

EARTHWORKS IN ST CROSS PARK, NEAR WINCHESTER, HAMPSHIRE

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ABSTRACT

Documentary research and fieldwork have identified earthworks to the south of the medieval hospital of St Cross, near Winchester, as the possible remains of medieval gardens. These would appear to have been surrounded by ditches that include a number of internal features of interest. The gardens of the hospital are recorded in historical documents, and appear to have been of some note. A discussion of the earthworks in relation to the documentary sources is given.

INTRODUCTION

Earthworks have been identified in a field known as St Cross Park (SU 476 277) to the south of the medieval hospital of St Cross (Fig. 1). These are almost entirely surrounded by earthwork ditches on the south and west, and by the partly canalised Lockburn on the east and north, forming a shape characteristic of a moat. It is possible that these may be associated with documented gardens recorded at the hospital in a survey of 1401.

The hospital buildings that have survived today are some of the finest late medieval structures of their kind in Europe. Although many of the surviving buildings date to after the reorganisation of the hospital by Henry Beaufort in the 1440s, a study of earlier accounts seems to suggest that a far more substantial institution existed before this date (Carr 1966). The early buildings are discussed elsewhere by Currie (1995).

Historical Background

There is some doubt about the exact date of the foundation of a hospital or almshouse at St Cross by Henry de Blois, Bishop of Winchester from

1129 to 1171. The Victoria County History gives the date as 1136 (Cox 1903, 194), but more recent research has shown that it is not possible to be this accurate. According to Kusaba (1983, 21) the foundation appears to have occurred between 1129 and 1137, with the greater likelihood that it was between 1132 and 1137. The de Blois' hospital was set up to provide a home for thirteen old and infirm men, and to provide a daily dinner for 100 other poor men (Cave n.d., 7).

The foundation has had a troubled history, and was the subject of much scandal and misappropriation of funds. De Blois put the hospital under the management of the Knight's Hospitallers in 1151 (Cave n.d., 8), but by 1185 the bishop of Winchester had attempted to resume personal management. The Hospitallers disputed this, and the matter was not resolved until 1204, during which time building work was disrupted. Consequently, the church was not finally completed until 1225 (Cox 1903, 194).

For most of the 13th and 14th century the hospital was plagued by the recurring problem of pluralist masters and corruption. At these times the hospital buildings were neglected, and the wealth of the foundation diverted to the pockets of absentee masters and other officials. Only William de Edynton, later Bishop of Winchester, is recorded to have undertaken building work of any note between c. 1225 and 1382. He was master between c. 1336 and 1346, and undertook repairs to the church, built a chamber for the master and put a roof on the 'hundred mens' hall' (Humbert 1857, 21).

Corruption resumed after Edynton's elevation to the bishopric, and this was not put right until the episcopate of William of Wykeham. The latter had some difficulty removing the incumbent

