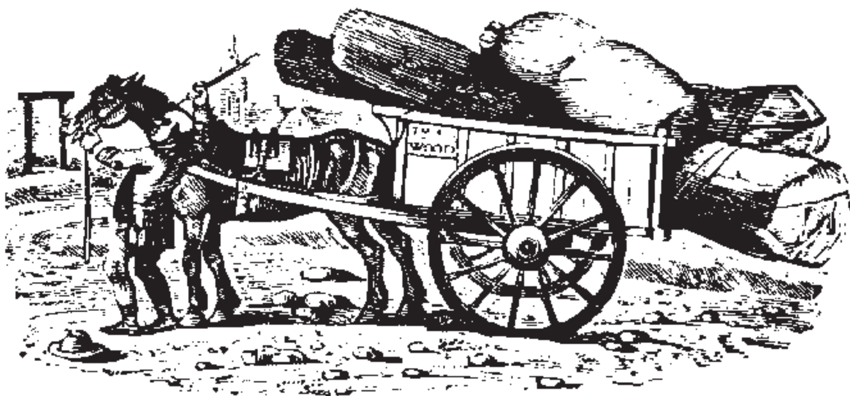
WYCHWOODS HISTORY

THE JOURNAL OF THE WYCHWOODS LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY



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Foreword

The year 2000 seems an appropriate time for the Wychwoods Local History Society to hold an exhibition, Wychwood 2000, and celebrate the end of one millennium and the start of the next. The theme of Wychwood 2000 and this journal, timed to coincide with the exhibition, is continuity and change. The articles included are intended to complement the displays.

A thousand years ago England as a state was in its infancy and the first comprehensive written references to the Wychwood Forest and its associated villages is in the Domesday Survey. Much can also be learnt from the scattering of debris left by the medieval villagers as they went about their domestic and farming life. Members of the Society have taken part in much field-walking over the years and we are pleased to publish an integrated analysis. Members have also helped James Bond survey several sites of archaeological interest around the Wychwood villages and in October 1999 surveyed the humps and bumps by Ascott D'Oilly castle at Ascott manor. The results of the survey, published here, show this site to have been the most important that we have surveyed, and representative of a generally understudied class of site.

The Reformation saw great changes in society and it is possible to catch glimpses of their effect in Shipton parish over 450 years ago. The coming of a better road system with the passing of the Turnpikes Act in the late eighteenth century saw the transference of road maintenance from the parish to private enterprise. The field systems of the Wychwood villages may have changed dramatically in the nineteenth century but the agricultural year continued with its endless round.

And what's in a name? We name our houses to our liking but then along comes a new owner and it's all change.

Sue Jourdan, Joan Howard-Drake and Trudy Yates

A Survey of the Earthworks at Ascott d'Oilly Castle,
Ascott under Wychwood, Oxfordshire

James Bond

The village of Ascott-under-Wychwood has the unusual distinction of containing the remains of at least two, and possibly three, earthen castles of motte-and-bailey type. The main purpose of this report is to describe the results of a survey of an area of earthworks surrounding the manor house and farm at Ascott d'Oilly[1] which included one of these castles. The survey was undertaken by members of the Wychwoods Local History Society under direction of the writer over a period of four days in October 1999. The nature and significance of the site will be assessed on the basis of the interpretation of the survey, set against current knowledge of comparable sites elsewhere in the country.

Castles in Oxfordshire

The close proximity of the castles at Ascott has no direct parallel anywhere else in Oxfordshire. Indeed, castles do not at first sight appear to be a particularly common feature of the Oxfordshire landscape. Information collated from the County Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) and published in 1986 produced about 30 examples within the bounds of the modern county, of which nine were classed as motte-and-bailey castles, six as simple ringworks, and two as developed or elaborated ringworks, with the remainder mostly fortified palaces or manor-houses of thirteenth-century date and later.[2] The multiple functions of the SMR at that time dictated an inclusive rather than exclusive indexing policy, so that total includes several earthwork sites whose date and character remains unproven and several later medieval manor-houses which may have had little more than nominal defences. Cathcart King's gazetteer published in 1983, which employed rather stricter definitions, listed a total of 21 castles in the pre-1974 county.[3] Oxfordshire's average of one castle for every 35.7 square miles pales into insignificance compared with densities of one castle in less than 10 square miles in Welsh border counties like Herefordshire or Monmouthshire. Nevertheless, Oxfordshire is typical of its own region, where the five adjoining counties show densities between one in 29.9 square miles (Buckinghamshire) to one in 42.6 square miles (Berkshire). In fact, in a league table of 51 English and

Welsh counties based upon Cathcart King's data, Oxfordshire stands surprisingly high, in about 22nd place (its precise placing depends on whether various marginal categories, such as late medieval tower-houses, are included). It has nearly three times the density of castles to be found in Norfolk or Anglesey. Although remote from any frontier, and without any castles of the first rank, its total is inflated firstly by the number of 'adulterine' castles (i.e. castles built without royal consent) thrown up during the anarchy of 1139-48, when the upper Thames valley was a major theatre of war during the period when Stephen and Matilda were contesting the throne; and secondly by the number of manor houses fortified by crenellation licences in the later Middle Ages.

The Nature and Distribution of Motte and Bailey Castles

The motte-and-bailey type of castle found at Ascott was a distinctive form of earthen defence used in England from a couple of years after the Norman Conquest up until about the end of the twelfth century. At one time this form of earthwork was widely believed to be of Saxon origin, and it was not until the second decade of the present century that its post-Conquest date became firmly established and accepted.[4] By definition a castle of this type contained two essential elements: the term 'motte' derives from an Old French word meaning hillock or mound, while 'bailey' also derives from an Old French word meaning 'enclosed court'. The motte was the main strongpoint, an earthen mound which was originally associated with a timber or stone tower. Mottes can range very widely in size, but are commonly between 3 metres and 30 metres in height, and from 30 metres to 90 metres in diameter. The bailey was a larger, more or less flat, area providing more room for domestic and ancillary buildings. For protection this was surrounded by an outer ditch, and a bank originally surmounted by a timber palisade, later sometimes by a stone curtain wall. Both terms were being applied to castles in twelfth-century texts. However, confusion was introduced in the late thirteenth century when scribes on this side of the Channel forgot the original meaning of the French word 'motte' and began using its Middle English derivative 'mote' to mean not the mound, but the ditch around it, so that our modern word 'moat' has come to mean something quite different. In passing, it may be noted that castle terminology is bedevilled by such shifts of meaning, with the French word 'donjon', meaning 'keep', taking on board a quite different sense in the English 'dungeon', and the term 'pele' used for a class of fortified towers in the north of England actually being identical with the term 'pale', meaning the enclosure attached to the towers rather than the towers themselves.

The nature of the motte-and-bailey received renewed attention during a project to investigate the origins of the castle in England undertaken by the Royal Archaeological Institute in the 1960s.[5] It had generally been

Manor Farm, Ascott, c1910

assumed that the motte was a primary feature of military strength in its own right, a solid mound of earth on top of which a wooden palisade surrounding a timber tower would be constructed (several examples of mottes with palisades and towers are shown on the Bayeux Tapestry). Obviously there would be some problems with settlement, but Brian Hope-Taylor's excavation at Abinger (Surrey) in 1949 had demonstrated that some mottes were indeed precisely like that. In the case of Abinger the first timber tower had been dismembered when the motte had slumped beyond the point where it was of much value, the motte was then raised, and a new timber palisade and tower built on top.[6] However, the excavation at Ascott d'Oilly, which will be described in the following section, provided an alternative model, demonstrating that the motte could be thrown up around the lower part of a tower built up from the original ground level, rather than the tower being built on top of the mound. This meant that the mound was secondary to the tower, not a primary feature in its own right. John Kent's excavation at South Mimms demonstrated that the ground-level stone-built tower at Ascott also had close parallels in timber.[7] It was also demonstrated at Castle Neroche (Somerset) and Goltho (Lincolnshire) that mottes could sometimes be added to pre-existing ringworks, and this probably also occurred at Winchester.[8] The Royal Archaeological Institute's project challenged the prevailing doctrine that the motte-and-bailey was a familiar Norman form of castle simply imported into England in 1066. It concluded that there was no evidence for mottes being used in Normandy before 1066. It

concluded, moreover, that there was no evidence for mottes being an original feature of any of the castles constructed in England during the first couple of years after the Norman Conquest (Pevensey, Hastings, Dover, London, Winchester, Exeter). It suggested that the first fortifications used by the Normans in England did not differ significantly in form from existing defensive enclosures or ringworks already being used by the Saxons, Welsh and Irish. It suggested finally that the motte might have been a new invention following the widespread rebellion of 1068, designed initially to enable the Normans to dominate the larger centres of hostile Saxon population within the towns. These conclusions sparked off a heated controversy, which we cannot follow here;[9] and not all of them have stood the test of time. Most importantly, further work in France has now produced both documentary and archaeological evidence for the existence of mottes well before the middle of the eleventh century, and renewed arguments have been put forward for a pre-1066 origin for several mottes in Normandy.[10]

As a class of earthwork, mottes and baileys are very numerous. It is difficult to produce definitive totals because of the number of marginal cases, but Cathcart King's gazetteer lists over 760 examples in England and Wales, that total including mottes-and-baileys, solitary mottes where no evidence for a bailey survives, and mottes-and-baileys overlain by later stone castles, but excluding ringworks, ringworks-and-baileys and other earthwork sites.[11] The distribution map produced by Derek Renn shows that mottes are most heavily concentrated in the Welsh borders (where King's gazetteer allocates 70 examples to Shropshire and 66 to Herefordshire), along the coastal fringe of south Wales and in Dyfed.[12] Oxfordshire is not an area with a high density of mottes, but the post-1974 county includes examples at Swerford, Hinton Waldrist and Ascott Earl, with further probable and possible examples elsewhere in Ascott under Wychwood, and at Over Worton, Lew and Faringdon, in addition to the castles at Oxford, Wallingford and Ascott d'Oilly, which are of motte-and-bailey form but which included masonry components from an early period.[13] The classification of individual sites may at times be debatable. Some mottes, for example, may have been removed entirely, or obliterated by later works. At Deddington the existence of an early motte can be deduced only from a rounded projection on the east side of the inner bailey; it was reduced when a stone curtain wall was built over it in the early twelfth century.[14] Conversely at Middleton Stoney what appeared to be a motte turned out to be the collapsed rubble from a stone tower;[15] here the illusion of a mound was due solely to collapsed debris, and there was no indication that the tower had been deliberately encased within a mound as occurred at Ascott d'Oilly.

Ascott d'Oilly Castle: the Documentary Evidence

The documentary record for Ascott d'Oilly was investigated and reported as a background to the archaeological investigations undertaken by Jope & Threlfall in 1946-7.[16] Little new work has been undertaken since, but it may be helpful to summarise briefly what is known of the history of the site. The meaning of the settlement name, 'eastern cottages', shows quite clearly that Ascott developed as a subsidiary settlement within the great royal estate of Shipton under Wychwood , and was named in relation to the estate centre.[17] When Ascott was first recorded, in the Domesday Survey, it already comprised two separate vills. The Ascott d'Oilly estate can be traced back to the six hides held by Robert d'Oilly, castellan of Oxford, in 1086. It was held of him by one Roger, quite probably his close friend Roger d'Ivry. The Ascott Earl estate comprised four and a half hides held by Ilbert de Lacy under Bishop Odo of Bayeux.[18] The Domesday Survey gives no indication of a castle on either vill, though on its own this is not necessarily conclusive, since castles were regarded as items of expenditure rather than of taxable income. Castles are named or implied in only 48 places in the entire survey, 27 of them in boroughs.[19] Many other castles, Oxford among them, were certainly in existence before 1086, but find no mention in the Domesday record.

Roger d'Ivry was exiled and his possessions forfeited in William Rufus's reign, and Robert d'Oilly then appears to have granted Ascott d'Oilly to the Bishop of Lincoln, from whom his younger brothers Guy and Nigel held it for the term of their lives. By the 1120s it was in the hands of Nigel's son, Robert d'Oilly II, and there is no further indication of the bishop holding any interest in it. Robert d'Oilly II remained in the service of King Stephen during the Anarchy.[20] Soon afterwards the manor came into possession of another branch of the family, with several successive generations bearing the name Roger, whose precise relationship to the main line is obscure. It seems likely that the castle was built by Roger d'Oilly II, who had been a member of Stephen's household in 1135, but may then have changed sides, since an individual of this name was with Matilda at the siege of Winchester six years later.

Robert d'Oilly II had granted a manorial chapel at Ascott d'Oilly to the canons of St Frideswide's shortly before 1130, when a confirmation locates it within the 'curia' of Roger d'Oilly, a term which has no particular defensive connotations. However, a subsequent acknowledgement of the canons' rights by Roger d'Oilly and a confirmation by Henry d'Oilly dated somewhere between 1150 and 1160 both describe the chapel as being 'in castello de Escot', the first clear reference to the existence of the castle.[21]

There is no indication that the defences of Ascott d'Oilly castle were maintained over a prolonged period. Many castles of the Anarchy were

dismantled under an agreement reached between King Stephen and Henry Plantagenet in 1153, but the pottery evidence from Ascott d'Oilly suggests that it was probably occupied for a little longer than that. The most likely context for its demolition may have been after the Assize of Northampton in 1176, when Henry II ordered the complete destruction of all castles which had been held against him during the rebellion of 1173–4.[22] At precisely the same time Roger d'Oilly III was fined 200 marks for transgressions against the Forest Law and had his estates sequestrated for debt. The Pipe Rolls of the later 1170s record expenditure on the demolition of several castles elsewhere.[23] Although a certificate of 1212 still refers to the manorial chapel 'in the castle' at Ascott, this appears to be quoting from earlier documents or hearsay, and cannot be taken as evidence that the castle was continuing to function as such. By 1229 the St Frideswide's cartulary has reverted to the earlier wording, 'capella site in curia de Estcote',[24] and there is no later reference to the chapel after the Hundred Rolls of 1279. Some time before 1268 the manor was leased to Bogo de Clare (d.1294), who is unlikely to have been resident except perhaps occasionally when in attendance at the court in Woodstock, and the d'Oillys passed from the scene.[25]

Ilbert de Lacy's Domesday estate subsequently descended to the Despencers, Earls of Winchester, from whom the manor of Ascott Earl acquires its distinctive suffix. This name is first recorded in 1316 (in the Latin form 'Astcote Comitis').[26]

Ascott d'Oilly Castle: Previous Archaeological Work

Notice of the earthworks of what appeared to be a small motte and bailey castle near Manor Farm at Ascott d'Oilly was first published in 1907.[27] The site was selected for a research excavation by Martin Jope in 1946–7, partly because the documentary evidence suggested a limited period of occupation in the mid- to late-twelfth century and there was a need for pottery closely dated within this period to help date other sites elsewhere; and partly to gain a better understanding of the nature of small castles. The excavations revealed that the 'motte' was in fact a pile of clay mounded up around the lower stage of a square stone tower while the tower itself was under construction. This would have given the visual impression of a tower standing on a mount, but it did in fact rest upon the original ground level, on a low natural swell of clay rising above the gravel of the Evenlode valley. At the time this principle of construction had not been recognised elsewhere, though other examples have since come to light, for example at Farnham, Wareham, Lincoln, Totnes, Aldingbourne and Lydford.[28] The tower at Ascott was 10.7m square, with walls of roughly coursed local liassic rubble 2.4m thick, with ashlar quoins of Taynton stone. From the dimensions of the footings it was estimated that this could have stood to a height of around 20 metres. The excavation

revealed the stub of a rubble abutment against the south end of the west wall of the tower, almost certainly the base of an external timber stair, and a latrine sump outside the north-west corner. Internally its walls were plastered at basement level. The tower was then deliberately demolished to within 1.8 metres of its footings, probably around 1180, and the mound was smoothed over to its present shape. The demolition debris consisted of much rubble not worth salvaging for use elsewhere, and contained mortar, domestic window glass, nails, arrow-heads, a gilt-bronze strip and a horseshoe, together with much mid- to late-twelfth-century pottery. Bones of both red and fallow deer were also present in significant quantity, which gives some substance to the accusations of offences against Forest Law laid against Roger d'Oilly in 1175-6 (Ascott lay within the bounds of the Royal Forest of Wychwood during the twelfth century, though most of it was excluded from the contracted bounds in 1300). The mound was surrounded by a ditch cut into the natural clay, which contained fragments of waterlogged brushwood, oak timbers, an oak roofing shingle and hazel nuts. The ditch did not completely encircle the mound, but was left uncut on the southwest, towards the bailey, to provide access up towards the external stair.[29]

Although the attention of the excavators was concentrated upon the tower, they noted beside it 'remains of a bailey and contemporary paddocks' and 'many ditches which divided the crofts of the medieval village, and the land around the d'Oilly manor into paddocks... [some of which] seem to be of the twelfth-century ...and such are not unusual features associated with mound and bailey earthworks'.[30]

Jope also undertook a survey and analysis of the manor house standing to the south-west of the tower, which he envisaged as standing within the bailey. The eastern part of this house dates mainly from the sixteenth century and the western part from the seventeenth century, but both portions incorporate fragments of a medieval building complex which must be seen as the successor to the Norman castle. The most articulate remains survive in the east gable end. This is built of roughly-coursed rubble with a clasping buttress of two stages at its southern corner and a pair of angle buttresses of two stages at the north, all of Taynton stone. An ashlar plinth runs along the base of the wall and around the buttresses. The jambs and part of the arch of a large pointed window spanning both modern storeys are visible both externally and internally. All this appears to be of early- or mid-thirteenth-century date. Jope surmised, surely correctly, that this window was too big for the documented domestic chapel, and must have served the hall.[31]

The location of the chapel remains unknown. Could it be equated with the tower in the motte, the only other surviving early stone building? Certainly there is a tradition of turriform private chapels from before the

Norman Conquest, exemplified by the Saxon towers at both Barton-on-Humber in Lincolnshire and at Earls Barton in Northamptonshire where naves were added for parochial use at a later date. Jope and Threlfall quote a post-Conquest reference in the chronicle of Meaux Abbey (Yorkshire), where a chapel was contained within the upper floor of a timber tower on a motte. However, the documentary sources for Ascott seem to point to the existence of a manorial chapel twenty or thirty years before the castle was built, and it is difficult to reconcile this with the archaeological evidence that the tower and motte were raised at the same time.

Objectives of the 1999 Survey

The basic form and extent of the earthworks at Ascott d'Oilly had long been known from the small-scale sketch plan, plotted from aerial photographs, which accompanied Jope & Threlfall's report. The outline of the earthworks is also shown on several editions of the Ordnance Survey 1:2500. These plans show the tower and motte partly surrounded by a ditch, with a broad round-edged platform beyond to the south-east. A ditch connecting with that of the motte runs along the north side of the farm buildings. Jope's map shows this beginning to turn southwards at the west end of the long range of buildings on the north side of the farmyard, and he seems to have viewed this as the boundary of the bailey. Beyond that there are extensive outworks to the west, with banks and ditches forming a rectangular area some 220 metres by 160 metres, subdivided internally by further ditches. Jope refers somewhat indiscriminately to 'paddocks' and to the 'crofts of the medieval village' in this general area, and it is difficult to work out which he thought was which. However, he was also able to demonstrate from considerable finds of pottery that there was extensive occupation in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries beyond the bounds of the large rectangular earthwork enclosure, around the west end of the village to west and east of Corner House Farm and to the south on either side of London Lane. His plan shows a further rectilinear outline of ditches extending beyond the railway to the south. Leaving aside these last-mentioned, the major earthworks extend into four modern land parcels and cover an area of approximately 9 hectares. Field-names are not especially informative. The fields containing the outer enclosure are called 'The Old Orchard' (north of the farm drive) and 'Fro' Court' (south of the farm drive).[32]

Despite the early recognition of the significance of these earthworks, they had never been surveyed on the ground prior to the Wychwoods Local History Society's work in 1999. Field visits carried out in the 1970s and 1980s for Oxfordshire Museum Services had shown that the earthworks were more complex and included far more subtle details than were shown on any plans currently available. It was decided, therefore, that a much more detailed survey was needed, for two reasons: firstly, to provide a

better record of the earthworks as they survived in 1999 as an insurance against any future unforeseeable threat or damage; and secondly to see if any fuller interpretation was possible through more detailed recording and in the light of general knowledge of sites of this class which has accumulated since the late 1940s.

