

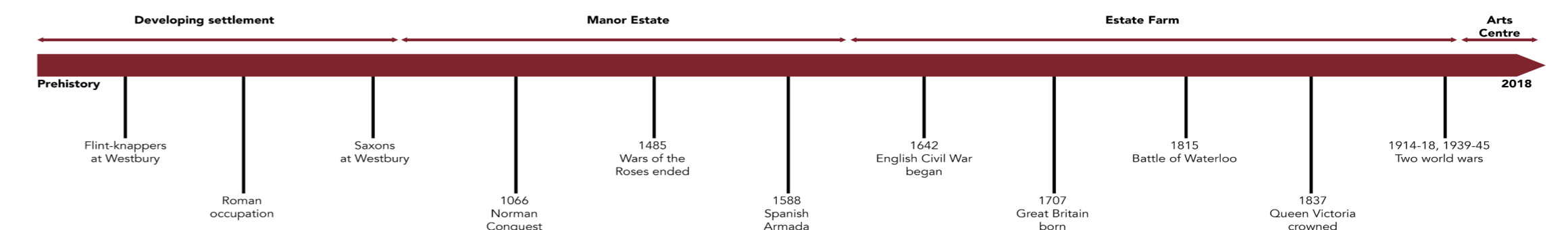
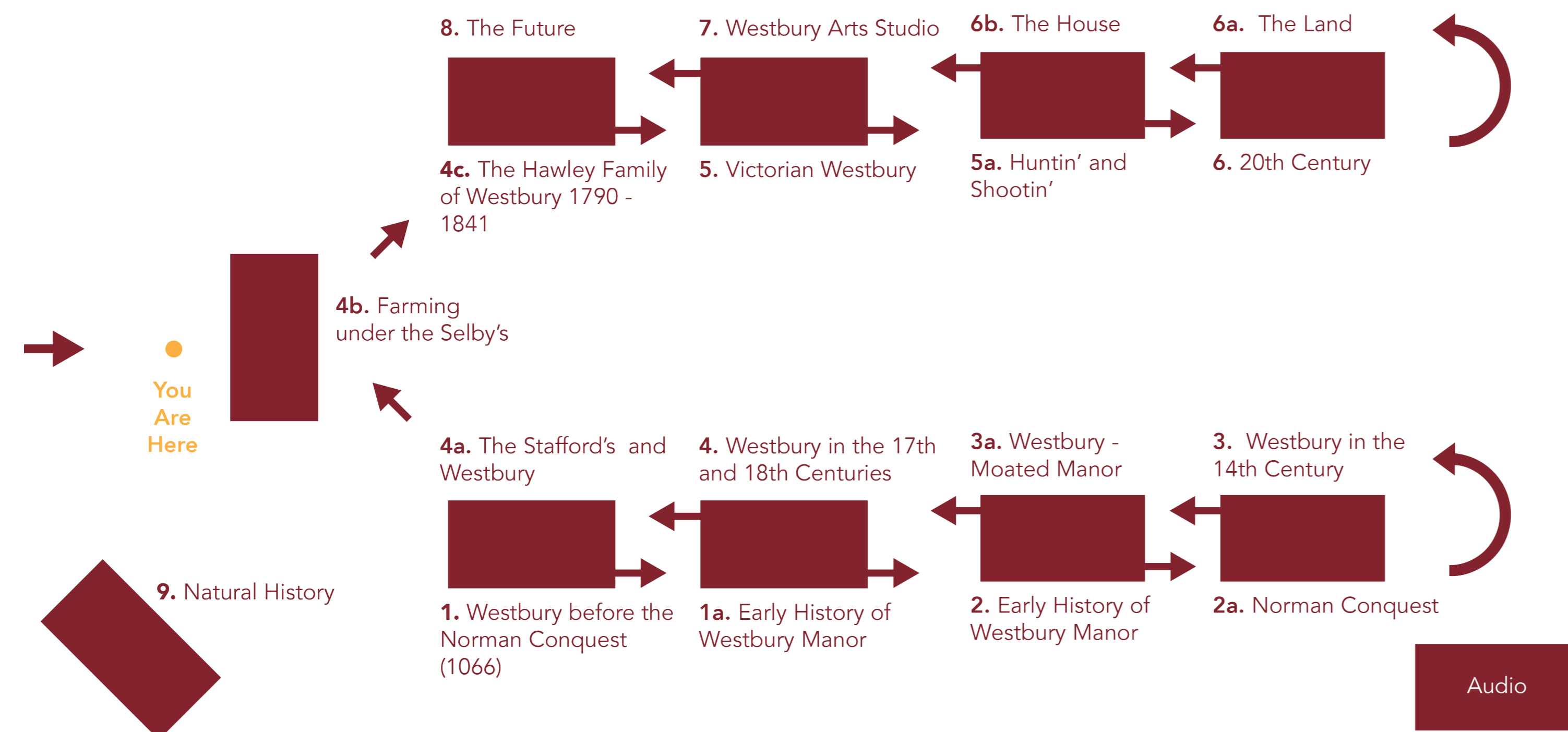


WESTBURY – THE STORY BEGINS

Welcome to this exhibition about Westbury Manor. Westbury's story is common to many rural farms, not only in Buckinghamshire, but also around the country.

Westbury has seen changes that help illustrate aspects of England's history. The central theme is one of land ownership and the people who lived here. Not always the same people, for the greatest part of Westbury's long history: mostly Westbury was run by tenants. They paid rent to the landowner and tried to make a living (often on the breadline!) from farming.

Was Westbury at the forefront of our history? Not often. Ordinary country folk, rich country folk – it is a tale even older than England. And it is Westbury's story. You thought Milton Keynes had no history? This exhibition is for you...

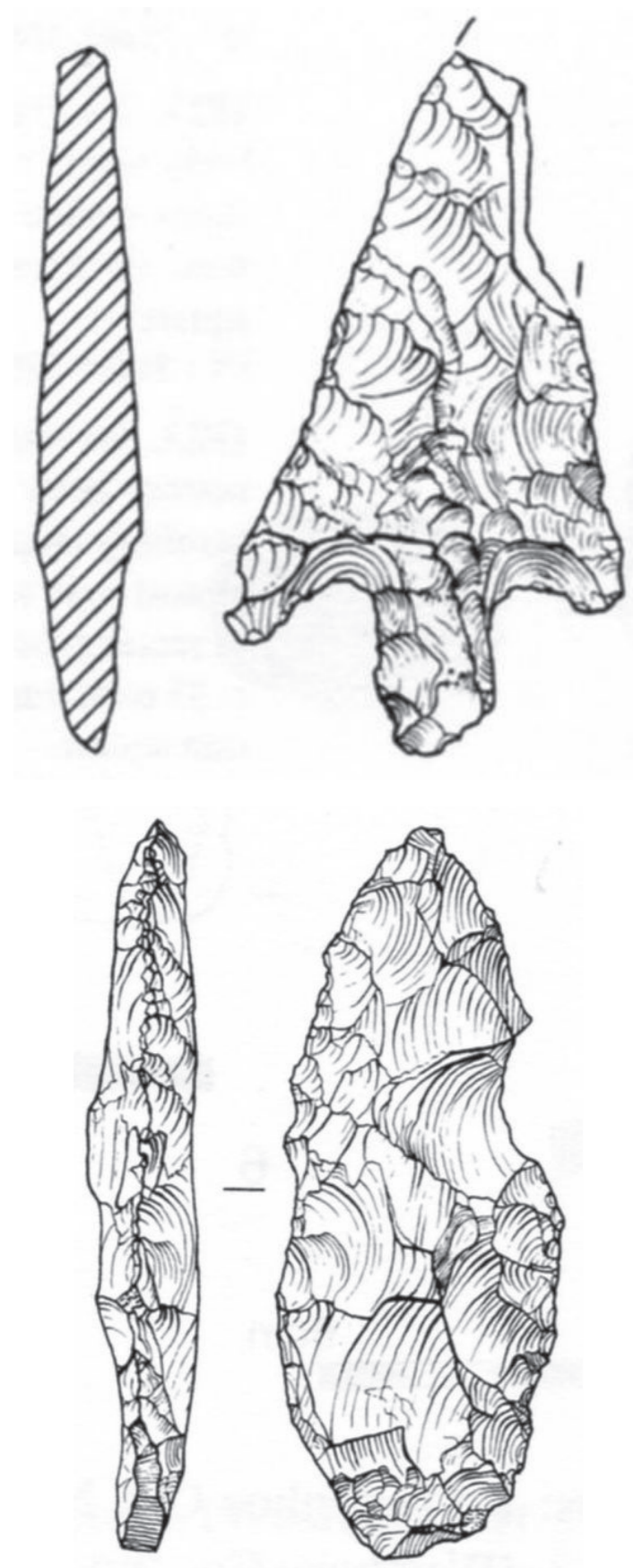


Above each panel is a timeline – this shows you what was happening in this country, and in the world.

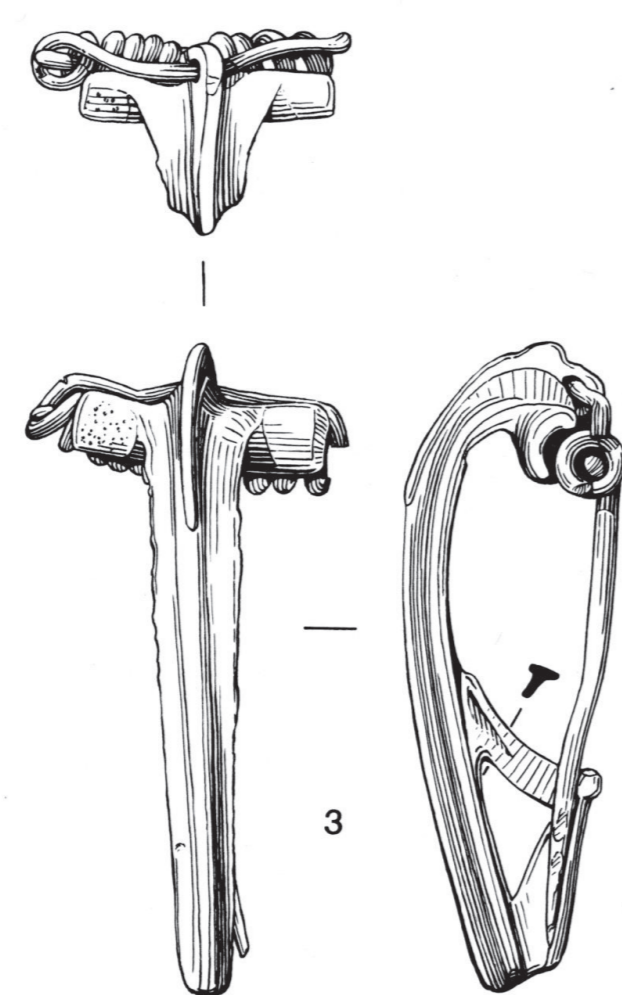
The exhibition is laid out as you see here. You may find the Brief History of Westbury booklet useful – panel numbers refer to the chapters in the booklet.



1 THE FIRST THOUSAND YEARS OF WESTBURY



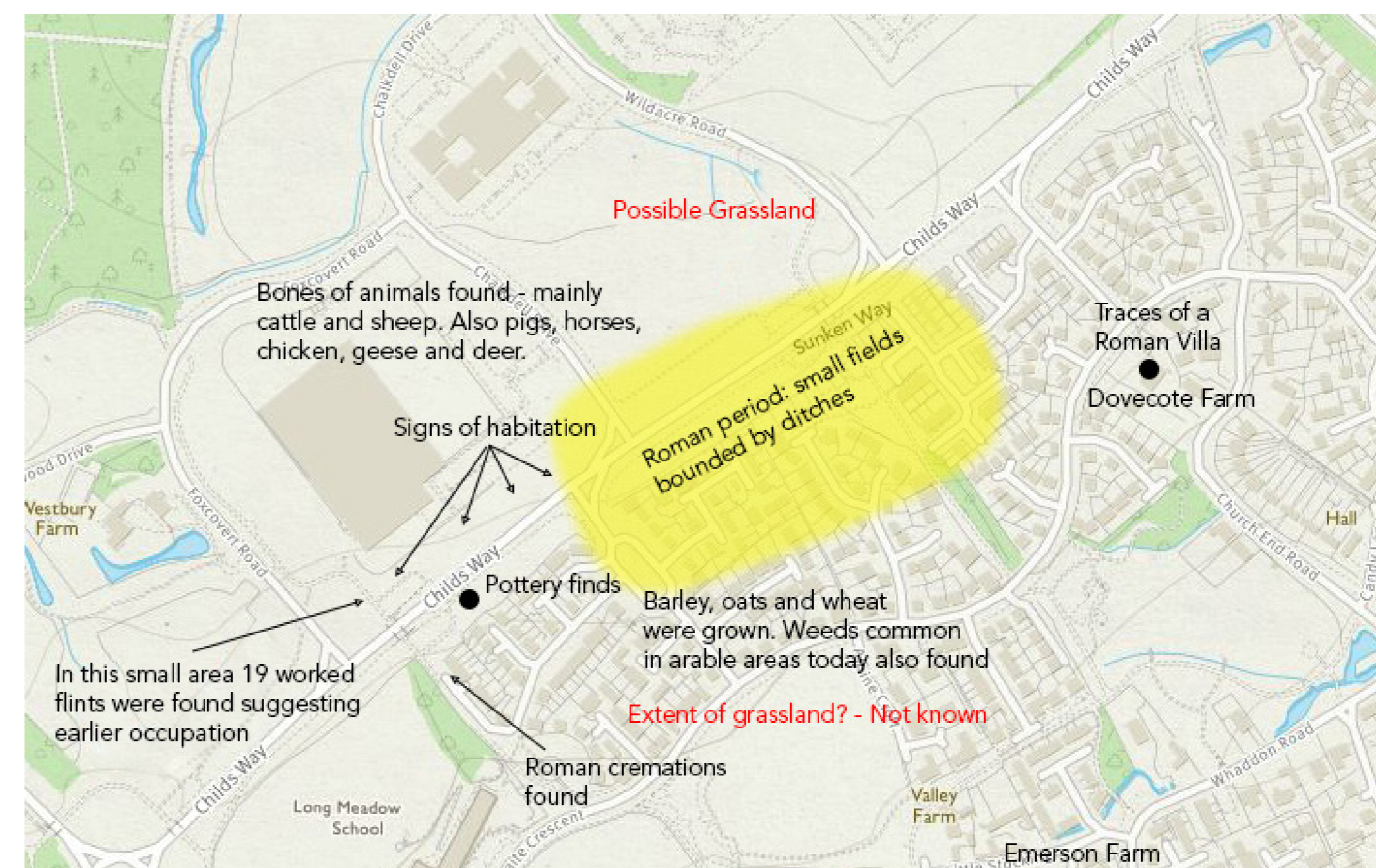
In the 1980s excavations of earthworks near Westbury farmstead by Milton Keynes Archaeological Unit found a hidden history going back to prehistory.