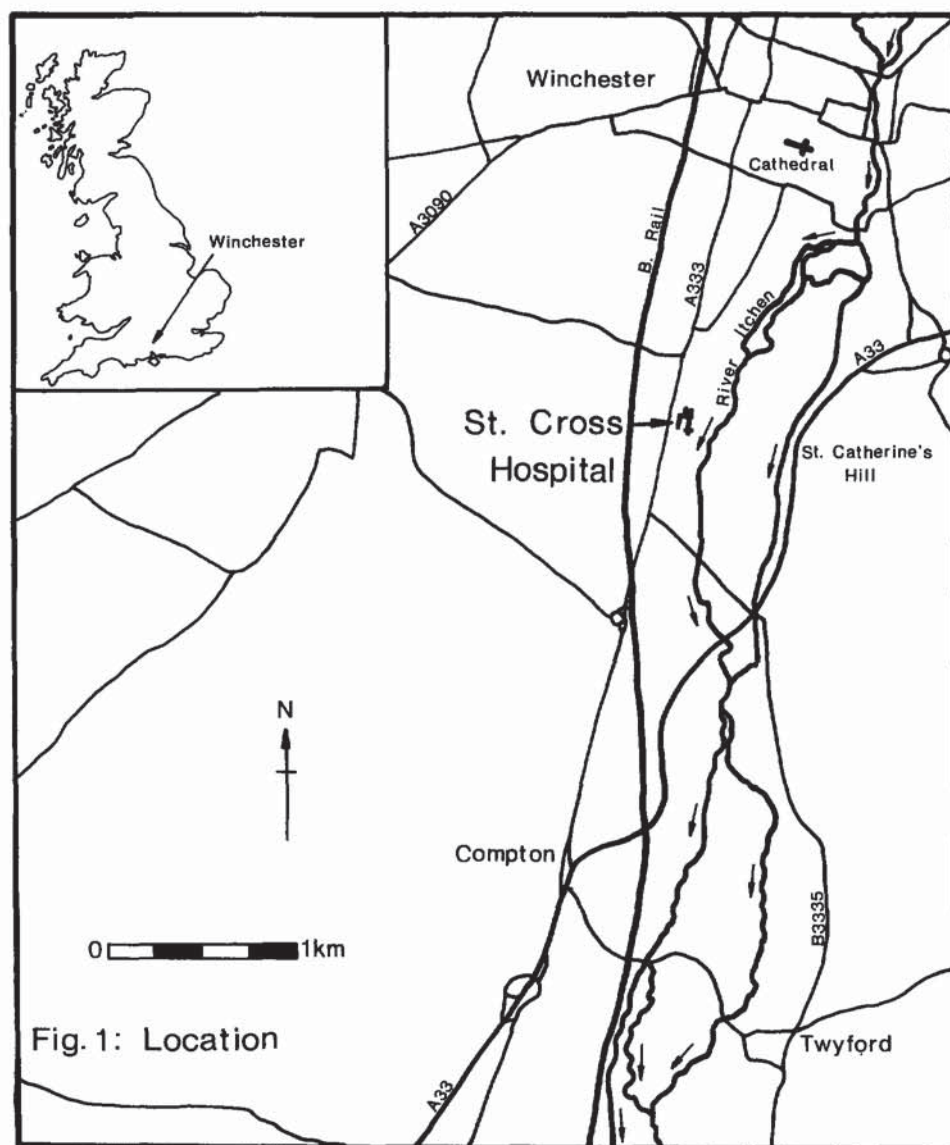


Fig. 1 St Cross: location map

master, Roger de Cloune, before appointing John de Campden in 1382 (Cox 1903, 196). Work on restoring the existing buildings, and putting up new ones, began almost immediately, and de Campden spent considerable sums on the hospital between 1382 and his death in 1410 (Carr 1966).

In 1445, Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester, added the hospital of 'noble poverty' to the original foundation, but his original intentions were never put into effect fully because of the disruptions of the Wars of the Roses. The hospital continued to be the subject of misappropriation throughout its later history until 1855 when a new

'customary' was drawn up that put an effective end to the corruption that plagued the foundation throughout its history.

Gardens at St Cross

A garden is mentioned at St Cross in 1282–83 when payment to the bishop of 3/- is recorded for water flowing through it (Keene 1985, 61n). This was probably the Lockburn stream. John de Campeden's accounts give more detailed information. In 1392–93 a wooden 'wall' (*murus ligneus*) is constructed for the 'enclosed garden' (*pro clausura gardini*), and in the same year a 'house for the garden' is made (*domus pro gardino*) (Carr 1966, 38). The vagaries of medieval Latin do not allow a more precise interpretation of the 'house for the garden'. It may be a reference to a structure similar to a summer house, which would indicate that garden ornamentation was given some priority, but it could equally be bad Latin, the *gardino* being a possible abbreviation for *gardinario*, meaning 'for the gardener'.

Other mentions of gardens in the accounts are also enigmatic, such as the record of cleaning the ditches surrounding the cemetery and garden (*fecit mundari in latitudine et profundari fossas circumcingentes cimiterium et gardina in domo Sancte Crucis*) (Carr 1966, 39). Considering the moat-like ditches observed to the south of the present buildings, it is possible that this reference is to these features. Certainly the cemetery could not have been in its present position immediately south-east of the church, as it would appear that a cloister-like structure may have existed there (Currie 1995). It is possible therefore that the cemetery may have been further south within the confines of the area surrounded by the moat-like ditches.

The accounts also refer to horticultural activity undertaken by John de Campeden. He is recorded as planting 245 trees 'called Goodnote' in diverse places within the gardens of St Cross (*Item fuit plantari ducentas xlv arberes vocata Notebenius diversis locis et gardinis Sancte Crucis predictis*) (Carr 1966, 39). These 'trees' were possibly apple trees to fill the orchards mentioned in a survey of 1401 (Kirby 1899, 533). Together with the other hints given above, this suggests that de Campeden gave seri-

ous consideration to the gardens ornamenting the buildings.

The area south of the hospital under discussion may have contained an orchard when a survey of the hospital precinct was undertaken in 1401. The bounds mentioned in this document, although approximately reflecting those shown on 19th-century surveys, offer a number of problems that can not be fully resolved by comparison with the later extent of the precinct. It is uncertain what has happened exactly, but it would appear that the lands perambulated in 1401 exceed those of the 19th-century hospital, and it can only be suggested that some lands may have become alienated in the interim. Considering the amount of corruption that occurred in the hospital's past, this is not to be unexpected.

The bounds of the 1401 survey move clockwise from the north side of the present hospital. Here, on the site of the present Master's house, was the 'Northgardyn', an orchard of three and a half acres. The bounds then move eastwards across the River Itchen, and on down to St Cross Mill, before apparently returning northwards along the course of the Lockburn, referred to as a 'ditch'. Further south, this stream ran through the north part of Compton, and although a moderate sized stream, was referred to here as the North Mead 'Ditch' in a mid-19th-century legal dispute (HRO 18M54, Box H). The survey is taken up as it moves in a 'north-eastwardly' direction along the Lockburn:

'then on north-eastwardly along and including a ditch, as far as the south-eastern corner of an orchard of the hospital, known as 'Connyger', and including it; then westwards along and including the ditch, to the north-west corner of the said orchard; then eastwards as far as the eastern corner of the wall [this may be an error, the wall here is more likely to be the western wall] of the close of the hospital ...' (Kirby 1899, 533).