Method of Survey

Members of the Society had developed some experience of earthwork survey on smaller sites previously reported in this journal[33], but this was by far the largest and most ambitious survey that the Society has attempted so far. It was decided to employ once again the methods used on previous occasions, dividing the entire area into a grid of 30m squares using fibron measuring tapes, marking the corners of each square with ranging poles, marking 10m points along the main axes with canes, measuring in the top and bottom of each break of slope within each square by means of offsets, and then depicting the relief by means of graduated hachures. Groups of three people were allocated to each pair of grid squares, two to measure and one to draw. As each group finished drawing its allocated pair of squares it was moved on to the next pair available, whether or not they were immediately adjacent. At the end of each day each drawing was checked against the earthworks on the ground. No significant errors or discrepancies in measurements were expected or found, but there were inevitably some differences in emphasis due to individual drawing styles. The end-of-day inspection provided an opportunity to annotate the field drawings where necessary so that variations derived from the work of many individuals could be adjusted. All squares drawn during the day were brought together each evening and transferred to a master plan, which has provided the basis for the final drawing published here.

Experience has shown that this method has several advantages. The procedure is easy to understand, and most people, even if they have never surveyed anything in their lives before, quickly grasp the basic principles. The equipment required is minimal, none of it is prohibitively expensive, and it is well within the means of any local group. The method is well suited to surveys undertaken by groups comprised of individuals of varying experience, since each square can be treated as a self-contained task, and each party can take as long as it feels it needs, without holding up progress elsewhere. Above all, it is self-checking. The ranging poles, if correctly positioned, should line up perfectly through both 90 degrees and 45 degrees from any grid intersection, and so the slightest error in laying out the grid very quickly reveals itself. Equally, any error of measurement within a square shows up the moment the drawing of that square is placed alongside its neighbours.

While this method lacks the absolute precision of instrumental survey,

and professional surveyors may not regard it as entirely respectable, it is nevertheless entirely adequate for the type of site under consideration here. Earthworks are, by their very nature, not sharp-edged features with precise limits. Individual determinations of where the top and bottom of a slope begin and end can often vary quite legitimately over a metre or even more. Where such margins are involved, a grid laid out by direct measurement and sighted alignments provides a perfectly satisfactory framework. Elsewhere I have used this method successfully alongside much more sophisticated technology, when half of the extensive earthworks of the deserted medieval village site at Hawling on the Gloucestershire Cotswolds were surveyed by a colleague using EDM (electronic distance-measuring equipment), while I employed the

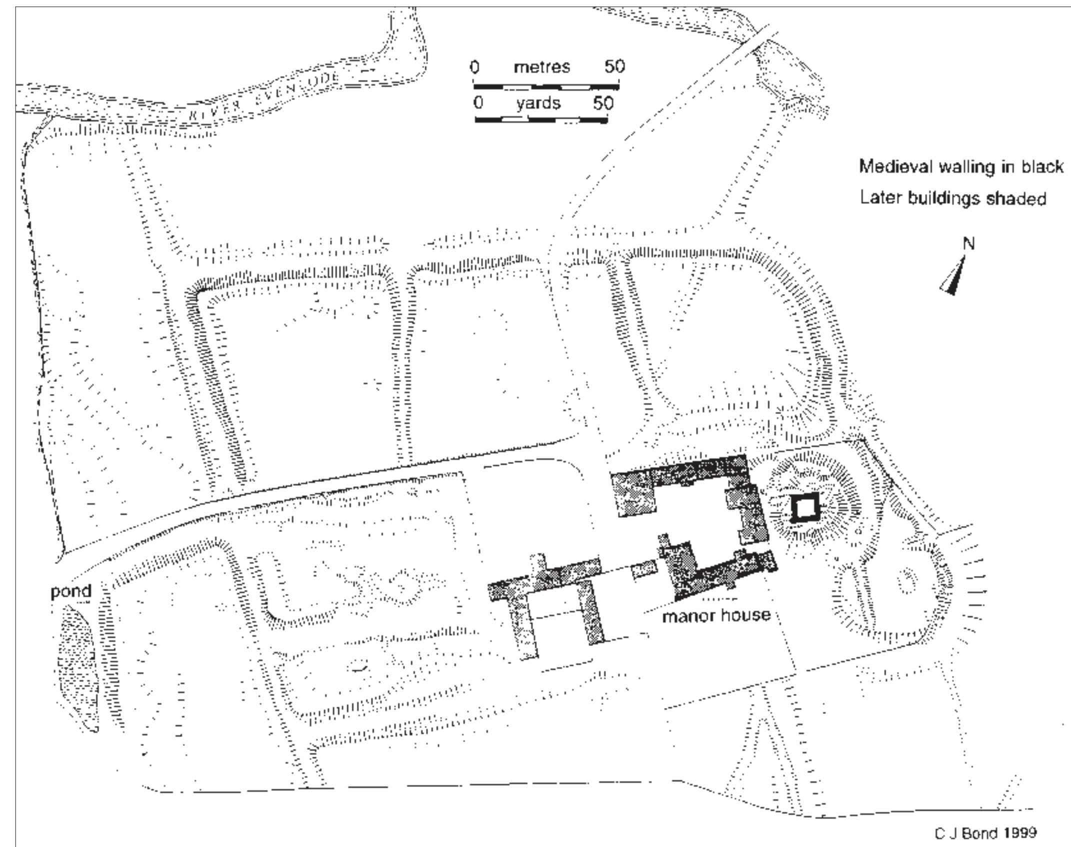

FIGURE 1: SURVEY OF ASCOTT D'OILLY CASTLE, ASCOTT UNDER WYCHWOOD

procedure used at Ascott on the other half; the areas surveyed by the two different techniques took about the same time to complete and fitted together perfectly at the end, and I would defy anyone to tell which portion of the site was surveyed by which method from the published plan.[34] The accuracy of the procedure of setting out the grid was put to the test at Ascott because the position of the house and farm buildings in the middle of the earthworks meant that the grid had to be carried right round them over the surrounding fields through a full circuit of 360 degrees. Around a perimeter of some 1.5km the accumulated error by the time the grid was brought back to its point of origin was just 8cm. At the scale of the final drawing such a tiny error simply disappears.

Interpretation of Survey

Two basic questions invariably arise on any archaeological site: how old is it, and what was it for? In the case of Ascott d'Oilly the identification of the castle and the definition of its date and purpose were already well established, but how does it compare with others of similar date? There were also questions about the nature and function of the outer enclosure. Was it earlier than the castle, contemporaneous with it, or a later addition? Was it a large outer bailey, an enclosed peasant settlement which may be the predecessor of the present village, or some sort of livestock compound? Was the perimeter earthwork merely a boundary, or a flood defence, or did it fulfil a defensive role?

It was not expected that the survey would necessarily produce definitive answers to any of these questions. Earthwork survey by its very nature is limited to the recording of the ground surface, which on any settlement site tends to reflect most strongly the final periods of occupation. It has often been demonstrated that apparently simple and straightforward earthworks conceal complex, multi-period archaeology. However, there are three ways in which the surveying process can help to elucidate the nature of sites:

- By identifying patterns, shapes and profiles which can be compared with other sites elsewhere whose date and purpose may be better known;
- By providing evidence for a relative chronology of elements within the site, where it can be shown that one earthwork feature overlies, or is intersected by, another;
- By incidental discoveries, such as the recovery of pottery or other finds from molehills or other disturbances.

The last of these can be passed over quickly. The outer enclosure produced very little direct dating evidence, apart from a few scraps of early

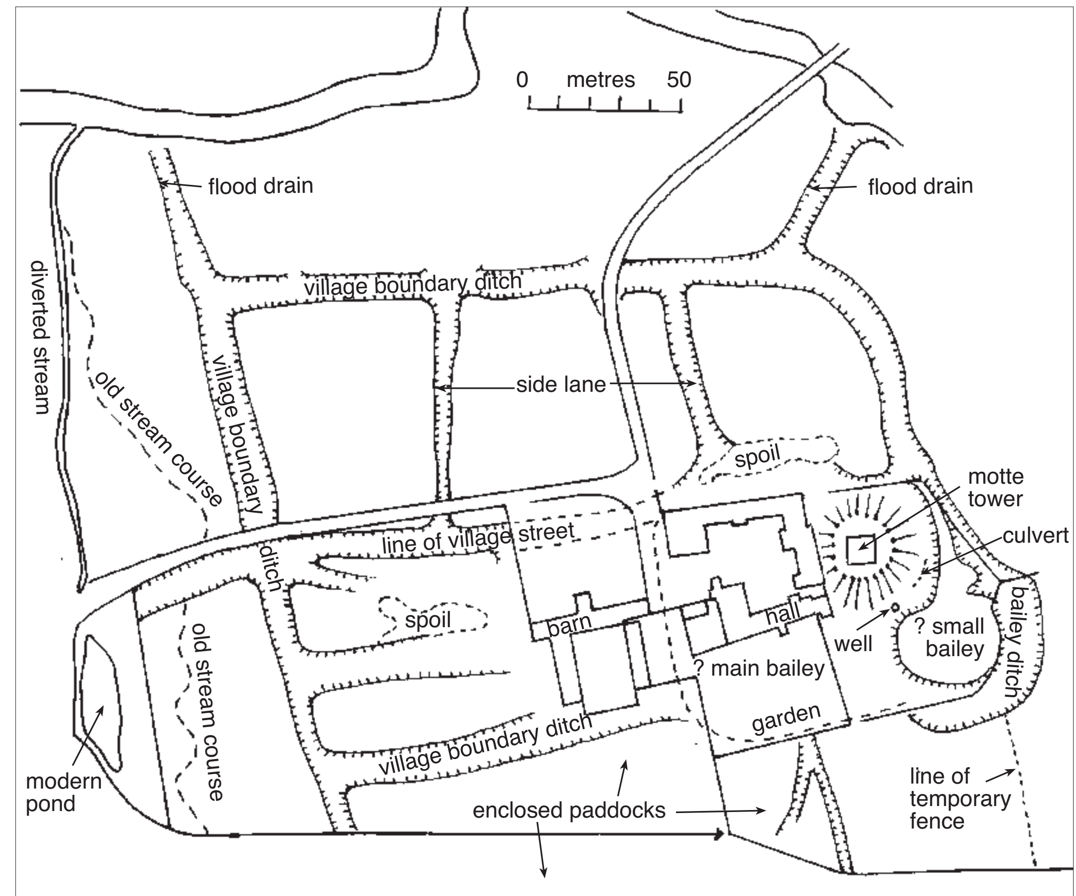

Figure 2: An interpretation of the survey of Ascott d'Oilly castle

medieval pottery collected from molehills. These do not necessarily, of course, date the earthworks, but they do indicate a period of occupation which is compatible with our understanding of the site derived from other strands of evidence.

In comparison with the general size range of mottes, that at Ascott, with a diameter of 30 metres, lies right at the bottom end of the scale, though its form, in combination with the tower, is quite unambiguous; but some question remains over the location and extent of the bailey. Jope felt that the present manor house and farmyard lay within the bailey, largely on the basis of the ditch along the northern side of the farm buildings and the stair abutment being on the south-west corner of the

tower. This is perfectly reasonable. However, Jope makes no suggestions about the rounded flat platform to the south-east of the motte. The new survey showed that this itself had an outer ditch, not shown on the earlier plans, and the possibility must be considered that this was a supplementary bailey, or even the earlier main bailey. Certainly it is limited in extent – little more than 30 metres in diameter in either direction. However, though its enclosing ditch encompasses an area little greater than that of the motte, its lower, flatter summit is quite big enough to contain a twelfth-century hall. Two features were recorded inside this platform, a deep trench orientated from north-west to south-east cutting off a narrow south-western portion, and a hollow with a partial, slightly raised rim within the larger portion. Initially the possibility was entertained that the latter feature might actually be part of the foundations of a small building, but its size and slightly irregular outline probably points more prosaically to the fall and removal of a large tree at some stage in the past.

Between this putative small bailey and the motte, the ground dropped away to a hollow within which a flat stone capped a well. A short distance to the north another stone marked the beginning of a culvert curving round within the the ditch of the motte. The ditch became quite deep around the northern side of the motte, but it could not be traced at all west of the well on the south. There seems no obvious reason for the construction of the thirteenth-century manor house to have obliterated this much of the motte ditch quite so completely, so it may always have been open on this side to a second, larger bailey, as Jope had suggested.

The ditch north of the farm buildings may be, as Jope implied, one arm of the ditch of this larger bailey. However, the new survey opened up a further possibility, in that the general line of this ditch was seen to continue westwards beyond the present farm entry and garden, reappearing as a slight but persistent depression along the southern side of the present farm drive, and then becoming a much stronger feature with a prominent platform to the south in the final 40 metres before it was intersected by the cutting of the pond and then the modern road between the station and Ascott Bridge. This depression fairly neatly bisects the large outer rectangular enclosure, and it may well represent a street serving village crofts on either side. The present more elevated farm drive in from the road represents its successor, on a slightly different alignment.

Having said that, it has to be conceded that there is no sign whatsoever of any medieval building foundations on either side of the suggested early street. Although the present farm drive overlies the northern frontages, it is not wide enough to have obliterated all traces. However, it must be remembered that in the early Middle Ages, even in areas like the Cotswolds where stone was plentiful, peasant building tended to be in timber. Stone peasant buildings do not generally appear before the late

twelfth or thirteenth centuries.[35] If the focus of settlement was already shifting towards the present village by that time, as the pottery distribution implies, there may never have been stone houses here at all. Although it is not uncommon to find no clear earthwork trace of peasant buildings on deserted medieval village sites, croft boundaries do often show up as ditches, if not as wall foundations. Can such features be detected at Ascott d'Oilly? The northern side of the outer enclosure is cut into three blocks of roughly equal size by two prominent ditches, which run back from the 'street' front more or less at right-angles to break through the northern boundary bank and terminate in its outer ditch. In fact the two side ditches are not quite parallel, so the westernmost enclosure is broader at the northern boundary and the central enclosure is broader at the 'street' front. All three enclosures contain some unevenness of surface, though no obvious patterns can be discerned. The two side ditches are perhaps deeper and wider than most croft boundaries, and on the reconstruction drawing at Figure 3 (page 22) they have been interpreted as lanes giving access through the boundary bank to the meadows beyond, with a couple of crofts in each of the three enclosures subdivided by fences; these details are, however, purely speculative. For the moment, the interpretation of this outer enclosure as an early village site is no more than a working hypothesis, and we will examine other possibilities in the following section.

South of the 'street' the earthworks are much more complex, though still with an underlying rectilinearity. The side ditches to the north are not mirrored by similar ditches to the south, but instead the main part of the south-western quarter of the outer enclosure is bisected by another ditch parallel with the 'street' and slightly over half-way towards the southern boundary of the enclosure.

The outer enclosure is defined around the whole of its northern and western sides and part of its southern and eastern sides by a substantial bank, standing a metre or more high in places, with an external ditch. What was the purpose of this perimeter earthwork? Was it merely a boundary between village crofts and the meadows and fields? Was it a flood defence, keeping the waters of the Evenlode away from the settlement area? Or was it defensive, protecting whatever lay within the area as part of the outer defences of the castle? It may, of course, have served a combination of all three functions. Lest the bank and ditch be thought too slight for defences, it must be remembered that the present appearance of earthworks is not a wholly reliable guide to their original form, the general tendency always being towards a reduction in magnitude. Banks invariably become degraded by erosion and ditches will always silt up. At Ascott d'Oilly (and at similar sites like Kilpeck) the top of the banks of the outer enclosure can never have risen much more than a

couple of metres from the bottom of the ditches, yet they are significantly more impressive than the boundary banks which encompass many other deserted medieval villages. Higham & Barker have forcibly made the point that where there was defensive intent, it was the vertical walls of wood or stone which crowned the bank, rather than the earthworks themselves, which were intended to daunt the attacker. The processes of natural erosion of ramparts and, in some cases, the deliberate dismantling of the walls or palisades which stood on them, will often make it difficult, even on excavated sites, to assess the magnitude of the original barrier.[36]

Some earthworks were noted beyond the bounds of the outer enclosure. The western boundary ditch continued northwards down to the river, reinforcing the idea that the inner bank may have served as a flood defence; it also continued to the south, where it was almost immediately intersected by the railway. Jope's map shows it continuing beyond the railway then turning eastwards round a right-angled corner to form part of the boundary of the outer paddocks already mentioned. Part of a second ditch also belonging to these paddocks was recorded running south-eastwards from the walled garden south-east of the manor house, again intersected by the railway. Insufficient time was available in 1999 to

THE CASTLE MOTTE FROM THE SOUTH-EAST, 1999

investigate these peripheral earthworks beyond the railway further, but they give the impression of belonging to agricultural closes or paddocks adjoining the settlement, rather than being part of the settlement area itself. A further ditch, broader and deeper than the paddock ditches, ran from the north-eastern corner of the outer enclosure due north down to the river, again perhaps serving as a floodwater escape channel. Finally, at the westernmost extremity of the survey area, between the outer enclosure boundary and the pond and stream, a continuous series of very slight, curved hollows was recorded. The present course of the stream, running directly alongside the hedge, is very obviously artificial, and these features would appear to represent the original stream course.

We would not necessarily expect all of the earthworks surveyed to be precisely the same date, and in some areas they clearly were not. The trench intersecting the small bailey south of the motte has every appearance of a subsequent disturbance (there is a curiously similar trench bisecting the bailey at Bishopton in County Durham, also of unknown origin). The very irregular nettle-covered hummocks immediately north of the farm buildings appeared to be a product of relatively recent dumping of spoil. The north-eastern subdivision of the outer enclosure is cut by a slight bank and ditch on a diagonal alignment pointing roughly in the direction of the suggested flood channel beyond, and this looks like a pipe trench. In the western part of the outer enclosure the somewhat irregular area of earthworks in the centre of the paddock south of the farm drive appeared to include some dumping, but its position matches quite well with a group of buildings shown as surviving on the 1838 enclosure map. The building plans shown on this map appear somewhat schematic, by comparison with its depiction of those that survive, but there are hints on the ground of the old street being diverted into this area, as the map appears to show. Finally, one real 'red herring' was recorded: the very slight, ruler-straight ditch marked by a line of parched grass and nettles at the south-eastern limit of the survey area, running south-eastwards from the bailey ditch, was recalled by Mrs Gripper as the line of a recent temporary fence controlling the grazing of horses.

Ascott d'Oilly was, throughout its short life, a small, and not especially formidable castle. Compared with many other contemporary sites, its defensive works were of no great strength. The present survey does nothing to counteract that view. However, two questions relating to it are of particular interest: what was the nature of the large rectilinear outer enclosure to the west? and why should there be two, or possibly three, similar earthwork castles in such close proximity?

The Outer Enclosure

Two fundamental questions must be raised about the outer enclosure: Firstly, when was it constructed? – is it earlier than the motte and bailey,

contemporaneous with it, or a later addition; and secondly, what was its purpose? These questions are interdependent, and it is difficult in discussion to divorce the one from the other. It has already been suggested that the outer earthwork was a quasi-defensive feature around a small group of crofts attached to the castle, but are there parallels for this, or alternative interpretations? To attempt to provide answers we have to combine the intrinsic evidence derived from the ground survey with the study of parallels elsewhere.

The first possibility is that the outer enclosure was something much earlier than the castle. Motte and bailey castles partly sited over and probably reutilising prehistoric enclosures can be recognised at Herefordshire Beacon on the Malvern Hills, and probably also at Stogursey (Somerset) and Elmley Castle (Worcestershire). Similarly Roman forts were reused at Portchester, Cardiff, Carisbrooke, Pevensey, Burgh Castle, Tomen-y-Mur in Maentwrog (Merioneth) and Colwyn Castle in Glascwm (Radnorshire).[37] However, nothing about the location, shape or character of the earthworks at Ascott d'Oilly encourages further speculation along these lines.

