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LAND MANAGEMENT AND CUSTUMAL DIVERSITY ON THE ESTATE OF MOTTISFONT PRIORY IN THE 1340s

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ABSTRACT

This essay looks at the estate of the Augustinian priory of Mottisfont as described in a survey of c. 1340–42 in the Hampshire Record Office. The survey shows that there were decided differences in the management of the estate just prior to the Black Death. Although there was still much land held in demesne, there were signs that leasing out had already begun. The differences between the management of Mottisfont manor, adjacent to the priory, and its outlying estate is notable. Study of later documents has allowed some of the place-names in the Mottisfont portion of the survey to be located in the overall landscape.

INTRODUCTION

Mottisfont Priory was a house of Augustinian canons founded *c.* 1200 by William Briwere or Brewer, a powerful Hampshire landowner (Dugdale 1846 (6), 480–83; *VCH*, II, 172) (Fig. 1). It was never a rich house, and seems to have suffered badly during, and in the years after, the Black Death. It narrowly avoided early closure in 1494, but hung on until its final suppression in 1536 (*VCH*, II, 174).

The monastic land of the priory at Mottisfont represents an uncommon example of a monastic estate that has remained as an undivided land unit since the medieval period. After the Dissolution the estate passed to Sir William Sandys of the Vyne, Sherborne St. John, Hampshire. He converted the monastic buildings into a double courtyard mansion, with the main rooms occupying the site of the former monastic nave. On the death of Edwin Sandys in 1684, the estate passed to Sir John Mill, the son of Edwin Sandys' daughter, Margaret (*VCH*, IV, 503). During the 19th century it acquired the misnomer 'abbey', and became known as Mottisfont Abbey. Although the estate passed in the female line on a number of occasions, it continued to pass by inheritance until 1934, when Peter Barker-Mill sold the estate to Mr and Mrs Gilbert Russell. The house had been reduced in size *c.* 1741, but much of the monastic fabric has survived. The Russells set about modernising the house and grounds, and although many of their grander schemes were not carried out, they employed modern designers such as Rex Whistler, Geoffrey Jellicoe and Norah Lindsey to make alterations. In 1957 the widowed Mrs Russell donated the estate to the National Trust, with whom it remains (Honess 1976).

The general pattern of land management on both secular and ecclesiastical estates in the late 14th and 15th centuries was for land previously held as demesne to be farmed out for money rents (Harvey 1969; Bolton 1980, 208–16; Mate 1984; Rigby 1995, 84–85). Subsequently, those tenants taking on the land leases gradually became free of the custumal obligations associated with demesne farming (Dyer 1980, 290–94; Martin 1986; Rigby 1995, 86–87). The social unrest centred around the uprisings of 1381 was, at least in part, the product of landlords being unable to come to terms with this situation and attempting to reimpose custumal obligations on their unfree tenants, who were seeking to capitalise on the socio-economic advantages presented to them by the dramatic demographic changes brought about by the Black Death (Hilton 1973; Eiden 1998). However, the chronology of the decline of demesne farming and labour-services was not wholly dependent upon the social and economic dislocations of the later Middle Ages. Landowners of the 12th century had practised mixed demesne and lease farming on their estates, and conditions on most large estates in the early four-

