

MEDIEVAL SETTLEMENTS IN WINSCOMBE PARISH IN NORTH SOMERSET

Where did Helen atte Wyke, Isak in la Combe and William de Makkesmille¹ live in the Middle Ages?

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Summary

This article looks at the evidence for medieval settlement sites in the north Somerset parish of Winscombe (Fig. 1). It is not principally concerned with the archaeological evidence to locate settlements but uses a rich series of documentary sources, including Domesday Book (1086), a survey of 1189 and a Custumal of the manor for 1290, to trace sites through the names of medieval people in the parish. A good run of account rolls and some court rolls supplement these sources and there are several good post-medieval surveys. Although occasionally Winscombe can be set in its local context by comparing it with other manors for several miles around, the main approach adopted in this article is the examination of documents for the existence of any settlement at a particular date that might be indicated by the appellations attached to particular tenants' names, usually in the form of de or atte.²

INTRODUCTION

The part of Somerset in which Winscombe is located is usually said to have a predominately non-nucleated settlement pattern with few fully developed villages with common fields. In fact it can be demonstrated that it is an area of hamlets, some of them apparently planned, with a few scattered farmsteads. In this area, medieval field systems are irregular and their management difficult to understand, with enclosure occurring early and few large areas of arable remaining at the end of the Middle Ages to be enclosed later by parliamentary enclosure Acts. As such, Winscombe is typical of settlements in many areas of western and northern England which lie outside the champion or 'planned' landscape regions

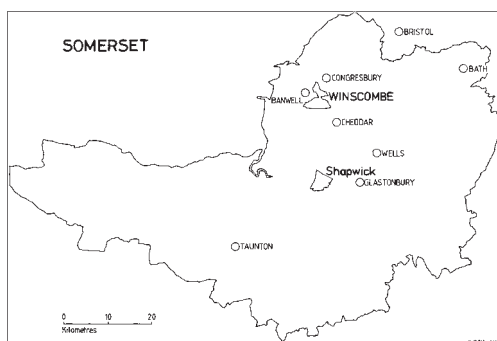


Fig. 1 Winscombe parish in Somerset: location map. Shapwick parish, the subject of a similar long-term project, is also shown

of medieval England.³ Such areas have been little studied, relative to areas with nucleated villages and common fields, and Winscombe is therefore a good candidate for a long-term research project.⁴

Attempts to characterize different types of medieval settlement go back a long way, but over the last decade considerable advances have been made by Brian Roberts and Stuart Wrathmell with their critical analysis of settlement zones in England.⁵ Most of Somerset falls into their 'Central Province', a belt of country stretching from Dorset through the Midlands to Durham and Northumberland. Within that belt western Dorset and Somerset, except Exmoor, are grouped separately as 'West Wessex'. This 'Central Province' is a region of nucleated rather than dispersed settlement; and of their West Wessex province, Roberts and Wrathmell remark, 'this area contains the greatest density of nucleations in the country – concealed by the fact that many are rather small'. There are well-defined nucleated villages with common field systems in this area such as Shapwick in central Somerset⁶ but several settlements within an early parish unit is the more normal pattern. By putting most of Somerset into one settlement zone we may perhaps be deluded into thinking that there is greater uniformity of settlement distribution in the landscape than is actually the case. Strongly nucleated settlements, like Shapwick, lie at one end of a scale of degrees of nucleation and dispersal, while completely scattered settlements, of small hamlets and single farmsteads, lie at the other end, outside Roberts and Wrathmell's 'Central Province', in areas like west Somerset.⁷ Somewhere between lies much of the 'normal' landscape of lowland England with its mixture of villages, hamlets and farmsteads of medieval and later date. Winscombe is just such a parish and a very preliminary study of it, undertaken in 1986, suggested that it would be a suitable place to study dispersed and mixed settlement patterns in Somerset.⁸ It is thus the type of parish and settlement pattern identified by the Medieval Settlement Research Group as being worthy of further study.⁹ It is the purpose of this article to discuss the origins and distribution of its settlements using principally place-name evidence and the sequence of recorded names of tenants living in the parish from the 12th to the 16th century.

The origin of the land unit of the medieval parish and its relationship to the early estate structure of the area has already been considered.¹⁰ Several aspects were examined including a possible early

medieval estate centred on Banwell, its fragmentation, and the relationship of this to ecclesiastical arrangements and later medieval parishes. The recognition of early minsters and monasteries, together with their surrounding *parochiae*, seems to be an important aspect of the hierarchy of early settlement in this area as elsewhere. In general this aspect of early medieval settlement has been little considered in such studies so far in Somerset, and the picture is far from clear in detail in the Winscombe area.¹¹

The parish lies in the north of the historic (pre-1974) county of Somerset, just inland from the town of Weston-super-Mare and between the larger settlements of Cheddar and Axbridge to the south, Banwell to the west and Congresbury to the north (Figs 1 and 2). Much of the parish is upland, set on the western end of the Mendips, a carboniferous limestone plateau dominating the landscape south of Bristol. The northern half of the parish is low-lying and forms part of the North Somerset Levels, stretching from Uphill and Banwell in the south, to Clevedon and Nailsea in the north. In the centre of the parish is a wide, open valley, between the limestone ridges, the form of which may be the origin of the 'combe' element of the place-name – meaning something like Win's, Wine's or Wint's valley.¹²

We can trace around 20 medieval hamlets and farm sites in Winscombe in the Middle Ages but of these only ten or a dozen are regularly referred to in documents (Fig. 13). Not all of these are obvious in the parish today since modern settlement is largely made up of commuter/dormitory and retirement housing. Bizarrely, the name of the main settlement of Winscombe has moved. The centre of what is now called Winscombe village began as a scatter of farmsteads around a large triangular common called Woodborough Green (Fig. 4). The settlement called Winscombe, which gave its name to the parish and which was presumably always the most important settlement in it, despite its odd position on the north side of the Mendips, was a kilometre away adjacent to the fine medieval parish church. Here were sited many of the manorial buildings mentioned in the *comptus* or account rolls of the 13th and 14th centuries from which a very clear picture can be built up of the number of buildings in the manorial *curia* (see below).

There are no pre-1066 documentary accounts of settlement in this area. While there are Anglo-Saxon charters with boundary clauses for Banwell and Compton Bishop and for Wrington, surrounding

Winscombe,¹³ there are no boundary clauses for the parish itself. Fortunately, though, because much of the boundary marches with these neighbouring parishes, we do in fact have boundary details for the estate at Winscombe for the 11th century for over 50% of its length.

After the Norman Conquest however the parish is exceptionally well endowed with medieval documents. As well as the Domesday Book in 1086,¹⁴ there was a survey carried out for Abbot Sully of Glastonbury Abbey in 1189¹⁵ and a Customal of the Manor from 1290.¹⁶ We can thus see changes in the manor and references to various settlements every 100 years, over a 300-year period in the Middle Ages. From the late 13th century onwards, there are abundant court and *compoti* rolls through to the middle of the 16th century.¹⁷ We then have surveys of Sandford in 1540¹⁸ and Winscombe in 1572 and 1650¹⁹ before the excellent William White map of Winscombe and Shipham dating to 1792.²⁰ With the map are a series of copies and leases enabling us to trace many of the tenants and their properties over several generations.²¹ We can therefore be sure, with a good degree of confidence, of what settlements were in existence in the parish at different dates from the 11th to the 19th century.

PLACE-NAMES IN AND AROUND WINSCOMBE²² (Fig. 2)

It may be possible eventually, after the collection and identification of late Saxon ceramics from gardens and test pits in village properties, to identify those settlements which were in existence in the parish in the 10th and 11th centuries from archaeological evidence.²³ Until that time, elements of the various place-names are probably our best indication of the existence of early medieval settlements in the area. Michael Costen has discussed a number of such names which indicate settlements – the habitative names in the county. These names incorporate an element in them directly referring to a farm, house or enclosure – something physically remaining that could be excavated. These names are often assumed to be of 10th and 11th-century date, if not earlier, and include *worth* and *hiwisc* (*huish* or *hewish*).²⁴ Other names are also being studied in Somerset such as *wic*.²⁵ Some of these habitative names are only known today as field names, though others survive as place-names: there is a hamlet of Hewish on the borders of Puxton and Congresbury.

Worth survives at Brimbleworth in the north of Banwell parish, at Badgworth and Edingworth to the south of Winscombe and the name element is recorded at a possible unidentified and unlocated place called *Hokeworth* mentioned in Winscombe parish in 1336–7 (see below).

There are a number of names in the Winscombe area which clearly indicate early, pre-Norman settlement sites (Fig. 2). Some of these have the well-known and well-studied habitative suffixes of many settlement sites across the country, such as *tun* and *ham*. We can be sure that these names are referring to places where people were actually living in the past, rather than just names for locations in the landscape which were, or later became, settlement sites. These include Locking and a spread of *tun* names such as Wrington, Puxton, Loxton, Christon, Webbington (formerly *Wiventon*), Compton, Bourton, and Burrington.²⁶ There were certainly more of these in the past; there are for example field names on the tithe map of 1834 in Banwell parish of probable former settlements called *Bustleton* and *Belgurton*,²⁷ and Rolstone was formerly called *Worston*.²⁸ *Ham* names in the Winscombe area include Wemberham (in Congresbury) and Shipham.²⁹ There are also several habitative place-names with the element *cot* such as Knightcott and Walcott³⁰ in Banwell parish and Sidcot in Winscombe parish.³¹

Generally speaking however many of the names attached to places in this part of Somerset are not of the habitative type. They are mainly topographical and indicate features in the landscape such as fords (Sandford, Langford), hills (Churchill, Wolvershill), springs (Banwell, Ludwell) or islands (Nye, Brinsea) rather than settlement sites. With these names we cannot be sure people were living at the place where the name is applied until the documents tell us so. However, part of the problem of identifying settlements lies in the interpretation of the names. For example, it is possible that the ‘borough’ or ‘berrow’ elements of names such as Woodborough (in Winscombe), Elborough and Rowberrow derived from *burg* used in the sense of ‘manor’.³² Or alternatively, they could be derived from *beorg*³³ referring to a hill or mound, or, as at Rowberrow, a probable Bronze Age barrow site – an artificial hill. The large barrow here, overlooking and dominating the end of the Winscombe valley, seems likely to have given its name to the place.³⁴ Despite these problems of interpretation, there are in Winscombe a number of field names recorded that probably indicate early settlements.³⁵

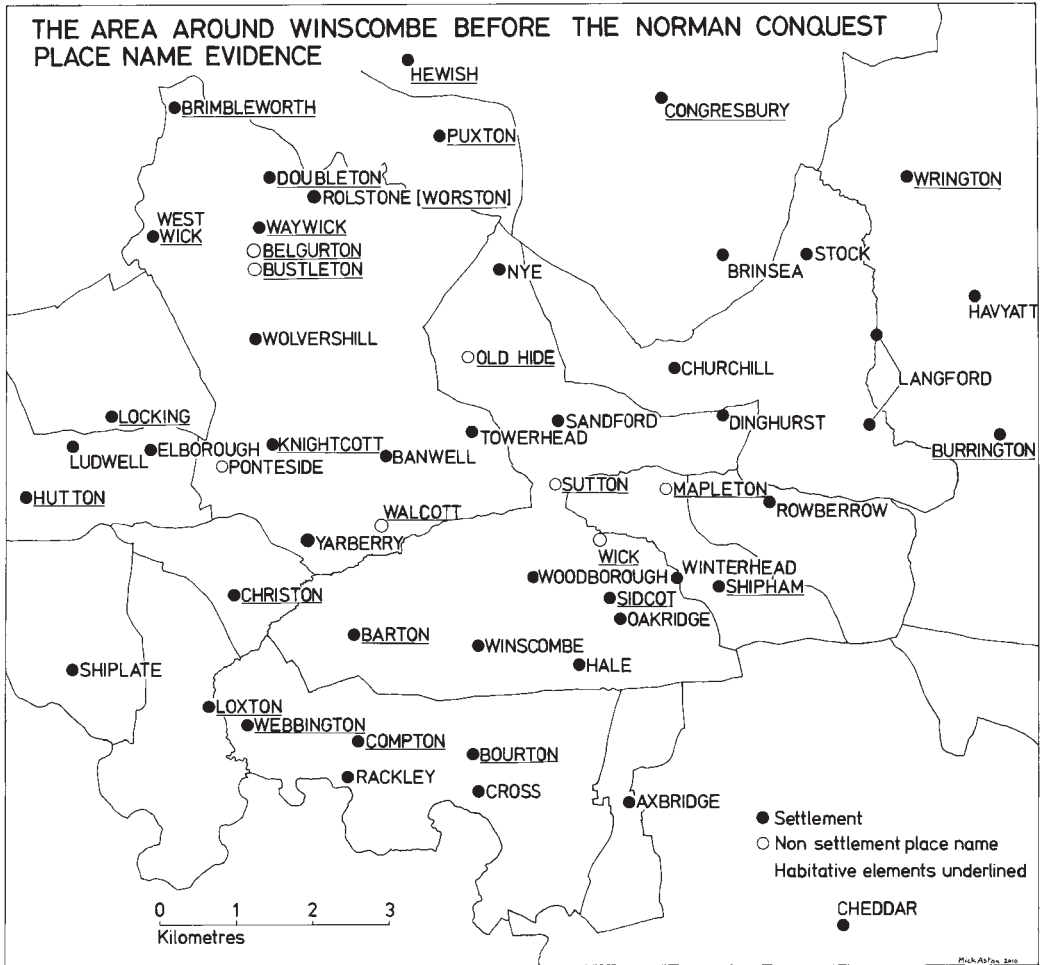


Fig. 2 The area around Winscombe before the Norman Conquest: the place-name evidence. Various sources including tithe maps; the parish boundaries are from the 19th-century maps

FIELD NAMES INDICATIVE OF EARLY SETTLEMENT

Old Hide

In the northern part of the parish, near Sandford, there are several fields named *Old Hide* on the map of 1840 (Fig. 3). This name is probably indicative of a single isolated Anglo-Saxon farm site.³⁶ Nearby there are a number of *Blackland* field names, which may well relate to a pre-existing Roman settlement, where the darker soil over an area of former occupation was identified by later people.³⁷

These names have a very interesting location in the local landscape. They are on a flat plateau of Keuper marl (or Mercian mudstone), a clay geological base covered with head deposits (a mixture of clay and rock fragments) out in the Levels but raised some 5–10m above the floodable lands of the Levels to the north and west. There is a pronounced dip in the landscape between this area and the slopes to the south where Sandford is located, so that even today the *Old Hide/Blackland* area feels somewhat separate. The pattern of field boundaries in this area suggests early strips in the common fields that have been enclosed in a

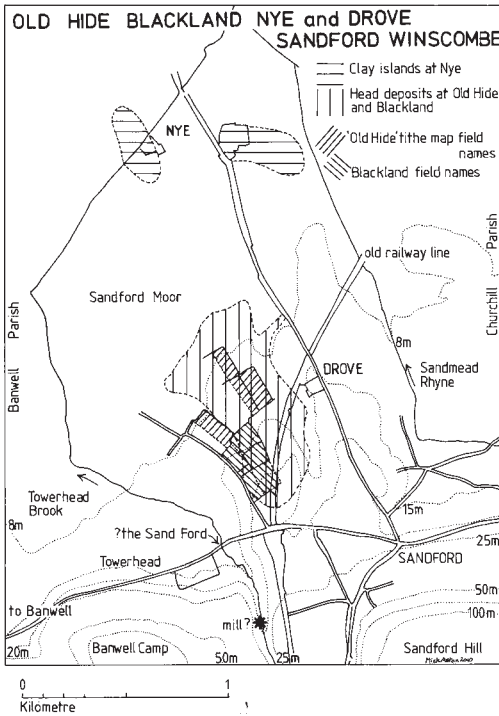


Fig. 3 Old Hide, Blackland, Nye and Drove in Sandford, Winscombe parish; sources include tithe maps and geology maps

piecemeal way. Later medieval documentation, and even the tithe map of 1840, indicates that there were strips of arable, in probable common furlongs or fields in this area. The hedges in the area are distinguished by a high proportion of mature oak trees.

One possibility, which would explain the relationship of *Old Hide* and Sandford, and the possible common field organisation here, is that this site may well have been abandoned when Sandford was developed, together with its common field arable, over the former settlement site.³⁸ Such developments have been observed elsewhere in Somerset, most notably at Shapwick³⁹ and are widespread across England.⁴⁰ The process of field system change and settlement relocation has been observed over a time span from the 9th to the 14th centuries.

Sandford seems to have developed as a linear settlement along the east-west route at the foot of

the north side of the Mendips (Fig. 3). Its name means 'sandy ford' and this should probably be seen in relation to Banwell which is the most important early-medieval centre in the locality. Sandford lies beyond the Towerhead Brook and the hamlet of Towerhead and so it is likely that the sandy ford lay where the main road crossed Towerhead Brook. The earliest medieval pottery found in Sandford so far is 10th/11th-century so perhaps the move took place around 1000AD; there has been no archaeological work at *Old Hide* so far.