Could the outer enclosure be of Anglo-Saxon date? It is inherently likely from the habitative place-name that there was some form of settlement at Ascott under Wychwood before the Norman Conquest. There is limited evidence elsewhere in Oxfordshire that a minority of nucleated villages, or parts of villages, were surrounded by a well-marked, possibly even defensive, perimeter in the late Saxon period.[38] Is it possible that the outer enclosure at Ascott already surrounded the village before the castle was built? It is well-known that many castles were superimposed over pre-existing settlements, causing disruption to older streets and buildings. This is best documented in towns, where the impact was greatest. Pounds recognises 48 cases where a new castle was imposed by William the Conqueror or his followers over a pre-existing town.[39] The Domesday Survey records considerable destruction of property (166 houses at Lincoln, 98 at Norwich, 51 in Shrewsbury) resulting from this process.[40] Locally we have the Domesday record of eight properties (hagis) being removed from the north-eastern quarter of Wallingford to make way for the castle and the archaeological evidence of extra-mural settlement beneath the castle at Oxford.[41] The same process must surely also sometimes have occurred in villages. It certainly did at a later date, for example at Braybrooke in Northamptonshire, where the elaboration of the old manor house into a castle under a crenellation licence of 1303–4 and the expansion of an associated set of fishponds first documented around 1200 cut right through part of the older settlement.[42] Topographically the best clue to the superimposition of a new castle over an older settlement is the blocking or diversion of roads, as is evident at

Castle Street in Oxford and Castle Street in Wallingford. At Ascott d'Oilly the castle stands on the edge of the village enclosure, the line of the suggested early street is not conclusively disrupted by it, and although the motte ditch straddles the line of the bank and ditch of the village enclosure, the curvature in the north-eastern corner of the latter, contrasting with the rectilinear pattern at its western end, strongly suggests that the bounds of the outer enclosure were designed from the outset to link up with the castle defences. While none of this evidence is decisive, on balance it points towards the outer enclosure being secondary to the motte and bailey, rather than preceding it.

If, as seems likely, the outer enclosure is more or less contemporary with the castle, its possible function merely as a livestock enclosure must be considered. Derek Renn in 1959 suggested that some large ditched enclosures attached to mottes were intended for the safe keeping of cattle, putting forward as examples Alderton (Northamptonshire), Hailes (Gloucestershire), Hawridge Court (Buckinghamshire.) and Topcliffe (Yorkshire).[43] However, the substantial boundary banks and internal subdivisions at Ascott seem of greater magnitude than necessary for the performance of this function.

Many mottes have more than one bailey, and at Ascott d'Oilly the outer enclosure may be simply a large outer bailey, either contemporary with, or a later addition to, the castle. Outer baileys vary enormously in size, character and purpose; indeed, there is no clear threshold between outer baileys and associated village or town enclosures. Outer baileys usually contained stables, smithies, workshops and gardens directly connected with needs of the lord's extended household, but they enter a rather grey area when they also contain dwellings for servants, retainers, grooms and necessary craftsmen, and in some cases for tenants owing military services, quarters for visitors, courtroom, and pound for livestock. It was not uncommon for an enclosure which was initially conceived as an outer bailey in due course to pass out of the lord's direct control and develop as a separate community.

Outer enclosures were also quite deliberately created with the intention of establishing within them new market settlements or boroughs dependent upon the castle. The expanding economy of the early Middle Ages encouraged many lords to attempt to combine defensive and commercial functions on the same spot. The Domesday Survey shows that this process was already under way well before the end of the eleventh century, with castle-boroughs at Old Rhuddlan (Denbighshire), Ewyas Harold, Clifford and Wigmore (all in Herefordshire), Tutbury (Staffordshire), and possibly also Trematon (Cornwall). Outer defensive circuits which were clearly intended to give some protection to these embryonic boroughs can be detected at several of these places (Appendix A). The planting of new boroughs alongside castles continued to be employed as a

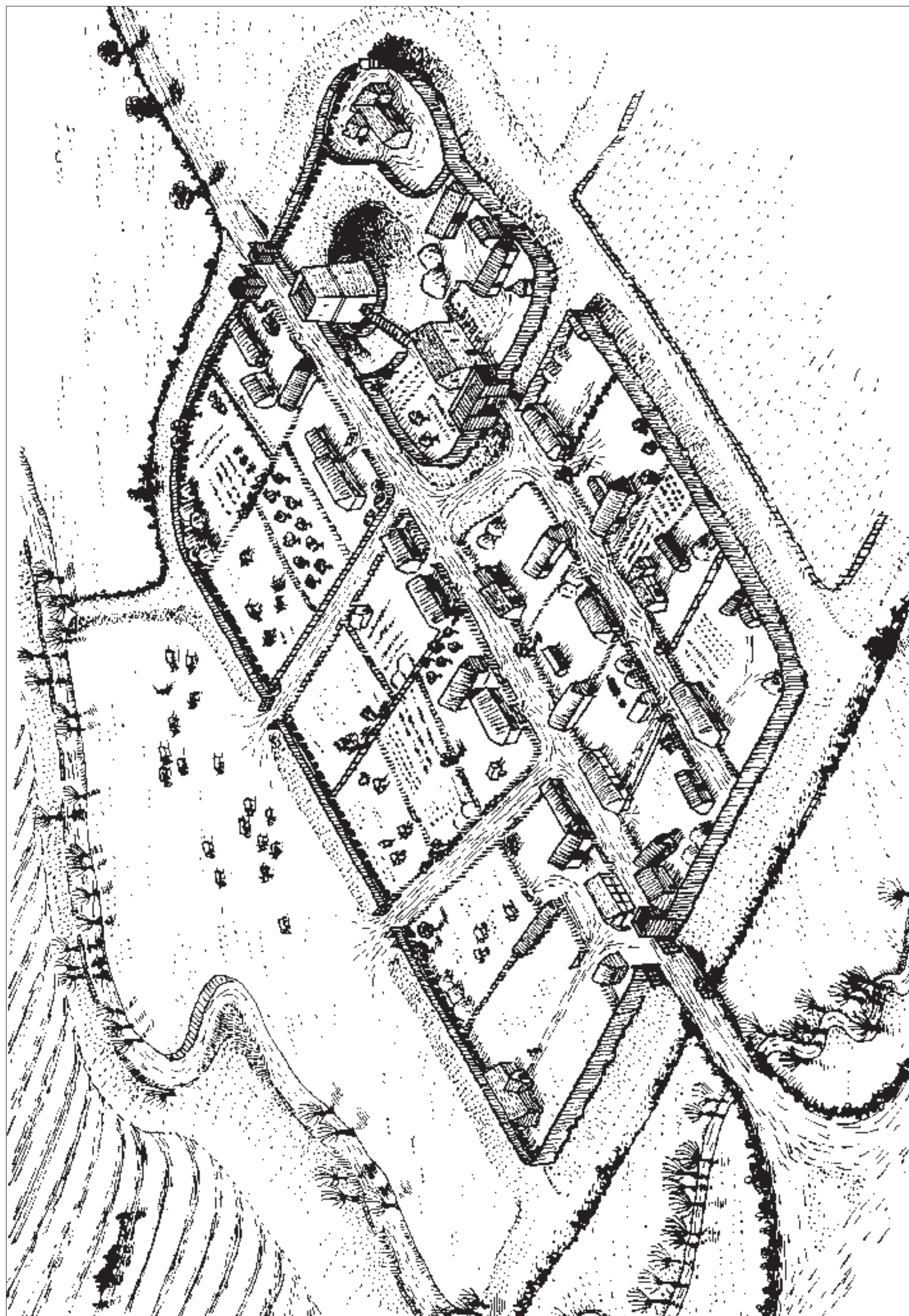

FIGURE 3: AN IDEA OF HOW ASCOTT D'OYLEY CASTLE MAY HAVE LOOKED C1170 ([by C.J.Bond)

means of colonising hostile territory in Wales, where the policy initiated by the Normans at sites like Pembroke culminated in Edward I's chain of castle-and-town foundations at Flint, Rhuddlan, Conway, Caernarvon and Beaumaris. Sometimes the town defences were contemporary with the castle, sometimes they came later. The same process was also employed on many sites in England. Well over thirty examples are known of small boroughs established within extended outer defences of castles. Some of these, like Launceston (Cornwall), Castleton (Derbyshire), Clun (Shropshire) and Framlingham (Suffolk) continue to flourish as small towns today. However, the association of defence and commerce on the same site was not always a happy one, since the two functions have quite different siting requirements: the best defensive positions are those with limited access, on hilltops or surrounded by water or marsh, whereas the best market sites are easily accessible from all directions. In consequence, a significant proportion of Norman urban promotions in outer baileys subsequently failed (Appendix A). The same problems continued to affect many later ventures, and examples of thirteenth-century castles accompanied by failed towns can also be recognised, especially in Wales: for example at Dryslwyn and Old Dynevor (Carmarthenshire), Old Denbigh, Castell-y-Bere (Merioneth), Skenfrith and Whitecastle (Monmouthshire), Dolforwyn (Montgomeryshire) and Cefnllys (Radnorshire).

Normally a market or borough promotion adjoining a castle, whether ultimately successful or not, would leave some trace in the written record. There is no indication whatsoever that the d'Oillys ever attempted this at Ascott. However, there are numerous other cases where the castle embraced an adjoining village within a circuit of outer defences. Although such places may never have had any borough or market pretensions, they are often morphologically indistinguishable from places that did; and they have to be seen as part of the same process of regulation and replanning of settlements after the Norman Conquest. In the words of Pounds, 'During the first century of English feudalism the village was often intimately linked with the castle, being enclosed by a ditch, rampart and palisade, and forming, in effect, an outer bailey .... It is doubtful, however, whether such enclosed villages continued to be created after 1154, except in frontier regions'.[44]

If, as is suggested, the Ascott d'Oilly earthworks do represent a castle with an outwork formerly containing an associated village which has since become deserted, the site has no clear parallels anywhere else in Oxfordshire. The outer eastern enclosure attached to the castle at Middleton Stoney might at first sight appear to fall into this category, though it is more ovoid in shape, smaller than the Ascott enclosure (1.5 hectares), and with much slighter boundary works. However, the Middleton Stoney enclosure contains only faint traces of ridge and furrow,

and a single archaeological trench produced post-medieval pottery from a layer cut by the ditch.[45]

In other parts of the country, however, a wide variety of surviving, contracted and deserted non-urban villages attached to castles and enclosed by earthworks which range from substantial defences down to slight boundary banks can be recognised. No comprehensive survey of such sites has ever been published, but a provisional list containing over thirty certain or probable examples is here offered for the first time (Appendix B). Some of these provide quite close parallels for Ascott, notably Kilpeck in Herefordshire, though there the castle earthworks are much more substantial and the village earthworks slightly more extensive and certainly clearer.

On present knowledge the distribution of this type of site reveals significant concentrations in certain parts of the country. The biggest group is in the Welsh borderland, an area which also contains a relatively large concentration of castle-bailey boroughs. In a region where insecurity was endemic throughout the early Middle Ages, this comes as no great surprise. It is more difficult to see any obvious rationale behind a second substantial concentration in the eastern region of England, though again this area contains some castle-bailey boroughs. A few examples can be recognised in the north, which can presumably be explained by the ever-present threat from the Scottish border. Outside these regions, however, only a handful of scattered examples can be recognised, including Ascott d'Oilly itself.

Like most assessments of the distribution of archaeological sites, this one is undoubtedly skewed by the extent of past survey, in particular by the work of the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, but also by the pioneer surveys of individuals like Beauchamp Wadmore in Bedfordshire, working at a time when many sites may have been better preserved than they are today. It is probable that many more examples of defended villages once existed than can now be recognised: village enclosure boundaries have always been more vulnerable to destruction than castle earthworks, both because of their slighter nature and because the pressures of later settlement expansion and development were more likely to overwhelm them. It is no accident that the best examples of outer village enclosures occur in cases where the village has itself either contracted or become deserted.

The Other Castle Sites in Ascott under Wychwood

The earthworks of a second motte and bailey lie within the bounds of the hamlet of Ascott Earl, which makes up the western portion of the present village. The site lies some 840 metres south-west of the motte at Ascott d'Oilly, and was recognised for the first time by Jope & Threlfall.[46] This is somewhat larger than the Ascott d'Oilly site, but in much poorer condition. The motte has party been flattened, but still stands up to 3 metres above its ditch, and there is a kidney-shaped bailey to the west. A small excavation in 1956 produced about 70 sherds of pottery, and the absence of any glazed ware raised the possibility that it could have had a slightly earlier period of occupation and abandonment than Ascott d'Oilly, though the evidence from such a small-scale operation could not be conclusive. A sketch plan of the earthworks was published by Mick Aston in 1972, following the cutting of a drainage ditch through the bank of the bailey.[47]

A third possible site has since been suggested from the evidence of vertical aerial photographs taken in June 1961, which show a very distinct and characteristic figure-of-eight cropmark near the river some 360 metres to the north-east of the motte at Ascott d'Oilly.[48] A hedge running down towards the river deviates significantly around the ditch of the putative motte. This hedge seems to mark a significant change in the landscape, being followed by a sharp rise in ground level. To the west the valley land was within the Evenlode flood plain and was used as meadow; but the air photographs show the ploughed-out ridge and furrow of former open field strips beginning immediately east of the hedge. Just as the hedge line deviates around the 'motte', the ridge and furrow equally significantly respects the 'bailey', an almost circular enclosure immediately north-east of the motte. The site is almost precisely the same size as the motte and bailey at Ascott d'Oilly itself. However, if this was a motte and bailey, unlike Ascott d'Oilly and Ascott Earl, it seems to have been totally isolated from the rest of the early medieval settlement pattern. Field-names around the site are uninformative: Wagmore or Wagmoors to the west, Upper and Lower Wagmoor, Over Railway and Down Field to the east. The field is regularly under crop, and the nature of this site awaits final determination.

It is not unusual to find more than two or three earthwork castles in fairly close proximity in the same parish or township in Wales, or the Welsh borders, or the north of England, but it is relatively unusual in the midlands and south. Why should there be at least two, maybe even three, motte and bailey castles in the one village? The most likely circumstance, and the one which certainly accounts for two of the castles at Ascott, is that they were on different manors in different ownership. The documentary evidence discussed earlier clearly points to this. However this leaves the third site unaccounted for, and if this is genuine, two possible reasons for it can be envisaged:

(i) The third site might be a short-lived product of some particular conflict rather than anything intended as a permanent stronghold or

residence. A number of close juxtapositions of earthen fortifications elsewhere appear to be a product of sieges during the reigns of Stephen and Henry II. At Exeter a separate ringwork 270 metres away from the castle, built during the 1136 siege, has recently been rediscovered and excavated.[49] Wallingford Castle was besieged by Stephen on three occasions, in 1139–40, 1146 and 1152-3. On the first occasion two siege-castles were raised, one of which was swiftly overthrown. A new work was erected in 1146 in full view of Wallingford. The building of two more siege-castles is recorded in 1152, including a substantial work at the end of Wallingford Bridge. One of the sites recorded can fairly certainly be identified with the now destroyed earthworks known as Stephen's Mount at Crowmarsh Gifford, immediately beyond the end of Wallingford Bridge on the Oxfordshire bank of the river. During the 1153 episode a siege-castle at Brightwell, 3 kilometres away, was destroyed by Henry Plantagenet. Mark Spurrell has recently suggested that earthworks at South Moreton and Cholsey may also be connected with the 1146-53 sieges.[50] At Oxford two mounds on the north side of the castle moat, known in the seventeenth century as 'Jews Mounts' and 'Mount Pelham', are said to have been thrown up by Stephen during the siege of 1142.[51] At Huntingdon the earthworks of a siege castle thrown up by Henry II in the 1170s have been identified some 350 metres west of the castle.[52] At Corfe (Dorset) a ringwork and bailey some 400 metres south-west of the castle seems likely to be a product of Stephen's unsuccessful siege in 1139.[53] Carenza Lewis has recently suggested that the motte at Stake Farm, some 200 metres from the motte of Castle Hill at West Chelborough (Dorset), may also be a siege-castle thrown up late in 1139.[54] Other possible examples are listed by Renn, who estimated an optimum distance of 180-275 metres between siegework and castle.[55] There is clearly some variation in tactical use amongst these works. Those closest to the besieged castle generally seem to have been built with the most aggressive intent; those more than a bowshot away are more likely to be associated with longer-term blockading, intended to protect the besiegers and to prevent the arrival of supplies or reinforcements; those at a greater distance probably fulfilled more of a neutralising operation, conceding ground around the castle, not posing any direct threat to the garrison, but inhibiting any raids out into neighbouring territory. Superficially the spatial arrangement of the three sites at Ascott most closely resembles the situation at Barley Pound in Crondall (Hampshire), probably identifiable with the Bishop of Winchester's castle of 'Lidelea', where two siege-castles were built in 1147: here the earthworks of Bentley Castle lie 400 metres to the south-west and those of Powderham Castle 550 metres to the east.[56] At Hamstead Marshall (Berkshire) the juxtaposition of two mottes 115 metres apart with another uncompleted motte 830 metres away has been discussed by Desmond Bonney and Chris Dunn, who incline towards the interpretation of one of the two in close proximity as a replacement for the other, but the more distant uncompleted motte as a siegework.[57] The basin of the upper Thames was certainly a significant war zone during the Anarchy; but the isolated and low-lying position of the third site at Ascott, along with the absence of any documentary record for a siege, probably argues against this function here.

(ii) The more likely hypothesis is that the third site was not directly contemporary with its neighbours, but was a temporary and short-lived predecessor abandoned in favour of one of the other sites (presumably Ascott d'Oilly, that being the nearer). The gazetteers of Renn and Cathcart King contain many cases where an early motte-and-bailey was apparently superseded by a later one on a better site nearby: the replacement of the small motte of Bryn-y-Castell by the larger motte in Knighton (Radnorshire) and the abandonment of Hawcocks Mount in favour of Caus Castle (Shropshire) (here the connection is demonstrated by the name of the older site, a corruption of 'Old Caus') may be quoted as examples. Similarly, where the military functions remained important, an earthen castle might be superseded later on by a stone one, for which a new site might be selected: in this way Hen Domen was replaced by Montgomery Castle, Castle How motte in Westmorland by Kendal Castle.

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Notes

1 The spelling of the place-name has almost as many variants today as has been the case in the past. The first element of the name can be spelt with one or two final 't's or a final 'e', and I have adopted the form 'Ascott' as used by recent editions of the Ordnance Survey. The Norman suffix is variously spelt d'Oilli, d'Oilly, Doilly and d'Oyley. I have preferred a form which is close to the original name but is Anglicised enough not to jar on the eye or tongue.

2 C.J. Bond, 'The Oxford Region in the Middle Ages' in G. Briggs, J. Cook & T. Rowley (eds), *The Archaeology of the Oxford Region* (Oxford University Dept. for External Studies, 1986), pp135-59. Castles and moated sites are discussed briefly in the text on pp.147-51 and plotted on Map 17.

3 D.J. Cathcart King, *Castellarium Anglicanum: an Index and Bibliography of the Castles in England, Wales and the Islands*, 2 vols (Kraus International Publications,

New York, London & Liechtenstein, 1983).

4 The pioneer works which definitively established the Norman date of the motte and bailey were J.H. Round, 'The castles of the Conquest', *Archaeologia*, Vol 58 (1902), pp313-40, and Mrs E.S. Armitage, *The Early Norman Castles of the British Isles* (John Murray, London, 1912). See also A. Hadrian Allcroft, *Earthwork of England* (MacMillan, London, 1908), pp400-452, and A. Hamilton Thompson, *Military Architecture in England during the Middle Ages*, (London, 1912).

5 A brief summary of the aims of the project was outlined by Brian Davison in 'The origins of the castle', *Current Archaeology* No.5 (Nov. 1967), pp129-30 and 'The origins of the castle in England: the Institute's research project', *Archaeological Journal*, Vol. 124 (1967), pp202-11. Some key papers which appeared in *Archaeological Journal*, Vol.134 (1977) were reissued with an introduction by A.D. Saunders under the title 'Five Castle Excavations: Reports on the Institute's Research Project into the Origins of the Castle in England' (Royal Archaeological Institute, 1978).