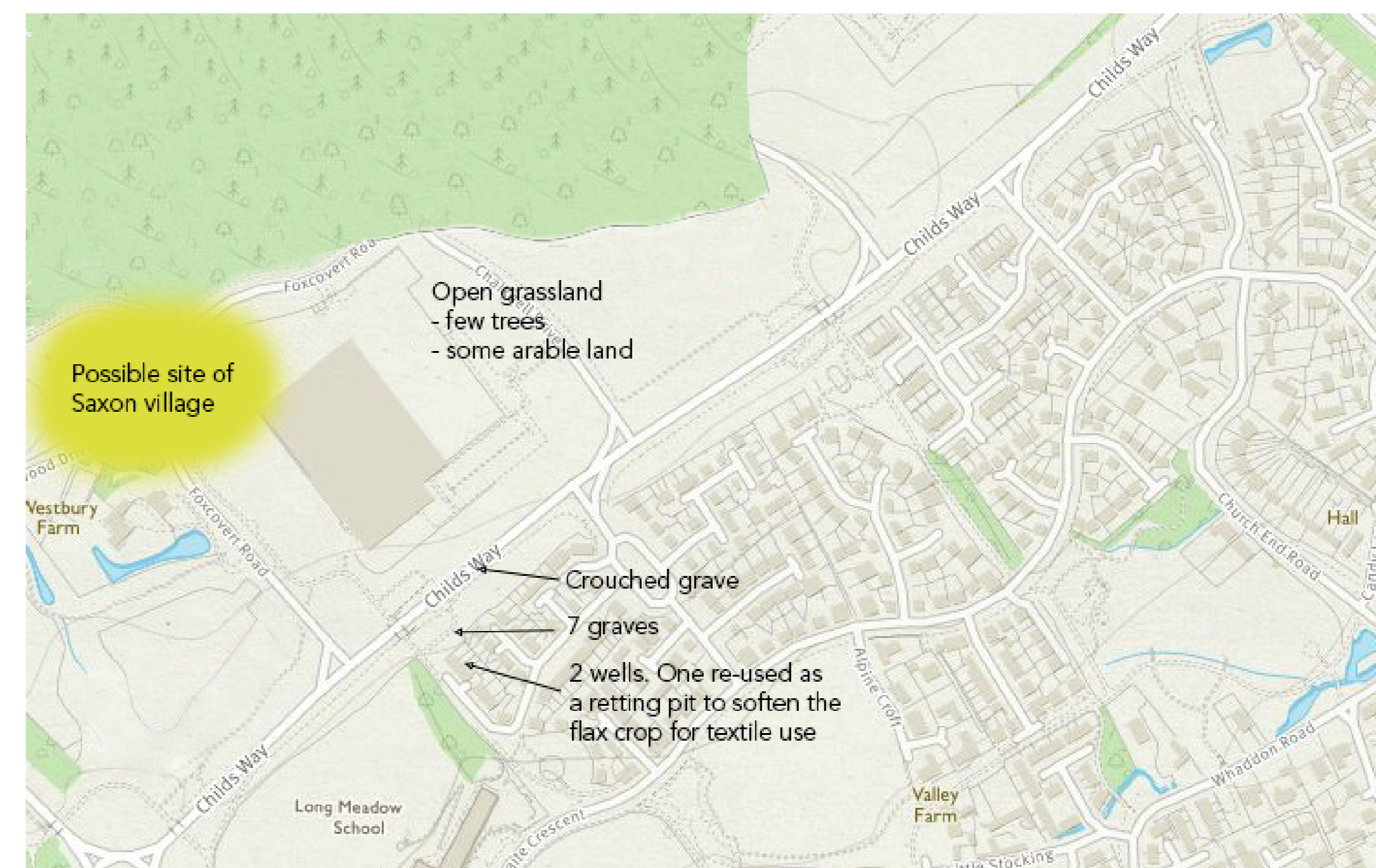
Flints from the Westbury site – an arrowhead (for hunting) and a hand-axe (for timber work and skinning).

Illustrations from Tattenhoe and Westbury Ivens et al BAS 1995

Roman Westbury



Saxon Westbury

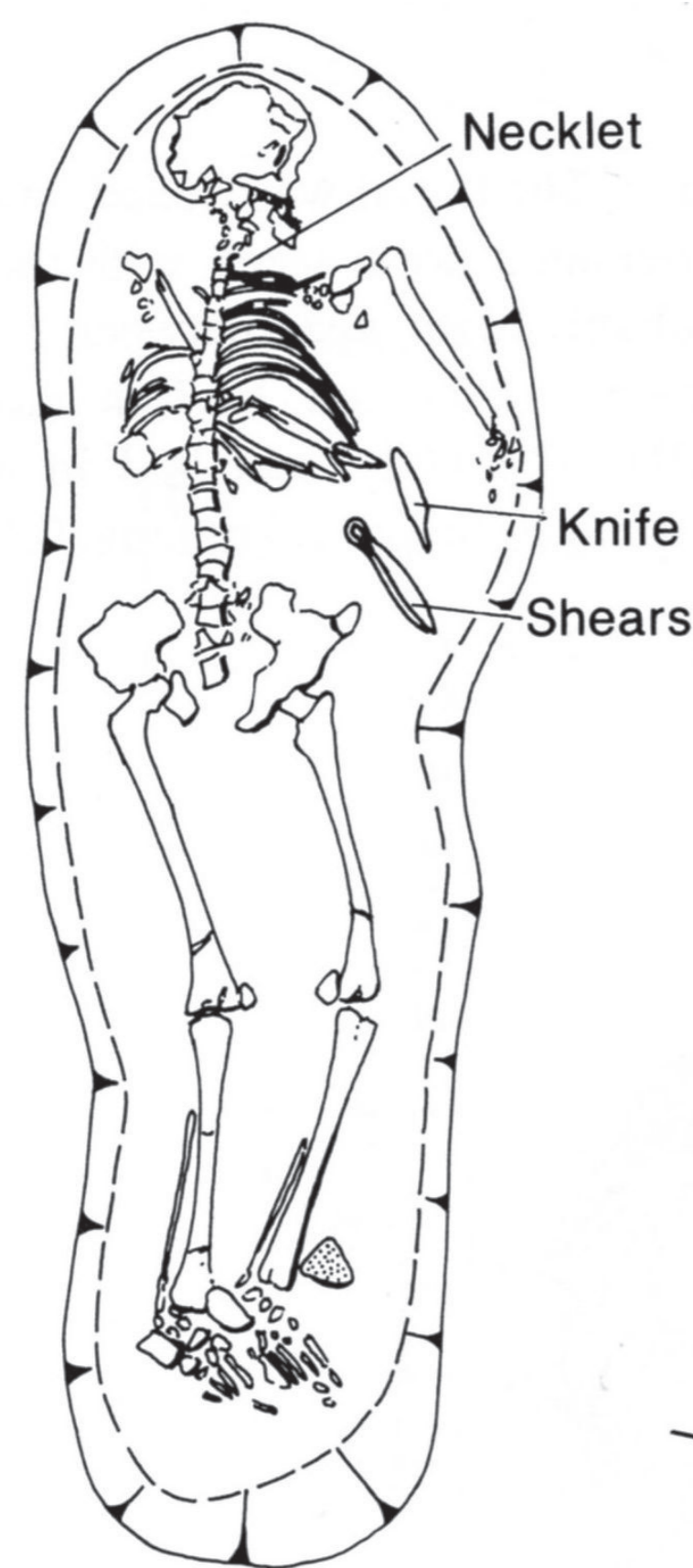


Great Ouse

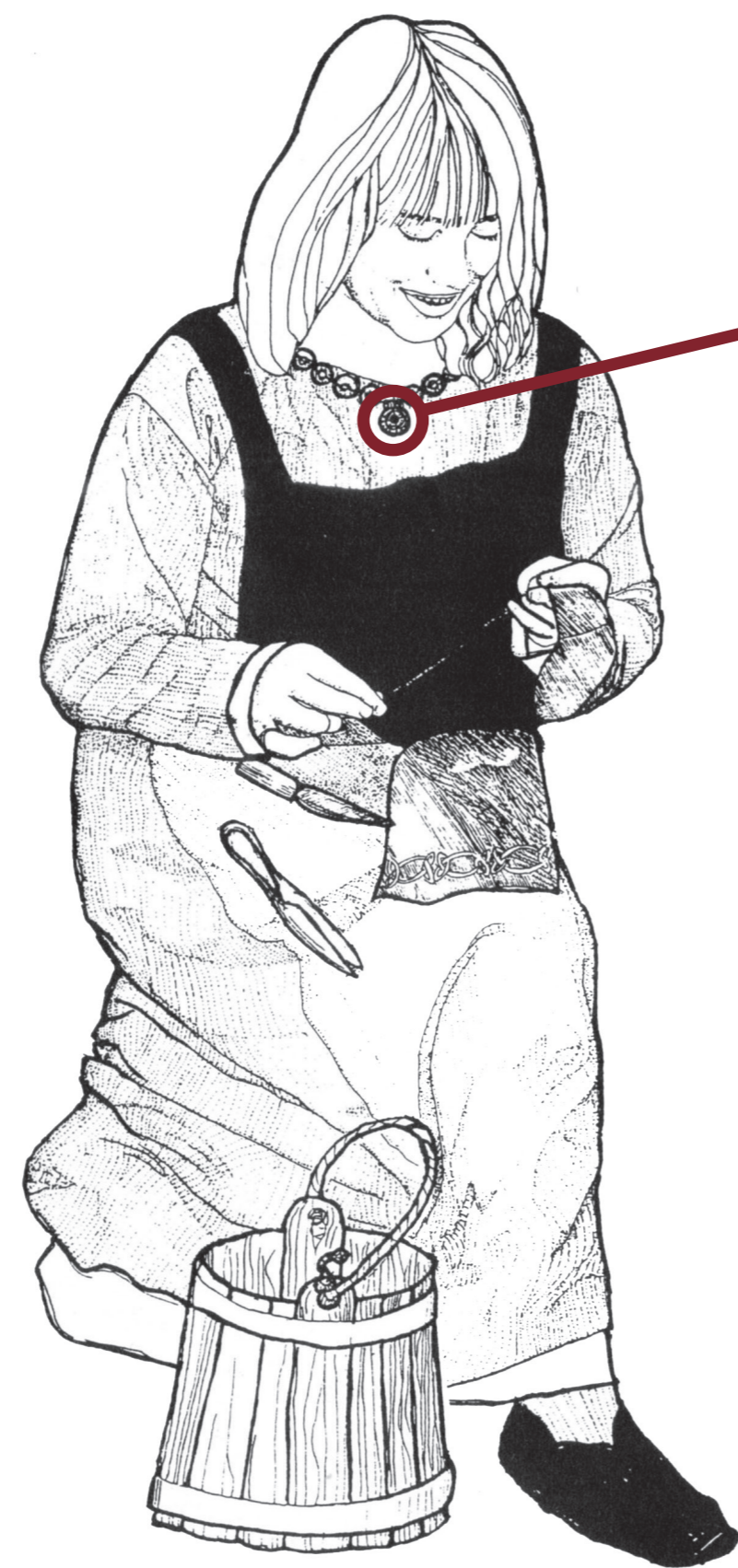


1a THE SAXON REMAINS

The excavations before the building of Childs Way uncovered a small Saxon cemetery of seven graves. The most significant was of a young woman buried face-down.



Skeleton graphic from Tattenhoe & Westbury; Drawing of young woman from Windows on the Past MK Archaeology Unit, 1992



The garnet in the centre is of good quality and thought to be from southern Russia or India. The gold had been melted down from old continental coins and mixed with alloy.

The pendant was on a necklet of silver rings, blue glass beads and shells. The pendant showed signs of wear and may have been a family heirloom.

The woman was obviously of high status, so her unusual burial is a mystery.

The pendant is on display in Bucks County Museum in Aylesbury.