In contrast to Sandford, *Old Hide* lay in the middle of a large area of level land that could be efficiently farmed for arable crops. Any settlement there would also have been ideally situated to exploit a range of different land-use types that were necessary to support an early medieval community.⁴¹ As well as the surrounding arable, there was abundant seasonal pasture nearby down on the Levels and further away on Sandford Hill, where there was probably woodland as well, on the north-facing escarpment. In many ways *Old Hide* was an ideally situated early agricultural settlement; and so it is an interesting question why it was abandoned. It seems to have been replaced in the local landscape with, in some ways, a less than ideally placed settlement at Sandford.⁴²

Winscombe parish has a *tun* settlement at Barton⁴³ and there were several other *tuns* in the area. To the south of Sandford are several *Sutton* names on the tithe map of 1840 suggesting a 'south *tun*'.⁴⁴ Later spellings indicate, however, that the field name might well be *Suddon*.⁴⁵

Running from the Winscombe parish boundary, which was also the boundary of the 11th-century estate,⁴⁶ southwards to Star in Shipham parish on the A38 main road, is a track called Mapleton Lane (Fig. 2). This crosses earthworks associated with the Roman villa site at Star (Fig. 4).⁴⁷ However, the pattern of rectilinear banks does not look Roman in character and it is possible that they represent settlement remains of a place called *Mapleton*, another small settlement with the *tun* element in its name. This could have been succeeded, by the 18th century, in a sort of 'site-drift process', by the settlement at Star with its inn on the turnpike road from Bristol heading south to Bridgwater, serving not only passing travellers but also the many thirsty miners in the area.⁴⁸ The site is in Shipham parish but given the close association of early Shipham with Winscombe parish (see below) the site is relevant to this discussion.

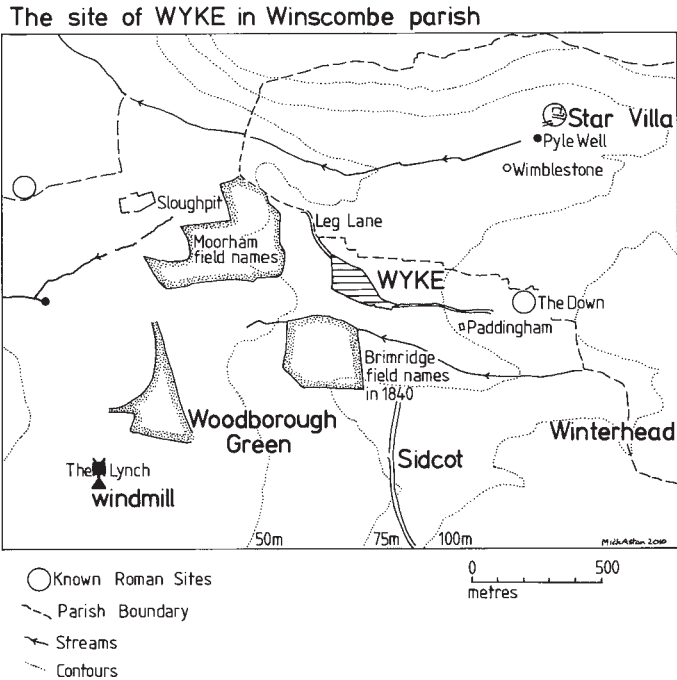


Fig. 4 The site of Wyke or Wick in Winscombe parish and its surroundings

Wick

Then there is the enigmatic site of *Wyke* or *Wick* (Figs 2 and 4). This name occurs as a surname associated with tenants of Winscombe from the 12th to the 15th centuries. The account rolls for the manor record in 1305–6 that the reeve of the manor was William atte Wyke and he was followed in 1306–7 by John atte Wyke as reeve; 30 years later there was a Thomas atte Wyke. More significantly in a court roll for 1330, *Wyke* is recorded as one of the places (possible early tithings?) in the Winscombe manor when a list of *garciones* is compiled.⁴⁹ Names such as Walter de Wyke in Henry of Sully's survey of 1189,⁵⁰ Dennis de la Wyke and Thomas atte Wyke in the 1290 Custumal and Thomas atte Wyke (in 1330) suggest that there were people living at somewhere called *Wyke* or, more likely, *Wick* in the parish over a long period.⁵¹ At the start of this research, it was thought that perhaps the place being referred to was not in Winscombe parish at all, as there are plenty of *wic* settlements in the surrounding area – West Wick and Waywick in Banwell parish (Fig. 2) and Wick St Lawrence, formerly part of Congresbury, for example. But the fact that *Wyke* is listed as one of

six places in Winscombe in the court roll of 1330 strongly indicates that it was in the parish.⁵² There are no known field names, on the tithe map for example, indicating the site of this settlement and no part of any existing place in the parish has this name today or on earlier maps.

So is it possible to locate the site of this *wic*? There are several possibilities and the 1330 list of hamlets eliminates certain areas. We can account for Nye, Sandford and Dinghurst, and presumably land around them, in the northern half of the parish and hence there seems little room for another settlement in that area. In the southern area we have Barton, Winscombe and Sidcot, and we know that Woodborough and Winterhead are usually separately assessed (see below); these together with their lands, account for most of this part of the parish (Fig. 12). However, *wic* names are sometimes associated with Roman sites⁵³ and hence there are a number of possible locations in the parish where it could be placed near known Roman settlement sites (Fig. 4).

However, it is the association of people with the *Wyke* name, with other field and place-names in the area that indicate the site of this *Wyke* settlement. In the *compotus* roll for 1336–7 for example, 'two

shillings is received for pasture of a piece of Bronrigge Wood' ... 'between the land of Thomas atte Wyke and the windmill' and from a *compotus* roll of 1342–3 'two shillings from the pasture of one [] of wood in Brounugg, between Thomas atte Wyke's land and Morham'. These names and the position of the wood can be gleaned from later information. The site of the windmill is known on the Lynch (see below), and there are *Moorham* names on the tithe map and *Moorham* is still today the name of an area near Slough Pit, between Sandford Batch and Woodborough. *Bronrigge* Wood, the name probably means 'brown ridge', varies in its spelling in the documents and by 1539–40 in a *compotus* roll it is called 'a wood called Brenrige'. On the tithe map of 1840 there are three fields called *Brimridge*⁵⁴ adjacent to a large irregular field (tithe map 539) called *Blunderhedge*. This is near the present-day houses called 'The Down' and 'Paddingham' (not early names) in the south-east of the parish where there is a Roman site. There are irregular earthworks in this field alongside a hollow way, an extension of the former Leg Lane. The site lies above and to the south-west of the Roman villa site at Star. Apart from the hollow way, there are several large terraces on the site and what is probably surface quarrying for the underlying Dolomitic conglomerate, but some of the earthworks look like house and building sites.⁵⁵

At the moment it looks as if this is one of the few genuine lost early settlements in the parish and further field research will be carried out at the site. It was clearly in existence by the late-12th century and consisted of two ferdeller's holdings in 1290.⁵⁶ Up to a dozen people may have been living there in 1330 and we can trace two (or three?) generations of farmers there in the 14th century. We last hear of anyone living at the site around 1400 and so it is at least a possibility that the community there died out (or decided to move to a better location) as a result of the Black Death in 1348–9. It does not look as if the settlement ever consisted of more than two or three farmsteads.

DOMESDAY BOOK HOLDINGS (Fig. 5)

Winscombe

In Domesday Book we learn of an estate called Winscombe of 15 hides, and the meaning of 'hide' has already been considered above (endnote 36). The estate was first referred to in the 10th century when

it was granted by King Edgar to Aelfswith, wife of ealdorman Aelfheah of Hampshire.⁵⁷ It then passed to Glastonbury Abbey and it was held by the abbey in the Domesday Book.⁵⁸ It later passed to the Bishop of Wells and eventually by 1239 to the Dean and Chapter of Wells Cathedral with whom it remained until the 19th century.

A number of separate estates are documented in the Domesday Survey as well as the main manor of Winscombe itself. These are not separately named, but most can be identified from later documentation.⁵⁹ For example 2½ hides were held, in lordship, from Glastonbury Abbey by Roger of Courseulles⁶⁰ a major tenant of the king, who held most of his land in Somerset: around 100 estates as a tenant-in-chief,⁶¹ most of which comprise small holdings of less than 1½ hides and were sub-let. In addition to these, Roger held 20 estates as a sub-tenant of Glastonbury Abbey, all lands which were previously held by thegn. Elsewhere in the country his holdings were minimal: five estates in Shropshire (presumably to help hold down the Welsh Borders in time of unrest); one estate at Corton in south Dorset; and one estate at Fisherton in Wiltshire. The nearest of his estates to Winscombe in 1086 were two and a bit hides (unnamed) in Cheddar (SOM 21.78) (which was sub-let) and a ½ hide held in lordship at 'Ponteside' (SOM 21.80), a deserted site on the border of neighbouring Banwell parish, near Hillend.⁶² He also held a 4-hide estate in Shipham (SOM 21.79) sub-let to Robert that, as we shall see below, may have been originally part of the Winscombe estate. It is possible to suggest, from later evidence that his Winscombe holding may have been at Woodborough in the centre of the parish. Frank and Caroline Thorn remark that 'many of Roger of Courseulles' holdings are held later by the Malet family or by Hugh Poynz' and that 'some of the lands held from the Abbot (of Glastonbury) by Roger of Courseulles are later found in the hands of the Malet family'.⁶³ Later, in 1189, Neil Stacy notes that the Malets had a fee of Glastonbury Abbey at Woodborough 'in the east [sic? It is really north-east] of Winscombe'.⁶⁴

Rather more certainly, we are told that 'the Bishop of Coutances⁶⁵ holds 1 hide of this manor's land from the King' and that 'Brictric held it freely before 1066, but he could not be separated from the church' that is Glastonbury Abbey. A separate entry⁶⁶ records the same information but adds that Herlwin was the tenant of the bishop and that the 1-hide estate was at Wintreth or Winterhead. The estate has clearly



Fig. 5 The area around Winscombe in 1086 from Domesday Book (source Thorn and Thorn 1980) The parish boundaries are from 19th-century maps

been alienated from Glastonbury Abbey between 1066 and 1086. The Bishop of Coutances was a major tenant of the king holding over 270 estates across the country, but with the greatest concentration in Somerset (around 70) and Devon (around 99).⁶⁷ The nearest of his estates to Winscombe in 1086 were Hutton and Elborough to the west and Havyatt in Wrington to the east (Fig. 5).

A man called Pipe, whom we know nothing about as he does not seem to be mentioned elsewhere in Domesday Book or to hold any other land in 1086, held a ½ hide somewhere in Winscombe.⁶⁸ This could

be any one of a number of places recorded later in documents associated with Winscombe such as Barton, Sidcot, Oakridge, Hale, Dinghurst, Nye or even Wyke but we have no further way of identifying it at the moment.

Holdings of Ralph ‘Crooked or Twisted’ Hands

Perhaps of greatest interest is a small estate of 1 hide and 1 virgate held by a man called Ralph. From the Feodary of Glastonbury Abbey⁶⁹ and from the research of Stephen Morland⁷⁰ we know that Ralph’s holding was at Sandford. Furthermore we know that

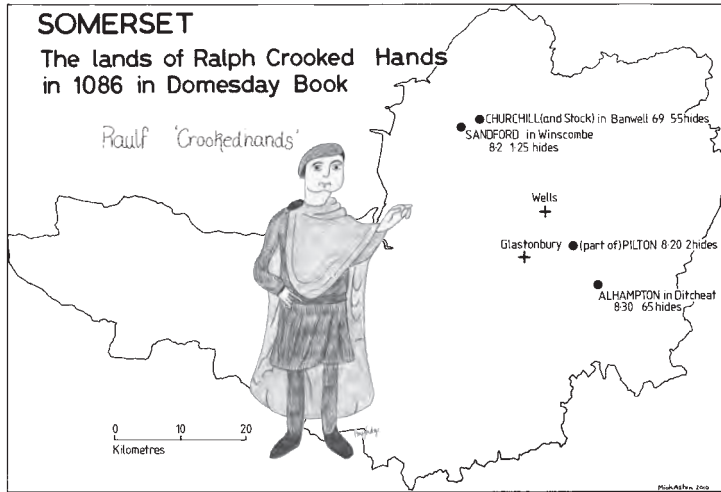


Fig. 6 Somerset: the lands of Ralph Crooked Hands in 1086 in Domesday Book (source Thorn and Thorn 1980). The numbers (SOM 8.20) refer to the entries in the Phillimore edition together with the number of hides (for example 6.5) listed. The drawing of Ralph is by Amy Fudge and is based on figures in the Bayeux Tapestry

of all the Ralphs mentioned in Domesday Book – it was a common Norman name – this person was distinguished by the name ‘Crooked or Twisted Hands’. The (Old) French ‘tortes mans’ and Latin ‘torte manus’ show that this man had some form of deformity and that it was not, for example, a reference to a criminal character! Frank Thorn⁷¹ says that the (Old) French and Latin show that his name is ‘of the twisted hand’ or ‘with crooked hands’ so that we should perhaps think of him as ‘Ralph with crooked hands, crooked-handed Ralph’ or ‘Ralph who has crooked hands’. He says that it is likely to be a physical defect, either inherited or a defect at birth or the result of disease or injury. Latin *tortus* is related to *torqueo* (to twist or to hurl – essentially twisting or knotting; so ‘these hands are crooked’ or ‘these hands have been twisted’). We should perhaps call him Ralph Twisted Hands rather than Crooked Hands.⁷²

Ralph was a major subtenant of both the Abbot of Glastonbury and the Bishop of Wells at the time of Domesday (1086) (Fig. 6). He held lands of Glastonbury Abbey at Pilton, near the abbey, and at Alhampton in Ditchheat parish.⁷³ But he also had land from the Bishop of Wells at Banwell,⁷⁴ 5½ hides at what has been suggested were Churchill and Stock, but, as Frank Thorn comments,⁷⁵ Ralph’s land in Banwell probably included Puxton and Rolstone as well.

His name shows he was an obviously disabled landholder but this does not mean he was not a good land manager and we know that his family continued successfully in the area for several generations. Ralph’s 1 hide and 1 virgate at Sandford is not a large area of land. Almost certainly it does not account for the full extent of the former tithing of Sandford since we are told by John Collinson that this included Dinghurst and Nye.⁷⁶ However, this Sandford land lay next to Ralph’s 5½-hide holding at Churchill and Stock in Banwell parish (though detached from the main part of the parish) and very close to his lands at Puxton and Rolstone, so he would have had a large cohesive holding between Sandford and Churchill of at least 6¾ hides, a substantial area of land. This estate would have extended from the foot of the northern slopes of the Mendip carboniferous escarpment northwards towards Congresbury, with extensive levels and moors to the west. The main land block was a useful area of relatively level land based on the clay subsoil of Keuper marl (or Mercian mudstone) which produces a soil which is heavy to plough but productive when worked. We do not know if Ralph had a manorial centre in the area and he may well have spent most of his time in his larger holdings of Alhampton and Pilton near Glastonbury. But there must have been at least a home farm in either Sandford or Churchill for his bailiff or steward.

So although we do not know where the centre of Ralph's estate was without further research, any later medieval manorial complex, which is most likely to be at Churchill, was probably the successor to it.

Winterhead and Shipham

Winterhead, separately assessed in 1086, is a hamlet on the eastern border of the medieval parish of Winscombe; indeed the settlement is cut by the parish boundary with the neighbouring parish of Shipham to the east.⁷⁷ In previous research on the parish this seemed a puzzling aspect⁷⁸ but the *compotus* rolls make it clear that Shipham church was formerly dependent on Winscombe and so the parish boundary at Winterhead may be late and not of great significance. In many accounts from at least 1277 onwards a sum is recorded in each year 'from the pension of Shipham chapel' and by 1396–7 the four shillings pension from Shipham church is said to be for burial rights. This suggests that Shipham was a chapelry of Winscombe and that its inhabitants were paying to be allowed to bury their dead at Shipham rather than at Winscombe.⁷⁹ Such an arrangement is a classic sign of the subsidiary nature of one church to another⁸⁰ – in this case Shipham to Winscombe. It also hints that Shipham chapel/church was founded after the separation of the Winscombe land unit from the greater Banwell estate, which probably occurred in the 10th century.⁸¹ If this were not the case, we would expect Shipham to be a dependency of Banwell in the Middle Ages, and earlier to have been within its *parochia*, as the churches of Puxton and Churchill were until the 18th century.⁸² Both Winscombe and Shipham therefore would have been originally in the same land unit.

By 1086 we also need to consider the mill, listed at Winscombe and valued at 5 shillings, as a distinct settlement. This is one of a number of mill sites in the area listed in Domesday Book which are generally assumed to have been watermills.⁸³ The main manors around Winscombe also have mills, at Banwell (three), Congresbury (two), Wrington (three) and Cheddar (two) (Fig. 5). Only Loxton, of the smaller vills, had a mill recorded in Domesday Book but this may have been because its location was extremely advantageous. Any water mill there would have received all of the Lox Yeo River water, through the gap in the Mendips between Crook Peak and Loxton Hill, on its way to the River Axe to the south.

