used by strong village communities for five centuries or more was rapidly reaching a limit. This limit was related to soil and climatic conditions on the one hand, and to complex social and economic factors, as well as to technological skill, on the other. Confirmation that saturation point had already been reached in many Feldon vills is contained in the Warwickshire Hundred Rolls of 1279 which have been very thoroughly analysed for the Hundreds of Stoneleigh and Kineton by Dr. J. B. Harley.[3] Comparison of the recorded populations for Feldon vills between 1086 and 1279 shows that in general only slight increases of population had occurred in these two centuries, several vills had remained almost stationary, while in the Hundred of Kineton (which then included Wormleighton) seven parishes out of the forty examined showed slight decreases. Apart from John Peche, who held 2 carucates in demesne, and John Passelewe, who held a further 2 carucates of him, the landholding population in Wormleighton in 1279 amounted to 36 villeins holding 23¼ virgates, 6 freemen with 2½ virgates, and 3 cottagers with 1 virgate, making a total of 47 recorded persons with 4 carucates and 26½ virgates. The recorded population was therefore very slightly below that of 1086, though the amount of ploughland would appear to have been greater, perhaps about one-third of the parish area then being arable.

It is tempting to conclude from this evidence, supported by data for other vills, that long before the Black Death had catastrophically upset the life of many villages

[1] W. Dugdale, *The Antiquities of Warwickshire* (1656), 404–5.

[2] P. N. Nicklin, 'The Early Historical Geography of the Forest of Arden', *Transactions of the Birmingham Archaeological Society*, lvi (1932), 71–76; B. K. Roberts, 'Moated Sites', *The Amateur Historian* (Winter 1962), 34–38, and maps facing p. 40; also 'Moated Sites in Midland England', *supra* 26–37.

[3] J. B. Harley, 'Population Trends and Agricultural Developments from the Warwickshire Hundred Rolls of 1279', *Economic History Review*, xi. no. 1 (August 1958), 8–18; also 'The Hundred Rolls of 1279', *The Amateur Historian*, Autumn 1961, 9–16.

in the middle of the fourteenth century, stagnation in the growth of both population and farming resources had already been reached in parts of the Feldon. Lords of the manor must have struggled to increase or even maintain their profits, while village folk must have experienced increasing difficulty in getting an adequate livelihood from the land. Under such conditions of increasingly delicate equilibrium the influence of any disrupting forces—social and economic change, inclement weather, political unrest, famine, and disease—was acutely felt, and magnified, leaving its impress deeply on both man and land. It is interesting to consider to what extent the vulnerability of a parish to social and economic change was partly reflected in taxation returns. Thus, in the Lay Subsidy[1] of 1327 Wormleighton and Fenny Compton were assessed at 62*s.* and 61*s.* 4*d.* respectively, Ladbroke at 54*s.*, Priors Hardwick at 35*s.*, Hodnell at 22*s.*, and Radbourn at 9*s.* 6*d.* The two latter places were depopulated by 1486, whereas the remainder still exist as villages today although, as we shall see later, Wormleighton must be treated as a special case. It may well be that the Lay Subsidy of 1327 had already foreshadowed the decline of Hodnell and Radbourn, whereas Wormleighton was still fairly prosperous, as the assessment suggests, though it, too, was to suffer later. The decline in Hodnell[2] must have been particularly pronounced, for the parish appears then to have included also Chapel Ascote and Watergall, both subsequently depopulated (Fig. 2). The number of taxpayers listed in the Subsidy and the magnitude of the total amount of tax paid for each vill also give some indication of the relative prosperity, and possibly population size, of the settlements. Thus, whereas in Radbourn 6 taxpayers subscribed a total of only 9*s.* 6*d.* and the 14 taxpayers of Hodnell only 22*s.*, the corresponding figures for Wormleighton were 22 taxpayers (62*s.*), Fenny Compton 16 (61*s.* 4*d.*), Ladbroke 23 (54*s.*), and Priors Hardwick, owned by the Priory of Coventry, 18 (35*s.*). Among the taxpayers listed for Wormleighton in 1332[3] and 1337 were Sir John Peche, who held the main manor, and Nicholas Passelewe, holding a sub-manor, while the remainder included a hayward, a smith, and a reeve. Although from the Lay Subsidies quoted above Wormleighton (parish area 2,425 acres in 1894) yielded slightly less than its neighbour Fenny Compton (2,157 acres in 1894), other evidence suggests that it was more prosperous. In Domesday times the value of the manor of Fenny Compton was only £6 compared with £15. 5*s.* 0*d.* for Wormleighton, while the recorded value of the Spiritualities in the Pope Nicholas *Valor*[4] of 1291 were £7. 6*s.* 8*d.* and £10 respectively. Similarly, the recorded value of sheaves, fleeces, and lambs in the *Nonarum Inquisitiones*[5] of 1342 amounted to £33. 6*s.* 8*d.* for Fenny Compton, but no less than £50 for Wormleighton.

[1] W. F. Carter and E. A. Fry, 'Lay Subsidy Roll of 1327 for Warwickshire', Supplement to *Transactions Midland Record Soc.* iii (1899), 1–12.

[2] The derogatory name *Schytenhodenhull*, applied to part of the manor from 1232 to 1401, may have reflected this decline. See *The Place-Names of Warwickshire*, 132–3.

[3] W. F. Carter, 'Lay Subsidy Roll for Warwickshire, 1332', *Dugdale Society Publications*, vi (1926), 27.

[4] S. Ayscough and J. Caley (eds.), *Taxatio Ecclesiastica Angliae et Walliae Auctoritate Papae Nicholas IV circa 1291*. Record Commission (1809), 216–57. From the nature of the entries these two manors were better compared as regards Spiritualities than as regards Temporalities, though the latter may be generally more useful.

[5] G. Vanderzee (ed.), *Nonarum Inquisitiones in Curia Scaccarii*. Record Commission (1807), 438–48. In the 1342 figures quoted above for Fenny Compton and Wormleighton the recorded values of the ninth of sheaves, fleeces, and lambs have been multiplied by ten, to include the tithe and so give an overall index of wealth derived from agricultural production in these parishes.

Fig. 2, which attempts to show Wormleighton in its local setting during perhaps the peak of its post-Conquest prosperity, provides a good example of the density of nucleated rural settlement in this part of the Feldon and indicates some of the principal roads and field-ways that appear to have existed at this time. In plotting these lines of communication use was made of the evidence of aerial photographs giving complete cover for the district, and I am greatly indebted to Mr. D. J. Pannett[1] for checking the information against his maps of the distribution of ridge-and-furrow patterns, old open-field boundaries, and headlands for Wormleighton and neighbouring parishes. Wormleighton appears to have been well served by routeways at this time, many of them continuing in use today. The little stone church on the hill appears to have benefited from the short period of prosperity after the Conquest, having acquired a thick-walled tower and two narrow aisles by the end of the twelfth century. The rapid succession of priests in Wormleighton, Fenny Compton, Ladbroke, Burton Dassett, Avon Dassett, and Warmington between 1348 and 1350 is probably an index of the severity of the great plague, the Black Death, in the area and similar evidence could no doubt be produced for many other parishes within and outside Warwickshire.[2] Conditions at the end of the Black Death must have been chaotic in many parishes where a severely depleted, half-starved, and under-stocked labour force had to cope with portions of neglected fields. Little wonder that many parishes never had a chance to regain their old equilibrium before they were beset with other physical and human problems. Little wonder, too, that lords of large manors now lacking an adequate labour force should be ready to consider other forms of land-use than arable farming, or be willing to sell land to the first bidder. And who could blame the dispirited peasants, short of plough-teams and seed corn, if they tried to sneak away to the growing towns where employment might be found in tanning, metal-working, or the woollen industry?

Professor R. H. Hilton[3] has clearly demonstrated the unprofitable nature of peasant farming in such Feldon villages as Compton Verney and Kingston around 1400, when many peasants were voluntarily surrendering their arable strips to their lord who in turn often had great difficulty in finding new tenants for his surplus land. Moreover, in many vills the peasants had already commuted their customary services and renders into annual money rents and were now hard pressed to pay these fixed sums, particularly when the demand for their wage labour both by the lord and by prosperous freemen had declined sharply. The outcome appears to have been a general reduction in the intensity of arable farming under the old open-field system and a corresponding increase in the acreage under grass. The demands of the growing cloth industry for ever-increasing quantities of wool now encouraged many peasants and tenant farmers, as well as the lord of the manor himself, to graze sheep on unwanted arable land, with the result that blocks of enclosed pasture sprang up on the

[1] Mr. D. J. Pannett is a post-graduate research student of the Department of Geography, University of Birmingham. The results of his research are shortly to be presented in a dissertation entitled 'The Significance of Ridge and Furrow in the Agrarian Landscape of Warwickshire'.

