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HISTORICAL RESEARCH NOTES

BEKESBOURNE AND THE KING'S ESNECCA 1110-1445

Bekesbourne, just south of Canterbury, has two unusual claims to fame in that it was a member of the Cinque Ports and also supplied one of the king's esneccas, his cross-Channel passenger ship.¹ The only other place in England that supplied the king's esnecca was Southampton, which is a large port with extensive cross-Channel shipping. How these arrangements came about for a very small inland village nestling on the banks of a stream, which nowadays only runs intermittently, is an intriguing story. The transfer of the administration of the esnecca from generation to generation also resulted in two court cases, one of which involved a divided serjeanty and created a virtually unique legal precedent.

The first record, which confirms the provision of the king's ship, comes in a court case of 1190 in which William de Bec produces a charter from Henry II which says:

that this land (Bekesbourne) is held in serjeanty from the King for the administration (and presumably provision) of the king's esnecca by Hugh de Bec (William's father) and that Roger de Burnes, brother of Ilarria who was the wife of Hugh de Bec, and Roger's ancestors had held this serjeanty in the reign of Henry I.²

In the search for Roger de Burnes and his ancestors the next record comes from the Pipe Roll of Richard I in 1190 recording a payment for Eustace de Burnes' ship.³ So what is Eustace de Burnes and Roger's ship? The esnecca, as used after the Norman Conquest, is a long narrow, fast ship for the transport of passengers and in modern terms the king's esnecca can be compared to a royal yacht. It is said of Henry II that the King of England had not one but three ships for his crossings.⁴ Eventually there were four esneccas based at Southampton, Barfleur, Dieppe and Hastings, and there may have been another berthed at Chester.⁵ The Southampton esnecca was a large narrow ship of some 240 tons crewed by 64 men and was used for the King's frequent journeys from England to Normandy. The size of the Southampton esnecca is confirmed by the information about the collection of ships by Richard I when about to embark on his crusade:

He had taken into his service all the vessels, which the Cinque Ports could produce, to the number of thirty-three. Six more had been obtained from Shoreham and Southampton, and four by gift or hire from private persons; the King commissioned for his own use a vessel called the *Esnecca* which was much larger than the rest and carried a crew of sixty-one men.⁶

It is quite likely that the *esnecca* supplied by Bekesbourne was included in the quota of Cinque Port ships and that this *esnecca*, berthed at Hastings, was a smaller ship of 60 tons crewed by 21 men and a boy, which was the normal size of ship for that period. Although it was perfectly capable of travelling the eighty miles from Hastings to Dieppe, the king's preference was to use the larger ship for travel from Southampton to Barfleur. However despite the differences in size both the Southampton and Hastings ships were called an *esnecca*. A seal from Winchelsea shows the likely configuration of a ship fitted out for the king's travel, with a small cabin for shelter (Fig. 1).

The provision of a ship for the king's crossing of the English Channel commenced in the reign of William I, who used the services of Stephen Fitz Airard, one of his sea captains in the transport fleet to the Battle of Hastings. Fitz Airard, who had connections with Southampton, supplied the *esnecca* berthed at Southampton. On the death of Stephen Fitz Airard, sometime between 1110 and 1120, the service did not pass to his son as it is known that by 1120 Henry I had made other arrangements.⁷ The administration of the Southampton *esnecca* passed to an Italian family based in Southampton and from them to Nicholas de Sceau and on to Alan Trenchemer.⁸



Fig. 1 The Winchelsea seal. There is no known depiction of an *esnecca* and this is probably the closest available likeness of the Bekesbourne vessel.

The other change in arrangements made by Henry I was the appointment of Godwin Frenes to administer the king's esnecca based at Hastings. Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, had been in possession of Bekesbourne in 1086, the time of the Domesday Book, but he was stripped of his lands and exiled in 1087. Bekesbourne was therefore vacant after this and could be allocated to the supplier of a service to the king. Godwin Frenes was in possession of Bekesbourne in 1120 and the gift of this tenure by the king was the reward for supplying the king's esnecca at Hastings. It was a very handsome gift, as the manor of Bekesbourne was just over 1,000 acres. The tenure was held in serjeanty, the provision of a specified service to the king.

Godwin held the appointment for several years and when he died c.1130, his eldest son Robert de Hastings, then in possession of Grange (Gillingham) took over at Bekesbourne. He either held Grange as well as Bekesbourne or more likely passed Grange over to his younger brother, as there is a record of Grange being held in the de Hastings family for many years. Manasser de Hastings is shown as holding Grange by the service of finding a ship and 2 armed men for the fleet of the Cinque Ports, during the reign of Edward I. The tenant is also said to have owed the service of an oar whenever the king sailed to Hastings.⁹ On the death of Matthew de Hastings in 1276/7, his *Inquisition Post Mortem* shows him as holding Grange as a limb of Hastings by service of finding an oar at the same port when the king shall wish to cross the sea there.¹⁰ Robert must have felt that taking over Bekesbourne was a prestige appointment and this is reflected in the change of his name from de Hastings to de Burne, derived from the old name for Bekesbourne. However, the connection with Hastings for both the de Burnes and the de Becs is maintained over many years. The Grange branch of the family not only kept the Hastings name, from the *Inquisitions Post Mortem* they also had property in and around Hastings (see below), and their tenants supplied the guard at Hastings Castle.

If Eustace de Burnes is the operator of the Bekesbourne esnecca in 1190 how is he related to Roger de Burnes, named in the above charter? Eustace de Burnes appears several times in the Cartulary of St Gregory, Canterbury, and, in particular in charter 38, he is named as the son of Robert de Burnes.¹¹ Robert also has several entries in the cartulary and in charter 35 he has the names of Robert de Burnes and Robert de Hastings. In charter 36 Theobald, Archbishop of Canterbury, confirms his name as Robert de Hastings, son of 'Godwini freni'. Freni seems to be a descriptive word rather than a place name or surname, especially as the Godwin is capitalised and the freni is not. The only Latin word close to freni means a bit, bridle or brake which does not seem to be a suitable description. In a list of landholders in Kent for 1120 there is an entry for Godwinus Frenesena as holding 2 sulungs in Bekesbourne.¹² Colin Flight has suggested that Godwinus Frenesena means the son of Godwin of Frenes but he is unsure of this interpretation and it may simply mean

a Frenchman or as the latin suffix *ena* means of or from, his name should be rendered into English as Godwin from Frenes, a small commune in Normandy. If this is the case Godwin therefore either came over with William the Conqueror or was the son of one who did. His son is shown as Robert de Hastings and not Robert *freni* or *frenesena* so he was most likely born in England. In the same list of landholders, Robert de Hastings is shown as holding one and a quarter sulungs in Grange. It is unlikely that they were an English family as the Norman kings by the time of Domesday trusted very few of the English to hold positions of authority and they had to be skilled in seamanship to be entrusted with the life of the king on a channel crossing. The link between Grange and Bekesbourne is vital to understanding the start of the supply of the king's esnecca.

In the *White & Black Books of the Cinque Ports* there is an entry, covering Grange, which reads:

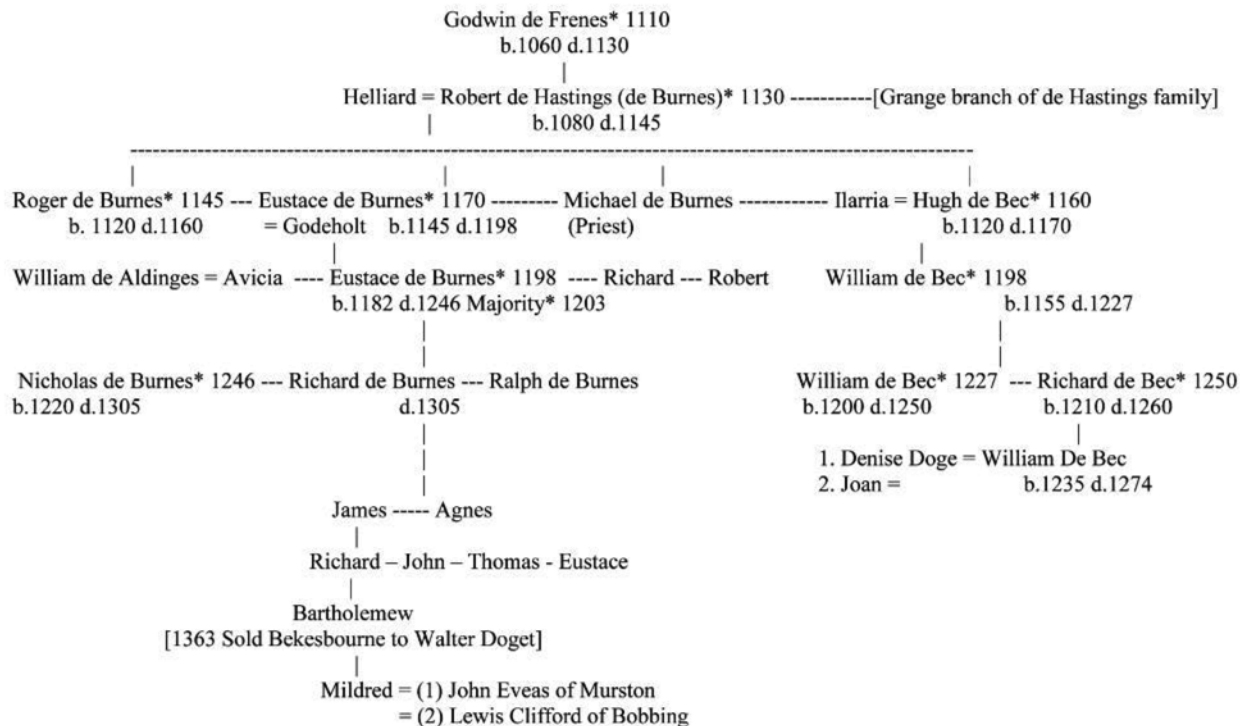
Grange is a limb of Hastings as a result of a Hastings family migrating and carrying one oar of one boat, a purely personal service.¹³

As the family that held Grange in 1120 had the surname de Hastings we can assume that this is the same family, and that Godwin held that manor, before his son Robert, and before he held Bekesbourne. This personal service was later translated into a requirement that Bekesbourne and Grange

will find these ships (one each) on the summons of 40 days, armed and in each ship, 20 men and the captain, and they must maintain this at their own expense.¹⁴

The provision of the ships is the reason for both Grange and Bekesbourne being Cinque Port limbs of Hastings, as these two ships would have counted against Hastings' allocated requirement to supply 21 ships. Grange does not ever appear to have been involved in the supply of the king's esnecca. Nor indeed does Hastings, except that the esnecca supplied by Bekesbourne was berthed there.

When Robert died, around 1145, the succession was not clear. The only children we have a record of are Eustace and his younger brother Michael.¹⁵ Michael went into the priesthood and was vicar of Bekesbourne from 1180 to 1182. Eustace did take over the administration of the esnecca, which he held in 1190, but the court case, at which the charter of Henry II is revealed, shows that both Roger de Burnes and Hugh de Bec had the administration before 1190; therefore Eustace could not have succeeded directly. As Hugh de Bec succeeded Roger, it must have been Roger de Burne who took over from Robert de Burne and Roger de Burne must therefore be Robert's son and Eustace de Burne's elder brother, despite not being mentioned in the cartulary of St Gregory's Priory, Canterbury. (See **Fig. 2** showing the family tree.)