There are at least two known watermill sites in the medieval parish of Winscombe but it will be argued below that this Domesday mill was at Maxmill. It was probably built by Glastonbury Abbey between about 960 and 1086, though it is not separately named until much later, in 1305. The Winscombe mill probably received considerable investment as its value dramatically increased from 1086 to 1189.⁸⁴

Thus a number of the settlements in the parish were clearly in existence at the end of the 11th century – Winscombe, Winterhead, Woodborough, Sandford and probably Maxmill (Fig. 5). We do not know where Pipe's holding was and we cannot be certain of the existence of Sidcot, Oakridge, Hale, Nye and Dinghurst. Barton is recorded earlier in the 1068 charter for Compton Bishop.⁸⁵ But the holding at Sandford was not big enough to have included both Nye and Dinghurst as well in 1086. We know that the tithing of Sandford included these later on, encompassing that part of the parish north of the ridge of limestone hills. So Domesday Book does not help us to fully explain the settlement pattern by 1100.

LATER MEDIEVAL DOCUMENTARY SOURCES

The situation dramatically improves with later documentation in the 12th, 13th and 14th centuries and this enables us to see for the first time a number of other hamlets and farmsteads recorded over this period. The probability surely must be, however, as elsewhere in the country where detailed studies have been carried out, that these are merely the first documentary references to such settlements and that they in no way reflect when the places actually came into existence, which might have been a long time before. As Frank Thorn points out⁸⁶ all these place-names are 'Old English in origin, without any trace of Norman influence and therefore likely to pre-date the Conquest'. The main sources for Winscombe are the survey for Abbot Henry of Sully of 1189,⁸⁷ the Custumal of Winscombe of 1290⁸⁸ and the Lay Subsidy records for 1327.⁸⁹ Many of the smaller places in the parish are first recorded as surnames of people mentioned in these documents. Sometimes this is as officials, while at others it is as people assessed for tax. Often the name form is *atte* or *de-*such and such a place-name, and we can be reasonably confident that such a place existed by that date if the person is named after it. This approach

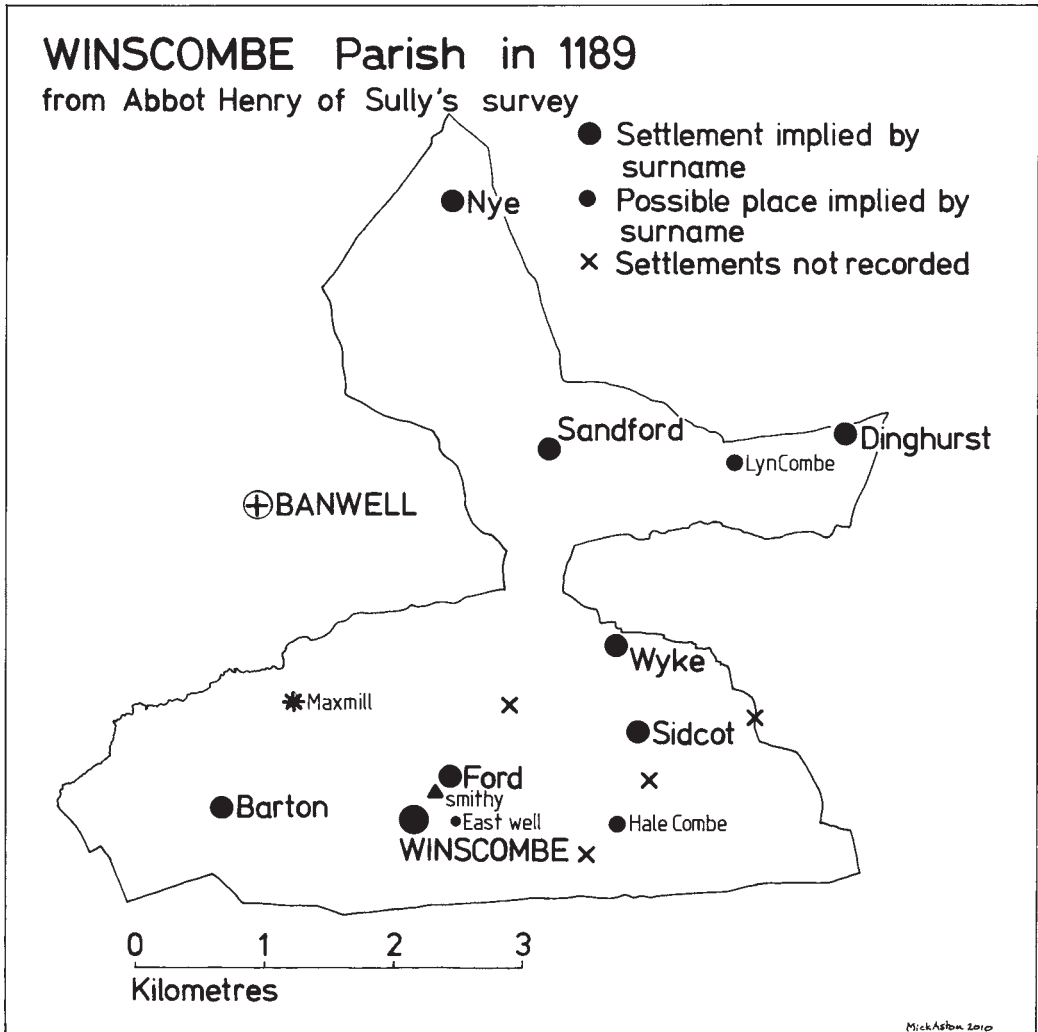


Fig. 7 Settlements in Winscombe parish in 1189 from Abbot Henry of Sully's survey (source Stacy 2001)

has proved very useful in a number of other studies in Somerset.⁹⁰ In the post-Black Death period the names appear to have become patronyms – often the place-name became merely a surname handed down as a family name and therefore unreliable as an indication of residence.⁹¹ Stephen Wyke for example in 1483, may have been a descendant of John and Edith Wyke who were living at Wyke in the later 14th century, but Stephen by then seems to have been living at Sandford.⁹²

The survey prepared for Henry of Sully in 1189 (Fig. 7)

The 1189 Survey for Abbot Henry of Sully of Glastonbury Abbey lists the holdings of the various types of tenants, virgaters, half-virgaters and cottagers (*cotsetle*), in the manor, after the jurors for the vill have been listed. The survey covered a number of the manors belonging to Glastonbury Abbey including Winscombe and the (almost)

adjacent manor of Wrington.⁹³ We can use the surnames of the people listed in the survey to demonstrate that certain hamlets and other features in the landscape were in existence by 1189 because they were used to distinguish people with the same Christian names in each manor. For example, three of the jurors for the entry for Winscombe appear to be from Sandford – Turbertus de Sanford, Willelmus de Sanford and Reginaldus de Sanford. This seems to be the first time that the hamlet of Sandford is separately named, distinguishing it from the main Winscombe manor. Other places in the parish implied by the surnames of the jurors are Barton (Eliot de Bertone), Dinghurst (Galfridus de Hinghurst) and Ford (Edwardus de Forde), Ford being the lower, northern end, of Winscombe village where a road crosses the Winscombe Brook which flows from East Well (Fig. 8A). Of the tenants listed, settlements are further indicated by this date at Barton (Henry de Bertone and Eluinus de Bertone), Sidcot (Edwinus de Sidekote) and at ‘Combe’ (Walter in Combe).⁹⁴ In this single document we get the first recorded mention of most of the hamlets in the parish – Sandford, Dinghurst, Sidcot, Ford and Wyke. These were unlikely to be new at that date (Figs 7 and 13).

We can certainly add to this list the existence of a settlement at Nye by the late-12th century. Neil Stacy discusses extracts from the *Book of Thomas atte Nye for 1198* attributed to a monk, Thomas, who had probably lived, or perhaps had been born ‘atte’ Nye. Two monks of Glastonbury Abbey, Thomas (atte Nye) and William of Shrivensham compiled a list of the military tenants of the abbey; Neil Stacy adds that ‘The difference in Thomas’s appellation cannot be resolved with certainty, but ‘Nye’ is a more likely toponym than ‘Clye’; and that ‘inhabitants of Winscombe called ‘de la Nye’ and ‘atte Nye’ are to be found in the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries’.⁹⁵ It is perhaps interesting to note that there is still a persistent local story in the parish that there was a monastery out on the clay island in the Levels at Nye (Fig. 3). No doubt Thomas, as a monk of Glastonbury Abbey, his surname, and this reference in the Glastonbury records have all contributed to this story. There is equally the possibility that there was, perhaps, an early hermitage out on the islands at Nye, an appendage to the minsters at Banwell and/or Congresbury in the early medieval period.⁹⁶ The same may be true for the origin of Puxton, another island site just to the north of Nye, but this possibility is not discussed by Stephen Rippon in his fine study of the Puxton landscape.⁹⁷

Of equal interest is the mention in 1189 at Winscombe of a smith (*faber*), Walter, holding a ½ virgate. This is the first of many later references to a smith (and smiths) in Winscombe, as there are in neighbouring villages; the smith was clearly an important and relatively wealthy tenant of the manor all through the Middle Ages⁹⁸ while in 1327 there was John Faber at Loxton, Walter Faber at Banwell, and John Faber at Cheddar.⁹⁹ It seems likely, from the later references, that the smithy was on the hill at Winscombe, near the church, and it ought to be possible to locate the site from archaeological fieldwork, as the activities of a smith enhance the magnetic anomalies at a smithy site.¹⁰⁰

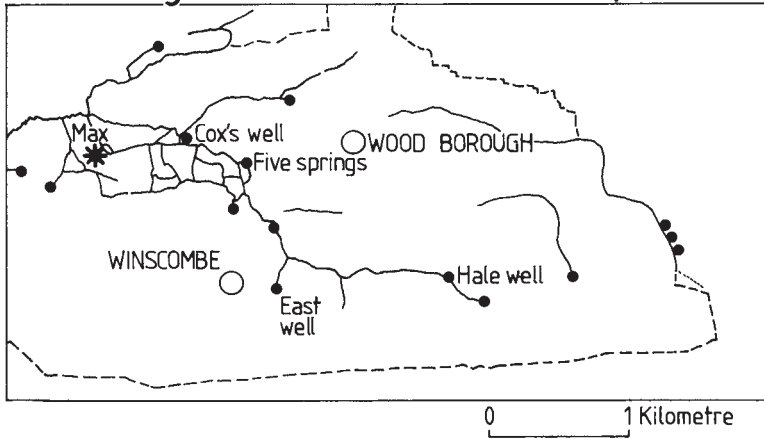
The medieval watermill at Max Mill Farm (Fig. 8A, B, and C)

There was also a mill at Winscombe in 1189, as we have *Reginaldus de molendino*, a juror. This Reginald the miller, we are informed in the survey, held a mill and a ½ virgate. Neil Stacy discusses the millers and mills on the Glastonbury Abbey lands in 1189 pointing out that the mill at Winscombe was one of three in the fee¹⁰¹ where the value increased between 100% and 114% between 1086 and 1189. This implies major investment in these mills, by Glastonbury Abbey officials, in the previous 100 years. Perhaps the mill was actually rebuilt at this time, perhaps on a new site, or even perhaps there was a change from a small horizontal mill to a mill with a vertical wheel needing complex gearing and an elaborate water leat system. These are all aspects of a site which can be examined by archaeological techniques.

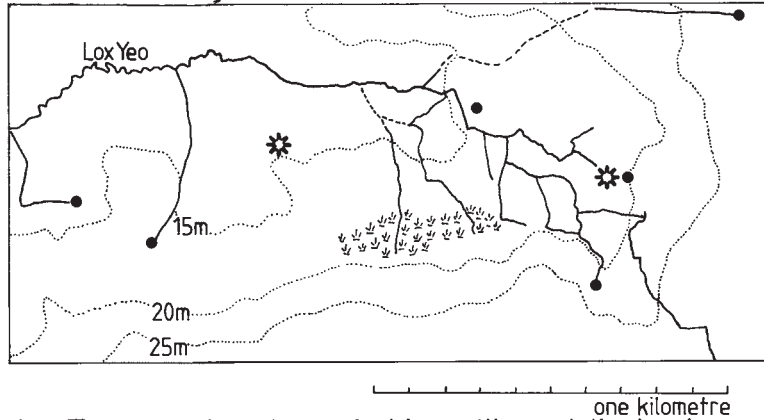
Is it possible to locate the Domesday and 1189 mill in the Winscombe landscape? There are three possible candidates for water mill sites in the parish.¹⁰² It has to be assumed that it was a water mill as windmills do not appear in England until the late 12th century¹⁰³ though it might have been an animal-powered mill. There was a windmill in Winscombe, as well, from at least the early 14th century – see below and Fig. 12.

The most obvious candidate for the Domesday mill is the site at Maxmill, where there is still a ruined mill building, millpond, water system and substantial supply leat with sluices. Most of the water from the springs in the whole of the southern half of the medieval parish of Winscombe eventually feeds into the leat supplying this mill (Fig. 8A). There was also a watermill at Woodborough, just to the west of the

A Drainage in the south of Winscombe parish



B The valley before Maxmill was built



C The construction of Maxmill and its leat

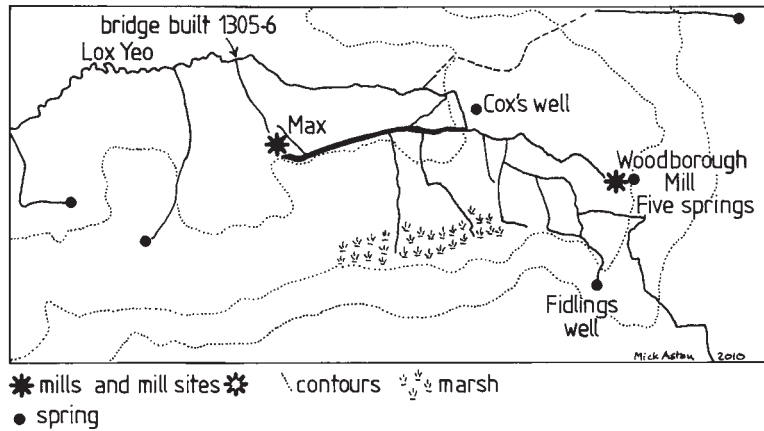


Fig. 8 Maxmill in Winscombe, Somerset: A drainage in the south of Winscombe parish; B the valley before the mill was built; C the construction of Maxmill

medieval settlement, beyond Nut Tree Farm. This was fed by water welling up from springs nearby which was captured in a small pond, and today there is also the ruin of a small stone mill building on the site. A third possibility is a site between Sandford Batch in Winscombe and Towerhead in Banwell on the Towerhead Brook, which here is a large and powerful stream; the site is shown on Fig. 3. In the bed of the stream and in the side banks are stone paving and walls and what is probably the site of a sluice gate. These are positioned at a 'nick' point and where a former road crosses the stream in a wide ford below hollow ways approaching from west and east. If there was a mill here, the diagnostic features of wheel pit, by-pass leat, or indeed mill stone fragments are missing or buried. Without archaeological excavation the site must remain only a possibility.¹⁰⁴

Maxmill is not called as such until it is first named in 1305–6 though it had probably already existed for a long time by then; indeed it may already have been over 300 years old. In that year a *compotus* roll records the expenditure of 2 shillings on making a stone bridge between Banwell and 'Makes'mille' – presumably over the Lox Yeo River on the parish boundary with Banwell where there is still a bridge today – so the mill is already called Max at that date. Thereafter the name is mentioned regularly in documents. A William de Makesmille is mentioned in a *compotus* roll of 1336–7 and he is probably the same William as the one listed in the 1327 Lay Subsidy, paying 6 pence, where he is called 'Makefunille' – clearly a misreading of –f- for –s- in the minims in 'Makesmille', the word would have been *Makesimille*.¹⁰⁵ Slightly earlier, in the Winscombe Custumal of 1290 (see below) another William (the same person or his father?) 'de Molendino' is mentioned holding a ½ virgate with a water mill by 'ancient tenure'.¹⁰⁶

The mill was however unlikely to have been newly built in 1305–6 just because this is the first time that it is mentioned. It is here suggested that a good case can be made out for Maxmill being the mill mentioned in Domesday Book in 1086. The hydraulic engineering involved in the siting of the mill and the earthworks associated with it are very impressive and on a large scale. It is likely that a major ecclesiastical corporation was behind its construction, and while either the Bishop or the Dean and Chapter of Wells might have been involved, the chronology suggests that this was a mill scheme undertaken by Glastonbury Abbey. They owned the

manor and mill in both 1086 and 1189 and it only goes to Wells after 1200.¹⁰⁷ The Abbey acquired the manor from the Anglo-Saxon aristocratic lady, Aelfswith, probably some time after 970 when she died as a widow and left it to them.¹⁰⁸ We can suggest its initial construction then perhaps sometime in the 100 years between 960 and 1060. The increase in value between 1086 and 1189 suggests major investment, though it could also indicate that this was when the mill and the earthworks were constructed on a new site here, or enlarged, if the Domesday mill was elsewhere.