[2] Lists of incumbents are given in W. Dugdale, *The Antiquities of Warwickshire* (1656). See also *Victoria County History of Warwickshire*, i. 145–6, for further details of the severity of the Black Death in Warwickshire.

[3] R. H. Hilton, 'A Study in the Pre-History of English Enclosure in the Fifteenth Century', *Studi in Onore di Armando Sapori*, i (1957), 675–85.

old ridge-and-furrow landscape of the open fields. For example, in 1354–5 a flock of nearly 800 sheep was kept on the demesne at Great Chesterton.[1] At the end of the same century some 400 sheep were folded on the lord's demesne at Radbourn[2] (Fig. 2), while a bailiff's account roll for Kingston shows that over half the manorial receipts in 1393–4 were derived from the pasturing of tenant beasts.[3] It is not surprising, therefore, that by the late 1430's many lords of the manor had recognized the advantages to be gained by converting all their arable land to great sheep walks. This was especially easy in villages where there were few or no freemen and ruthless lords could drive the peasants from the land and even destroy the village itself. One or two herdsmen could then tend the stock, their wages were only a small item, and the profits to be gained from commercial stock-raising were considerable. In consequence by 1460 rural depopulation had become a serious national problem affecting many counties besides Warwickshire. The severity of depopulation in Warwickshire alone may be judged by the fact that at least 100 settlements were to be affected, although many of these did not disappear entirely.

Professor M. W. Beresford has already provided most interesting and fully documented accounts of the medieval depopulations for England in general, and for Warwickshire in particular, and it is unnecessary to enlarge on these here.[4] Instead the writer proposes to make one or two observations on the reasons[5] generally advanced for the depopulations before discussing in detail the fate of Wormleighton itself. In the first place, one would emphasize that too much weight has probably been attached to wool alone by those seeking to explain the reasons for the widespread conversion of open arable to enclosed pasture during the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. While it is not denied that wool commanded a very high price both at home and abroad, one would stress, too, that growing towns of the period, such as Birmingham and Coventry, required meat as well as bread. Nor was mutton the only flesh, for large herds of cattle were kept in many parts of Warwickshire, providing not only beef, butter, and cheese for the townsfolk, but also hides for the flourishing leather industry in local centres like Birmingham, Coventry, and Lichfield. In the second place, one would emphasize that the maintenance of good arable farming on the heavy Lower Lias Clay of many parts of south Warwickshire depended as much on weather conditions as on general soil fertility and favourable social and economic conditions. That these sticky soils, so prone to water-logging, can yield good crops of corn in favourable years was seen during the ploughing-up campaign of the Second World War, but once the emergency was over many farmers lost no time in allowing this intractable land to tumble down to grass again as feed for cattle and sheep. Indeed, during wet years there can be little doubt that the best crop for much of this land is grass.

[1] Willoughby de Broke MS. 393b (bailiff's account roll of Great Chesterton 1354–5) at Shakespeare's Birthplace Library, Stratford-on-Avon.

[2] Public Record Office, *Ministers' Accounts* 1041/10 and 13. Even earlier, pasture for 600 sheep had been included in a grant of land in Radbourn to the monks of Combe. See W. Dugdale, 2nd edn., p. 329.

[3] Willoughby de Broke MSS. 438 and 439.

[4] M. W. Beresford, 'The Deserted Villages of Warwickshire', *Transactions Birmingham Archaeological Society*, lxvi (1945–6), 49–106; also *The Lost Villages of England* (London, 1954).

[5] See H. Thorpe, 'The Lost Villages of Warwickshire', *Warwickshire and Worcestershire Magazine*, Feb. 1959.

Several authorities[1] would agree that Europe in general experienced a humid peak in the fourteenth century, followed by a preponderance of unfavourable climatic conditions in the first half of the succeeding century. One might inquire whether this was the reason for the disappearance of vine-growing in England towards the end of the fourteenth century. Even today the farmers of southern Warwickshire require a good dry spell before they can tractor-plough their heavy clays. If they are able to do so in a dry autumn then the action of winter frost breaks down the heavy clods and sowing in a dry spring is easy. But if a wet autumn is succeeded by a wet spring the land may never be ploughed in time to crop that year. Medieval peasant farmers were clearly much more vulnerable to the harsh effects of inclement weather than the modern farmer whose bread corn may come from as far afield as Australia or Canada. Thus, if they missed a crop or saw a large proportion of their seed rot in sodden fields, they would be near to starvation the following year. A succession of only two wet autumns and springs would thus bring famine to peasants farming the heavy clays, unless they had a compensating pastoral land-use. At the very least, then, one must consider weather conditions as one of the factors, together with changing social and economic conditions, that might here upset the delicate balance between man and land at this time. A deterioration in each, operating simultaneously, could quickly change both the fortune and the appearance, of a Feldon parish. Some settlements succumbed early, particularly if their lord took the line of least resistance and sold his manor; others struggled for a while and then gave in; yet a third group, worthy of more detailed study than has yet been accorded them, survived as open-field mixed farming units with land still in strips until as late as last century. It is to the second of these groups that Wormleighton belonged.

DEPOPULATION A.D. 1499

Manors held by absentee lords, including especially those estates that changed hands frequently in the fluid land-market conditions of the late fourteenth century onward, were likely targets for depopulation. Professor H. J. Habbakuk[2] has also emphasized the important part that 'good and bad demographic luck' might play in the fortunes of great families and so in that of their estates. Thus failure of male issue, as well as changes of fortune, might lead to the transfer of a manor from the hands of a family that had been associated with the place for generations to an 'outside' family that cared little for either the land or the folk. Such change may have occurred in Wormleighton on the death in May 1386 of Sir John Peche, who then held the principal manor there. Sir John left a widow and two daughters, and the manor passed successively to his widow for life and then to his daughter, Margaret.

[1] G. Utterström, 'Climatic Variations and Population Problems in Early Modern History', *Scandinavian Economic History Review*, iii (1955), 3–47; H. Flohn, 'Klimaschwankungen im Mittelalter und ihre Historisch-geographische Bedeutung', *Berichte zur Deutschen Landeskunde*, xii (1949 501; C. E. Britton, *A Meteorological Chronology to A.D. 1450*, Meteorological Office Geophysical Memoir No. 70 (H.M.S.O. M.O. 409a), 1937; D. J. Schove, 'Climatic Fluctuations in Europe in the Late Historical Period (especially A.D. 800–1700)', University of London M.Sc. thesis, 1953.

[2] See the Preface to M. E. Finch, 'The Wealth of Five Northamptonshire Families, 1540–1640', *Northamptonshire Record Society*, vol. xix (1956), pp. xii–xiii.

who married Sir William Mountfort of Coleshill in Warwickshire.[1] So the manor came in due course into the hands of their grandson, Sir Simon Mountfort, who had the misfortune to be attainted for treason in 1495, all his lands being seized by the king. Although there is no direct evidence that the manor in Wormleighton had suffered considerable neglect following the death of Sir John Peche in 1386, it is very probable that this was so. As will be seen later, the manor-house is thought to have been in a very dilapidated condition towards the end of the fifteenth century, presumably because it no longer served as a major residence for an important family; indeed, it may well have sheltered only a bailiff or an ambitious tenant farmer at this time. Similarly, if one compares the recorded population of Wormleighton in Domesday times with that at the end of the fifteenth century, the settlement must have declined by over half even before the final depopulation occurred in 1499.