**Received the serjeanty for the esnecca.
All dates are provisional.*

Fig. 2 The de Burnes/de Bec family trees.

When Roger died he left only a widow and the administration did not pass, as would have been expected to Eustace, his brother, but passed out of the de Burne family to Hugh de Bec. The only explanation for this must have been that Eustace was too young to take over the administration, which required an adult male in charge. The charter of Henry II makes it clear that Hugh de Bec had married Roger's sister, Ilarria, and was therefore the closest adult male relative to take over the administration. When Hugh de Bec married Ilarria it was stated that he had married an heiress; presumably she had been left land by her father Robert. Hugh de Bec almost certainly took over the manor of Bekesbourne for the duration of his tenure and the charter makes clear that this tenure would pass to his heirs.

However when Hugh de Bec died, his son William did not take over the administration, and again it was probably because he was too young. By this time Eustace de Burnes had come of age and reclaimed the administration. There is no record of the administration being shared between Eustace and William de Bec (when he came of age), and it is unlikely as the Pipe Roll of Richard I refers to Eustace de Burnes' ship, and not to a shared ship.¹⁶ William de Bec and Eustace had a difference of opinion, which resulted in a court case in 1190, for which fortunately there are many details. It appears that Eustace gave the church at Bekesbourne to the Priory of St Gregory, Canterbury, only to discover that Hugh de Bec, William's father, had also given away the church, to a priory in Hastings. Eustace contended that as his family had built the church and funded it that it was his right to give it away. Eventually William agreed on receiving a payment of 100s., and the priory in Hastings relinquished its claim.¹⁷

Eustace had a son also called Eustace but when Eustace senior died, probably in 1198, Eustace junior was still a child. Eustace's affairs, until he reached the age of majority, were in the hands of Robert of Turnham (now known as Thurnham) a wealthy Kent landowner with extensive maritime connections (commander of the English Fleet from 1191-1213) and he arranged for Eustace to be awarded the serjeanty as listed in the *Testa de Nevill* for 1198:

(Eustace) son of Eustace de Burnes who is under age and in the wardship of Robert de Turnham holds Burnes in serjeanty and it is worth £10. In the hands of Robert de Turnham for our Lord King.¹⁸

William de Bec (Beke) was also awarded his share in the serjeanty in the same list of the *Testa de Nevill*:

William de Bec holds Burnes in serjeanty and it is worth £10 and he has to find one ship for the service of our Lord King and pays to the Lord King three marks.¹⁹

This is the point at which the divided serjeanty becomes the subject of a court case which took place in 1201. These entries clearly show that the serjeanty was for the provision by William de Bec (and not Eustace) of one ship at the king's service and that the land held in tenure, supposed to support that supply, as a result of this serjeanty was divided into two equal parts. The action was brought by William of Alding (Yalding) husband of Avicia against William de Bec, claiming the whole land as serjeanty on the grounds that Avicia was the eldest daughter (presumably also the sister of Eustace, junior) the niece of Roger de Burnes and was the eldest co-heir of the eldest co-heir, and that William de Bec, who held the serjeanty was the representative of a junior co-heir. William obtained the declaration below that land held in serjeanty could not be divided; however the phrase used is partible and this may refer to the custom of gavelkind and partible inheritance from which serjeanty was exempt.²⁰

William (de Bec) is advised that his land is by serjeanty of the Lord King and is non partible, and is confirmed by charter of the Lord King Henry father's [i.e. Henry II] and in order to preserve this I give and concede to Hugh de Bec administration of my snecca of Hastings of which Roger de Burnes brother of Illaria wife of Hugh de Bec had and his ancestors before him ... and I order that the same Hugh de Bec as tenant and his heirs administers the same with land and all appurtenances in peace etc., as fully as did the ancestors of Roger in the time of King Henry my grandfather.²¹

Although Avicia initially claimed the serjeanty as the eldest co-heir of the eldest co-heir, on the grounds that Roger was her uncle and referred to William as the younger co-heir, she did not succeed in her claim and when she returned to the attack in 1203 by simply claiming a caracute of land as her share she was again defeated. The result of the court case created a legal precedent and it was used as almost the only example of the fact that a serjeanty could not be divided even into the beginning of the reign of Queen Victoria in 1837, concerning the serjeanty of the Lord Great Chamberlain.²²

The whole of this court case seems to hinge on the declaration that a serjeanty could not be divided but this same serjeanty was in fact divided between William de Bec and Eustace de Burne junior. One thing the court case seems to make clear is that Eustace junior was not involved in the case, probably because he was under age, and at this stage he did not have any involvement in the administration of the king's esnecca. However Eustace came of age in 1203 and the administration of the esnecca was then shared between himself and William de Bec. This must have been an amicable arrangement as the two tenure holders of the manor also held land jointly outside the manor.²³

The next entry in the *Testa de Nevill* is in 1227, probably when William

senior died and was succeeded by his son, also William. This shows William and Eustace jointly holding land worth £20 for the provision of a ship on the summons with the men of Hastings. This seems to be the normal service of a limb of the Cinque Ports in supplying a ship as part of the quota of the head port, and not the provision of the king's ferry service.²⁴ This also accords with an ordinance issued by Henry III in 1229 which is quite clear:

an ordinance touching the service of shipping to be furnished by the Cinque Ports. These are the ports of the King of England, having liberties which other ports have not, that is to say, as more fully appeareth in the charters thereof made: Hastings, to which pertains as members ... Seaford, Pevensea, Bulverhithe, Hydney, Iham, Beaksborne, Grench and Northye. The services therof due to the Lord King, twenty one ships, and in every ship twenty one men with one boy, which is called a gromet.²⁵

The next entry relating to Bekesbourne in the *Testa de Nevill* for 1240/1 rectifies this situation with a specific reference to the king's ferry service as a joint service between William and Eustace.²⁶ Eustace was succeeded by his son Nicholas in the 1240s although we can find no entry for his award of serjeanty, and William de Bec, who died childless, was followed by his brother Richard de Bec about 1250 according to the following entry from the *Testa de Nevill*:

Serjeanty of Richard de Bec in Burnes for which is found to be responsible to our Lord King of one ship for whatever passage is alienated in share.²⁷

And a further entry for the same person:

Serjeanty of Richard de Bec for which is found to be responsible to our Lord King of one ship for whatever passage is alienated in a small part.²⁸

Why there were two entries for essentially the same service is not known, especially as they are for the same year; it may possibly have been a clerical error where the writer did not realise he had already made an entry for Richard. The serjeanty of Richard is shown as shared, and this is confirmed by the following entry in the Patent Rolls, when Nicholas de Burne and Richard de Bec go off together, presumably in their joint ship, with the King on an expedition to Gascony in 1253:

Exemption of Nicholas de Burnes and Richard de Bek, because they hold of the king in the liberty of his ports, by the service of finding one ship for the king's crossing, from being put on assizes, juries or recognitions, and from being made coroner or escheator. Grant also to them that if their heirs will defend (*vendicare*) before the king the said liberties, the king will do them full justice in his court.²⁹

The joint serjeanty continued until the death of Richard de Bec, probably around 1260. His son William succeeded him but there is no record of the serjeanty being awarded to him. Nicholas de Burnes' son James succeeded him but there is also no record of him claiming the serjeanty. Richard de Bec's award of the serjeanty in 1250 is the last record of such, as serjeanties were in retreat during the reign of Edward I (1272-1307).³⁰ However the obligations and privileges of the tenure continued and in 1276 we find a record that 'the tenant of Bekesborne, alias Levingsburn, was bound to find a ship called *Baard* for this purpose'.³¹ When the two halves of the manor passed from the de Burnes to the Dogets in 1363, and from the de Becs to the Cobhams in the late thirteenth/early fourteenth centuries, these privileges, and presumably obligations, were confirmed by a charter of the late fourteenth century from Richard II:

The king commands the treasurer and barons not to compel John of Cobham, knight, Walter Doget and John Doget, tenants of the manor of Bekesbourne and of 32 acres of land parcel of the same manor, purchased by Walter Doget, deceased, which manor and lands are a limb of the port of Hastings, to pay the tenth and fifteenth or the moiety of the tenth and fifteenth, because they contribute to maintaining the ships.³²

These obligations and privileges passed from owner to owner down the years, and when Christchurch Priory, Canterbury was contemplating the purchase of the manor, they made diligent enquiries as to what the obligations involved. In a letter from John Elham to William Molash the Priory of Christchurch Priory, he refers to discussions with the Lord Cardinal [Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester] about port tolls imposed for Bekesbourne and about other matters.³³ These port tolls were presumably the cost of providing a ship for the king, whether an actual ship or a monetary payment.

Unfortunately, despite the provision of the ship at Hastings over many years, there is actually no record of the King, or his court, ever sailing from Hastings or any of the Cinque Ports to Normandy.³⁴ On the occasions when the king should have been able to use his own ship from Hastings he was more likely to hire a ship, as in 1246, when he authorised the sheriff of Kent to pay out 30s. 6d. for a ship from Dover for the voyage of Imbert de Salinas and Master Eymes the Emperor's clerk.³⁵ And even earlier in 1186 instead of using his *esnecca* berthed at Hastings he had the Southampton *esnecca* sailed from there to Dover for a crossing to Wissant:

To delivery of a ship – the king's *esnecca* with the treasury and king's equipments for a channel crossing from Dover, £19. 7s. 0d. by the king's letter [of authority].³⁶

Despite the fact that the king never used the ship berthed at Hastings, the arrangements for its supply were continued and renewed for some 200 years.

And finally after 300 years of providing a service that was not used, in 1445 Margaret of Anjou, the bride to be of Henry VI, crossed the Channel to England and according to the accounts of the manor, now kept by Christchurch Priory, they as owners of the manor had to pay 53s. 4d. of the total cost of £4; presumably the other half of the cost was borne by the joint owner of the manor, the Cobhams.³⁷

However throughout the whole period of the Bekesbourne tenure there seems to have been no certainty on the part of the authorities as to whether the tenure was held by the service of providing a ship specifically for the king's cross-Channel crossing or simply by the provision of a ship as part of the quota of Hastings. It is unlikely that Bekesbourne was required to provide two ships so even the authorities are not sure what the ship is actually for, but since the king never used the ship it was a useful addition to the Hastings quota. This Hastings connection is the reason for Bekesbourne being granted non-corporate membership of the Cinque Ports as a limb of Hastings. Along with Grange (Gillingham) it was required that Bekesbourne (and Grange) as limbs had to supply one ship each, which would count as part of the allocation of ships supplied by Hastings for its Cinque Port obligations.