The mill at Max is sited on a slightly projecting spur looking out over the Lox Yeo valley. The land drops away several metres to the west and north while there is level ground to the south. Any mill sited here would easily have a fall for the water of several metres to drive an overshot wheel. There are a large number of prolific springs in the area and all of the drainage for the southern half of Winscombe parish ends up in the Lox Yeo River, most of it passing through Max mill (Fig. 8A). Any scheme that tapped these streams would have had a near inexhaustible supply of water. It is possible to suggest the pre-mill drainage pattern of the valley (Fig. 8B) with a network of streams flowing some distance away from East Well and Hale Well, more locally from Five Springs, Cox's Well and Fiddings Well, as well as from elsewhere to the east. Much of the valley between these streams was, and still is, very poorly drained and marshy with clear earthwork indications of water-leats for managing the hay meadows – the undoubted later land use for the area once some of it had been drained. Part of this drainage work, was facilitated by the diversion of much of the water of the valley into a substantial leat to supply the mill. This was dug from at least near Cox's Well¹⁰⁹ westwards to Maxmill. It is over 500m in length, is at least 5m wide and seems to have been embanked on the valley-side to the north. The consummate skill of the engineers is shown by the fact that the leat runs parallel to the 15m contour on modern maps for much of its course with the water level being at about 14m (Fig. 8C). All of this implies considerable surveying knowledge and great care in construction by an institution that could afford to put in the capital investment and had the expertise and resources to carry it out.

James Bond has shown the importance of the role of Benedictine monasteries, like Glastonbury Abbey, in mill construction in the Middle Ages and this looks like another such scheme.¹¹⁰ Since Glastonbury held

the manor at Winscombe from around 970 to at least 1200, there is more than a 200-year period when Max mill and its waterworks system could have been built, developed and modified. Schemes as elaborate as this are not even out of place in the pre-Norman Conquest period, as is shown at Abingdon in Berkshire where Abbot Aethelwold seems to have built a major leat and a mill around 960.¹¹¹ It is therefore more than likely that this is an Anglo-Saxon mill scheme at Max, though later modified considerably, as is suggested by the increase in value between Domesday Book (1086) and Abbot Sully's survey of 1189. Pottery from the farm at Maxmill dates from the late Saxon period so this chronology is a distinct possibility.¹¹²

The Custumal of Winscombe dating to 1290 (Fig. 9)

The third document which gives us names of settlements in Winscombe is the Custumal of the manor dating from 1290, usefully 100 years after Sully (1189) and 200 years after Domesday (1086). This records the tenants on the manor, their holdings, their status – whether free tenants or by villeinage, virgaters, half-virgaters and so on – together with their obligations to the lord in the agricultural activities on the manor.¹¹³ As in 1189 individuals are distinguished by 'surnames' which relate to places in the area. Thus, we have a number of places, which we have seen mentioned and which have been discussed already, together with a few new places, but all of which can still be readily identified in the parish today. These include Robert de la Nye, Adam le Frye of Barthon, and William de Molendino (free tenants), Alice East of Barton (tenant at will), William de Thinghurst (virgater), Edith de Sydecote, Gilbert and Walter both de Okrygge, and Edith de la Hale (half virgaters), Robert and Walter both de la Drove, Dennis de la Wyke and Thomas atte Wyke (see above) (furlingers or quarter virgaters). There is also Henry de la Hale (half furlinger or cottar) and Geoffrey de Okrygge (cottar and Mondayman).¹¹⁴ A Thomas de Okrygge was also holding small areas of land. The year 1290 is thus the first time that the hamlets of Oakridge, Drove and Hale are recorded, though there is little more than a single farm at each place today. Robert Faber held half a furling and the site of a smithy in Winscombe. This is presumably the same holding that Walter held in 1189 (see above) and Robert (the same man or his son?) Fader (sic), paying 18 pence

in the Lay Subsidy, held in 1327.¹¹⁵ Mary Siraut has provided corrections for many of the mistakes in Dickinson's 1889 version of the 1327 Lay Subsidy.¹¹⁶

There are however a number of other names of tenants which have not been seen before and cannot easily be related to places in the parish today or to names that are recorded on later maps. Wyke has already been discussed above and Isak de la Combe, half virgater, may well have been living in whichever Combe had been lived in by Walter in 1189.¹¹⁷ Edith Knappe may have been named after the prominent hill to the north-west of Woodborough,¹¹⁸ and William de la Schete's name is probably preserved in Shute Shelve, the modern name for the watershed on the south side of the parish.¹¹⁹

Also, somewhere in the parish there may have been a prominent (prehistoric?) standing stone, or stones, since both at this date and in 1327 there are several people 'de' or 'atte' Stone – in 1290 Richard de la Stone and Cristina atte Stone and in 1327 Henry atte Stone. Broadstone names, and variants of it, are particularly associated with Sidcot in the surveys of 1572 and 1650. There are standing stones to the west of the parish at Yarberry in Banwell (Fig. 2), and to the east in Shipham, at the Wimblestone near Star (Fig. 4). Dolomitic conglomerate, part of the Keuper Triassic geological series, occurs widely in the area, even having outcrops in Woodborough, and there are many stiles made of slabs of this rock across the footpaths in the parish today. The 'Stone' could have been another large block of Dolomitic conglomerate situated in a place or as a landmark in one of the already recorded settlements.

The same could be true for some of the other recorded names that seem to indicate settlements, or locations within them, but for which no name now survives. One such is 'Plested' or variations on this name,¹²⁰ which seems to mean something like 'play place – a place for games'.¹²¹ Another is Wynch¹²² with John de la Wynch in 1290. In the 1330 list of *garciones* in the court roll (mentioned above), there are two people listed under Sandford 'atte Wynch' – William and John atte Wynch, father and son. Smith¹²³ suggests that 'wince' or 'winch' might occur in place-names in the sense of 'nook, angle, corner' and may refer to 'a sharp bend in a river or valley, a corner'. At Sandford this might relate to the Towerhead Brook or some feature of the Mendip hills hereabouts. John de Quercu may have been living near a prominent oak tree or at Oak (sic) ridge. We can perhaps get a vague idea of roughly in which areas of the parish these places were from one of the

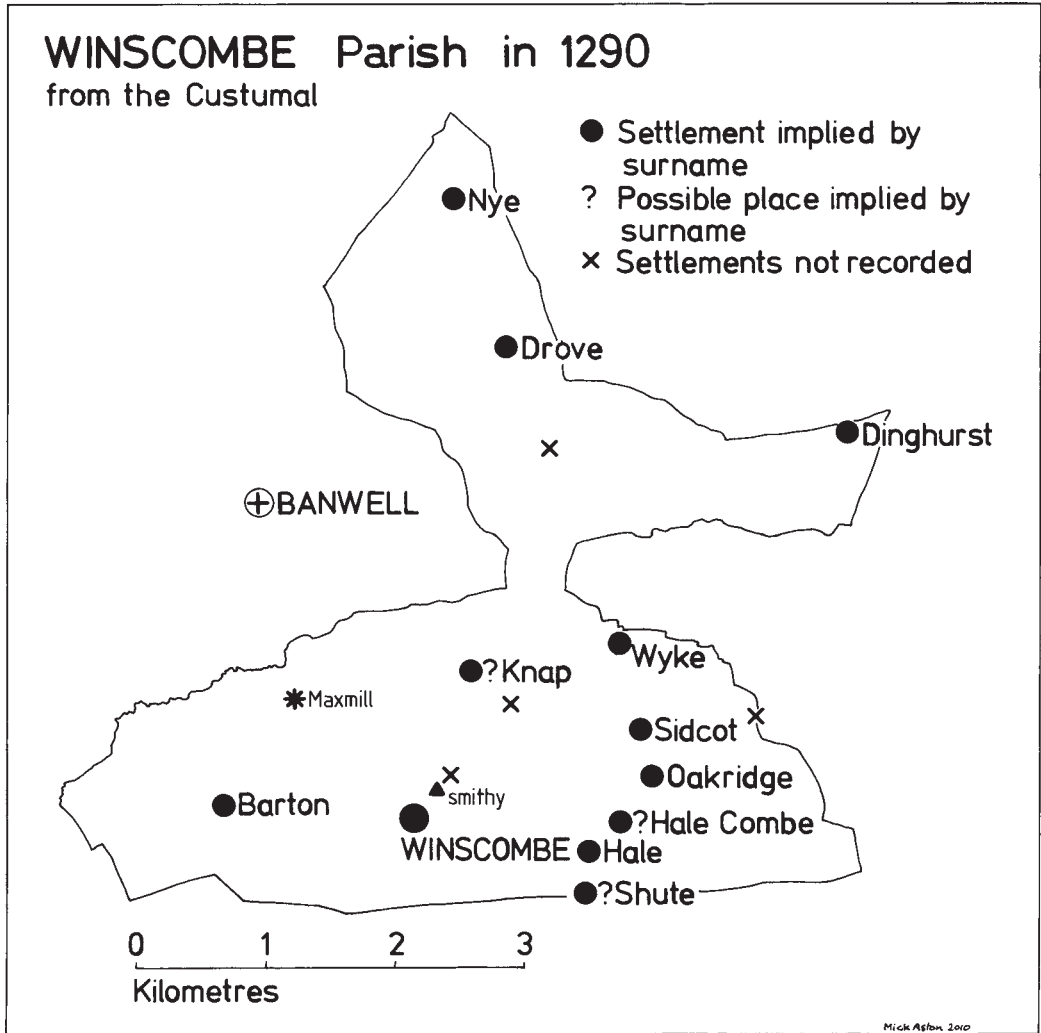


Fig. 9 Settlements in Winscombe parish in 1290 from the Custumal (source HMC 1907)

court rolls for the parish. In the court roll for April 1330 the clerk lists six places with the *garciones* in each as we have seen. It is noticeable that the names recorded are almost exclusive to each place in that part of the parish. For Sidcot, for example, Hale and Oakridge are given as surnames for people in Sidcot but such names are not recorded for any other place in the parish. Hale and Oakridge are near to Sidcot in the east of the parish so we might expect them to be associated with Sidcot rather than any other hamlet.¹²⁴ 'Pleysted' is only attached to two names and both were in Dinghurst, suggesting that the

'playing place' was somewhere in the Dinghurst part of the parish.¹²⁵

The impression given by these names is that the landscape is filling up with people and that they are living everywhere. It has become necessary to describe quite minor features as reference points to where people are living and to distinguish one individual from another. Some may relate to existing settlements – Alice and John Upehulle/Upehull and Alice Boueton (Bove, that is above, ton (Old English *tun*) probably meaning 'town/township') were presumably all living on higher areas of the parish,

perhaps at Oakridge.¹²⁶ Thomas Well presumably lived by one of the wells, John Bytheweye near a road and William de gardino near a garden or orchard, probably the lord's.

Winscombe, as the main settlement in the parish, is only indicated by the title of the document, by reference to the smithy (above) and to William Dollyng who held a cottage for a rent of 12 pence 'by the smithy at Wynescumbe'. Again, Woodborough and Winterhead are not indicated at all, presumably because they were in the hands of different lords still in 1290. There is also no mention of Sandford, possibly for the same reason. It is clear that under the Abbot of Glastonbury and then the

Bishop and Dean and Chapter of Bath and Wells, there were a variety of sub-tenants and divided holdings.¹²⁷

The Lay Subsidies of 1327 and 1334 (Fig. 10)

Few new settlements are named in the documentary material for the 14th and 15th centuries and the references we have merely reinforce our knowledge of the existence of the places plotted on the earlier maps. The documentary sources available to us, however, are very rich for Winscombe. They include national records like the *Nomina Villarum* of 1315–16 which, as its name suggests, is a list of the names

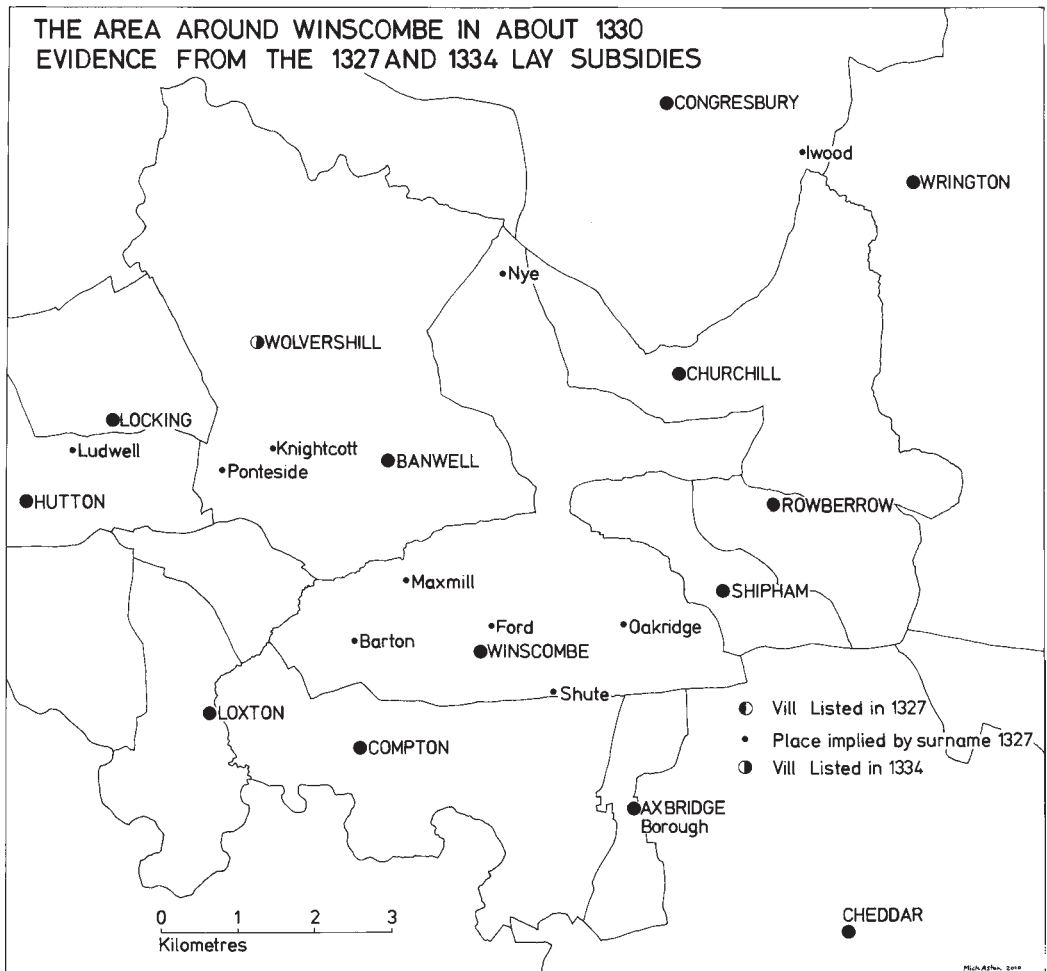


Fig. 10 The area around Winscombe in about 1330: evidence from the 1327 and 1334 Lay Subsidies (sources Dickinson 1889; Glasscock 1975) The parish boundaries are from 19th-century maps

of vills and their holders or tenants. Under Winterstoke Hundred this merely lists that Winscombe belongs to the Dean and Chapter of Wells.¹²⁸ A little later, in the Lay Subsidy of 1327, a tax collected at a rate of a 20th¹²⁹ of the value of people's moveable goods,¹³⁰ Winscombe is listed with 21 tenants paying a total of 33s 7 ½d. This sum compares unfavourably, in Winterstoke Hundred,¹³¹ with Congresbury, Banwell, Cheddar and even Churchill and Compton Bishop, all of which were paying more than that amount. The individual taxpayers of Winscombe are listed and some of the places indicated by their surnames have already been mentioned in the discussion above. They include Barton, Shute (Shelve), Oakridge, Maxmill and ?Nye (recorded as Robert atte Nyche or Nythe), as well as some which are less certain, which have been discussed above – 'Uppehulle', 'atte Stone' and 'Bythedonne' (presumably 'By the Down'?). Ford,¹³² the settlement below Winscombe where the road crosses the Winscombe Brook, is again indicated in 'William atte Forde'. And as we have seen the smith, Robert Fader is listed.

The Lay Subsidy for 1334 gives no details of the people or places, only the amount collected – £5 1s 7d for Winscombe. This is because a 'revolution' took place in the system of tax assessment at that date. As Maurice Beresford notes: 'The Crown found it expedient, and perhaps most efficient, to cease to concern itself with the wealth of individuals. Through its officers it negotiated with the local communities for a payment from each vill and borough which justly reflected the local capacity to pay. How the vill distributed the sum among its inhabitants was not the Crown's concern, and the rolls which found their way to the Exchequer ceased to carry any information other than the names of the townships and the sums due from each'.¹³³ This figure for Winscombe, however, was by far the largest amount collected in Winterstoke hundred except for Congresbury.¹³⁴ Because of the different way the subsidy was collected in 1327 and 1334, the amount contributed by the tenants in 1327 in relation to 1334 suggests that there was considerable tax avoidance by the inhabitants of Winscombe at the earlier date. There seems no other reason for such a discrepancy in the ranking of Winscombe (from 12th in 1327 to 2nd in 1334) in only a seven-year period. There were certainly no major changes in the parish such as might occur in the economy, for example, which might account for the discrepancy.