Artist's impression of the young woman with items found. She is wearing the jewellery and has on her lap the knife and shears buried with her. The bucket was in a well found nearby.

2 EARLY HISTORY OF WESTBURY MANOR

The earliest record of Westbury Manor is in the Domesday Book compiled in 1086.

Before the Conquest of 1066, Westbury Manor had been held by Wulfward the White who was a lord at the court of King Edward the Confessor. The new king, William I, had granted Westbury to Richard Ingania (Engaine), an artificer or engineer who had been of service to him.

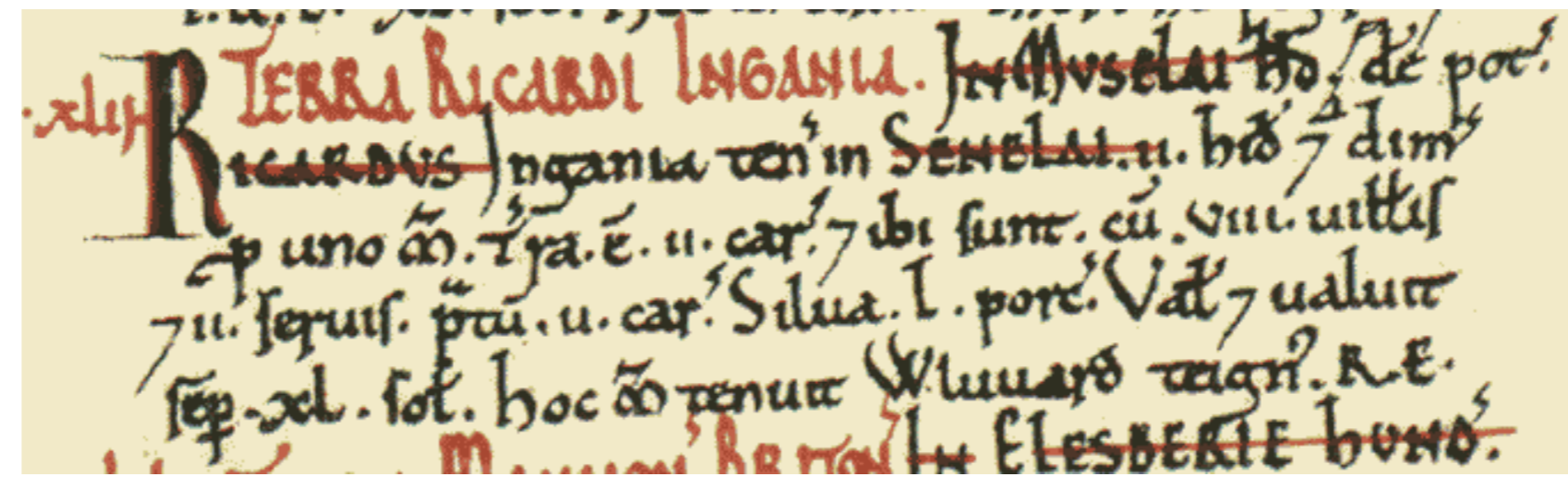
Westbury Manor may have looked like this in 1086



Picture of a typical Manor village by Mike Codd



Beating down acorns for pigs to feed
Source – MK Archaeology Unit booklet



Domesday Book entry for Westbury Manor

42 LAND OF RICHARD THE ARTIFICER
In MURSLEY Hundred
1 Richard the Artificer holds 2½ hides in SHENLEY (Brook End) as one manor. Land for 2 ploughs; they are there, with 8 villagers and 2 slaves.
Meadow for 2 ploughs; woodland, 50 pigs.
The value is and always was 40s.
Wulfward, a thane of King Edward's, held this manor.

Translation of Domesday Book entry for Westbury (Phillimore)

Westbury was a small manor with a population of about 40 to 45 people. The manor had land for growing crops, meadows to feed the animals and woodland for timber and feeding pigs. The meadowland would have been along Shenley Brook.

Life on a manor in 11th century illustrations



Ploughing with oxen



Harvesting



Clearing woodland



Shepherds

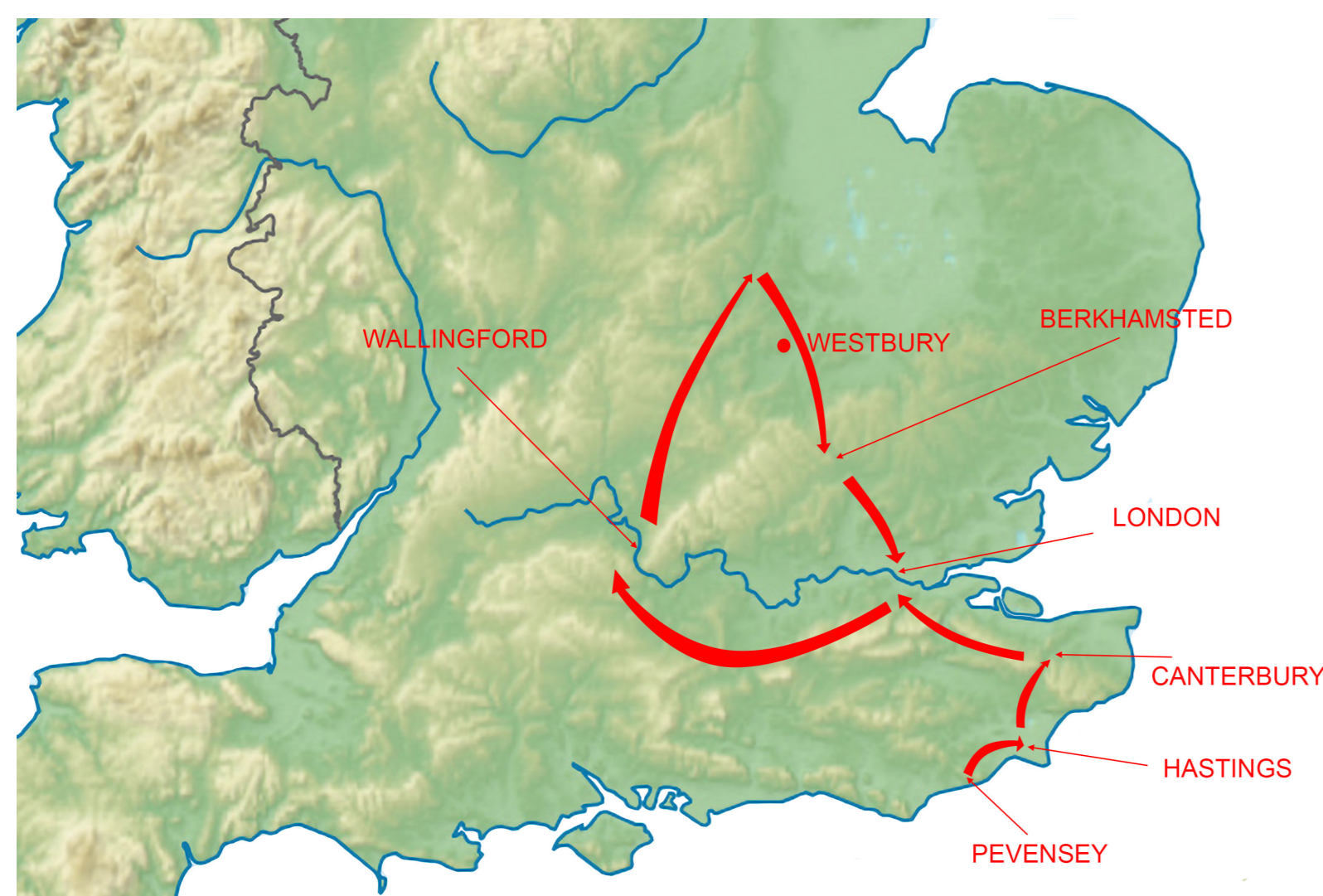
2a

NORMAN CONQUEST



William the Conqueror (c. 1028–1087)

William's route of conquest



Battle of Hastings, 14th October, 1066 - the Norman Conquest begins.

At Berkhamsted William receives the surrender of the English.

William heads to London where he is crowned king (December 25th, 1066).



Normans setting fire to a house



Normans feasting on plundered food



Normans pillaging



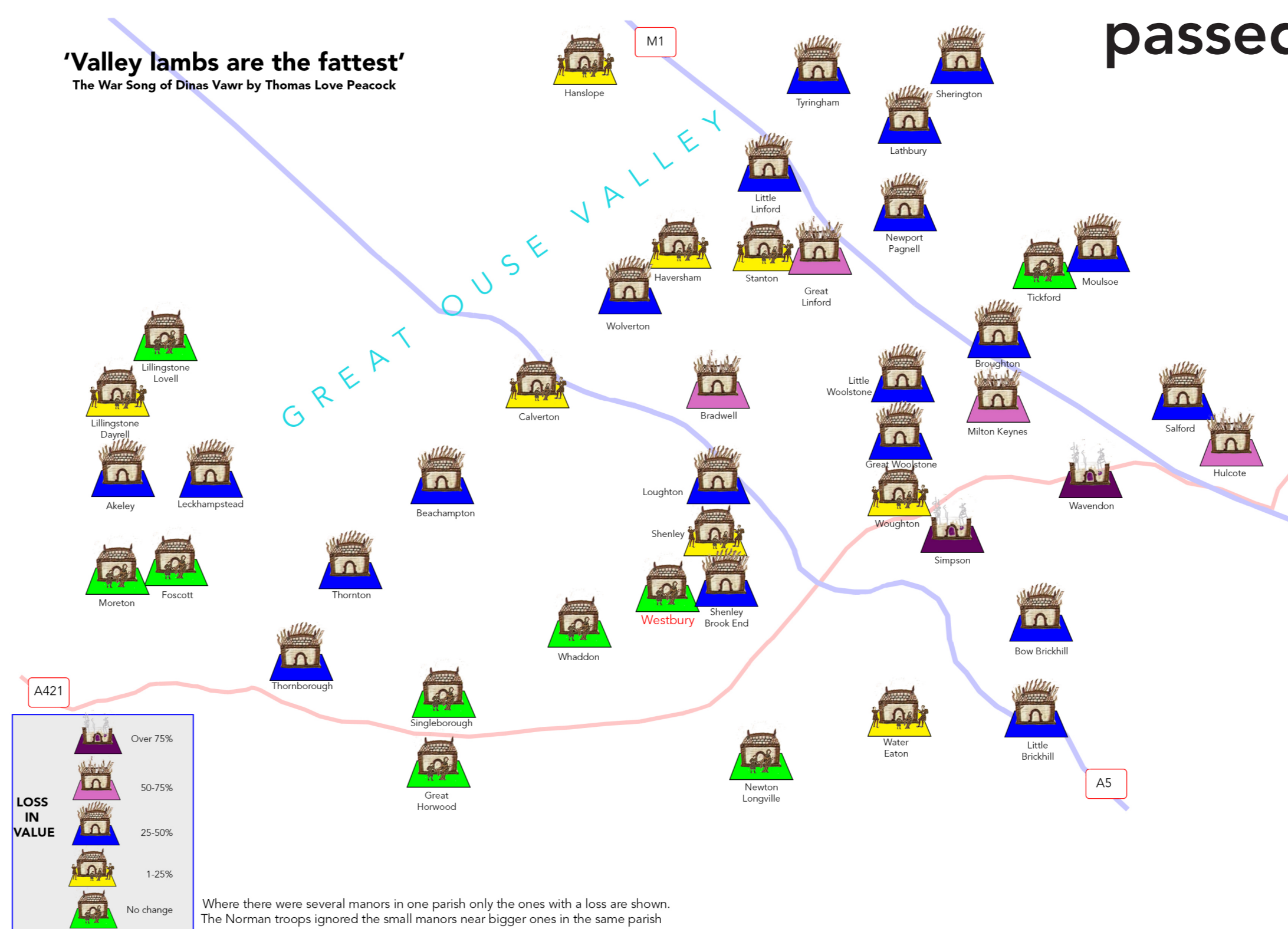
Edith, by King Edward's deathbed

Images from the Bayeux Tapestry

“The Normans wasted all they passed through”

The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle

The Domesday book records that many manors in north Bucks show a loss of value shortly after 1066. The map above shows these manors and so indicates the route of the plundering bands of Normans as they made their way to London.



The Lord of the Westbury Manor, Wulfward the White, was taken hostage by the Normans after the Battle of Hastings. But did the villagers know?