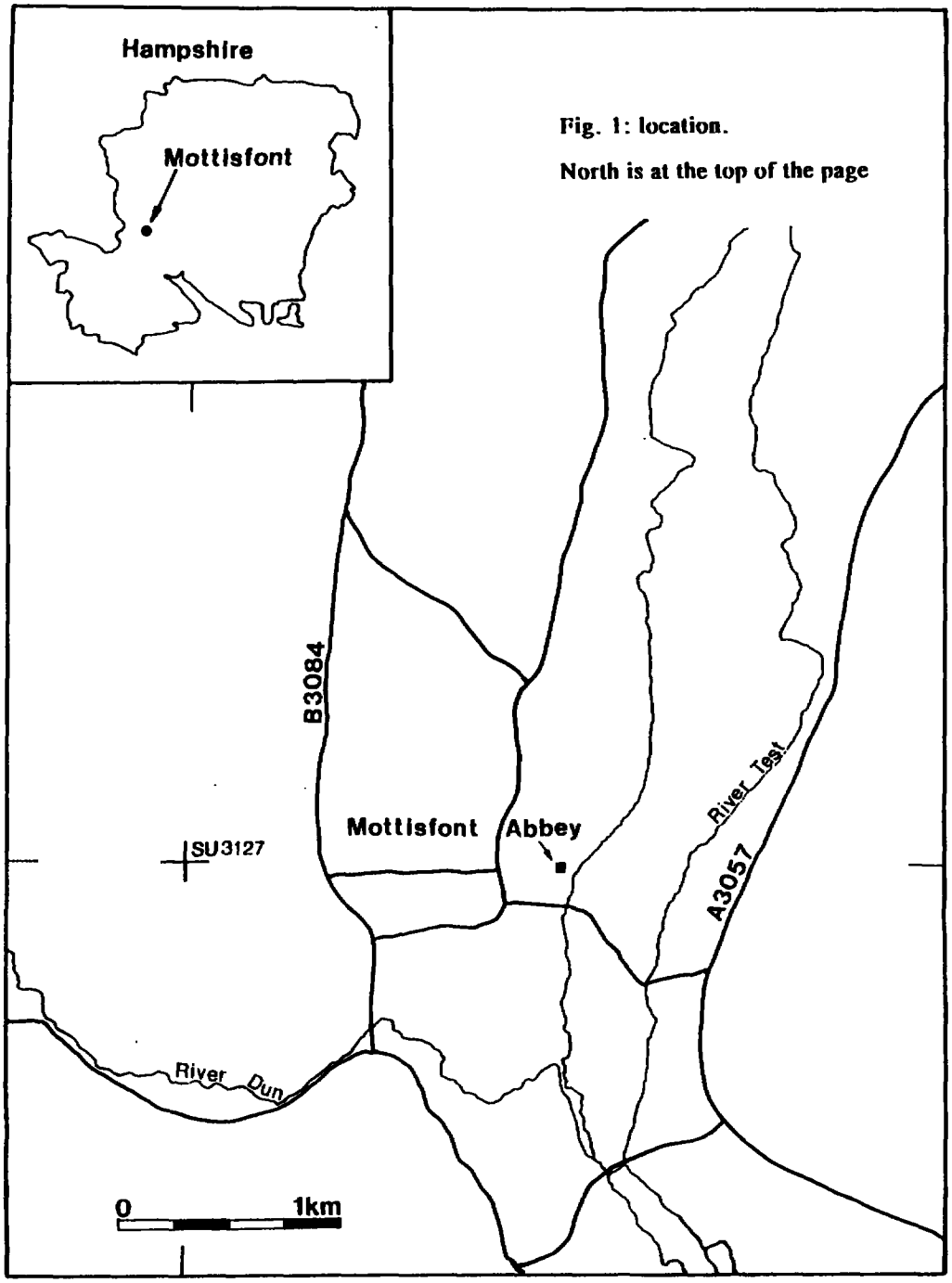

Fig. 1 Location of Mottisfont Abbey

teenth century reflected the incomplete reclamation of land for direct management by lay and ecclesiastical landowners after the dramatic inflationary pressures of *c.* 1180–1220, reclamation which did not necessarily involve the retention of labour-services but could instead involve the hiring of wage labour (Miller 1971; Miller 1973; Harvey 1973; Bolton 1980, 87–90; Rigby 1995, 75–76; Campbell 2000, 3–10).

It is in this context that the estate of the Augustinian house of Mottisfont Priory in Hampshire (the priory is centred on SU 32712695) can be studied thanks to the survival of a detailed survey compiled by the then cellarer of the priory, Walter de Blount, between 1340–1342 (HRO 13M63/3). This survey has been designated as a rental, yet its contents demonstrate that it was serving more than this purpose alone. Those tenants farming priory land were listed with the amount of land at farm and their annual rent, but the main emphasis was upon recording the demesne land-holding of the priory. As such, the survey could also be seen as an extent, taken for the needs of managing the estate held in hand. But there are also details of the custumal work services rendered by the unfree tenants on the demesne of the priory on some of the manors. The survey must therefore be seen as a multi-purpose administrative document meant to serve as both a quantification of the priory's estate and as a management tool for the ongoing seigniorial exploitation of its resources. The reason for its production at this particular point in time is almost certainly related to the assessment of seigniorial demesne land holdings for fiscal purposes by a government commission in 1341, which came to be known as the *Nonarum Inquisitiones* (Stamper 1983, 72–83; Campbell 2000, 41). The priory would have been anxious to supply an accurate survey ahead of taxation and the extent is probably the result of the efforts of Walter de Blount to supply such an assessment. The combination of the recording of demesne and land at farm in the survey demonstrates the priory's desire to integrate and rationalise its estate management policy at a time when population pressure could have been placing extra demands on land use and necessitating the more efficient exploitation of the estate (Campbell 2000, 386–410).

Unfortunately, there is a dearth of further evidence for the continuing management of the Mottisfont estate in the later Middle Ages, and so the extent to which the survey was actually used as an administrative tool remains unknown. However, the survey is a relatively comprehensive document for an important moment in the history of this medium sized Hampshire priory and can thus be utilised in an interdisciplinary fashion, with archaeological evidence, to assess the strategies of land management and the extent of custumal service on the demesne land of the priory on the eve of the Black Death.

THE OUTER PRECINCT AND CLOSE OF THE PRIORY

The economic centre of a monastic estate was the outer precinct beyond the ritual areas of church and cloister (Moorhouse 1989, 39–43; Aston 2000, 101–24). At Mottisfont the survey allows for a partial reconstruction of this precinct (HRO 13M63/3, fols 1^{r-v}). The first item mentioned is the spring (*fons*) to the south of the church from which Mottisfont is thought to take its name (Gover 1961, 189). This fed a pond (*stagnum*) which supplied the power for two water mills valued at 60*s.* a year, derived from the priory's milling rights in the manor (*C.Pat.R 1343–1345*, 547). Some commentators have implied that this meant there were two different mills in the precinct (e.g. Honess 1976). This is unlikely. When a 'mill' is described in medieval documents it generally meant that there were two sets of stones; two mills being two sets of stones. It is therefore likely that the two mills in the precinct were two sets of stones housed under the roof of the same building (cf. Currie 1998a, 176). The survey continues by describing two gardens within the close, the Great Garden (*Magnum Gardinum*) and *Coumbeorchard*. They were valued with pasture in the same place at 30*s.* a year which suggests that they covered a reasonable acreage between them. At the medieval St Cross Hospital in Winchester a recent study has shown that there were orchards and gardens covering over nine acres within the precinct bounds (Currie 1998a, 172). At Mottisfont the produce of these places would have been a vital part of the house's internal economy, shown by the fact that the infirmary had its own close of fruit trees worth 6*s.* 8*d.* The priory also took the opportunity to double up on its resources. Under the

infirmary fruit trees the ground was managed as meadow, whilst in *Coumbesorchard* the grass beneath the trees had additional value as pasture. This type of intensive management of garden resources is reflected in the 14th-century Italian gardening treatise by Piero de Crescenzi (Calkins 1986).

Also within the outer precinct were two dovecotes valued at 13*s.* 4*d.* a year; a tannery building with a meadow worth the same; a pasture called *Condrove* valued at 6*s.* 8*d.* a year; a small meadow appropriated to the sacristy valued at 2*s.* a year; and two meadows containing the place-name element -hamme- (*Chalfhamme* and *Orchardeshamme*) suggesting that they were water meadows to the east of the cloister (Smith 1956, 229–31). Interestingly, there are three further meadows – *Southmede*, *Middelmede* and *Northmede* – which contain a total of 87 acres between them and which are also stated as being within the close (*infra clausum*) of the priory (HRO 13M63/3, fol. 1^{v}). The only area large enough to contain such a close was that located to the north of the church and cloister, where approximately 80 acres plus the floodplain of the River Test must have constituted the area of these three meadows. Whatever was used to enclose this 'close' effectively extended the outer precinct boundary to encompass the large tract of land stretching to the Oakley road. The retention of such a large acreage of meadow within the priory's immediate vicinity meant that there was a convenient bloc of enclosed demesne meadow which would not have been feasible anywhere else in the manor. The subsequent ease of transportation of the harvested hay to the priory and the failure of the survey to give values to the meadows (as it does for other meadows), suggests that the hay was for the use of the home farm rather than for commercial profit. The annual yield of hay from such an area would have served the needs of winter fodder and other domestic uses of an institution the size of Mottisfont and would have created enclosed spaces in the immediate vicinity of the priory for keeping livestock (Rackham 1987, 334–38; Harvey 1988, 122–23; Campbell 2000, 71–76).