Little has survived of the Poll Taxes of 1377 and 1381 for Somerset, carried out after the Black Death

of 1348–9.¹³⁵ This is a pity as comparison between information in 1327/1334 and 1377/1381 might have enabled us to gauge the impact of the Black Death on the community in Winscombe, which from other sources seems to have been severe.¹³⁶

The *Compotus* – account rolls for Winscombe for the period 1276 to 1549 (Fig. 11)

The manor of Winscombe is fortunate in having a series of *compotus* or account rolls, compiled by the steward and reeve of the manor, surviving from the late 13th century onwards.¹³⁷ These overlap with the Custumal of 1290 and the Lay Subsidy of 1327, and as we have seen above in many examples they enable us to check many of the names. They run through to the 14th and 15th centuries, the momentous time of the Dissolution of the monasteries.¹³⁸ The accounts mention a lot of income and expenditure, as might be expected, and incidentally many tenants' 'surnames' and places around the parish. These include many of the settlements already documented as well as a few new, or at least previously unmentioned, ones. The latter include Pleysted (variously spelt Plested, Pleghestede/Pleystede, Pleisted/Pleistode (in 1276, 1290, 1305–6 and 1336–7) already discussed, Yordebury (1336–7) and Hokeworth (1336–7 where we are told of 'from the pasture of the road next to Hokeworth'). This name may well indicate another former enclosed farm site somewhere out in the parish, though it is not known where.¹³⁹

We are also fortunate that court rolls also survive in great quantity for the manor, though many are difficult to read and a lot are in very poor physical condition.¹⁴⁰

These documents give a great deal of information about buildings and structures on the estate enabling us, for example, to reconstruct much of the manorial *curia* or home farm which presumably stood in Winscombe village. They also indicate the existence of a windmill on the manor that stood for over 250 years from at least 1300 to 1540. It seems to have stood on a mound on the Lynch, a prominent ridge north of Winscombe village and south-west of the hamlet and green at Woodborough (Figs 11, 12 and 13).

Many of the hamlets already discussed are indicated in the account rolls, though it should be emphasised that it is family names that are being indicated not places, which are seldom mentioned. Before the Black Death (1348–9) (Fig. 11) from 1276 to 1343, there are references to Oakridge, Hale,

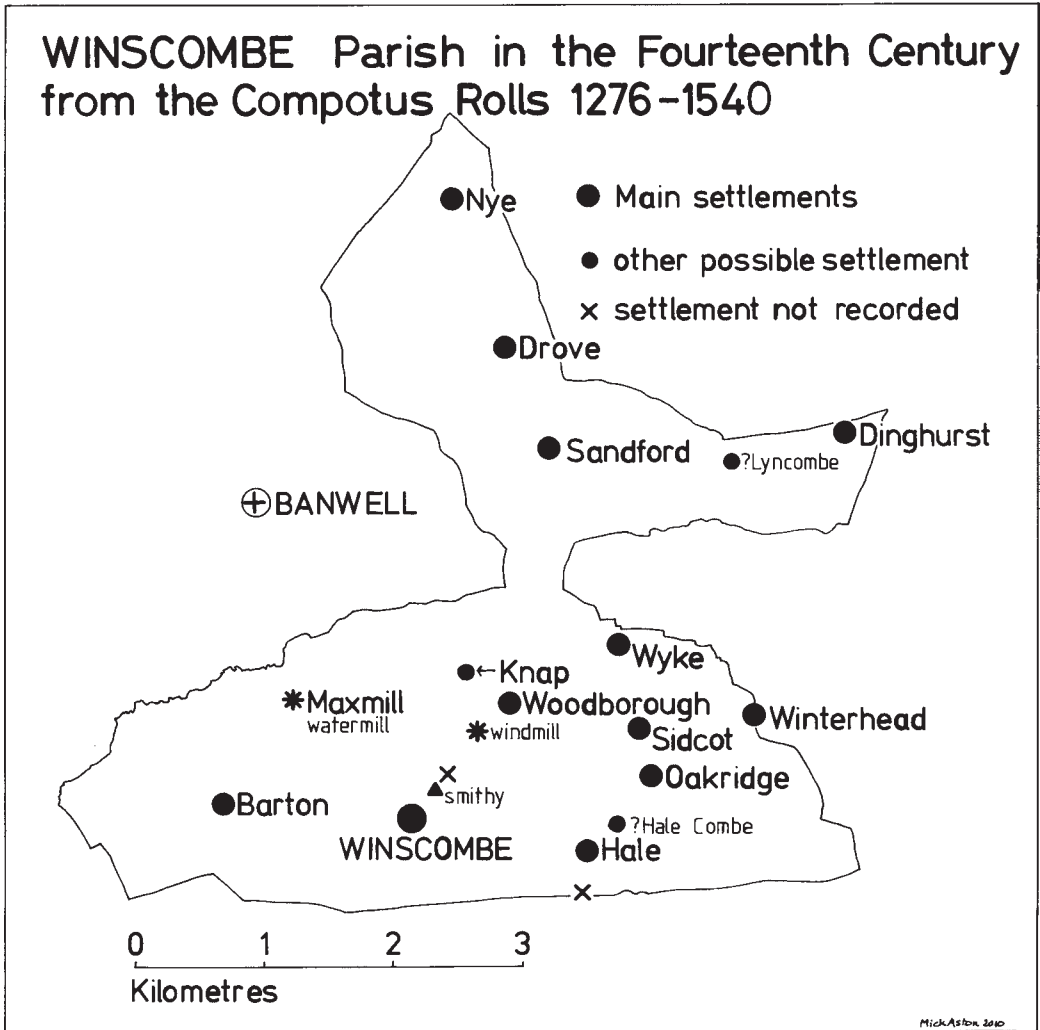


Fig. 11 Settlements in Winscombe parish in the 14th century (1276-1540) from the Compotus rolls of Winscombe (source Marin Ecclestone; the documents are in the Somerset County Record Office)

Wyke, (in the) Combe, Maxmill, and Drove. There are also names referring to other, unlocated, places – Pleystede, Rok, (atte) Crosse, Yordebury and Hokeworth. From the Black Death to the Dissolution (1539-40) most of the hamlets in the parish are indicated in people’s names in the account rolls. From 1371-2 onwards, these include ‘in the Combe’, ‘atte Drove’, ‘atte Hale’, ‘atte Mulle’ (mill), ‘de Oakridge’, ‘atte Wyke’ and so on. Less certain still are the imprecise names of topographical features or elements in the settlements; ‘atte Brigg’ (a bridge somewhere),¹⁴¹ ‘Boveton’ and ‘atte Stone’ (see

above). The fact that by this date all of these names may not directly relate to settlements anymore, that in fact they have come to be just surnames, is suggested by the reference in 1452-3 of a tenement ‘in Dinghurst, lately Thomas in the Combe’s’. At least one property, presumably a farm, is indicated at Knap, which is next to Woodborough, by references, in 1371-2, 1382-3 and 1396-7, to John Sprynge holding a tenement there. There are references, unusually, to Woodborough in 1396, and to Winterhead, in John Wintrad’s surname, in 1382-3.

In the later medieval period, however, the clerks who compile the records begin to lump together various hamlets against particular income and expenditure. They may, of course, have always done this in their minds without writing it down, but their records now seem to reflect groupings, and most likely the tithings in the parish as a means of accounting. The first record, the court roll of 1410–11, specifically mentions ‘the Winscombe and Sandford tithings’, suggesting a recognized division in the parish, north and south of the northern limestone hills of Sandford and Lyncombe Hills. In 1396–7 for example Sandford, Dinghurst and Nye are mentioned together, reflecting the tithing, when £9 6s 8d is recorded from the tithes of grain there. In the same document, under ‘harvest costs’, Winscombe, Barton, Sidcot and Woodborough (a rare mention) are listed together under costs for the harvest of grain, again perhaps suggesting that the southern half of the parish was thought of as another single tithing. In 1416–17 under ‘sale of grain’, tithes of Dinghurst, Wyntright (Winterhead), Sidcot and Nye are listed together, while under ‘harvest costs’ there are expenses of ‘various men collecting tithes for four weeks in autumn in Sandford, Winscombe, Barton, Woodborough, Oldfield, Sidcot and Hale’. These entries account for all of the main settlements discussed above. Oldfield is not a settlement but an area of arable which is often separately mentioned in these accounts, it seems to have been between Winscombe and Barton.¹⁴² The list is repeated almost verbatim in the accounts for 1452–3 and 1539–40. For 1452–3 under ‘Sale of the Tithe Grain’ are listed payments from the ‘tithes of grain in Sandford, Nye, Dinghurst, Winterhead, Sidcot, Barton, Winscombe, Woodborough, Oldfield and Hale’. In 1539–40, under ‘assize rents’, are listed payments from the customary tenants of Barton, Winscombe, Nye, Dinghurst, Sandford, Woodborough and Sidcot. In the later medieval period it is no longer necessary for us to try to gauge the number of settlements in the parish from surnames, and in any case the attribution and formation of surnames is changing by this time.¹⁴³ It is clear that the medieval clerks have a mental map of the parish and were referring directly to places out in their local landscape.

The manorial curia at Winscombe 1305–1540

The manorial *curia*, or hall, at the centre of the home farm of the lord, and the farm itself, is extremely well documented in the account rolls. At this stage

of research in the parish, we probably have to assume that this main farm complex was in Winscombe itself, though there is only one mention of the ‘Winscombe *curia*’ as such, in the 1452–3 accounts. However, the number of buildings documented and the amount of room they would require, might indicate that the *curia* was perhaps elsewhere in the later Middle Ages, on a flatter site somewhere, rather than on the knoll where Winscombe is situated. Nevertheless, as Maria Forbes points out to me, there is a detailed survey of the Parsonage or Rectory in 1650,¹⁴⁴ the successor of which, Winscombe Court, stands east of the parish church. In 1650 this stood in a 3-acre enclosure with barns, dovecote, brewhouse, dairy house, stables and three gardens so it seems certain that the *curia* was indeed on the hill by the church at that date.

The main manorial house can easily be imagined from various accounts. It had a hall, camera (private room) and chapel (1336–7), while in 1371–2 a great chamber, another chamber, garderobe and buttery are mentioned and, in 1539–40, ‘the lord’s chambers, hall, kitchen and stable’. There was also a brewery and bakehouse with its oven (1416–17), and it was all surrounded by the ‘lord’s garden’, a ‘fruit garden’ (1416–17) and an apple garden (1382–3). A stone wall separated the *curia* from the road and this was being rebuilt in 1416–17¹⁴⁵ using recycled stone from an old granary, when there is expenditure for clearing the foundations and building the wall ‘four raps’ or 80 feet long, probably the Somerset rope of 20 feet.¹⁴⁶ In 1371–2 ‘the gate of the *curia*’ is mentioned when repairs are being carried out there.

Within the *curia* enclosure, large numbers of farm buildings are recorded in the documents. Perhaps most impressive would have been the ‘demesne barn’, but there was also at the same date (1276) an ‘east barn’, so the former was probably the ‘west barn’ of 1277. A ‘north barn’ is also listed in 1336–7. Later, two of these barns, or conceivably two others, are called the ‘demesne barn’ and the ‘tithe barn’ (1336–7) and a ‘parson’s barn’ is also recorded in 1416 and 1539–40. In 1396–7 one of these barns was repaired, the records suggesting that it was the two bays at the eastern end of the barn which needed replacing with new timber trusses, wooden laths and stone tiles.¹⁴⁷

A dovecote is also recorded from at least 1277 to 1417, though it was often leased out for occasional years.¹⁴⁸ It stood in its own walled yard, the gate of which was repaired in 1396, and the pasture of this yard was sometimes let as in 1416–17 and 1452–

3.¹⁴⁹ There were other specialised buildings for different animals. We hear of an oxhouse (1277, with a reed roof in 1371–2), a cowhouse (from 1277), a house for affers¹⁵⁰ (1342–3), a sheephouse – *bercaria* (from 1277), a goathouse (from 1277), a pighthouse (from 1336), and geese and hen houses (1342–3). As we have seen there was at least one stable as well. A dairy is frequently mentioned and there must have been a cheese store judging by the large quantities of cheese made on the manor each summer.¹⁵¹ Other buildings listed include a larder, a strawhouse, a cider press, and a granary, but there must also have been beehives (wax and honey are sold in 1336–7, though possibly this came from wild bees), a malthouse and a shed to make or store the carts and wagons mentioned in 1336–7.

Since Winterhead and Woodborough were usually held separately from the main manor at Winscombe, usually by sub-tenants either of the Abbot of Glastonbury or later the Dean and Chapter of Wells, it is likely that there were other (sub) manorial centres at these places as well as at Winscombe. The same is true for Sandford in the north of the parish. In the Sandford Survey of 1540¹⁵² a William Frye held the capital messuage there which was described as ‘wholly in ruin and decay’. It is not known where this stood in Sandford though it may have been next to the chapel which is documented at about the same time (see below).

The manorial windmill in Winscombe (Fig. 12)

From 1305 to 1540 the account rolls record each year, under Assize rents, a sum of money ‘from villein homage for their suit owed for the windmill’ to be paid at Hock Day/Tide (the second Monday and Tuesday after Easter). The amount is 13 shillings and 4 pence (a mark) and this figure does not vary over the 150-year period from 1305–6 through to 1452–3; in 1540 only 9s 7½d is being paid ‘from the homage’s villeins for remitting their suit owed to the windmill at Hock Day’. We do not know when this windmill was first built; no doubt it was a timber structure which could be dismantled and moved if necessary (Fig. 12). Windmills are first developed in England in the 12th century and were widely adopted by Glastonbury Abbey on its Levels manors where a flow of water to drive a watermill was scarce.¹⁵³ Timber post-mills seem to have been common in Somerset; two are depicted on bench ends in the churches at Bishop’s Lydeard and North Cadbury.¹⁵⁴ It is just about possible that the windmill

in Winscombe was first built by Glastonbury Abbey. However for this to be the case it would have had to be built before the division of the estates in the early 13th century and this seems too early.¹⁵⁵ The windmill is not mentioned in the first account roll of 1276–7 but by 1336–7 2 pence is listed under the produce of the manor ‘from a piece of land where the windmill stands’. If we are right about the site, it may have been within the Woodborough part of the estate that was an alienated part of the manor. The available information indicates that the mill was erected sometime around 1300 and so it would have been a project of the Dean and Chapter of Wells.

The 1650 Parliamentary Survey of Winscombe¹⁵⁶ mentions a copyhold of 1633 whereby William, Mary and Isobel Holbin held ‘one cottage with a curtilage commonly called Millmott upon Lynch where the Lords Wyndmill sometime stood containing by estimation one rood of land’. This indicates that the windmill was on the Lynch, a prominent ridge of Dolomitic conglomerate between Winscombe village and the green at Woodborough, which is still a very windy place in the parish, and that it had a mound – the mott or moot – to support the (wooden) mill building and raise it up into the wind. A further lease of 1736, but referring back to 1729, records a ‘cottage with curtilage lately built upon a certain piece of empty ground called millmoot – length 28 rods from east to west and breadth on the east side of millmoot 3 rods, and width in the middle 3 rods and breadth at the west end 1 rod’. The dimensions of this piece of land can be reconstructed on paper (Fig. 12) on the basis of one rod being 5½ yards and this can then be related to the 1792 William White map, the Tithe map of 1840 and the modern maps. The land was on the north side of the Lynch running for much of its length on the flat hill top; the mill moot was presumably somewhere in the middle near modern house numbers 48 and 50. These semi-detached houses built in 1870 stand prominently 1m or more above the rest of the houses in the Lynch possibly because they stand on the flattened remains of the mill’s earthen mound.