Hastings was very happy to have this obligation as part of its quota, and whether the ship was for the king or not, it counted towards the quota. Both the Bekesbourne and Grange families had close connections with Hastings other than the Cinque Port connection and these were maintained over many years. The Grange branch of the family kept the de Hastings name and the records show that Matthew de Hastings held land and had obligations in Hastings including provision by his tenants of a guard at Hastings Castle.³⁸ The de Burnes and the de Bees also had property in and around Hastings, as there is a record of Eustace de Burne selling land at Eggingeth, near Hastings, which was passed on to the Abbey of Robertsbridge, also near Hastings.³⁹ And as we have seen above the de Bees tried to give the church at Bekesbourne to the priory of Holy Trinity, Hastings, which showed their close ties with Hastings.

Why Henry I and Henry II would want the provision of a ship at Hastings when they used the ship provided at Southampton is not clear. Hastings occupied a special place in the hearts of the Norman Kings as the place of the successful invasion and conquest and was, in their eyes, the principal port of the Cinque Ports. Using a family with Hastings origins to provide them with a personal service would have seemed appropriate. The serjeanty was renewed time and time again even though as we have seen above the obligations varied from the provision of a ship

for the exclusive use of the king to the provision of a ship for general use. Although the serjeanties declined in the reign of King Edward I, the obligations incumbent on the tenure of the manor of Bekesbourne continued as though the serjeanty was in place, and even when the manor was divided and sold on, the obligations were divided as we have seen above in the case of Margaret of Anjou in 1445.

The documentary evidence for the early Norman period is sparse and some aspects of the supply of the esnecca, and the serjeanty required for supporting the supply, are still obscure. Unusually the serjeanty tenure was divided, quite clearly in the case of Eustace de Burnes junior and William de Bec senior in 1198. Although the divided serjeanty is recorded in the *Liber Feudom (Testa de Nevill)* for 1198 it could well have occurred earlier and simply been recorded as a fact in 1198. It is also possible that the division occurred when Hugh de Bec took over the administration of the esnecca sometime between 1160 and 1170, but there are no records to check for these early dates. Whether the requirement of the tenants of Bekesbourne was for the supply of the king's cross-Channel ferry, or simply the provision of a ship as part of the quota of Hastings, is also obscure, but some aspects of this dual requirement may be due to changing circumstances over the years. When the esnecca service was required in the reigns of King Henry II and King Richard I, England, Normandy, Anjou and Aquitaine were all part of the Angevin Empire, with the ports of Dieppe and Barfleur on the French coast within that empire. After the reign of King John, Normandy and Anjou were lost and the nearest port in France within the empire was in Gascony. The small esneccas of 21 men and a boy would not have been suitable for regular crossings from England to Gascony although they were used on exceptional occasions. Eventually with the loss of the French territories the requirement for any sort of cross-Channel service was greatly diminished and the only requirement left was for the provision of ships as part of the Cinque Port quotas, and even these requirements were superseded by the founding of the Royal Navy. Despite this the Cinque Port privileges continued at Bekesbourne for many centuries until finally ended in the reign of King George IV in 1832, with the passing of the Great Reform Act.

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¹ The esnecca, from a Norwegian word for snake was a derivative of the Viking longship propelled by oars or by a single masted square rigged sail. Basil W. Bathe, *Seven Centuries of Sea Travel*, p. 15.

² Rose, G. and Illingworth, W, *Placitorum in Domo Westmonasteriensi asservatorum Abbreviatio: Temporibus Regum Ric. I Johann. Henr III, Edw I and Edw II*, Record Commission, London, 1811, p. 39b. *Willelmus [de Bec] dicit quod terra illa est de sergeantia Domini Regis et non debet partiri, et profert cartam Domini Regis H. patris [i.e. Henry II], in qua continetur quod ipse concessit et dedit Hugoni de Becco ministerium de*

Esnetka [? *Esnecka*] *sua de Hasting quem Rogerus de Burnes frater Illarie uxoris Hugonis de Becco habuit et antecessores sui ante eum ... et precepit quod idem Hugo habeat et teneat et heredes sui ministerium illud cum terris et omnibus pertinen' in pace etc. sicut unquam antecessores Rogeri plenius etc. tempore H. regis avi. Richard I. 1190.*

³ J.H. Round, 'The Dating of the Early Pipe Rolls', *English Historical Review*, Vol. 36, no. 143, July 1921, p. 327, 'in pay of one sailor additional in Eustace de Burnes' ship 60s.10d'.

⁴ J.C. Robertson, *Materials for the History of Thomas Becket Archbishop of Canterbury*, Longman, London, 1876, Vol. 3, p. 26, Fitz.Stephen, *Rex Anglie ad suam transfretationem navem propriam solet habere. Cancellarius ei fieri fecit non unam solam sed tres simul naves optimas.*

⁵ *Pipe Roll 14 Henry II*, Pipe Roll Society, Vol. 12, 1890, p. 92.

⁶ H.W.C. Davis, *England under the Normans and Angevins*, Methuen, London, 1905, p. 295.

⁷ Charles H. Haskins, 'The Administration of Normandy', *The English Historical Review*, Vol. 24, no. 94 (Apr., 1909), p. 230.

⁸ Austin Lane Poole, *From Domesday to Magna Carta 1087-1216*, Clarendon Press Oxford, 1955, p. 434.

⁹ Charles I. Elton, *Tenures of Kent*, James Parker, London, 1867, p. 228.

¹⁰ *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem*, HMSO, London, 1906, Vol. 2, 5 Edward I, 1277, 220, p. 134.

¹¹ Audrey M. Woodcock, *Cartulary of the Priory of St. Gregory*, Royal Historical Society, London, 1956, charter 38, p. 29.

¹² Colin Flight, 'Landholders in Kent', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, 125 (2005), 364.

¹³ Felix Hull, *A Calendar of the White and Black Books of the Cinque Ports*, HMSO, London, 1966 (fol. 408v), p. 630.

¹⁴ British Library, *Cotton MSS Vespasian, A 5, 67*, Ils trouveront ces neifs sur la sumonce de 40 jours, armées at en chacun neif 20 hommes, et le maistre des mariners, et ils maintiendront a leur costes demesnes.

¹⁵ A.M. Woodcock, *op. cit.*, charters 37 and 38.

¹⁶ J.H. Round, *op. cit.*, p. 327.

¹⁷ A.M. Woodcock, *op. cit.*, charter 37 and 38.

¹⁸ *Liber Feodorum (Testa de Nevill)*, Part 1, Public Record Office, 1920, 1198, p. 13, II 49: *Stacekinus de Bumess qui est infra etatem et in custodia Roberti de Turneham tenet Bumess in seriantia, et valet x.l. In manu Roberti de Turneham per dominum regem.*

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, Part 1, p. 13, 1198, *Willelmus de Beche tenet Bumess in seriantia, et valet x.l. et debet invenire domino regi j. navem ad servicium suum, et offere domino regi iij.m.*

²⁰ C. Elton, *op. cit.*, p. 232.

²¹ Rose and Illingworth, *op. cit.*, p. 39b.

²² C. Elton, *op. cit.*, pp. 38-40.

²³ Canterbury Cathedral Archives (hereafter CCA)-DCC-ChAnt/I/132 1227. Ancient Charters Final Concord.

²⁴ *Liber Feodorum (Testa de Nevill)* Part 2 Public Record Office, 1920, p. 1346, m 26 d. *De seriantii, dicunt quod Willelmus del Bek et Eustachius de Burn' tenent xx. libratas terre in Livingeburne de domino rege per servicium inveniendi j. navem ad summonitionem suam cum hominibus de Hasting.*

²⁵ Sir Nicholas Harris Nicholas, *The History of the Royal Navy from the earliest times*, Bentley, London, 1847, p. 262.

²⁶ *Liber Feodorum (Testa de Nevill)*, Part 2, Public Record Office, 1920, p. 1381, 7 d, *De seriantii, dicunt quod Wilelmus de Becko et Eustachius de Livingeburn' tenent xx. libratas terre in Livingeburne per seriantiam inveniendi unam navem domino regi ad custum eorum quandocunque dominus rex voluerit transfretare.*

²⁷ *Ibid*, Part 1, p. 216b, *Sarjantia Ric'i de Bet [Bec] in Burn [i.e. Livingsbourn] p' qua invenire debuit d'no Regi una nave in quolibet passag' suo aliena est in parte.*

²⁸ *Ibid*, Part 1, p. 216b, *Serjantia Ric'i de Bek in Burne pro qua debuit invenire d'no Regi una nave in quolibet passag' suo aliena est per partic' las.*

²⁹ *Calendar of the Patent Rolls*, 37 Henry III, p. 221, 12 August 1253.

³⁰ Elizabeth G. Kimball, *Serjeanty tenure in medieval England*, Yale University Press, 1936, p. 250.

³¹ Thomas Blount, *Antient Tenures*, Beckwith edition, 1784, p. 174.

³² CCA-DCc-ChAnt/C/1245. Ancient Charters – writ of Richard II, 1387.

³³ CCA-DCc-Cantlet/3. Letter from John Elham to William Molash, Prior of Canterbury Christchurch Priory, 1428-1437.

³⁴ N. A. M. Rodger, 'The Naval Service of the Cinque Ports', *The English Historical Review*, Vol. 111, no. 442 (June, 1996), p. 642.

³⁵ *Calendar of the Liberate Rolls*, Vol. 3, HMSO London, 1937, 30 Henry III, 1246, p. 21.

³⁶ *Pipe Roll*, 33 Henry II, *Pipe Roll Society* Vol. 37, p.195, relating to payments for Southampton. *In liberatione navium et esnece regis cum thesauro et harnasio regis quando ipse transfretavit apud Doumar .xix. l. et .vij. s. per breve regis.*

³⁷ C.E. Woodruff, 'Accounts of the Bedells and Farmers of the Manors', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, 53 (1940), 2. *Sol' Roberto Landeman pro navigio ad Margaretam reginam convehendam in Angliam iiij li, supra onus tenencium quod se extenditad Lijs. iiijd.*

³⁸ *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem*, HMSO, London, 1906, Vol. 2, 5 Edward I, 1277, 220, p. 134.

³⁹ *Calendar of Charters and Documents relating to the Abbey of Robertsbridge*, charter 20.

RUTUPIAE AND RED HILLS

The remains of Roman-era salt-making operations, similar to those in Essex known as Red Hills, offer a possible explanation for the name Rutupiae.

Roman Britannia's main Channel port lay on the Kent coast, just south of the Isle of Thanet, near modern Richborough. Its ancient name was something like *Rutupiae*, which has long been a puzzle because it has no obvious etymological explanation in Latin or Celtic. Now we suggest a possible meaning, with implications for the early history of Britain.

Ancient documents had multiple spellings of the name, including *ad portum Ritubis*, *Ruthubi* and ρουτουπια, which were discussed at length by Rivet and Smith (1979). They concluded that the best form was *Rutupiae*, mainly influenced by the discussion of Hamp (1976) and by Roman poets' use of *rutupinus* as an adjective to figuratively describe Britain.

Etymology

The first syllable *rut-* almost certainly contained a U, so it probably did not come from Celtic *ritu* (ford) or Germanic *rið* (stream), or even from an ancestor of road (anchorage). The obvious meaning of *rut-* is reddish, because Proto-Indo-European **reudh* has descendants in most

Indo-European languages, for example English ruddy, rusty, russet, etc., or Welsh *rhwd* (filth, rust).