The bounds move from the south-east corner of the orchard, westward along a ditch to the north-west corner of the same orchard. This route is explained by the term after the name of the orchard, 'and including it'. This indicates that the bounds move west from the south-east corner to include the orchard. In 'including' it there is no

need to mention the south-west corner as this is understood. There is further evidence that this is the intended route from Gale's map of 1836 (HRO 11M59/7694), a survey of the precinct taken in 1853–54 (HRO W/H5/13), and 19th-century Ordnance Survey maps, all of which show the boundary of the hospital lands following this route.

In these later surveys, the 'precinct' of St Cross was extra-parochial. Despite problems with parts of the 1401 survey, the fact that this boundary followed the outer edge of the ditches on the west and south side of the field known as 'St Cross Park' suggests that they were of particular significance. This would imply they are part of the 1401 boundary. If this were the case, it would seem that the area had once been the orchard known as Connyger, or at least part of it. Parkland trees can be seen today superimposed on the earlier earthworks. The park was in existence by 1853, suggesting that any earlier features had been abandoned by this time. The antiquity of the outer edge of the ditches appears to be confirmed by them being depicted as a boundary between St Thomas' and St John's Wards on all the later surveys. Ward boundaries are thought by Keene to have been formed by the medieval period in and around Winchester (1985, 83–84).

The 1401 survey also records a large number of other gardens within the precinct, including a vegetable garden, a 'little pigtle' garden, the Porter's garden and the Home garden (Kirby 1899, 533–34). The total area covered by these gardens and orchards was more than 3.6 ha (9 acres). That the hospital was well endowed with gardens seems to be suggested again in 1576 when an act of Elizabeth I forbade the master to lease 'the orchards, gardens, closes, meadow or any lands lying within the precincts of the hospital of St Cross ...' (Humbert 1857, 25–26).

Comments by a visitor, John Macky, around 1722–23, suggest the possibility that the earthworks here discussed may have been incorporated into a later formal garden. This was during the long mastership of Dr Abraham Markland (1694–1728). Macky says the Master:

'... lives like an Abbot, hath a very good apartment, with fine gardens adorned with a canal, and evergreens; with his coach-house and stables; and

his income is computed to be a good £600 a year.' (quoted in Humbert 1857, 30).

Markland seems to have had a liking for horticulture, and his monument in the church records that he spent much time adding to the appearance of the hospital by improving the gardens (*patri vigilantia ac munificentia praefuit locum ipsum hortorum amoenitati et elegantia ornavit*).

It is possible that the earthworks at St Cross represent the gardens containing the canal mentioned in the early 18th century. However, the almost complete circuit of the ditches and water courses around this area suggests if this was the case that the site was adapted from an earlier medieval moated area. However, a very plausible alternative site for Markland's canal could be the rectangular pond in the present Master's Garden. It would not be unknown for such relatively small ponds to be called a canal at this period. If this were the case, it would suggest that the earthworks south of the hospital are entirely earlier in date, and were not part of Markland's garden at all. It is not possible to resolve the problem of whether they are medieval features reused by Markland, or medieval features that had been abandoned completely by the later 17th century without archaeological excavation.

THE EARTHWORKS (Figs 2 and 3)

The area covered by the present survey extends from the former boundary between the wards of St. Thomas and St. John. This runs along the top of a ditch on the west side of the field south of the hospital buildings down to the boundary fence at the southern end of the field. This latter boundary divides the field under discussion from a sports field. The eastern limit of the survey is marked by the Lockburn, a small artificial tributary of the River Itchen. The northern limit is the hospital buildings. This area is approximately 150 m north-south and 145 m east-west.

The field is currently grazed by cattle, and has a number of parkland trees within it. An avenue of limes divides the site approximately midway on a north-south alignment. The most prominent earthworks are those of ditches surrounding the site on all sides apart from part of the north side. The site