After Wormleighton came into the hands of the king in 1495, part of the manor, comprising 10 messuages, 200 acres of arable land, 40 acres of meadow, and 200 acres of pasture,[2] appears to have been granted for a time to a John Spicer. A prominent grazier of Hodnell (Fig. 2) by the name of John Spencer held 1 messuage and $3\frac{1}{2}$ virgates from John Spicer in 1497, and it is not unlikely that most of this land was in pastoral use then.[3] In the account that is to follow of Wormleighton's historical geography during and after the depopulation we shall be closely concerned with the Spencer family over a period of more than four centuries extending to the present day. At this time they were prosperous freemen farmers[4] who appear to have taken full advantage of the opportunities that depopulation had offered elsewhere of first renting and later purchasing abandoned arable, pasture, and meadow land in the Feldon. As their fortunes grew through the accumulation of land and stock, so their social standing rose through marriage ties with the local nobility and gentry. In 1498 William Cope,[5] who had married the daughter of John Spencer of Hodnell and who was Cofferer to the Household of Henry VII, was granted the manor of Wormleighton by the king at an annual rent of 20 marks (£13. 6*s.* 8*d.*), having previously rented the manor from John Spicer.[6] He promptly set about purchasing all the lands and tenements of minor lords in Wormleighton, including those of Sir Edward Raleigh.[7] Having gained control of the entire parish he proceeded in 1499 to destroy 12 messuages and 3 cottages, converting 240 acres of arable land to enclosed pasture for animals and driving 60 persons from the land.[8] If one includes a further 6 messuages

[1] W. Dugdale, *The Antiquities of Warwickshire*, 2nd edn., revised by William Thomas (1730), i. 515.

[2] Warwickshire Feet of Fines, 1345–1509, iii, no. 2767 (1498–9), *Dugdale Society Publications*, xviii, pp. 212–13.

[3] *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem, Henry VII*, ii. 245.

[4] J. H. Round, *Studies in Peerage and Family History* (1901), pp. 285–9.

[5] William Cope seems to have held land both from the Crown and from various individuals in several parts of southern England. In 1499 he was appointed steward of the lordships of Henley-in-Arden and Tanworth in Warwickshire (see *Calendar of Patent Rolls, Henry VII, 1494–1509*, p. 168). In 1503 he took possession of great parks in Guildford and Henley, Surrey (ibid., p. 339).

[6] I. S. Leadam, *The Domesday of Inclosures 1517–1518* (1897), ii. 485 (Earl Spencer's MS. of *c.* 1519). See also Spencer MSS. 1670, 1677, and 1685.

[7] Ibid. ii. 656.

[8] Ibid. ii. 403–4; see also Public Record Office, *Miscellanea of the Exchequer* 164/10/7. William Cope was associated with other depopulations, for example, at Irchester and Knuston in Northamptonshire (*vide* Leadam, i. 287).

that had been destroyed by Sir Edward Raleigh,[1] the total destruction in Wormleighton around 1499 amounted to no less than 18 messuages and three cottages with an estimated population of about 85. That an enclosed, depopulated manor was now more valuable than one in which village folk still derived a livelihood from mixed farming may be judged by the fact that the annual rent due to the Crown from Wormleighton, which before depopulation had been £8, increased after enclosure to £13. 6*s*. 8*d*.[2] Similarly the value of the land to Cope rose from £40 to £60 per annum.[3]

Using aerial photographs, documentary evidence, and field investigations, an attempt has been made in Fig. 3 to reconstruct the fifteenth-century settlement pattern and rural landscape of the immediate neighbourhood of Wormleighton before the final depopulation. The major settlement, of village status, nestled on fairly well-drained land close to a stream about one-third of a mile from the church. In common with many Warwickshire villages, both past and present, the settlement seems to have consisted of two parallel rows of rectilinear homesteads and crofts separated by a long narrow green[4] that extended from the ford, close by the road to Southam, south-east towards a suite of fishponds. Investigation with the aid of soil augers of the small mounds and long narrow banks forming the rectilinear mesh of former cottages, gardens, and closes, with their associated lanes, has revealed little stone walling, and one supposes that the homesteads on these heavy clays were simple thatched structures of timber, infilled with brushwood, clay, and daub. Immediately west of the village the moated house of former lords no longer formed an impressive sight, for it had been allowed to fall somewhat into disrepair after the widow of Sir John Peche ceased to occupy it. The site of the village and ancient manor-house stand out very clearly on the aerial photograph (Plate 6), though partly truncated by the canal that now cuts across the area. A second, but considerably smaller, cluster of homesteads may have occupied the dry slopes of the hill west of the church and the rectilinear outlines of former cottages and closes can be clearly seen in Plate 6. As one might expect, the church seems to have received few major additions during the fifteenth century, though the south porch (which could be either early fifteenth century or late fourteenth), the clerestory above the nave, and the rood-screen and loft were added then.

Prominent on Fig. 3 and Plate 6 are the fishponds (now dry), the largest of which was fed by the spring issuing half-way down the drift-capped hill. The controlled effluent from this large embanked pond seems to have led off from the north-east corner following a small runnel along its northern edge to enter the smallest of the four fish-breeding tanks. Surplus water could be directed from the large pond down a small channel into the main stream in the bottom of the valley below, by-passing the

[1] W. Dugdale, (1656), p. 405.

[2] I. S. Leadam, ii. 485.

[3] Ibid. 404. See also Spencer MSS. 1698 and 1699.

[4] Villages and hamlets with their homesteads arranged around a central open space, or green, seem to have been common in many parts of England from Anglo-Saxon times at least. An examination of many lost village sites in England suggests that the green was often an important morphological feature. See M. W. Beresford, *The Lost Villages of England*, pp. 32–38, 54; also 'The Deserted Villages of Warwickshire', *Transactions Birmingham Archaeological Society*, lxvi (1945–6), 78; H. Thorpe, 'The Green Village as a Distinctive Form of Settlement on the North European Plain', *Bulletin de la Société Belge d'Études Géographiques*, xxx, no. 1 (1961), 93–134; also the section and maps on Rural Settlement in *The British Isles: A Systematic Geography* published for the International Geographical Congress (1964).

village (Plate 6). The size of the great square pond reminds one of the importance of fish-breeding in medieval times, a fact well borne out for Warwickshire by recent research by Mr. B. K. Roberts.[1] Before Wormleighton was enclosed in 1499 great open arable fields crossed by ridge and furrow lay around the village, and to give a general impression of this orderly patterned landscape the incidence of ridge and furrow, discernible both on the ground today and on aerial photographs such as Plate 6, has been plotted on Fig. 3. It is certainly not claimed that the ridge-and-furrow patterns seen today are all a direct relic from medieval times. One has only to look at the corrugations that cross the bed of the large drained fishpond to realize that many of these patterns have been etched on the landscape, or parts thereof, since the depopulation. Yet one must also bear in mind that many aspects of open-field patterns, particularly those contained within headlands and field ways, were semi-permanent features of the medieval landscape, and in Wormleighton, with such a strong pastoral tradition after enclosure, the surviving ridge-and-furrow grid may still give a reasonable picture of the topographic framework of strip cultivation during the fifteenth century. Recent research work on ridge and furrow has also led one to think that the actual pattern of ridges and furrows may have changed very little during several centuries of cultivation. Co-aration in medieval times on the Lower Lias Clay of Wormleighton would have found ridging a great convenience, not only in identifying strips of land but more particularly for ensuring good drainage in times of excessive rainfall. Unfortunately little is known about the nature of the field-system that was operated at Wormleighton itself in medieval times, though four compact fields survive as names on the estate plan of 1634. On the Bishop of Worcester's vills in the neighbourhood a two-field system was favoured, and this may well have been customary over extensive areas of the southern Feldon.[2] By contrast further north three-field and four-field farming was often practised.

The aerial photograph (Plate 6) reveals a remarkable variety of ground patterns, some of which are residual elements from the pre-depopulation landscape, whereas others, particularly the hedgerows and buildings other than the church, are more recent. In describing aerial photographs of 'lost village' sites many research workers have tended at times to see the present landscape merely as a doubly exposed photographic plate, one horizon revealing skeletal features of the old village organism, the other containing 'modern' features that are still viable topographic elements, though such features as roads may yet be very old beneath the surface. As will be seen later, the years immediately following the abandonment of a settlement were often associated not only with the destruction of all or part of the old village or hamlet, but also with further alteration of the landscape to meet the needs of the changed economy. Thus many closes and folds, as well as great pastures strongly hedged, banked, and ditched, were fashioned from former open fields and village remnants. Surviving

[1] B. K. Roberts, 'Moated Sites in Midland England,' *supra* p. 30. Mr. Roberts was formerly engaged in post-graduate research in the Department of Geography, University of Birmingham, and will shortly submit a dissertation entitled 'Settlement, Population and Land Use in the Western Portion of the Forest of Arden, 1086–1350'. I am indebted to him for help in locating various unpublished manuscripts relating to Wormleighton.