The third part *-iae* is generally taken to indicate a plural. The problem lies with the second syllable. Maybe *-up-* can be linked with a hypothetical **apa* (water), related to words such as *abona* (Celtic), *aqua* and *amnis* (Latin), and the *-appe* suffix in Germanic place names. However, it seems perverse to abandon the letter A, which is common to all these watery words, while keeping the P, which varies.

Many authors are content to guess that *Rutupiae* meant 'muddy waters', but this is unlikely. Ancient *Rutupiae* was a respectable port, protected by a shingle bank and it is hard to see how whitish shingle, yellowish sand, or even brownish mud could be called *rut-*, reddish. *Rutupiae* was famous for oysters (which cannot tolerate large amounts of mud) and the remains of oyster beds in the Wantsum/Stour area described by Smith (1850) and Dowker (1872) lie on an ancient sea shore covered by more than a metre of alluvium, which cannot have arrived before late Roman times.

Was there anything else at *Rutupiae* that was genuinely reddish and so prominent as to give its name to the place? The obvious answer is Red Hills, the distinctive archaeological remains of ancient salterns, which have been much investigated in Essex. In that case, can the *-tup-* syllable reasonably be translated as 'mound'? *Terp* has been taken into English from Frisian to mean 'mound', though most authorities hold that meaning to be secondary to a meaning of 'village' as in its cognates: English *thorp*, Dutch *dorf*, Welsh *tref*, etc. *Tap*, in Taplow, probably means 'tapering cylinder' (contrary to what some place name compilations assert). Particularly interesting is *toft*, which dictionaries consider to be originally a Norse word and define as 'eminence, knoll, or hillock in a flat region'.

In fact, a remarkable number of words with a sense of enlargement and/or sticking up have descended from a Proto-Indo-European root **tu* or **teu* ('to swell'). Examples in English include *tip*, *top*, *tuft*, *tumour*, *tuber*, *tussock*, *tomb*, and *thumb*. One line of descent ran through proto-Germanic **tuppaz*, which is generally considered the origin of the Latin word *tufa* (helmet plume), which Bede helpfully translated with Anglian *tuuf*.

One argument against translating *Rutupiae* as 'red tops' is that in Roman times languages put declensional endings on both nouns and adjectives. So, at the very least, a hypothetical local-language source of *Rutupiae* should have had a structure something like **rut-vowel-tup*. However, vowels are well known to disappear from the middle of multi-syllable words, especially if unstressed or sandwiched between two similar consonants.

If *Rut* did indeed have no declensional ending, *Rutupiae* would be analogous with later Anglo-Saxon place names. Among the dozens of compound names beginning with 'red' that Gelling and Cole (2003) cite,

even though they are spelled in many ways (Rad-, Rut-, Raw-, Rud-, Rath-, etc), none shows obvious signs of declension.

Salt-making

It is hard for modern people to comprehend the huge economic importance of the ancient salt-making industry. On a macro scale, control of the salt trade determined the fates of empires, while on a micro scale the availability of salt licks could decide the locations of farms and roads (Kurlansky, 2002). The craft of seaside salt-making has persisted with very little technological change from before the Bronze Age up to the present, as archaeology and ancient written accounts (notably by Pliny and Rutilius) make clear. First some seawater is allowed to evaporate over an area of flat land near the coast. This yields a concentrated brine that is boiled away to produce solid blocks of salt, which in prehistoric times were almost a form of money, the core item of long-distance trade.

Evidence linking *Rutupiae* with salt-making is indirect but compelling. Until quite recently almost every geographically suitable coastal inlet in Britain had salterns. The Domesday Book of 1086 recorded 49 active *salinae* around the Wantsum Channel (Darby and Campbell, 1962), close to Richborough but at places that are now far inland. There were mediaeval salterns at Seasalter levels near Whitstable (Thompson, 1956). Roman-era salt-making is known near Chatham (Miles, 2004; Cook, 1928), in the Isle of Wight (Lyne, 2010), and around the Wash (Owen, 1960).

Evidence for redness lies in briquetage, the name (originally French) for low-grade pottery used to evaporate brine in ancient salterns, at least until Roman times when metal pans were introduced. Almost all deposits of clay contain enough iron to turn a reddish colour, somewhere between terra cotta and purple, when fired in an oxidising atmosphere into pots, bricks, tiles, etc. The fort at *Rutupiae* sat on a geological 'island' of brickearth surrounded by alluvium (Adler, 1977).

Salt-makers definitely made mounds in medieval times (Owen, 1960), which were called cotels or coterells on the Isle of Sheppey (Thompson 1956). McAvoy (1984) described how further north up the east coast it was common practice to let areas of coastal mud flood at high tides and dry in the summer sun before salty mud was raked into mounds and leached.

Place names often reveal a salty past, for example Seasalter, Saltwick, and Saltcotes. Less certain is the place name element Chat-, possibly related to the cotes or cots (humble cottages) of salt-makers operating near Chatham and Chattenden. At the points where a hypothetical salt industry at *Rutupiae* would trade its salt up-river and buy firewood in return lie Fordwich (known from AD 675 but with a Roman-era jetty), Sandwich (from 715), and Wickhambreaux (from 948).

The place name element –wich came from Latin *vicus* via Anglo-Saxon *wic*, and mostly meant ‘trading port’ in a general sense. Its particular use in salt-mining areas (Droitwich, Nantwich, etc) and for dairy farms (which were major inland users of salt), and the preferential location of early Anglo-Saxon place names *wicham* and *wictun* near Roman roads (Gelling, 1967; Coates, 1999) or just inland from estuaries, reminds us that salt used to be the primary commodity by value in ancient trade.

Red Hills

In Essex there are more than 300 archaeological sites of ancient salterns known as Red Hills, very thoroughly described by Fawn *et al.* (1990). Originally built on dry land, they were swallowed up by rising sea levels, which surrounded and covered them with silt. Most Red Hills have been dated to between 50 BC and AD 100, though Essex had earlier salterns, during the Bronze Age, and later ones, during the Middle Ages.

Nowadays most Red Hills are little more than areas of reddish soil in farmland, but some survive as visible mounds rising more than a metre above a marsh. They can be huge, up to 100m in diameter, containing over 1,000 tons of material. Structures found inside Red Hills, including hearths and settling tanks, conclusively prove their salt-making function. Their colour arises not just from briquetage with identifiable shapes (pottery, slabs, firebars, or pedestals) but mainly from prodigious quantities of reddish dust.

The sheer quantity of reddish earth suggests that hearths were constructed out of the material to hand, local silt and clay, which was formed into shape and fired in situ. Perhaps hearths were built afresh every summer, with last year’s fire-reddened debris being simply tipped away. Essex Red Hills must have been a huge industry in which many sites with multiple evaporation hearths continued in use for more than a century.

Further north, on the coast around the Wash, ancient salt-boiling hearths have also left many mounds of crumbling reddish soil, often very large (Owen, 1960). Investigators there commented on the Belgic nature of associated pottery, and also on the fact that in medieval times the word *toft* or *tuft* meant a saltern with its associated salt-cotes on a narrow piece of land stretching towards the sea.

The big unanswered questions about Red Hills concern timing. What happened before 50 BC to make the industry take off? Was it technological innovation, perhaps due to the arrival of new people, or was it simply economics? Then why did the industry die out after AD 100? Did the *Pax Romana*, with roads and taxes, give a competitive advantage to salt from inland brine springs? Did the industry exhaust nearby fuel supplies? Was malaria a problem? Did sea-level rise cause problems?

Ancient salterns at *Rutupiae* must surely have copied contemporary best

practice from Essex, so any Roman arriving by sea there could not fail to notice the reddish waste tips, topped with huts for salt-makers to live and work, and the multiple hearths with plumes of smoke. And anyone literate in Latin would surely understand the little linguistic joke of arriving in a land where red hair (*rutilae comae*) was much commoner than in Rome, via a port whose name resembled *rutilae tufae*, reddish top-knots.

Sea-Level Rise

The critical factor that links together *Rutupiae*, Red Hills, Frisian *terpen*, salt-making, and the English language is sea-level rise. In a nutshell, if sea steadily encroaches on land, people living near the coast at first adapt their lifestyle but eventually are forced to move, taking their ideas and their language with them.

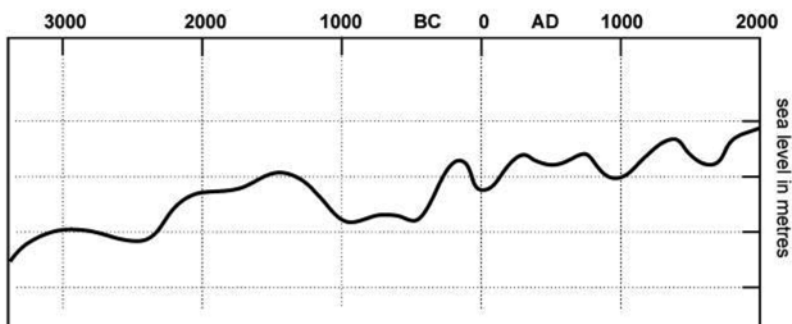
Coastal lands around the North Sea have long been heavily settled by humans, because such areas have high biological productivity, whether as saltmarsh or as flat farmland. On average, coastal land is flatter on the continental side of the North Sea than in Britain. So changes in sea level of less than a metre can translate into enormous changes in coastline from France to Denmark, which is exactly what has happened repeatedly since the Stone Age.

Worldwide sea levels have risen by more than 50m since the last glacial maximum, but during the past 5,000 years the rate of rise has slowed to an average of about 1.1mm per year. In addition, the whole island of Britain is slowly pivoting, due to post-glacial rebound, such that Scotland is rising, while the South-East is now sinking by millimetres per year. Countering that effect, both the sea and rivers deposit silt, which tends to maintain marshy coastal areas at about the high tide level. However, silt deposition stops if humans build sea walls; then the land sinks as it dries out and its organic content oxidises.

Superimposed upon the general rising trend of sea level has been a series of oscillations, of sufficient amplitude that at some times sea level actually fell while at others it rose extra fast. Of particular interest here is the so-called Dunkirk 1b transgression between about 400 and 150 BC, when encroaching sea caused people living on the Frisian coast to build *terpen* and to leave the area (Louwe Kooijmans, 1980).

Some of these people may have travelled to Britain and become known as Belgae, carrying the technical innovations (in ploughing, pottery, and money) commonly attributed to the Belgae. They must have spoken a Germanic language while living around the river Eems and presumably continued to do so around the Thames. Obviously they were experienced mound builders and it is highly likely that they made salt by some forerunner of the processes well documented for medieval times in the *terpen* area (Van Geel and Borger, 2005).

Behre (2007) has published a curve for ancient sea levels in the North Sea, which makes it possible to see when exactly transgressions and regressions occurred. The younger part of Behre's curve is redrawn here.



For the present purpose what matters is that the steepest rise in this curve lies in the centuries before Julius Caesar's visit. Its subsequent dip matches the period of prosperity when the Romans became interested in Britain, when Cunobelin and Verica built up their kingdoms, and when Red Hills flourished.

