

BOURNE AND BURRINGTON: A *BURNANTŪN* ESTATE?

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INTRODUCTION

The generally accepted explanation of the place-name Burrington favours a derivation from A/S *byrig* and *tun*, to give a meaning 'the settlement/farm/estate at the fortified place', apparently a reference to the small, partially-complete and very inconspicuous Iron Age hillfort of Burrington Camp.¹ However, it has been pointed out to me that an alternative spelling appears in a medieval record published as long ago as 1931, which may suggest a rather different meaning.

The document in question, dated 1298, is one of the several surviving versions of the Bounds of Mendip Forest, or more strictly, the clause immediately following the bounds proper which lists those places considered by the jury to lie outside the Forest.² The transcription given by Gough is based on his reading of the *Liber Fuscus*, an important but little-known manuscript in the Dean and Chapter Library at Wells Cathedral which, although noted, was not among those calendared by the Historical Manuscripts Commission.³ Chiefly on palaeographical grounds, J. Armitage Robinson considered that *Fuscus* belonged to the 14th and 15th centuries,⁴ and it is therefore suggested that its place-name spellings, in their Middle English form, carry considerable authority. Sight of the manuscript for the purposes of this article confirmed that Gough had correctly transcribed the name Burrington, which *Fuscus* gives as *Burnyngton*.⁵

Burrington's status as a subsidiary appendage of the Wrington estate throughout the Middle Ages has led to a distinct scarcity of place-name spellings in the records of that period. However, that the *Liber Fuscus* example was not merely an isolated idiosyncrasy was confirmed by a cursory search of the more easily available printed editions of Somerset medieval documents, which produced at least one further instance of a similar spelling, namely that of Edrich de *Burnington*, who in 1238 was a *ferdel* tenant of Glastonbury's manor of Wrington.⁶ An unpublished hundred court roll in the Public Record Office, dating to 1315 or 1316,⁷ has *Burnyngton*, and Gough cites an entry on a PRO Patent Roll of 1300, again relating to the Mendip Forest bounds and also unpublished, which he prints as *Burnington*. For the sake of completeness, though, it should be noted that against these examples must be placed spellings contained in Henry of Sully's survey of Glastonbury manors of 1189, which represent the earliest versions of the name to which a firm date and provenance can be assigned. Consultation of the manuscript showed clearly that all five occurrences of Burrington in that document are of the form *Burington*, or minor variations thereof.⁸

Ekwall had used as his source a reference in the standard printed edition of the Berkeley Castle charters, the absolute accuracy of which cannot, it seems, always be relied upon.⁹ Select Charter 48 is a grant by a member of the Berkeley family of lands and privileges in the area of Blagdon and Burrington to the Canons of St Augustine's Abbey in Bristol, dated by internal

evidence probably to late Henry II.¹⁰ As an original document of that period, not a later cartulary copy, it contains what may be the earliest known form of the toponym Burrington, with the exception of those in Henry of Sully's survey, already noted. Its correct interpretation is therefore central to an understanding of the etymology of that name. Close examination of a photostat copy of the charter, kindly provided by the County Archivist for Gloucestershire, has satisfied me that the name transcribed by Jeayes as *Buringtune*, and interpreted by Ekwall accordingly, was in fact written by the scribe as *Burnigtune*.¹¹ The similar spellings from rather later in the medieval period, already mentioned, must have been well-known to Somerset scholars for some time; in looking for a reason why they have apparently attracted so little comment, probably being dismissed as merely insignificant aberrations, one can only suggest that the coincidence of the proximity of Burrington Camp lent irresistible weight to Ekwall's explanation of a first element *byrig*, a solution which was completely reasonable given the spelling with which he was working.¹²

TOPONYMY: AN ALTERNATIVE SUGGESTION

An alternative derivation must, then, be offered, and the most likely is based on a first element of A/S *burna*, 'a stream', giving a meaning 'the estate on or by the stream'.¹³ As originally coined the name would probably have been *burnantun*,¹⁴ and Brunton in Northumberland can be cited as a parallel example.¹⁵ In Burrington's case, there can be little doubt that this is a reference to the watercourse which rises as a spring on the southern side of the A368 Bath road, a few hundred metres south-east of Rickford, and flows roughly northwards through Rickford before passing through the significantly named hamlet of Bourne.¹⁶ In 904 this stream was identified as *Schirebourn*, 'the clear stream', when it was noted in the boundary perambulation of an Anglo-Saxon charter relating to the Wrington estate.¹⁷ There was at that time no indication that the stream had given rise to a toponym suggesting the existence of a discrete estate, a *burnantun*, and indeed it seems clear that, with a few minor variations, the 904 charter bounds, which have been examined in detail by a team led by Frances Neale, were essentially coterminous with those of the ancient ecclesiastical parish (and manor) of Wrington, which included Burrington.¹⁸

THE ORIGINS OF THE BURRINGTON ESTATE

The charter of 904 is not a conveyance, by which land changed hands, but rather a formal confirmation of current ownership intended to replace a charter contained in a landbook which had been destroyed by fire. It shows that the Wrington estate was at that time in lay hands, and indeed remained so until the middle of the century; and probably in or shortly after the year 957 it had passed to Glastonbury.¹⁹

There is no reason to suppose that the estate acquired by Glastonbury at this time had not remained essentially the same size between 904 and 1086, since at both these dates it was assessed at 20 hides, and therefore continued to include what was later to become Burrington. Nonetheless, the very fact that *Burnantun* had been coined before the late 12th century clearly demonstrates that by that date, an estate of that name was recognised as having a separate identity, quite distinct from any larger administrative unit of which it may notionally have been part, and indeed a fortunate chance reference by William of Malmesbury points firmly to an origin before the late 11th century.

William gives an account of a confirmatory charter of William I, apparently now lost but dating probably to 1081 or 1082, and relating to lands which, so Glastonbury claimed, it had

lost both before and since 1066, partly through the King having 'enfeoffed very many of his followers out of the [Abbey's] possessions ... so it can be deduced ... how and through whom the once very rich monastery ... was almost stripped of its estates ... namely by the squandering of Aethelweard and Aethelnoth and the hostile assaults or violent oppression of the Danes and Normans. But the same King William ... confirmed to the monks ... certain estates which, they complained, had belonged to them by right but had been unjustly taken from them'.²⁰ It is reiterated by John of Glastonbury, almost certainly using William as his source.²¹ William lists the estates by name and among them was Burrington, in a spelling, *Burniginton*, which may be added to those tending to support the suggested reading of that place-name in the Berkeley charter.²² If William's account can be relied upon, the inference must be that at some point before the early 1080s, at least one subsidiary holding had become detached from the main Wrington estate, acquiring its own identity and name, and effectively depriving Glastonbury of ownership.

The evidence of the Conqueror's charter bears in its turn upon that in the Domesday entry for Wrington, some five years later, which seems to confirm the impression that, contrary to Glastonbury's claims, the estate had undergone partial fragmentation well before the advent of the new Norman lords. Domesday shows that by the late 11th century, Wrington's 20 hides included two small sub-manors, of 1½ hides each, both of which had come into existence before 1066. One of these manors was held from the Abbot of Glastonbury by Roger of Courseulles, a senior vassal of the king who had been granted extensive property in Somerset and at Wrington had displaced the Saxon thegn holding this little estate before the Conquest.²³ The thegn 'could not be separated from the church', a phrase interpreted by modern historians as indicating someone holding land by personal homage to a lord, in most cases probably in return for military service. Such men were effectively Saxon knights, and were free to leave their tenements and take their services to any lord they wished; but they did not own their estates, which remained the inalienable property of the church.²⁴ It thus seems clear that Glastonbury had succeeded in retaining control of Roger's estate since having created it, probably as a knight's fee at some time in the 10th century (see below).

Of more immediate interest, however, is the second of these small 1½ hide units, for it is one of the relatively few cases in Somerset where a Saxon tenant, Saewulf, managed to retain his land from before 1066 right up to the time of Domesday. This is the more significant when one considers the context in which Saewulf's tenacity must be placed. Michael Costen has observed that 'of the 622 settlements in Domesday Somerset, which are recorded ... 295 or 47.5% were of one hide only or less. Only eleven of these places had the same tenant in 1086 as they had in 1066 ... it is clear that the small landowners had suffered grievously. Those men who are only recorded as 'thegns', the holders for the most part of very small estates often as a member of a group, did most badly of all. All were swept away. There was also a tendency for the very small holdings to be amalgamated. Probably estates which were hardly distinguishable as separate agricultural units were being put back together again'.²⁵

Against this background, it seems reasonable to look for the particular circumstances which might account for Saewulf's apparent ability to weather the tenurial storm which raged around him, and the most likely explanation is that his claim to his little estate was of such long standing, and so secure in its provenance, that he could not easily be displaced; a title established by hereditary right before 1066 might well have made this possible. Michael Costen has described in detail the process by which, particularly in the 10th century, landlords of large estates in Somerset were obliged progressively to enfeoff extensive areas, creating small tenements of only a few hides, 'primarily to reward their own followers and to provide for the military service now demanded of them by the kings of the English. This was a practice ... most obvious upon church estates'. These new minor estates, many carved out of larger units, often 'developed new names formed with a personal name and tun'.²⁶ Domesday does not put a name to Saewulf's

tenement; but in the light of the evidence already adduced, from both before and after 1086, it is suggested that his 1½ hides can be equated with the *Burniginton* of the 1081/1082 charter, which lands provided the core of what was later to become, firstly, Wrington's tithing of Burrington, and then the parish of that name.²⁷

A kinsman of Saewulf's may have been established by Glastonbury Abbey on a small fee, the Burrington part of the Wrington estate, in return for military service, after the latter came into Glastonbury's hands, and it is at this point that the place-name would have been coined to distinguish the smaller unit. In this case the use of a topographical rather than a personal name for the first element perhaps emphasises the importance of the *Schirebourne* as a major feature marking this part of the Wrington estate boundary, and may even suggest that some kind of pre-existing agricultural and/or tenurial unit based upon the stream provided the basis for the formal enfeoffment of Saewulf's estate noted in Domesday.