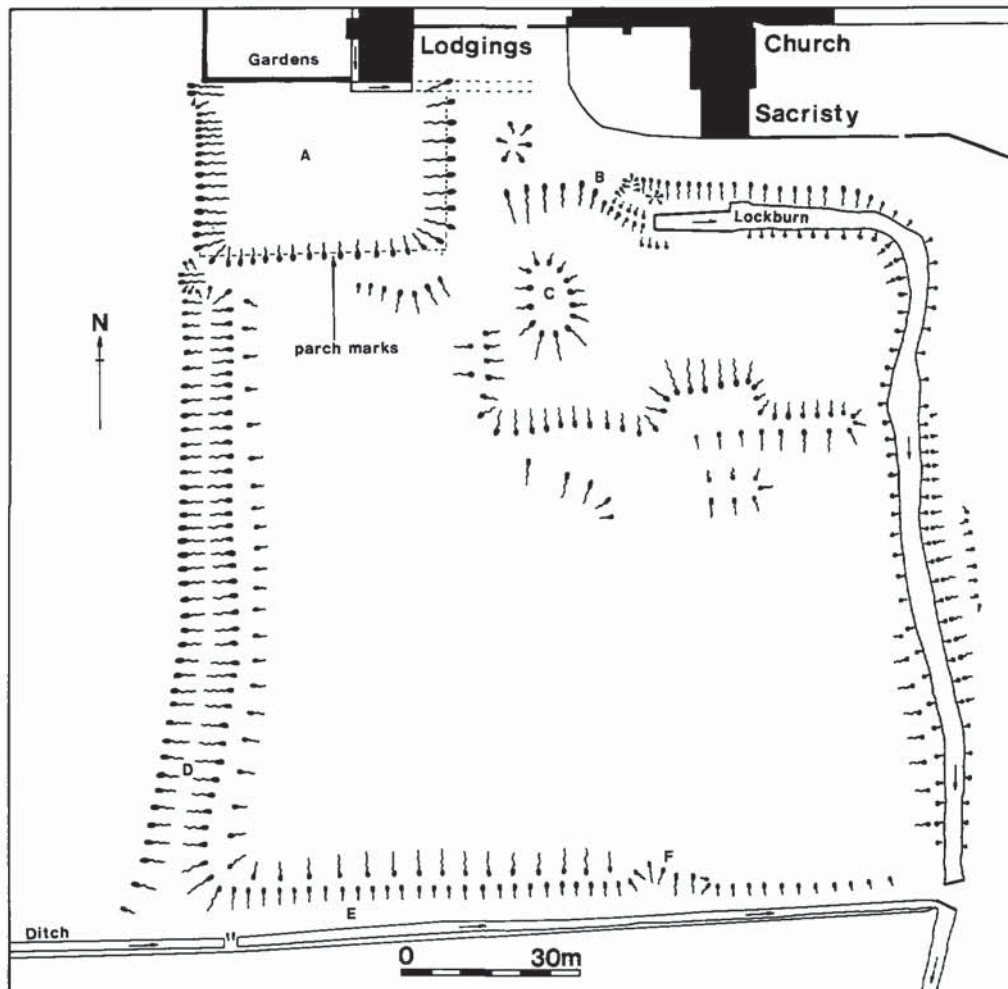


Fig. 2 St Cross: earthwork survey

is described starting in the north-west corner, and working anti-clockwise.

In the north-west corner of the site is a rectangular depression (marked 'A' on figure 2), 45 m east-west and 30 m north-south. The west side is marked by a bank up to 1.5 m high. The land to the west of the bank does not drop away, but continues to rise very slightly to the west. On the south side of the depression is another bank, averaging 0.6 m high. A footpath crosses the site along the top of this bank. A slight drop of about 0.2 m along part of the bank's south side gives the

feature the appearance of a raised causeway. On the east side of the depression there is a slight bank up to 0.4 m high, with a shallow gradient.

Observations from the top of the adjacent chapel tower made in the late summer after the earthwork survey had been completed revealed the foundations of a stone wall picked out as a parch mark approximately half way down the slope of this eastern bank. These reach the surface at a number of places, where they can be seen clearly on the ground. The markings seem to show at least four, possibly five buttresses, on the