From what has been documented here it looks as if the mill is first built around 1300 and remained in use into the 16th century, a period of 250 years. It has gone, but is still remembered as a place in 1650 and 1730 and the mound was probably still there then. The windmill must have disappeared in the century between about 1540 and 1650; the mill mound on which it stood could have remained until more recent times. But why did the people of

THE SITE OF THE MEDIEVAL WINDMILL

1736 (1729) Lease

THE LYNCH WINSCOMBE

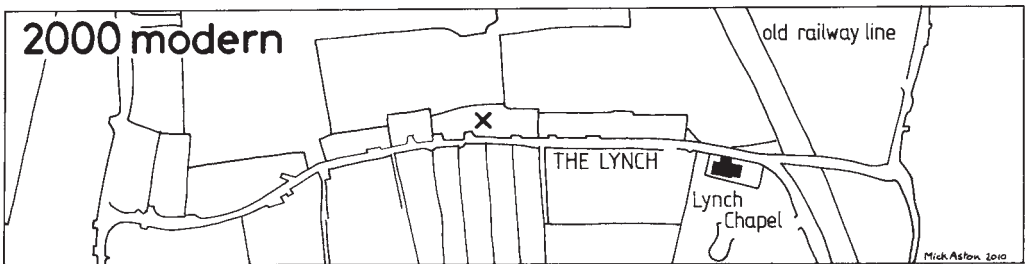
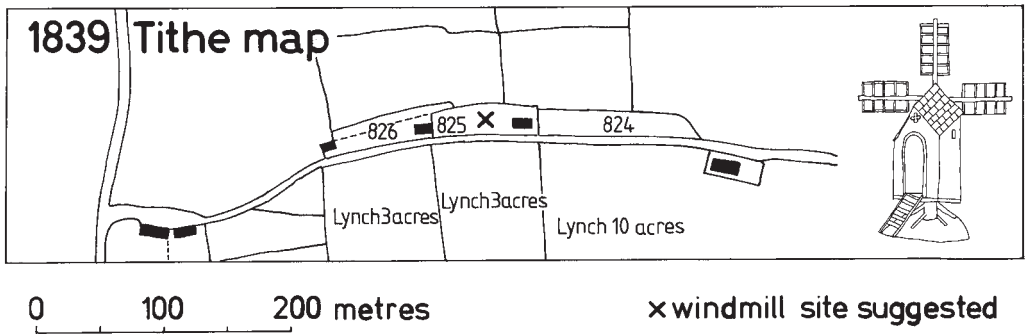
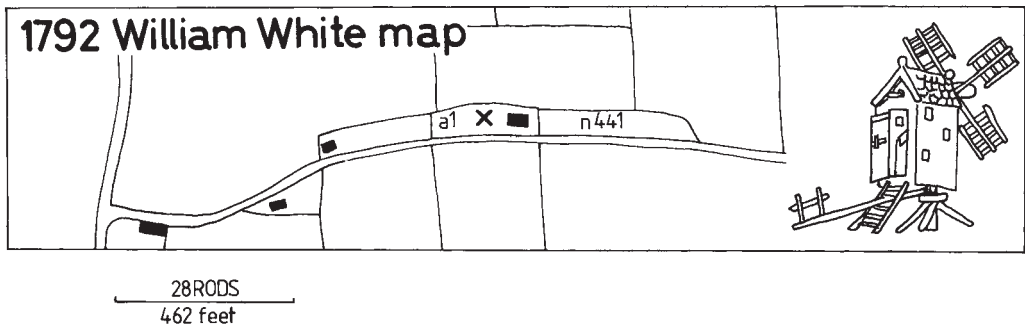
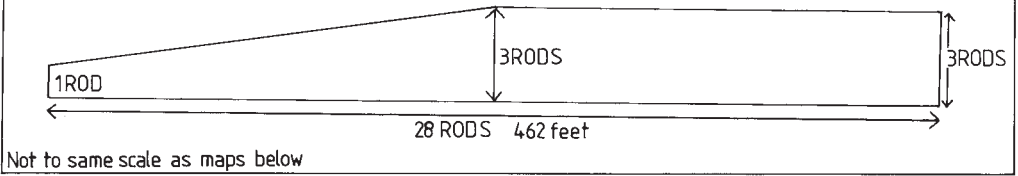


Fig. 12 The site of the medieval windmill, the Lynch, Winscombe: inset are drawings of medieval windmills, redrawn from medieval manuscripts, of the type that was probably built in Winscombe

Winscombe need a windmill when they had a big watermill with a very elaborate water system and perfectly adequate water supply in the valley below and probably, by the later Middle Ages, another watermill at Woodborough? The answer may lie in the various subdivisions and lesser lords in the manor in the later Middle Ages. It is possible that the windmill lay in either Woodborough or Ford, sub 'manors' of the main Winscombe manor, though why the mill should be recorded in the Winscombe account rolls then seems odd. Otherwise perhaps it was built to supplement the role of the water mills, or at a time when the water mill was being rebuilt, or was damaged or was otherwise out of action. Or, more prosaically, perhaps it was built as a speculative venture to make money for the Dean and Chapter in an area of the county which may have been short of milling capacity by the later Middle Ages.¹⁵⁷ The water mills of the area in 1086 are shown on Fig. 5.

CHURCH AND CHAPELS (Fig. 13)

The parish church was at Winscombe and there were chapels and oratories at the manorial *curia* in Winscombe, in Sandford, at Woodborough and possibly also at Winterhead elsewhere in the parish. There was also a 14th-century hermitage, though its site is not known at present.

It is not known when the parish church was first constructed.¹⁵⁸ It is possible that, once the estate had been granted to Aelfswith, well before 975, a local private or 'proprietary' church was founded for the use of her tenants. Alternatively, it is extremely likely that once the estate had come to Glastonbury Abbey on the death of Aelfswith sometime after 970, the abbot and monks would have founded a church on their estate for its inhabitants. At any event a foundation date sometime in the late-10th century seems most appropriate, as is suggested for many churches across the country.¹⁵⁹ Why the church was founded in such an odd location, half way up the north side of the Mendip escarpment, is a mystery. It is not central to the area it was to serve, it was not convenient to get to from much of the parish, and there was little room to lay out the church and its graveyard. A great flat platform had to be cut into the hillside to provide the flat land on which to build the church and there is only limited space for the burials, presumably cut into rock, to east, west and north of the church. Perhaps there was a pre-church religious focus in the vicinity, such as at East Well,

an impressive permanent spring nearby to the east (Figs 6 and 7).¹⁶⁰ Winscombe parish is likely, originally, to have been part of a larger estate centred on Banwell before the late-10th century and so the minster there would have been the pastoral centre for the inhabitants of the Winscombe area. That the church at Winscombe was inconvenient to the inhabitants elsewhere in the medieval parish is shown by the separate arrangements made for Shipham (see above) and for Sandford where there was a medieval chapel.

The site of this chapel at Sandford does not appear to be known.¹⁶¹ On the tithe map only a cottage is shown on the present church site in the middle of Sandford. It is recorded in 1548, in a survey of chantries and other religious sites prior to their dissolution under Edward VI. A 'fraternity' of St Mary with a priest, based at Winscombe church¹⁶² may have drawn an income of 12 pence a year from it. Then there is itemised 'the rent of the said chapel (of Sandford within the parish of Winscombe there) with a certain parcel of land containing by estimation one rood wherein the same chapel is situated'. The yearly rent was 12 pence (or 1 shilling) and it had had a chalice weighing 9 ounces and ornaments valued at 2s 10d.¹⁶³ In 1548 the chapel and its land were leased out and there is a very useful description of the building. 'The chapel, with a certain parcel of land, by estimation a rood, on which it is situated. There are no more lands, tenements or hereditaments belonging to the chapel in Winscombe. The chapel possesses neither lead nor bells but is made and covered with stone, timber and tiles and is 'much defaced and ruinous having two bells which the presentors affirm to be stolen'.¹⁶⁴ Earlier references to the chapel seem scarce, though in the *garciones* listed in the court roll for 1330, under Sandford, the name of Henry atte Churche (described as infirm) may refer to him living near the chapel.

It should be possible to find the site of this chapel using archaeological techniques. There is no obvious enclosure measuring one rood in size along the roads in Sandford and in any case it could have been developed and built over since 1548. But the site of a stone building with a tile roof somewhere in the present hamlet should be identifiable. Its foundation date and original function are not clear. It may have been a private chapel for a manor house complex in Sandford, the site of which is not known, as we have seen. Alternatively it may have served as a chapel-of-ease for the local inhabitants of the tithing in the northern half of the parish, saving them the long journey south, to the parish church several miles

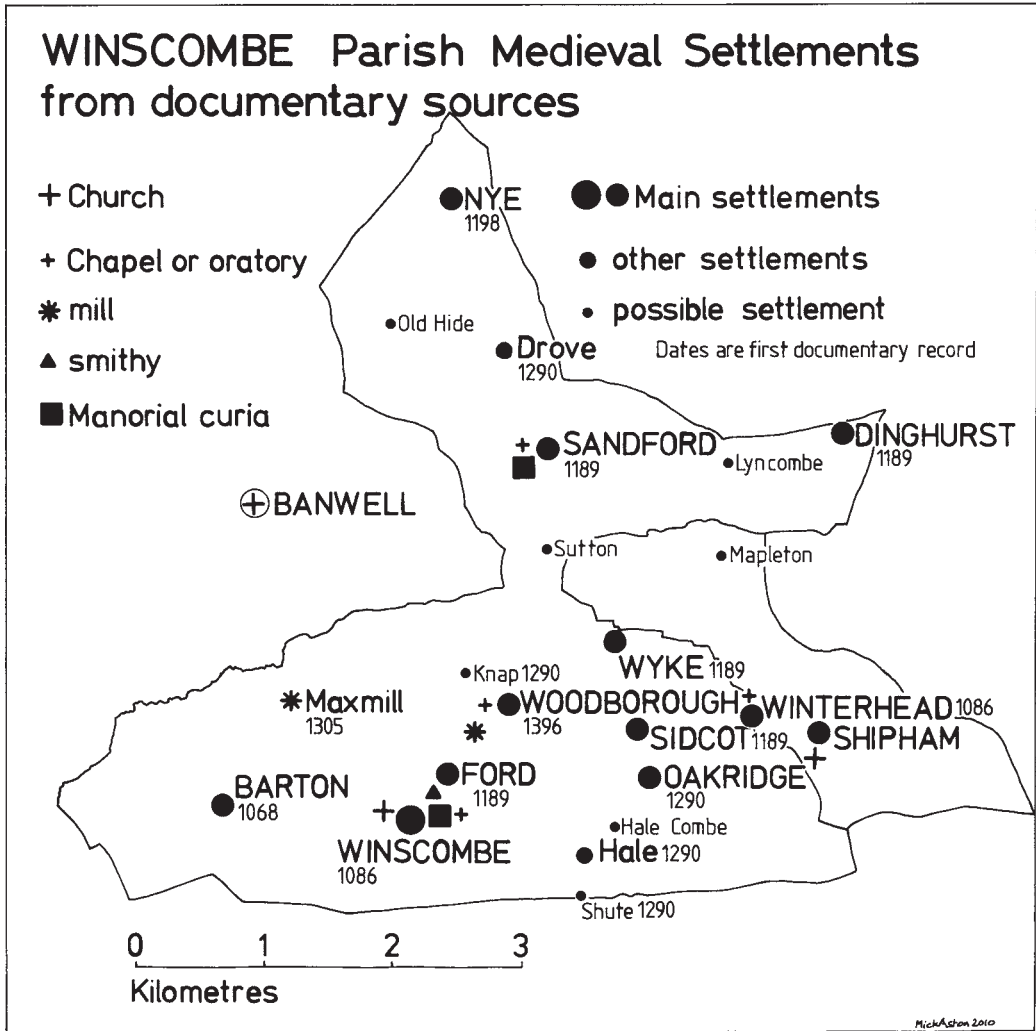


Fig. 13 Medieval settlements in Winscombe parish with the dates of their first recording in medieval documentary sources. Hokeworth, Pleysted, Stone, and Wynch are not shown; Combe is allocated to Hale Combe

away; or it may have served as both. Neither is the date of its foundation known, though it is unlikely to have been new in the 16th century. Often chapels-of-ease were set up in the 12th and 13th centuries and this may be the case here, once Sandford began to develop as a settlement. However, if its origin was earlier, say in the 10th century, it may originally have had burials in the yard around it.¹⁶⁵ This is not likely however, with firstly Banwell as the minster and then Winscombe as the parish church being the

appropriate places for Sandford's dead to be buried. Dating any burials excavated at the site, once it has been located, will help our understanding of the chapel's origin and original function.

It is not certain how many other chapels there were in the parish. In the 14th century there are references to William and then John de Barton having licence from the Bishop of Bath and Wells to use a chapel or oratory in Woodborough and (or?) Winterhead. These references in the Register of Bishop Ralph of

Shrewsbury make it clear however that an oratory, or private room in a manor house used for worship, was being referred to rather than a separate chapel building.¹⁶⁶ At the *curia* in Winscombe there was certainly a chapel in the 14th century. It is referred to in the account rolls in 1336–7, when its roof is being re-tiled, and 1342–3 when part of its wall was repaired.¹⁶⁷

There was also a late medieval hermitage in the parish. In 1331 Bishop Ralph of Bath and Wells, as was the custom, licensed Philip Schipham to be a hermit and construct a hermitage somewhere in Winscombe at a place called ‘St Romanus’. In the document the Bishop asked local people to help and support the hermit.¹⁶⁸ It is not known at present where ‘St Romanus’ was situated, though there are plenty of hidden valleys, hill tops and islands out in the Levels that would have provided suitable sites for a hermitage; equally, the hermitage could have been in the churchyard or attached to the church. The saint indicated, if it is St Rumon or Ronan, is associated in the Middle Ages with Cornwall,¹⁶⁹ Tavistock in Devon¹⁷⁰ and places in Brittany and northern France. If it is St Romanus, there are associations with Rouen in Normandy which the bishops of Wells would have been familiar with.¹⁷¹ No more is heard of the hermit or his hermitage after the middle of the 14th century and there are no later place or field names that might indicate a possible site.

DISCUSSION

From this straightforward examination of the names of tenants in the parish of Winscombe, we can see something of the increased recording of the various farms and hamlets in the parish. It is always possible that, to some extent, the date when a place is first recorded may reflect when the settlement was founded; this has certainly been an assumption in the past in settlement studies. More realistically, however, it can be observed that the larger and more important places are mentioned in documents before the smaller and less significant farms and hamlets. The process of recording places therefore is more a reflection of the increasing bureaucracy and record keeping as time goes on than the continual creation of new settlements. In fact it is likely that many, if not most of the settlements in Winscombe were in existence and already named by the later Anglo-Saxon period, though most remained to be mentioned for the first time in later documents, sometimes

hundreds of years later.¹⁷² Many probably had their origins in late-Roman settlements, or, because we are in Somerset, sometime in the post-Roman period – ‘Late Antiquity’ – the early medieval period from 400 to 700AD.¹⁷³ It is not until the mid to late 7th century, some 300 years after the ‘official’ end of the Roman period in 410AD, that aspects of Anglo-Saxon culture can be seen in the county.

There is nevertheless a sequence of recording of places in Winscombe (Fig. 13) which may have some significance for the landscape history of the parish. Winscombe itself is recorded for the first time in the mid 10th century, though the reference is to the land unit rather than the village. Barton follows in the mid 11th century as a name on the boundary of the Banwell estate in 1068. This probably reflects its importance as the ‘barley farm’ on the early estate of Banwell – it was certainly in the best part of the parish for arable land in the Middle Ages. It was, however, purely fortuitous that it was alluded to as a boundary feature in 1068. If Barton was the barley farm of the early estate, it is possible that some of the other place-names in the area reflect further aspects of the organization of the early medieval estate as well. Shipham was probably the ‘sheep’ farm of the estate, appropriately given its position up on the edge of the Mendip plateau, and Bourton, in Compton Bishop, may have had some obligation to supply building materials for buildings on the estate.¹⁷⁴ In Domesday Book, Winscombe and Winterhead are mentioned in 1086, the latter as a separate estate¹⁷⁵ which it remained for hundreds of years rarely being included in any of the material relating to Winscombe.¹⁷⁶ It is not until the end of the 12th century that there is any reference to any of the hamlets in the parish and this reflects the increasing records from that date. As with elsewhere in England, the 12th century, between 1086 and the early 1200s is a ‘black hole’ in terms of medieval documentation. In 1189, Sandford, Dinghurst, Sidcot and Ford are first recorded as named places, as is the recently located site of *Wyke* (Fig. 4). People were also living in one of the *Combe* sites in the parish, either Hale Combe or Lyncombe or elsewhere. Round about the same time Nye is first recorded (in 1198), and, as has been argued above, we can have confidence that Maxmill was in existence by at least 1189. It is perhaps surprising that Oakridge is not documented before 1290 but the most significant omission is Woodborough. This must have been in a different, separate ownership, but it is strange that no one was even named with reference to it before that date.¹⁷⁷

The 50 years or so before the outbreak of the Black Death in 1348–9 sees an abundance of references to settlements in the parish, not only of the main hamlets but of the smaller farms as well (Fig. 11). From the 1290 Custumal to the Lay Subsidy of 1327 there are references to *Drove*, a roadside settlement north of Sandford on the droveway (sic) out to the Levels of Sandford Moor. This late date for the first reference to *Drove*, may well reflect a late medieval origin for this settlement. It is situated on a flat clay plateau between Sandford and the former sites at *Old Hide* (to which it is very close) and *Blackland* (Fig. 3). Indeed in some respects the development of *Drove* perhaps represents people from Sandford returning to the more central position of their arable land, surrounded by its abundant Levels pasture in the northern part of the parish. *Drove* continues to be indicated as a settlement in the late 14th and 15th centuries, well after other hamlets cease to be recorded. To some extent the same is true of *Knap*, a tenement named after the hill near Woodborough, Oakridge up on the hill above Sidcot and possibly the farm site at Hale. As well as *Combe*, Shute (Shelve) seems to have had a settlement and *Wyke* is still in existence, though it ceases to be recorded before the end of the Middle Ages. References to *Wynch*, *Hokeworth* and *Pleysted* may indicate other minor medieval settlements, probably farm sites, which disappeared from the Winscombe landscape by the end of the Middle Ages.

The abundance of minor names, some of which may be just reference points within the main settlements, suggests widespread occupation of the countryside. This implies a less than nucleated settlement pattern with, instead of one or more strongly nucleated villages and hamlets, much more of a scatter of cottages and small farms within a largely enclosed and pastoral landscape. Between 15 and 20 separate settlements can be seen to have existed in the parish in the later medieval period, an extraordinary number. Several of these are substantial hamlets, Barton, Sidcot, Woodborough and Sandford, but many, perhaps the majority, consisted of no more than one or two farmsteads, such as Nye, *Wyke*, Oakridge and Hale. The impression created by this examination of medieval settlement in the parish is of places like Hanbury or Pendock in Worcestershire studied by Christopher Dyer¹⁷⁸ or the parishes studied by Victor Skipp on the east side of Birmingham.¹⁷⁹ In these places, in a predominantly wood-pasture landscape, there was an abundance of commons, greens, wayside wastes

and enclosed woodland and pasture. This all existed alongside scattered farms, often moated,¹⁸⁰ small hamlets and isolated cottages. As such, we might expect to find, almost anywhere in Winscombe parish, archaeological evidence of medieval settlement in the form of isolated buildings and unexpected collections of medieval pottery turning up in places well away from known settlement sites.