Of the period after 1066 it has been noted that 'once land had been granted as feudal tenancies ... it tended to remain in one family and very quickly attained hereditary status. In this way much land which had been closely tied to monasteries in the mid 11th century passed to vassals and escaped from monastic control'.²⁸ In the case of Saewulf's fee, it is suggested that its hereditary nature had been established before the Conquest: it is perhaps significant that Domesday describes Roger of Courselles specifically as holding his 1½ hide estate from the Abbot, whereas Saewulf merely 'holds' his land, with no explicit indication of a formal status as a Glastonbury tenant.

It seems reasonable to infer from this that by 1086, and probably long before, the occupier of this unit held his land on his own account, by hereditary right. The 1081/1082 charter theoretically restored the status quo; if, however, the identification of *Burniginton* with Saewulf's Domesday holding is correct, it failed to displace him (if that had been the Abbey's intention), and the by now firmly established sense of independence surrounding the estate suggests that the success of Glastonbury's remedial action was severely limited.²⁹ Indeed, even if spurious, a charter of Henry I, reiterating his father's confirmation of, among other places, Burrington, as a rightful possession of Glastonbury, serves merely to heighten the impression of unease on the part of the Abbey over its apparently limited ability to retain control of that estate.³⁰

BOURNE: AN EARLY 'MANORIAL' SITE?

It is possible that these arguments also have implications for Burrington's settlement history. There is, it seems, no known tradition or documentary record of a building or tenement of manorial status within the present village of Burrington.³¹ As a semi-autonomous unit it is likely, however, that the *Burniginton* estate had a quasi-manorial function, and it seems reasonable to expect the existence of at least a low-status demesne farm; it may not be safe to dignify such a place with the term *caput*. It is suggested that this lay somewhere in the area of the hamlet of Bourne, a few hundred yards north-east of Burrington. The evidence for this is circumstantial but perhaps significant. As already noted, Bourne lay on the south-eastern edge of the 904 Wrington charter estate, with the *Schirebourne*, flowing northwards through it, marking the stretch of boundary roughly between Rickford and the stream's confluence with the River Wrington.³² The place-name Bourne, from the simplex form of *burna*, and derived ultimately from the name of the stream, is not known to be mentioned in documents before the 13th century,³³ but its origins are almost certainly earlier, and probably pre-date those of *Burniginton*: *burna* occurs in place-names recorded by 730, and 'other reasons for considering it to be an early English element are that it occurs with ham in some instances of Burnham ... and is several times the final element in -inga- compounds ... also it is more common in major than in minor names ... [and] remained in use as a place-name-forming term longer than has been assumed ... it is well

represented in some areas of Wessex which lay beyond Selwood, where English names were mainly coined after the middle of the 7th century ...'.³⁴

While Bourne as a probable early toponym is suggestive, it is to rather later periods that one must turn for evidence that it may have supported a site of 'manorial' type. A common feature of such sites is the existence of a proprietary church or chapel, built by the lord close to his hall or demesne farm for the use of his family and retainers. Many such church/manor house complexes survive,³⁵ and Michael Costen makes the point that the proliferation of churches which was such a characteristic feature of the 10th and 11th centuries, arose probably from 'the break-up of estates into smaller units, which encouraged landowners to build churches for themselves and their dependents as a sign of their independence ... the implication of archaeological finds at places which were modest settlements in the 11th century is that churches were very common and that the majority of communities had a place of worship close at hand'.³⁶ It has already been argued that *Burniginton* had been carved out of, and enjoyed some degree of independence from the main monastic estate by the late 11th century at the latest, and this is important in the light of Michael Costen's further observation that 'we should look for the emergence of independent churches with graveyards on secular estates, or on those church estates which were isolated'.³⁷ Burrington might conceivably satisfy either of these criteria, and it is in this context that we should note F.A. Knight's statement that at Bourne 'a few years before Dr Whalley's time, as is recorded in that gentleman's note book, were still standing the ruins of a chapel; and the Doctor adds that six human skeletons were found here when foundations for a neighbouring farm were being dug out'.³⁸

The implication of a chapel at Bourne, perhaps with burial rights, is significant, for as Hinton comments of Raunds, 'since burial was one of the fees charged by the church, a graveyard was a source of revenue, and it may be that when the ... owner won burial rights for his church, he was thereafter able to divert part of the fees for the interment of his tenants into his own pocket, reducing the income of the church which had previously had sole burial rights in the area'.³⁹ It is possible that either the threat or the reality of such a loss of revenue from burials provided a further motive for Glastonbury's attempt to recover *Burniginton* through the 1081/1082 charter. It is, however, difficult from Knight's somewhat vague reference to be certain either about the location of the burials and the 'chapel', or indeed whether they were actually associated. The farm in question cannot be Emley (at NGR ST486599), which dates to after 1838 since it does not appear on the Burrington Tithe Map of that date.⁴⁰ Conversely, Bourne Farm (ST485598), as an essentially early 17th-century building,⁴¹ is too old for its construction to have been witnessed by Whalley, although the foundations to which he refers may well have been for outbuildings being newly constructed in the late 18th century. A building marked on plot 39 of the Tithe Map of 1838, immediately to the west of the later site of Emley Farm, may perhaps be a better candidate, since ancient auster rights appear to have been transferred from that tenement to Emley. The building itself has probably been demolished and its site is now occupied by Emley's outbuildings (Fig. 1).⁴²

Even if it is not now possible to confirm Whalley's eye-witness account of a 'chapel' at Bourne, there are nonetheless strong indications of a 'manorial' site in existence there by at least the 14th century. The best-known references occur in the Register of Ralph of Shrewsbury, Bishop of Bath and Wells, when in 1333 and again in 1337, Elizabeth of Bourne was granted permission, for the space of one year on each occasion, to celebrate mass in a private chapel or oratory inside (*infra*) her house.⁴³ It is difficult to imagine a dwelling of anything less than seigneurial status containing a room suitable for such use. The time restriction specified in the grant implies very strongly that we are dealing here not with a permanent, purpose-built chapel, intended to be used only in that capacity, but rather with a chamber temporarily set aside, and presumably specially consecrated, for the purpose. Such a licence would not be granted lightly, and on each occasion the Bishop was careful to include clauses stating explicitly that the rights

and privileges of the mother church at Wrington must not be compromised. We may presume that his reason for sanctioning the chapel was a pressing one, and that he was satisfied that both the lady Elizabeth herself, and her house, were worthy of his special favour.⁴⁴ It seems probable, therefore, that Elizabeth required her house-chapel because she was temporarily denied access to her usual place of worship, perhaps because of rebuilding; indeed, more detailed study of the documentary evidence, and a careful reappraisal of the fabric of the building itself using modern techniques of 'vertical archaeology', may make it possible to establish a relationship between the dates of Elizabeth's licences and the suggested chronology of Burrington church: the 14th-century tower is the earliest part of the present building, but it is probable that a nave and chancel of the same date were destroyed through rebuilding at the end of the 15th century.⁴⁵