There is no mention of fishponds within or without the precinct and so fish for the canons' own diet was most probably obtained from the priory's five acre fishpond at Timsbury (*C.Ch.R 1226–1257*, 40), although monastic fishponds were not constructed to produce a commercially exploitable surplus, and it is possible the survey does not include them for this reason (Currie 1989). A potential location for fishponds at the priory would be on the site of the later peat excavations and duck-ground to the east of the precinct stretching towards the River Test. The artificial water channel here is usually thought to be post-Dissolution in date – some moulded stone from the priory has been found constituted in its bank (Currie and Rushton 1999). But this could easily be from a *re*building of the bank, and it is feasible that the river diversion and earthworks are medieval in origin and constitute water management by the priory so as to have a nearby supply of fresh fish for their own consumption (Currie 1988; Bond 1989, 97–99). The earliest map of the area, by Charles Mason in 1724 (HRO 13M63/420), shows the water system in place by that date, but without any corroborative documentary evidence or archaeological excavation the date of the canalisation of the River Test must remain unknown.

The buildings pertaining to the home farm of the priory must have been at the west gate (the south-east gate area being too restricted by size and its liability to water logging) where access to and from the village and the north-south routeway would have allowed the economic activity of the priory to be carried out here by lay officials and servants without infringing upon the ritual areas of church and cloister. The survey describes two curtilages, one inside and one outside the close (HRO 13M63/3, fol. 1^{r}) and it is possible that these buildings with yards constituted at least part of the home farm complex clustered around the west gate, perhaps partly occupying the site of the present Abbey Farm. This home farm was essential for the everyday running of the priory and its household, but even with the large area of meadow within the close the main land management concerns of the priory and the basis of its wealth rested not with the home farm but with its extramural estate. First among these was Mottisfont manor itself.

THE LANDSCAPE OF MOTTISFONT MANOR

The survey allows for a certain amount of landscape reconstruction of the manor of Mottisfont

thanks to the listing of field, furlong and close names (HRO 13M/63/3, fols 2[r]–4[r]) (Fig. 2). There were three large open fields surrounding the priory and village – the north, south and west fields – and closes at *Strode* and *Bentlegh*, which were all labelled as land at *Cadeburi* and then divided into three sowings (*semen*). The west field was called *Le Westfeld de Cadebury* and contains over 61 acres, with the nearby fields of *Aylesburyacre* and *Ayrchesacre* each over 4½ acres each, all of which were sown with a single crop (HRO 13M63/3, fol. 2[r]). The vicinity of the west field can be identified by the present field name Westfield Copse, south of Cadbury Farm. At the same sowing what appear to be parts of the north field were sown. *Le Puchalne* (over ½ acre), *La Longehalne* (over 1½ acres), *Walyngton* (over 4½ acres), *Herlegh* (over 16 acres), and *Houndestyle* (over 3 acres) were all in this field and were each described as *placea* (HRO 13M63/3, fols 2[r]–2[v]). Wallington and Herless can be identified today as field names to the north of Bengers Lane, thereby making the land here within the north field.

At 'another seed' (*aliud semen*) a further 20½-plus acres between the king's road and the cellarer's hedge was sown in Cadbury. This is probably the land between Westfield Copse and the B3084 at Spearywell. A number of other furlongs are mentioned after this, few of which are identifiable today, although the *Dunnyngsok* seems to have the same root element as Dunbridge, suggesting this land is south of Keeper's Lane towards Dunbridge (HRO 13M63/3, fols 2[v]–3[r]). One of these furlongs extends from the 'southern part of the prior's quarry' (HRO 13M63/3, fol. 3[r]), suggesting that quarrying was being undertaken in the pre-Black Death period. One of the most notable features of the Mottisfont landscape is the large number of old quarries on the estate; most of the present woods grow on old quarry sites (see below). If the assumption that these furlongs are located towards Dunbridge south of Keeper's Lane then the quarry mentioned could be one of three old quarries south of Hatt Farm. The sowing of the second crop also encompassed *La Southfeld de Motesfonte* and included a place called *Tylereslond* within it (HRO 13M63/3, fol. 3[r]). 'South Field' field-name elements still survived at the time of the tithe survey to the south of Hatt Lane (HRO 21M65/F7/164/1–2), and so it is likely that this is the south field of medieval Mottisfont. As all the identified field names are north of Bengers Lane, it is possible that the land between Hatt Lane and Bengers Lane was also in the south field. The name *Tylereslond* is interesting because it suggests an association with tile making in the general vicinity. Brick and tile making was carried out at Mottisfont (probably at Spearywell) in the late 17th century, when it was recorded that William Berrier paid rent by providing the lord of the manor with a set number of bricks and 'Ridge Tyles' (HRO 13M63/39). It is possible to suggest that the name indicates the presence of 14th-century tile making in Mottisfont.

The survey next records the lands sown at *Cadebury* with a third sowing. Some furlongs of interest include one next to *Denebruggeshegge*, again suggesting a location south of the priory towards Dunbridge, and intimating that this furlong was on the edge of the open field where there was a hedge separating it from other lands. Another furlong extends above *Hurtheslane*, giving the name of one of the three lanes leading into Mottisfont village, while another extends 'continuously along the road to *Le Tylcroft* within the gate of *Cadebury* along the southern part of the road', giving further indications for tile making activity in Mottisfont (HRO 13M63/3, fol. 3[v]).