[2] See H. L. Gray, *English Field Systems* (1915), pp. 499–500; R. H. Hilton, 'Social Structure of Rural Warwickshire in the Middle Ages', *Dugdale Society* (1950), pp. 22–25.

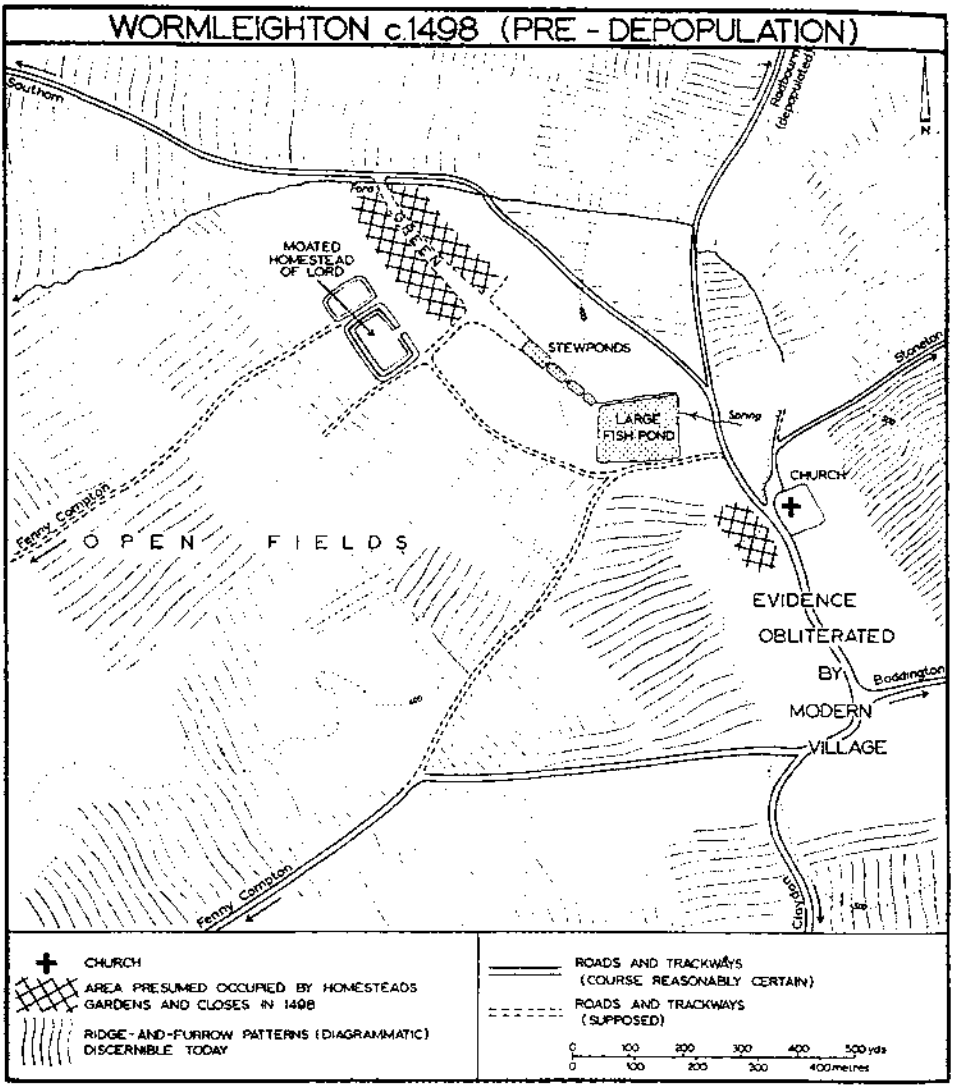
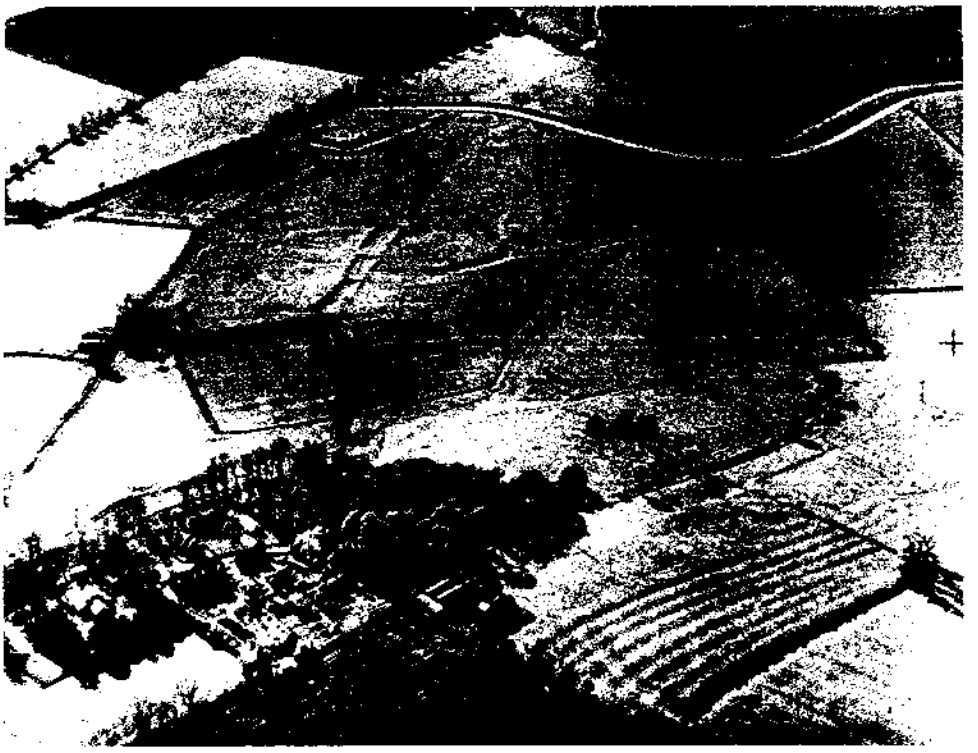

WORMLEIGHTON c.1498 (PRE - DEPOPULATION)
Southorn
Northourn (depopulated)
Ford
Old Mill
MOATED HOMESTEAD OF LORD
STEWPONDS
LARGE FISH POND
Spring
Stanton
CHURCH
Fenny Compton
O P E N F I E L D S
EVIDENCE OBLITERATED BY MODERN VILLAGE
Boddington
Claydon
Fenny Compton
CHURCH
AREA PRESUMED OCCUPIED BY HOMESTEADS GARDENS AND CLOSES IN 1498
RIDGE-AND-FURROW PATTERNS (DIAGRAMMATIC) DISCERNIBLE TODAY
ROADS AND TRACKWAYS (COURSE REASONABLY CERTAIN)
ROADS AND TRACKWAYS (SUPPOSED)
0 100 200 300 400 500 yds
0 100 200 300 400 metres

Fig. 3

Plate 6



Dr. J. K. St. Joseph *Crown Copyright Reserved*

Aerial photograph looking north-west showing the old church of Wormleighton and a cluster of cottages on the hill-top (bottom left); earthworks of the deserted medieval village and rectangular moated homestead near the canal; outlines of a secondary cluster of deserted dwellings on the hill flank below the church; a great square fish pond with four small fish-breeding tanks (now drained); old water channels leading from the large fish pond into the valley below; remains of the great double hedgerows set up soon after 1499; ridge-and-furrow patterns of former arable land-use in the fields around the past and present settlements.

homesteads may have been quickly converted to provide shelter for stock, particularly for use in lambing or calving time, while new shelters may have been provided for herdsmen or animals elsewhere. The problem of feeding larger numbers of livestock during the winter months gave a boost to hay production and storage, while any opportunities for irrigating pastures and meadows were quickly seized upon. All these activities left their impress on the landscape, and there is no doubt that many earthworks once thought to have been associated with villages before their abandonment actually came into being in the period immediately following the depopulation. Plate 6 must therefore be viewed as a three-stage or four-stage landscape at least.