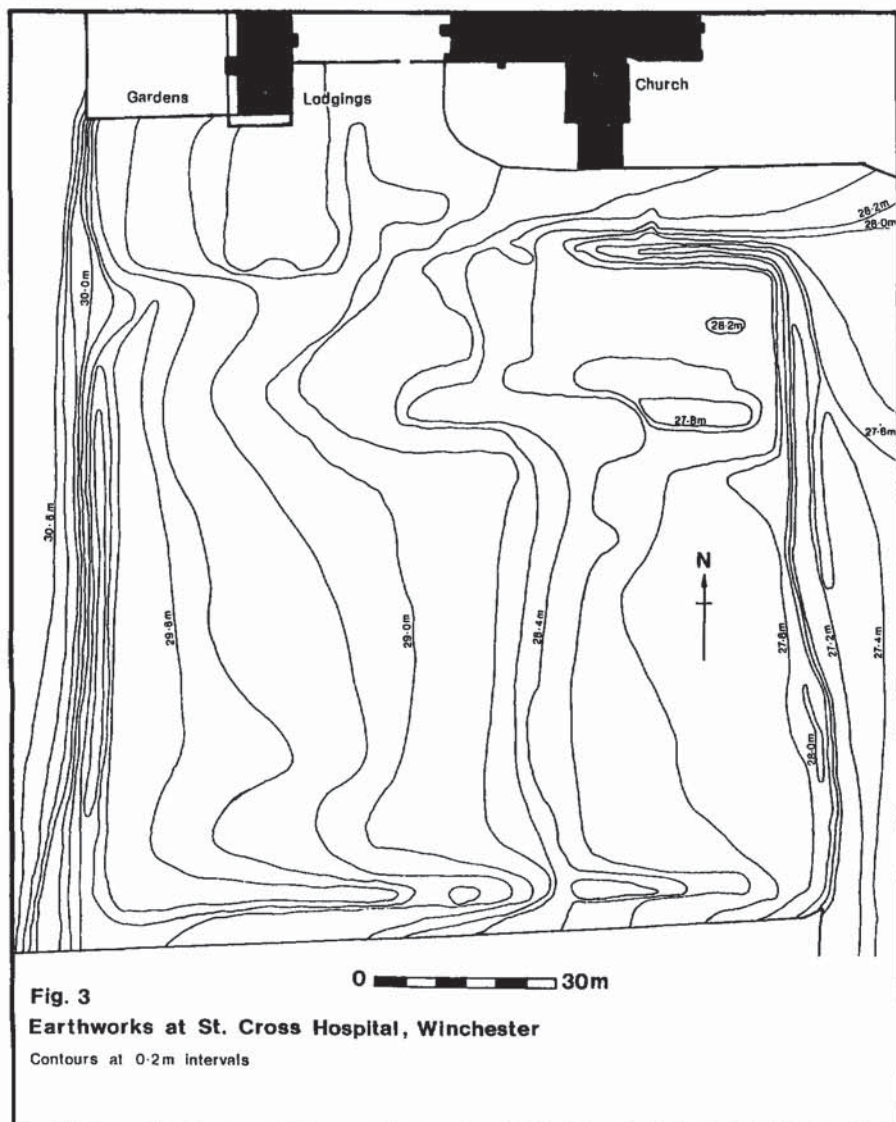


Fig. 3 St Cross: contour survey

east side of this postulated wall. The most southerly of these is on the corner of this mark, where it meets another parch mark that runs along the southern side of depression 'A'.

These markings continue westwards where the bank turns along the southern side of the depression, although they do not appear to be as wide as on the east side of the depression. Further

foundations have been noted turning eastwards at right angles to the north end of the east bank of the depression. These are shown by a slight hollow in the ground about 14 m in length. The latter are thought to be the foundations of the former south range of the hospital that was demolished by a faculty of 1789 (HRO 111M94W/Box 9). The hollow is thought to be

the filled-in remains of the garderobe channel that ran behind this range.

To the east of area 'A' is an area of uneven disturbance ('B'). The Lockburn stream emerges from a brick culvert on the eastern edge of this area. Parts of these earthworks are caused by the culvert forming a definite ridge about 0.3 m high that crosses 'B' in a WNW direction. A number of the disturbances in this area are of a sub-circular nature, and have the appearance of being places where large trees have been grubbed out in the past.

To the south and east of 'B' is a roughly rectangular depression ('C'), with an elliptical-shaped low mound, 12 m north-south by 7 m east-west by about 0.4 m high, within it. This area is approximately 70 m east-west by 35 m north-south, and is bounded by the Lockburn on its north and east sides. On the south and west sides, the area is bounded by a bank. This is quite pronounced on the south side, being up to 0.7 m high. At approximately half way along the south bank, a rectangular protrusion, 8 m by 14 m, extends northwards into the depression.

The rest of the area surrounded by the earthwork ditches is roughly even ground, sloping gradually from west to east, the fall over the internal area of about 115 m being less than 2 m.

Of the ditches surrounding the surveyed area, that on the west side ('D') is the best preserved, and most pronounced. The western side of this ditch is up to 0.8 m higher than the east side. This side is an apparent continuation of the west bank of the rectangular depression 'A'. The ditch itself has a roughly flat bottom, being up to 1 m wide at its base, and up to 12 m across the top. The ditch was up to 1.7 m below the top of the west bank, and 1.2 m below the east bank. At its southern end, the ditch became much shallower and wider for a short distance before fading out. The eastern side had a low counterscarp bank, up to 0.3 m high, parallel with the ditch.

Along the south side of the field was a bank up to 0.8 m high, with a pronounced drop on the south side, and a shallower drop to the north. About 70 m from its western end, the bank was interrupted by a low causeway-like feature, about 11 m across. The bank then continues eastwards, but gradually fades towards the south-east. Approximately parallel with the

bank, and between 2 and 5 m south of its base, was a recently cut ditch, which carries a flow of water in the winter. Beyond the ditch is a sports ground.

Along the northern side of the surveyed area, the Lockburn emerged from an underground culvert into a channel, up to 1.4 m deep in places. This extended for about 40 m to the north-east corner of the ditched area before turning at a right-angle southwards. The Lockburn progressed approximately southwards between banks up to 1.2 m high at the northern end, but decreasing in height to 0.3 m or less at the southern end. There were signs of a low counterscarp bank on both the east and west banks.

Discussion of the Earthworks

The documentary evidence discussed here gives clues as to the possible causes for earthworks in St Cross Park. Few of the trees within the area appear to be of any great antiquity. A study of the 1:500 Ordnance Survey first edition plan (sheets 50.1.17/18; 1871) seems to confirm this suggestion, indicating that many of the trees, particularly the central lime avenue, were planted after this date.