LAND MANAGEMENT ON THE PRIORY ESTATE

The reason the survey records the landscape in so much detail is that Walter de Blount, and his officials, were carrying out the survey in accordance with the 13th-century Norman French treatise known as the *Husbandry* by Walter de Henley, a copy of which is attached to the beginning of the survey (HRO 13M63/3, fols i-xi; the treatise is translated in Oschinsky 1971, 417–48). The land divisions throughout adhere to the criteria for measuring stipulated in the *Husbandry*:

> All the land ought to be measured, each field by itself and each furlong by name. And each meadow by itself and each pasture and wood ... And all the land ought to be mea-

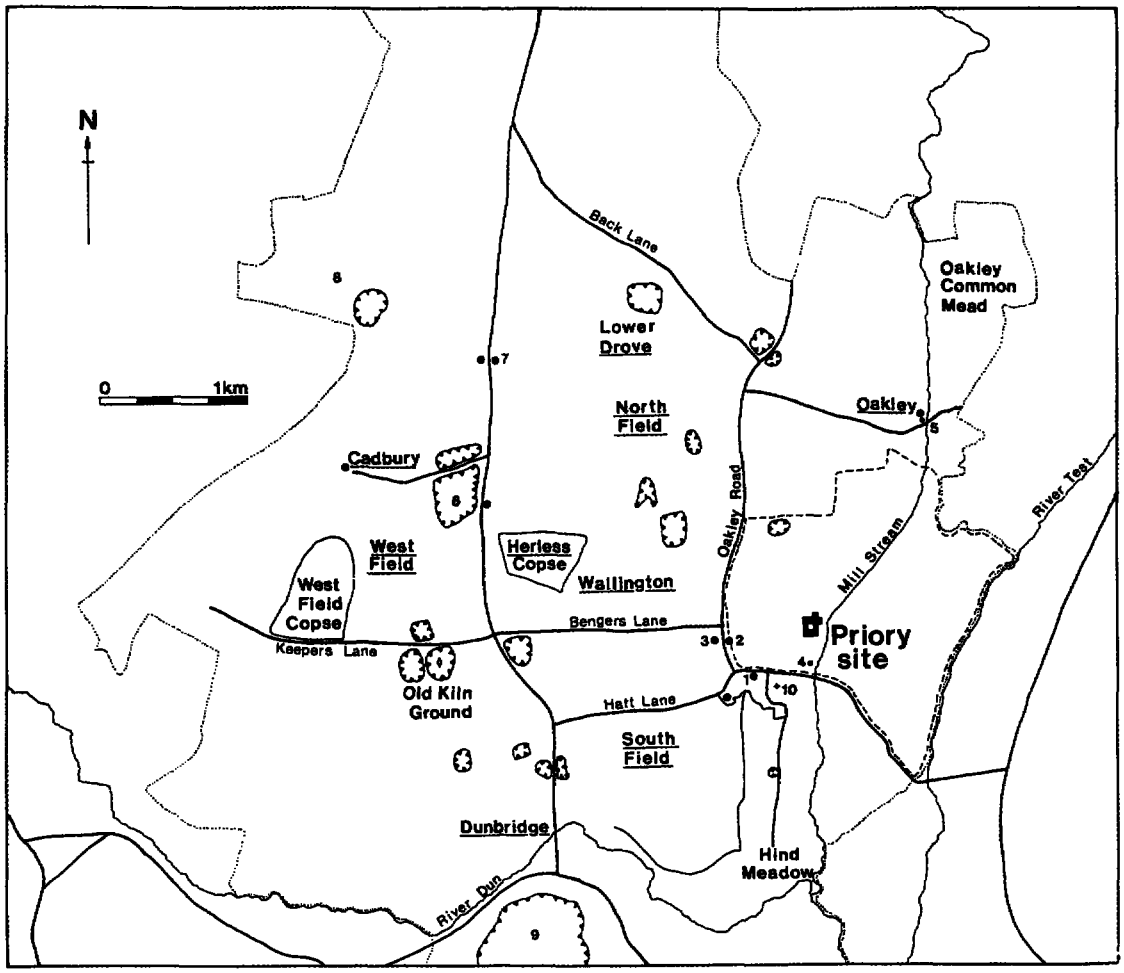

Fig. 2 The landscape of the Mottisfont Estate

Underlined place-names are given in medieval texts.

- • Medieval House sites
- o Mills
- + Mottisfont village church
- ◊ Kiln site (undated)
- Quarry sites (undated)
- ..... Parish boundary
- ----- Conjectured precinct boundary in 1340s: shown as tithe free land in 1724 (HRO 13M63/420)

1. Medieval (tithe?) barn
2. Abbey (Home) Farm
3. Mottisfont Treasury Manor
4. Mottisfont Mill
5. Oakley Mill?
6. Site of post-medieval brickworks
7. Spearywell Farm
8. Black Pits Copse
9. Dunbridge Hill (extensive quarries in woodland)
10. Mottisfont parish church.