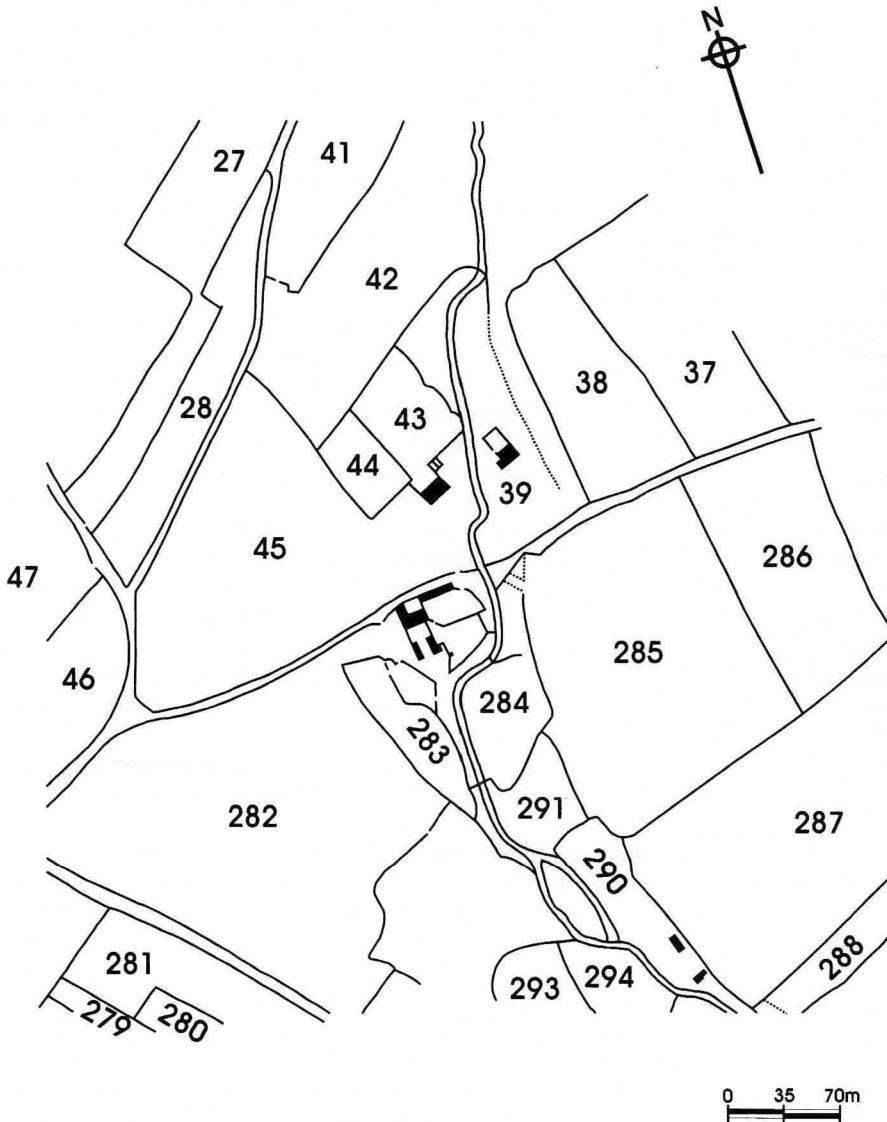


Fig. 1 Bourne in 1838, redrawn from the tithe map, showing tithe plot numbers

BURRINGTON: PLANNING, FIELDS AND WOODLAND

If an early site of manorial status at Bourne is allowed, it becomes necessary to examine the question of the possible nature of the relationship of that site with the present village of Burrington, and it is suggested that a large part of the answer lies in the topography of the settlement. Even a cursory examination of the Burrington Tithe Map of 1838, which contains the earliest large-scale plan of the settlement, reveals a striking regularity in the shape of the village boundary, and indications of significant coherence in the internal framework of plot boundaries, although now considerably disrupted (Fig. 2).⁴⁶ The external boundary delineates an irregular rectangle with dead straight sides. In the western and northern areas of the plan (plots 268, 269, 270, 231, 232 and 233) the layout appears to be one in which plots run back from the main street to the boundary. This, it is suggested, perhaps represents the original scheme, which in the eastern area has been severely interrupted by the carving out of an intrusive, 'inner' unit (plots 234 and 235) and by the removal of boundaries to produce the large L-shaped close in the south-eastern corner, plot 237. It seems clear that, going eastwards, the main east-west street has been forced to make a sharp diversion around the northern side of plot 234, curving gently southwards again as it leaves the eastern end of the village, and joining the virtually straight lane running westwards out of Rickford at a sharp bend in the northern boundary of tithe plot 256. There is no obvious field evidence at the northern ends of plots 238 and 256 that might suggest that the line of the Rickford lane continued directly westwards in a straight line. However, if such a projection is made, the lane can be seen to strike into Burrington at approximately the point where the main street now dog-legs around plot 234, whose intrusive nature is also suggested by the fact that the building it contains is the only one on the main street which lies gable-end on to the road, clearly out of step with the all the other buildings which are orientated with their long sides facing the road (Figs 2 and 3). In the light of this evidence, it appears probable that the original course of the main street was directly east-west through the village, dividing it into northern and southern halves, and making an approximately straight line between Rickford and Burrington church.

It is unlikely that the original plan conformed to the classic tenement-plot/back-lane arrangement, as for example seen elsewhere in Somerset at Isle Abbots,⁴⁷ or, indeed, somewhat closer to Burrington at East Harptree. Rather, the layout at Burrington seems to owe more to a type identified by Mick Aston at the shrunken village site of Marston Magna. Here, a large rectangular unit has been butted on to the north-western quarter of a smaller, probably pre-existing one, their general relationship and the orientation of the internal subdivisions showing that each was planned as a totality at different dates. As at Burrington, there is no evidence in either unit of extended toft enclosures associated with back lanes, but conversely there are clearly in both, elements of regularity in the arrangement of what are obviously tenement plots.⁴⁸ On the ground, the external boundary at Burrington is today merely a hedge line, with no obvious embanking and certainly no suggestion that it marks the line of a former path or lane. Nonetheless, the stabilising influence it has continued to exercise on the village plan is clear; it is noteworthy that even now, its integrity remains largely intact, with very little development having taken place immediately outside it.

The western end of the Burrington 'unit' opens onto a relatively large, open space, now triangular in shape, which on the ground presents a particularly impressive feature known simply as 'The Square'. Without firm evidence, or more detailed topographical study, the original form and function of The Square must be regarded as problematic, and at present it is impossible to say whether it was an original and integral element of the overall plan, a later but deliberate development, or simply the result of the obliteration of the internal tenement boundaries on this side of the village. Certainly, the later creation of such a feature within a pre-existing framework could conceivably be responsible for just the type of disruption of tenement plot boundaries

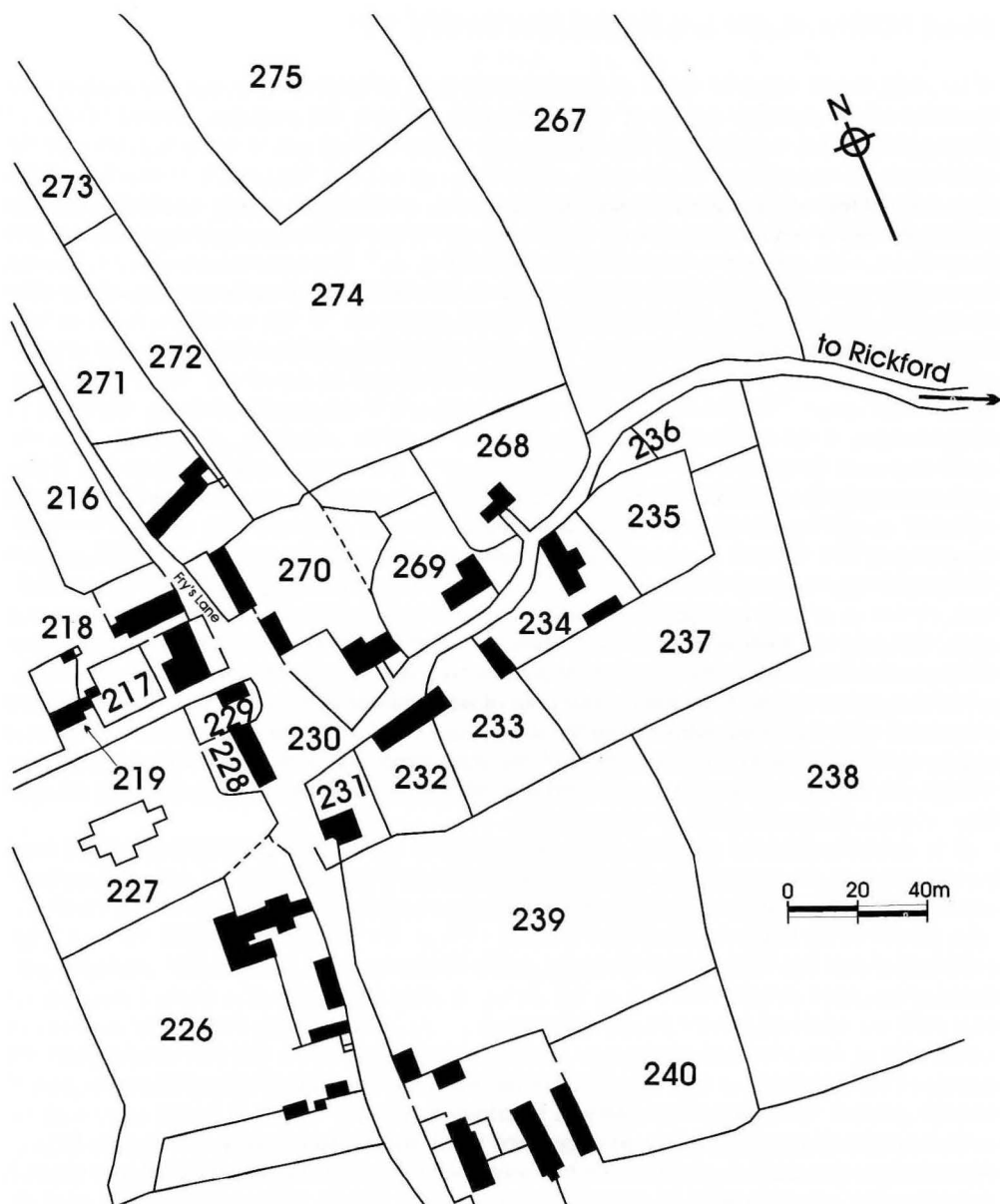


Fig. 2 Burrington 1838, redrawn from the tithe map, showing plot numbers

which seems to be indicated in this area. The Square may once have been larger and, as perhaps its name might suggest, more regular in shape: tithe plots 228 and 229, for example, appear to be later encroachments, and it is therefore tentatively suggested that either originally or at a date after the village plan had already been established, this area may have been laid out for use as a market place or herding enclosure (Fig. 4).⁴⁹

It is also important to note the accuracy with which the shape and disposition of the churchyard enclosure echo those of the larger unit immediately to the east (Fig. 2). The church enceinte

forms a straight-sided rectangle, with the church dead centre. The east–west orientation of the building itself is of course expected, but it is striking how the long sides of the boundary closely reflect the alignment of the northern and southern boundaries of the village enclosure. The churchyard unit is clearly an integral part of the plan, and it may be inferred, therefore, that if planning was involved at Burrington, then church precinct and village were conceived as a unity; indeed it is possible that the requirement of an east–west alignment for the chapel may have dictated the orientation of the plan as a whole. It is possible, then, that Burrington may at least in part provide a much earlier example of a type of planned layout recently identified by Susan Oosthuizen in Cambridgeshire, in which a high degree of regularity is attributed entirely to post-Conquest expansion over open fields, the basic framework of the plan being dictated by the disposition of furlongs and strips.⁵⁰

If Burrington's topography suggests regularity and planning, so also does the road pattern in the surrounding area suggest the primacy of Bourne and the 'newness' of its near neighbour. Burrington lies off the line of the main road, now the A368 between Weston-super-Mare and Bath, southwards down a lane (now Fry's Lane) that even today is unusually narrow, and which opens suddenly onto the open area of The Square. This lane serves *only* Burrington: it goes nowhere else, although its southern end joins a track leading up to the mining areas and former common pasture on Burrington Ham. It is probable, therefore, that the lane southwards from the main road was created specifically to give access to Burrington.⁵¹ The relationship between the lane and the adjacent field boundaries, especially those immediately to the east, is also highly suggestive. The lane runs parallel to the field boundaries in a NNW–SSE direction, reflecting precisely their general orientation. The most likely reason for this is that the lane itself originated as a field or furlong boundary: the group of enclosures between tithe plots 271 and 267 inclusive might once have made a convenient furlong block, and the strip-like shape of 267, and 273 and 272 combined, is especially striking (Fig. 2). This impression is strongly reinforced on the ground, for although depicted by the Tithe Map as essentially straight, in fact Fry's Lane displays a marked reverse 'S' curve. Certainly the overwhelming sense from the Tithe Map is that the village plan has been imposed as an intrusive element upon a pre-existing field 'system', causing considerable local disruption to it. The nature of these relationships strongly suggests that the site on which Burrington now stands was previously unoccupied, perhaps lying in the midst of subdivided open arable land, and that the access road and the village plan are contemporaneous.