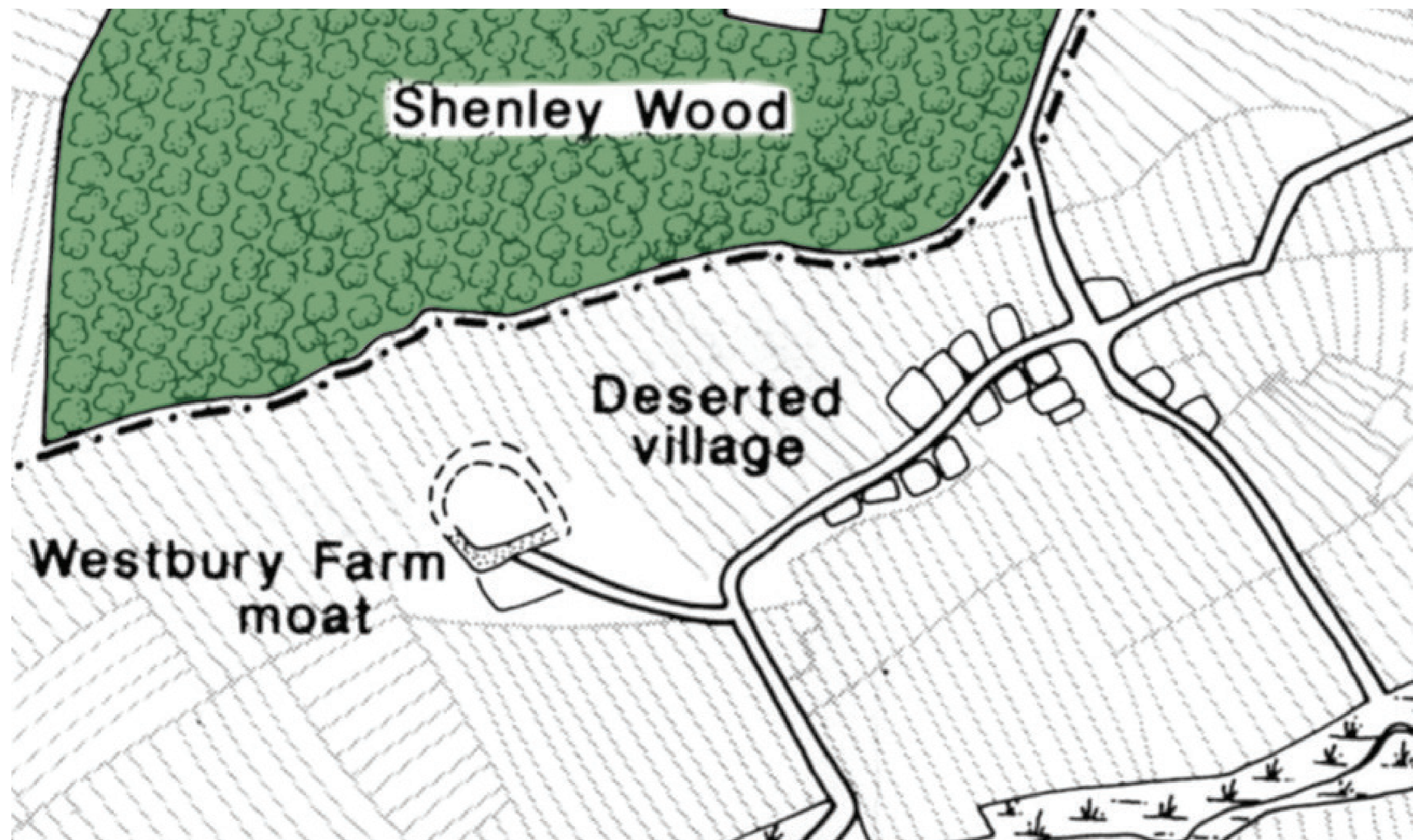
Did they hear that the Norman army was coming north through Bucks looking for Watling St and the way to London? Or was the first news from other Shenley manors that were plundered by Norman bands of soldiers looking for food?

Did they put out their fires so the manor was not noticed? Did they hide their animals in the wood?

We do not know what they did but Westbury Manor was spared. The value of the manor before the Conquest and shortly after it remained the same: “is and always was 40 shillings”.

The greatest damage was to Simpson Manor which was held by Edith, widow of King Edward and sister of the defeated King Harold.

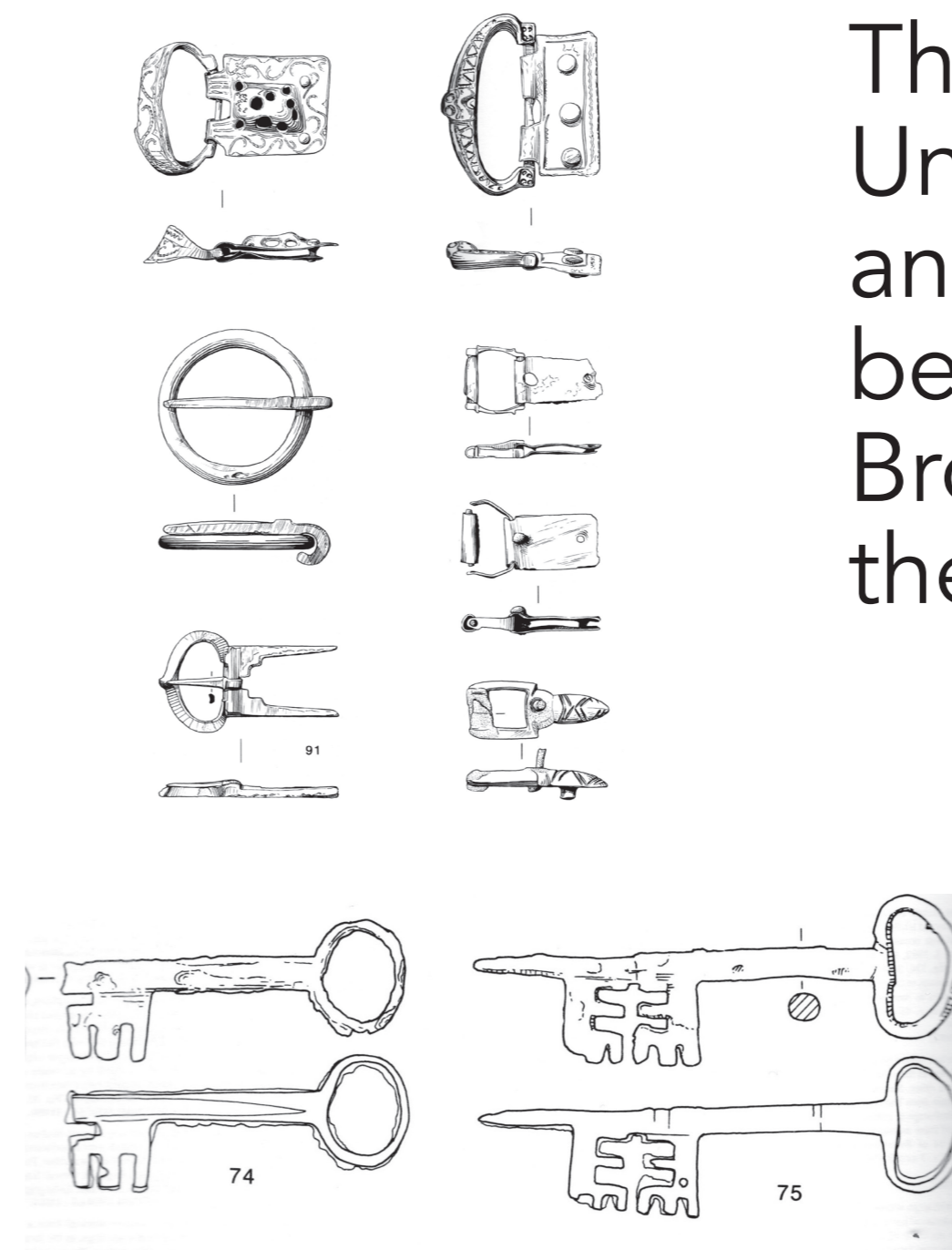
3 WESTBURY IN THE 14TH CENTURY



Pre-1980 earthworks indicating medieval Westbury and sunken ways



Illustrations of 14th C life from the Luttrell Psalter



Illustrations of medieval finds from Westbury village – Tattenhoe and Westbury ibid



from Windows on the Past MK Archaeology Unit, 1992

There is now no sign of Westbury village. Until the 1980s there were many mounds and sunken ways (below) in the fields between Westbury Farm and Shenley Brook End village. These were the traces of the deserted medieval village.

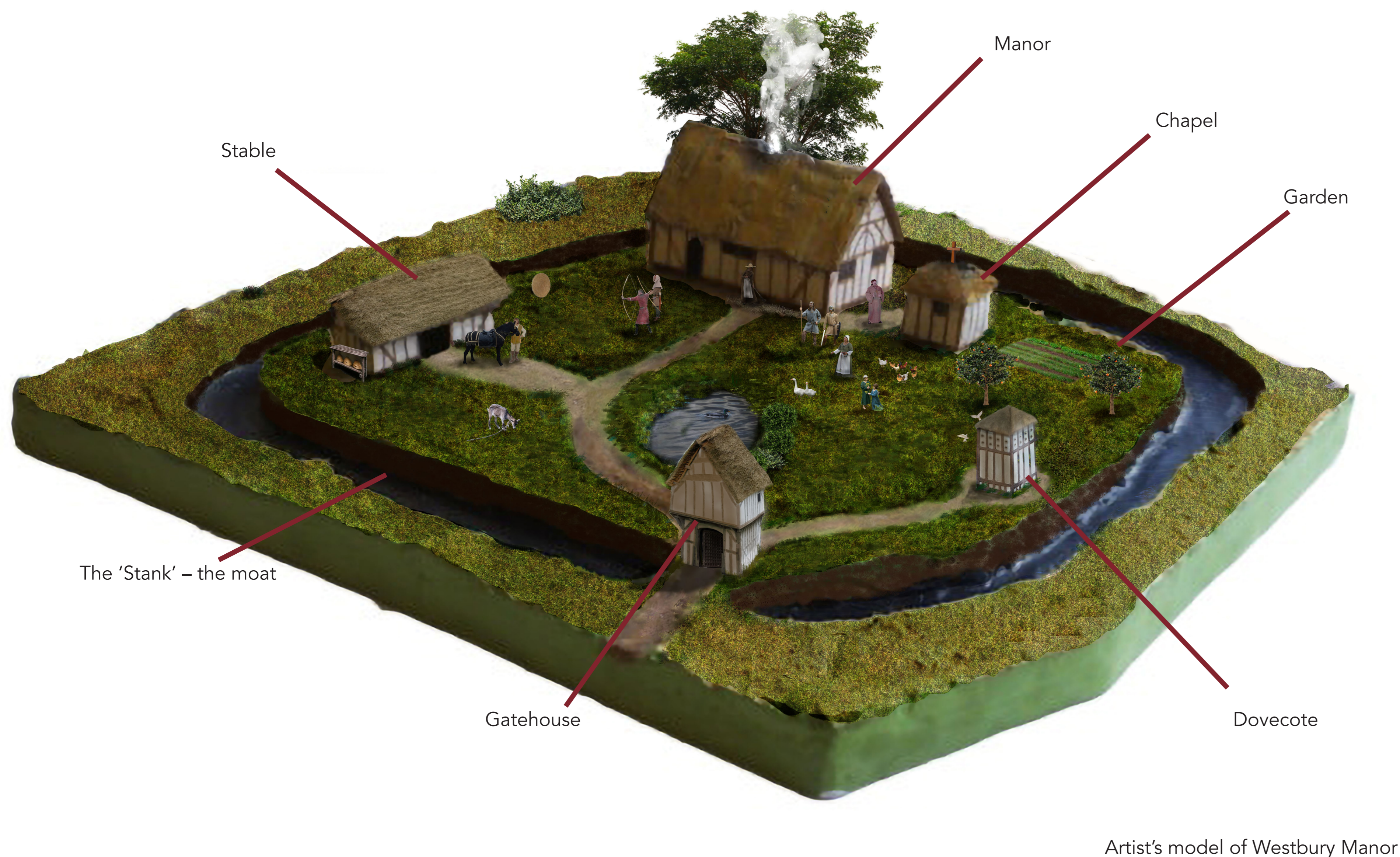


Archaeologists found the remains of crofts (small farms) and buildings along the main sunken way.

Westbury village was mostly a self-sufficient community growing or hunting their own food - except for occasional shellfish – spinning and weaving cloth and with a smithy forging iron. Pottery, sharpening stones and finer metal objects seem to have been obtained by barter as very few medieval coins were found.

There was no evidence of any sudden desertion of Westbury village. It seems life was better nearer the Shenley Brook.