Within the earthworks are disturbed areas thought to be caused by the removal of old trees and shrubs. An old photograph of c. 1900 in the collections of the Winchester Local History Library (reference W36.26 St Cross) shows workmen cutting up old elms that had recently fallen in a storm in the area marked 'B' on Fig. 2. Disturbances here are thought to partly represent the site of these elms. This disturbed area can be accounted for further from clues on the 1871 1:500 Ordnance Survey plan. This shows that the Lockburn once extended about 20 m further west from the point where it currently emerges from its underground culvert. The Lockburn runs underneath a series of projecting latrines outside the existing west range of lodgings, and appear to have done the same to the south of the now demolished south range, before turning at a right angle into the present line of the stream. This range was demolished around 1789, but the foundations of their southern wall are still marked by a slight hollow. Until after 1871 the Lockburn followed its earlier course, when the old course was filled in, and a new culvert was cut across diagonally to the new exit. The infilling of the old channel,

and the removal of the elms after 1871 (probably at the very end of the 19th century), accounts for the disturbance of the ground in area 'B'.

Area 'A' has the appearance of a former pond (but see the Appendix for recent observations on this feature). The sharpness of the bank on the west side suggests that the bottom may have been dug out to form the depression. However, the parch marks recorded after the original survey had been completed may cause this initial interpretation to be revised. These indicate that stone walls once ran around the east, south, and possibly the west sides of this depression. The present line of the Lockburn, running behind the range of lodgings, is almost certainly artificial, but it is not certain whether it was diverted here in the 1440s in conjunction with the construction of these buildings by Beaufort, or whether it had been channelled here earlier. The ditch running along the west side of the survey area strongly suggests the stream ran through this area before the 1440s. If the present Lockburn had taken this course before the 1440s, it may have filled area 'A', making a pond. If this is the case, the contour survey shows that this pond may have extended under the present west range.

Artificial ponds serving both the function of providing fresh fish as a status food, and as ornaments to high status buildings such as the Hospital, were common in the medieval period (Currie 1989). It would be unusual if such facilities were not present at such a site. However, the only pond mentioned in Campeden's accounts is a *stagna* (sic) associated with one of the three mills on the site at that time. John Keevil (1994) has suggested that the feature 'A' may represent a pond serving a mill. Amongst the arguments given for this mill is the suggestion that it was one of the three mills mentioned in the survey of 1401. However, since the above article was written the Hospital muniments have become publicly available for the first time. These describe the mill in 1579 as being 'three corn mills under one roof commonly called St Cross Mills ...' (HRO 111M94/Q2/86/1), seemingly suggesting that the 'three mills' have always been on the one site. It is not unusual for multiple 'mills' in the medieval period to refer to the number of pairs of millstones, not the actual number of individual mill buildings.

It does not seem, therefore, that the walled feature was a pond (see Appendix). A more likely candidate is a walled garden. An 'enclosed garden' (*pro clausura gardini*) is mentioned in de Campeden's accounts that may fit this site. However, it is equally possible that the walled area may have been a later arrangement associated with the Beaufort layout of the 1440s. What was within this area before this is uncertain. The only thesis that can be stated with any degree of probability is that the Lockburn must have passed through this area at one time to feed the ditch around the survey area.

Water entering the area 'A' could have been channelled down the west ditch 'D', or along the present course of the Lockburn. Both alternatives are possible at the same time, if suitable sluices had been provided. Levels show that water flow southwards along ditch 'D' was likely, before turning eastwards along the conjectured ditch at 'E'.

The remains of the southern 'ditch' are problematic. It seems that a winter stream would have flowed from the west on the line of this ditch. Levelling of the ground to the south to make a sports' ground, and recutting of the present ditch, may have obscured evidence for what happened here in the past. However, the bank running along the southern edge of the surveyed area may be the surviving remnant of a ditch similar to that running along 'D'. The survey of 1401 suggests that a ditch ran along this line, but the term used could be interpreted both as a simple drainage ditch or a more substantial moat-like feature. Considering the nature of the ditch along the western boundary, it would seem to suggest the ditch on the south side was similar. A break in the bank at 'F' for an apparent causeway may represent an entrance to the ditched area from the south.

The present course of the Lockburn along the north and east sides of the surveyed area has clearly been artificially cut, and could therefore be taken to represent the other two sides of a ditched enclosure. The size of the surviving ditches suggests that they may have formed a moat. There is a possibility that the present course of the Lockburn was cut after ditches D and E had been in existence for some time, as an alternative course for the stream after the 1440s alterations. This latter idea is supported by the

acreage given for the orchard 'Connyger' in the 1401 survey.

The area enclosed by the ditches is mainly level ground apart from a slight natural fall from west to east. The 1401 survey suggests that this area was an orchard called Connyger, but its given area of four acres plus exceeds that of the ditched enclosure today, which is little under three acres. This might be explained by past inconsistencies in measurement. Another explanation is that Connyger included the strip of meadow between the mill stream (now the main river) and the eastern arm of the moat. If this is added to the moated area, it would be just over four acres, and may have been called Connyger before the ditches were cut. The measurement therefore refers to the original area, and not just that which later became enclosed by the ditches.

Another possibility is that the eastern arm of the moat had not been cut by 1401, but was undertaken later. As the Lockburn was made to turn east to pass under latrines of Beaufort's now-demolished south range in the 1440s and the earlier arrangement is not known, this could have been the time when this was undertaken. This could suggest that the moated form of the area came into being as part of Beaufort's reorganisation of the hospital precinct. If this is the case, then the site may have gone through at least two stages of development. It is even possible that the south and west ditches were abandoned after the 1440s. However, considering the high status of moats in the medieval period, it is more likely that the 'moat' would have been formed if the ditches existed around all four sides of the area. Whatever the answer, the earthworks in the north-east corner of the 'moat' (area 'C') appear to be designed symmetrically with the cutting of the north and east arms of the moat, and seem to be contemporary with this work.