Before following the story of Wormleighton after the depopulation, it would be useful at this point to examine briefly the fate of some of the neighbouring settlements in the difficult days of the fifteenth century. As we have already seen, Hodnell, Chapel Ascote, Watergall, and Radbourn (Figs. 1, 2, and 4) seem to have been relatively small settlements that had suffered gradual decline since the fourteenth century.[1] John Rous, a chantry priest of Warwick, who died in 1491, was so incensed by the ruthless depopulations both in the county and elsewhere that he presented a petition to Parliament in 1459 asking for legislation against it. Later in his *Historia Regum Angliae*[2] Rous gives a long list of villages in south Warwickshire that had been destroyed, adding; 'If such destruction took place in other parts of the kingdom as in Warwickshire it would be a danger to the whole country.' In his list, which was probably prepared about 1486, Rous mentions Hodnell, Chapel Ascote, and Radbourn as already depopulated, and it would seem that those responsible were either the monks of Combe Abbey or the Catesby family.[3] From circumstantial evidence Stoneton would also appear to have suffered some depopulation, but the precise details are not known. By contrast Fenny Compton and Priors Hardwick seem to have suffered little, despite the fact that part of the former, like Wormleighton, had passed to the Mountforts after the death of Sir John Peche in 1386 and so came into the hands of the Crown in 1495. When William Cope, Cofferer to the king, obtained the manor of Wormleighton in 1498 he was also granted a manor in Fenny Compton to hold in socage,[4] but whereas Wormleighton had been declining throughout the century and was ripe for final depopulation, Fenny Compton seems to have been a thriving settlement of several manors that stoutly resisted interference.

* Fig. 4 appears in Part 2.

Note. This article first appeared under the title 'The Lord and the Landscape' in *The Transactions of the Birmingham and Warwickshire Archaeological Society*, Vol. 80 (1965). We are most grateful to the Society for their permission to reprint it (in two parts) in *Cake & Cockhorse*.

As the article is reprinted in facsimile, the numbering of Plates follows the original publication, from 6 to 8. There are no Plates 1 to 5.

[1] See M. W. Beresford, 'The Deserted Villages of Warwickshire', pp. 61, 65–67, 78, 86, 92–93, 94, and 98.

[2] T. Hearne, (ed.), 2nd edition (1745) pp. 122–3.

[3] W. Dugdale (1656), p. 219a.

[4] *Calendar of Patent Rolls, 1494–1509*; grants to William Cope, dated May 7, 1498 and Nov. 12, 1503, pp. 133 and 340.

Notes on the text. On page 155 the author refers to William Cope, Cofferer to the Household of Henry VII and his Warwickshire lordships. However, he does not mention Cope's estates in and around Banbury itself. In 1496 he leased the Manor of Hardwick and was responsible for depopulating it. Two years later he acquired Hanwell Castle, in which he resided and either built or rebuilt. See Clare Jakeman's contribution on 'Cofferer Cope and the Copes of Canons Ashby', *C&CH* **9**(6), 1984, pp.166-167; and extensively in Beesley's *History of Banbury*, pp.190-194.

In the forthcoming second part of this article a footnote refers to John Spencer I, when first leasing the manor of Wormleighton from William Cope, undertaking 'within 12 years to build upon the premises as good a mansion as the said William has of late built in a Quadrant within the lordship of Hampton, co. Oxon.', quoted from Spencer MSS, 1698 and 1699. It seems likely that 'Hampton' may be a misreading of Hanwell. The remains of Hanwell Castle, originally a 'quadrant', are brick-built, like the house at Wormleighton.

'Chapel Ascote – A Deserted Village' by Linda Doyle, *C&CH* **13**(9), 1997, pp.272-281, is also of relevance, including 'The Lord and the Landscape' amongst her sources. Mrs Doyle has several publications on 'Local History around Ladbroke'. **J.G.**

Recent work on Anglo-Saxon Wormleighton

Della Hooke

The late Professor Thorpe's paper was published in the mid-1960s[1] when the extent of prehistoric settlement in southern Warwickshire was underestimated and the amount of woodland thought to be present vastly exaggerated. The 'dense oak-wood' of Arden would have been, in reality, an area of open woodland, heathland and cropland, even if largely used as wood-pasture, with abundant settlement. Colonization of these 'woodland wastes' by Anglo-Saxon incomers no longer plays a part in this scenario although there was undoubtedly an acceptance of Anglo-Saxon culture over the early centuries of the so-called 'Anglo-Saxon' period (now more usually referred to as the early medieval period). Thorpe was able to claim in 1965 that there was 'no evidence for settlement around Wormleighton before the Anglo-Saxon colonization'[2] but the systematic recording of stray finds, pottery scatters, cropmarks revealed by air photography etc has today changed

[1] Thorpe, H. 'The Lord and the Landscape', *The Transactions of the Birmingham and Warwickshire Archaeological Society*, Vol. 80 (1965).

[2] *Ibid*, p.40 (original pagination; p.144 as reprinted here).

the image of the Warwickshire Feldon and a Romano-British burial was perhaps located within Stoneton or Wormleighton itself.[3]

The charter boundary clauses of Wormleighton may have included Stoneton to the east,[4] especially as the Domesday holdings of Wormleighton and Stoneton together amounted to only six hides – not the ten *mansæ* (hides) noted in the tenth-century charter – but this remains unclear and Stoneton by the time of Domesday Book was included within Northamptonshire. The first charter is a grant by King Eadwig to his *comes*, Ælfhere, in AD 956 and the second an undated boundary clause.[5] Thorpe rightly notes that the western boundary in part followed the road from Banbury to Southam (the *hore pyt* or may have been a pit dug alongside it for roadstone) while the northern boundary was formed by a saltway running east–west across the county area.[6] Much of the eastern boundary followed a ridgeway running between Claydon and Priors Hardwick, as Hooke's maps show, a route which is still shown as a trackway on the 1:25000 map of 1957 but later marked by a belt of woodland. Where this routeway met the Claydon with Clattercote boundary it was marked by the Three Shire Stone – a marker for the meeting point of the counties of Warwickshire, Northamptonshire and Oxfordshire. However, Thorpe's map was incorrect in identifying the present Wormleighton to Priors Hardwick road as part of the 'ridgeway' of the charters: as Peter Christopher has observed, the ridgeway appears to have continued northwards along the top of the ridge to Priors Hardwick (now a footpath). If the boundary clause indeed included Stoneton then the 'white dyke' may have referred to a ditch along the northern Stoneton boundary.

The charter-bounds contain other references to the features of the early medieval landscape – especially the studfold where horses would have been reared on Shirne Hill and a lost tumulus on the eastern boundary.[7]

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[3] Warwickshire Historic Environment Record 1307.

[4] Contrary to the maps (on pp. 59 and 128) in Hooke, D., *Warwickshire Anglo-Saxon Charter Bounds* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1999).

[5] S.588 and S.1574 in Sawyer, P.H., *Anglo-Saxon Charters: An Annotated List and Bibliography* (London: R Hist Soc., 1968).

[6] Hooke, D., *The Anglo-Saxon Landscape: the Kingdom of the Hwicce*, p.125, fig.31 (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985, repr. 2009).

[7] Christopher, P. M., n.d. 'Track ways associated with parish boundaries in the vicinity of Wormleighton in Warwickshire and discussion with regard to their possible origins, destinations and antiquity', unpublished typescript.

SNIPPETS FROM THE ARCHIVES

Deborah Hayter

The Steeple Aston Parish Book records the decisions made by a 'Special Meeting of the Vestry, April 17th 1769':

'Whereas great complaint has been made of the misapplication of the parish money in Extravagant & needless Expences – Now for the better and more effectual prevention of such complaints for the future, it is agreed by the parishioners in this present Vestry assembled in manner following' –

1 Every vestry meeting to be held in the church and notice to be given in advance.

2 The overseers of the poor to be allowed 3s. for journeys on parish business but 5s. if more than 6 miles.

3 Overseers conducting business at a publick house – no more than 1s.

4 The constable to be allowed 2s.6d. for his charge and trouble in settling his accounts, and that the 7s.6d. usually spent, to be hereafter suppress'd and for ever discontinued.

5 3s. only for the ringers on the King's Accession and on Gunpowder Treason.