3a WESTBURY – MOATED MANOR



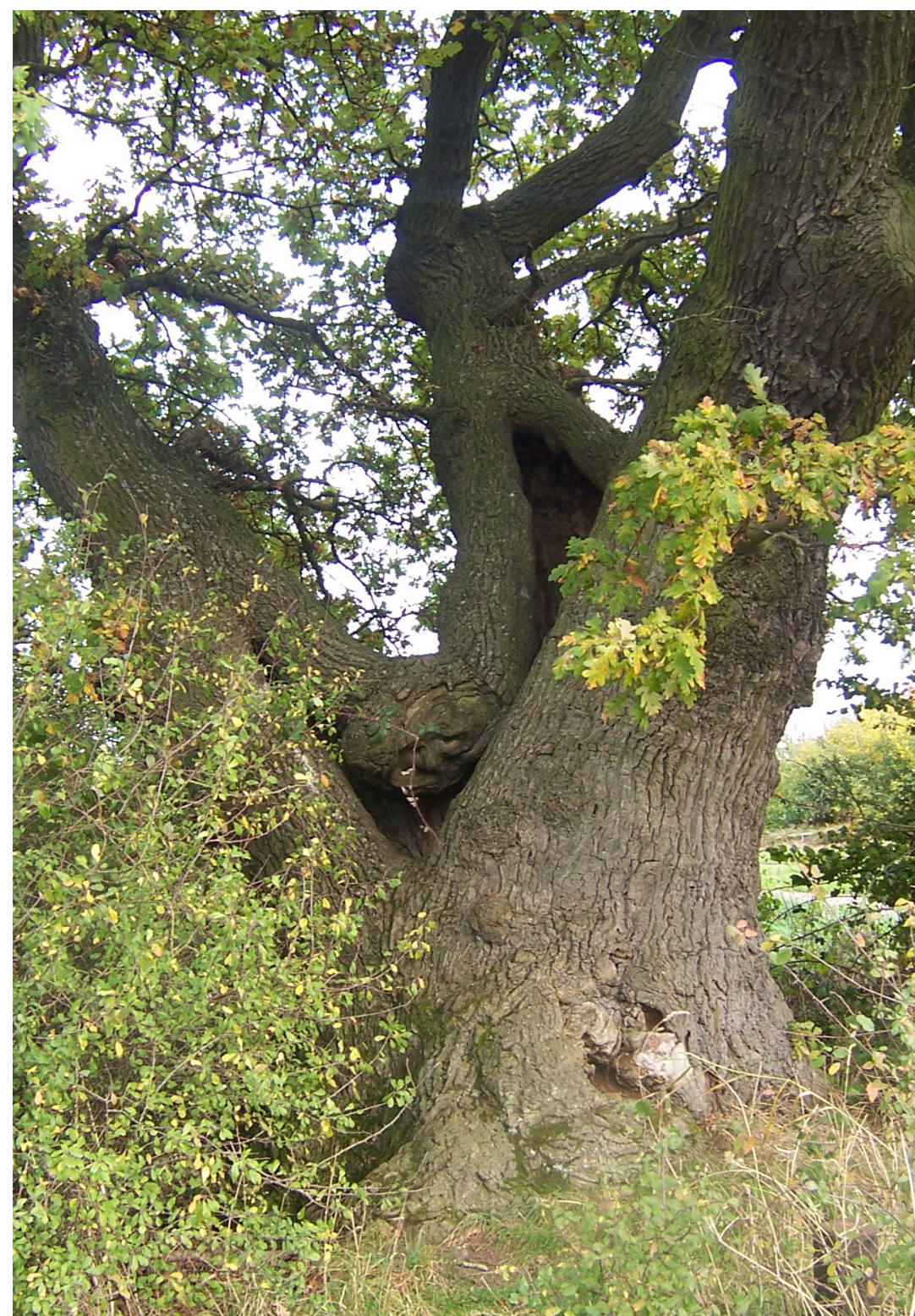
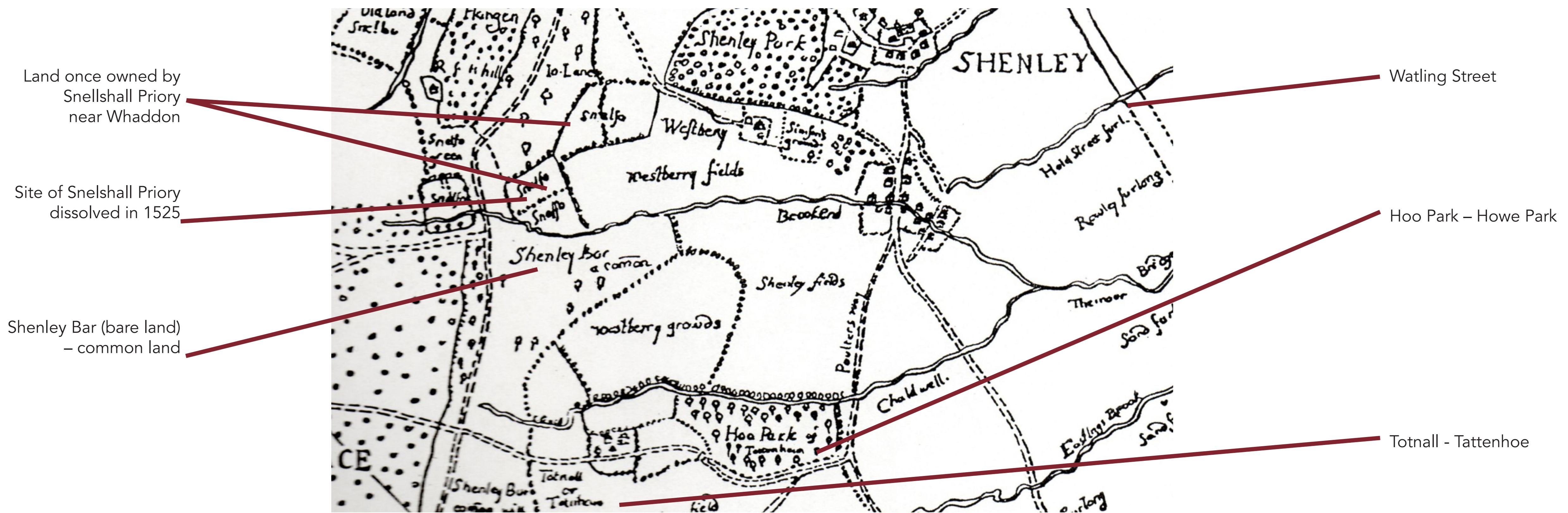
In 1369 John fitz Eustace, Lord of Westbury Manor, died leaving a widow, Christiana, and a baby son.

A document awarding Christiana a share of the manor tells us much about Westbury Manor at that time.

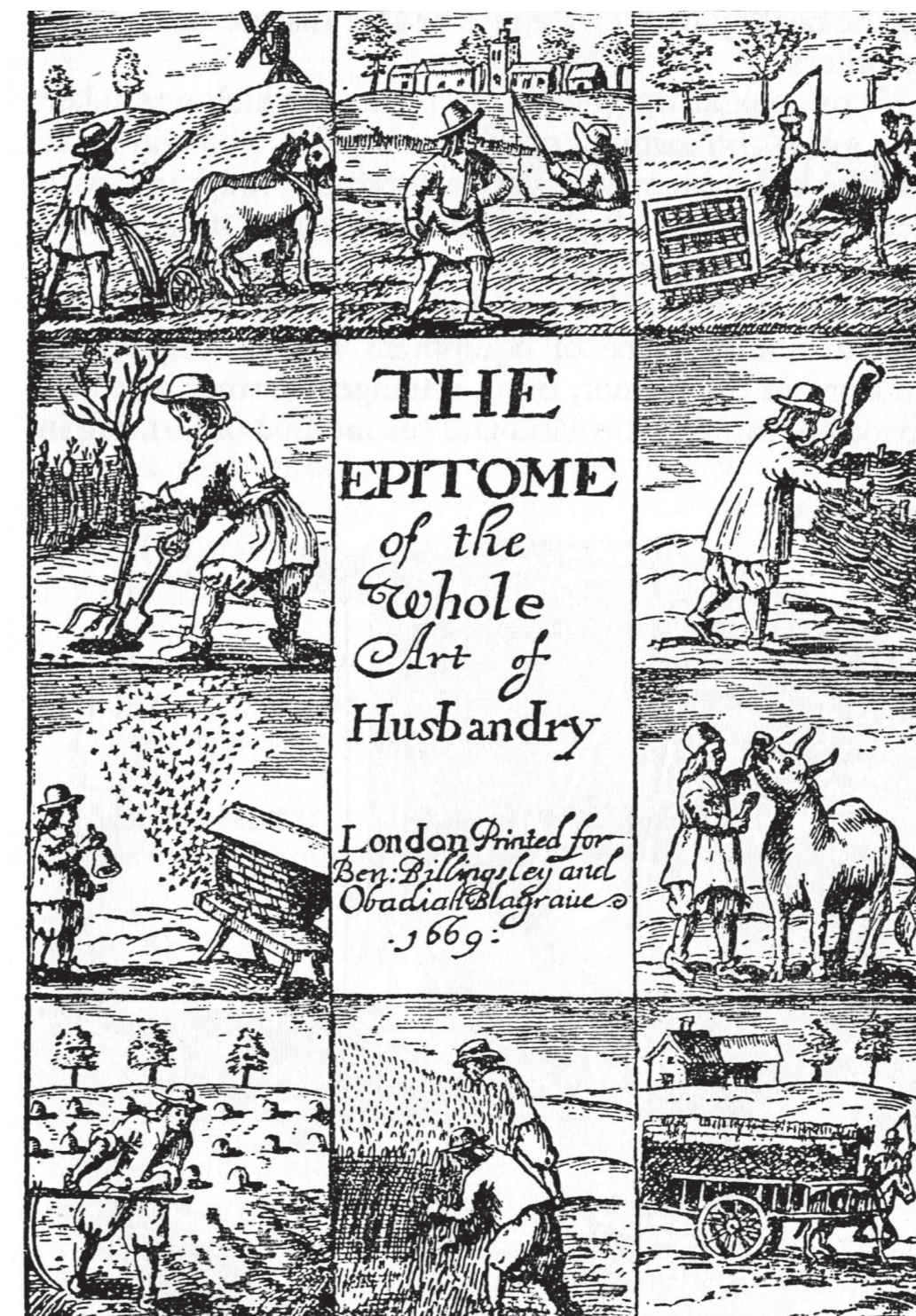
Christiana was granted

- “all the lower chambers under the upper ones [of the manor house] a little stable at the north end of the hall and part of a garden adjacent called le Chapelyard”
- a third part of the granary and a chamber over the bridge-gates provided that the chaplains have ingress and egress over the bridge
- a third part of the profit of the dovecote
- part of the great stank [moat] beginning on the west side and northwards as far as the Hazelwood
- and many more pieces of land including “part of a wood called Howe Park”

4 WESTBURY IN THE 17TH AND 18TH CENTURIES



The Boundary Oak was planted around the time the map was created. It stands at the edge of Shenley Wood on the corner of Foxcovert Road and marked the boundary between the two Hundreds. It later marked the boundary between Newport Pagnell and Winslow District Councils.



Front page of an early book on farming showing each process

During its long life the Oak has seen many changes in rural life – it was at this time that the agricultural revolution was beginning. Farming practices changed; land ownership and rights changed, as did the landscape. Much of the rural population migrated to urban Britain.

This was one of the first books to promote improve farming methods

4a | THE STAFFORDS AND WESTBURY



Edmund Stafford Esq^r late of Westbury in the County of Bucks

Edmund Stafford Esq late of Westbury in the County of Bucks From the Probate record of 1784

The Stafford family of Tattenhoe became lords of Westbury Manor in 1512. Edmund Stafford, an heir-in-waiting, renovated and extended Westbury Manor House in 1670, commemorated by a plaque in the front wall. The imposing chimney stack and high gable added status to the house and ensured that it could be seen from far away.

The record inventory shows that Westbury Manor House was that of a wealthy gentleman. The house had three living rooms, a kitchen, pantry, dairy, buttery, a cheese room and a brewhouse outside. Upstairs were six bedrooms, and above them, garrets for five servants. The "best chamber" had an "embroidered bed" with "tapestry hangings".

Edmund wore fine clothes, a watch and "ringing bells". Among his many possessions were guns, pistols, swords, books, clocks and silver tableware.

Sources: Probate records of 1684 at the National Archives and on ancestry.co.uk



4b

FARMING UNDER THE SELBYS



Edmund Stafford's son Charles who inherited Westbury Manor mortgaged it to James Selby of Wavendon. When Charles died the Selbys acquired Westbury. The 1801 map drawn for William Selby shows the newly enclosed fields with only the commons as open land. By 1860 these were enclosed and new farms formed.

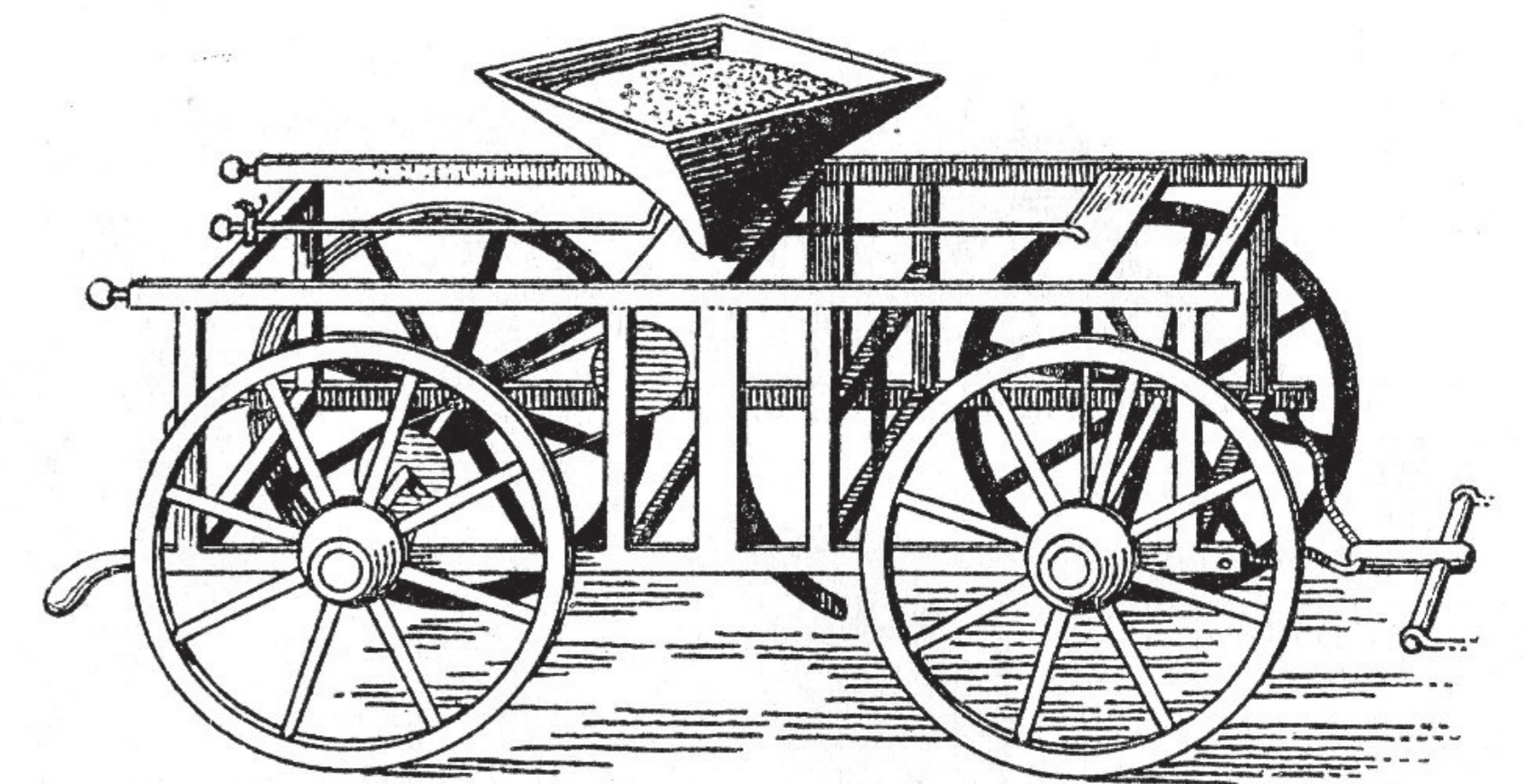
In the enclosed fields labour-intensive methods increasingly gave way to mechanisation.