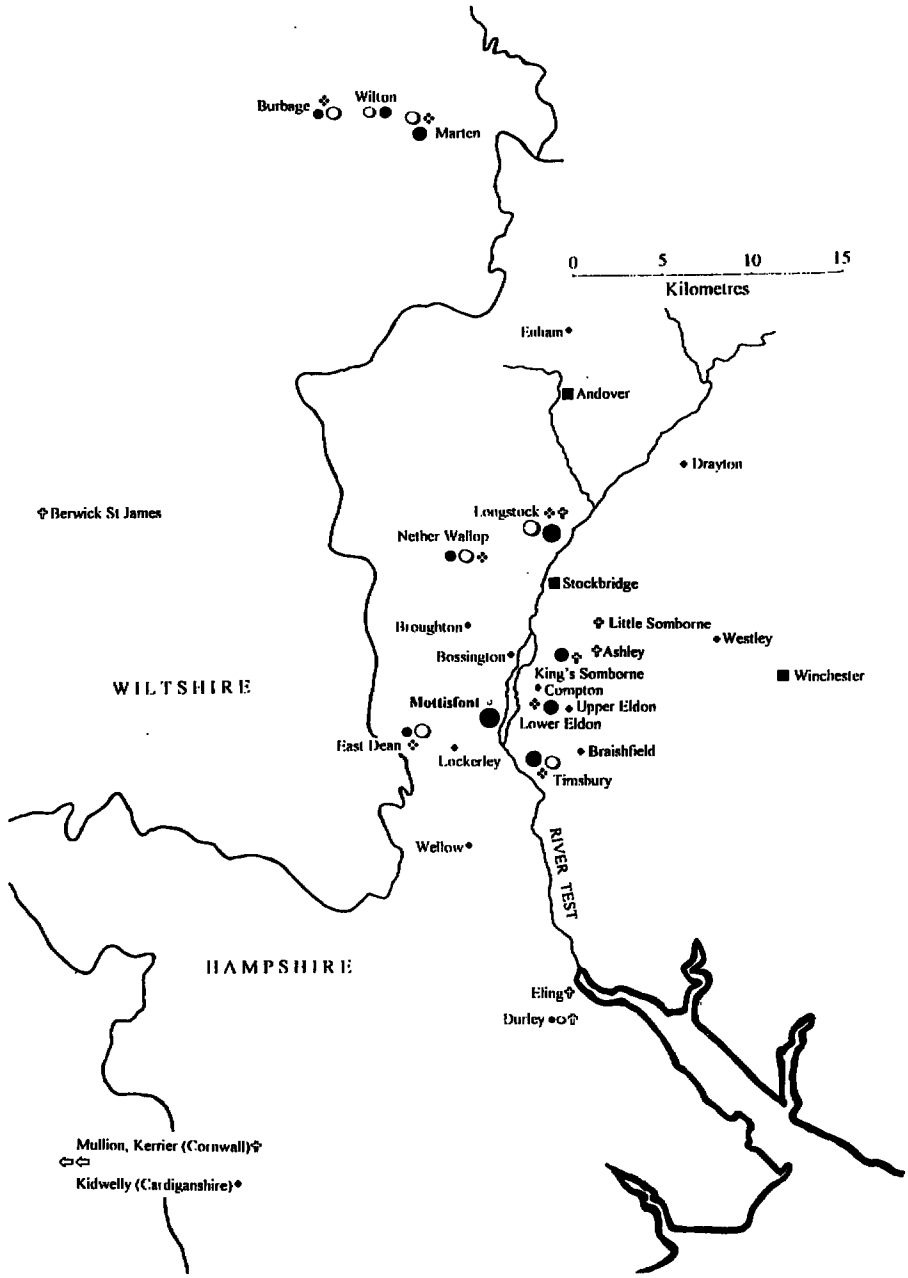

Fig. 3 The estates of Mottisfont Priory in 1340–42. ● Arable/Meadow in demesne (proportional); ○ Arable/Meadow leased (proportional); ❖ Pasture (not in proportion); ■ Other property/land from the rental; ◆ Other property/land from other sources; ✝ Appropriated church

Table 1 Mottisfont Priory manors as surveyed by Walter de Blount in 1340–42

Manor	*Survey ref. HRO 13M63/3*	*Location ref. and hundred*	*Soil type*	*Height A.S.L in metres*	*Value infra curia*
Mottisfont	*Motesfont* fols 1^{r}–8^{v}	SU 327720 Thorngate	Loam/sand over chalk	34	£7 18s. 8d.
Nether Wallop	*Wallop* fols 9^{r}–16^{r}	SU 304365 Thorngate	Loam/sand over chalk	54	£2 7s. 0d.
Longstock	*Langstoke* fols 17^{r}–33^{r}	SU 359371 K. Somborne	Peat/gravel over chalk	45	£1 6s. 8d.
King's Somborne	*Somborne* fols 35^{r}–39^{v}	SU 362309 K. Somborne	Loam/clay over chalk	35	£3 18s. 2d.
Durley	*Durlegh* fols 41^{r}–45^{v}	SU 358107 Eling	Clay/sand	18	£0 6s. 8d.
Lower Eldon	*Elledene* fols 46^{r}–51^{v}	SU 357278 K. Somborne	Loam/clay/ Gravel over chalk	60	£0 6s. 8d.
East Dean	*Deone* fols 52^{v}–58^{v}	SU 275267 Thorngate	Loam/clay over chalk	38	£1 16s. 8d.
Timsbury	*Tymberbury* fols 59^{r}–67^{r}	SU 346246 K. Somborne	Loam/clay over gravel	23	£2 13s. 7d.
Marten	*Merthone* fols 70^{r}–78^{r}	SU 284602 Kinwardstone, Wilts.	Chalk	145	£1 7s. 8d.
Wilton	*Woltone* fols 79^{r}–81^{v}	SU 267615 Kinwardstone, Wilts.	Chalk	129	folio missing
Burbage	*Burbache* fols 82^{r}–91^{r}	SU 230615 Kinwardstone, Wilts.	Chalk	165	no values given

> sured with a rod of sixteen foot, because on land which is measured by the rod of sixteen foot one may in places sow four acres of wheat, rye and peas with one quarter and in other places one may sow five acres with one quarter and a half. And one may sow two acres of land with one quarter of barley, beans or oats. (Oschinsky 1971, 443).

This benchmark was followed throughout the manors over which the priory held jurisdictional rights, which in the 1340s numbered eleven (Fig. 3).

The tenurial situation of these manors varied somewhat, but the priory benefited from being granted an estate made up mostly of cohesive single-manor villages, despite the relatively late foundation date (Dugdale 1846 (6), 480–83). The surviving lay subsidy assessments of 1333, seven years before the survey, demonstrate that the numbers of tenants recorded as heads of household in the tax assessment were of similar numbers (allowing for some underassessment) as those recorded in the survey (PRO E 179/242/15a; PRO E 179/196/8; Tab 2). This further strengthens the case for seeing these manors as coherent single-manor units. The home manor itself consisted of the whole village of Mottisfont with its appurtenant open fields – a unit which had been carved out of part of the Archbishop of York's estate in the parish, known as Mottisfont Treasury (there were six further sub-manors in the parish, two of which belonged to the priory, and all of which were never more than single farmhouses or hamlets, *VCH*, IV, 506–508). Indeed, the parish church always remained a spiritual possession of the Archbishop's manor, and in 1229 the priory agreed to pay a silver mark each year to the parish church in compensation for loss of tithes and associated revenues (HRO 13M63/2, fols 147^{r}–149^{r} is a copy of a 1311 agreement of this arrangement). But the priory held jurisdictional rights over the manor and, by holding most of the arable and

Table 2 Demesne and leased land and tenants on the estate of Mottisfont Priory as recorded in the survey of 1340–42 (all areas to nearest ½ acre).