6 Brian Hope-Taylor, 'The excavation of a motte at Abinger, Surrey', *Archaeological Journal*, Vol.107 (1950), pp15-43; also 'The Norman motte at Abinger, Surrey, and its wooden castle', in R.L.S. Bruce-Mitford (ed.), *Recent Archaeological Excavations in Britain* (Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1956), pp223-49.

7 J.P.C. Kent, 'Excavations at the motte & bailey of South Mimms, Herts., 1960-1967', *Barnet and District Local History Society Bulletin*, No.15 (1968). Brief interim reports have appeared more accessibly in *Medieval Archaeology*, Vo1.5 (1961), p318; Vol.6-7 (1962-3), p322; Vo1.8 (1964), p255.

8 B.K. Davison, 'Castle Neroche: an abandoned Norman fortress in south Somerset', *Proceedings of Somerset Archaeological & Natural History Society*, Vol.116 (1972), pp16-58; Guy Beresford, *Goltho: the Development of an Early Medieval Manor, c.850-1150* (English Heritage, Archaeological Report No.4, 1987); Martin Biddle (ed.), *Winchester in the Early Middle Ages*, Winchester Studies Vol.1 (Oxford University Press, 1976), pp302-5.

9 R. Allen Brown, 'An historian's approach to the origins of the castle in England', *Archaeological Journal*, Vol.126 (1969), pp131-48, to which is appended a reply by B.K. Davison.

10 See, for example, M. de Bouard, 'Quelques données françaises et normandes concernant le problème de 1'origine des mottes', Château-Gaillard, Vol.2 (1964); Michel Fixot, 'Les fortifications de terre et la naissance de la féodalité dans le Cinglais', Chateau-Gaillard, Vol.3 (1966), pp61-6; M. Deyres, 'Les châteaux de Foulques Nerra', Bulletin Monumental, t.132 (1974), pp7-28; J. Decaens, 'De la motte au château de pierre dans le nord-ouest de la France', in Gwyn Meirion-Jones & Michael Jones (eds), *Manorial Domestic Buildings in England and Northern France*, Society of Antiquaries Occasional Papers, no.15 (1993), pp65-81.

11 King, *Castellarium Anglicanum.*

12 Derek Renn, *Norman Castles in Britain* (John Baker, 1968), Map D, p16.

13 Bond, 'Oxford Region'.

14 H.M. Colvin, *A History of Deddington, Oxfordshire* (SPCK, 1963), pp13-14. R.J. Ivens, 'Deddington Castle, Oxfordshire: a summary of excavations, 1977-1979', *South Midlands Archaeology*, No.13 (1983), pp35-41, and 'Deddington Castle, Oxfordshire, and the English honour of Odo of Bayeux', *Oxoniensia*, Vol.49 (1984), pp101-19, esp. pp108-11.

15 S. Rahtz & R.T. Rowley, *Middleton Stoney: Excavation and Survey in a North Oxfordshire Parish, 1970-1982* (Oxford University Department for External Studies, 1984), pp57-65.

16 Jope & Threlfall, *Antiquaries Journal*, Vo1.39 (1959), pp220-9.

17 Margaret Gelling, *The Place-Names of Oxfordshire,* Part II (English Place-Name Soc. Vo1.XXIV, Cambridge University Press, 1954), pp335-6.

18 J. Morris, ed., *Domesday Book*: Oxfordshire (Phillimore, Chichester, 1978), 28.25, 7.61.

19 References to Domesday castles were first collected in Sir Henry Ellis, *A General Introduction to Domesday Book*, 2 vols (Commissioners of Public Records, London, 1833), i, pp214-40; see also Renn, *Norman Castles in Britain*, pp27-33; H. C. Darby, *Domesday England* (Cambridge University Press, 1977), pp313-7.

20 Graeme White, 'Continuity in Government' in Edmund King (ed.), *The Anarchy of King Stephen's Reign* (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1994), pp119n, 120n, 123.

21 *The Cartulary of the Monastery of St. Frideswide at Oxford* (ed. Rev. S.R. Wigram), Vol. i: General & City Charters (Oxford Historical Soc., Vol.28, 1894), no.8, p13; no.15, p21; Vol.ii: the Chantry and Country Parish Charters (Oxford Historical Soc. Vol.31, 1896), no.951, p208; no.1009, p241; no.1010, p242.

22 W. Stubbs (ed.), *Select Charters and other Illustrations of English Constitutional History* (8th edn., revised H.W.C. Davis, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1948), pp178-81, esp. p180, clause 8.

23 For example, the purchase of 100 picks is recorded in 1177-8 for the demolition of Benington Castle in Hertfordshire: *The Great Roll of the Pipe for the 23rd Year of the Reign of King Henry II* (Pipe Roll Soc., Vol.26, 1905), p144

24 *Cartulary of Monastery of St Frideswide*, ii, no.1019, p247; no.1022, p251

25 *Rotuli Hundredorum temp. Hen.III & Ed.I...*, ed. J. Caley & W. Illingworth (Record Commisioners, 1818), ii, p731.

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APPENDIX A: Norman earthwork castles with failed towns in outer enclosures

Carmarthenshire
Old Kidwelly Earthwork defences of early l2th-century borough adjoining castle enclosing 3.2 hectares; part later walled (Beresford, 1967, p541; Renn, 1968, pp214, 217; King, 1983, pp55-6; Brown, 1989, pp134-6)

Cornwall
Trematon[?] Domesday Book records transfer of market from St Germans to the Count of Mortain's castle (Beresford, 1967, pp411-12)

Essex
Pleshey Motte & bailey founded by William de Mandeville in1174, large outer circuit of town defences, markets and shops flourishing into 16th century; still a village (Beresford & St Joseph, 1979, pp222-3; Beresford, 1967, pp435-6; Renn, 1968, pp280, 287; King, 1983, p146; Brown, 1989, pp183-4)

Flintshire
Old Rhuddlan New borough with 18 burgesses recorded in Domesday, linked with motte & bailey castle held by Robert of Rhuddlan under Earl Hugh of Chester; excavated Norman borough defences on a different alignment to both the Anglo-Saxon defences and those of Edward I's town (Quinnell & Blockley, 1994, pp14-16, 210, 214-6)

Glamorgan
Kenfig Burgages first recorded in 1140s. Castle ruined, adjoining town site overwhelmed by sand dunes (Beresford, 1967, p555; Renn, 1968, pp211-12; King, 1983, p164)

Herefordshire
Clifford 16 burgesses were attached to the castle in 1086 (Atkin, 1954, p103)
Ewyas Harold 2 mansurae 'in castello' in 1086 (Atkin, 1954, pp103-4)

Richard's Castle Domesday Book records 51 people within the castellaria, 23 within the castle itself; 103 burgages recorded in 1304. Oval area east of motte & bailey, enclosed by earthen defences; excavation in 1962-4 showed these to be added c.1200 (RCHM Herefds, iii, 1934, pp172-3; Beresford, 1967, pp451-2; Renn, 1968, p293; Curnow & Thompson, 1969; Brown, 1989, pp196-7)

Wigmore Domesday borough by the castle. Two banks with outer ditches running north from the castle may have enclosed the settlement (RCHM Herefds, iii, 1934, pp205-9; Atkin, 1954, p104; Renn, 1968, pp345-7)

Leicestershire
Belvoir[?] Castle and adjoining priory founded by Robert de Todnei c.1076, with possible small town attached (Beresford, 1967, pp461-2)

Norfolk
Castle Acre Motte & bailey with square settlement enclosure to south-west containing two roughly parallel streets and cross-lanes, representing a decayed early borough. Church outside western borough defences, present market place overlies northern defences (Renn, 1968, pp86-7; Aston & Rowley, 1974, p141; King, 1983. p306; Brown, 1989, pp73-5)

New Buckenham Castle and adjoining grid-planned new borough laid out c.1146-56 by William de Albany. Still a village (Beresford & St Joseph, 1979, pp226-8; Beresford, 1967, p467; Renn, 1968, pp121, 145; Brown, 1989, pp58-60)

Shropshire
Caus Motte & bailey established by 1140, market charter acquired by Robert Corbet in 1200, 34 burgages in 1300, town in terminal decline by 1540. Line of town defences clearly visible, but interior now empty (Beresford, 1967, pp480-1; Renn, 1968, pp139, 147; Higham & Barker, 1992, pp200, 237; Brown, 1989, pp82-3)

Staffordshire
Tutbury Domesday Book records 42 traders 'in burgo circa castellum'; there are clear traces of a small settlement enclosure to the south of the motte & bailey (Wheatley, 1954, p207; Renn, 1968, p335)

Yorkshire
Skipsea Motte & bailey built before 1098 by Drogo de la Beuvriere, castle borough attached before late 12th century (Beresford, 1967, pp514-5)

APPENDIX B: Earthwork castles with attached village enclosures

Bedfordshire
Arlesey Ringwork and baileys with additional village defence (Wadmore, 1913, pp57-8, King, 1983, p4)

Bletsoe [?] Castle with large outer bailey or village enclosure [Wadmore, 1913, pp153-4; King, 1983, p5)

Cainhoe Large oval enclosure with vestigial bank and ditch south-west of motte & bailey containing extensive earthworks of deserted village (Brown, 1989, pp69-70)

Meppershall Motte and two baileys with large square village enclosure, two

sides of which form parish boundary, including 12th-century church (Wadmore, 1913, pp109-19; Renn, 1968, pp217, 242; King, 1983, p6)

Thurleigh Motte with wet moat, village defences attached (Wadmore, 1913, pp129-30; King, 1983, p7)

Totternhoe [?] Motte & bailey with large rectangular enclosure to south-east (Wadmore, 1913, pp .139-40)

Yielden [?] Complex motte & bailey with adjoining deserted village earth-works, outer bank probably not defensive (Wadmore, 1913, pp145-6; Brown, 1989, pp236-7)

Cambridgeshire
Castle Camps Ringwork with two successive baileys, the inner of which is overlain by the parish church of the adjoining deserted village, which is itself at least partly surrounded by a slighter outer bank (Taylor, 1973)

Durham
Bishopton Motte & bailey within extensive deserted village earthworks (Renn, 1968, pp101, 111)

Essex
Ongar Large well-preserved oval village enclosure partially surrounded by bank and ditch to south of motte &bailey, including church (RCHM Essex, ii, 1921, pp53-41 King, 1983, p146)

Gloucestershire
English Bicknor Motte & bailey with outer enclosure on north side including the church, further partial ditched enclosure beyond that containing the rectory (Maclean, 1879-80; Renn, 1968, p184; King, 1983, p181)

Hampshire
Ashley Ringwork with embanked outer enclosure around northern and western sides, including the church (Renn, 1968, pp94-6; King, 1983, p189)

Herefordshire
Ashperton Oval moat with weak rectangular ditched area including church to east (RCHM Herefds, ii, 1972, ppxxvi, 3; King, 1983, p202)

Eardisley [?] Large outer enclosure, but present village lies beyond it (RCHM Herefds, iii, 1934, ppxxix, 52-3; Renn, 1968, pp 180-1; King, 1983, p205)

Kilpeck Well-preserved earthworks of deserted medieval settlement within an embanked rectangular enclosure immediately north-east of the castle. The village enclosure is bisected by a holloway, and includes the church (RCHM Herefds, i, 1931, pp158-9; Renn, 1968, pp216-7; King, 1983, p207; Brown, 1989, pp136-8)

Longtown Rectangular outer enclosure east of motte encloses part of village, but excludes church (RCHM Herefds i, 1931, pp181-4; Renn, 1968, pp224, 231)

Hertfordshire
Anstey Large motte and bailey with ditch of possible rectangular village enclosure to west; it is not clear whether this included or excluded the church immediately south of the castle (RCHM Herts, 1911, pp35, 37; Renn, 1968, pp90, 95: Brown, 1989, pp38-9)

Benington [?]

Pirton Motte with church enclosed in bailey and traces of outer village enclosure to east, south and west (RCHM Herts, 1911, pp162-3; Renn, 1968, p280; King, 1983, p220)

Therfield Motte & bailey with traces of fortified village enclosure west of parish church (RCHM Herts, 1911, p218; Renn, 1968, p321)

Lincolnshire

Bourne [?] Possible outer village enclosure west of motte & bailey castle (Renn, 1968, p113; King, 1983, p260)

Castle Bytham Signs of bank around village adjoining motte & bailey (Brown, 1989, pp76-7)

Kingerby Motte & bailey in centre of deserted village, the western part of the village more regularly planned within arectangular enclosure surrounded by intermittent bank and ditch, not obviously of defensive character (Everson, Taylor & Dunn, 1991, pp35, 146-9)

Norfolk

Mileham Motte with inner and outer bailey, attached rectangular enclosure surrounded by bank and ditch, once believed to be Roman, but containing shrunken village earthworks and producing 12th–13th-century pottery (Brown, 1989, p158)

Northumberland

Wark-on-Tweed Motte & bailey with traces of rectangular village enclosure on south and east. (Renn, 1968, p339; Brown, 1989, pp221-2)

Oxfordshire

Ascott d'Oi11y Rectangular outer enclosure with internal earthworks extending south-westwards from castle. Present settlement and church outside the enclosure

Shropshire

Holdgate [?] Motte & bailey with outer enclosure to east and more extensive deserted village earthworks to south, bounds defined by a considerable, if somewhat disjointed, terrace (Medieval Village Research Group Annual Report no.31,1983, pp9-11)

More by Lydham Oval outer enclosure of castle with deserted village earthworks. Church and present village outside the enclosure (Higham & Barker, 1992, pp232-3)

Pontesbury Ringwork castle with traces of bailey and village enclosure (Barker, 1961-4)

West Felton Church and part of village within sub-rectangular enclosure east of motte (Aston & Rowley, 1974, p120)

Whittington Multiplication of outer banks south of castle (Renn, 1968, 345; King, 1983, p432)

Staffordshire

Castlechurch by Stafford Massive motte with two baileys and a less strongly fortified outer enclosure containing earthworks of a rectilinear-planned village; church just outside village enclosure (Higham & Barker, 1992, 19, 289-93)

Suffolk

Haughley Motte & bailey with traces of outer enclosure which includes the church (Renn, 1968, p201; Brown, 1989, pp128-9)

Yorkshire

Barwick-in-Elmet Motte in centre of oval bailey with large oval village enclosure to east (Renn, 1966, pp101-2; King, 1983, p513)

Whorlton Ringwork and bailey west of church, with large village enclosure to east (Renn, 1968, p345; King, 1983, p528)

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A Wychwoods Farming Year 1854–55

WENDY AND JIM PEARSE

The farming year begins in the autumn after harvest. The previous crops are carried and stacked and the land lies waiting, in anticipation of the next agricultural cycle.

OCTOBER
The sowing month for autumn crops. The soil has been ploughed and harrowed to a tilth suitable to receive the seed. Sacks of corn, a half peck measure, guide flags and a seed lip are taken to the field in a horse drawn cart. The sower can then set up his first flag near the straightest traverse of the field. He begins his measured pace across the field, the seed lip of corn filled by the half peck measure, suspended from his shoulders by leather straps, each handful of seed cast in a sweeping arch in concert with the rhythm of his pace. Flags are regularly moved into position to guide his progress across the field. The crop may be wheat, rye, beans or vetches and once the sowing is completed, horses will drag the harrows over the field to cover the seed. Hopefully soil conditions will be on the dry side, sticky mud on boots makes heavy going and several miles may need to be walked in one day.

A number of trains run through the valley daily since the completion of the Oxford, Worcester and Wolverhampton Railway only a year ago. During construction the necessary earthworks caused great disruption to farmers especially in Ascott where the line of the railway interrupted the access to their fields on the west and north sides of the parish and after a period of nearly eight centuries abruptly severed Ascott d'Oyley Manor from its associated village. In the fields the sound of the trains approaching

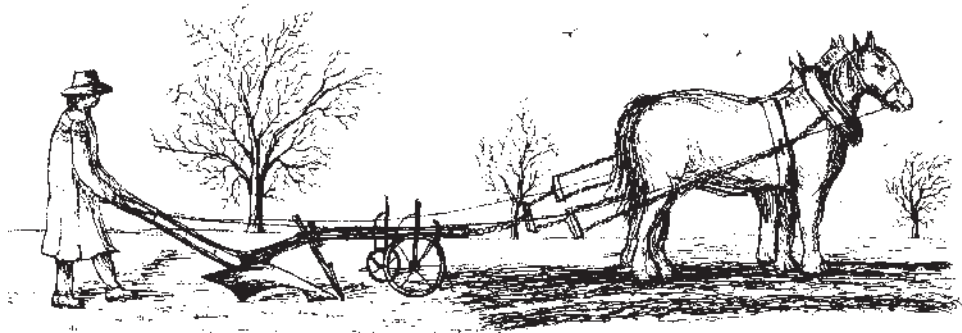
will compete with robins and wrens singing in the hedgerows. Rooks are not welcome – their voracious quest for newly sown seed will soon thin out the crop. At this time, potatoes for humans and mangolds for cattle are also harvested and the sheep are progressively penned with hurdles over the turnip fields.

NOVEMBER
With autumn sowing completed, the farmer's attention turns to spring crops. Large heaps of manure cleared from cattle sheds during the previous year, which have been left to heat up and rot down, are loaded on to muck carts and taken to the fields. Once unloaded into a number of heaps, the labourers can then use their four tined forks to spread an even layer across the land ready to be ploughed in. Robins frequently appear alongside the labourers, their bright eyes scanning eagerly for worms. Autumn fogs and frosts can create an eerie atmosphere to this task with steaming manure and the misty breath of men and horses rising up into the air.

This month also sees the harvesting of swedes for sheep fodder and carrots for human consumption. Maintenance jobs are undertaken. Road repairs, field drainage operations and the important winter occupations, hedge laying to maintain stockproof hedges and ditch clearing to ensure the free flow of field drains.

DECEMBER
The month for winter ploughing. Although the use of individual strips to denote ownership is no longer required due to the recent enclosures, the time honoured practise of maintaining the ridge and furrow system is still continued. Ridge and furrow aids surface drainage and ensures at least a reasonable crop on the ridges in a wet season and the furrows in a dry season.

The ploughman will position his ploughteam, probably horses but oxen may still be used, on the field headland in line with the first ridge. The first plough furrow will be cut along the top of the ridge, the share making the horizontal cut about five inches below the surface while the coulter makes the vertical side cut and the mould board turns the furrow slice over to the right hand side of the plough. The ploughteam proceeds around the ridge in a clockwise direction ensuring the soil is turned uphill to maintain the ridge. The ploughman needs to keep a firm grip to steady the plough against the thrust of the soil which will tend to force the plough sideways downhill. When the ploughing on this ridge is completed and the furrow opened, the ploughman will commence on the top of the next ridge. The headlands will be ploughed last to complete the field. An acre a day will be the ploughman's aim in which time he will walk about ten miles.



During ploughing rooks may perform their only deed of assistance to the farmers. Following closely behind the ploughman, they will consume from each furrow, quantities of wireworms and other insect grubs and larvae which would otherwise remain active in the soil and cause damage to the spring crop. Hopefully the ensuing months will bring some frost and snow to break down the soil to a fine tilth to form the seedbed for the spring corn.

Throughout the winter, cows, calves and fattening cattle will be kept in stalls and yards, their foodstuffs carried to them at regular times during the day. They will also need to be provided with a supply of water and bedding straw.

JANUARY

With land work possibly held in abeyance by the weather, threshing the last season's crop is the main occupation for the agricultural labourers in the large threshing barns. A sheaf of wheat is spread out on the threshing floor and two men working to a rhythm alternately beat the ears of corn with flails, to knock out the grains. Certainly not an easy task and one that requires a large amount of elbow grease. Once the ears are empty, the straw is collected and stacked and the grain is shovelled up ready for winnowing. The high wide doorways not only give access to horses and waggons but create a good through draught which is part of the winnowing process. Shovels of corn are thrown up into the air so that the draught will blow the dust and chaff away from the grains. Threshing and winnowing are hard monotonous tasks lasting several months but necessary to acquire the new seed to sow, animal feed and grain for sale.