This area is about half an acre, and is apparently divided from the rest of the ditched enclosure by a bank. The elliptical platform at the west end of this area may represent a building platform. Another possible building platform is the area projecting into 'C' from the southern bank that forms the area's southern boundary. The purpose of these possible buildings can not be determined without excavation.

Area 'C' may have been a special garden; a number are mentioned in the 1401 survey. One of the possible buildings may have been the 'house for the garden' that is mentioned in the accounts. An enigmatic reference to cleaning the ditches around the 'cemetery and garden' might be relevant, suggesting that area 'C' may be the site of the original cemetery, with the building platforms being the site of structures associated with that function. There is the possibility that the more elaborate earthworks here may represent a garden area of special status such as a 'paradise' cemetery garden. It is unlikely that the present burial ground at St. Cross is on the medieval site as it is thought that medieval buildings existed on the SE side of the church (Humbert 1857, 23). This area was not consecrated as a burial plot until 1785 (HRO 111M94W/Box 9), with subsequent enlargements after this date.

Since the survey has been undertaken John Keevil has pointed out that there are the remains of a building on the banks of the mill stream in direct line with the northern ditch. These comprise building materials, including bricks and clay tiles eroding out of the side of the bank.

Research amongst the recently acquired St Cross muniments at the Hampshire Record Office has helped identify the purpose of this building. A faculty dated 1782 gives the master permission to demolish the brewhouse 'which stands detached and at a Distance from all the other buildings of the said Hospital and is situated in a Meadow called the Grove on the Banks of the River Itchen.' Demolition, it is recorded, would open up the view to St. Catherine's Hill and the river (111M94W/uncatalogued). This brewhouse was probably the one mentioned in de Campeden's account as the buildings next to the stream bank (*Iuxta rivum fluvii*) that included a flow of water being channelled through a brewhouse (*cum cursu aque in modum gutteri in bracinam fluenti*). In an earlier essay on the buildings of St Cross the author stated that he thought this stream was probably the Lockburn (Currie 1995, 28). This is now shown to be incorrect. The watercourse in question is a short ditch cut off the mill stream under the brewhouse. A map of the area by Godson, dated 1751 (WCL WSS C/3/6), shows this layout exactly 31 years before the building was taken down (Fig. 4).



Fig. 4 St Cross as shown on the Godson map of 1751 (WCL WSS C/3/6)

A DISCUSSION OF MOATED GARDENS

Although it is now recognised that gardens were often moated in the medieval period (Taylor 1978, 10–12; Le Patourel 1978, 40–41), there has been no attempt to specifically study them. Excavations and field survey of moats have concentrated almost exclusively on looking for domestic and agricultural structures within them, and our knowledge of moated gardens derives almost entirely from documentary sources (Le Patourel 1978, 40–41).

Even here sources are scanty, and most of the evidence is late in date. For example, the abbot of Peterborough had a herber constructed in 1302 with a double moat around it (Harvey 1981, 13). At Kenilworth Castle, Warwickshire, a 'Pleasance' was constructed in the early 15th century with a double moat at the far end of the great 'mere' as part of an ornamental landscape. In 1465 carp are stocked into the moat in the close garden at Stoke-by-Nyland, Suffolk (Harvey 1981, 114). A moated orchard is recorded at Howden in Yorkshire (Le Patourel 1978, 23).

Archaeology has identified a number of moats that appear to be 'empty' in that they do not seem to contain buildings. Sites with more than one moat are fairly common, and the subsidiary moats are often thought to contain gardens (Le Patourel 1978, 40–41; Taylor 1978, 11–12). Furthermore, there was a known 'adaptive revival' of moats as garden features from the early 16th century onwards (Le Patourel and Roberts 1978, 46). Whether such sites represent the survival and reuse of earlier features is not always certain. Certainly a large number are thought to have been made from new at this time. Lord Burghley is recorded to have had a moated garden at Theobalds in 1598, where it was possible to go boating to see the plants (Strong 1979, 53).

Perhaps the most telling statement that moated gardens were once a common feature in medieval and early post-medieval England is an early 18th-century statement by Roger North. He gives an interesting analogy between moats and the craze for canals in gardens in late Stuart England:

'The View of it [the moat] is a Delicacy the greatest Epicures in Gardening court, and we hear of it by

the Name of Canal. Then the moving upon it in Boats ... after a Romantick Way; and thus Circling an House, taking in the Variety of Walks and Gardens here and there ... are Pleasures not given to be understood by any, but Statesmen laid aside for their Honesty, who by Experience are taught the Variety of Greatness ...' (North 1713, 33).

The documentary evidence for St Cross Hospital suggests that there was a ditch on the line of the present earthworks in the field to the south of the hospital in 1401. It would seem that at this date, the field there may have been an orchard. The name 'Connyger' suggests that it may have been converted from an earlier rabbit warren. Whatever the use in 1401, it is possible that this may have changed after the 1440s when the hospital was modified by Bishop Beaufort, taking on much of its present form.