Manor	*Demesne land (acres/sheep)*			*Land leaser at farm (acres)*			*Tenants*	
	ar.	*mead.*	*past.*	*ar.*	*mead.*	*past.*	*free*	*unfree*
Mottisfont	312½	133	0	5	0	0	44	0
Nether Wallop	86	15	300s	129½	0	0	8	11
Longstock	372	19½	0	329	10	0	7	22
King's Somborne	189	22½	330s	0	0	0	only tithes specified	
Durley	27	8½	0	30	3½	0	7	21
Lower Eldon	144½	20	59a	0	0	0	u/s	u/s
East Dean	68	7½	160s	199	4½	0	7	12
Timsbury	220	80½	137a	181	13½	0	4	21
Marten	188	18	52½a	128½	0	0	1	24
Wilton	129	0	0	84	u/s	0	5	2
Burbage	68	5	1½a	125½	9	2	0	6
Total	1804 250a	329½	790s	1211½	40½+	2	83	119

s – heads of sheep; a – acres; u/s – unspecified

Most manorial capital messuages also contained various amounts of garden and sometimes meadow as well, which are not added in the table as the separate type of endowments were not always differentiated. There were also tenements and small parcels of land recorded as paying rent to the priory in Andover (HRO 13M63/3, fols 33^{r}–33^{v}), Stockbridge (HRO 13M63/3, fols 34^{r-v}) and Winchester (HRO 13M63/3, fols 68^{r}–69^{v}), whilst the two 15th-century cartularies (HRO 13M63/1–2) demonstrate that land was also held in Drayton, Westley, Compton, Braishfield, Lockerley, Broughton, Bossington, Enham, Upper Eldon, Wellow (all in Hampshire) and Kidwelly in South Wales in the pre-Black Death period. Although none of these constituted manors. It should also be remembered that the number of tenants constitute heads of household only.

meadow in hand, was able to dictate its landlordship over an autonomous unit. There was little scope for the villagers to rent any arable land of their own in the parish and thus their dependence on wage labour for the priory can only have been offset by production for the market (see below), or by the holding of land in other parishes. This last point must be taken into consideration and, although such landholdings by the peasantry of Mottisfont could only be discovered in a wider study, it should be noted that by the mid-14th century, village communities were relatively mobile in their patterns of landholding (DeWindt 1987).

With the exceptions of King's Sombourne and Nether Wallop, the other manors making up the priory's estate were also single-manor villages and as such gave the priory an estate which could be exploited without the problems of shortages of tenants to work the demesne, which may have been the case had the estate been a collection of sub-manors carved out of larger estates. Amongst the Hampshire manors, it is noticeable that Nether Wallop has the smallest number of tenants, namely for the reason that the multi-manor status of the Wallops meant that in effect, the priory only held a sub-manor here with no more than nineteen heads

of house and their families to work on the demesne as labour service or for cash (Tab 2). At King's Sombourne the village had as many as four manorial lords at various times through the Middle Ages, and the priory had no tenants at all (*VCH*, IV, 469–73; Tab 2). The villagers would thus have worked the arable and pasture demesne for cash wages. In the pre-Black Death period this was probably not a problem for the priory, but after the sharp population decline caused by plague, sub-manors such as King's Sombourne would have been the first holdings to be leased out to farmers in order to alleviate the common problem of finding wage-labour (Bolton 1980, 208–16; Rigby 1995, 86–87). But in the 1340s, Mottisfont Priory's estate could be closely managed by the canons largely due to the autonomous integrity of the manors which they held.

The survey also includes details of rents and tithes from various other locations, but it is from the entries for these eleven manors that the techniques of land management can be gauged. The details of these manors, land endowments and rents are given in Tables 1 and 2.

The geographical location of the priory's estate conforms to the pattern noticed at other Augustinian priories whereby the majority of owned manors were within a day's travel from the priory (Robinson 1980, I, 314–20). The original foundation grant of William Briwere furnished the priory with mostly local lands, and subsequent land acquisitions by the priory seem to confirm a policy of increasing the endowment only within a limited area (Dugdale 1846 (6), 480–83; HRO 13M63/1, 2 are 15th-century cartularies from Mottisfont). Figure 3 demonstrates the cluster of estate lands along the Test valley within a radius of 17 kilometres of the priory. Access to and from these holdings was thus made easy by road or river without having to deal with the logistics of administering remote manors. The three Wiltshire manors of Burbage, Wilton and Marten were more than a day's journey from Mottisfont but their closeness to each other meant that the priory was able to administer them as a unit. The site of the *curia* at the small village of Burbage seems to have been an impressive residence with two manor houses, a hedged moat and a home farm (possibly housing a *famulus*) with a bailiff and four named administrative officials (HRO 13M63/3, fol. 82^{r}), and it is reasonable to suggest that these three manors formed a sub-estate managed from Burbage. The slightly different format of the survey and the internal differences of land measurement (in the Hampshire manors a virgate was 28 acres but in Wiltshire 32 acres) for these Wiltshire manors is further evidence that this was the case (HRO 13M63/3, fols 70^{r}–91^{r}).

The survey demonstrates that at all the manors except Durley (where salt working was more important than agriculture) the demesne and leased arable land conformed to what is called the 'Midland' system and lay in two or, more usually, three open fields divided into named furlongs (Miller & Hatcher 1978, 88–97). As discussed, at Mottisfont there were three open fields divided into three separate crop sowings. Unfortunately these crops are not specified, but it is clear that all three fields were under one of the three seeds, and that the units of measurement which mattered were the furlongs not the whole fields (Ault 1965, 9–10; Oschinsky 1971, 443; Baker & Butlin 1973, 642–43). The survey was made in May (HRO 13M63/3, fol. 9^{r}), and so the first sowing of 132½ acres would have been the previous winter's seed of wheat, whilst the second sowing of 84 acres would have been the spring mixture, probably barley (Baker & Butlin 1973, 642–43; Campbell 2000, 222–23). This left 96 acres for the third sowing spread over the three fields. This could suggest that the priory was simply overcropping its demesne on the home manor and would subsequently suffer from declining yields as the soil became exhausted. Without any surviving series of manorial accounts it is not possible to assess the changing values in crop yields which soil exhaustion would bring about. But there is supporting evidence from other southern demesnes that where the soil was of high enough quality, fallows could be almost eliminated, and that it was the policy of many seigniorial landlords to practice a sustainable system of near continuous cropping when possible (Mate 1980, 331–34; Brandon 1988, 318–20; see map in Campbell 2000, 253). The fact that all the remainder of the demesne land at Mottisfont is specifically stated as being at a third sowing suggests that the manor was practising what Bruce Campbell has termed 'intensive mixed-farming':