Conclusion

Why did Red Hills at *Rutupiae* get so thoroughly forgotten? In AD 731 Bede apparently knew the Roman name but not what it meant. The modern name Richborough has no obvious linguistic link with *Rutupiae* and it probably comes from Anglo-Saxon *ræc* or *ric*, modern reach, referring to the Wantsum Channel.

Presumably *Rutupiae*'s salterns declined for the same reasons as suggested above for Essex, or because the Roman military took over the seashore. The Wantsum Channel, like many south coast estuaries, started silting up in Roman times when populations grew, trees were felled, and erosion became serious (Burnham, 1989). Therefore, one should expect to find patches of reddish soil a metre or so below farmland near Richborough.

Dowker (1889) reported that maiden soil lay about 3 feet down, and 'over it a large quantity of burnt earth, like the remains of a brick kiln, was found in both trenches, with a layer of soil above, containing fragments of Roman pottery and other debris'; with 'burnt earth' in many other trenches he dug. Closer to the fort, Wilmott and Tibber (2009) observed 'orange clay laid down in marshy conditions'. Maybe there really were Germanic-speaking salt-makers at *Rutupiae*.

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LYMINGE PARK — A COLLECTION OF DOCUMENTS TOWARDS A HISTORY

Edward Hasted, writing in 1790 says about the parish of Lyminge, 'Near the southern boundary of the parish is the estate and manor of Liminge park, which as well as Westwood, belongs to Mr. Sawbridge of Ollantigh, who has near 700 acres of woodland in this parish, the whole of his estate here having been formerly appurtenant to the manor of Liminge, and together with it, exchanged by Archbishop Cranmer with king Henry VIII in his 31st year' [22 April 1539-21 April 1540].¹

The manor was originally amongst the possessions of the Abbey of Lyminge whose principal female saint was Eadburga, abbess both of Minster in Thanet and Lyminge who was buried at Lyminge.² The minster at Lyminge was one of the earliest Anglo-Saxon foundations. Cuthbert, Archbishop of Canterbury, is said in a charter granted to it by Ethelbert, King of Kent, in 741 to have been abbot there.³ Whilst a charter of Cynewulf, king of Mercia and Cuthred, King of Kent in 804 is addressed to Selethrytha, abbess (successor of Eadburga). Charters were also granted by Wihtried, King of Kent in 694 and Ethelstan in 964. But there is conflicting and inadequate information about the minster.⁴

The minster of Lyminge appears to have suffered from the ninth-century Viking raids because by 960 when St Dunstan was Archbishop of Canterbury the buildings were in a ruinous state of repair. Certainly by the time that the Domesday Book was compiled we are told that the manor was held by the archbishop himself. The first reference to the park at Lyminge is in 1274/5 in the Hundred Rolls. At that time the archbishop of Canterbury has chase and warren in Lyminge and during the vacancy of the see Master Richard de Clifford had 23 deer caught. John Harris, writing in 1719, tells us that 'in the 21st year of Edward the first [1291/2] I find the Archbishop of Canterbury had a warren at this place; for one John son of Peter de Hardress was accused before the Justices Itinerant for hunting here'.⁵

The late Kenneth Witney says of Lyminge, 'This manor was the successor of the early Abbey, but did not inherit all its lands, many of which appear to have passed to Aldington. Like Aldington, it was divided into collectorates, of which the outlying ones on Romney Marsh and the borders of the Weald, together with the manor's Wealden dens, were all closely associated with Aldington lands. Lyminge's share of the old Abbey property had also been reduced through the creation of virtually independent knights' fees at Orgarswick on the Marsh and at Siberton and Eastleigh in Lyminge parish itself.⁶ The survey excludes these. The manor, though still sizeable, was no longer in the first rank of the archbishop's possessions. The old arable demesnes of the Abbey, concentrated around Lyminge village itself, seem to have passed to the manor virtually intact. They amounted to some 535 acres, disproportionately large compared to

the reduced quantity of tenant land. The demesne fields can be identified in and to the south of the village to either side of the Postling road and stretching up the lower slopes of the chalk'.⁷ Under Lyminge manor there is a very long entry, a few lines of which are extracted here:

Woods there are here one park and the woods of Westwood, Dingledden and Sibersnoth, save only for *danger*'.

Park Wood and Westwood survive in Lyminge parish. Mrs Hendrick has identified Dingledden in the small scraps of woodland remaining in the triangle between Woodland, Hemsted and Skeete (**Map 1**). Sibersnoth gave its name to the outlying collectorate around Orlestone, bordering the Weald.⁸ Witney gives *Danger(ium)* as the due paid to the lord by occupants of Wealden dens on failure of pannage. Therefore he comments here that this implies that these woods were not used for pannage, except possibly by the archbishop himself. Their chief value was for firewood and timber.

After the destruction of the residence of the archbishops and the ancient *Camera of Lyminge* between the years 1382 and 1368 the custody of the park was united with that of Saltwood and assigned for life to William Sonynglee.⁹

That the woodland was for firewood and timber is demonstrated in the parker's account for Lyminge in 1441-1442:¹⁰

The sale of wood: and of the 46s. 11d. received for underwood of divers persons sold in Dyngdon wood and the Westwood over the price of 6s. 8d. an acre and of 13s. received from 44 lots of wood cuttings sold to Hamo Meller, James Wodell and Thomas Newynton in bulk and of 17½d. received from 7 bundles of faggots sold to John Hempsted of Eltham, the is 61s. 4½d. The total received is £4 16½d.

Customary payments of the park: Of these, account is given of the customary payment of hay with John Holewey and his companions making rails and posts from the lord's timber in 4 furlongs and 21 perches of unfenced land and erecting these in the west and north parts of the park and raising the supporting palings at 5d.; 75s. 5d. And for conveying the said pales, posts and rails from various places of the park to enclose it more effectively at 10d. per furlong, 7s. 6d. And for making one furlong and 6 perches of new hedge next to Sodenden, Rede and Crowchgate to enclose them and for making one furlong and 11 perches of new hedge for inclosing divers places at Tymyngherst at the east part of the park, price per furlong as above, 8s. 6d. And for making spikes, stakes and *tyshokes* for hedging at the south part of the park, price per furlong as above, 41s. and for making 2 furlongs of new hedge from both parts of Elmstede gate in the west part of the park in price 1½d. per perch, 10d. And for making and enclosing 1 furlong of new hedge next to Canterbury gate 6s. 8d. and for making and carrying spikes, stakes and tenters from Westwell wood to enclosure 2 furlongs more effectively 4s.



Map 1 Extract from Andrews, Dury and Herbert map (1769) showing the location of Lyminge Park (*top right corner*), 2½ miles north of Lyminge village. Various other places mentioned in the text are marked – e.g. Hemsted, Skeet and Sib(er)ton. West Wood is labelled within the wooded area (*left*).

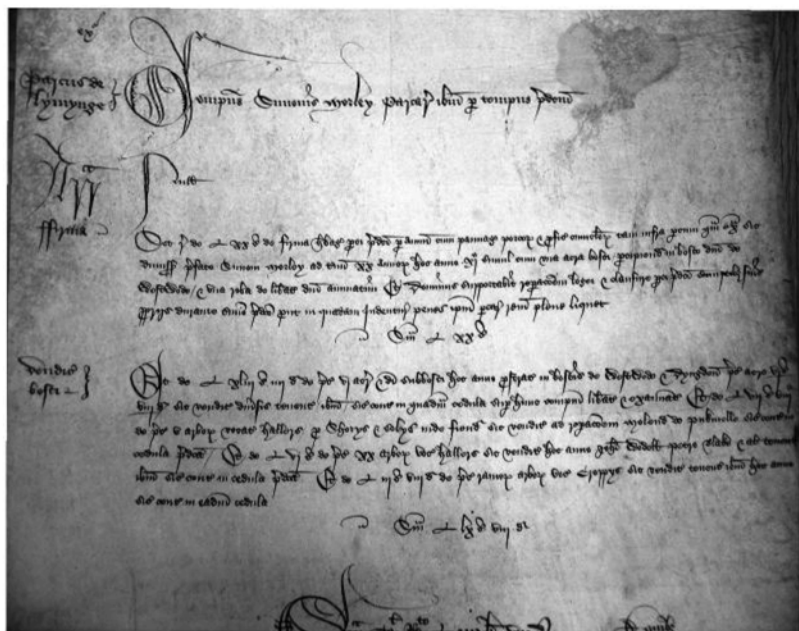


Fig. 1 The start of the account of Simon Morley, park keeper of Lymynge Park, from the Ministers' Accounts, Michaelmas 30-31 Henry VI, 29th September 1451-1452. TNA: SC 6/1129/3.

The Ministers' Accounts, Michaelmas 30-31 Henry VI, 29th September 1451-1452 have survived (Fig. 1).¹¹ A long and detailed section on the accounts of the manor and the tenants' customary payments and services (not reproduced here) is followed by the park keeper's report:

Lymynge Park The account of Simon Morley, the park keeper there for the aforesaid time.

Arrears: none.

Farm: but 20s. was received for the farm of the herbage of the park each year with pannage of the pigs and the profits of the rabbits both within the park and outside, thus demised to Simon Morley for the term of 20 years, this year being the 11th together with one acre of wood to be taken in the lord's wood of Westwood and with one gown of the lord's livery each year and the lord will pay for the repair of the lodge and enclosure of the aforesaid park with his own gates during the aforesaid term as in a certain indenture remaining regarding the parker makes fully clear. The total is 20s.

Sale of wood: and of 43s. 4d. being the price of 6½ acres of underwood cut down this year in the wood of Westwood and Dyngden, price of an acre 6s. 8d., thus sold to divers tenants there just as is shown in a certain schedule allowed and examined upon this account. And of 7s. 8d. being the price of 5 trees called *hallerys* to be then made into *shorys* and *solys* thus sold for the repair of the mill of Pluckley,¹² just as is shown in the aforesaid schedule and of 6s. being the price of 20 trees called *Hallerys* thus sold this year to John Wodell, Peter Binke and other tenants there, just as is shown in the aforesaid schedule and of 3s. 4d. being the price of branches of trees called *croppys* thus sold to tenants there this year just as is contained in the same schedule. The total is 60s. 8d. The total of all received is £4 0s. 8d.

Cost of the park: item the account of pence paid for posts, rails and shores bought for repairing the pales of the aforesaid park from the gate called Canterbury Gate in the same park as far as the great oak in Dedsule and from the corner as far as the great beech grove together with the repair of *les sales* 27s. and in payment to John Clerke and John Baker for inclosing 2½ *steads* containing half a perch of new hedge from the west part of the aforesaid park in le *Tymyngherst Gore* and in other places which were more defective, moreover for each perch 2d., 16s. 8d., and in payment for inclosing the same wood called Dyngdon for the safe keeping of the stock there 20s. and in payment for scouring 2 stanks [ponds] being in the aforesaid park for game and other animals to drink there 20d. and in payment to John Hancock the tiler and his mate with 2 labourers serving them, working upon the repair of the lodge there for 4 days, 3s. 6d. and in payment to Simon Courte for assessing the underwood sold this year 8d. The total is 51s. 2d. The total of all allowances is 51s. 2d. and 29s. 6d. is owed which is charged in the account of the parker himself from the office of the Forester of Bishopsden within the bailiwick of Wingham this year just as is fully clear.