An alternative job during drier spells is the spreading of very short well-rotted manure on pasture land to aid early spring growth of grass.

FEBRUARY

Fills the dyke, either black or white. Often the month causing the most awkward and difficult conditions for man and beast. Frost plays havoc with water supplies when it is essential to satisfy the thirst of all farm animals. For some obscure reason cattle especially seem to drink more in frosty weather. Frozen mangold clamps cause problems with sheep fodder. Eggs crack in the nestboxes of hens. And any delayed land work can be impossible to pursue, especially when temperatures remain constantly below freezing. Snow causes problems with movement of animals and other goods and roads may become impassable or slippery. It may be necessary for the horses to be fitted with snowshoes – a type of horseshoe with protruding nails that gives a horse some measure of grip in snow and ice. This month may well be an extremely busy time for blacksmiths since the shoes will need to be changed as required, depending on the variations of the weather.

MARCH

The busiest time of year for shepherds and a fickle month for weather – cold, wet, windy or all three. Time to build a lambing pen, constructed of hurdles, windproofed with straw cladding and well-littered with bedding straw. The more protection provided for the new-born lambs, the greater the number that will survive and as shepherds are often paid per lamb, a successful lambing season is important for both shepherd and farmer. Shepherding is a lonely job with little sleep during the peak of the season, the shepherd continually patrolling his flock using only the soft glow of his horn lantern to avoid scaring the ewes. Odd moments are spent in his hut or shelter where a drop of whisky and warmth will possibly revive the shepherd as well as poorly lambs.

March is also the month for spring sowing when all types of crops are sown including oats for horse feed, barley and carrots for humans and grass, clover and vetches for hay.

APRIL

When many crops are beginning to germinate in the fields, the blight of the farmers' lives is crows, rooks and jackdaws. With young birds in their nests to feed, a continual shuttle service is carried out by the parent birds which in a large flock can decimate a corn crop in a matter of days. The prime deterrent is a crow scarer, preferably human, a young lad with a rattle and a loud voice. Not a pleasant job by any means,

cold, tiring and monotonous and very poorly paid, but an extremely necessary addition to the farming structure. Another type of aid comes in the form of peewits (lapwings or plovers), the farmers' friend. Peewits nests with eggs will be left carefully undisturbed amongst the emerging crops because of the parent birds' determined protection of their young. At the sight of an approaching marauder (rook or crow) they will soar into the air and fearlessly dive at the predator until it retreats. A field with two or three peewits' nests can be left to the birds to defend.

With the remaining crops of potatoes and mangolds safely planted, attention turns to livestock. The larger cattle will be turned out into the pastures and horses and carts will transfer the manure from pens and sheds to the expanding heap in the field.

MAY

With a fresh growth of spring grass and herbs in the pastures, the young calves can be turned out. Here they can exhibit the natural exuberance of the young and free, by all means of exercise, racing, jumping and kicking up their heels with pure pleasure before settling down to experience the new sensation of eating fresh young grass. With bulging sides and tired limbs they can, at the end of the day, retreat to their resting shelters and chew their cuds, enjoying the grass for the second time.

But farm labourers are less fortunate at this time since a major monotonous occupation is the elimination of weeds in the crops. It is performed mostly by hand, hoeing through long hours of daylight, although some horsehoes may be used in the root crops. Some consolation is the rippling song of numerous skylarks rising and falling overhead.

JUNE

The hoeing of crops continues and turnips are sown for autumn feed for sheep. But now is the time for shearing the sheep when the rise in the wool indicates the natural time to shed the fleece. Washing the sheep in the wash pools ensures a clean fleece which fetches a higher price. But whether the loss of dirt will reduce the weight sufficiently to negate the extra value is debatable. Washing which involves rubbing and squeezing to rid the fleece of as much dirt as possible occurs several days before shearing and both processes are accompanied by a tremendous amount of bleating from lambs who are

temporarily separated from their mothers, to keep them out of harm's way while their mothers are attended to. Hand-shears are used, a skilled man can shear four sheep in an hour. Occasionally a cut will occur which is instantly treated with Stockholm tar to cauterize the wound. The fleeces are rolled and tied and packed into woolsacks ready for dispatch to the buyers.

JULY

If the weather is favourable, haymaking will begin towards the end of June, but is in full swing throughout July. The grass is mown by scythes. The labourers work in line cutting a swathe of grass which is left behind each of them as they work across the field. Now women and children take over. The swathes are spread thinly over the ground to ensure maximum exposure to sun and wind. Later the grass is raked into smaller rows called wallies which are frequently turned to allow the moisture to evaporate until the crop becomes a sweet smelling, rustling hay. Throughout this process the fields are alive with several varieties of butterflies seeking pollen and nectar from the wild flowers and herbs growing amongst the grass whilst swallows and swifts fly overhead. The hay is raked and built into rows of cocks - small stacks of hay as much as a man can lift on a seven foot pitchfork up to the waggon. The horse and waggon are then led between two rows, a pitcher goes to each row and one man on the waggon to build the load. No one leads the horse. His or her name is the command to move forward and whoa is the word to stop. When the load is completed and roped, the horse and waggon are led to the rickyard where the hay is built into ricks. The amount of time required for haymaking depending on the quality and age of the grass and hopefully dry weather varies from three to seven days. Spells of rain can double the making time.

AUGUST

Like haymaking, harvesting is an extremely busy season. All hours of daylight are used, sometimes under extreme pressure. The weather can suddenly turn into the enemy. When conditions are right with both corn and weather, scythes are once more to the fore. A bow (similar to a chair back) is fitted to the scythe for harvesting. This carries the cut corn round to form the swathe instead of allowing it to fall over the handle. Barley is

normally left loose and carried similarly to hay. But wheat and oats are tied into sheaves by women and children with straw bonds made from the crop, then stood into stooks by the men, each stook of six sheaves supporting each other. These are then left to get thoroughly dry. Oats should have the church bells rung on them at least three Sundays. Finally the sheaves are carried to the rickyard whilst opportunist kestrels hover above the newly cleared fields seeking the now less protected mice. The ricks are built with all the butt ends to the outside beginning by working round the stack from the middle with a deeper layer in the middle to cause a natural slope to the outside. Once the crop has been carried, the fields are opened to the gleaners – the poor people of the district who are free to take part. Every loose ear is a bonus – free food for hens and pigs or it can be threshed to be ground into flour.

SEPTEMBER
Harvest complete, it is important to maintain the quality of the corn by thatching the ricks as unthatched grain will quickly sprout under wet conditions. The yealmer shakes ready-threshed straw into a heap and dampens it for strength. A number of handfuls are pulled out and using his fingers he combs the straw to form a yealm – a thatching unit. The yealms are laid in alternate directions in the angle of a forked stick – a jack. When full the jack is carried on the yealmer's shoulder to the rick, where the thatcher carries it up the ladder to the top. He begins at the eaves and tucks the thinner end of the yealm into the roof. Then the next yealm is put in with the big end, the thinner end overlapping the first yealm. He continues to lay the yealms up the roof until he reaches the very top. Now starting from the top and working downhill, he combs the thatch out straight with a hand rake and fastens it down with a bond or twine held into place with sprays (rick pegs) three feet long made from split ash or hazel. Up to a dozen lines of twine and sprays will be arranged across the roof. A good overhang at the eaves and gable ends will give better protection from the weather.

In preparation for the next sowing season, the clover land is manured and ploughed to enable it to settle before wheat planting takes place.

And so the farmers' year is complete. Twelve months of wind, rain, snow, frost, hail and sun, wet days and dry spells have passed. Another sowing, another harvesting and a new crop of calves and lambs to tend. Long days, and nights of hard earned sleep, and now the next year of unknown fortune lies ahead.

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Shipton and Religion in the Sixteenth Century

JACK HOWARD-DRAKE

The sixteenth century was a time of religious turmoil in England as elsewhere in Europe. The impact was felt throughout the country, affecting the lives of ordinary citizens as well as those of people in authority. This article brings together some of the evidence of what happened in the parish of Shipton which at the time consisted of Shipton itself together with Langley, Milton, Lyneham, Leafield and Ramsden. Ascott, although established as a separate parish, was technically a chapelry of Shipton. Bruern, described as extra-parochial, had close links with the parish.

In the early years of the century the Cistercian monastery at Bruern would have been a prominent feature of the religious life of the area as it carried out its monastic duties of prayer, hospitality and alms for the poor. It had been there since the middle of the twelfth century and although it held only one field in Shipton it had extensive holdings in the larger parish and elsewhere and had particular responsibility for Milton where it provided a priest for a chapel. (Milton was known as Monks Milton.[1]) Its image was severely damaged in 1532 when there was an enquiry into the conduct of the abbot, Abbot Macy. Macy had bought his appointment by bribing Cardinal Wolsey with 250 marks (£166.67) and with a gift of 280 of the best of the monastery's oaks which went to Oxford for the building of Wolsey's college, later Christ Church. He had grossly mismanaged the abbey's estates, had expensive tastes and numerous relations and lady friends to support. His monks rebelled and one of them went to London and pawned the abbey plate in order to raise funds to get Macy out. A full scale investigation was held at Bruern and Macy was dismissed.[2] His successor restored order but this did not save the monastery from dissolution under Henry VIII's policy of suppressing the monasteries. The commisioner who was sent to examine it, John Tregonwell, reported to Thomas Cromwell that he came to Bruern from Eynsham and there found that 'the abbot is (as it appears to me) not only virtuous and well learned in holy scripture, but also hath right well repaired the ruin and decay of his house, left by his predecessor's negligence, and the convent (which heretofore were insolent) being now brought to order'.[3] Even so the

monastery was dissolved and the buildings pulled down, the stone being used for building elsewhere. (There is a reference to money being paid for a load of stone being taken from Bruern to Culham in 1538.[4]) The only substantial legacy may be the window at the east end of the south aisle in Chipping Norton church described in the Oxfordshire volume of *The Buildings of England* as 'a great decorated window of six lights with a wheel in the head.'[5]

The radical reforms in religion of which Henry's dissolution of the monasteries was only one manifestation, did not go entirely unopposed. There is no evidence that the people of Shipton were directly involved, indeed all the signs are that Shipton was and always has been a stable community whatever the disturbances elsewhere in the country; but they must have been well aware of what went on around them.

There was widespread unrest during the reign of Edward VI, much of it due to economic problems, but there were two revolts, the Western Rebellion and The Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Rising, which were partly the outcome of changes in religion, in particular the introduction of the first Prayer Book, which came into use on Whitsunday 1549.

There was considerable opposition to this new service in English in the West Country and on 9 June 'sundry lewd persons' were said to have assembled in protest. At first it seemed that troops under Lord Russell had contained them but he then appealed for reinforcements and was told that Lord Grey had been ordered to join him with three or four hundred horsemen. On 12 July the government decided that protests in Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire, which were at first directed against gentlemen and cattle and sheep owners, had got out of hand and Lord Somerset wrote to Russell to say that 'we had determined to send downe to you the Lord Graye with a band of horsemen and some hagbuters footmen.[6] But uppon occayson of a sturr here in Bucks. and Oxfordshire by instigacion of sundery preists (kepe it to your self), for these matyers of religion, we have been forced to kepe him a while and yett we trust within a vj daies matyer shall he chaystice them, and then shall we send him unto you'.

Edward VI noted in his journal 'To Oxfordshire the lord Graye of Wilton was sent with 1500 horsmen and footmen; whose coming with th'assembling of the gentlemen of the countrie, did so abash the rebels that more than hauf of them rann ther wayes, and others that tarried were some slain, some taken and some hanged'. The 1500 men included foreign troops such as Germans and Albanians. One account says that the engagement probably took place at Enslow Hill on the Cherwell where, according to a tradition current towards the end of the sixteenth century, there was in former times a rising of people who were persuaded to go home and were afterwards hanged like dogs. Another account says that those who had not slipped away were surrounded at Chipping Norton and

some 200 prisoners were taken. After the defeat of the rebels Grey, who was then at Witney and anxious to get on to the West Country, issued an order to certain gentlemen of Oxfordshire to execute more rebels in various towns in the county. He listed those who were to be executed and ordered that their heads were then to be set up in the highest places. One of those on the list was Henry Joyes, the vicar of Chipping Norton, said to be one of the leaders, who was to be hanged on the steeple of his church.[7] One can imagine that there was a certain amount of discussion of these events in the Crown Inn and elsewhere.

The vicar of Shipton at the time was Ralph Willett who was presented to the living in 1546. He was a man of considerable substance with many interests and family connections mostly straddling the Oxfordshire/ Gloucestershire border. The parish registers show that during the upheavals of 1549 he was baptising, marrying and burying his parishioners in the usual way. He seems to have kept his head down successfully, surviving the further reforms of Edward VI and the restoration of catholicism during the reign of Mary Tudor.

There is not much evidence of the way in which these various changes in religious observance affected the day to day administration of Shipton church. Two incidents are recorded in Willett's time. Chantries, that is money left to finance the saying of masses for the souls of the dead and sometimes for the building of chapels, were abolished by an act of 1547. Parsons and churchwardens were required to make written reports on all the property and endowments of their church, on the number of 'houseling people', that is those of the age to receive communion, and on any chantry priests attached to the church. In a chantry certificate of 1548 Shipton (the large parish) reported that there were 60 communicants (the population at the time was about 700), admitted to an 'obit', that is a modest endowment for an anniversary service made by those who could not afford a chantry, and to a 'lampe light', which would have stood before the rood or a picture of Our Lady and was now prohibited. Certain lands had been given by persons unknown for the maintenance of the 'obit' and the lamp, and other lands and tenements belonging to the church were valued at £3:1:4 a year. There was no list of plate, vestments or other valuables as there was in many other parishes, but it has to be borne in mind that churches were not over keen to admit to all their possessions when the government was in the process of confiscating them.[8]

The second piece of evidence shows how uncertain times were. John Chapman of Milton made his will on 29 May 1557. He left the bulk of his estate equally between his father, his two brothers and his two sisters; but remembering his christian duty, he first left 30 shillings to be given to the poor of Shipton at his burial and a further ten shillings to be given to them at his 'month's tide' or month's mind, the requiem mass celebrated thirty

days after death or burial. In addition he instructed his executors to provide twenty sheep from his estate, the profits from which were to pay for masses and dirges for him and his friends to be said at Easter and Christmas, any money left over going to the poor.

Chapman wrote his will when Mary Tudor was on the throne and his wish to be remembered at his month's mind and by masses and dirges, reflected the official religious policy of the day; but Chapman saw what was coming. If, he said, the law in the future will not permit masses and dirges all the profit from the sheep was to go to the poor. Eighteen months later Mary Tudor died and Elizabeth I came to the throne; official policy reverted to protestantism.[9]

There is one other later example of the problems involved. When the Shipton churchwardens presented their accounts on 14 December 1589 they noticed that the vicar of Shipton 'in olden times' had appointed a deacon 'to bring out popish and idolatrous books, vestments, copes and to lighten tapers and to ring certain peals and to do other like ceremonial trifles and superstitions by the mercy of Christ swept out of his temple in England'. They realised that in 1589, thirty-one years after Elizabeth I came to throne, this 'so called' deacon was still employed and being paid 40s a year, but now had nothing to do. They decided that the money would be better spent for a schoolmaster 'to train up youths in virtue and learning'. The 'deacon' was Nicholas Becket, aged about 90, who was 'lying sick at the mercy of God', so they agreed with the parishioners not to bring in the new arrangements until he died. This he obligingly did quickly, was buried on 11 January 1590, and a schoolmaster was appointed.[10]

Willett resigned the Shipton living when William Master was appointed to it in 1564. (Willett had also been rector of Kingham from 1558 and held that appointment until his death in 1575.) It is with Master's appointment that we have detailed evidence of the strong protestant tradition which was the hallmark of the parish in the sixteenth century.[11]

William Master was one of the many protestants, known as Marian exiles, who fled to the continent when Mary Tudor came to the throne, and settled in Frankfurt, Geneva, Basle and elsewhere. He was much involved in the theological controversies which developed between the various groups, among whom John Foxe was a prominent member. Foxe was a prolific writer in the Protestant cause and while he was abroad wrote the Latin version of his famous work which is usually known as *The Book of Martyrs*. After his return to England in the autumn of 1561, he was mainly engaged in translating it into English and it was published on 20 March 1563. It was an immediate success and Queen Elizabeth rewarded him with the Shipton prebend.[12] As prebendary Foxe became rector of Shipton with the right of presentation to the living to which he appointed Master.

Master was an educated man able to write well in Latin and English, with an extensive library and with friends and relatives in high places. His brother was Richard Master, physician to the Queen, and some of his nephews were senior members of Oxford University. The preamble to his will shows how firmly he was wedded to the protestant tradition: 'In the name of the father and of the sonne and of the holie ghost Amen ... [he thanks God for] his endless mercies and amongst them for his holie gospell restoared and Antichriste the pope revealed and confounded'.

There are also various indications that not only was he a protestant but that he was sympathetic to the cause of the more extreme protestant reformers and to those usually referred to as puritans. His library included books by the radical continental theologians, Calvin, Magdeburg, Zwingli, Sabellicus, Luther, Erasmus, Beza and Gualter. He appears in the puritans' survey of 'the state of the ministrie' in Oxfordshire, where he is shown as residing in his parish and preaching every Sabbath, thus conforming to the puritan ideal. His will reflects a particular aspect of puritan doctrine, namely opposition to the belief in immediate resurrection. He wanted his body to be buried ' in the middest of the churcheyard of Shipton ... and there to rest, yf god will until the last Daie at which tyme I beleve that it shalbe joyned againe with my soule and inherit together both bodie and soule everlastinge ...'. Like many of his fellow protestants he appears to have been much troubled by the requirement to wear a surplice and by 'the putting down of prophesy men'. Prophesying was a system of regular discussion groups among ministers which was unpopular with the government who took steps to suppress it.

Given his education, experience and social standing, combined with his deep commitment to the protestant faith, Master's influence on the parish where he was vicar for 27 years must have been considerable. The influence of Foxe, second to none in his protestantism, would have been less direct but none the less substantial. There is no evidence that he ever visited Shipton although he may well have done so; but in him Shipton had a rector who was a national figure and he maintained his contact with the parish in correspondence with Master and through the tenants to whom he leased the prebend. The first was his brother-in-law Thomas Randall and when Randall died he gave the lease to his son Samuel Foxe. Samuel did not reside permanently in Shipton but he may have visited the parish when taking his degree of Master of Arts at Oxford in 1587. He was certainly here in 1590 when he recorded in his diary 'Anno 1590 ye last day of ye month and year, being New Year's Eve, and the same day 30 years whereon myself was born into this world my liefest daughter [Anne] at Shipton in the parsonage house between two and three of the clock in the morning ...'. Anne was baptised in Shipton church on 10 January 1591.[13]

The major impact which John Foxe made on Shipton as on other

parishes throughout England would undoubtedly have been through his *Book of Martyrs*. In 1571 the Church of England declared that Foxe's book and certain other books should be kept in the halls and dining rooms of archbishops, bishops, deans, canons and archdeacons in cathedrals, colleges, halls of London livery companies and other places. The only books which had to be kept in parish churches were folio bibles, the *Book of Common Prayer* and the *Book of Homilies*; but many clergy included the *Book of Martyrs* among the other books. Master's close friendship with Foxe and Foxe's position as rector of the parish would no doubt have been sufficient reason for him to have a copy in his church.

There has for some time been a copy of the book in The Old Prebendal House. It was bought by the then owner of the house at an unknown date in the last century from an unknown source and has no obvious historic link with sixteenth century Shipton. It was examined in 1989 by Paul Morgan, the diocesan adviser on books and the Bodleian representative on the books and manuscripts committee of the Council for the Care of Churches. He identified it as a third edition printed in London by John Day in 1576. It is bound in late seventeenth or early eighteenth century calf, probably Oxford work; it has been rebacked and defective leaves have been repaired. A dozen or so pages are missing.

There has been a local tradition that Foxe wrote the English version of his book in the Prebendal House but sadly this cannot be true as he did not receive the prebend until he had published his translation.