> Demesnes practising this most exacting form of husbandry devoted the lion's share of the

> winter course to wheat, the most demanding crop of all, and partly to replenish soil nitrogen, partly for fodder, and partly for food, grew legumes on a larger scale than in any other farming system. This is consistent with virtually continuous cropping of the arable and the near elimination of fallows. (Campbell 1997, 232)

Legumes are spring-sown and so could have constituted the third sowing (Campbell 2000, 269–71). If so, it is demonstrative of the intensification of arable farming at the Mottisfont manor, suggesting that the pre-Black Death population pressure in and around the priory's home manor was perhaps coercing it into a more soil-demanding agricultural regime which required the sowing of nitrogen-replenishing legumes instead of the annual fallowing of a third of the arable land. This would have been possible on the high grade agricultural land of the Test Valley, away from the flood plain, demonstrated by the high value of land recorded in the *Nonarum Inquisitiones* of 1341, which has been mapped by Stamper (1983, 72–83). In general Hampshire does not show any contraction in land under cultivation in the pre-Black Death years as has been demonstrated from the *Inquisitiones* for other parts of the country (Baker 1966), and contraction certainly does not seem the case at Mottisfont. Alternatively, such land management could be seen less as an enforced system for localised needs and more of an adaptation to meet the wider needs of the market where increased demand, because of continued demographic growth and the expansion of the monetary economy, created the potential for increased cash profits from increased yields (Postan 1954a; Bolton 1980, 95–96; Britnell 1981; Stamper 1983, 33–39; Campbell 1995).

In practice the priory's land management policies were probably a reaction to both. There was possibly a market in Mottisfont by the time the survey was made (*C.Ch.R 1341–1417*, 127; this is a market licence granted in 1351 to Mottisfont Treasury, but which could have been formalising an earlier arrangement), but even if there were not, the nearest local market in 1342 was only two miles away in Lockerley, and Winchester, only twelve miles distant, provided a major market for consumables (Stamper 1983, 42). Demographic pressure could have created a market-demand for leguminous vegetables, so as to make their intensive cultivation economically profitable despite the apparent downturn in prices in the two decades before the Black Death (Phelps & Hopkins 1962, 184 & 193). Crowland Abbey in Lincolnshire was certainly practising intensive mixed-farming on some of its manors in the 13th and 14th centuries, and selling its leguminous vegetables for prices as high as 8*s.* a quarter (Page 1934, 118 & 326–28). But if Mottisfont Priory were intensifying its arable farming as an economic venture alone it would surely have introduced it on other manors where the soil and drainage allowed. This was not the case.

The manor of Timsbury had 74½ acres of its 220 acres demesne arable land as fallow when it was surveyed in May 1340 (HRO 13M63/3, fols 60^{v}–61^{v}). At Nether Wallop 29% of demesne land was fallow in May 1340 (HRO 13M63/3, fols 9^{v}–12^{r}), whilst at Longstock, Lower Eldon, East Dean, Marten and Burbage there were three fields containing sometimes more than one type of winter or spring sowing each (rye for instance could be sown at the same time as wheat in winter) but which did not receive a third sowing in their open fields (HRO 13M63/3, fols 17^{r} *passim*). Somborne and Wilton manors seem to have worked a two-field system sowing winter and spring mixtures. Somborne is complicated by its multi-manor status, but the arable land of Wilton was certainly divided into a north and south field and there is mention of inferior and superior furlongs which suggests that the thinner soil and higher altitude of the Wiltshire manor meant that a system of fallowing was a necessary part of managing the land. There was certainly no third sowing here (HRO 13M63/3, fols 35^{r}–38^{r} & 79^{r}–80^{v}).

Without another survey for comparison it is impossible to say whether the 'intensive mixed-farming' recorded at Mottisfont manor in the 1340s was an innovation or an established policy, but it does seem (along with other evidence discussed below) that the demesne arable land on the priory's home manor was being managed differently from the rest of the estate. This could have been a strategy to supply the priory with ei-

ther cash or with the extra food/fodder it needed, but whatever the case it was a policy specific to the home manor and not a general estate policy.

Land set aside for oats (*terra avenosa*) was recorded at Nether Wallop, Longstock, Timsbury and Merton (HRO 13M63/3, fols 12^{v}–13v; 23^{r}–24^{r}; 60^{v} & 74^{v}). Oats were the primary medieval fodder-crop – more acres in England were oat-sown 1250–1349 than any other crop – and its presence at the manors where it is not mentioned could be concealed within the unspecified 'sowings' (Campbell 1997, 230–32; Campbell 2000, 224–26). However, at Longstock there was a large area (134 acres) set aside for oats on the less fertile soil of Cleave Hill above the village (the fields were described as being north and south of *Deneweye* to the west of Longstock), which could certainly have provided an estate surplus for priory manors without recourse to the market (HRO 13M63/3, fol. 21^{v}–24^{r}; Postan 1972, 207).

Demesne meadowland has already been discussed at the home manor of Mottisfont, but the only other manor recorded in the survey as having such a large extent of hay crop was Timsbury, which had 80½ acres of meadow (HRO 13M63/3, fols 59^{r}–59^{v}). Elsewhere the area of meadow at individual manors was between eight and twenty acres – enough for their own use but no more (see Tab 2). More difficult to interpret is the uneven recording of the priory's demesne pastureland in the survey. Large areas were put over to pasture in Nether Wallop (300 sheep in common pasture), King's Somborne (130 sheep in common pasture and 200 sheep and 15 cattle in private pasture), Lower Eldon (59 acres), East Dean (160 sheep in private pasture) and Marten (52½ acres), but there is very little recorded in the other manors despite the survey mentioning work services involving sheep-washing and shearing at these places (see Tab 2 for references). For instance, one wonders where the lord's sheep that Robert Poydras had to wash were grazed in Mottisfont manor, which, according to the survey, contained no pastureland (HRO 13M63/3, fol. 7^{v}). For part of the year the meadowland probably served this purpose, but they could not be kept there all year or there would be no hay crop. In all the survey records on the priory's estate 790 head of sheep with pasture for about a further 300. But this was almost certainly an underassessment and it must be accepted that much pasture was unrecorded in the survey.