*Lyminge Park Account of Simon Morley the parker there for the aforesaid time.*¹³ [1456-57]

Farm of the herbage: And he gave account of 20s. from the farm of the herbage of the aforesaid park this year with the pannage of the pigs and the profits of the rabbits, both within the park and outside it, so demised to the aforesaid Simon Morley for the term of 20 years, in this year together with receiving one acre of wood in the lord's wood of Westwood and one gown yearly of the lord's livery and the lord will pay for the repair of the lodge and the hedging of the aforesaid park with his own money during the aforesaid term, just as is clear from the indenture remaining with the parker himself, the total is 20s.

Sale of wood: and of 30s. resulting from the wood and underwood of 4½ acres felled this year in the lord's wood of Westwood and Dyngdon, price 6s. 8d. per acre, thus sold to various people, that is to say to John Warde,

John Gukepott, William Rand, John Cooke, John Baker and others whose names are written in a certain schedule recorded upon this account and of 11s. 1d. from the receipt of divers cuttings of oak trees felled for the repair of the aforesaid park palings and of other trees there called Hallers sold to Robert Borchler, John Spicer, John Wodell and others as is recorded in the aforesaid schedule, the total is 39s. 1d. The full total is 59s. 1d.

Costs of the park: item account was given of the moneys paid to John Stokes and his son, carpenters, working for 4 days on the construction of one new wooden chimney situated in the lodge of the aforesaid park, each one receiving 5d. per day, 3s. 4d. and in payment for nails bought for such work 7d., and the wages of Robert Sloden and his mates working 5 days at the plastering of the said chimney, each one receiving 4d. a day, 20d. and in payment of 18d. for 4 quarters of burnt lime bought for the same work and money paid to Edmund Burges for 8 days working upon the plastering and wattle of the partition walls of the aforesaid lodge's houses and chambers and also upon the foundation of the same, receiving 4½d. per day, 3s. and in payment to John Tyler working for 7½ days upon the roofing of the said houses, 3s. 9d. and in payment to John Stokes, his son and John Honywykkys working for 8 days at making and erecting the palings in the east part of the aforesaid park, each one of them receiving 4d. a day, 8s. and in payment to Roger Stokys in the same way for working 6½ days there in the said east part, at 4d. per day, 2s. 6d. and in payment to John Stokys and his son working in the same way and making one furlong and 8 perches of new paling in the south part of the aforesaid park, receiving 5d. for each perch, 20s. and in payment to John Stoke and his brother working in carrying pales, posts and rails from divers places within the park to the aforesaid enclosure 2s. and in payment to John Clerke and John Sloden for making 46 perches of new hedge at Westwood hedge 2d. for each perch, 7s. 2d. and in payment to the aforesaid John Sloden and his brother working at making 8 perches of new hedge at Westwood hedge 16d. receiving 2d. for each perch. The total of all the allowances is 54s. 6d. and 4s. 7d. is owed which is charged with the account of the office of forester of South Bishopsden this year.

The register of Archbishop Thomas Bourchier records that on the 6 March 1459 the commission to John Rothman for life, for services to our church, to be custodian of our park of Lyminge in the county of Kent and the woods of Monkenlond in the said park enclosed and the rabbit warren both in and outside the park and underwood or woods of Westwode, Dyngden and le Menes. He was to receive 3d. per day and pasture of one horse and two cows and one suit of our servants livery.¹⁴

In the 1540s Sir Thomas Cheyne was appointed keeper of the manor and park of Westenhanger and master of the deer in Lyminge Park.¹⁵ John Harris also says that the manor 'was on the general suppression of the religious houses in the time of King Henry VIII granted to the see of Canterbury but Archbishop Cranmer in the 29th year of that King,

exchanged it for other lands with the crown and then that prince in his 36th year granted it to Sir Anthony Aucher'. *The Ninth report of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records* shows that amongst the particulars for grants in the Augmentation office there is a deed of this transaction in 1546. 'Anthony Aucher, master of the Kings Jewels, 38 Henry VIII section 2 requests the purchase of the manor of Lymyng and its demesne in Kent late of the Archbishop of Canterbury in the King's hands by purchase'.¹⁶

This grant is translated in full by Jenkins and is dated 24 September 1546.¹⁷ The grant includes 'and all those our deer, both male and female, which are in the said park, all those our messuages, lands and tenements, meadows, pastures, woods and hereditaments whatsoever, with their appurtenances, now or lately in the tenure or occupation of John Spicer and Henry Spicer his son, and formerly in the tenure of Thomas Horne in Lymmyng'. He was to hold by the service of a 20th part of a knight's fee and to pay £4 7s. 2d. The keeper of the park, which had been granted to Thomas Hardres, knight for his lifetime by the archbishop on 8 January 1522, received 3d. per day together with the herbage and pannage of the said park, beyond what was required for the deer. Jenkins also translates this deed copied into the records of the Court of Augmentations, which not only mentions Lymyng park, but also Monkenland within the said park, the thickets or woods of Westwood, Dyngedown Wood, and the Menes [Minnis]. Besides the perquisites already mentioned he was demised the messuage in the same park called 'Le loige'¹⁸ and the trees and woods called windfalls and browsing, as was the ancient custom.

The rental of Saltwood and Aldington 18 October 1538 gives us a little more detail.¹⁹

The parke of Lymyng. Item the parke there is in circute as is reputed by the estimacon of the tenaunts there thre myles. Item, there be of falowe dere of all sorts lx. Item the pale is very ruynous. Also that there is sufficient tymber in the parke for the raylinge and paling of the same. The herbage of there parke there by yere ijs. Item the fee of Thomas Herde keeper there iiij libri. *Lymyng* Geffreyeston Eastebrige and Somerfeld ar worthe by yere and so letten lvij lib' -ixs -ld. *The ferme of Lymyng.* Item of Henry Spicer fermor there by yere xv lib' -xs. *Sibertisnothe.* Item [space] fermor there by yere xiiij lib' -iijjs -viijd. And a half. Item. In almys of the church of Lymyng ijs -vjd. Item. To the reve of Northygate and Harbaldowne xxxs. *Lymyng.* Also there perteyneth to the manor of Lymyng xij dennys whiche paye yerely att thauditt for their rents sutes and serveces xij lib' vijs 7d. farthings.²⁰

After 1535 conveyances of land by one particular method, known as bargain and sale, had to be enrolled by one of the central courts of law, or with the locally-kept records of the Quarter sessions. The most

popular court for enrolment was that of the Court of Chancery and these indentures were enrolled on the back of the Chancery Close rolls. So that we find on the fourth roll dated 11 June in the 2nd year of the reign of Queen Elizabeth [1560] an entry for Dame Affra Aucher widow, the late wife of Sir Anthony Aucher granting to Edward Aucher gentleman, one of the sons of the said Sir Anthony 'The manor and park and advowson of the church of Lyminge, Kent ... sold to him in view of his marriage to Mabel Wroth one of the daughters of Sir Thomas Wroth knight'.²¹

Affra or Aphra was the daughter of William Cornwallis and had married Sir Anthony Aucher of Ottringden, knight.²² Ottringden is Otterden parish in Kent. Edward Aucher, Affra's son, was described as being of Bourne Place, Bishopsbourne. His grandson Sir Anthony Aucher of Bishopsbourne (buried there 24 July 1637) with his wife Hester leased the Park and other lands for 21 years to Robert Rogers of Godmersham, gentleman, and Hamond Videan of Lyminge, husbandman.²³ They leased by an indenture dated 1 March 13 James I [1616]:

All that park warren and grounds called or known by the name of Lymedge alias Lymindge Parke and also all and singular the lands grounds and soil and hereditaments whatsoever parcell and belonging to the said parke and warren called Lymedge alias Lymindge parke or esteemed or reputed parte parcell or member thereof or with the same used occupied demised or lett within the sept of the parke. And also all and singular the houses barnes stables and other buildings now thereupon builded or being, together with all the landes tenementes easementes waies profittes and commodities to the said parke warren or grounds ... in the parish of Lymedge alias Lymindge ... except all such woods woodland copices and grounds as now are and be preserved copiced reserved and kept for fellable woods or copices or usually felled for acre wood ... at the epyry of the lease to leave 20 acres of som[er]land ... and during the lease to maintain the quick frighes fences and enclosures now made or hereafter to be made', Aucher supplying timber for houses and building maintenance. They had to pay £140 per annum at Bourne Place, Bishopsboume, and within 12 years they had to erect and built a stable to the mansion house on the premises, Aucher finding the timber within six miles of Lyminge. Thomas Philipott in 1659 said that Sir Anthony Aucher of Bourne Place lately sold the manor to Sir John Roberts of Canterbury.²⁴ This presumably is the Sir Anthony Aucher (1614-1692) who was created a baronet.

We get a tantalizing glimpse of events in the Park from an inquisition held at Brabourne on 2 October 1606, before Thomas Honywood, knight, Thomas Scotte, Henry Heyman and John Herdson, esquire, four justices of the peace, regarding an assault on Robert Spratt, Philip and Edward Eastland in 'the Gaore' at Lyminge Park.²⁵ The jurors included Richard White, Edward Cutter, Henry Saunders, David Marcha, Thomas Rigden, David Hogbeane, Thomas Marcha, Richard Yong, John Dunkin,

Anthony and William Wraight and Nicholas Oldfeild. It would seem that Anthony Stokes of Stowting yeoman and five others, unknown, being 'armed' carried out the attack between the hours of nine and two in the night. However, an annotation on the enquiry suggests that on the 26th November when Anthony appeared and denied the charge, he was nonetheless bound over to keep the peace. There is the suspicion that this is a case of the poachers versus the gamekeepers since we come across Philip Eastland in connection with an earlier case. Michael Barber of Acrise and Simon Head of Elham, husbandmen were indicted in 1602 for breaking into the park of Anthony Aucher at Lyminge and hunting his deer, who were feeding there, with two bloodhounds.²⁶ In 1602 and 1603 Barber and Head found sureties for their appearance at court and to keep the peace towards George Hills of Lyminge and Philip Eastland.²⁷

Further work is needed to sort out the descent of the manor of Lyminge. Hasted in 1790 says 'that Sir John Roberts of Canterbury died seized of it in 1658. His heirs sold it to William Taylor gentleman whose descendant John Taylor dying without issue, it descended in 1778 to Robert Hume, esquire as his heir and second cousin and he in 1722 conveyed it to Sir Andrew Hume, who died intestate in 1734, leaving one son and four daughters. The former died intestate in 1736, on which this estate came to his four sisters and coheirs, who about the year 1775 joined in the conveyance of it to Alexander Wedderburne Esq. solicitor, and afterwards attorney-general, chief justice of the Common Pleas, and created Lord Loughborough.²⁸ He in the year 1784 conveyed this manor with the advowson of the church of Lyminge and its appurtenances to Ralph Price, clerk, Rector and vicar of this church who is the present owner of it'. However, the account by Hasted may require some revisions because in 1719 we discover John Blunt of London Esq. and Susanna his wife selling to Jacob Sawbridge: 'And also all that park or reputed park of Lymidge alias Luninidge alias Lunininge now disparted situated lying and being in the parish of Lymminge alias Lummynges alias Lumminge in the county of Kent and all that the scite of land whereon lately stood a messuage tenement or farm called Park House farm or by whatsoever other name or names the same is or hath been called or known. And all the fourteen or more pieces or parcels of land meadow arable and pasture to the said messuage tenement or farm belonging or therewith now or heretofore used let or occupied or enjoyed containing in the whole by estimation two hundred and forty acres be the same more or less and being heretofore or reputed to be part of the said Park and now planted with ash and willow and so about in part upon Stelling Manes Common in other part on Canterbury Lane and another part on the lands hereinafter mentioned'. The long document also mentions Droveaway Farm (100a) Sawkins Farm alias Park Gate farm (160a), Goar Wood (42a), West Wood

(280a) in the parish of Lyminge alias Lymynge alias Lymedge.²⁹ John Sawbridge had Lyminge Park in 1787 as we find a reference to John Spice of Wye labourer being licensed as the gamekeeper.³⁰

The West Wood and Park Wood were acquired by the Forestry Commission in 1925 from the Erle Drax family. From *Some Aspects of the Natural History of the Folkestone District*, published in 1968 we read that 'from 1926 to 1935 the main tree species planted were European larch and Douglas fir. Much of the European larch has been felled in recent years ...'. This timber was mostly for the Kent coalmines. From 1936 to 1950 almost all the planting was beech. There is much more here for the reader who is interested in the development of the forest by the Commission.³¹ The forest also has the dubious distinction of being the place where in 1959 the last red squirrel was seen in Kent.