When William Master died in 1591 he was succeeded by Richard Hopkins. There is no record of Hopkins' institution to Shipton, which he held in plurality with Burford, as Master had done from 1572 to 1578. He died in 1593, possibly from the plague, and was succeeded by Henry Mills.[14] A case in the Oxford church courts shows Mills fully maintaining the protestant tradition in the parish.

In *Man and the Natural World* Keith Thomas describes the 'baffled contempt with which the people of Tudor and Stuart England greeted reports by returning travellers of the way in which Eastern religions respected the lives of animals. He quotes a sermon preached by Henry Mills in 1615 in which he illustrated the profaness of the Turkish religion by telling his parishioners of 'a woman that, travelling a long journey should make water in her hand and give it to her dog that fainted to restore him, and how that this woman in the Turkish religion was taken up to heaven for the same deed'.[15]

The sermon preached during morning prayers in mid-Lent caused something of a stir in Shipton because one of the parishioners, John Rawlings, brought an action about it in the Oxford church court.[16] Rawlings had accused Mills of obscenity not it seems from moral outrage but out of pique as Mills had refused him communion.

Mills had taken as his text St Paul's epistle to the Hebrews, chapter 11, verse 5: 'By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not to be found because God had translated him; for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God'. In Hebrews 11 Paul was writing about faith as 'the substance of things for, the evidence of things not seen', and it was on this doctrine that the fundamental protestant doctrine of justification by faith alone was largely based. Mills was explaining this doctrine to his parishioners and making fun of those who believed that good works rather than faith were the true path to salvation.

None of the witnesses suggested that Mills had caused any offence. Quite the reverse. In his evidence, Arthur Smith of Shipton summed up the general reaction: '...he well remembereth that the said words were delivered by the said Master Mills to such good sense & purpose & with such gravity that this deponent who was then present did like well thereof for his owne parte & he remembereth that Sir Rowland Lacy, knight, & divers other men of good sorte and understanding of their parte were there also present & he did not heare from then or since at any tyme to use any words of mislike of any parte of the doctrine of the said Master Mills in that sermon'.

There were numerous other witnesses who had all enjoyed the sermon, had smiled at the story and thought it suited the text very well. Those at the service included the Laceys from Shipton Court, William Tomson, a yeoman of Shipton, John Smith, a weaver and parish clerk, William Grey of Milton, a labourer, William Chapman of Milton, a cakemealman, Thomas Reason, husbandman, and Thomas Shelar and James Hyatt of Lyneham.

Here, then, we have a clear picture of a full church at morning prayers in Shipton in Lent in the early seventeenth century, attended by the gentry from the Court and labourers and others from the scattered villages of a large parish, enjoying an explanation by their vicar of the basic doctrine of the protestant faith. It neatly illustrates where Shipton stood in the religious debates of the time.

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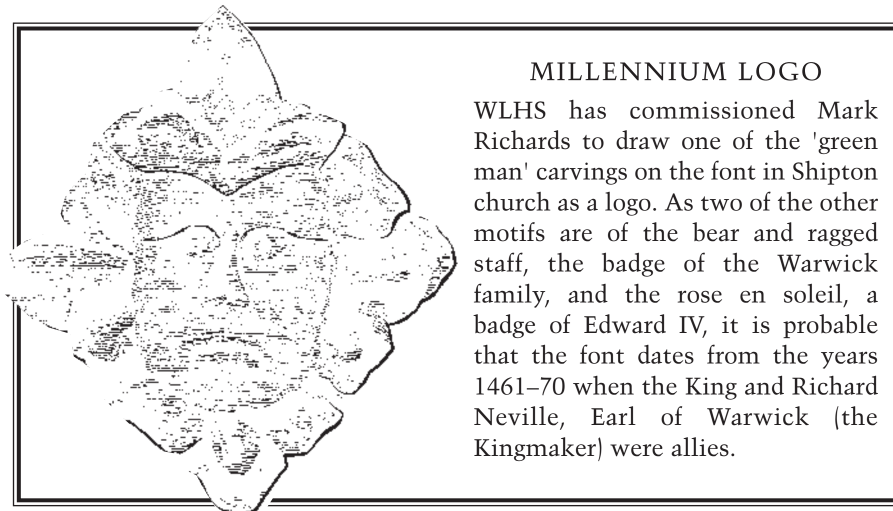


MILLENNIUM LOGO

WLHS has commissioned Mark Richards to draw one of the 'green man' carvings on the font in Shipton church as a logo. As two of the other motifs are of the bear and ragged staff, the badge of the Warwick family, and the rose en soleil, a badge of Edward IV, it is probable that the font dates from the years 1461–70 when the King and Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick (the Kingmaker) were allies.

Medieval Pottery in the Wychwoods

MARGARET WARE

The rubbish left behind by former inhabitants of a landscape can provide clues as to who they were and how and where they lived. Usually items made of leather, wood and cloth decay away easily, but pottery is relatively durable, even though it gets broken into pieces. In the past broken crocks would have been thrown onto village middens together with other domestic waste. This was then carted out into the arable fields and spread as manure. Modern archaeologists examine such discarded objects collected systematically from the surface of ploughed fields by carefully organised fieldwalking. For a number of years the Wychwoods Local History Society has been collecting and studying finds from the ploughsoil of local fields in the Evenlode valley and also, where possible, recording finds of old pottery from building sites in the villages. A fascinating picture is beginning to emerge.

During the Roman period, a large amount and variety of expertly-made pottery was used in our area, and we find the evidence in the soil. But the national economy collapsed in the fifth century, and for the next seven hundred years it seems that the ordinary inhabitants of the Wychwoods area used little pottery. Only a few pieces of a late Saxon/early medieval type made in the ninth-thirteenth centuries have been found at Shipton. Perhaps many people used mostly bowls and platters of wood, and drinking vessels of horn and antler, which have not survived? Maybe the Forest acted as a barrier to trade? However the twelfth century owners of Ascott's two medieval castles, Ascott Earl and Ascott D'Oilly, were using pottery – cooking pots, bowls and jugs, as a great many broken pieces were found at both sites in the 1940s. It has been suggested that it could have been made in Ascott village (see later).

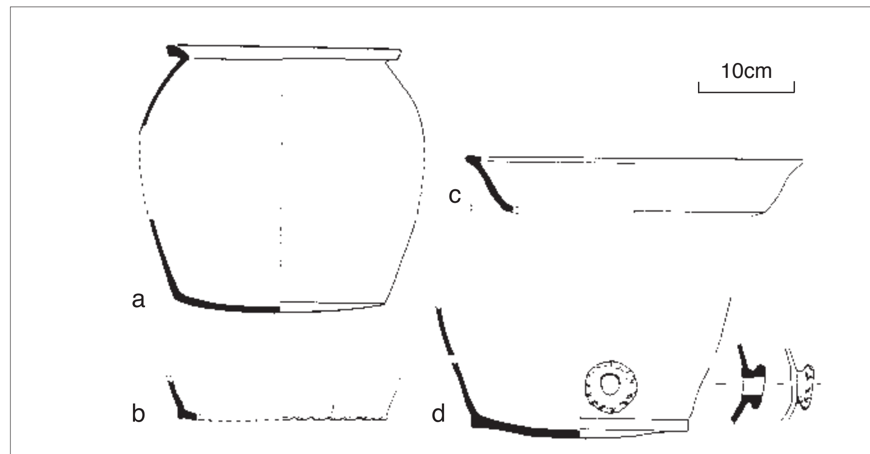
By the fourteenth century several substantial pottery industries were flourishing and supplying different parts of Oxfordshire, including our area. The crockery would have been transported from the kilns by middlemen with carts or packhorses, and sold at local markets such as Witney, Charlbury, Burford and Chipping Norton. Some people in Shipton and Ascott around this time were using pottery made as far away as Minety and the Savernake Forest, both in Wiltshire. More was being

acquired from an important pottery at Brill, just over the Buckinghamshire border, which produced beautifully made crockery – pots and jars, bowls and jugs, often glazed a mottled green colour. Pieces of this type have also turned up in fields above Upper Milton.

But the pottery most abundantly used in the later medieval period in and around Shipton and Milton, and also commonly at Ascott was locally-made 'Wychwood ware', produced from the thirteenth-fifteenth centuries. The forest must have been a valuable source of fuel, while clay from the river valley was 'tempered' with tiny particles of limestone to help it hold together during firing. The fired pots were reddish-brown with gritty speckles, only occasionally decorated with scratched lines and a thin partial glaze. The vessels were solid and practical rather than beautiful - large rounded cooking pots and storage jars, cisterns with bungholes, possibly for holding ale or cider, shallow dishes, bowls and jugs (fig.1). Some of them had lids or handles.

A thin scatter of medieval sherds has been found in every field the Local History Society has examined, in all three parishes, suggesting the extent of arable cultivation at the time. Sherds often have a greyish 'core' showing incomplete firing, while prolonged weathering can leach out the limestone particles leaving little holes, so that some sherds resemble brown sponge. Substantial deposits have been found at sites within Shipton and Ascott, probably of medieval rubbish tips, which help to indicate where the inhabited parts of the villages were at that time. The maps (figs. 2 and 3) show early settlement in Ascott mostly to the east of

Figure 1 Wychwood ware vessels: a. large cooking pot/storage jar, b. jug with thumbed base, c. shallow dish, d. base of bung-hole cistern. Reproduced by kind permission from Mellor (1994).



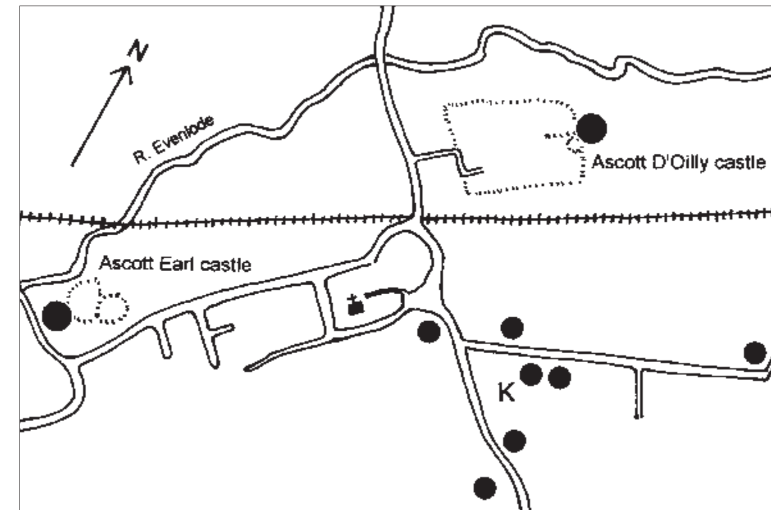


Figure 2 Medieval pottery finds in Ascott village and possible kiln site, K (after Jope and Threlfall 1959).

the church (apart from the two castle sites), while in Shipton it seems concentrated along the sides of the Trot's Brook valley, the slopes of Springhill and near the church. Gaps on our record maps do not necessarily mean medieval pottery is absent, merely that we have not yet looked there! Very little investigation has been carried out in Milton; in the fourteenth century the village was at Upper Milton only, the rest probably being part of the sheep-runs of Bruern Abbey.

Where was our medieval crockery being made? There was probably a pottery at Ascott, near the corner of High Street and London Lane, as the remains of a possible kiln were discovered there in the 1930s, and medieval earthenware sherds spoiled by twisting and flaking in firing (kiln 'wasters') recovered about 1950. Although no other local kiln sites have yet been identified, local names may provide clues: field names like Great Potters and Little Potters (now the sites of St Michael's Close and Coombes Close) in Shipton, Crockwell Assarts (Ramsden), and Potter's Hill and Potters Quarre (Leafield parish), all part of the Royal Manor of Shipton. The Forest Proceedings for 1272 mention Nicholas and Richard le Poter of Leafield and John le Potter of Estcote (Ascott).

Wychwood ware has been found as far north in the county as Salford and Deddington, and at Whichford Castle in south Warwickshire, five miles north of Chipping Norton. In the south it occurs near Bampton and Stanton Harcourt, but not quite as far east as the Cherwell and Oxford. Its penetration over the county border westwards has not been recorded, but compared with most other contemporary ceramic industries, it seems

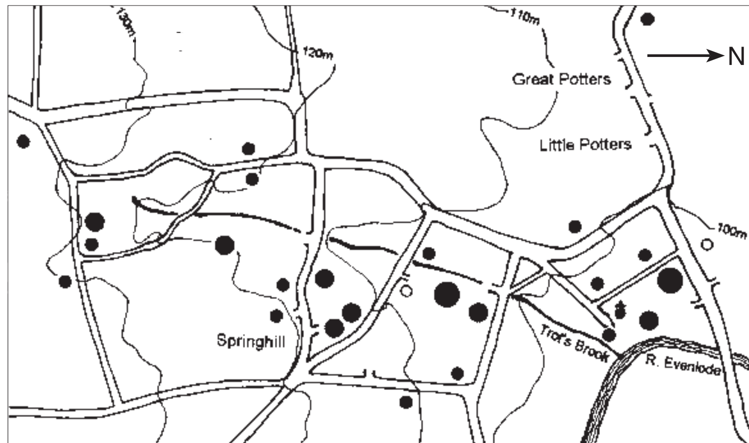


FIGURE 3 MEDIEVAL POTTERY FINDS IN SHIPTON VILLAGE.
● 0–5 SHERDS ● 6–50 SHERDS ● 51+ SHERDS O POSITIVE ABSENCE

very localised, and one which had died out by the mid-fifteenth century.

Three hundred years later another very successful local pottery industry was establishing itself at Leafield, supplying the surrounding area with kitchenware and dairy pans, crocks and flowerpots, while the production of fine tablewares, tea- and dinner-services, was to become a national industry, largely the province of the Staffordshire 'potteries'. Pieces of Leafield terracotta pot and the modern, mass-produced white earthenwares comprise the bulk of what is recovered from the ploughsoil, reflecting both the more widespread ownership of household goods and increased population after the medieval period.

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groves

The Burford to Banbury Turnpike Road

JOAN HOWARD-DRAKE

'I remember the roads of Oxfordshire forty years ago, when they were in a condition formidable to the bones of all who travelled on wheels'.
Arthur Young, 1813[1]

From 1555 until 1835 parishes were legally responsible for the repair of all their roads and inevitably the conditions varied from place to place. Even with goodwill the stones and gravel used for the purpose were not always adequate for the job and in some places were positively dangerous. The parish officers, the Constables and Surveyors of the Highways, organised the road work to be done by parishioners who had to do 'six days statute labour' yearly, and could be fined if they refused. The rates raised and the work imposed were very unpopular, consequently many parishes neglected to maintain their roads and by the seventeenth century the difficulties for people travelling and for the transport of goods had become intolerable.

The need for better mobility led to the passing of acts of Parliament for setting up turnpike trusts which were to be responsible for the upkeep of main public roads and to charge tolls for their use. Parishes were to continue to repair other parish roads and some were not even properly repaired until well into the nineteenth century. A turnpike act was mainly promoted by local landowners, farmers, clergy and commercial interests and once passed trustees took over the maintenance of the roads. A turnpike road was one across which bars or gates were placed and money paid to pass through them. The income from the tolls was used to keep the roads in good repair. Seventeenth century turnpike roads were important routes mainly radiating from London but by the end of the following century more than five hundred had been set up countrywide.[2]

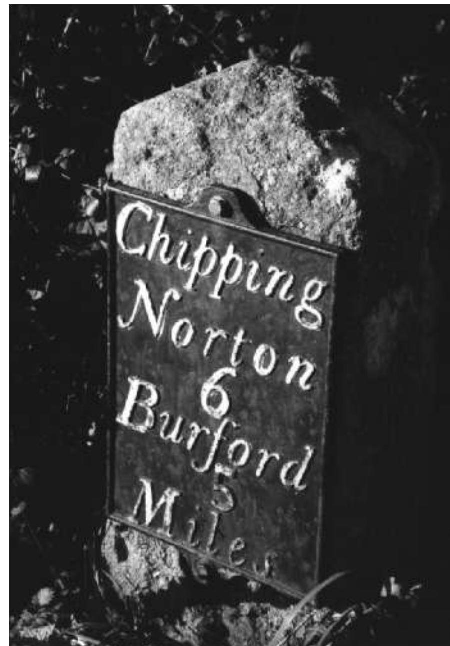
The Oxfordshire Turnpike Act of 1770

On Wednesday 31 January 1770 there was a meeting at the White Hart in Chipping Norton to consider the proposed turnpike roads.[3] Later that year a turnpike act was passed and it shows how this part of west and north Oxfordshire set about improving its roads, and the clauses of the Act

give some insight into what was intended. The preamble said that the trust was 'for the repairing and widening the road from Burford to Banbury in the county of Oxford; and from Burford to the Turnpike Road leading to Stow, in the county of Gloucester, at the bottom of Stow Hill; and from Swerford Gate, in the county of Oxford, to the Turnpike Road in Aynho, in the county of Northampton'.[4] It also stated that the roads were 'in many parts narrow and cannot be effectually amended, widened and kept in repair by the ordinary course of law' and goes on to lay down the conditions, rules and regulations for the maintenance of the roads by the trustees. The Act was for 21 years in the first place but was renewed several times until a local Highways Board, introduced by the Highways Act of 1862, took over the responsibily.

Trustees

Trustees were appointed to raise money to finance the work of the trust; sometimes but not always they invested their own money in the venture. They were to supervise the day to day operation of the Act and to make rules and regulations for travellers and employees of the trust. No-one could be a trustee unless he or his wife were in possession of rents and profits of lands and tenements with a yearly value of £40 or be heir apparent of someone whose yearly estate was £100 or who had personal property worth £800. A penalty of £50 could be levied if a trustee proved not be so endow-ed. The 1770 Act appointed 313 trustees. The ownership of land and local standing of those named as trustees would have helped to get the Act passed through Parliament and many of them were there to give consequence rather than activity to the work in hand. From the local aristocracy there were Viscount Wenman, Lords Charles and Robert Spencer, Lord North and members of their fam-



Turnpike milestone near the railway station in Shipton

ilies. Gentry names from this area were Sir Charles Cope of Bruern, Sir John Reade of Shipton Court, the Lenthalls of Burford, and the ubiquitous Fettiplaces. At least 72 clergymen were named including the Reverend Joseph Goodwin, the vicar of Shipton under Wychwood and the Reverend Thomas Brookes soon to be the vicar. Also named were Thomas Brookes of Parsonage Farm and several other Brookes family members, together with Edward Coleman, Henry Furley, Edward Young, Joseph and William Hawtin of Shipton, Ralph and Richard Ellis and Isaac Snowshill of Milton and Solomon Goffe of Leafield.

Few of the trustees named would have been active and from the first it only needed five or seven trustees as a quorum to meet in the White Hart at Chipping Norton, whose landlord was Mr Haynes, to enact business. The first trustees could divide the area into divisions and appoint more trustees to run the divisions. This area was divided into three, namely Chipping Norton, Stow on the Wold and Aynho, with trustees and a Surveyor for each division. The trustees could borrow money on the security of the expected income from the tolls in order to proceed with business. For example there was a notice in *Jackson's Oxford Journal* on Saturday 20 October 1770 stating that 'the Burford to Stow turnpike trustees will borrow money on credit of tolls, apply to Peter Brooks, Shipton, Treasurer for the Burford to Chipping Norton division or to Samuel Churchill, attorney, Deddington'.[5] In 1829 the trustees repaid to D. Stuart, Esq, £105 plus interest of £5 8s, interest being paid at just over 5%.[6] The trustees could farm the tolls, that is lease them, to anyone prepared to take them over for not more than three years at a time. The leasing was done by public bidding, the toll income going to the highest bidder. In 1775 the lease of the future tolls of the gate at Burford on the Banbury road went for £161 10s and in 1780 and 1781 £155; the gate at Chipping Norton went for £60 and the Chapel House gate for £50. In 1882, sometime after the roads had been taken over by Chadlington Highways Board, when tolls were still being charged, the cost of leasing the tolls on the road which went from 'the boundary of the Chipping Norton local board to the tollhouse at Shipton' cost James West £73. From 'Shipton tollhouse to the mile-stone in the Shipton Hill' cost William Hayward £115. The lessees hoped, of course, to take more money than they had paid, but the repair of the roads remained the responsibility of the trustees using the money from the sales of leases to undertake the work. Trustees employed road surveyors, clerks, treasurers and collectors of tolls. *Jackson's Oxford Journal* for Tuesday 29 January 1771 reports that at a meeting of the 'Burford, Chipping Norton and Banbury Turnpike Commissioners, Samuel Churchill clerk advertised for surveyors for three divisions. Apply to Treasurer, Reverend Stone, Chipping Norton'.[7] Anyone liable for yearly statute or duty work on parish roads was to be

liable under this Act as well, as the trustees or surveyors required, provided the duty was not asked for in hay or harvest time. Rules were laid down for the convening of meetings, the notices to be given as to when and where they were to be held and trustees were allowed their personal expenses. Minutes of meetings and financial accounts were to be kept in writing by clerks. For the payment of one shilling the minute books and records of financial dealings could be seen by anyone.