6 The churchwardens are to be allowed to spend only 1/ at a time with any workman in treating about church repairs.

7 It is agreed that 5s. only is to be spent by the parishioners in settling the accounts at Easter.

8 It is agreed that these articles are to be read over every Easter when the parish Accounts are settled.

We can sense a good deal of righteous indignation behind this careful record. Local administration – the care of the poor, the maintenance of the highways and law and order – was the responsibility of the ecclesiastical parish, whose ratepayers met every April to elect from among themselves the parish officers for the next year. These would be the two churchwardens, who were responsible for the maintenance of the church and usually were the Trustees, with the incumbent, of any parish charities; the Overseers of the Poor, who bore the burden of collecting the poor rate and of administering poor relief to those who needed it; the Surveyors of the Highways whose sole but difficult job was to keep the roads in good order; and the parish constable, whose duties included the moving on of the indigent before they could claim relief from the parish.

Ale was the great lubricant of all parish business (see the *Kings Sutton Churchwardens' Accounts 1636-1700, ed, P. Hayter, BHS 27, 2001, passim*), but it is clear that the ratepayers of Steeple Aston thought that their parish officers were making a good deal too merry with their money, and that the amounts spent in the pub when 'treating about church repairs' or when 'settling the accounts at Easter' had to be strictly limited in the future. It is likely that the money for the bell-ringers on the occasion of the King's Accession, and on Bonfire Night, was paid in ale rather than money, and we might note that these sessions were extra to their usual duties every Sunday for church services.

Note. Steeple Aston Parish Book. is at ORO, MSS DD Par Steeple Aston e.1

Book Reviews

A View from the Hill; a history of Sibford School 1842–2010 – an 'experiment' in Quaker education, by Michael Finch, Sessions Books (ISBN 978–1-85072-4007-0) 184pp, numerous photographs. 2010. £10.00 + £2.50 p&p. Available from Ali Bromhall (abromhall@sibfordschool.co.uk).

This is the lovingly told story of Sibford School from around the late 1830s to the present day. Sibford was established as one of a group of Quaker schools in the early nineteenth century which reflected the concern of Friends to develop the individual talents of children, 'for the service of God and their fellow human beings'. Michael Finch, the author and long-term member of the teaching staff, has compiled a history of Sibford with particular emphasis on those who have worked tirelessly to ensure that the school offers opportunities to children from many different backgrounds. The warmth of feeling at the school comes across very clearly, albeit that some of the staff are recognised as less easy-going than others. Many staff members are remembered and lauded for their long-standing service and efforts to ensure that the school operated as an extended family. For some children it may well have been a surrogate family, particularly in the early years, and the tradition whereby many children of staff attended the school speaks volumes for the value all those involved placed on providing an education with an emphasis on community values. It was, and still is, a close knit and caring institution. Its emphasis on providing opportunities for children with special needs was recognised early on, though more recent head-teachers have tried to draw back from too much specialism in that area, preferring to widen the opportunities for the children of Friends and others; the latter now make up the major part of the annual intake.

National educational strategy had a limited impact on the school given its independent – if rather impecunious – status. However, after the traumas of the two world-wars and the inevitable disturbances to the ordinary life of school,

successive headmasters moved the school on, improving the financial basis and developing it into a 'modern, progressive, comprehensive school'. That included, under the direction of Jonas Fielding (1963-1972), the introduction of a sixth form, as well as the development of numerous building projects to cope with the expansion of pupils – rising from 260 to over 350. The reason given for not introducing a sixth form earlier had always been that other Quaker schools were better equipped to offer education at this level, but it was a symptom of Sibford's growing confidence at this time that the staff were prepared to undertake this considerable expansion. Later development has included increased capacity for music and the performing arts, resulting in improved facilities and a growing reputation. The latest trends have been in line with many of those nationally, not least in increasing the number of day pupils in relation to the number of boarders.

Many of the questions which arise from this book are the result of the hard work undertaken by Michael Finch. With all this information available it would be interesting to know more about the pupils, where they came from and who they were; what did they go on to do, what was their influence in the Society of Friends (clearly many of the staff and members of the School Committee were well known Friends) and how was the school regarded within the Society and the wider educational establishment. Edward Milligan, who wrote the Foreword, suggests the possibility of further research based on the framework already constructed in this book; that is the value of histories such as this, that they suggest additional lines of research which can take the subject forward.

Helen Forde

***Bygone Bartons**, vol. 1*, 32pp, full colour illus. 2011, £3,00 from Rosemary Wharton (tel. 01869 347638). <www.bartonshistorygroup.org.uk>

This Souvenir copy is the first in a planned series by the Bartons' History Group. The Group was revived in 2007 and has already produced or reprinted a range of booklets and leaflets, plus a DVD of films celebrating the 1977 Silver Jubilee. There are five articles in *Bygone Bartons*: 'From Saddles to School Meals' (Barbara Hill), 'Flint axe found near Leys Farm' (Christine Edbury), 'Postboxes from all reigns' (Rosemary Wharton), 'Looking backwards… and forwards' (Chris Jones) and 'The Methodist Chapel's 150th anniversary (the late Audrey Martin)'. Entertaining and well illustrated (I particularly liked that of the rare Victorian pillar box, dating from 1856, outside Banbury Town Hall), we look forward to future issues. **J.G.**

An Historical Atlas of Oxfordshire, ed. Kate Tiller & Giles Darkes, Oxfordshire Record Society vol. 67, 2010. xii, 194pp. £20 (card-covered) or £35 (hardback).

With 74 subjects (all mapped), and 42 contributors, meaningful comment requires more time and space than yet available. For a (fairly critical) review, see Chris Hall (over nine pages) in *Oxfordshire Local History*. Nevertheless, the Atlas provides an invaluable overview of the county's history. A book to buy.

OBITUARY

George Fothergill, 1933-2011

George Fothergill, who has recently died in Winchester, fired generations of teenage students in Lancashire, Oxfordshire and Hampshire with enthusiasm for history. He was also the inspiration of the early teenage years of the Banbury Historical Society. He was appointed Head of History at Banbury School in 1965 when Dr Harry Judge was creating a new comprehensive institution from several existing schools. He quickly became involved with the eight-year-old Historical Society, joining the committee and then serving as chairman (1968-71), assistant secretary and secretary. He brought to the Society an array of distinguished speakers, Howard (later Sir Howard) Colvin, Brian (now Sir Brian) Harrison, Christopher Hill, E.P.Thompson, Tony (now Sir Tony) Wrigley and Brigadier Peter Young amongst others. George had a great sense of fun, and introduced music, drama and poetry to the annual dinners that were then a feature of the Society's programmes. He secured a notable coup in July 1971 by arranging for the Society to visit Nicholas Hawksmoor's great house at Easton Neston, and was closely involved with the *Son et Lumière* presentation at St Mary's Church in the autumn of 1972. He organised a memorable evening of reminiscences on 26 November 1970 which is recorded in the article 'Banbury at the turn of the century' (*C&CH.* **5**.2 1972). George never became closely involved with the minutiae of local historical research but his all-round understanding of history was of enormous benefit to the Society. He wrote several authoritative reviews for *Cake & Cockhorse*, including a masterly survey of the Banbury volume of the *Victoria History of Oxfordshire* (*C&CH.* **8**.8, Spring 1974). George initially lived at No 102 Bath Road whose frontage was adorned with the 'Salt Warehouse' sign from the Original Cake Shop in Parson's Street, but later moved to King's Sutton.

George Fothergill was born in Ravenstonedale, Westmorland, and educated at Appleby Grammar School and the Queen's College, Oxford, where he read Modern History. He did National Service with the Royal Norfolk Regiment, where he gained his first experience of teaching by assisting fellow soldiers with basic literacy and numeracy. He taught history at Bolton School in Lancashire from 1958 until he moved to Banbury. He left Banbury in the summer of 1973 to take up the post of deputy principal at Peter Symons Sixth Form College at Winchester, where he remained for 20 years. In 1984 he was elected Liberal Democrat city councillor for the Littleton & Harestock ward where he lived. He chaired the amenities committee of Winchester City Council, was instrumental in the establishment of *The Screen* cinema in the city in the mid-1990s, and served as Mayor of Winchester in 1998-99. He was active in the Winchester branch of the Historical Association until shortly before his death.

Only eight years of George Fothergill's long life were spent in Banbury. He lived in Winchester for 38 years, and became a distinguished figure in the city. He made a notable contribution to the development of Banbury School, and the Banbury Historical Society has reason to be grateful for the high standards that he set. Nevertheless those who knew George in his Banbury years will remember him most vividly as an ever-cheerful friend and a stimulating companion.