CONCLUSION

This exercise in settlement location and chronology provides a framework and an agenda for the archaeological and topographical investigation of the origins and development of a north Somerset parish with a dispersed settlement pattern. Topographical analysis of the plans of the individual settlements, using the detailed early map evidence, may suggest further varying origins for the different hamlets. These might range from deliberately planned ‘villages’¹⁸¹ to rather more random accretions of farms and cottages around greens and commons.¹⁸² This plan-analysis approach to villages has been most extensively employed by Brian Roberts and Christopher Taylor¹⁸³ though only a few settlements in Somerset have also been studied in this way.¹⁸⁴ Acquisition of archaeological material, principally pottery, should provide some chronology for such developments. Collections of material from garden soil and vegetable patches, as well as from 1m square test pits, is likely to be the most fruitful sampling strategy. This approach was adopted in the study of the village of Shapwick¹⁸⁵ and has since been used extensively elsewhere to clarify the chronology within village plans.¹⁸⁶ A project in the parish of Winscombe designed to investigate this will be undertaken in the next five years or so.¹⁸⁷

Acknowledgements

My debt to other scholars will be clear from the endnotes. Maria Forbes, working with Frances Neale, provided a lot of the key post-medieval documentation for the parish and has kindly made her research available to me. Martin Ecclestone transcribed and translated large quantities of medieval account and court rolls on which much of the discussion here is based and I am most grateful to him. Frank and Caroline Thorn have continued to patiently answer my odd questions about medieval documentation which I, as a landscape archaeologist,

have put to them, and I am pleased to acknowledge their advice on Domesday matters for which they are among the country's experts. They and Teresa Hall, Maria Forbes, Martin Ecclestone and Michael Costen kindly read the text and provided constructive helpful comments which have improved the text immeasurably. As ever, Teresa Hall provided moral support and encouragement and the editor Peter Ellis has been both patient and helpful. I am particularly grateful to Amy Fudge for the drawing of Ralph Crooked Hands.

ENDNOTES

¹ These are genuine names of peasants recorded in the *compotus* roll for 1336–7.
² This approach has been used widely but little discussed. See the English Surnames Series, a collaboration between the Marc Fitch Fund and the Department of English Local History in the University of Leicester published by Leopard's Head Press, Oxford; there is no volume for Somerset but the 'Introduction' and the 'Methodological questions' sections of the Devon volume (Postles 1995, 1–10) provides useful background discussion where these types of names are called 'bynames' and specifically 'locative' or 'toponymic'.
³ Rackham 1986, 3–5.
⁴ The study came about as a result of discussion with Frances Neale, formerly the archivist of the Dean and Chapter of Wells Cathedral; she has continued her interest in Winscombe's history and has encouraged us in this parish project and we are grateful to her for her assistance.
⁵ Roberts and Wrathmell 2000; 2003.
⁶ Gerrard with Aston 2007; Aston and Gerrard forthcoming.
⁷ In parishes like Brompton Regis on Brendon Hills with its scatter of single farmsteads and groups of the two, three and four tenements in each hamlet; Aston 1983; for a recent study see Rippon 2008.
⁸ Aston 1987, 99, 103.
⁹ In 2007 the Medieval Settlement Research Group, in their research, conservation and excavation policy document, identified such areas as appropriate for further research suggesting that 'a large parish' should be selected where 'work should be focussed on regions of dispersed settlement, or those with both nucleated and

scattered settlements' (p. 6). They add that 'some types of site (particularly farmsteads and hamlets) are less well-recorded than others, because of their ubiquity' (p. 3) and 'there must be in England 30,000 deserted farms and hamlets' and that 'many more must firstly be identified'. *Medieval Settlement Research Group 2007 'Medieval Rural Settlement: A Revised Policy on Research, Conservation and Excavation'*. The identification of the small deserted hamlet settlement of 'Wyke' in this article provides an example of the type of research needed.

¹⁰ Aston and Costen 2008.
¹¹ For recent research generally see Blair 2005; for a preliminary survey of Somerset which does not adequately address this northern part of the county see Aston 1986.
¹² Ekwall suggests Wine's comb or valley (1960, 524); see also Gelling 1984, 88–94.
¹³ for Wrington see Neale 1969; for Banwell and Compton Bishop (the date is actually two years after the Norman Conquest in 1068) see Aston and Costen 2008.
¹⁴ Thorn and Thorn 1980.
¹⁵ Stacy 2001.
¹⁶ HMC 1907, 336–42.
¹⁷ These are stored in the Somerset County Record Office and have been transcribed and translated by Martin Ecclestone to whom I am most grateful, not only for the research, but for discussing the contents with me on a number of enjoyable occasions. My indebtedness to him will be apparent from the great use I make of his references in this article.
¹⁸ SCRO T/PH/VCH 38 c/2789 Most of the document actually covers the period 1519 to 1529. I am grateful to Frances Neale and Maria Forbes for a transcript of this document and to Maria Forbes and Michael Costen for discussion of its contents.
¹⁹ For 1572 Wells Cathedral ADD/2881 folios 1–6; for 1650 SCRO DD/cc 110 733. Again I am grateful to Maria Forbes who transcribed these documents for making copies of her typescripts available to me.
²⁰ SCRO DD/CC 10762.
²¹ Maria Forbes is investigating this aspect for the post-medieval period and I am grateful to her for discussing her research with me.
²² I am grateful to my long term friend and colleague Michael Costen, who knows more about Somerset place-names than anyone else,

- for checking the map and discussing the place-names of the area with me and for helpful comments from Frank and Caroline Thorn.
- ²³ The potential for this type of evidence was demonstrated for a number of parishes in the north Somerset area by various researchers (Aston 1994, 224, fig. 11.5 – Winscombe parish, though on the map, is conspicuously blank in 1994).
- ²⁴ Costen 1992; Costen 1994. This method was used at Shapwick. See Aston *et al.* 2007, 74–5.
- ²⁵ Research is being conducted by Susan Fitton.
- ²⁶ Corcos 2002.
- ²⁷ Banwell tithe map 1834 – see Fig. 2.
- ²⁸ Morland 1991, 124.
- ²⁹ *ham* – Smith 1956 Vol 1, 226; *ing*, 282; *tun*, Vol II, 188.
- ³⁰ On the tithe map of 1834 for Banwell there is a group of field names over the Roman site of Wint Hill, north of Maxmill – Walcott, Walcott Three Acres and Walcott Orchard.
- ³¹ Smith 1956 Vol 1, 108.
- ³² Smith 1956 Vol 1, 57–62 at p. 59.
- ³³ Smith 1956 Vol 1, 29–30.
- ³⁴ Ekwall 1960, 395 interprets the name as ‘rough hill’; Michael Costen however tells me the name is really ‘rough barrow’.
- ³⁵ It is also noticeable how few of the place-names in the Winscombe area actually refer to early medieval individuals, in the form of personal name plus *tun* or *cot* etc. Only Winscombe itself seems to incorporate an Anglo-Saxon personal name – Wine, but this is not certain; even Sidcot seems to be a topographical name (Ekwall 1960, 421).
- ³⁶ Smith 1956 Vol 1, 246; ‘a hide of land, an amount of land for the support of one free family and its dependants, estimated to be about 120 acres, but both hide and acre varied in different regions according to the productivity of the land’; Frank Thorn (pers.comm.) says, ‘The word is Old English *hid*, connected with the words *hiwian* (to marry), *hiwung* (marriage), *hiwa* or *higa* (a family member), *hiwen* (a family or household or hide of land). This last yields the place-name Hewish or Huish. As well as the notion of dwelling, the hide is also sometimes glossed as *tributaria* (tax-land) or *terra unius tributarii* (land of one tax-payer) and sometimes simply as *familia* (family or household). The household is likely to have been an extended family of several generations and it seems probable that the actual extent of the hide varied with the nature of the terrain’; Costen 1992, 72–3 ‘it is clear that *hiwisc* represents an agricultural unit that was self-contained, if not self-sufficient’.
- ³⁷ These *blackland* names are recorded at least as far back as the 1540 survey of Sandford as *Blacklond*. Michael Costen suggests that the name probably is first used when the land is first ploughed and relates to the origin of the common fields and would therefore be 10th to 12th century in date. It is intended to carry out fieldwork at *Blackland* but at the time of writing only limited and rather inconclusive geophysical survey has been undertaken.
- ³⁸ Somewhere in the Old Hide area on the 1792 William White map there was a field called ‘In Old Field’ – 469 (its exact location is not clear as there is a large hole in the map near field numbers 467 and 468). Such ‘old field’ and ‘oldland’ names have been used as evidence of earlier types of (probably not common) field systems; Aston 1988, 96–7.
- ³⁹ Gerrard with Aston 2007, 963–5.
- ⁴⁰ For example in Northamptonshire, Taylor 1983.
- ⁴¹ Aston 1985, 103–4.
- ⁴² As I live in Sandford I have often wondered about its site. It lies under the north side of the hills and receives very little sunlight in the winter season, effectively from the end of November to the beginning of February. This is made worse nowadays by the trees, growing on what would have been common grazing land on the top of Sandford Hill, which also cut out the winter sun; this would not have been the case in the past when the top of the hill was intensively grazed. The result is that frost remains longer and stretches further out from the base of the hill in Sandford than at *Old Hide* where, on a cold morning, it has already melted in the morning sun. The settlement at Sandford consists of two distinct parts however. The eastern linear part of the village is more poorly sited than the western, triangular part. The latter is situated below a gap in the limestone hills, between Sandford Hill and Banwell Camp (Fig. 3) which allows the low-level sunshine in for much of the winter to warm the houses and paddocks at this end of the settlement. These minor aspects of the local topography were probably taken much more notice of in the past. Frost-free ground, in the sun, would have brought on the grass providing an early bite for the animals in this part of the settlement, for example.

- ⁴³ Barton probably means ‘barley farm’ Smith 1956 Vol I, 31 and Frank Thorn (pers. comm.) suggests ‘lordship barley farm’ and that ‘these ‘bartons’ and their associated granges seem usually to be part of the demesne, although if an estate breaks up or is re-organized, they may end up in the hands of tenants. The sense seems to shift over time from ‘dependent barley settlement’ to ‘outlying dependency’ and the word ‘barton’ cannot always be sure to exclude the sense of ‘outlying’: the ‘barton’ in Winscombe might illustrate this’.
- ⁴⁴ Smith 1956 Vol II, 169 – possibly meaning south of Sandford, but more likely referring to the site at *Old Hide* on the south-facing slopes of Sandford Hill (Fig. 2).
- ⁴⁵ In the 1540 survey for example. Michael Costen, however, comments this is a very late source and that the name is more likely to be Sutton and be no more than a field name. As yet there have been no opportunities for fieldwork across *Sutton*.
- ⁴⁶ Aston and Costen 2008, 147, fig. 4 between points 4 and 5.
- ⁴⁷ Barton 1964.
- ⁴⁸ Christopher Taylor cites a similar, rather more elaborate, example at Caxton in Cambridgeshire where the village seems to ‘drift’ over time from the village centre, admittedly with a church, over to a main road, part of the Great North Road system, where its inhabitants served long-distance travellers (Taylor 1979, 129).
- ⁴⁹ *Garciones* are landless, single men working on the lord’s demesne. I am grateful to Martin Ecclestone for his work on the manorial court rolls of Winscombe and for discussion about *garciones* especially their role and status. Frank Thorn (pers. comm.) points out that their role gives an important new sense for the word which can also mean ‘young ruffian’, ‘servant’, ‘groom’, ‘boy’ or ‘lad’. ‘In the present context these men were probably the free, but depressed, successors to the slaves who were common on the demesne land in Domesday Book’.
- ⁵⁰ Stacy 2001, 178.
- ⁵¹ Smith 1956 Vol II, 257.
- ⁵² The places listed in this 1330 court roll are Winscombe, Dinghurst, Barton, Sidcot, Sandford and *Wyke*; in another, shorter, list of *garciones* in a court roll for 1360 the places listed are Winscombe, Barton, Sidcot, Sandford and Woodborough.
- ⁵³ I am grateful for discussion on this point with Susan Fitton and Teresa Hall; for a good example which has been excavated, in Shapwick parish, see *Sladwick* – Gerrard with Aston 2007, 377–88.
- ⁵⁴ Field numbers 587, 588 and 598; but on the William White map of 1792 there are even more *Brimridge* names in this area including the field with the suggested *Wyke* settlement site; only the tithe map names are shown on Fig. 4.
- ⁵⁵ At grid reference ST 427581 It is hoped to carry out a topographical and geophysical survey of this site in future.
- ⁵⁶ A *ferdel* was a quarter of a virgate and so would have been about 7 to 8 acres.
- ⁵⁷ Abrams 1996, 248–9; Aston and Costen 2008; see also Dyer 2002, 74; Foot 2000, 182–3.
- ⁵⁸ Thorn and Thorn, 1980, SOM 8.2 References in this article are to the chapter and section number of the Phillimore edition prefaced by a three-letter county abbreviation.
- ⁵⁹ I am immensely grateful to Frank and Caroline Thorn for re-examining the entries in Domesday Book for the area around Winscombe (Fig. 5) and for discussing with me the difficulties of locating un-named holdings in Domesday Book, and the possibilities that nevertheless can be suggested. I have incorporated their comments into the places shown on Fig. 5 which therefore represents a best guess, at the end of 2009, of which places existed in 1086 and which might be referred to in Domesday Book.
- ⁶⁰ He is named after Courseulles-sur-Mer in the Département of Calvados in Normandy.
- ⁶¹ Thorn and Thorn 1980 SOM 21 which has 98 entries; Frank Thorn comments, ‘The difficulties in using Domesday Book for this sort of enquiry are that i) even when it mentions divisions of the main manor, it rarely names them; ii) these divisions may well be temporary and may have no named settlement within them, or be named from parts of the settlement that give their name to the manor; iii) unless the holder of one of these divisions can be identified as an individual and his family tree reconstructed, it will be difficult to match a Domesday division with a later estate (these holders are often a *genus* (Frenchman or thane) or have a single name, many of which are very common); iv) the approach is essentially hierarchical and narrowly focussed: Domesday contents itself with identifying the tenant-in-chief of the manor, his sub-tenant of the whole,