Trustees' Powers

The trustees were given wide powers. Turnpike gates could be set up across roads to be repaired and chains across any lanes leading to those roads. Tollhouses could be built, enclosing the sides of the roads to make their gardens, and the trustees could give orders to erect and maintain bridges. In the early days the barrier across a road was not more than a bar or 'pike', often with spikes along the top, but later proper gates were installed. Sometimes the tollhouse was a wooden booth; this was the case at Burford where two stood beyond the bridge at the bottom of the town, one for the road to Banbury and one for the road to Stow on the Wold.[8] There was a tollhouse on the main road now opposite Shipton station and another to the south of Chipping Norton. Both buildings are still there, the one in Shipton is called Pike House. When houses were to be built a quorum of eleven trustees was needed to make the necessary orders. Milestones or 'guide' posts were to be placed a mile apart on each road indicating the distance of each from a town but there is no indication as to how far apart tollhouses or gates should be. In 1989 a damaged milestone in Shipton showing the distance between Burford and Chipping Norton was replaced in its original position.[9] The first Ordnance Survey maps clearly show where the tollgates were but do not always show the tollhouses. It can be presumed however that if the gates were to be manned at all times there must have been houses or booths by the sides of the gates. Action could be taken against anyone stealing the 'guide posts', milestones and gates, or damaging any of these or the tollhouses erected by the trustees. A notice in *Jackson's Oxford Journal* of Saturday 20 October 1770 says 'Reward offered for information about the theft of the chain between Chipping Norton and Churchill'.[10] The Act expressly states that no gate must be put up 'between the town of Chipping Norton and an inn called the Chappell House'. The site of the Chapel House Inn is shown on later maps on the A34 south of the roundabout on the A361 Chipping Norton to Banbury road. A tollgate was erected about a mile further towards Banbury on the A361. There was a tollgate and tollhouse called Swerford Gate at the Deddington turn off the A361; the original house no longer exists but there is still a house on the site.

In some areas the making of turnpike roads caused riots and people did their best to avoid paying tolls but if caught they could be fined. There is

TOLLGATE COTTAGE, BURFORD ROAD, CHIPPING NORTON, 1922

no evidence of trouble locally. Anyone allowing carriages and animals to make a detour to avoid paying a toll or who issued counterfeit tickets could be fined forty shillings, part of which would go to any informer, the rest towards mending the road. Nobody having a place of profit under the Act could sell wine, cider, ale, beer or spirits. This appears to be a recognition of the eighteenth century problem of overindulgence in alcohol and a warning to gatekeepers, drovers and drivers of vehicles. Collectors who had to account for money to the trustees and failed to do so when asked, or continued to default, could be brought before a justice of the peace who could commit the defaulters to 'the common gaol of the county where such officer or officers, person or persons shall live and reside there without bail or mainprise until he or they have delivered in and settled his or their accounts'.

The Road Surveyors

Like the trustees the Surveyors under orders to mend roads had very wide powers. They could take stones, gravel, sand, furze and any other materials from any waste or common ground and from private lands, fields or grounds adjoining the roads to be mended. There is no mention in the Act of the new materials for road building and surfacing such as 'Blind John Meycalfe' and John MacAdam were advocating at the time.[11] Roads could be diverted through fields and grounds while old ones were being repaired, and the course of streams or ditches could be altered. Surveyors could order removal of rubbish, and the lopping or topping of any bushes, trees or shrubs adjoining the road if the owners failed to do so. Ten days

Map of part of the Burford to Banbury turnpike road

notice of these actions had to be given and there were many rules as to where the notices to any owners should be sent or exhibited. Anyone who hindered this work could be fined forty shillings. Compensation could be offered to owners for use or damage and if agreement could not be reached the matter was to go before a justice of the peace for adjudication. If the authorities wished to widen a road and needed to purchase land, agreement with the owners of the land was to be sought but if there was no agreement, the matter was to go before a jury of twelve men at general or quarter sessions for adjudication. This looks very like an early form of compulsory purchase which became so unpopular in later years. However, at this time, no private yards, gardens, orchards, paddocks, planted walks, nursery for trees or avenues could be used for the above purposes.

Charges

The tolls to be charged were laid down in the Act. Every coach, chariot, chaise, waggon, cart or other carriage with four wheels paid eightpence and with less than four wheels paid fourpence. Every horse, mare, gelding, mule, ass or beast of draught or burden, laden or unladen, drawing or not drawing, paid one penny; every ox, bull, cow, steer or heifer one half penny and every calf, swine, pig, sheep or lamb one farthing. If any person refused to pay the toll then the collector could seize their goods and chattels or animals and sell them if the person did not pay within four days. If the toll had been paid and a note or ticket given as a receipt and the same carriage or animals returned before midnight the same day no further toll was to be paid. Thomas Camden of Churchill recalled 'how, as a boy, working, like other villagers for the Squire, they would have their heavy farm waggons loaded with corn waiting at the toll-gate at the top of the village until 12 o'clock struck. Then, off to Banbury, unload, rest, fill up with coal, returning within the 24 hours, thus saving many shillings in tolls'.[12]

Exceptions to charges

There were exceptions to the payment of tolls. Regular traffic of goods and animals concerned with the maintenance of the roads paid no tolls, neither did general agricultural traffic such as ploughs, harrows, drays and horses, mares, ox, mule or ass concerned with local farming. Any animals to be shod or taken to water also paid nothing. Officers or soldiers on a march or any of their wagons, and the conveying of vagrants from one parish to another were also absolved from payment. Any carriage or horse taking or bringing back any knights of the shires of Oxford, Northampton or Gloucester on election days and any clergyman of the church of England going to or from his parish or chapel for services were exempt. The Act provided that if a tollgate were erected within 'four hundred yards' of Burford then the tanners and skinners of Burford and clothiers residing in Swinbrook and Burford were exempt and could pass and repass with leather, hides, hair, wool, cloth, blankets and other things of their trade provided that they went no further than 'two furlongs on the road.' A special exemption was given on the Burford to Stow road where it was ordered that if a toll was paid at one gate and a ticket obtained, free way was given through all other gates. This applied only during that one day and for the same carriage or cattle. Anyone claiming any of the benefits when they were not entitled to them could be fined forty shillings, some payment going to any informer.

Clifton Bridge

The turnpike Acts for this area follow the same pattern as most of those passed after 1720 which gave few local details; these appeared in trust division minutes. However there must have been a particularly bad problem on the road that ran from Deddington through Clifton to Aynho for there to be a special explanation of the work needed to be done there. The Act says '... the bridge across the Cherwell at Clifton in the parish of Deddington aforesaid is only a horse bridge and the way across part of the meadow called Aynho meadow although a carriage road for the use of occupiers of land therein is only a public bridle way and subject to be overflowed and rendered impassable'. The trustees therefore decided to make a 'commodious bridge' and a road across the meadow fit for carriages of all sorts, and the bridge was to be called Clifton bridge. The road was not to be used as a drove or drift way for cattle until a mound or fence was put on each side to stop damage to the meadow by the cattle. Samuel Churchill, clerk to the Trustees, gave notice in *Jackson's Oxford Journal* on Friday 24 July 1772 that the 'Deddington to Aynho Road is now completed and all turnpike between Chipping Norton and Deddington much repaired will be safe for carriages all summer'.[13]

The Oxfordshire Turnpike Act 1791

As was usual at this time this second Act extended the terms of the 1770 Act for a further twenty one years. It gives the following as the reason for the extension '...a considerable sum of money hath been borrowed upon the credit of the tolls thereby authorized to be collected upon the said roads great part whereof is now due and owing and the same cannot be paid and the said roads amended and kept in good repair unless the term of the said Act be enlarged'. Both Acts were re-enacted again after 21 years in 1810 in the time of King George III, and later under King William and Queen Victoria.[14]

Local Trustees and Employees

Little is known of early active trustees in each division. Peter Brookes was treasurer in both Chipping Norton and Stow divisions, Samuel Churchill, an attorney, acted for the trust in Deddington and the Reverend Stone was a later treasurer in Chipping Norton. A statement of income and expenditure of the Burford, Chipping Norton and Banbury division of the Trust for the year 1828 to 1829 given by the then treasurer, John Matthews, shows that in that year they balanced their books and had £333 10s 6d 'in Treasurers hands'.[15] A later survey commenting on local turnpike roads said that the road between Shipton and Chipping Norton was in good repair except by Shipton station owing to the heavy traffic there.[16] So that at least by this time the trustees had managed to improve the road. In 1877 the following five men were trustees in Chipping Norton, the Reverend William E. Dixon Carter, Mayow Talmage, John W. Lockwood, Richard Nicholl Byass and Thomas Harris Norton, and signed the conveyance passing the 'Chipping Norton Tollhouse and Garden' to the 'Mayor, Aldermen and Burgesses of the Borough of Chipping Norton'. for fifty pounds.

Of the turnpike employees one was a member of the well-known Packer family of Chipping Norton. Charles Packer was the grandfather of Francis Richard the photographer. At his marriage in 1843 and the baptism of his son Thomas in 1846 Charles was given as the Burford Road tollgate keeper. In later census returns he was given as road surveyor. The Chipping Norton 1841 census gives a Robert North as the turnpike keeper. There is an entry in Heythrop parish registers giving the baptism of a daughter to Charles Cox of the Turnpike Gate, Chipping Norton. This is probably the gate on the Chipping Norton to Banbury road near to the turning to Hook Norton. The 'Shipton' tollhouse was in fact in Ascott under Wychwood parish and entries concerning it are in their census returns. In 1871, Joseph Moss an agricultural labourer, was given as living in 'Turnpike House' and the next entry was 'Shipton Turnpike' occupied by David Alder given as a coal dealer. William Hayward, aged 70, was

PIKE HOUSE, THE OLD TURNPIKE TOLLHOUSE IN SHIPTON

living in the 'Late Toll Gate' his occupation was 'road contractor'. In 1891 John Simmonds, a railway porter was living at 'The Toll House'. It is ironic that at the end of the century a railway worker was living in the old tollhouse, so close to the form of transport that did much to reduce the use of turnpike roads. William Hayward appears in the Shipton census returns. In 1851 he was given as a road labourer, in 1861 as 'Foreman on Turnpike Road', and in 1871 as a roadman. Other names appear, in 1861 William Bartlett was given as 'carter for surveyor turnpike roads' and in the same census Charles Bayliss was shown as 'surveyor of roads employing 30 men', and in 1871 as 'road surveyor. Two given as road contractors are named, Richard Ustice (?Eustace) in 1851 and John Franklin in 1891. In 1881 John Cox and his wife Sarah both appear as 'roadman lab'.

Conclusion

Historians know that no problems are new, they only differ in detail. In early centuries complaints were made about the condition of the roads which were muddy and potholed in winter and chokingly dusty in summer; now the worries are of car emissions and pollution. The eighteenth century *Jackson's Oxford Journal* is full of accounts of road accidents between carts, post chaises, stage coaches and riders on horseback often caused by road conditions. Earlier generations sought to solve the problems of road transport with privately sponsored road acts. As John Rule says 'Enabled by the willingness of Parliament to facilitate

local economic improvement, the turnpike trusts succeeded in injecting resources into the improvement of a road network which might otherwise have remained much worse'.[17] Such evidence as there is suggests that few people made large profits from investing in turnpike roads but their investment did help to make the movement of people and goods easier. Costs of tolls were probably passed on to customers so that while travelling was relatively more comfortable the price of travel, and the carriage of goods would have increased. Toll roads were still in existence until the late nineteenth century but the coming of the railway began the demise of horse-drawn travel and the turnpike roads, much as the combustion engine did to the railways in this century. But will it be electronic toll roads which relieve the modern problems of congestion and public cost of road travel in the twenty-first century?

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The Wychwoods Manors in Domesday Book

FRANK WARE

Local history in the Wychwoods, like much of rural England, begins with a sudden flash of illumination in Domesday Book. Shipton, Milton, Ascott and Lyneham are all recorded there for the first time.

King William I instigated the survey of the country he conquered twenty years before to establish its wealth for taxation purposes and how it was distributed among his barons. Survey teams toured the country, taking evidence on oath from the sheriff of each shire, local barons and villeins from every manor. The results were collated during 1086 in Domesday Book. The terse entries, in abbreviated medieval latin, present a detailed picture of the demography, economy and social composition of late Saxon England, in the process of being taken over by the Normans.

The Royal Manor of Shipton

Nine manors are detailed at Ascott, Lyneham, Milton, Shipton and Swinbrook, see the Map and Tables 1 and 2. The massive Royal Manor (Shipton 1) dominated them, with 53 ploughteams and 124 peasant households, over half the total. There were 6 mills, the highest number on any estate in Oxfordshire. The manor included the jurisdiction of three hundreds (divisions of the shire for local administration); fines imposed in the hundredal courts were a lucrative source of revenue. Six other Royal Manors in Oxfordshire were also responsible for the jurisdiction of hundreds. Altogether Shipton was worth £72 to the King.

Milton and Swinbrook

Two further estates, recorded under Shipton, were held from the King by Alfsi of Faringdon, a Saxon who paid rent for Shipton 2 and held Shipton 3 as an 'officer of the King'. With 36 acres of meadow, they were worth £11. Shipton 2 was probably located at Milton and Shipton 3 possibly at Langley Mill. Another small estate was held by Alfsi's son Alwy at Milton, with 2 acres of meadow and a long stretch of woodland. The value was said to be £7, but this looks like a mistake for 7s. Father and son ran these three manors as a single estate.

Also at Milton was a small estate worth £3 held by Rannulf Flambard, then a minor cleric. Flambard became Chief Minister to King William II, hated for unpopular taxes, and as Bishop of Durham built the magnificent

Table 1: The Domesday Estates

Estate	Domesday Name	Tenant-in-Chief	Occupier or Sub-tenant	Phillimore Reference
Shipton 1	Sciptone	King		1,5
Shipton 2	Sciptone		Alfsi of Faringdon	1,9
Shipton 3	Sciptone		Alfsi of Faringdon	58,29
Milton 1	Mideltone		Alwy, son of Alfsi	59,21
Milton 2	Mideltone		Rannulf Flambard	14,6
Swinbrook	Svinbroc		Geoffrey	58,15
Ascott Doilly	Esthcote	Robert d'Oilly	Roger	28,25
Ascott Earl	Estcote	Odo	Ilbert de Lacy	7,61
Lyneham	Lineham	Odo	Ilbert de Lacy	7,59

Cathedral. Milton was an early estate in the portfolio he was beginning to accumulate in 1086.

A small estate at Swinbrook was held by Geoffrey, another 'officer of the King', worth 40s.

Ascott and Lyneham

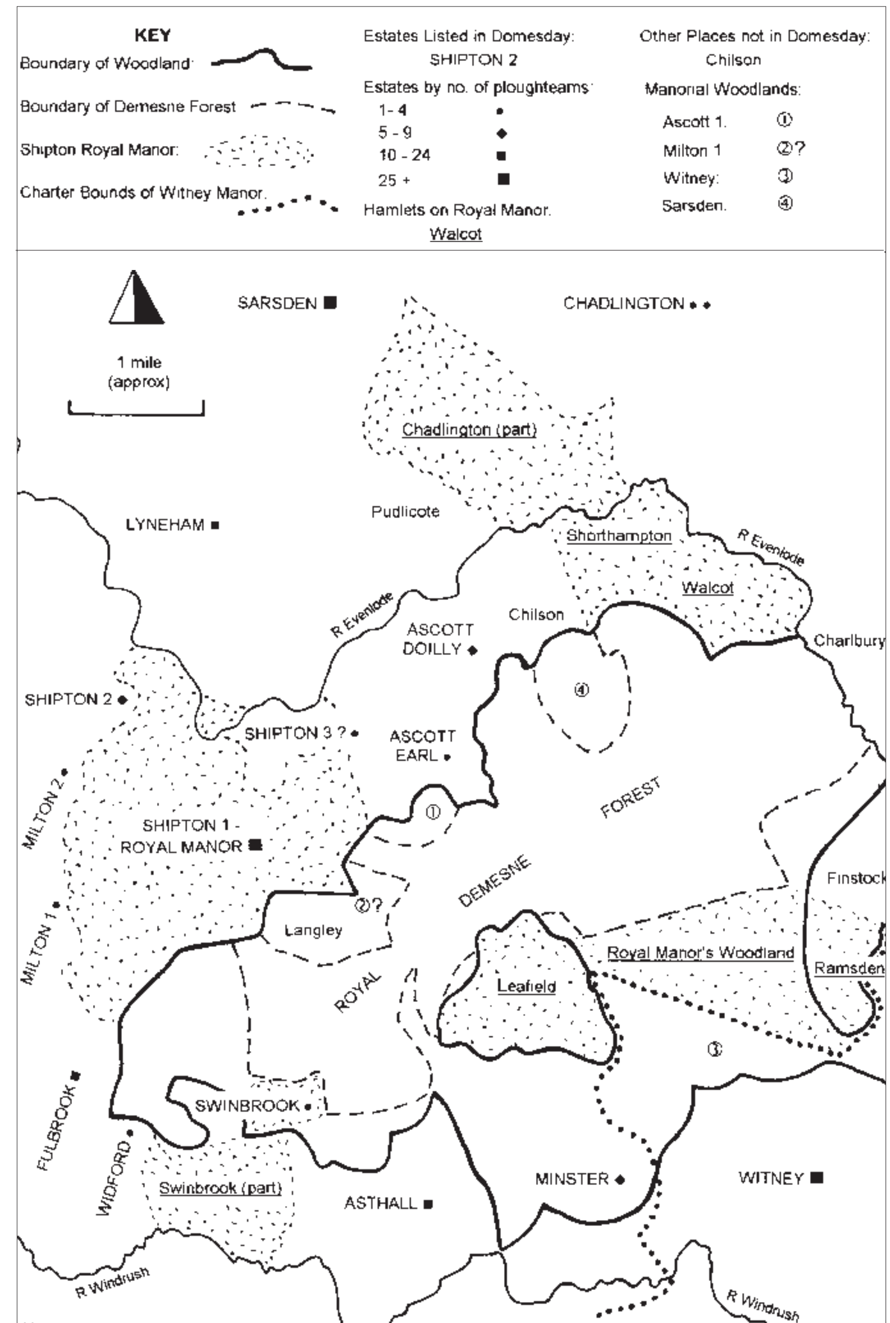
Ascott was divided into two manors. The first was held by Robert d'Oilly, a prominent local Norman baron, from whom the name Ascott Doilly comes. With a mill, 15 acres of meadow, pasture and woodland, it was worth £8. The second (later called Ascott Earl) was held by Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, the half-brother of King William. Ilbert de Lacy, a major baron, was the sub-tenant. With 16 acres of meadow, it was worth £4.

Lyneham was also held by Bishop Odo as tenant-in-chief with Ilbert as sub-tenant. With a mill, 120 acres of meadow and 200 of pasture, it was worth £10.

The Estates and their Lords

What were these places recorded in such detail in Domesday, with names so familiar to us? Domesday describes them as *terra*, 'land'. The term 'manor' is often used but may confuse, implying a domestic residence fit for a lord. Parishes as we generally know them probably developed later, following rather than establishing the borders of these estates. They may not yet have fully developed into the villages we know; it is now thought that the nucleated village with its open fields divided into strips was a later development, up to the twelfth century. It is safer to think of the *terra* as agricultural estates, often with several hamlets and isolated farmsteads scattered throughout them.