Tenants paying rent to the squire



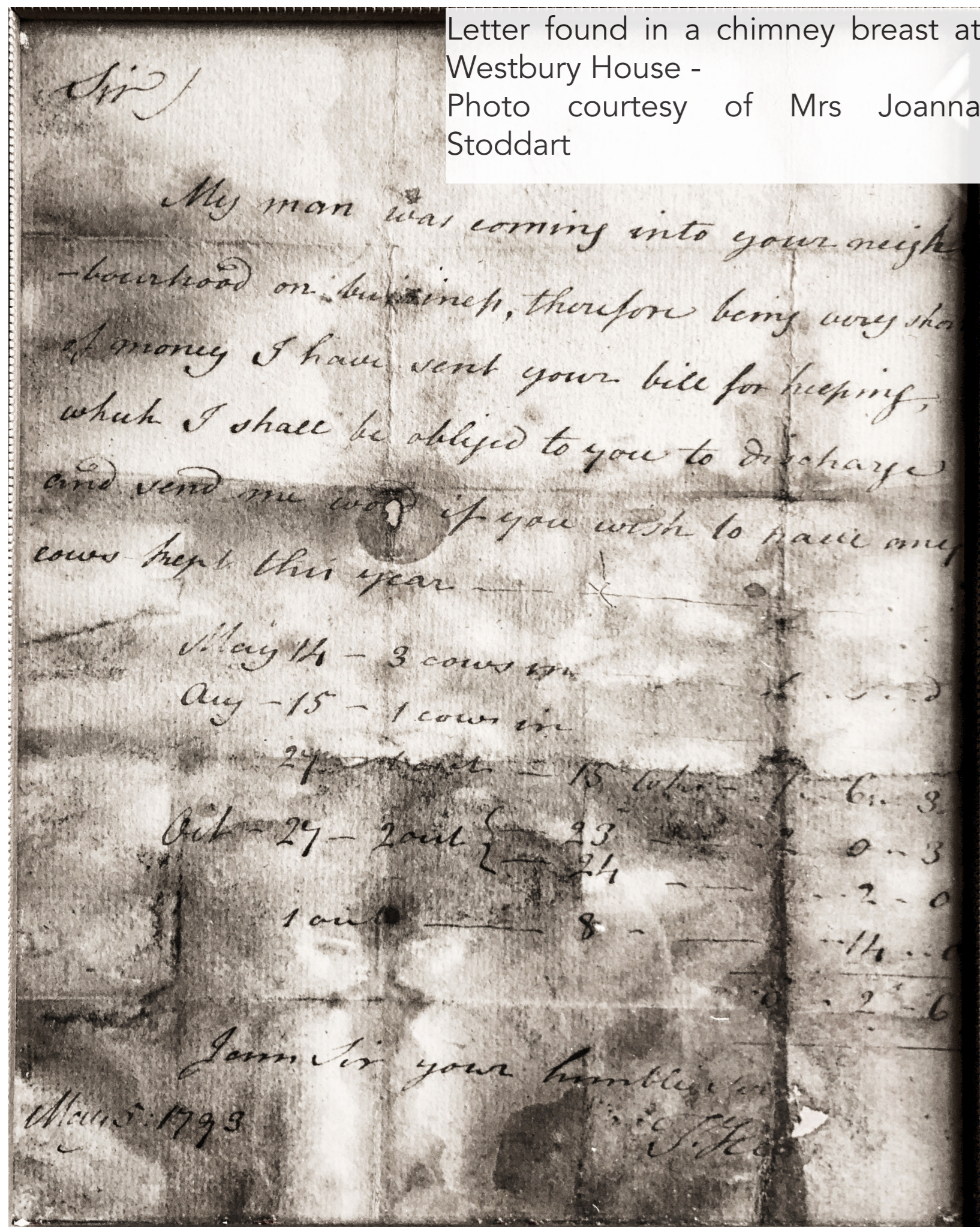
Farm Labourers ate with the family



An early seed drill

4c

THE HAWLEY FAMILY OF WESTBURY 1782 - 1841



Letter found in a chimney breast at Westbury House - Photo courtesy of Mrs Joanna Stoddart

Sir
My man was coming into your neighbourhood on business, therefore being very short of money I have sent your bill for keeping, which I shall be obliged to you to discharge and send me word if you wish to have any cows kept this year

				£	s	d
May	14 -	3 cows in				
Aug	15 -	1 cow in				
	27 -	1 out	15		6	3
Oct	27 -	2 out	23	2	0	3
			24		2	0
		1 out	8		14	0
				<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
				3	2	6

I am Sir your humble [servant?]

May 5: 1793

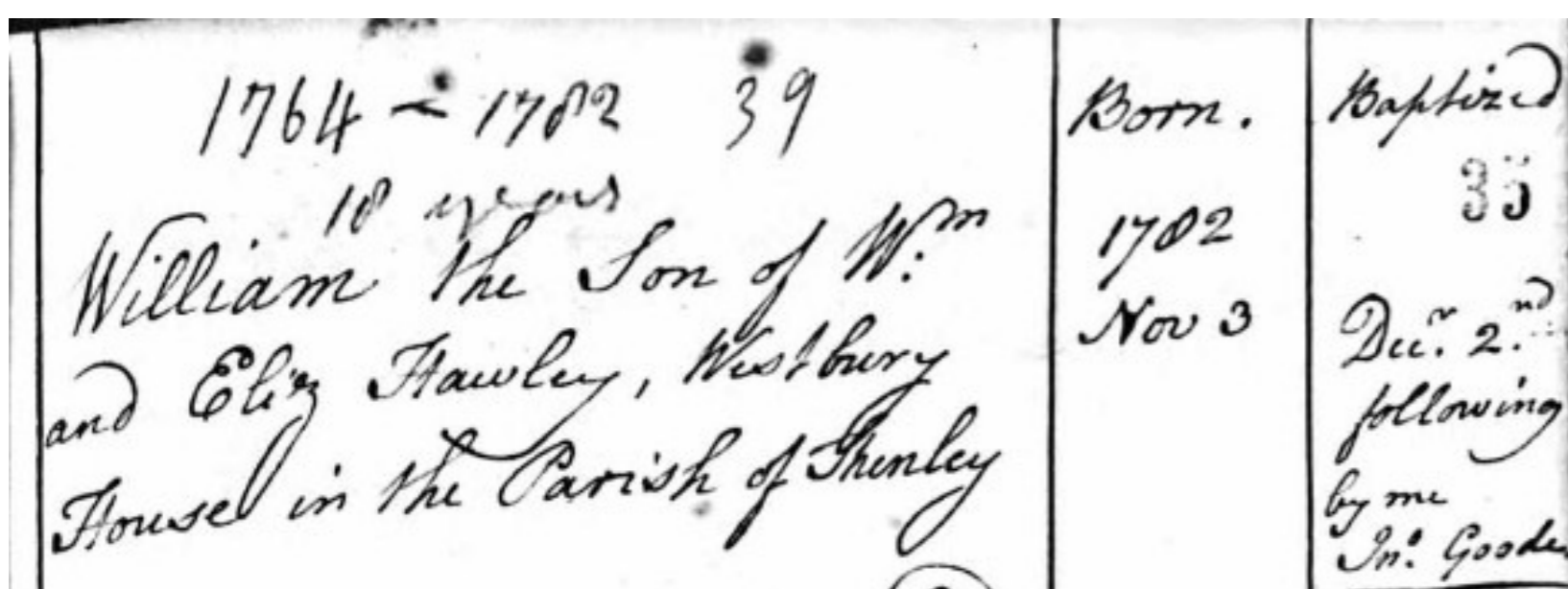
T Fre[?]

The tenant at Westbury in 1793 was William Hawley. The letter is a bill to him from another farmer, or a landowner, for "keep" – having 4 of Hawley's cows to graze his land. These pregnant cows would have returned home to calve.



It seems that Westbury farm tended to suffer periods of poor growth of grass in summer, probably because of water shortage.

£1 had an estimated value of £111 in 1793 so good milk production was important to William Hawley. The milk was probably used to produce butter and cheese for the local market.



Baptism record of William Hawley

5 | VICTORIAN WESTBURY



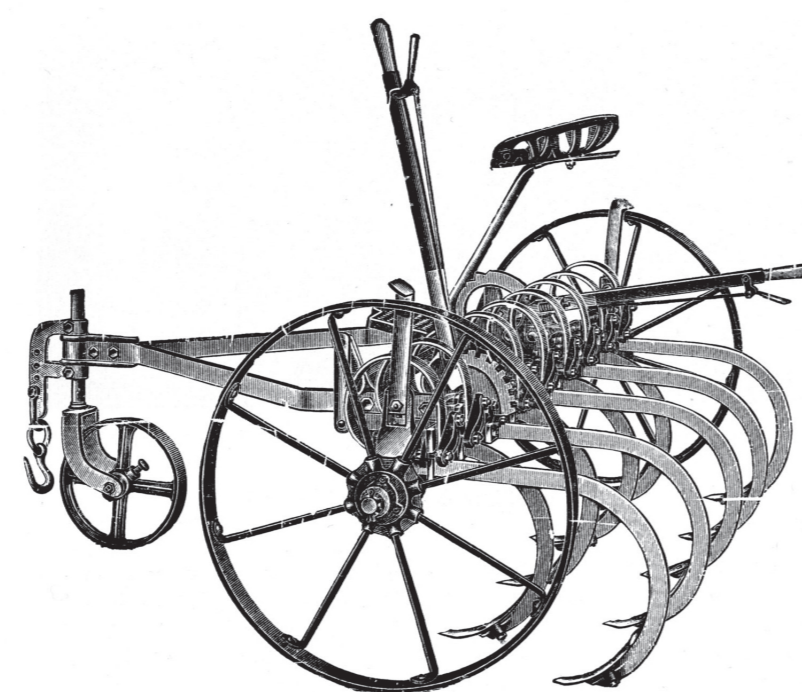
1837 OS map updated 1867 to include railways

In the early nineteenth century Westbury was owned by the Selby-Lowndes family. Their estates stretched from Whaddon to Winslow and beyond. Until 1840 Whaddon Chase was fenced-in as a private park.

By 1860, however, the common lands around had all been enclosed. Westbury Farm was sufficiently prosperous for improvements to be made. The moat was partly filled in to accommodate new buildings.

The Hawley and Clarke families were tenants for over one hundred years from the 1780s until the 1880s but by the end of the century the agricultural depression saw greater tenancy turnover. Agricultural prices fell. Eventually the Selby-Lowndes family sold Westbury.

The coming of the railways in the 1840s meant Whaddon's hunting grounds were accessible to riders and their horses from as far as London.



ESTD. **W. TASKER & SONS'** (1813.)

IMPROVED TRACTION ENGINES

Are Powerful, Simple, Efficient,
with small consumption
of Fuel and Water.

PRICES.	
6 H.P.	£385
7 "	410
8 "	440
10 "	500
12 "	560

EXTRAS.

Hauling Drum and Rope . . .	15
Water Lift and Horse	10
Injector	10

Catalogues of Traction, Portable, Fixed, Semi-fixed, and Vertical Engines and Boilers; R.A.S.E. Prize Threshing Machines; R.A.S.E. Special First and only Prize Combined Elevator and Stacker; "Farmer's Friend" Elevator, and Traction Wagons; Rack Saw Benches, &c., on application.

W. Tasker & Sons' Combined Threshing Machine,

Awarded Prize of £17 10s. at the Great Trials of the Royal Agricultural Society of England, Doncaster, 1871.

The recent Trials of the R.A.S.E. (see R.A.S.E. Journal, vol. 2nd, part III, No. VII, page 469) have conclusively proved that this Machine requires much less power to drive Threshing or empty.

That it threshed most grain per minute per horse power, and that it threshed the cleanest.