- if the lord does not hold directly, and (sometimes) the holders of any important divisions. Its intention is to identify those who collectively answer for the taxes and services of the manor: lesser divisions and little people do not appear.’
- ⁶² Rippon 2006, 133. I am grateful to David Bromwich for further references to *Ponteside*.
- ⁶³ Thorn and Thorn 1980, 355, 360.
- ⁶⁴ Stacy 2001, 178.
- ⁶⁵ Coutances is a cathedral city in the Cotentin peninsula in the Département of Manche in Normandy.
- ⁶⁶ Thorn and Thorn 1980 SOM 5.12.
- ⁶⁷ Thorn and Thorn 1980 SOM 5.
- ⁶⁸ Frank Thorn (pers. comm.) says that the name Pipe is almost certainly French and may be connected with the name Pepin or Pippin.
- ⁶⁹ Weaver 1910, 112.
- ⁷⁰ Morland 1963–4, 94–8.
- ⁷¹ I am pleased to acknowledge the detailed linguistic and grammatical analysis of Ralph’s name by Frank Thorn and for extensive discussion about him.
- ⁷² Of course, for this early date, there are no portraits of Ralph so I am grateful to Amy Fudge for the drawing of him, which is based on figures in the Bayeux Tapestry, here included with Fig. 6.
- ⁷³ Thorn and Thorn 1980 SOM 8.20 two hides at Pilton; SOM 8.30 6½ hides at Alhampton.
- ⁷⁴ Thorn and Thorn 1980 SOM 6.9 and p. 354.
- ⁷⁵ Pers. comm.
- ⁷⁶ Collinson 1791, 614.
- ⁷⁷ Michael Costen remarks (pers. comm.) that Winterhead or Wintreth as it is in 1086 is a genuine Old Welsh, that is British, pre-700AD place-name, meaning something like ‘white, fair or pale (coloured) hillside’.
- ⁷⁸ Aston and Costen 2008, 150.
- ⁷⁹ For this reason Shipham is shown on Fig. 13.
- ⁸⁰ Hall 2000; Blair 2005.
- ⁸¹ As is suggested in Aston and Costen 2008.
- ⁸² Youngs 1980, 415, they became separate ecclesiastical parishes in 1749.
- ⁸³ Darby and Finn 1967, 190–4.
- ⁸⁴ Stacy 2001, 63.
- ⁸⁵ Aston and Costen 2008, 146. It is included on Fig. 5 as, following discussion with Frank Thorn, it is felt that it is at least a possibility that it was one of the unnamed holdings in the area.
- ⁸⁶ Pers. comm.
- ⁸⁷ Stacey 2001.
- ⁸⁸ HMC 1907.
- ⁸⁹ Dickinson 1889.
- ⁹⁰ See for example Aston 1983 where the existence of large numbers of farmsteads around Exmoor was demonstrated by the surnames of tax payers listed in the 1327 Lay Subsidy.
- ⁹¹ Postles 2006, 7 for example: ‘Fransson’s ‘rule of thumb’ (for it is no more than that) that by about 1350 bynames are being generally transformed into hereditary surnames (family names rather than individual’s second, qualifying names, bynames or cognomina)’.
- ⁹² Winscombe Court Roll of 1483.
- ⁹³ Stacy 2001, 175–8; 179–186.
- ⁹⁴ Neil Stacy 2001, 177, suggests that this was ‘one mile due east of Winscombe church which is Hale Combe, but there are several other possibilities in the parish including Lyncombe between Sandford and Dinghurst – see below. There are several Combe Farms in the parish, at Slough Pit and Sidcot for example and there are field names with ‘Comb’ near Sidcot in 1840; and there are plenty of other, un-named ‘combes’ in the limestone escarpments in the parish.
- ⁹⁵ Stacy 2001, 3–4; Michael Costen suggests (pers. comm.) that the name derives from ‘atten ieg’ meaning ‘at or on the island’.
- ⁹⁶ Stevenson 1959; see also Aston 2003, 41, fig. 5.
- ⁹⁷ Rippon 2006.
- ⁹⁸ In 1189 at Wrington, just east of Winscombe, there were Ailbrihtus and Edward both called *faber* (Stacy 2001).
- ⁹⁹ Dickinson 1889. Frank Thorn (pers. comm.) notes that the names are preceded by a preposition (*de, pro* etc in the Lay Subsidy, so they are in the ablative case so that ‘Fabro’ in the Dickinson translation is the nominative ‘Faber’).
- ¹⁰⁰ There may also have been a smith at Sidcot; in the court roll of 1305 a *Walter Faber of Sydecote* was distrained for default.
- ¹⁰¹ The others were Ditcheat and Pilton – Stacy 2001, 61–4.
- ¹⁰² Martin Ecclestone points out to me that there may have been a watermill at Sandford, perhaps on the third site discussed here. In a *compotus* roll for St Augustine’s Abbey, Bristol for 1492 under ‘Assize Rents’ is a reference to ‘the old water mill next to the site of the manor there, which used to pay 9s per annum but now pays nothing because it is totally fallen down and worth nothing’. This is listed in a group of the

- Abbey's properties under Rowberrow though it seems to be related to 'Sampford' (Sabin 1960, 31, 192).
- ¹⁰³ Bond 1995, 7–8.
- ¹⁰⁴ I am grateful to Martin and Sue Watts for visiting these mill sites with me and commenting on the suitability of each and the degree of sophistication of the engineering works displayed. For the archaeology of mills see Watts 2002.
- ¹⁰⁵ Dickinson 1889, 265, and Frank Thorn (pers. comm.).
- ¹⁰⁶ This 'ancient tenure' probably relates to 'old auster' rights which are recorded in the parish as 'antiquo astro' from as early as 1336. 'Old Auster' tenements are an interesting aspect of early tenure in medieval Somerset villages and will be the subject of further research in future.
- ¹⁰⁷ Aston and Costen 2008, 153.
- ¹⁰⁸ Aston and Costen 2008, 140, 153.
- ¹⁰⁹ It may have been dug from somewhere further east near Five springs and then the water from Cox's well added to it. The latter is now a major source of water for Burnham on Sea and elsewhere, with a building over it dated 1887.
- ¹¹⁰ Bond 2004, 312–16.
- ¹¹¹ Bond 1979, 69; see also other pre-Conquest schemes in John Blair 2007.
- ¹¹² I am grateful for discussion about the mill at Max with Archie and Maria Forbes who live at Maxmill Farm next to the ruined mill.
- ¹¹³ HMC 1907, 336–42.
- ¹¹⁴ Cottagers and 'Mondaymen' were tenants who held very little land, often not enough to sustain them and their families without working for other tenants. They often worked for their lord on the demesne on Mondays, hence the name – Homans 1941, 241.
- ¹¹⁵ Robert Fader is clearly a mis-reading of 'Faber' (Dickinson 1889, 265).
- ¹¹⁶ Siraut 1996.
- ¹¹⁷ See above; on Figs 8 and 10 the Combe references have been allocated to Hale Combe but the names could apply equally to Lyncombe or elsewhere.
- ¹¹⁸ On the tithe map of 1840 there are several fields in this area with the 'Napp' name and there is today a modern road name here; in the 1650 survey a cottage with a close called Knapp is recorded.
- ¹¹⁹ Michael Costen suggests (pers. comm.) that the name is derived from 'scyte' meaning 'a steep hill' – a very appropriate description of the rise from Cross in Compton Bishop to the watershed here along the old abandoned holloway later replaced by the graded engineered turnpike trust road.
- ¹²⁰ Such as Richard atte Plegestede in 1276, John de la Plested and William Pleysted in 1290, and Richard atte Pleystede in 1305–6.
- ¹²¹ Smith 1956 Vol II, 67 (perhaps a predecessor of the present day 'Rec' the local name for the recreation ground in Winscombe!).
- ¹²² Unless this is a mis-reading for the Lynch near Woodborough (see below).
- ¹²³ Smith 1956 part II, 267. On the 1792 William White map of Winscombe and Shipham there is a Winchfield – field f210 – at the north-east end of the hamlet of Barton which at least raises the possibility that Winch was part of Barton; the sharpness of the cliffs above Wringstone Rocks on Barton Hill, might be the context for the name.
- ¹²⁴ Thomas son of Richard atte Hale and William son of Henry atte Hale; Thomas son of Robert de Okryg, Richard de Okrygge, Walter son of Walter de Okrygg and Gilbert de Okrygg. Again I owe a great debt of gratitude to Martin Ecclestone for translating and transcribing the sometimes illegible court rolls for Winscombe.
- ¹²⁵ Richard and Walter atte Pleystede. As we shall see, this line of reasoning may help to locate some of the other names indicative of places in the parish recorded later on (see below and note 118 (above) about Wynch).
- ¹²⁶ But note that in the 1330 list of *garciones*, referred to above (notes 49 and 52), Boveton and Uppehull names only occur associated with Barton in the west of the parish perhaps suggesting that the people were living in its vicinity but on the hillside, which seems very unlikely – William Uppehull, Henry Uppehull and William son of John Uppehulle and (?illegible) son of William Uppehull. Frank Thorn (pers. comm.) comments 'One of the problems with habitative personal names is that people take their names with them when they move; could these people have come over the hill or followed the contours from Uphill?'; Martin Boveton, William son of Thomas Boveton and (?illegible) son of Thomas Boveton.
- ¹²⁷ Research has begun on this aspect of the parish's history by Maria Forbes and Teresa Hall as there is no Victoria County History volume for

- Winscombe parish or Winterstoke Hundred, where this manorial history would normally have been fully explored.
- ¹²⁸ Dickinson 1889, 65.
- ¹²⁹ Beresford 1963, 3.
- ¹³⁰ Dickinson 1889, 265–6.
- ¹³¹ Winscombe comes twelfth out of 20 places.
- ¹³² Sometimes called Foord iuxta Winscombe – Collinson 1791, 613.
- ¹³³ Beresford 1963, 4.
- ¹³⁴ Glasscock 1975, 259.
- ¹³⁵ The late Professor Maurice Beresford gave me copies of his and Mrs Margaret Midgeley's files of these Poll Taxes many years ago. There are a few hundreds for Somerset remaining for 1377 but not for Winterstoke Hundred which includes Winscombe; there is nothing for 1381.
- ¹³⁶ This aspect will be discussed in future research on the peasants of Winscombe in the 14th century.
- ¹³⁷ Martin Ecclestone suggests that these survive well because they would have been kept at Wells in relatively good conditions; by contrast the manorial court rolls survive in very poor condition because they may initially have been kept elsewhere (?in Winscombe, at the *curia*).
- ¹³⁸ These documents deal with the manorial accounts for 19 years before 1500, though many are for only part of these years; of the documents examined here ten are in the Somerset County Record Office and one in the Wells Cathedral Archives. We are grateful to Wells Cathedral and to Tom Mayberry and the staff of the Record Office for making these records available to us. Roy Rice and Nick and Chris Bristow did sterling work digitally photographing the records. I am greatly indebted to Martin Ecclestone for transcribing and translating these documents, and for much discussion about the contents and their implications. The documents discussed here with the years and their reference numbers in the Somerset County Record Office (SCRO) are 1276–7 (DD/CC 131913a/3 and 131908/1), 1305–6 (DD/CC 131908/2), (probably) 1306–7 (DD/CC 131911a/10), 1336–7 (DD/CC 131909/8), and 1342–3 (DD/CC 131909/12) before the Black Death (1348–9), and 1371–2 (DD/CC 131909/3), 1382–3 (DD/CC 131910/11) and 1396–7 (DD/CC 131910/4) for the rest of the 14th century. For the 15th century we have 1416–7 (Wells Cathedral Archives DC/E7/27) and 1452–3 (DD/CC 131914/7), and for the 16th century 1539–40 (DD/CC 131921/6). There are also *comptii* for 1332–3, 1333–4 and 1334–5 but these are damaged; after the Black Death 1374–5, 1375–6, 1390–1 and 1393–4 but these have not been fully transcribed; and for the 15th century onwards, 1459–60, 1513–4 and 1544–5 (none transcribed). We can use the latter to compare with the survey of Sandford in 1540 and of Winscombe in 1572; see notes 18 and 19 for references.
- ¹³⁹ Smith 1956 Vol II, 273; Martin Ecclestone (pers. comm.) suggests the 'Hoke' could be Oak.
- ¹⁴⁰ Nevertheless Martin Ecclestone has persisted with working on the court rolls and there are now transcriptions and translations available for particular courts (ie not all of the courts held) for the following ten years (again in SCRO DD/CC) – 1305 (131912a item 2), 1330 (with the list of *garciones*), 1350 (B 131909/13), 1352–3 (B/13909/4), 1359–60 (131909/9), 1361 (B 110738 item 1), 1392 (110738 item 2), 1400–1 (110738 item 3), 1410–11 (110738 item 4), 1483 (B/110738 item 6).
- ¹⁴¹ In the 1540 survey the name is associated with Barton.
- ¹⁴² It is intended to carry out further research in future on the field systems in the parish.
- ¹⁴³ Postles 2006, 7.
- ¹⁴⁴ SCRO DD/OB 33. I am grateful to Maria Forbes for providing me with a copy of this survey and for discussing its contents with me on a number of occasions.
- ¹⁴⁵ '13s 6d for the agreed payment of a mason building a new wall between the common road and the curia, length four *rapps*' and '8d for the wages of a man for two days clearing out the foundations of the wall' and '2s for carting 48 wagon loads of stone from the old granary for the same'.
- ¹⁴⁶ Zupko 1985.
- ¹⁴⁷ Under 'cost of the houses' for 1396–7 '12s for the wages of a carpenter making two new ladders with the lord's timber, and repairing timbers in two bays of the barn'; '16d for carting the timber from Bronrigge'; '12d for carting 3 cartloads of timber for laths for the same'; '12s 6d for the wages of a roofer making a new roof (for the two bays) and repairing defective places in the western part of the barn'; '2s for the wages of a tiler repairing parts of the barn roof with stone'.
- ¹⁴⁸ For example in 1277, 1342–3, 1371–2, 1382–3, and 1416–7.

- ¹⁴⁹ The *compotus* roll of 1416–7 records under ‘produce of the manor’ ‘12d from pasture sold this year in the close around the dovecote’ while that for 1452–3 records ‘10s for the dovecote and the close around it’.
- ¹⁵⁰ These are mature working or plough horses. Frank Thorn comments (pers. comm.) that the term is from the medieval Latin *averus*, sometimes *afrus*, *affrus*, *afferus*, essentially referring to a draught animal, connected with *avera*, *averagium* (etc), ‘carting’ or ‘carting service’.
- ¹⁵¹ But only up to 1337; afterwards the cows were farmed out. Maximum cheese production was 89 stones in 1305–6 – 223 cheeses of mean weight 5½lb (Martin Ecclestone pers. comm.).
- ¹⁵² SCRO T/PH/VCH 38 c/2789.
- ¹⁵³ Bond 1995, 8–11; Holt 1988, 28–30.
- ¹⁵⁴ Bond 1995, 25–7; included on Fig. 12 are two drawings of medieval windmills from medieval manuscripts showing the type of structure referred to in these documents.
- ¹⁵⁵ Aston and Costen 2008.
- ¹⁵⁶ Somerset County Record Office DD/CC 110 733. I am grateful to Maria Forbes for making her translation of this document available to me.
- ¹⁵⁷ The only other recorded windmill in the area was at Hutton, first mentioned at about the same time as the Winscombe mill in 1309; a second windmill was added there in 1482 (Bond 1995, 56).
- ¹⁵⁸ For a good general introduction to the church and other sites in the parish see Forbes 2000.
- ¹⁵⁹ Blair 2005; Morris 1989; Wood 2006.
- ¹⁶⁰ More could be learned about the history of the church. For example the chancel caught fire in 1610 ‘the chancel of the church of Winscombe being now by the negligence and oversight set on fire, the same shall be mended and the roof set up and covered with hard tile’ HMC 1914, 359.
- ¹⁶¹ It does not seem to have been on the site of the present church built in 1885 as a ‘chapel of ease’ at a cost of £1100 (Kelly’s Directory 1914).
- ¹⁶² Bettey 2000, 10–12. References to this fraternity have given rise to confusion in the parish that there was formerly a medieval monastic site in Winscombe, but there is no evidence for this – Knowles and Hadcock 1971.
- ¹⁶³ Green 1888, xii, 81–2, 263.
- ¹⁶⁴ Woodward 1982, 1.
- ¹⁶⁵ At Raunds in Northamptonshire, a chapel which later disappeared had originally functioned as a local church and had a burial ground around it – Boddington 1996.
- ¹⁶⁶ Holmes 1895 and 1896.
- ¹⁶⁷ 1336–7 ‘2s 8½d for eight tilers wages for roofing and repairing defects in the hall, camera and chapel’; 1342–3 ‘12d for repairing part of the chapel wall’.
- ¹⁶⁸ Holmes 1896, 70; Clay 1914; Aston 2000, 7–8.
- ¹⁶⁹ Doble 1939.
- ¹⁷⁰ Finberg 1951.
- ¹⁷¹ Neale 2000, 9.
- ¹⁷² Frank and Caroline Thorn think that is a point that needs greater emphasis in settlement studies. They comment (pers. comm.) that ‘There are even fewer place-names that can be confidently said to be of Anglo-Norman or Middle English formation than there are Celtic names. One could argue that in small communities that remained predominantly Anglo-Saxon after the Conquest, new names would be formed in old ways. Moreover, names that are not in origin habitative but topographical (hills, woods, rivers) might have existed before the Conquest to describe landscape features, and might only have become habitative names later when someone decided to live on or near the feature’. ‘Behind the increasing bureaucracy is the break up of the great estates and the collapse of lordship, meaning that smaller entities have to answer to the authorities’. This may result in ‘the tendency for places to split into separate lordship centres (‘X Abbots’ and ‘Y Earls’) where there was only ‘X’ in 1086, and the apparent creation of satellite settlements, East and West, Upper and Lower, one of which may be the Domesday site and the other new build’.
- ¹⁷³ Somerset has a long post-Roman period when Roman culture continued in some form – see the interesting ideas about this in White 2007.
- ¹⁷⁴ Smith 1956, 57; Jones 1979, 18.
- ¹⁷⁵ Frank Thorn (pers. comm.) ‘Winterhead is a good example of a division of Winscombe that would have been invisible, but for the fact that it had been alienated to the Church’ ie the Bishop of Coutances.
- ¹⁷⁶ Even in 1791 John Collinson discusses Winterhead under Shipham rather than Winscombe.
- ¹⁷⁷ See note 63/64.
- ¹⁷⁸ Dyer 1991; 1990.
- ¹⁷⁹ Skipp 1970.

- ¹⁸⁰ In Winscombe there are moats at Nye Farm and Maxmills Farm and the moat at Rookery Farm, Nye might be medieval.
- ¹⁸¹ At the time of writing little thought has been given to this aspect of the settlements in the parish but preliminary map analysis suggests that Sidcot, Barton and possibly Winterhead and Woodborough may be 'planned' settlements.
- ¹⁸² This seems to be the case with Woodborough Green, possibly Winscombe itself and perhaps parts of Dinghurst such as the scatter of cottages on Churchill Batch.
- ¹⁸³ Roberts 1987; 2008; Taylor 1983.
- ¹⁸⁴ Aston 1985; 1988.
- ¹⁸⁵ Gerrard with Aston 2007, 244–65.
- ¹⁸⁶ Lewis 2007.
- ¹⁸⁷ This will be undertaken in association with the Winscombe and Sandford Local History and Archaeological Society, and is to be directed by the author, Teresa Hall, and Maria Forbes.

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