The present course of the A368 main road also avoids Bourne. This is very much the situation depicted on Greenwood's 1822 map of Somerset, with the Bath road, now explicitly depicted as a main route, making a right-angled bend to the south-east just east of Burrington, circumventing Bourne and curving in an arc southwards and eastwards through Rickford and on to Blagdon (Fig. 5). That this sharp bend is clearly a deviation from an earlier line is confirmed by Day and Masters's map of 1782, which shows the main road at that time continuing straight on east of Burrington, taking a gentle northerly arc on its way eastwards, leaving Rickford, isolated slightly to the south, to be served by a loop and an alternative access to Blagdon (Fig. 6). Significantly, the earlier route passed directly through Bourne, and if it is allowed that the line of at least this part of the main road is medieval or earlier in date, it is difficult to escape the conclusion that in terms of relative chronology, Bourne, not Burrington, is the earlier, and originally the more important place (Figs 5, 6, and 7). The change in emphasis between the two roads in the 40 years separating Greenwood from Day and Masters does not seem to have come about through any formal turnpiking scheme.⁵²

Elsewhere it has been suggested of another Glastonbury Abbey manor, Shapwick, that a major replanning of the settlement pattern at some point before the Conquest was accompanied by the reorganisation of the field system to create the highly regular two-field regime which operated there throughout the Middle Ages.⁵³ Since it is here being proposed that Burrington is

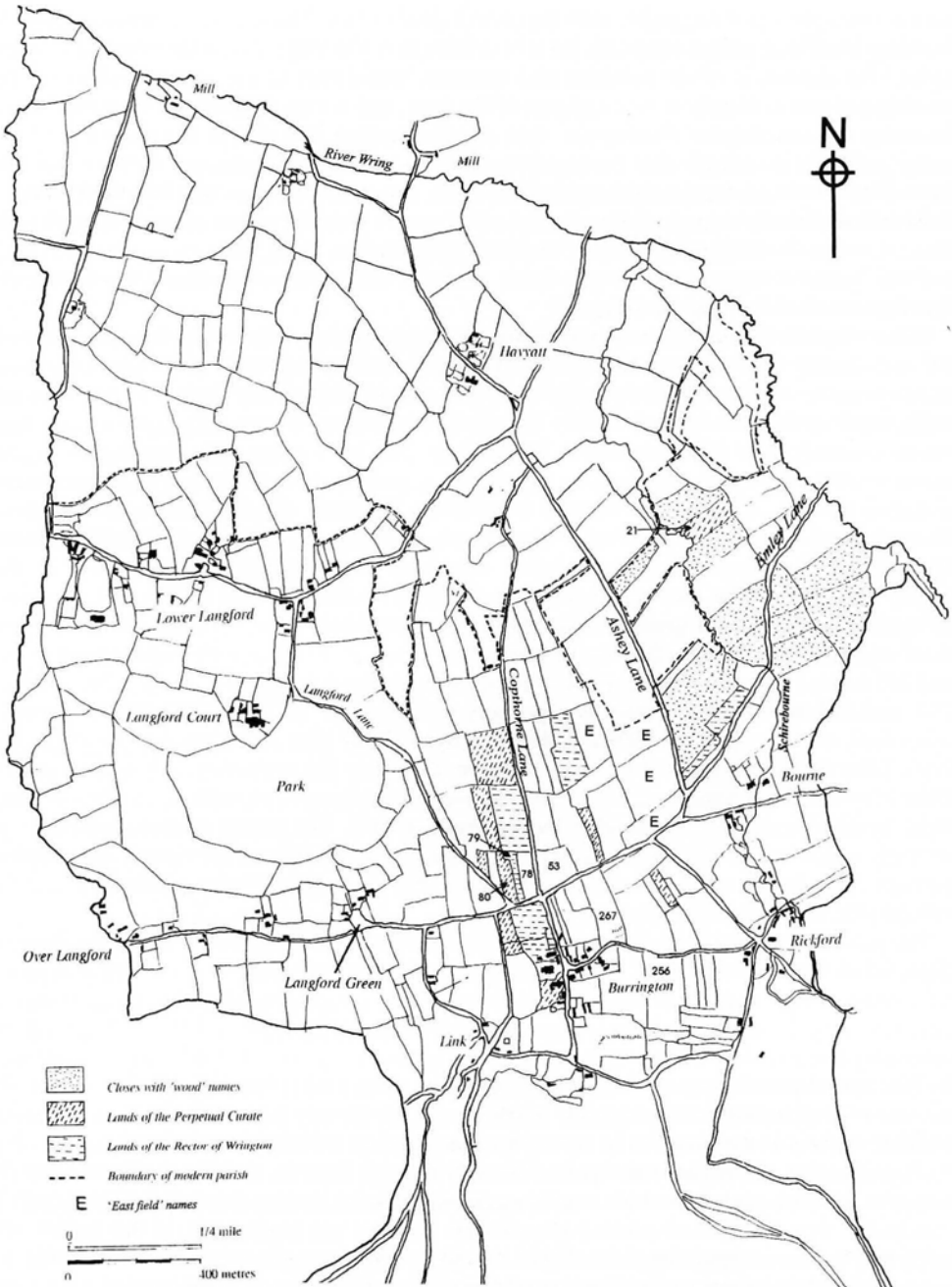


Fig. 3 Northern part of the tithing of Burrington with selected tithe plot numbers; drawn by Shirley Everden

also essentially a planned village, it would seem appropriate to look for signs of regularity in the disposition of its fields. Unfortunately, it does not at this stage seem likely that the available documentary evidence will of itself allow any firm statements to be made about the nature of

Burrington's field 'system' in the medieval period; indeed, the very existence of an autonomous field arrangement, centred upon Burrington, is open to question. If a regime akin to the classic open field type ever operated there, as it did at Shapwick, then it may have collapsed at a relatively early date since it is not possible now to say even how many fields may have been involved. A large part of the problem can be attributed to a regrettable lacuna in terms of historical sources, arising from the fact of Burrington's legal dependence upon Wrington to a relatively late date.⁵⁴ As a consequence it appears to have generated little if any of the kind of evidence that is generally used to study the nature of agrarian economies, particularly surveys, rentals, *compoti*, court rolls and other manorial documents.

What evidence there is is both late and inconclusive, but may perhaps reveal vestiges of an antecedent field arrangement displaying elements of the classic Midland open-field system. As to the number and layout of Burrington's putative open fields, there are indications, although rather insubstantial, of the former existence of at least two; the same evidence also, incidentally, goes some way towards confirming that, as might be expected, a Burrington field system would necessarily have been carved out of the Wrington estate.

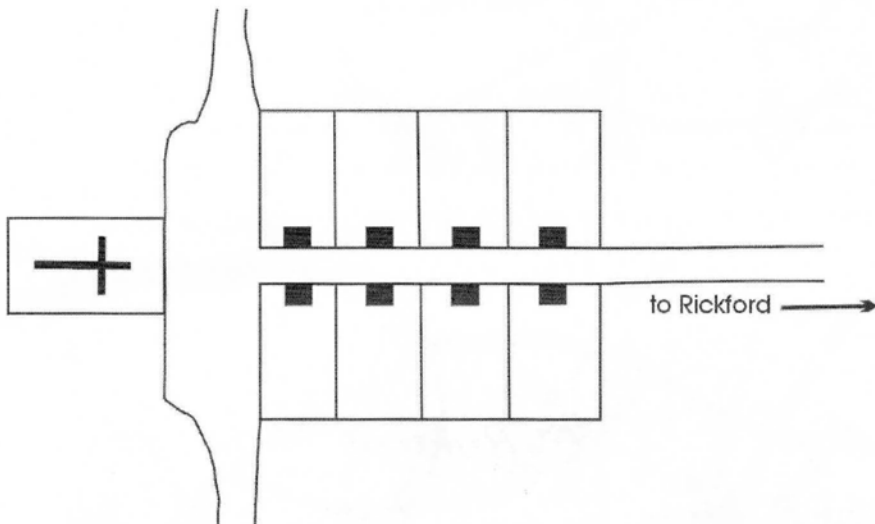


Fig. 4 Suggested schematic reconstruction of the original form of Burrington village (not to scale); after Shirley Everden

Three glebe terriers survive for Burrington, dated 1571, 1634 and 1639,⁵⁵ and the two 17th-century examples contain considerable detail about the disposition of the glebe plots in relation to those of the other tenants.⁵⁶ However, of equal importance is the size of those parcels; it is well known that glebe land tends to be 'conservative' in nature, and in open-field villages frequently remained scattered in small strips while other tenements underwent consolidation into larger blocks and progressive withdrawal from the common fields.⁵⁷ At Burrington, although it is clear that by 1634 all the glebe arable (referred to as 'ground') lay in closes, this was not always so. The terrier of that date refers to 'one close at Emley conteyninge by estimac(i)on 3 acres and halfe'. In 1571, however, the arrangement of this same holding was somewhat different: 'Lyinge in a felde called Elmleye in foure p(ar)cels v acars and a yard'. The slight decrease in the size of the glebe at Emley is less important than its disposition at the earlier date, and it is suggested that in this context the use of the word 'felde' is significant. The clear inference is that the 1571 terrier is giving us a glimpse of remnant open-field arable composed of at least



Fig. 5 The road pattern around Burrington, enlarged from Greenwood's county map of 1822



Fig. 6 The road pattern around Burrington, enlarged from Day and Masters's county map of 1782.
Note that on neither this map nor Fig. 5 is Bourne separately identified

some strips which were not lying contiguously. Indeed, in order for exchange and consolidation to take place between 1571 and 1634, we may presume that, as well as the glebe, most if not all of the land in Emley, belonging to other tenements, took the form of open-field strips. At least part of Emley Field can be identified from the 1838 tithe map as plot 21, Yeo Paddock (Fig. 3). By 1634, virtually all the glebe arable at Burrington, with the possible exception of a small plot