It is possible that other gardens mentioned in the 1401 survey were also incorporated within the ditches. Campeden's accounts referring to the cleaning of ditches around the cemetery and the garden suggests the possibility that an early cemetery was included in the enclosure. For this to have been laid out as a 'paradise' cemetery-garden would not have been out of keeping with practices of the time. The name 'Connyger' suggests that the moat, as well as being a status symbol, may have been dug to keep unwelcome visitors out of the orchard of that name. Alternatively a rabbit warren may have been included within the orchard. Such an arrangement, strange though it might seem today, would not have been out of place in medieval gardens. In Piero de' Crescenzi's contemporary treatise on gardens, he mentions that 'hares, stags roebucks, rabbits and the like harmless beasts' may be placed in gardens for the amusement of the owners (Clackson 1986, 173).

The situation of St Cross, close to the River Itchen, was amply suited for the location of a moated site. There is precedence for this at nearby Prior's Barton, a grange farm of St Swithun's Priory, less than 0.5 km to the north, where there are the remains of a substantial moat marked on the 1873 25" Ordnance Survey map (Sheet 50.1; surveyed 1870, published 1873). Furthermore, there is considerable evidence

within the precinct of the hospital for substantial water engineering. It is almost certain that the Lockburn, the stream that would have fed the conjectured moat, was artificially channelled to the site.

The best evidence, however, is the Itchen itself, which runs in a purely artificial channel today. This is indicated by the 1401 survey where the bounds near St Cross Mill move from 'the main river known as Ichenstreme' through various points on to 'the old bed of the river' (Kirby 1899, 533–4). These two 'rivers' probably represent the river itself and the artificial mill leat. The two separate where the northern boundary of the precinct crosses the river, and then rejoin each other just below the mill. By-pass streams around mills were common on major rivers to allow passage, particularly for migrating fish, around what would otherwise have been a major obstacle. These two branches of the Itchen are clearly shown on John More's map of the river in 1618 (HRO 102M71/P1). The main river was then to the west, but this has subsequently declined to a small carrier, and the former mill leat is now the main river. This evidence confirms that considerable water engineering had taken place before the 1440s alterations to the site.

It seems that the former master of the hospital, Dr Abraham Markland (1694–1728), took a particular interest in gardening according to his epitaph, quoted above. His garden is recorded by contemporary travellers as being of some note. By the 1720s, if not before, he may have converted the area to the south of the hospital into a formal garden adorned with a canal and evergreen shrubs. Godson's map of the area for 1751 shows a wide canal-like feature on the site of the now partly filled in north ditch of the surveyed area (WCL WSS C/3/6). Other earthworks, and the present partly canalised stretch of the Lockburn, suggest that this area may have been surrounded by water. According to North, writing in 1713, it was a shame gardeners no longer used moats as part of garden design. This suggests that if Markland's canal, mentioned by Macky in 1722–23, was within the survey area, he is unlikely to have created it himself, as it would appear to be part of earlier earthworks. However, this hypothesis must be treated with caution as it is

possible that Macky's reference may refer to the rectangular pond in the present Master's Garden. This, in its turn, may have had medieval origins (Wood 1975, 207).

CONCLUSIONS

Throughout its history St Cross seems to have been noted for its gardens, which are mentioned specifically in a number of historic documents. An almshouse could be expected to attempt to create an air of serenity for its inmates by providing them with such features in which to pass their leisure time. Further, it would not be surprising for the master, a man of considerable income, to maintain fine gardens for himself.

A survey of 1401 suggests that an orchard surrounded by ditches called 'Connyger' may have existed on the site of the present earthworks. This site may have been reused in the late 17th/early 18th century as part of the gardens of Dr Markland, master of the hospital from 1694–1728. It seems unlikely that the apparent moated form of the site can be attributed to Markland, and it would therefore seem that the present ditches derive from an earlier layout.

It is possible that the earthworks surveyed here represent the site of a moated orchard, and another small garden, possibly a cemetery-garden or 'paradise' c. 1400. If this is the case, they represent a rare survival of what were once common medieval features.

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APPENDIX

Test Pit dug in Brother's Garden

During 1995, an excavation to plant a tree in the Brother's garden to the north of the hollowed area 'A' enabled observations to be made of the soil profiles here. No archaeological features were seen, but the section showed no sign of silt deposits in this area. The soils are composed of about 0.25 m of dark grey loam (10YR 3/1) overlaying about 0.2 m of dark brown clay loam (10YR 3/4). This overlay undisturbed chalk rub-

ble, less than 0.45 m below the surface. In the circumstances, it is most unlikely that a pond could have existed in this vicinity. This is shown by the absence of silts, but is further indicated by the chalk sub-soil. This would have been extremely permeable to water, and it is unlikely that a pond could have been created in the vicinity without some form of clay lining to assist water retention. Although the high water table here in relation to the nearby river could have allowed water to sit in hollowed areas during periods of heavy rain, the idea of a more permanent pond is difficult to support.

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