Acknowledgements

Whilst not mentioning Lyminge, S.A. Milesen, *Parks in Medieval England* (OUP, 2009) provides an excellent introduction to the subject. The author would like to thank Susan Pittman for very kindly passing on many references to Lyminge Park, collected in the course of her PH.D. thesis, which he has been able to follow up. [See also article by Susan Pittman in this volume, pp. 53-82.]

DUNCAN HARRINGTON

¹ 2nd Edition (1799), Vol. VIII, p. 79.

² See charter no. 5 in Dugdale *Monasticon*, i, p. 453; VCH Kent, ii (1926), p. 146.

³ For these charters see Dugdale *Monasticon* i, 452 & Twysden, *Decem Scriptores*, 2208-9, 2213 & 2223.

⁴ Susan Kelly, 'Lyminge minster and its early charters', in Simon Keynes and Alfred Smyth (eds), *Anglo-Saxons: Studies presented to Cyril Roy Hart* (2006, Four Courts Press).

⁵ John Harris, *The History of Kent* (1719).

⁶ K. Witney, *The Survey of Archbishops Pecham's Kentish Manors 1283-85* (KAS 2000), p. 253, quoting Du Boulay, 1966, p. 356.

⁷ *Ibid.*, quoting Margot Hendrick, p. 253, fn 2.

⁸ Wallenberg, *Place Names of Kent*, pp. 473-4.

⁹ R.C. Jenkins, *The History of the Basilical and Conventual Church of St. Mary & St. Ædburgh* (?1879), p. 78. He quotes from the Anglo-Norman Charter, which he says was confirmed 20 March 1387 in Archbishop Courtney's register folio 174v.

¹⁰ Lambeth Palace Library ED 614.

¹¹ TNA: SC6/1129/3. There is at Lambeth Palace Library the account of Henry Gardener reeve there for 1446-1447, ED 616.

¹² *Haller* was probably a variant of *teller*, one of the many names for a standard in 'coppice with standards'; under this system a certain number of trees were allowed to grow amongst the coppice in order to provide larger timbers and these were generally known as standards. *Shorys*: according to OED *shore*; a piece of timber set obliquely against the

side of a building, of a ship in dock, etc., as a support when it is in danger of falling or when undergoing alteration or repair; a prop or strut. *Solys*: according to OED sole is a sill, perhaps as used in a wallframe.

¹³ Lambeth Palace Library ED 1193A.

¹⁴ Canterbury & York Society, Volume 54 *Registrum Thome Bourghier, Cantuariensis archiepiscopi*, A.D. 1454-1486. Transcribed and edited by F.R.H. Du Boulay (1956), pp. 75-76. See also D&C Cant. Register S folio 201v.

¹⁵ M. Zell (ed.), *Early Modern Kent 1540-1640*, p. 60; ref. LP, xvi, 1500 both at p. 714.

¹⁶ The modern class reference to this is TNA: E318.

¹⁷ R.C. Jenkins, *The Chartulary of the Monastery of Lyminge*, pp. 11-15 (Folkestone, 1867).

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 79: in 1577, from the parish register, John son of a stranger called Alice Parslaw was born in the Parke Lodge of Lyminge.

¹⁹ TNA: SC12/2/55.

²⁰ There is also a reference to a boundary of the park in LR2/196, p. 119 Survey of the manor of Elham 1649-1650. Jenkins says that the dennes which remained to the manor after the enfranchisement in 1546 were Sponden, Berthyngsden, Sandhurst [in the parish of Sandhurst], Gillingham, Held, Plasket, Stenynden, Herynden and Rotheringden.

²¹ TNA: C54/569 item 27.

²² William Berry, *Kent County Genealogies* (1830), p. 222.

²³ TNA: Ward 2/4/18a/1.

²⁴ *Villare Cantianum or Kent Surveyed*, p. 221.

²⁵ CKS: QM/SB 710.

²⁶ Louis A. Knafla, *Kent at Law 1602: The County Jurisdiction: Assizes and Sessions of the Peace* (HMSO, 1994), p.51, ref: Q/SR 3 mem. 8, Canterbury Sessions 22 Sep 1602.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 111 & 253; refs. QM/SM/21, p. 13 and QM/SRc mem. 189.

²⁸ A note by Hasted (taken from the 1st edition); Alice married to John Waite Esq., Grisall to George Carr Esq., Elizabeth to Charles St Clair Esq., and Helen to Andrew Wauchop Esq.

²⁹ CKS: U55/T599 and enrolled in Chancery 2 May 1719.

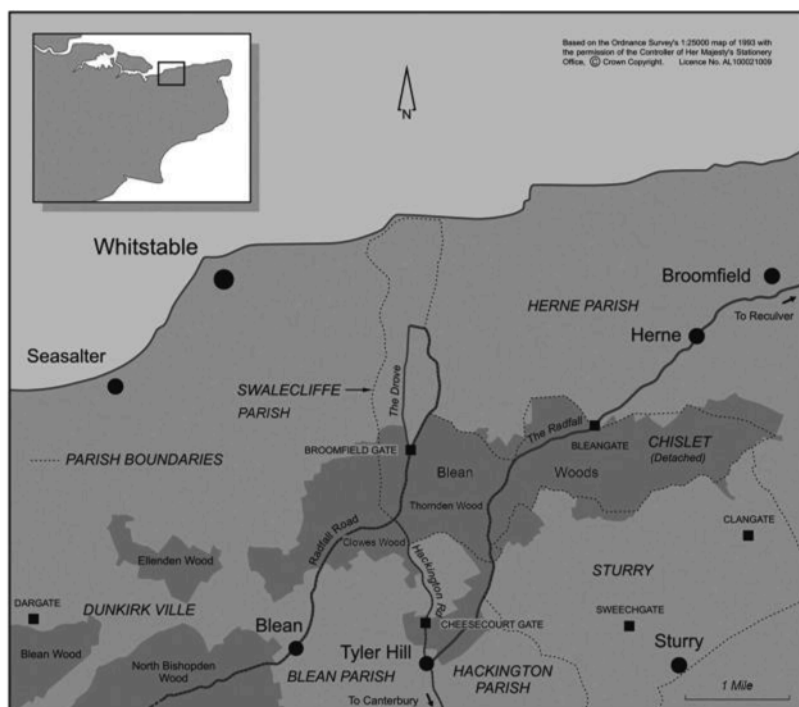
³⁰ *Kentish Gazette* 6 Nov. 1787 page 2 col. 1.

³¹ TNA: F37/59: Lyminge (1926-1951) Includes 17 photographs depicting: Lyminge forest, Kent: photographs taken by Miss Wood and indexed in rear of file, dated 1951. Also F 43/90; Lyminge Forestry Commission Inspections Files 1925-1959.

THE RECORDS OF THORNDEN WOOD IN THE BLEAN SINCE THE EIGHTH CENTURY

Long before the monks of Canterbury Cathedral acquired Thornden, near the north coast of Kent, the land nearer to the sea had been occupied in prehistoric times.¹ Part of Thornden was a large ancient wood on higher ground than that settled near the coast (**Map 1**). Crossing the northern boundary of this ancient wood were three small streams, near one of which recent excavations have revealed a Romano-British burial pottery vessel. This may suggest that (as in Clowes Wood to the west) the site may have been more open than today.²

Among the many ancient woods of the Blean, Thornden stands out in



Map 1 Location of Thornden Wood in the Blean.
(Kent Archaeological Projects: copyright reserved)

several ways. In particular, unlike others, its records survive in manuscripts over more than seven centuries. This survival is due to their having always been in the care of Canterbury Cathedral and its Archives, first by the monks of the Cathedral Priory and after by the Dean and Chapter and their archivists to this day. These records were many and of various kinds. Examples include medieval charters, monastery treasurers' accounts, foresters' receipts and expenses, and surveys of land and timber. Also recorded was the cost, presumably of labour, of constructing over several years during the thirteenth century some four miles of large boundary earthworks around the roughly square mile of the wood. Most of these, although eroded, still mark the wood's ancient boundaries.

The documentary information is supplemented by that obtained from archaeological investigation, although this has so far been limited. The prominent woodbanks and deep ditches are a feature of the eastern side of the Swalecliffe highway for about a mile. There are also other features of archaeological interest along the northern side of this wood. The Swalecliffe

highway (Radfall Road) passes between Thornden and the equally large Clowes Wood, now managed on behalf of the Forestry Commission, it was first recorded in a charter of 948 – a grant of woodland near Thornden.

Although many documents from the medieval period about Thornden exist in the Cathedral, earlier ones do not.³ There is, however, a medieval copy of what appears to be a grant of pasture for swine (*pascua porcorum*) in woodland called 'Bleanhean hric' to the cathedral priory. The grant was supposed to have been made in 791 by King Offa of Mercia. Unlike many others, this copy charter is not in good condition and it is not certain if it refers to Thornden.⁴ Whether or not it does, the then librarian of Canterbury Cathedral, C.E. Woodruff, stated in 1923 that Thornden was given to the cathedral by King Offa, and not by the cathedral's great benefactor, Queen Ediva.⁵ This is consistent with the statement of Wallenberg that 'Thornden from an early date belonged to Christ Church. It is not known when Thornden came into the hands of the monastery. It may well be a very old possession'.⁶

After King Offa's reign there were difficult times for the monks. There was the sack of Canterbury and its cathedral by the Danes in 1011. Then in 1067 the cathedral was destroyed by fire and in 1207 the priory was abandoned. When the monks returned in 1213 the production of documents resumed, many of which survive. For example, many charters were written relating to the properties including those in Thornden. An early one of these was concerned '*yn bosco de þorndenne*', i.e. Thornden Woods.⁷ This wood may not have had this name in the time of King Offa but the name has similarities with other large woods in the Blean, such as the two Bishopsden Woods, Bossenden Wood and Ellenden Wood; all were once 'dens,' meaning woodland which included pasture.