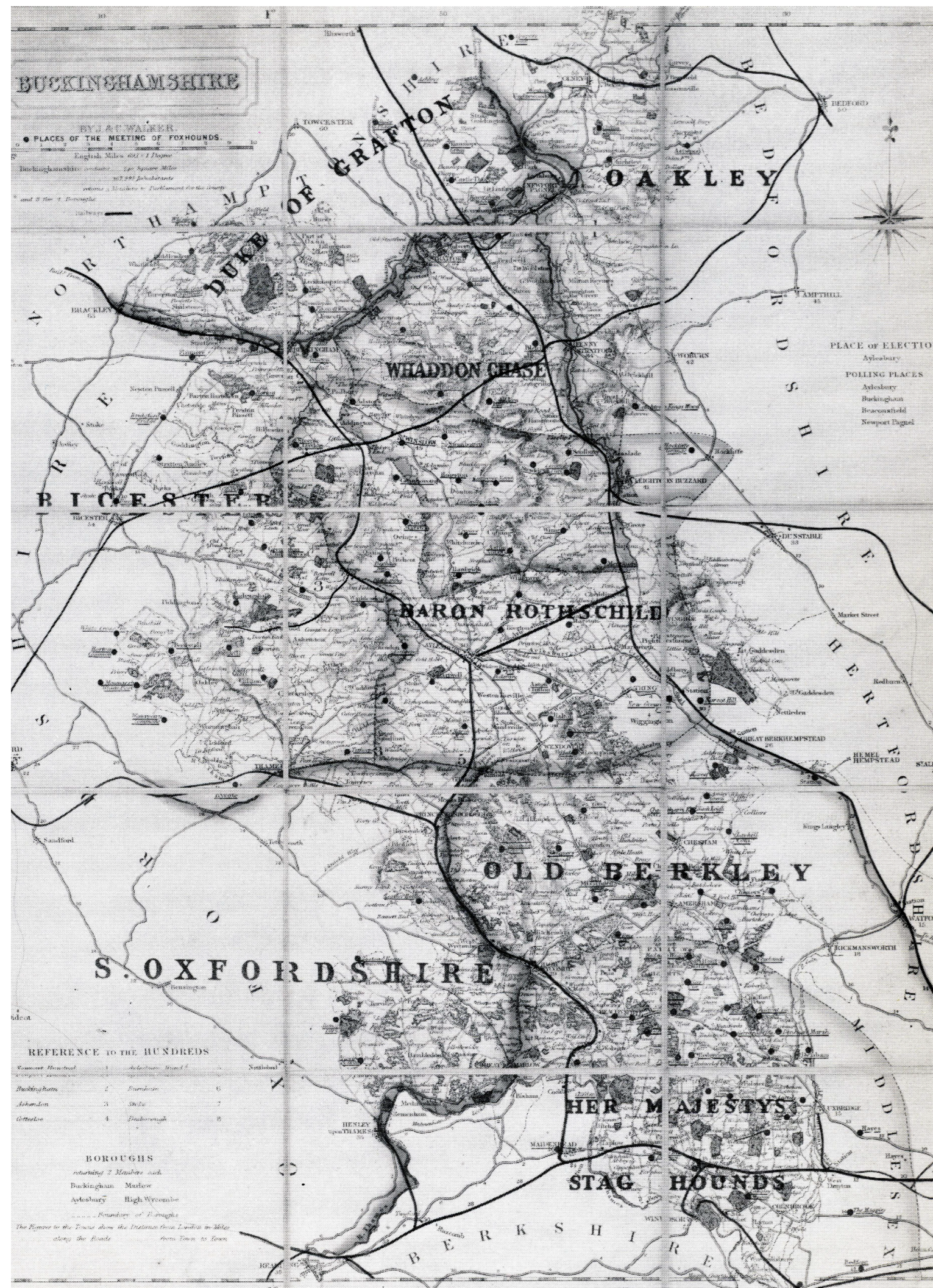
Strongly Braced.
Well Made.
Very Simple.

PRICES.	
Small, Large.	
42 in.	£115 —
48 "	125 £135
54 "	130 140
60 "	140 150
66 "	160

Chaff bagging £5 extra.

WATERLOO IRON WORKS, ANDOVER, HANTS.

5a HUNTIN' AND SHOOTIN'



J & C Walker's 1837 map of the county overprinted in Hobson's Fox Hunting/Map of Buckinghamshire of 1850



William Selby Lowndes Senior

The Selby Lowndes family were Masters of Whaddon Chase Hunt for over a century.



The Rose & Crown and the Whaddon Chase hunt

From the end of the 18th and well into the 20th century, this area was a famous hunting ground. Whaddon Chase and The Quorn hunts vied for pre-eminence.

Westbury and Shenley Wood were favoured hare-coursing and fox-hunting venues.

WHADDON CHASE HUNT.
IT has been arranged that the hunting days of the Whaddon Chase Hunt should be in the coming season as follows:
 The opening meet is on **TUESDAY, November 7th.**
 The next meet will be on **SATURDAY, November 11th.**
 In the following week the days will be **TUESDAY, Nov. 14th, and FRIDAY, Nov. 17th,** and so on, the days continuing to be **SATURDAYS and FRIDAYS** in alternate weeks and every **TUESDAY.**

Announcement in the Buckingham Advertiser for Saturday 12 August 1922



6 | 20TH CENTURY WESTBURY



During World War II the government assessed all farms in a bid to increase food production.

Westbury Farm and Dovecote Farm were being farmed as one unit but the survey (shown here) shows the difficulties faced by generations of farmers.

B. CONDITIONS OF FARM.				
1. Proportion (%) of area on which soil is	Heavy	Medium	Light	Peaty
	100			
2. Is farm conveniently laid out?	Yes ...	Moderately	No ...	
3. Proportion (%) of farm which is naturally ...	Good	Fair	Bad	
4. Situation in regard to road		75	25	
5. Situation in regard to railway				
6. Condition of farmhouse				
Condition of buildings				
7. Condition of farm roads				
8. Condition of fences				
9. Condition of ditches				
10. General condition of field drainage				
11. Condition of cottages				
12. Number of cottages within farm area				No.
Number of cottages elsewhere				
13. Number of cottages let on service tenancy				
14. Is there infestation with :-			Yes	No
rabbits and moles				
rats and mice				
rooks and wood pigeons				
other birds				
insect pests				
15. Is there heavy infestation with weeds?			X	NA
If so, kinds of weeds :-				
16. Are there derelict fields?			Yes	No
If so, acreage				X

Westbury saw many changes in the last century. At the turn of the century the farm had been sold to William Bradley Grimwood who had intended to transform the farm into a hunting lodge. He died before moving in. The Duncan family of Shenley Park House owned the farm for a few decades. Later it returned to being part of the Whaddon estate.

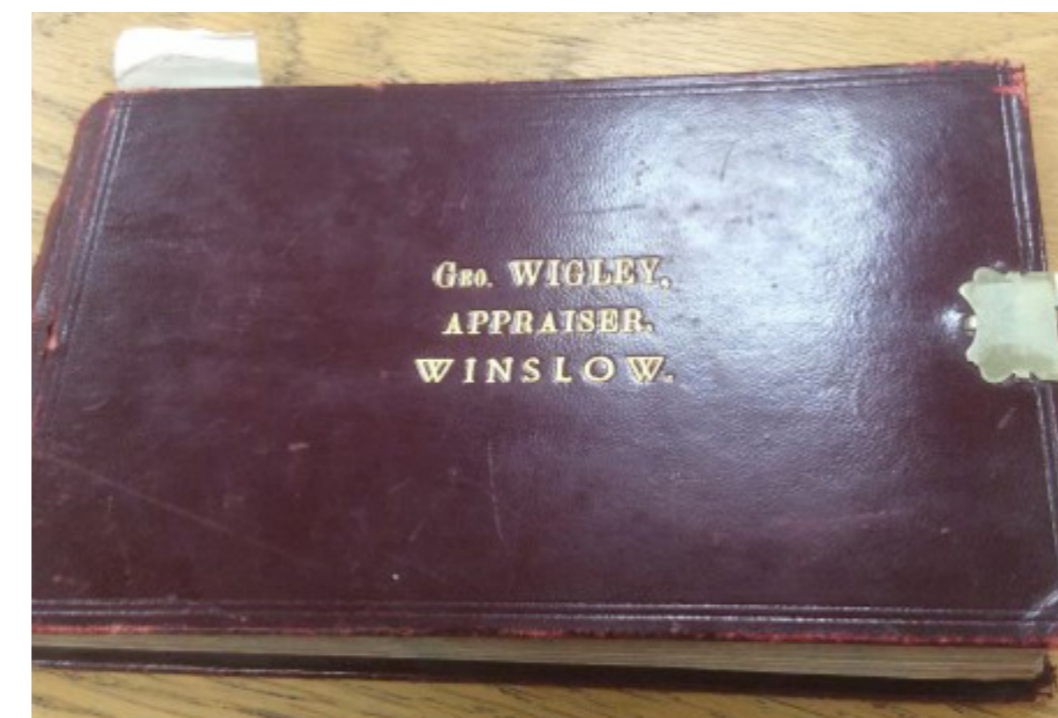
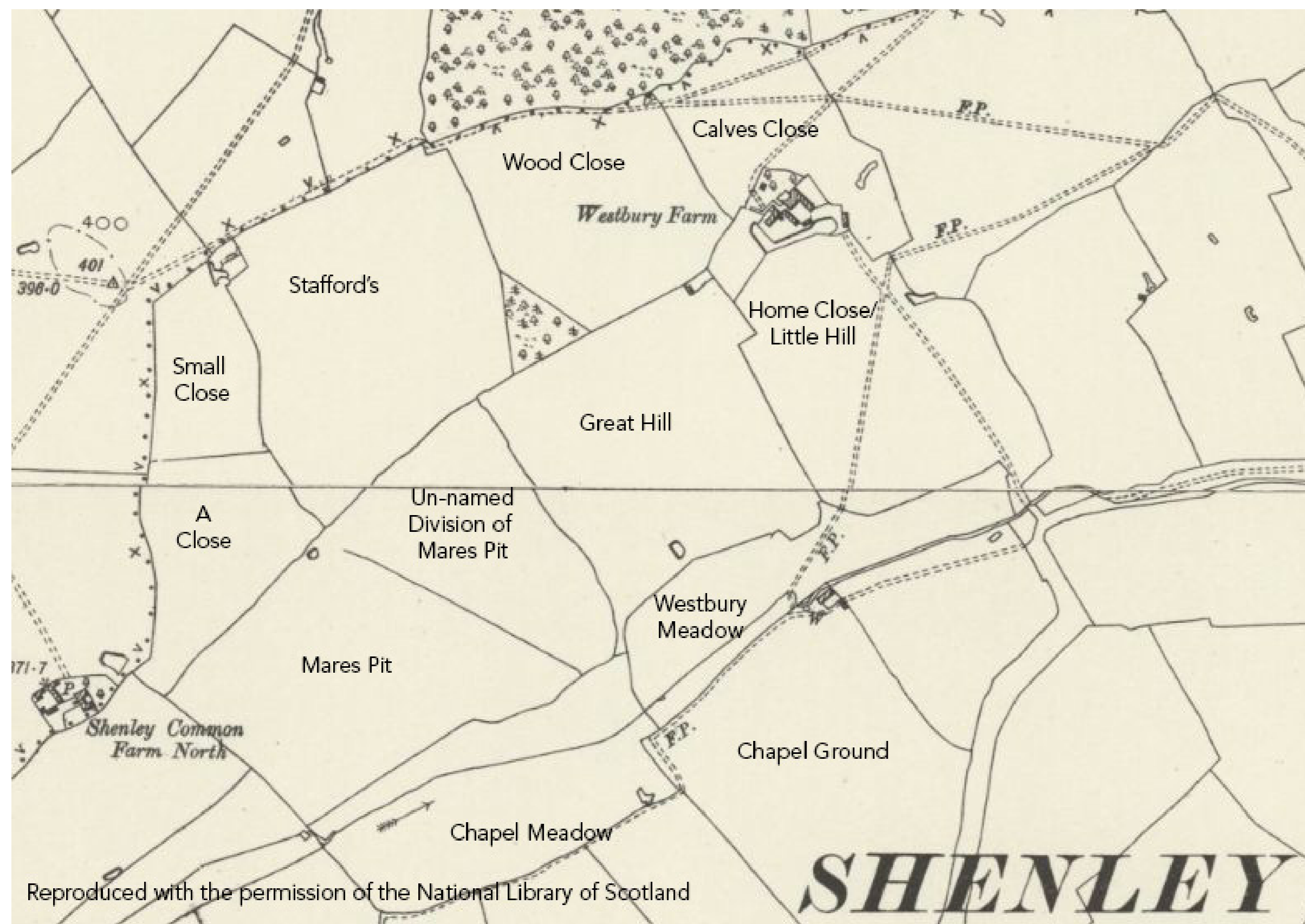
A succession of tenants struggled against the agricultural depression. In the years after the war the agricultural depression gradually lifted. In the late 1950s the Stoddart family bought the farm making it a family home. There was a farm manager and his family who lived in a modern cottage (the white building on the right of the photo above). Westbury was a part of the hunting scene as much as it was a working farm.

In 1986 the Stoddarts had to sell Westbury for the expansion of the new town of Milton Keynes.



Farm Manager Mr Cracknell's children

6a THE LAND



*Abstract of Acts of Assize
to at Westbury
from Mr. John Clarke
to J. H. Johnson Esq
April 8 1882*

Stafford's		
10 1 18	Acres	
100	4	5 0
3	1	0 5
2	2	1 5
4	9	16 10

The acreage of named fields, the types and value of crops are all listed in The wigley notebooks recorded by the local land agent and give valuable details of the agricultural practices on the farm in the late 1880s.