We extend our sympathy to Jenny, George's widow, and to his sons Lloyd and Gavin whose early years were spent in Banbury. A memorial service at which the Society was represented by Dr Barrie Trinder was held in the Guildhall at Winchester on Sunday 6 March.

[George Jackson Fothergill, b. High Stennerskeugh, Westmorland, 14 November 1933, died Winchester, 28 January 2011]

B.S.T

Lecture Reports

Brian Little

Thursday 9th December 2010

Archaeology and the Restoration of Stowe Landscape Gardens

Gary Marshall

The National Trust guidebook to Stowe Landscape Gardens describes Stowe as 'the most important landscape garden in Britain', so members were eager to hear about the ambitious restoration project undertaken by the Trust. The story began with a century of growth and change during the period from 1700 when its owners were the Temple and Grenville families. The formal terrace garden of the 1680s gradually became a more naturalistic landscape especially after the appointment of 'Capability' Brown, head gardener from 1741. In particular the speaker highlighted a less formal main vista, the loss of some ha-has and a progressive greening of the landscape and the introduction of exotic plants from the Americas. By 1800 the gardens as we know them were complete.

By the mid-19th century the second Duke of Buckingham's debts were mounting and in 1848 all the timber was sold. We now have a second generation of trees. In 1923 the house turned into Stowe School and its contents and many of the statues were sold. Restoration work based on the 1843 estate map started in 1996 with the re-creation of 18th century shrubbery.

A section of Gary Marshall's presentation was devoted to statues. Most of these were sold in 1921 but their original locations have been traced to residual bases. In addition to human intervention Lord Cobham's monument was blown to bits during a lightning strike of 1957. In pursuit of detail about columns the role of the archaeologists has been paramount. Grotto restoration has also owed much to their efforts.

The talk concluded with information about recent changes in the approach and especially the improvement of amenities, which reflects the influence of the National Trust. Estate buildings include a former corn mill converted to a saw mill at the beginning of the 20th century. The current project is the restoration of the archaeologically very interesting 1717 *New Inn*, which stood at the original crossroads. During part of this activity sheets of old issues of the *Bucks Herald* were discovered under wallpaper. These have been important for dating purposes.

Thursday 13th January 2011
The Aluminium Works at Banbury 1929-2009.
Richard Hartree

This was a comprehensive account of a landmark industry that started with the Northern Aluminium Company and ended in the time of Sapa Profiles. Early on the emphasis was on sheet metal production but after this moved to South Wales output at Banbury was all about extruded bars.

Quite rightly Richard Hartree assumed that most of our members knew little about the key industrial processes. An account of these was one of several themes that included the fascinating story of how money from the banking Gilletts and from Banbury Borough Council bridged the gap between the NAC bid for the site and the £12,000 demanded by Mr Lidsey, a local farmer.

Later we were treated to a review of bodies like the Volunteer Fire Brigade and the impact of industrial action especially in the early years.

A section of the talk that aroused a lot of interest concerned the works during the Second World War. Output was especially linked to aircraft (the Spitfire) production and involved female labour more than at any other time. That the work of shifts was so little impeded was due in no small measure to the dummy works on Hardwick Hill, which distracted the Germans.

In every sense of the word the Aluminium Works was a cradle to grave organisation. This was reflected in the audience, which included a number of former employees.

Working at the Ally will live on in the memories of many local folk. With the current reduced importance of manufacturing in the town it is unlikely to be challenged.

Thursday 10th February 2011
Bampton: a Minster-Town in Mediaeval Oxfordshire
Professor John Blair

This was a fascinating, detailed and superbly structured lecture. It started from the premise that Bampton in south-west Oxfordshire is 'one of the Banburys of England' and then evolved around the thesis that its Minster church acted as a powerful stimulus for urban growth. Ironically, despite this trend the town became detached from late mediaeval road patterns and earned the title 'Bampton in the Bush'. Geologically the settlement became rooted to

its dry point location on a gravel terrace. Here a grand mediaeval church gradually developed a cathedral style close. Outside this an early horse market became a focus of trade. Elaboration of church history revealed valuable information about its architectural features and links with Exeter as well as with invading forces such as those of William the Conqueror and King Stephen.

Professor Blair gave much prominence to Anglo Saxon settlement and pursued this topic examining the consequences of location – central church but fringe castle.

Towards the end of his address John Blair shifted his attention to Radcot and why this became more of a strategic place than Bampton. Route development favoured it whereas Bampton became a backwater. Maybe this is why Time Team was attracted to Radcot, though it could also have been due to the fact that the conflict between Stephen and Matilda was focussed on the castle. By contrast route development was more church than castle linked at Bampton.

A subsidiary theme throughout was the emergence of Bampton as a folklore centre, culminating today in such fascinating survivals as the May Garland procession and Morris Dancing.

Members who were privileged to hear this talk must have left pondering the 'Banburys of England' tag but more especially be inspired to visit Bampton to experience first hand the effects of church, market and castle alignment of the local 'go west' spirit of development.

Thursday 10th March 2011

Parks in Mediaeval England

Stephen Mileson

This lecture was about hunting and the character of the nobility, interesting topics focussed within a long-term study. Incorporated in this was a measure of social and political history together with the understanding of the development of landscapes, parks as well as gardens.

Although Woodstock was a dominant example Banbury got a mention especially in the area around Crouch Hill.

During the evening our lecturer traced roots within late Anglo Saxon hunting practices and focussed on the impact of enclosures. He also identified designed landscapes and looked specifically at areas like Wychwood Forest, an important source of timber.

A central problem about hunting was the lack of detailed recording, especially for the 11th and 12th centuries. He saw the activity essentially as a status symbol. Amongst recent slants has been that of partnership parks, a combination of house and ordered landscape. In some cases the house and park were widely separated. An area of study requiring more work is that of lord/peasant relationships. At present this is a controversial research frontier.

Overall this was a well illustrated talk with much to offer the landscape historian.

BANBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

ANNUAL REPORT 2010

2010 has been a very successful year with good audiences for all the lectures despite the poor weather at the beginning and end of the year. Numbers are up on last year in terms of attendees (averaging 60 for each talk) and the profile of the Society is kept firmly in the public eye by monthly announcements in the Banbury Guardian with details of forthcoming events. For the last two lectures of the autumn we served coffee in the Museum café afterwards to give members a chance to meet, discuss the subject or indeed to talk further to the lecturer. This innovation has been greeted with enthusiasm by members and will continue; we are grateful to the café for making it a relatively easy service to provide.

Bad weather caused the cancellation of the first scheduled talk of the new year, to be given by Dr Helen Glew - 'Women workers in war and peace: the General Post Office 1914 – 1939' – but fortunately we were able to reschedule it for September when it was very well received. Mandy de Bellin gave the February talk on 'The Hunting transition: from deerhunting to foxhunting' which was followed in March by 'Cresswell Crags: inspiring visitors for 50,000 years' given by the director of the Cresswell Crags Museum and Visitor Centre, Ian Wall. In April a new venture was tried, holding an evening at which some of those involved with the Society's local history competition gave short presentations on their research and methodology. This resulted in a hugely enjoyable and variable evening with a capacity audience.

The summer expeditions included a very well conducted walk round Steeple Aston, guided by members of the Steeple Aston Village Archive, a visit to Mapledurham House and Mill and a tour of the wall paintings at Burton Dassett church, the site of the nearby deserted village and the Felden Archaeological Society's excavations nearby. This was led by Deborah Hayter who explained the topography of the area as well as the importance of the paintings. These trips, which tend to attract about a dozen members each time, are very much appreciated for the time and effort put in by those who organise them and make the necessary arrangements. They also serve as a social event, allowing members to get to know each other better. The AGM was held at Ditchley Park, attended by 29 members who were shown round the house subsequently.

The autumn started with the previously cancelled lecture by Helen Glew, after the customary drinks held for all members thanks to Fiona Thompson, who organised it as usual. It was followed in October by a talk by Mark Davies on Oxford's historic waterways and in November by an exceptionally well attended talk by Dr Jim McDermott who spoke about the Cartwright archive and the family at Aynho. Dr McDermott is in a particularly good position to

enthuse an audience about his subject as he has been cataloguing the archive for the last two years in the Northamptonshire Record Office. The Record Office put up an exhibition on the archive at the same time, in the museum, which remained *in situ* into the New Year and has been enjoyed by many. The final lecture of the year was also very well attended despite the weather, members and others being offered the opportunity to learn more about the history of the gardens at Stowe. This was given by Gary Marshall who works for the National Trust and is in charge of the gardens have been put.