Some accounts of the monastery recorded the cost of building earthworks. Those for 1235/6 had 57s. 6½d. as spent that year on '*fossatis circa þornden*' and for 1251/2 50s. 3d. '*in foassatis ap þorndenn*'. There would have been other amounts in other years as the earth works extended over a long distance.⁸

Charters earlier in the century, such as the one already mentioned, had spoken of a '*boscus de þorndenn*', that is, Thornden Wood, instead of just Thornden. In this way the wood was distinguished from the low lying district, adjoining it on the north nearer the coast also called Thornden. Charters show that it consisted of fields, buildings, an '*aula*' (a hall), a solar and the King's Highway. This road went next to the wood's northern boundary.⁹ Some or all of this land was in the parish of Swalecliffe and in a district described as '*in borga de Thorndenn*', one of several small hamlets which became 'a feature of local administration' in and around Herne.¹⁰ Other parts of Thornden were in the neighbouring parish of Herne.¹¹

The thirteenth century is also significant in the history of Thornden wood with the introduction of pottery and tile manufacture in the vicinity,

examples of which were found recently near the north-east corner of the wood near where the earthworks were being built.¹² Little was found of a later date and nothing earlier than a Roman period burial urn (see above).

The records of the wood continue with accounts of cash receipts, some from the sale of the wood and others from the granting of licence to pasture animals, including swine.¹³ Fortunately, in the fifteenth century foresters began producing regular accounts for the woods they were managing. Several of these accounts provide many details of sales and expenditure in a number of woods in east Kent, including Thornden. An interesting example is the account of the forester, John Barbour, for the year to Michaelmas 1443. It begins with a group of items headed '*denar rec*' (cash received from the sales, e.g. of cropp, of bark, of stumbyl and underwood). His expenses included the cost of making ostwode, of felling and trimming 150 trunks of timber and work on the woods' boundaries. To these were added the payment of his salary and his assistant. A separate account, very detailed for its period, of the forester stated how much timber was delivered to the monastery's carpenter as well as much ostwode to their bartoner and how many court fagots and how much stumbyl to other parts of the monastery.¹⁴ The wood delivered to the bartoner was for use on the home farm of the monastery (the barton) for which he was responsible, where beer was brewed. The ostwode was for ovens there. The stumbyl supplied elsewhere would very likely have been hewed from the stumps of old trees.¹⁵

In the following century the management of what had been the monastery's estates changed not only because of the growth of a trade in coal but also because estates came into new hands, in the case of the Thornden estate onto those of the Dean and Chapter following the Dissolution. Then in the seventeenth century the estates came into the hands for about ten years of the English Commonwealth. In this period Parliamentary Commissioners were given the power to grant leases of land that belonged to cathedrals. Thus, in 1650 a lease was granted of 'all that Manor of Thornden' and also 'that Capital Messuage ... known by the name of Thornden Lodge' in Swalecliffe parish and other land; this included about seven acres of arable land, a parcel and close of pasture, totalling a further thirteen acres or so and finally Thornden Wood estimated to be of 572 acres, abutting upon Clowes Wood on the west'.¹⁶

Although the manor was leased to various people from time to time, the Dean and Chapter retained rights over the timber. In 1702 they commissioned a survey 'of the Timber in Several' of their woods, including Thornden, which also recorded something of the wood itself:

Thorn Denn wood contain about 600 acres and upon about 450 Acres 10 oaks upon each Acre (the other 150 Acres very poor and Barren and little or no wood or Timber).

It was estimated that there was a total of about 750 tons of timber there.¹⁷ That there was much barren land in the area is consistent with there having been sufficient open space for eagles or sea eagles to hunt for food as suggested by a charter of 948; this spoke of 'that den on Blean Earnes Hyrst' and a wood abutting Thornden namely 'cluse' (now Clowes Wood). It also mentioned the Swalecliffe highway as '*seo burh straet*' as well as a possible early name of Thornden. The name 'Blean Earnes Hurst' means the Blean Eagles Wood, i.e. a place good for eagles and their hunting.

More details of Thornden Wood can be gleaned from a map made for the Dean and Chapter in 1752 by J. Parr. This clearly shows the situation of the manor house and fields next to it (about 22 acres) and the size of the wood next to it (586 acres). Next to the eastern boundary is written RODFALL and the words 'bounded on this side by Blean Woods belonging to the Archbishop of Canterbury'. The boundaries are very much as they are now.¹⁸

Following this, counsel was instructed to advise on the rights of the Dean and Chapter in woodland in and around Thornden in 1758. Counsel is referred to 'Land lying between Swalecliffe Highway and the old Highway called the Rodfall'. This name perhaps derived from certain rights of wood reeves to some underwood on the boundaries of a wood. The use of the word Rodfall also occurs in reports of the archbishop's surveyors of 1759 at Lambeth Palace,¹⁹ where they refer to 'a slip of wood ... now called Rodfall ... between [West Blean Wood] and the wood called Thornden'.²⁰ As West Blean Wood adjoins Thornden Wood on its eastern side the surveyor's comments on the condition of that wood are of interest as being not unlike in some ways what appears from the survey report on Thornden Wood in 1702. In that report it said that:

in the wood there is a poor piece of wood ... supposed to be about 80 acres in which there is an abundance of heath sand the wood very short and poor ... the ways and cart tracks ... are scarcely passable.

For another hundred years West Blean and Thornden continued to be managed separately. After the creation of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners in 1836, their surveyors did not immediately take over the woods of archbishops and cathedrals. Thus in 1848 the Dean and Chapter had a Terrier written to describe the Thornden Estate. This showed that the areas of its different parts were approximately those as shown on the 1650 lease and the 1752 map.²¹

By 1864 Messrs Cluttons, surveyors to the Commissioners, were preparing a report in Thornden with suggestions for various improvements in which they said:

A large part of this wood is covered with a crop of growing Oak and underwood but ... portions are bare and unproductive at present but are

capable of much improvement by planting with Larch and Chestnut in a manner similar to the wood adjoining [i.e. West Blean Wood].²²

By this time the Commissioners were managing over 3,000 acres of the Blean woodland. They also advised that 'We have little doubt that at 12 years old the Larch crop will realise £30 to £40 per acre ... leaving a permanent plant of Chestnut producing a rental of 40s. per acre'.

The Ordnance Survey map of 1898 shows that although the wood's boundaries continued as they had been for centuries, changes had been made inside the wood, as for instance with the construction of the 'New Road'. The old Rodfall was now shown as 'The Radfall' and as being also on a local authority's boundary. The wood itself is shown as still remaining extra-parochial in the 'Vill of Dunkirk'.

Cluttons were still acting for the Ecclesiastical Commissioners when they were succeeded by the Church Commissioners after the Second World War. It soon appeared that the woods of the Blean, including Thornden, might involve unexpected expenses. The Forestry Commission in a letter of 15 December 1950 suggested that it was necessary to undertake 'a ... programme of rehabilitation and replacement in the Blean Woods'.²³ The Church Commissioners, however, did not embark on such a programme. Soon afterwards new owners began to grub up ancient woodland and replace it with conifers. A large part of Thornden Wood received this treatment.

Almost at the same time some of the Blean Woods became nature reserves. A National Nature Reserve was established in Mincing Wood,²⁴ and Crawford's Rough some two miles to the west of Thornden in 1953. Additions were made to this reserve in subsequent years.

Not long afterwards a large nature reserve was created by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds in Church Wood. Over the years more and more of the Blean Woods came to be purchased as reserves. Among these were Hunstead Wood and East Blean Wood, purchased by the Kent Trust for Nature Conservation, which later purchased Thornden Meadow, once the agricultural part of the Thornden Estate. Finally the Kent Wildlife Trust in 2003 bought a number of other woods in the Blean, including Thornden, making them owners of the largest amount of woodland in the Blean, more than 2,500 acres, mostly of ancient woodland. Other recent purchasers of Blean woodland include several local authorities and charities interested in conservation. This may make it possible for these woods to be partly restored to what they might have been a century ago. Nevertheless, much still survives and may well remain. Apart from the abundant wildlife there are ancient boundaries, boundary earthworks and ditches, the local authorities boundaries, the old Swalecliffe highway and the Radfall, once another important routeway.

ALEXANDER WHEATEN

- ¹ T. Allen, 2009, 'Prehistoric Settlement Patterns on the north Kent coast from Seasalter to the Wantsum', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, cxxxix, 189-208.
- ² W. Holmes and A. Wheaton (eds), 2002, *The Blean*, p. 139.
- ³ J.K. Wallenburg, 1931, *Kentish Place Names*, pp. 277-281; 'thorn-bush pasture'.
- ⁴ Canterbury Cathedral Archives [hereafter CCA], RE 126.
- ⁵ *Archaeologia Cantiana*, xxxvi, 1923, 1-14.
- ⁶ *Kentish Place Names*, p. 279.
- ⁷ CCA, *Chartae Antiquae* T9.
- ⁸ CCA, *Assisae Scaccarii* 4 and 7.
- ⁹ CCA, *Chartae Antiquae* T1, T3, T14, T16.
- ¹⁰ M. Sparks, 1984, 'Domesday and Manorial Matters', in K. McIntosh and M.E. Gough, *Hoath and Herne*.
- ¹¹ CCA: *Chartae Antiquae* T. 10-1303 and various others of the thirteenth century; also D. Harrington *et al.* (eds), *Kent Hearth Tax 1664*, KAS Record vol. xxx, p. 480.
- ¹² Reports on these finds were made in 2000 by John Cotter of the Canterbury Archaeological Trust. Most of the sherds were described as being of 'shelly sandy ware (Fabric Em3) of c.1175 to 1225/50'. See also, T. Allen, 'Swine, Salt and Seafood: a case study of Anglo-Saxon and Early Medieval Settlement in North-East Kent', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, cxxiv, 129-133.
- ¹³ CCA, Treasurer 26.
- ¹⁴ CCA, RE 199.
- ¹⁵ P. Collinson *et al.*, *A History of Canterbury Cathedral* (Oxford, 1995), p. 129; Murray *et al.*, *Old English Dictionary* (Oxford, 1919), *sub* stumbling block; O. Rackham, *Woodlands* (Collins New Naturalist Series, 2006), pp. 202-3.
- ¹⁶ CCA, Boxes in Basement 89/17.
- ¹⁷ CCA, U63/70313.
- ¹⁸ CCA, Map 40.
- ¹⁹ CCA, Boxes in Basement 50/89.
- ²⁰ Lambeth Palace Library, MS TS5.
- ²¹ CCA, Boxes in Basement 50/90.
- ²² Church Commissioners Records Section File no. 28417.
- ²³ *Ibid.*
- ²⁴ W. Holmes and A. Wheaton (eds), 2002, *The Blean*, p. 133; meaning a wood owned by nuns, granted to the Convent at Minster in Thanet by a charter of 724.