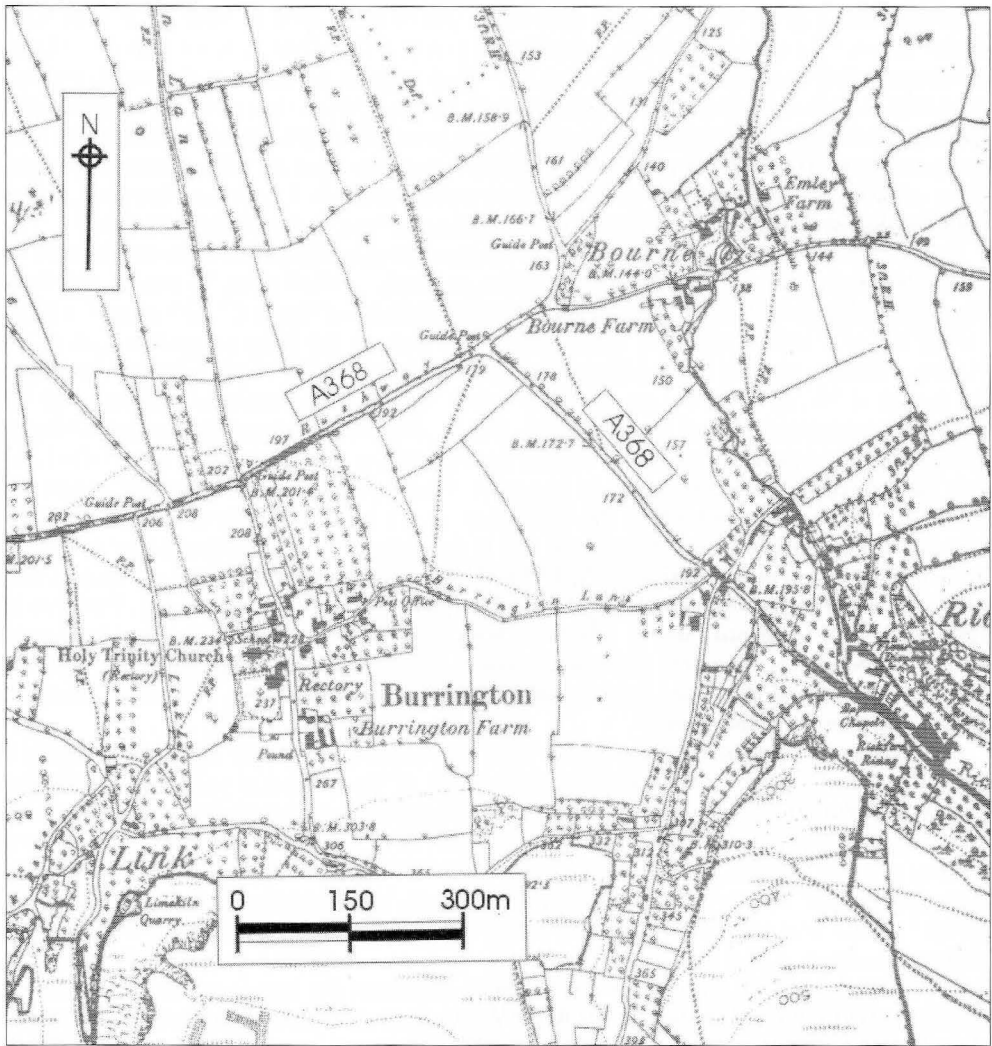


Fig. 7 Bourne and Burrington: 1st edition OS 6-inch map. The course of the modern A368 road is indicated

less than half an acre in size (described in 1634 as ‘one peace of ground lying in a ground of John Thatchers’) had succumbed completely to consolidation and enclosure. In the only surviving glebe terrier for Wrington, dated 1634,⁵⁸ there is a reference to ‘one acre of land in West Field’. Because of the possibility of exchanges involving some of the Rector’s glebe having occurred between 1634 and 1838, its identification is not certain, but can perhaps be equated with Plot 79, Young Orchard, at the later date, immediately west of the southern end of Copthorne Lane (Fig. 3). There is also some ambiguity about whether or not this acre was enclosed.⁵⁹ The real importance of this plot, however, lies in the name of the larger unit of which it was part, for West Field is typical of the kind of cardinal nomenclature that was frequently so closely associated with the existence of two, three, or more large, sub-divided open arable fields.⁶⁰ That this may have been the case at Burrington is supported by the fact that the probable existence of a West Field can be paralleled some two centuries later when, in 1838, the Burrington tithe award and

map recorded a series of contiguous enclosures immediately west of Bourne all with 'East Field' names.⁶¹ There is, in addition, a significant group of tithe field names which are redolent of former arable land worked in strips (Fig. 8).⁶² Such a layout would, as at Shapwick, ensure a relatively even division in terms of resources, with the boundary running roughly at right angles to the contours, the land sloping away northwards from Mendip's northern flank to the low-lying area around Havyatt Green. At Shapwick it was suggested that the field system in operation there in the medieval period represented an entirely new creation, laid out at some point before the Conquest and completely obliterating the antecedent field and settlement pattern.⁶³

At Burrington, by contrast, a rather different situation may obtain, for there are indications there that an existing sub-divided field system, probably worked from Wrington, may have been adapted, with lands perhaps amounting to the 1½ hides of Saewulf's sub-manor in 1086, carved out of it and allocated to Burrington at the time of the latter's creation. Part of the evidence for this, relating to the inclusion within Burrington parish of glebe land belonging to the Rector of Wrington, is discussed briefly below. The other evidence is topographical: the apparently intrusive nature of the Burrington village plan itself, and its disruptive effect on the surrounding field pattern, has already been noted. In addition, it is evident that Copthorne Lane cuts through boundaries that appear to be earlier. This impression is, for example, especially marked at its southern end where the Tithe Map shows the northern boundary of Shipham Close (T53) appearing to cross Copthorne and to form also the northern boundaries of at least three enclosures on the other side (T78, T79 and T80) (Fig. 3). Together these enclosures may represent an earlier furlong which Copthorne disrupted. West of Copthorne Lane, there can be little doubt that Langford Lane is a later (although probably medieval) intrusion associated with Langford Court. The field and lane pattern in this area has been completely obscured by emparkment around the Court, and its nature, and relationship, if any, with the Burrington fields, is at present problematic.⁶⁴

Indeed, the most cursory glance at the Tithe Map, paying particular attention to the field shapes, tends to reinforce suspicions about the nature of the antecedent pattern at Burrington. The fields immediately east of the village itself have already been noted, but scattered over the rest of the tithe parish, long, narrow enclosures and sinuous, S-shaped boundaries are clearly in evidence. This is the case, for example, immediately east of Ashey Lane, south-east of Burrington towards Rickford, and on both sides of Copthorne Lane, but especially on the eastern side, and on the western side towards the lane's northern end. It is possible also to discern at least one striking variation within this broad framework. East of Ashey Lane, a group of enclosures, some, as already noted, with sinuous boundaries, separates the lane from the *Schirebourne*, flowing north to its confluence with the River Wring. East of the *Schirebourne* the field pattern abruptly changes, to one dominated by large, rectangular, straight-sided enclosures in a highly regular layout. The northern half of Emley Lane seems to cut through this area with scant respect for the field boundaries, as it heads north-east towards Aldwick, while its southern half, by contrast, pays due regard to the boundaries south and west of the *Schirebourne*. This entire north-eastern quarter of Burrington, east of Ashey Lane and north of Bourne Lane, was characterised by fields with woodland-type names: Ashey, E(l)mley and Barrows (*bearu*). In this context, the name Purley, attached to two enclosures in this area, may be especially significant, for it is said to have the meaning 'land on the edge of a forest' (Fig. 3).⁶⁵ It seems probable, then, that what is indicated here is a post-Conquest assart into former woodland, extending the area of cultivable land available to the little Burrington estate and perhaps eventually forming an additional open field in its own right. The dating of this clearance is problematic but that at least part of it may have been relatively late (i.e. 16th century or later) is suggested by the fact that in 1516 Little Barrows was noted as woodland under the Wrington section of Abbot Richard Bere's great terrier of the Glastonbury estates, when it was described as '12 acres of wood and underwood ... which could be cut every 16 years and were then valued at 13s 4d an acre'.⁶⁶ Just