E-mail communication with members has been maintained by Deborah Hayter who tirelessly reminds everyone of the dates of meetings and also adds other events into her newsletter, connecting the Society with activities in the surrounding area. The Society had a table at the Banbury History Fair which was held on 21-22 May where the public could ask about the activities of the Society, buy publications and become members. Quite a lot of interest was shown, especially about the forthcoming lecture at the beginning of 2011 on the history of the Alcan Company. In addition, the website for the Society has been re-vamped and is now clearer and more user-friendly.

After the success of the Local History Competition a couple of years ago we have launched a further competition which will follow the same guidelines and which will, we hope, bring in another stash of work from local historians.

The normal three issues of *Cake & Cockhorse* included contributions from Robert Caldicott, Peter Christopher, Alan Donaldson, Tom Forde, Duncan Harrington, Paul Hayter, Geoffrey Lane, Mary Quinlan, Simon Townsend (with a colourful depiction of the Original Cakeshop mural) and Barrie Trinder, as well as regulars such as Brian Little and the editor himself (despite serious illness in February). At long last the records volume *Turnpike Roads to Banbury* appeared. Our thanks are due to its author Alan Rosevear for his patience during its long gestation. Work continues on the index to the second part of the diary of William Cotton Risley, 1849-1869. Typing of the index to *Rusher's Banbury Directory, 1832-1906* is well-advanced. This will form a separate publication to be issued with an on-line facsimile of the Directory itself on the Society website.

The most important event financially in 2010 was the publication of the Turnpikes records volume for which we received a generous grant of £3000 from the Greening Lamborn Trust. We were happy to make use of the Brinkworth Museum Fund to make a contribution to the Bodleian Library's appeal to purchase the archive of Cheneys, the Banbury printers, which was in danger of being broken up for private sale. The balance of the General Fund should be sufficient to meet the costs of publishing the two records volumes in the pipeline.

Sadly, ill health prevented Dick Mayne from carrying out the audit of our 2010 Accounts. We are grateful to Stephen Smith for stepping into the breach.

ANNUAL ACCOUNTS, 2010

Banbury Historical Society

Income & Expenditure Accounts for year ending 31 December 2010

GENERAL FUND		2010	*2009*
		£	*£*
INCOME			
Subscriptions		3,098	*3,055*
Income Tax refund		492	*383*
Building Society interest		26	*36*
Sale of publications		398	*556*
Other		82	*62*
Total Income		4,096	*4,092*
EXPENDITURE			
Cake & Cockhorse		1,502	*2,341*
Records Volumes costs	4,105		
Less Grant from Greening Lamborn Trust	3,000	1,105	*600*
Meetings		621	*461*
Reception & AGM		134	*186*
Administration costs		1,147	*544*
Total Expenditure		4,509	*4,132*
DEFICIT from the General Fund		(413)	*(40)*
BRINKWORTH MUSEUM FUND			
INCOME			
Building Society interest		12	*16*
EXPENDITURE			
Contribution to Cheney Archive acquisition project		250	*100*
DEFICIT from the Brinkworth Museum Fund		(238)	*(84)*

Balance Sheets as at 31 December 2010

	2010	*2009*
	£	*£*
GENERAL FUND		
Balance at 1 January 2010	9,534	*9,574*
Less Deficit for the year	(413)	*(40)*
Balance at 31 December 2010	9,121	*9,534*
BRINKWORTH MUSEUM FUND		
Balance at 1 January 2010	4,129	*4,213*
Less Deficit for the year	(238)	*(84)*
Balance at 31 December 2010	3,891	*4,129*
TOTAL BALANCE at 31 December 2010	13,012	*13,663*
Represented by:		
ASSETS		
NatWest Bank Banbury - Current A/c	1,405	*756*
Leeds Building Society - General A/c	8,418	*9,456*
Leeds Building Society - Brinkworth A/c	3,891	*4,129*
Cash	12	*15*
TOTAL ASSETS	13,726	*14,356*
Less LIABILITIES		
Subscriptions in advance	714	*693*
NET ASSETS at 31 December 2010	13,012	*13,663*

GF Griffiths, Hon Treasurer

I have reviewed and examined the books and records of the Banbury Historical Society and confirm that the accounts prepared by the Hon Treasurer represent a fair and accurate summary of the financial transactions completed in the year ended 31 December 2010.

Stephen Smith FCCA 21 January 2011

BANBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Banbury Historical Society was founded in 1957 to encourage interest in the history of the town of Banbury and neighbouring parts of Oxfordshire, Northamptonshire and Warwickshire.

The magazine *Cake and Cockhorse* is issued to members three times a year. This includes illustrated articles based on original local historical research, as well as recording the Society's activities. Approaching one hundred and fifty issues and five hundred articles have been published. All but the most recent issues have been digitised and are available on the Society's website (see inside front cover). Most back issues are also still available in their original form.

There are now thirty volumes in the records series. Those still in print include:

Banbury Wills and Inventories 1591-1650, 2 parts (vols. 13, 14).

Banbury Gaol Records, ed. Penelope Renold (vol. 21).

Banbury Baptism and Burial Registers, 1813-1838 (vol. 22).

The earlier registers, *Marriages 1558-1837*, *Baptisms and Burials 1558-1812*, are now out-of-print, but are available on fiche and CD from Oxfordshire Family History Society, website at: www.ofhs.org.uk

Oxfordshire and North Berkshire Protestation Returns and Tax Assessments 1641-1642 (vol. 24, with Oxfordshire Record Society).

King's Sutton Churchwardens' Accounts 1636-1700, ed. Paul Hayter (vol. 27).

The Banbury Chapbooks, by Dr Leo John De Frietas (vol. 28).

Early Victorian Squarson: The Diaries of William Cotton Risley, Vicar of Deddington, Part One, *1835-1848*, ed. Geoffrey Smedley-Stevenson (vol. 29).

Banbury Past through Artists' Eyes, compiled by Simon Townsend and Jeremy Gibson (vol. 30).

Turnpike Roads to Banbury, by Alan Rosevear (vol. 31).

Current prices and availability of other back volumes, and of *Cake and Cockhorse*, from the Hon. Editor (Harts Cottage, Church Hanborough, Witney OX29 8AB).

In preparation:

Selections from the Diaries of William Cotton Risley, ed. G.W. Smedley-Stevenson: Part 2. *Mid-Victorian Squarson, 1849-1869*.

Index to *Rusher's 'Banbury Directory' 1833-1906.*

The Society is always interested to receive suggestions of records suitable for publication, backed by offers of help with transcription, editing and indexing.

Meetings are held during the autumn and winter, normally at 7.30 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month, at Banbury Museum, Spiceball Park Road, Banbury. Talks are given by invited lecturers on general and local historical, archaeological and architectural subjects. Excursions are arranged in the spring and summer, and the A.G.M. is usually held at a local country house.

Membership of the Society is open to all. The annual subscription (since 2009) is **£13.00** which includes any records volumes published. Overseas membership, **£15.00**.

All members' names and addresses are held on the Society's computer database for subscription and mailing purposes only. Please advise if you object to this practice.

BANBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Spring/Summer 2011 Programme

Thursday 12th May, 2.00 for 2.30 p.m.
Medieval Oxford. Houses and (if access is allowed) some cellars. Conducted by Julian Munby, historic Oxford archaeologist. Meet outside St Michael at the Northgate. Teas at St Mary the Virgin, High Street. Park-and-Ride buses from Peartree and Water Eaton stop in Magdalen or George Street, a short step from Cornmarket and St Michael's.

Thursday 9th June, 2.00 for 2.30 p.m.
Kenilworth Castle and Elizabethan Garden. An enormous site with its newly reinstated Elizabethan garden and small Gatehouse museum in addition to the castle ruins. Teas available. Meet in the car park for entry as a group. If enough, discounted price will be £6.12, free for English Heritage members.

The castle is at the west (further) end of the town, on the A452, off the A46 (Warwick by-pass) (J15, M40).

Thursday 14th July, 5.00 for 5.30 p.m.
at **Aynhoe Park**, by kind invitation of James Perkins.
Annual General Meeting.
Followed by the usual refreshments.

Autumn meetings as usual, second Thursday of the month from September, at Banbury Museum

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