Our small local sample is not typical. Nationally, about 15% of the land was held directly by the King and a further 25% by the Church. Most



of the remainder was held by 200 barons – 'tenants-in-chief' – all but two of them Norman: men like Odo and Robert d'Oilly. Holdings by lesser men like Alfsi formed only a small part of the total. Knights of the shire, so prominent later in the Middle Ages, are hardly mentioned in Domesday; they were probably occupied on garrison duty in their lord's castle in the eleventh century, and it was later that barons settled them on manorial land as dependants.

The lord of the manor was usually absentee. The King and the barons, when not at court or on campaign, travelled round their estates with their followers, to consume the produce and enjoy the hunting. Sanitary conditions alone would have cut their visits short. But they followed established circuits, staying at their main estates with castles or manor-houses, and seldom visited their lesser manors.

The King and Bishop Odo probably never visited their Wychwood estates (when the King wanted to hunt, Woodstock was his most likely base); Ilbert de Lacy and Rannulf Flambard seldom if ever. Robert d'Oilly was a locally-based baron, the builder and first castellan of Oxford castle and Sheriff of the shire, and would have made his presence felt when he wished.

The Saxon Alfsi of Faringdon and his son Alwy were more frequent visitors, if not resident farmers – Alfsi had other estates locally, at Langford and Windrush, where he was described as a 'King's Thane'. Beryl Schumer suggests there was a later connection between Alwy's estate and the de Langley family who were Foresters – the woodland recorded was probably adjacent to the forest at Langley – which could explain the high value of £7. Later, Robert of Astrop gave to Bruern Abbey land at Milton, described as having been owned by his grandfather Alewi, the son of Eilsi of Faringdon. This was probably Shipton 2, attributed by Domesday to Alfsi, rather than Alwy's £7 estate.

But the men who played the most prominent role in the local community, the people to whom the peasants related daily as their masters, are not mentioned in Domesday: the bailiffs or reeves who managed the estates. In particular, the reeve of the Royal Manor would have also adjudicated at the hundredal courts, so was in charge of law throughout a swathe of West Oxfordshire. He presumably had a house of some pretension and comfort. He was probably, like Alfsi, a Saxon.

Ploughteams and Peasants

Table 2 shows the ploughteams and peasant holdings on these Wychwoods manors. The number of ploughteams gives a guide to the size of individual estates. These were oxen, with up to eight beasts to a team. A Saxon source tells us that a team could plough more than an acre a day, so I suggest each team could plough 50 acres a year with both autumn and spring ploughing. Half the land was kept fallow each year for rough grazing (the beasts manuring the ground in the process). A multiple of 100 acres of arable for each ploughteam is therefore suggested, on which basis the Royal Manor could have had about 5,000 acres, as well as meadows, pasture and woodland, which are mentioned but not measured in the Domesday entry. This is far larger than the present parish of Shipton. The manor of Witney, whose boundaries are known from Saxon charters, covered four modern parishes – Witney, Curbridge, Crawley and Hailey – but only had 25 ploughteams, less than half the Royal Manor's 53 (Witney did however include considerable woodland).

Table 2: Ploughteams and Peasant Households

Estate	Ploughteams			Peasant Households			
	Demesne	Peasants	Total	Villeins	Bordars	Serfs	Total
Shipton 1	10	43	53	54	64	6	124
Shipton 2	2	7	9	18	5	8	31
Shipton 3	2	–	2	–	–	–	–
Milton 1	1	–	1	–	–	–	–
Milton 2	1	1	2	4	2	2	8
Swinbrook	1	1	2	2	4	1	7
Ascott Doilly	3	3	6	7	1	6	14
Ascott Earl	2	2	4	3	6	4	13
Lyneham	4	11	15	30	7	6	43
Totals	26	68	94	118	89	33	240

Table 2 shows that less than a third of the ploughteams belonged to the demesne farms which supported the lords of the manor, the remainder belonging to the peasants. But this understates the demesne acreage, as the peasants worked for their lord on a number of days each year using their own ploughteams.

Two hundred and forty peasants are recorded, divided into three classes. The villeins probably owned the ploughteams and held 30 acres or so to support their families, with rights of access to meadows and pasture. The bordars held less land, perhaps 5 acres, but some may have been craftsmen – millers, smiths and carpenters. The serfs worked the demesne land for the lord, and would have had at best a small plot to raise some vegetables and keep a pig.

The count of peasants represents the number of holdings. Probably about 4 or 5 people lived in each household, so there were 1,000 to 1,200 people on the Wychwoods estates, over half of them on the Royal Manor.

Shipton Church

No church is recorded at Shipton, which is usual in Oxfordshire, even where eleventh-century churches are known. St Mary's dates back to the late twelfth century, but we may assume it replaced an earlier church. Samples of burials found at Prebendal House have been carbon-dated, suggesting that in the ninth century the burial ground was larger than at present. John Blair believes Shipton was one of the minster churches which in the Saxon period served much larger areas than the 'single-priest' parishes, which only crystallised by the thirteenth century. Minster churches were often associated with Royal Manors, and the fact that Shipton Parish included Leafield and Ramsden until the eighteenth-century supports this theory.

We may assume that the centre of the estate was located near the church – the manor house (if there was one), the reeve's home and the main barns. Round these would have clustered the homesteads of a number of the villeins and craftsmen, though other hamlets certainly existed on the Royal Manor.

The Royal Forest and the location of the Royal Manor

Woodland was a valuable resource, carefully managed. Standing timber was needed for building, coppiced wood for all manner of artefacts including fencing and hurdles, and wood was the principal source of fuel. Woodlands also provided pannage for swine and other fodder, and the Royal Forests supported deer which were hunted for sport and the table.

The boundaries of the Royal Forests are difficult to interpret from the Domesday entry: 'In Shotover, Stowford, Woodstock, Cornbury and Wychwood are the lordship forests of the King. They have 9 leagues length and as many in width'. I rely on Beryl Schumer's detailed study of medieval Wychwood Forest, largely deduced from documentary sources after Domesday, for the boundaries of the Demesne Forest, together with adjacent manorial woodlands, shown on the Map. She thought that the north-west shore of the forest, facing the Evenlode valley, did not change much between Domesday and nineteenth-century disafforestation. The early Norman kings tried to extend Forest Law to much larger areas, including the Wychwoods estates; but this was a question of Law, not land-use, and the estates remained agricultural with little if any additional woodland on them away from the Forest and its purlieus.

The Domesday entry for the Royal Manor says 'the woodland is in the King's Enclosure' (i.e. in the Forest or its purlieus), and Beryl Schumer has located it as a triangular strip lying between Leafield and Ramsden, with the boundaries of the Witney estate to the south, described in late Saxon charters. Open hamlets on either side at Leafield and Ramsden were also part of the Royal Manor.

Downstream in the Evenlode valley between Ascott and Cornbury Forest opposite Charlbury, the whole of the south bank and much of the north bank belonged to two estates, the Shipton Royal Manor and another large estate of 28 ploughteams at Sarsden. There were hamlets at Chilson and Pudlicote on the Sarsden estate with its woodlands adjacent; and at Shorthampton and Walcot on the Shipton Manor. Chadlington had two small estates recorded in Domesday, but much of the present parish was divided between Shipton and Sarsden. The Royal Manor also included part of Swinbrook.

Before Domesday Book

Archaeology reveals a landscape exploited long before 1086. Mesolithic flints, left by hunter-gatherers over 7,000 years ago, were found during excavation under a Neolithic barrow near the Charlbury road in Ascott. Our Society's fieldwalks have recovered widespread flints from the Neolithic to Bronze Ages: arrowheads and worked tools, flakes and knapping waste. An Iron Age hillfort commands the summit north of Ascott. A Romano-British villa stood below it, and lesser settlements have been located by fieldwalking. A thin but persistent scatter of Roman pottery deposited on the fields in the process of manuring, also found by fieldwalking, indicates that the landscape was widely farmed at that time.

It is inference that there was continuity of occupation and farming between the Roman period and 1086, as we have no archaeological or documentary evidence for it. During this time political sovereignties and local lordships came and went, a new language and a new religion were established, but the peasants continued tilling the land and eking out a living for themselves and their lords. The roots of the communities revealed in Domesday Book lay deep in the past.

Sources and Further Reading

There are two available translations of the Oxford folios in Domesday: by Sir Frank Stenton in Vol. 1 of the *Victoria County History of Oxfordshire* (1939) and Vol. 14 in the Phillimore *Domesday Book* series, ed. John Morris (1978). The references to the entries for individual manors in Table 1 are taken from the latter.

Beryl Schumer, *The Evolution of Wychwood to 1400: Pioneers, Frontiers and Forests* (1984). I am deeply indebted to Dr Schumer for information passed to me personally about the Forest and the manors which surrounded it.

Frank Ware 'The Royal Manor of Sciptone and Neighbouring Estates in Domesday' in *Wychwoods History* Number 1 (1985) & 2 (1986).

Frank and Margaret Ware, 'Practical Fieldwalking in the Evenlode' in *Wychwoods History* Number 4 (1988); 'Fieldwalking a Romano-British Site above Shipton' in *Wychwoods History* Number 8 (1993); 'A Roman villa at Upper Milton?' in *Wychwoods History* Number 14 (1999).

John Blair, *Anglo Saxon Oxfordshire* (1994) and 'The Origins of the Minster Church at Shipton under Wychwood' in *Wychwoods History* Number 7 (1992)

What's in a Name?

John Rawlins

Those who study the nineteenth-century census returns from 1841 onwards find that the names of persons living in households can usually be read, but, to find where those households were within the village is more difficult. The local enumerator for each census did not necessarily follow the same route as his predecessor and give only the vaguest indication of where people lived.

In 1841 Milton's enumerator divided the parish into Upper and Lower Milton and names only three definite locations, most of them roads, in each area to cover the 118 buildings. By 1891 the census enumerator gave little more detail or specific names to the households he visited and in Shipton James Alfred Willis named 29 buildings or groups of buildings he called on, but he named no thoroughfares.

Mr Gilbert the Milton enumerator for 1891 named 17 individual

Below: Kohima (right) with stables and clock tower (left) in the 1900s viewed from the direction of the Bruern Road

Right: Kohima from the southern gateway in Lyneham Road

buildings and four roads when he completed his census of the 215 households. Some of those named survive today, such as High Lodge, Springhill Farm and Sunrise; others are different through change of use, for example Coffee Tavern to the present Wychwood Surgery; or the same name has moved to another house. Heath House in Church Road, Milton kept that name until 1930 when the then owner Brigadier General Kirby changed it to Heathfield House. His reason for the change of name would seem to be to allow him to take the name Heath House with him when he married Mrs Paisley in March 1930. So, on her marriage Mrs Paisley not only took on the new surname of Mrs Kirby but her own home, Kohima, now took on her new husband's choice of name, Heath House.

Kohima was the name given to the property in Lyneham Road, Milton by Mrs Damont whose husband had been killed at Kohima in north-east India in 1857 during the Indian Mutiny. Apart from the house there were stables and coach house complete with clock tower, a pair of semi-detached cottages and six bungalows with their exteriors built from corrugated iron and using the name Kohima. Today the name only remains on the bungalow built on the site of two of the former corrugated iron bungalows.

Soon after the building of Matthews mill in 1911, a pair of semi-detached cottages were built in Station Road, Shipton, to house employees at the mill. One of the first occupants was the clerk, Mr Goss and his wife, from the Reading area. He named the cottage Falklands after the island of that

name where he was born and to which his great grandfather had emigrated in 1850. In the 1920s the Goss family moved to another Matthews tied cottage, Pike House, Station Road. This was named after its former use as the gatekeeper's house on the old turnpike (see photo page 63). As he approached his retirement Mr Goss had a bungalow built for himself in Bruern Road, Milton. He did not live long enough to live in it but is still carries the name he gave it – Falklands.

Like Falklands and Kohima, other house names have been brought to the area. The first Matthews home in Shipton was called Tothill from the family farm in Lincolnshire. This name was then changed to Holmwood, and changed again to Cromwell House and now back again to the present Holmwood. When called Holmwood before the Second World War, part of the grounds were used by Shipton Bowls Club, and during its spell as Cromwell House after the war it was home to the Wychwoods Tennis Club. In 1977 much of the grounds of the house were developed as a residential estate, taking the name of the original house, Tothill.

At the time of his marriage Samuel E. Groves of Alfred Groves and Sons built a pair of semi-detached cottages opposite the present Wychwood Church of England School. Mr Sam and his wife, Muriel, called their new home Berwyn to remind them of their honeymoon spent in North Wales.

Station Road, Shipton, 1920s looking south from above the railway. The nearest of the semidetached cottages is named Falklands

A larger house was subsequently built for them on adjacent land and called Four Winds, after John Buchan's book *The House of the Four Winds*.

About five years ago two members of the Basson family, whose relatives had been licensees at the Quart Pot at the turn of the century, called on me asking where The Anchorage was. They had been told that it was in Frog Lane, Milton, but having checked all property names they could find not find it. Luckily I could recall helping my father prune the roses for Mr Southam at The Anchorage some fifty years ago. Since then it has changed its name to Orchard House.

The Anchorage was built towards the end of the nineteenth century when two other neighbouring buildings in Frog Lane were built in non-vernacular style – Holmwood and Frogmore House. The former has been renamed Woodside and the latter became Forest Lodge in the 1930s which it remained until the 1950s when it became Forest Gate. The previous name of Forest Lodge was transferred to a newly-built house on the opposite side of Frog Lane, and the original name, Frogmore House, was adopted by another new house, as Frogmore, in Frog Lane.

The name St Michael's was used in Shipton for the two houses below the Crown (now called Ivan House and Gales Green) when they were run as a boarding school/college for young ladies from 1869. The name transferred to a newly-built school/college in Milton Lane in 1881, and the name remained when the building was subsequently occupied by the Waifs and Strays Society and during its requisition by the military during the Second World War. The building then became a corn mill and chandlery for Alfred Meecham and Son and the name again transferred. This time it was to the site opposite on which council houses were built in the late 1940s – St Michael's Close. The building built as St Michael's in Milton Lane was demolished in 1989 and the site redeveloped as Willis Court.

One might have presumed that Jubilee Lane in Milton had some connection with the celebrations concerning Queen Victoria, but the name is derived from the 50th Jubilee anniversary in 1889 of the building of the Baptist chapel at the top of the High Street. At that jubilee it was decided to raise subscriptions for the building of a manse in the lane which had been variously known as Dix's Lane. The Road, Groves' Lane and Barnes' Corner and is now known as Jubilee Lane.

From my limited research of records of Milton and Shipton it would appear that in the late nineteenth century very few residential buildings had names. Exceptions were farms and the larger properties – Shipton Court, Shipton Lodge etc, and the inns. Public buildings like schools, churches and chapels also had names. Small cottages had no names unless they were in a row or group when a collective name was used, as with Magpie Alley, Mount Pleasant and Fiddlers Hill in Shipton and The

ARIEL VIEW OF SHIPTON IN WINTER IN THE 1920S. THE AEROPLANE WING CAN BE SEEN IN THE BOTTOM LEFT CORNER. THE WHITE PATCHES ON THE FIELDS IN THE CENTRE ARE

Square, Frog Lane and Hawkes' Yard in Milton. In the twentieth century the spread of the naming of buildings was slow, although new buildings were usually given names and there was some up-market naming of the already existing names.

In the early 1920s there was some attempt with numbering properties on the newly-built estates, a policy which continues today. But the numbering of the older roads has progressed little, with the exception of Milton High Street.

For some reason, unknown to me, it was around the late 1930s that more of the smaller properties were given names and by the same time the names of most roads and lanes had evolved into the names generally accepted today.

Today all buildings have a name or number (some both) as well as a road or street name, and both house and street names are displayed on boards or plates and are recorded on maps. Unfortunately for the local historian some house names have been changed in the last one hundred years, a few more than once, and any owner can change the name of their property at any time.

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***Wychwoods History,* Number 6 (1991) £3.00** The Untons; Leonard Boxe, Gentleman of Ascott; Infantile Mortality 1565–94; The Wharton Charity; Medieval Fishpond at Bruern Grange; Shipton School Log Book 1869–1905; Mary Moss; Life in Old Milton.

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***Wychwoods History,* Number 10 (1995) £3.00** Jessie Hunt, Evacuee 1939–45; Shipton in 1662: Hearth Tax Study, Pt 2; Shipton Village Shops and Roundsmen; First Parish Council Elections; Smallpox; Puzzles over Shipton Prebend; What really happened at Shipton Court; The de Langleys: Medieval Foresters; George Quartermain of Ascott.

***Wychwoods History,* Number 11 (1996) £3.00** Shipton Small Tithes 1727-34; Memories of Ascott; Ascott Priory Tithes; The Chaundys of Ascott; 'Where There's Muck...'; Agistment – a Tithing Nightmare; Asthall Roman Camp; A Determined Emigrant.

***Wychwoods History,* Number 12 (1997) £3.00** Welfare in the Wychwoods 1700–1834; From Annie to Barbara – Five Generations of a Shipton Family; More Memories of Ascott; Sheepwashing & the Ascott Sheepwash; The Barters of Sarsden and Salome of Natal; Lady Harriet Reade; The Wychwooders Lament; Springhill Farm.

***Wychwoods History,* Number 13 (1998) £3.00** Mother Shipton; Gwen Morgan, a Milton teacher; Doctor's Bill; Killing the Pig; Occupations 1785-1817; The Stampe Family; Farming Memories of Chadlington.

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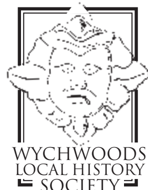
Cover illustration: *An idea of how Ascott d'Oyley castle may have looked c1170 (detail). Historical reconstruction by C J Bond*



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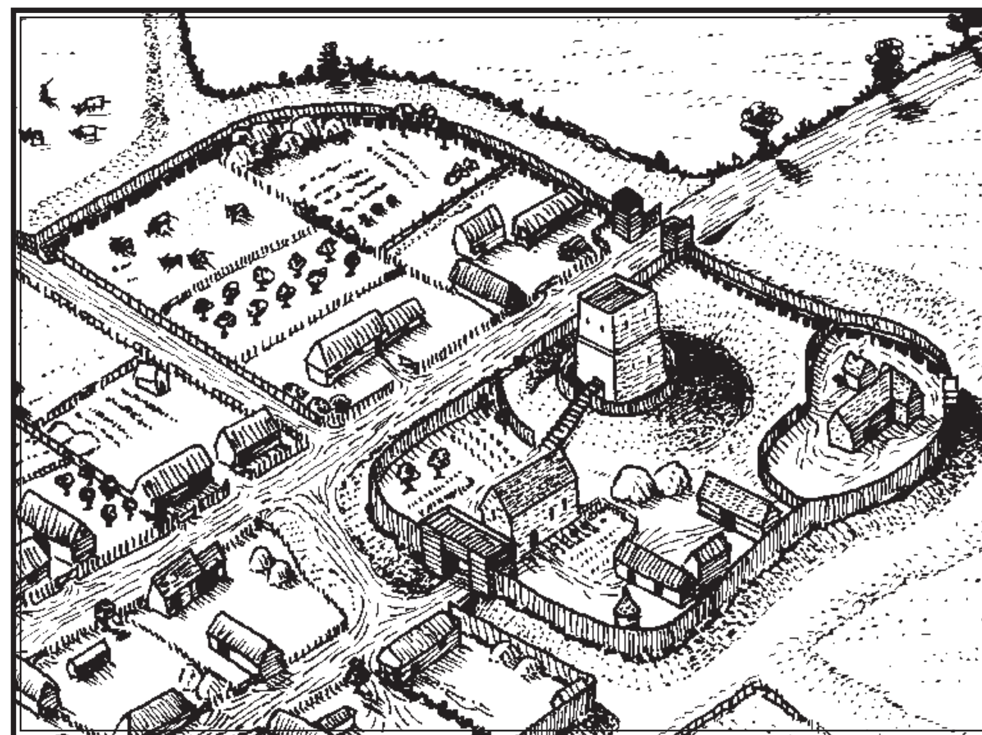

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