As the tenancy was renewed every year, there was little incentive to improve the land or invest in machinery.

The open fields of Westbury were probably enclosed by hedges in the 17th century. The size of the farm varied from tenant to tenant. However a core farm can be identified on the above map. The field names collected from those who knew the farm show little change from the 1801 Selby map.

The fields now form part of Shenley Wood, Shenley Brook End, Oxley Park and Woodhill. The ground has been reshaped for grid roads and playing fields but some hedgerows have been kept. Some of the land is now more intensively cultivated than ever before - as gardens.



6b | THE HOUSE



The date of the weathered, carved oak door is uncertain. Rumour suggests that it was from a ship from the Armada of 1588. Unlikely, given the distance to the sea! – but experts agree it is not English work.

Westbury House is a jigsaw puzzle yet to be solved. There are at least four different phases of building, from the still visible stone foundation – that probably supported an older timber-framed building – to the mid-20th century extension.

Only one wall remains of the Elizabethan half-timbered building near the front door in the photo above right. The Stafford additions (see panel 4a) have been modified by window enlargement, new doorways added and filled in! Notice the changes in size and colour of the brickwork.

The oldest feature of the house is the Moat, called the Great Stank in 1367, which encircled the site. It has been progressively filled in over the centuries, but even in 1841 much more of the moat still existed.



7 WESTBURY ARTS CENTRE



The Stoddarts

The Stoddarts – Westbury’s last owners before the New Town

The family bought Westbury Manor in 1958 from the Selby Lowndes family. On a recent visit in Spring 2018 they reminisced about the sloping bedroom floors, Nanny’s room with a single tub washing machine with a mangle, the original 1960s floral wallpaper in the toilet and the drinks cupboard in the Drawing Room which was always known as ‘the party room’. They recalled the extensive kitchen gardens with fruit bushes and pear trees and a dog kennel. The old apple tree was where one of them had her 18th birthday party with jelly and ice cream. The garden was full of roses (Buff Beauty and Peace), as well as cowslips. Cricket was played on the lawn and the son remembers leaving the lawnmower running while he popped inside only to find it in the moat when he returned!



Westbury in 2018

Apparently, in 1963, the police suspected they might be members of the Great Train Robbery gang. Neighbours, noticing unusual activity by a lorry in the lane leading to the farm, reported them. When the police investigated it emerged that the culprit was delivering a Wendy House for the children to play in! The Stoddart family left Westbury Manor in 1986, leaving behind fond memories of their pony, the pedigree Suffolk sheep and the two house cows, Buttercup and Daisy. They were delighted to see that the rooks were still visible in Ashpole Spinney and that the house was still enjoying a life as an Arts Centre.



Back row, L: Sally Annett, Alex Leadbeater, Maia?, Simon Tipping
Front, L: ? Diana Winkfield, Robert Koenig, Kate Edwards, Debbie Dallyn

The Silbury Group in 1992

In 1993 Westbury was offered to the Silbury Group, who swiftly became a leading feature of MK’s growing arts scene.

A number of artists have established international reputations: Boyd and Evans, Robert Koenig, Ed Durdey, to name a few.

By 2012 changes in Council policy and ownership of Westbury encouraged the studio artists to change the status of the group’s activities and become a charity. This happened in April 2013 and Westbury Arts Studios became Westbury Arts Centre (WAC).

PLEASE GIVE US YOUR NAME, ADDRESS & ARTISTIC ACTIVITY.		
NAME	ADDRESS	ACTIVITY
1. Pat Hand	56 Reddings St, Uxbridge	Illustrator/Drafter
2. Paul Smith	47 Rednet Oak Wood, 2000	PAINTER
3. Jenny Abbott	Courtyard	Courtyard Manager
4. Tim Leake	18 Easton Pl, Farnham	Artist
5. Mary Wilson	20 Holly Hill, Uxbridge	Artist
6. Robert Koenig	42, Wotton Rd, Uxbridge	Painter
7. Ian Clifford	10, Northwood Hill, Uxbridge	Sculptor
8. Simon Packer	10, Northwood Hill, Uxbridge	Model - model
9. Phil Tappin	10, Northwood Hill, Uxbridge	Artist - various media
10. Ed Durdey	10, Northwood Hill, Uxbridge	Gr. Sculptor - various media
11. John Edwards	10, Northwood Hill, Uxbridge	Artist
12. Alan Koenig	10, Northwood Hill, Uxbridge	Artist
13. Deborah Dallyn	10, Northwood Hill, Uxbridge	Model - model
14. Bill Dallyn	10, Northwood Hill, Uxbridge	Model - model
15. Dave Symonds	10, Northwood Hill, Uxbridge	Model - model
16. Bob Sackett	10, Northwood Hill, Uxbridge	Painter
17. Diana Winkfield	10, Northwood Hill, Uxbridge	Painter
18. Bob Sackett	10, Northwood Hill, Uxbridge	Painter
19. Bob Sackett	10, Northwood Hill, Uxbridge	Painter
20. Bob Sackett	10, Northwood Hill, Uxbridge	Painter
21. Bob Sackett	10, Northwood Hill, Uxbridge	Painter
22. Bob Sackett	10, Northwood Hill, Uxbridge	Painter
23. Bob Sackett	10, Northwood Hill, Uxbridge	Painter
24. Bob Sackett	10, Northwood Hill, Uxbridge	Painter
25. Bob Sackett	10, Northwood Hill, Uxbridge	Painter
26. Bob Sackett	10, Northwood Hill, Uxbridge	Painter
27. Bob Sackett	10, Northwood Hill, Uxbridge	Painter
28. Bob Sackett	10, Northwood Hill, Uxbridge	Painter
29. Bob Sackett	10, Northwood Hill, Uxbridge	Painter

The Silbury Group’s first meeting attendees

8

WESTBURY ARTS CENTRE – THE FUTURE

Westbury Arts Centre

Registered Charity Number 1151531



The importance of the arts here in Milton Keynes is embedded in Milton Keynes' vision for the future as outlined in the MK Futures 2050 commission. Their report includes six major objectives one of which is Milton Keynes: The Creative and Cultured City, and The Milton Keynes Creative and Cultural Strategy 2018-2027 identifies Westbury Arts Centre as a key site of cultural infrastructure for the western geography of the city.



Westbury has been an arts centre for almost 30 years. We hope that we can continue to make our contribution to Milton Keynes and its people.

In addition to being the home to a thriving community of artists, we run workshops and activities from bee-keeping to oil painting, felt-making to ceramics. If you'd like to know more, just pick up a leaflet or ask at the door.

"In the past year, Westbury Arts Centre: hosted 3000 visitors, opened its doors to the public on 220 days, housed 14 artistic disciplines, produced 1500 pieces of work, been supported by 2500 volunteer hours – all with an annual turnover of £50K."

(Westbury Arts Centre, Social Value Study 2017, We Made That)



<https://www.westburyartscentre.co.uk>

COME ON IN!

9 | NATURAL HISTORY OF WESTBURY

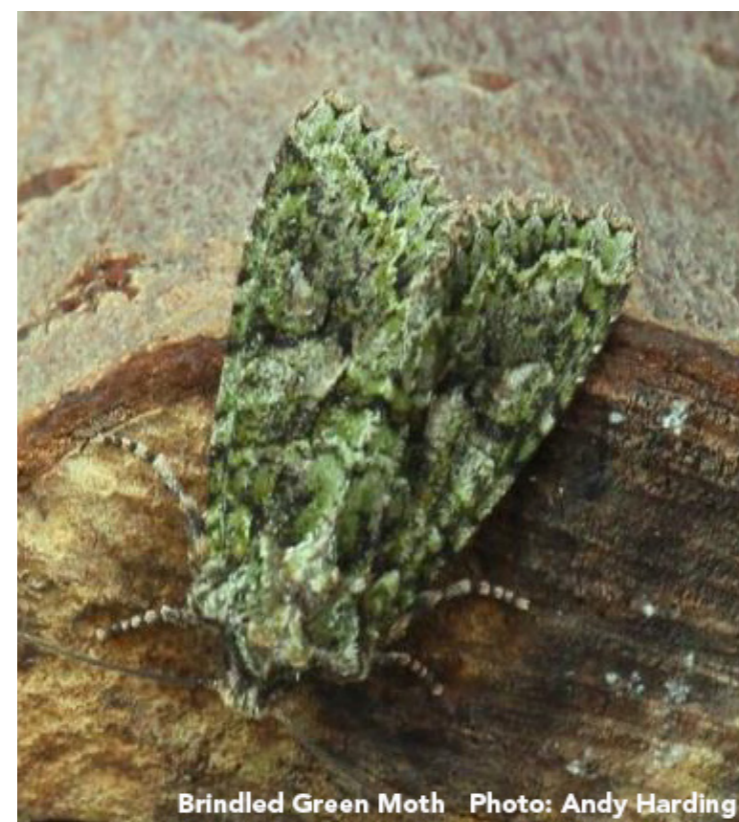
Between September 2017 and April 2018, Milton Keynes Natural History Society carried out a survey of the biodiversity at Westbury. The list covered autumn and winter subjects - trees, birds, land mammals, bats, moths and grasshoppers – and in February was widened to include amphibians and reptiles. The wildlife they discovered was varied. Here are some examples:



Fox



Brindled Green Moth



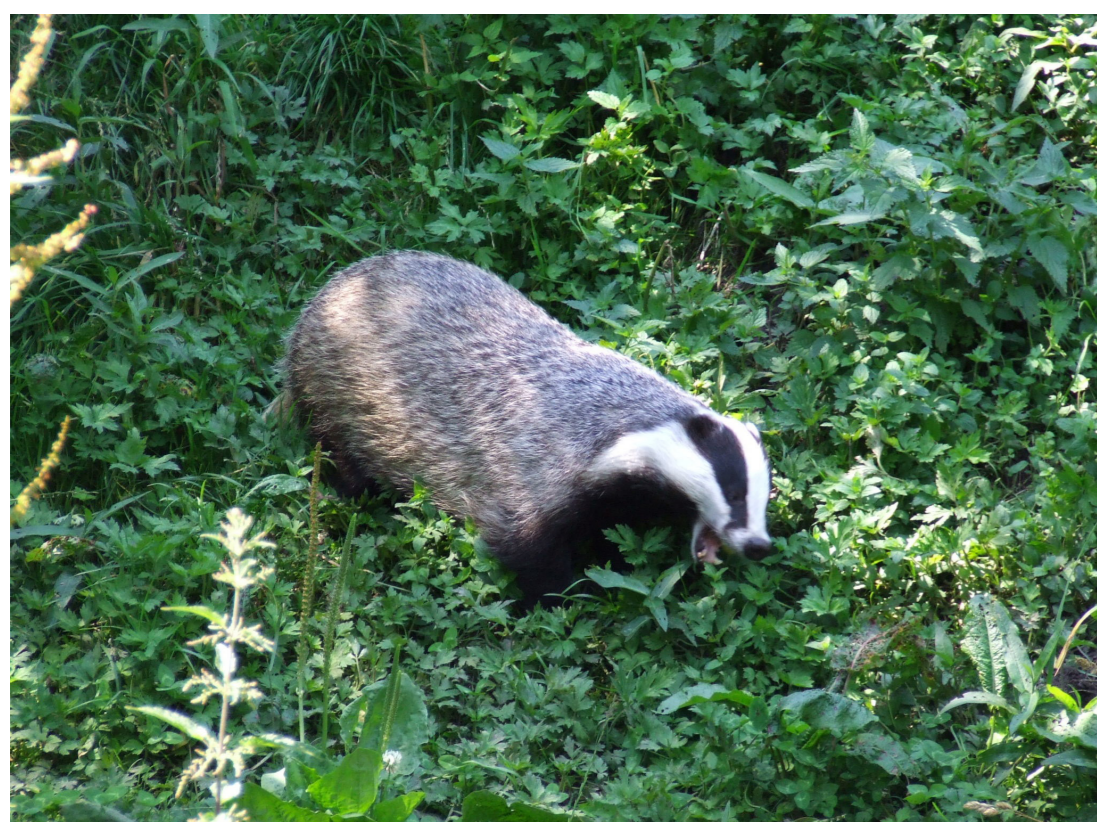
Muntjac



Spotting & Recording Methods

- Noting footprints
- Droppings
- Traps
- Cameras
- Observation (Eyes!)

Badger



Great Crested Newt



Noctule Bat



Speckled Bush-Cricket



AUDIO INTERVIEWS

THE EXCERPTS BEING PLAYED ARE FROM INTERVIEWS WITH THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE:

Brian and Anne Cracknell and their son Simon



Brian was the last farm manager of Westbury Farm and worked there from 1967 to 1985. He and his family lived in a cottage on the farm, since demolished, and managed a mixed farm. The photo shows the four Cracknell children by the barn.

Clive Stoddart, Belinda Gaze and Fiona Ramsay



Clive, Belinda and Fiona are the children of the last owners of the farm, the Stoddarts, and were brought up at Westbury Farm. They owned the farm from 1959 to 1986, when it was compulsorily purchased by Milton Keynes Development Corporation.

John Lewis



John Lewis was a chartered surveyor who came to work for Milton Keynes Development Corporation in February 1992 and lived at Westbury Farm for a year when he first arrived in Milton Keynes.

Jessica Rost



Jess was one of the resident artists and member of the Silbury Group from 1996 – she was the first ‘caretaker’ at Westbury and had a studio there until 2013.