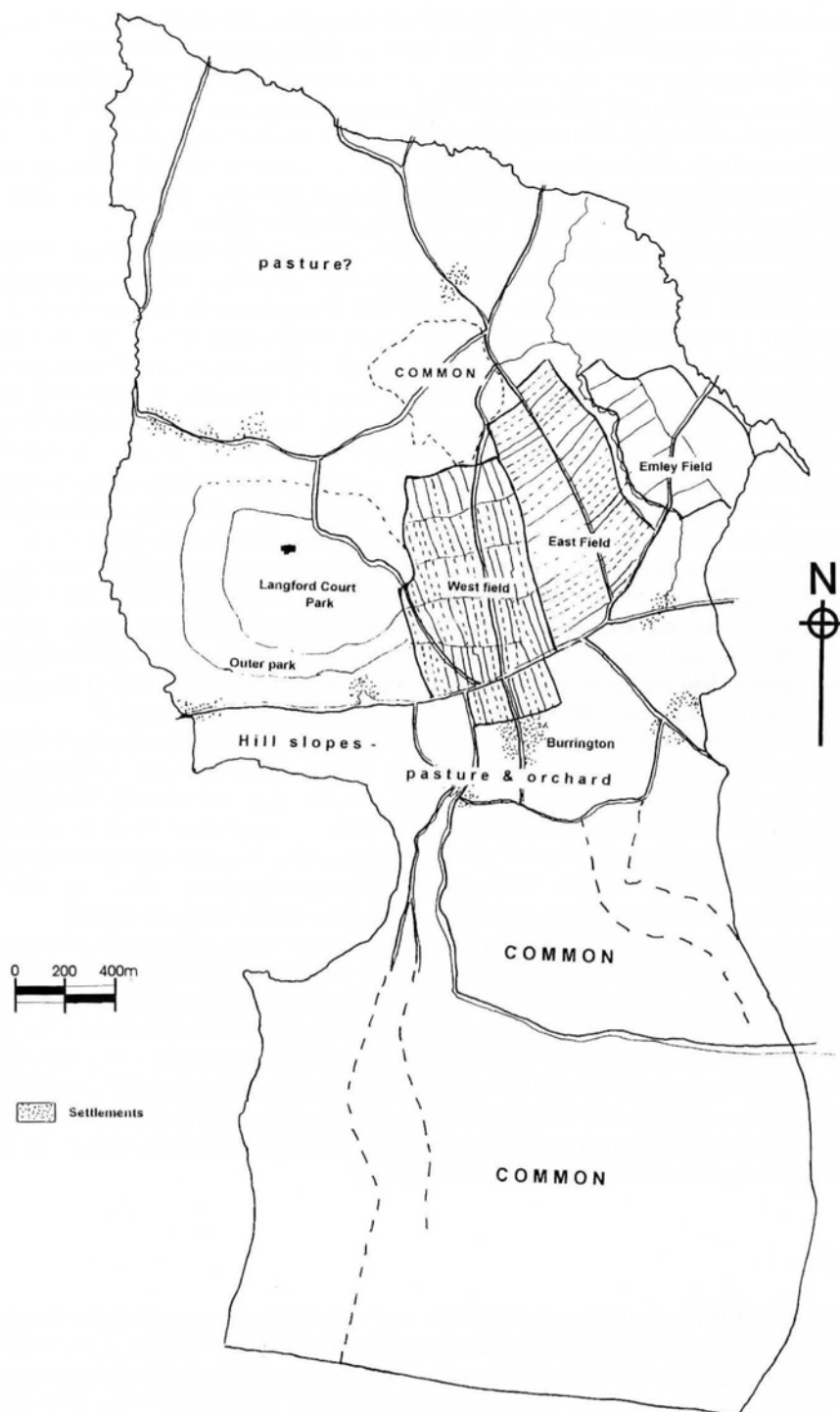


Fig. 8 Burrington: elements of the medieval pattern; drawn by Shirley Everden

over 20 years later, in November 1539, all the Wrington woods, by this time in the king's hands following the suppression of Glastonbury, were surveyed again, and again reference was made to a 'wode callyd litle barrowe cont[aining] xi acres of copes of thage of ii yer[es] which wilbe worth at thage of xx yer[es] eu[er]y acre xs'.⁶⁷ These documents, therefore, not only confirm that woodland still existed in this area at that time, but also show quite clearly that it was managed; consequently, and bearing in mind the fieldname evidence already noted, it seems difficult to avoid the conclusion that in the 16th century Little Barrows represented a surviving remnant of ancient woodland which once covered this part of Wrington.

The relative chronology of the suggested woodland clearance is at present uncertain, although the distinct difference in the nature of the field shapes on either side of the *Schirebourne* suggests that it took place in at least two stages. The curvilinear boundaries to be seen west of the stream, in contrast to the straighter ones to its east, may indicate an earlier date for the former. And while the southern part of Emley Lane, perhaps itself originating as a field boundary, can be suggested to be either contemporary with or slightly later than the group of fields with which it is associated, the relationship between the northern part of the lane and the fields through which it passes is more problematic. As already noted, the lane appears, at least for part of its length, to cut through field boundaries, prompting the notion that it must therefore be secondary to them. The same could be said of an extension running NW/SE off Emley's northern side, cutting through and dividing in half long strip-like enclosures which may represent former furlong blocks once extending the whole width of the watershed between the *Schirebourne* and the stream marking the parish boundary to the east (Figs 3 and 7). These superficial relationships may, though, be illusory, masking a far more complex development, and without more detailed work, and in the absence of earlier large-scale cartographic evidence, it would be unwise to venture any further than taking note of the highly suggestive field names, and of the clearly anomalous nature of road and field patterns, in this corner of Burrington parish.⁶⁸

The glebe is, of course, only one tenement, and lack of evidence relating to ordinary customary holdings means that it is not at present possible to say what proportion, if any, of Burrington's arable land as a whole was worked as open field in, say, the mid 17th century. Nonetheless, bearing in mind what has already been said about the relative conservatism of glebe it seems a logical step to suggest that both this and the Burrington glebe at Emley probably represent some of the last discernible vestiges of an open field system which may once have covered much of the original *Burnantun* estate, extending northwards from Burrington itself.

The acre parcel in the West Field of Burrington was not the only land in the parish belonging to the Rector of Wrington in 1634, for the terrier of that date makes it clear that the Rector retained a considerable interest in, and continued to derive revenue from, his holdings in Burrington tithing, many of which, despite some later adjustments, can be identified with precision from the Burrington Tithe map.⁶⁹ Bearing in mind the nature of the historic relationship between the two places, this is only to be expected, and can perhaps be seen as evidence of a former Wrington field 'system', of whatever nature that might be, encompassing the greater part of the estate as it is described in the 904 charter, with land supporting the mother church scattered throughout and surviving as 'pockets' of glebe in the fields of Burrington, created at a later date.

SUMMARY

At the time of the 904 charter, the area of the later Burrington tithing was part of the Wrington estate. So much is clear from the perambulation attached to the charter.⁷⁰ It is suggested that the settlement of Burrington itself did not at that point exist, but that there may have been a farmstead or hamlet cluster at or near Bourne, perhaps of some antiquity. The nature of the surrounding field 'system' at this period is problematic, although at present it seems most likely that some

sort of proto open-field regime, perhaps only partially formed, was in operation, based upon Wrington.⁷¹ Later on, part of the area of Burrington tithing may have conveniently formed an entire field of sub-divided arable, since it was effectively cut off from the main body of the Wrington estate by the natural boundary of the River Wring. Unlike the later parish, Burrington tithing included the area immediately south of the river, which, particularly around Hayyatt, has apparently always been too damp to plough.⁷² Indeed, so marked is this topographical division that there may have been good 'operational' reasons for working the cultivable part of the later Burrington tithing as a discrete unit in its own right, perhaps originally as an irregular field-system based on Bourne, and subject, for example, to its own cropping arrangements, while remaining administratively an integral part of the Wrington estate.

Although the exact chronology and nature of later developments is uncertain, it is evident that they stem from Glastonbury's acquisition of the Wrington estate around the middle of the 10th century. It is clear that a Burrington estate had become a recognisable entity by the late 11th century, and if the interpretation put forward here of both the place-name and the Domesday evidence is accepted, a pre-Conquest origin would be a corollary. It is suggested that the name Burrington was coined and became attached to an estate carved out of Wrington by Glastonbury as a knight's fee in the later 10th or early 11th century, and possibly also to benefit from increased rents and to formalise agrarian arrangements which may already to some extent have been in place. The first holder was perhaps an ancestor of the pre-Conquest tenant Saewulf, and as part of this scheme a new tenant settlement, later known by the name of the estate, was laid out, probably over existing arable land; a likely analogy is provided by Lucille Campey's recent detailed descriptions and reconstructions of planned villages on the estates of Durham Cathedral Priory, in which the different elements of plan layouts can be directly related to occupation by various classes of tenant.⁷³

At Burrington, the field system also was adjusted, perhaps entirely recast, to take account of the need for ease of working and access from the 'new' settlement rather than from Bourne.⁷⁴ It is likely, at least on the grounds of its apparent integration in the village plan, that a chapel would have been provided from the outset to serve the tenants, but the 'manorial' centre of the estate seems to have remained at Bourne, perhaps with its own small seigneurial chapel. It certainly appears as though no such site was provided at Burrington, and the separation of Burrington from Bourne, once established, continued, probably as the result of a conscious desire on the part of successive lords to distance themselves from their tenants. The subsequent success of the new unit can be gauged from the clear indications that probably by the mid 11th century at the latest, its tenants, strongly asserting their economic if not administrative independence, had effectively become manorial lords in their own right. They were thus fully capable of avoiding displacement in the years after 1066, such that later in the century Glastonbury was obliged to take measures, only partially successful, to recover the Burrington estate for its own use.

I hope that this discussion has conveyed at least something of the potential significance of Burrington as a possible subject for more detailed and systematic work. Ideas about the origins and nature of rural settlement are presently in a constant state of flux: scholars formerly using the all-powerful hand of lordship to provide explanations about the often momentous transformations in the countryside which they discern between the 9th century and the 12th, are now looking increasingly towards the idea of a partnership between lords and their tenants in the execution of change.⁷⁵ Indeed, in this respect it is suggested that in many cases it was the tenants who took by far the more active and dominant role; nor, in fact, is this idea necessarily entirely new, for nearly twenty years ago one continental scholar, arguing from his studies of planned medieval settlements in Sweden, stated that 'in eastern Sweden it was the farmers themselves who promoted the new ideas and also at a later stage innovated them, ... in the central districts the freehold farmers probably played an important role through their own acceptance of the new ideas'.⁷⁶

Worthwhile syntheses can only be constructed upon the foundation of an appropriate sample of detailed, painstaking studies of individual estates. Burrington seems to offer intriguing indications

that, in its case, such close examination of all the available evidence may bring us much closer to the moment when the village as we know it today first came into existence, something of the processes involved, and perhaps even of the rationale of those responsible for its creation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This article could not have been written without the generous help of Mrs Shirley Everden, who gave freely both of her detailed local knowledge, and of the results of her own extensive research into the history of Burrington. The magnitude of my debt to her will be clear from the references. I am especially grateful to her for agreeing at short notice to my use of her maps reproduced here as Figures 3 and 7, when circumstances conspired to prevent the use of certain of my own maps drawn specially for this paper. Mrs Everden read and commented upon an earlier draft of this paper, making many constructive suggestions, and for the same service I must also thank Dr Michael Costen, Prof Mick Aston, Dr R.W. Dunning, Mrs Frances Neale, Mrs Suzanne Bromme, and Mrs Cheryl Beech.

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Nick Corcos, [REDACTED]

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- ¹ E. Ekwall, *Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Place-Names*, 4th edn., 1960 (Oxford), 76.
- ² J.W. Gough (ed), *Mendip Mines and Forest Bounds*, Somerset Record Society 45, 1931 (Taunton), 189.
- ³ I am grateful to Frances Neale, librarian and archivist to the Dean and Chapter of Wells, for giving me access to both Liber Albus II and Liber Fuscus for the purpose of corroborating Gough's transcriptions, and for her invaluable guidance and advice relating to these manuscripts.
- ⁴ J. Armitage Robinson, 'Another Wells chartulary', *Somerset & Dorset Notes & Queries*, 16, 208.
- ⁵ Liber Fuscus f68v. This spelling is followed by Liber Albus II (f83v), which was compiled around 1500 and of which fos 1–87v are essentially a copy of Liber Fuscus fos 1–77; *ex inf* Frances Neale.
- ⁶ Hobhouse (ed), *Rentals and Custumals of Michael of Amesbury and Roger of Ford*, SRS 5, 1891 (Taunton), 75.
- ⁷ That is, the twelfth year of Geoffrey Fromond, Abbot of Glastonbury from 1303 to 1322. PRO SC2/200/56A; Gough, *op. cit.* note 2, 191.
- ⁸ Burrington appears on fos 6, 7, 76, 89, and 91 of Sully's survey, which has the reference 10589 NMR at Longleat House. The printed edition, edited by J.E. Jackson, *An Inquisition of the Manors of Glastonbury Abbey of the Year 1189*, 1882, is a page-by-page transcript, and appears to render the Burrington spellings correctly. In the absence of contraction marks it is, though, doubtful whether Jackson's extension of *Buringtona* to *Buringtonam* in one case was actually intended by the scribe.
- ⁹ D. Smith (Gloucestershire County Archivist), pers comm.; I.H. Jeayes, *Catalogue of the Charters and Muniments at Berkeley Castle*, 1892, 22.
- ¹⁰ D. Smith, pers comm. This is contrary to Jeayes, who gives temp Richard I.
- ¹¹ The responsibility for this conclusion rests with myself alone, although in reaching it I have benefited greatly from the advice of a number of people who were kind enough to examine the Berkeley charter on my behalf. For their helpful guidance I am particularly grateful to Dr Michael Costen, Miss Sue Berry, Mrs Frances Neale, Dr Frank and Mrs Caroline Thorn, and Mrs Shirley Everden. The copy of the charter used for this article has now been deposited at the Somerset Local Studies Library in Taunton.
- ¹² Knight himself, for example, was clearly aware of at least one of these variants, but did not remark on it; F.A. Knight, *Heart of Mendip*, 1915 (London), 238. Even if merely the result of transcription from earlier documents, it nonetheless seems that the spelling *Burnyngton* remained current well into the 16th

century, as is shown by its appearance, alternately with *Buryngton*, throughout a series of Augmentation Office rentals of the manor of Wrington spanning the years 33 to 36 Henry VIII. PRO E315/432 fos 1r–26v.

¹³ M. Gelling, *Place-Names in the Landscape*, 1984 (London), 16–20, discusses at length the use of *burna* as a name-forming word. For a suggestion that the occurrence of this element is tied closely to the character of local geology, see A. Cole, 'Burna and Broc: problems involved in retrieving the OE usage of these place-name elements', *Journal of the English Place-Name Society* 23. Countering this, however, is a more recent argument that patterns of regional dialect use are a far more significant factor in the distribution of both these and many other Old English toponyms: P.R. Kitson, 'The nature of Old English dialect distributions, mainly as exhibited in charter boundaries', in J. Fisiak (ed), *Medieval Dialectology* (Trends in Linguistics, Studies and Monographs 79), 1995, esp at 90–92.

¹⁴ M. Costen, pers comm.

¹⁵ Gelling, *op. cit.* note 13, 17.

¹⁶ NGR ST486599.

¹⁷ A. Watkin (ed), *The Great Cartulary of Glastonbury Abbey*, II, Somerset Record Society 63, 1952 (Taunton), 545–6. The charter reference is actually to a point on the boundary marked by a tree, the *Schirebourn* elm. The Burrington *Schirebourne* is exactly cognate with all the Sherbornes noted as major place-names by Ekwall, *op. cit.* note 1, 416.

¹⁸ F. Neale (ed), *Wrington Village Records*, 1969 (Bristol), 87–108.

¹⁹ L. Abrams, *Anglo-Saxon Glastonbury: Church and Endowment*, 1996 (Woodbridge), 254–6.

²⁰ William himself gives no date for the charter but seems to imply that it was written at about the time of the appointment of Thurstan, the first Norman abbot of Glastonbury, which he dates to 1082; J. Scott, *The Early History of Glastonbury Abbey: An Edition, Translation and Study of William of Malmesbury's De Antiquitate Glastonie Ecclesie*, 1981 (Woodbridge), 153.

²¹ Although John dates Thurstan's appointment to 1081: J.P. Carley and D. Townsend (eds), *John of Glastonbury's Chronicle of Glastonbury Abbey*, 1985 (Woodbridge), 155, and n358, 296.

²² Scott, *op. cit.* note 20, 154.

²³ C. and F. Thorn (eds), *Domesday Book, Somerset*, 1981 (Chichester).

²⁴ M. Costen, pers comm; M. Costen, *The Origins of Somerset*, 1992 (Manchester), 121.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 165–6.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 118.

²⁷ This caveat is important since it is clear that, in purely areal terms, Saewulf's 1½ hides cannot be directly related to either the later parish or tithing of Burrington, but was a much smaller unit. In 1838, the tithe parish extended to 2,009 acres. Of this only 975 acres were cultivated, with much the greater part of the remainder consisting of common pasture on Burrington Ham, which, as the bounds of the 904 charter clearly show, had become attached to the Wrington estate by the 10th century. If, as has been argued here, Saewulf's fee can indeed be equated with the Burniginton of 1081/1082, then the clear discrepancy in size between the Domesday holding and the later tithing or parish must at this stage be regarded as unexplained. It seems certain, however, that on its fragmentation from Wrington, Burrington would have taken to itself, or been allocated, a part of the Ham for its own use, which may account for at least some of the post-Domesday expansion. The remainder could perhaps be attributed to medieval assarting in the north-eastern quarter of the estate (see below), and the progressive annexation of land from Wrington, either as deliberate policy on the part of Glastonbury Abbey or through the acquisitive tendencies of successive lessees of the Burrington sub-manor.

²⁸ Costen, *op. cit.* note 24, 171.

²⁹ In this regard it is interesting to note that Exeter Domesday includes the information, omitted from the Exchequer text, that Saewulf, like the thegn who preceded Roger of Courseulles, 'could not be separated from the church', tending to confirm the impression that Saewulf's 1½ hides had originated as a fee created by the Abbey to support a knight. Since Exchequer Domesday is careful to record the continuing dependency of Roger's estate in this way, the absence of the same important fact for Saewulf is surprising, and difficult to explain. As an earlier return, the Exeter text probably represents more closely Glastonbury's formal, but not necessarily always correct, view of tenurial arrangements on its manors. The discrepancy between Exchequer and Exeter on this point may be attributable merely to scribal carelessness, but perhaps also to deliberate excision, reflecting some knowledge on the part of the Exchequer scribe of the reality of Glastonbury's effective loss of Saewulf's fee by 1086; *Exon Domesday*, Record Commission 1816 (London), 156–7.

³⁰ T. Hearne (ed), *Adam of Domerham*, II, 1727, 325. This brief charter is known only from a marginal note at the head of f24r of Trinity College Cambridge ms R.5.33. If genuine, it must date to between 1100 and 1118, the abbatial years of Herlewin, to whom it is addressed; Scott, *op. cit.*, note 20, 2. Knight, *op. cit.*, note 12, 238, makes an uncharacteristically basic slip in ascribing it to the correct monarch, Henry I (1100–1135), but the obviously *incorrect* date of 1168. This is clearly due to his misreading Hearne's edition of Adam of Domerham, where the charter is printed immediately beside a papal privilege of Alexander III dated for that year. Dr Julia Crick considers (pers. comm.) that Henry's charter 'was plainly a very early addition to the manuscript. It was added in a 13th-century hand - say middle third - a more documentary version of the main hand but not necessarily much later in date'. The possibility that it is, therefore, a forgery based on William's charter earlier in the same ms (on f17), cannot be ruled out: there is a suspiciously close resemblance between the two, with exactly the same group of estates being named in both. In the present context though, it is the possible motives which may lie behind such a forgery that are of most relevance. A detailed assessment of the contents of and problems surrounding this seminal Glastonbury manuscript has been carried out by Dr Crick, to whom I am grateful for her advice and guidance relating to Henry's charter. See 'The marshalling of antiquity: Glastonbury's historical dossier', in L. Abrams and J.P. Carley (eds), *The Archaeology and History of Glastonbury Abbey*, 1991 (Woodbridge), 217–43. Dr Abrams herself notes elsewhere that the Conqueror's charter recited by William of Malmesbury suggests 'some post-Conquest threat to Burrington'; Abrams, *op. cit.*, note 19, 256.

³¹ Pers. comm. Mrs Everden.

³² For which see the map showing the 904 charter boundary in Neale, *op. cit.*, note 18.

³³ Two Glastonbury tenants with names containing Bourne as an epithet, Roger of Bourne, a ferdellar, and William de la Burne, a free tenant, were listed under Wrington in 1238; Hobhouse, *op. cit.* note 6, 77, 80.

³⁴ Gelling, *op. cit.*, note 13, 16–17.

³⁵ One of the best-known examples being the sequence at Raunds, Northants; D.A. Hinton, *Archaeology, Economy and Society: England from the Fifth to the Fifteenth Century*, 1990 (London), 96–7.

³⁶ Costen, *op. cit.*, note 24, 147–8.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 147.

³⁸ Knight, *op. cit.*, note 12, 258–9. The last recorded owner of Whalley's notebook, in the early 1920s, was Mrs Veronica Hill of Woodspring Priory; 'First Report of the Excavations at Aveline's Hole', *Trans Univ Bristol Spelaeological Soc*, I, 1920–21, 61. Its present whereabouts are, regrettably, unknown. I am grateful to Chris Richards for this reference.

³⁹ Hinton, *op. cit.*, note 35, 97. This is, of course, to make the major assumption that Whalley was correct in his identification of the ruined building he recorded.

⁴⁰ SRO D/D/Rt 100.

⁴¹ Pers. comm. R. Keel, and Woodspring District Council, Listed Buildings Index.

⁴² Pers. comm. Mrs Everden. This statement is based on work carried out by Mrs Everden, involving a detailed analysis of auster rights attached to Burrington tenements, by relating landholdings to the stints allotted to Burrington Conservators under the 1913 Burrington and Wrington Enclosure award; W.E. Tate, *Somerset Enclosure Acts and Awards*, 1948 (Taunton), 59.

⁴³ T.S. Holmes (ed.), *The Register of Ralph of Shrewsbury*, SRS 9, 1896 (Taunton), 154, 312.

⁴⁴ It is possible that Whalley's ruined 'chapel' should be related to this grant, and that perhaps Elizabeth was forced into her own house while an external chapel was being rebuilt or refurbished. This, however, is unlikely: the clauses relating to the rights of Wrington church would seem unnecessary if Elizabeth and her predecessors had already long been granted the privilege of using a private, purpose-built chapel. If Whalley was correct about the nature of the building he saw, it had presumably fallen out of its original use before Elizabeth's time, and by then may have been of considerable antiquity, perhaps even pre-Conquest in date. Such arrangements were by no means unusual however, and Elizabeth's chapel should be seen in the context of a continuing tradition of such special provision among the nobility. For example at Ashcott in the mid 13th century, 'Sir Geoffrey of Langley was granted the right to build a chapel in his court ... and have his own chaplain provided that the rights of Shapwick church and Ashcott chapel were not harmed'; *VCH Somerset*, Whitley Hundred, Ashcott (forthcoming). I am grateful to Dr Robert Dunning and Mary Siraut for this reference. Sir Geoffrey's chapel was probably at Pedwell, and, like that at Bourne, its exact location has now been lost; G. Thomson, *All Saints' Church Ashcott: Historical and Descriptive Notes*, 1994, 11–12.

⁴⁵ C. Marsden-Smedley, *Burrington Church and Village: A Short History*, 1991, 4. The foregoing interpretation of the problems surrounding Elizabeth of Bourne's chapel owes much to my discussions

with Mrs Everden. A possible context for at least a partial rebuilding at about this time is provided by a judgement of the Consistory Court of Wells, dated 1498, by which the people of Burrington were ordered to rebuild their chapel completely, including the chancel; R.W. Dunning, 'The Wells Consistory Court in the Fifteenth Century', *SANH* 106, 58. The possibility that before this, the main body of the church was contemporary with the 14th-century tower receives some support from the discovery in 1908 of a carved stone, supposed to be an Easter Sepulchre, in the internal south wall of the chancel. The stone was found *in situ*, and its position so close to the high altar, together with the iconography (two figures kneeling before the risen Christ) and the presence of a burial directly beneath it, have led to the suggestion that it was originally incorporated in the tomb of a prominent (but unknown) figure, perhaps a major benefactor. The stone has been tentatively dated to about the mid 14th century, and may therefore have been part of a complete or partial rebuilding at that period; *Somerset and Dorset Notes and Queries* 17, 277–8.

⁴⁶ I am grateful to Burrington Parish Council for permission to reproduce this extract from the copy of the tithe map in its possession.

⁴⁷ A. Ellison, *Medieval Villages in South-East Somerset*, 1983 (Bristol), 45–7.

⁴⁸ M.A. Aston, *Interpreting the Landscape* (London), 1985, 74–7. I am grateful to Mrs Penny Stokes for drawing this parallel to my attention.

⁴⁹ The preparation of Fig. 4 owes much to my discussions with Mrs Everden concerning the original form of the Burrington village plan. No formal market charter is known for Burrington, but this does not preclude the possibility that it may have possessed a prescriptive market long before the granting of charters became a royal and seigniorial prerogative, especially from the early 13th century onwards. In this respect it is possible that, as was often the case, a royal charter granted to Glastonbury Abbey in 1332, to hold a weekly market and annual fair at Wrington, was merely formalising existing practice; *Calendar of Charter Rolls*, IV, 1327–1341, 259, and Watkin, *op cit.*, note 17, 173–4. If a putative Burrington market failed early on, perhaps as a result of competition from Wrington, its absence from both written record and local tradition might be expected.

⁵⁰ S. Oosthuizen, 'Medieval settlement relocation in West Cambridgeshire: three case-studies', *Landscape History* 19, 1997.

⁵¹ In this respect the situation at Burrington appears to be echoed at East Harptree (NGR ST566559), which is palpably a medieval planned settlement apparently conforming to the classic layout of tenement plots running back to twin back lanes. The village is located in an isolated position some 400m south of the main road (now the B3114) between West Harptree and Chewton Mendip, and access to it is by a straight road which may be contemporary with and an integral part of the village plan, since on reaching the settlement it continues straight through it, forming the main street with parallel back lanes on either side.

⁵² J.B. Bentley and B.J. Murless, *Somerset Roads: The Legacy of the Turnpikes – Phase 1: Western Somerset*, 1985, map 6: Sedgemoor.

⁵³ N.J. Corcos, 'Early Estates on the Poldens and the origins of settlement at Shapwick', *SANH* 127, 1983, 47–54.

⁵⁴ Even at the end of the 18th century, Collinson was still able to assert that Burrington 'manor' 'having been a member of the manor of Wrington ... at present ... does suit and service' to the latter; J. Collinson, *The History and Antiquities of the County of Somerset*, I, 1791 (Bath), 204.

⁵⁵ SRO D/D/Rg 21.

⁵⁶ Much of the discussion that follows is based on the results of a detailed analysis and comparison of these documents, and of the tithe map and schedule, carried out by Mrs Everden. I am grateful to her for allowing me to use her preliminary findings here.

⁵⁷ J.A. Yelling, *Common Field and Enclosure in England 1450–1850*, 1977 (London), 91. This was certainly the case at Shapwick in 1638: N.J. Corcos, *Shapwick: The Enclosure of a Somerset Parish 1515–1839*, 1982, 65–7 (unpub MA dissertation, Univ Leicester).

⁵⁸ SRO D/D/Rg 61.

⁵⁹ On this point, Mrs Everden has shown that the two 1634 terriers for Wrington and Burrington appear to give conflicting evidence.

⁶⁰ See, for example, J. Field, *A History of English Field Names*, 1993 (Harlow), 11.

⁶¹ Tithe plots 46, 47, 48 and 59.

⁶² Excluding the East Field names already noted, these are Short Lands (264), Inner Short Lands (265), Brimfurland (84), Brimfurlong (77), Great Acre (249), Cheslands (214) and Upper Cheslands (221). One of these names, Brimfurlong/furland, is attested in the Rector's glebe terrier of 1634, which mentions 'two closes of land meadow and pasture in Bemefurlong conteyninge five acres'. See Figs 1 and 4.

⁶³ Corcos, *op. cit.*, note 53.

⁶⁴ Although it is possible, as Mrs Everden has suggested to me, that this area may itself have contained a small, discrete field 'system' centred upon and worked from Langford.

⁶⁵ J. Field, *English Field Names: A Dictionary*, 1972 (Newton Abbot), 175–6. Support for the suggestion that, in this instance, the field name Barrows is of some antiquity, and does indeed derive from bearu, comes from its use as a locative epithet in the personal names of two Wrington tenants in 1238: Richard of Barewe, and Walter in Barewe; Hobhouse, *op. cit.* note 6, 76 and 78. For a discussion of the occurrence and distribution of bearu as a toponym, see Gelling, *op. cit.*, note 13, 189–90. It is possible that even by the late 17th century Little Barrows may not have been completely cleared, with perhaps just a few of the more massive and elderly trees remaining, for in 1665, when the Burrington church bells were being recast, part of the work involved a payment by the church-wardens to 'Mr Phippen the elder for halling one Bell to Bristoll and one peece of Tymber from little barrow', the latter almost certainly to be used in the making of a new headstock: SRO D/P/bur 4/1/1. It is, however, equally likely that the 'tymber' came from a large hedgerow tree which simply happened to be growing in the vicinity, or was a remnant of the former Little Barrows wood. I am grateful to Mrs Everden for this reference.

⁶⁶ Neale, *op. cit.*, note 18, 9.

⁶⁷ PRO E315/420 f70r.

⁶⁸ Mrs Everden considers that Emley Lane is an ancient routeway along its entire length, since it runs from Bourne to Aldwick (the *eald wic*), and passes through a field called 'Aldwick Bow' in 1838, perhaps indicating the existence in the medieval period of an arched stone bridge at the point where it crosses the River Wrington.

⁶⁹ Amounting to a total of some 16 acres, at various locations, and most of it leased to other tenants.

⁷⁰ It should be noted, however, that Dr Costen questions the authenticity of the 904 charter, observing particularly that by analogy with similar Glastonbury charters, the boundary description, although in itself probably genuine, is unlikely to be of the purported date but later, perhaps of the mid-late 10th century; M Costen, 'Dunstan, Glastonbury and the Economy of Somerset', in M. Sparks, N. Ramsey and T. Tatton-Brown (eds), *St Dunstan: His Life, Time and Cult*, 1992 (Woodbridge), 44.

⁷¹ The Winter acres referred to in 904, and lying on the northern boundary of the estate, are considered by Michael Costen to represent an 'isolated [plot] of land rather than fields' in the sense in which that term was understood in the medieval period; Costen, *op. cit.*, note 24, 126.

⁷² This is suggested by, for example, Mrs Everden's analysis of Burrington auster tenements, already noted, which has shown that grazing rights on Burrington Ham were attached to plots of land outside (i.e. north of) the area of the parish, extending to the southern bank of the Wrington.

⁷³ L. Campey, 'Medieval village plans in County Durham: an analysis of reconstructed plans based on medieval documentary sources', *Northern History* 25, 1989.

⁷⁴ In this context, Dr Costen makes the important point that, as has recently become clear in Somerset, settlement planning was by no means the sole prerogative of monastic landlords, but has now also been identified on both royal estates and those of major baronial tenants. Costen, *op. cit.*, note 70, 31.

⁷⁵ See, for example, C. Lewis, P. Mitchell-Fox, and C. Dyer, *Village, Hamlet and Field: Changing Medieval Settlements in Central England*, 1997 (Manchester), 204–13.

⁷⁶ U Sporrang, 'Individualistic features in a communal landscape: some comments on the spatial organisation of a rural society', in A.R.H. Baker and M. Billinge (eds), *Period and Place: Research Methods in Historical Geography*, 1982 (Cambridge), 153.