Totally absent from the survey is any mention of woodland. This could just represent the vagaries of medieval land surveys, but it is also possible that some manors did not contain economically productive woodland. Focusing in on the home manor of Mottisfont we find that the large area of woodland that covered the north of the parish by 1724 was at least partly recorded at the Dissolution when there were 'Great woddes 60 acres; copis woddes of divers ages 92 acres; all esteemed to be sold to £106 13*s.* 1*d.*' (Gasquet 1894, 271). Some isolated copses could have grown up within the compass of the three open fields after the Black Death when less arable was needed for a reduced population. These include Westfield Copse and Mason's Copse within the medieval west field, and Herless Copse, Queen's Copse and Bounds Bottom within what appears to be the medieval north field (cf. Fig. 2).

It is curious that nearly all the Mottisfont woodlands, except some areas in the far north of the parish, have grown up over old quarries. This could suggest that they evolved not in their own right as woodland but as a by-product of quarrying activity. Once a quarry was exhausted the land became largely waste until colonised by scrub that later developed into woodland. There are two quarries mentioned in the survey demonstrating that marling and other forms of quarrying was already under way by 1340 (HRO 13M63/3, fol. 3^{r} & 8^{v}). These quarry pits in Mottisfont actually derive from a number of different activities; there are chalk pits, clay pits and possibly gravel and sand pits (Currie and Rushton 1999). The survey also mentions the name *Chalkpark* (HRO 13M63/3, fol. 1^{v}). A medieval park was an enclosure from which certain commodities were taken – the most obvious being a deer park for venison. But a park could actually denote any kind of enclosure within which there was a protected resource, and so *Chalkpark* almost certainly suggests an enclosure from which chalk was extracted by the priory. From the explicit mention of a marl pit in the survey (HRO 13M63/3, fol. 8^{v}) it seems that it was a practice in Mottisfont to marl the land, which, if this was an intensive activity, could have dramat-

ically reduced the availability of arable land over the centuries. It is estimated that around 20% of the Mottisfont estate woodland has reverted to that woodland state after having been used for quarrying (Currie and Rushton 1999). This process had evidently begun in the pre-Black Death period and was largely complete by 1724 when Charles Mason's map shows extensive woodland on the estate (HRO 13M63/420). We therefore have an unusual wooded landscape that has not evolved because woodland was the most effective method of managing the land, but because the decimation of former arable land was so widespread that no other effective economic use could be made of the worked out quarries.

Allowing for the absence of recorded woodland, it seems clear from the survey that the management of the priory estate followed the standard monastic practice of centralised control over the production of moveable commodities (oats and wool) in order to supply other estate manors or the market (made easier by the limited geographical extent of the estate), but that methods of farming the main arable fields were more limited by local custom and conditions, so limiting the intensification of mixed-farming practice to the home manor of Mottisfont itself (Page 1934, 117–19; Knowles 1955, 309–30; Robinson 1980, I, 291–97). This is reflected in the custumal diversity of the priory's manors.

CUSTUMAL DIVERSITY ON THE PRIORY ESTATE

From the total amount of arable and meadowland recorded in the survey just under 37% was being farmed out to tenants. But there was considerable disparity in the ratios of demesne to leased land between the priory's manors. The two Wiltshire manors of Marten and Wilton conform closely to this average, as do Timsbury, Lower Eldon and King's Somborne in Hampshire. But Nether Wallop, Longstock, East Dean and Burbage all recorded higher ratios of leased land to demesne. However, the most noticeable variation is once again the home manor of Mottisfont where all but five of its 450 acres remained demesne land in 1340–1342. To what extent did diversity in custumal tenure of the individual manors account for this disparity?

At Timsbury five tenants held their homes and land without any imposed custumal rents except that of *heriot*, which makes it reasonable to allow them free-status (Neilson 1910, 87–89). Amongst them Walter de Brustowe and William le Fox were the biggest landholders with the largest rents – Walter held a capital messuage and 21 acres of arable land for an annual rent of 14s., and William held a messuage with a garden, curtilage and meadow and one acre of arable land for 15*s.* per annum – and as such were fairly typical examples of the one or two prosperous freemen recorded at most of the priory's manors (HRO 13M63/3, fol. 62^{v}). Between them these five free-tenants paid cash rents for their messuages and over 44 acres of arable land and meadow. But most of the rented land at the manor was held between eighteen villeins paying cash rents alongside custumal service on the lord's demesne for over 150 acres of land (HRO 13M63/3, fols 63^{v}–67^{r}). The amounts held by these individuals varies between 20 acres of arable (5) and ½ acre (1), with an average of just under eight acres.

This variation is reflected in the different custumal rents – two villeins (Stephen Martyn and Adam le Wheybole) owed minimal work-services, but were paying the high cash rents of 11*s.* 2*d.* for ten acres of land, and 19*s.* for seventeen acres of land and various crofts (HRO 13M63/3, 62^{v}–63^{v}). In contrast, the villeins holding 20 acres of land owed cash rents of between 4*s.* 6*d.* and 7*s.* 6*d.*, but with heavy work services on the lord's demesne. Stephen Sprynghom's work-services were outlined in great detail and included autumn boonwork, carting, lifting hay, and shepherding duties – all of which were then stated as being owed in villeinage by the other unfree tenants (HRO 13M63/3, fols 64^{r-v}). The priory could thus afford to keep the majority of its land in demesne at Timsbury because the unfree tenants were either unable or unwilling to pay cash to commute their services, and the custumal infrastructure here was still strong enough for the priory to be able to guarantee a substantial amount of its demesne would be worked through custumal payment. For a smallholder

villein in Timsbury, such as John le Douke with three acres of land, the payment of his annual cash rent of 6*s.* would only be possible by his hiring himself (or members of his family) out as a wage labourer (HRO 13M63/3, fol. 65^{v}). This allowed the priory an adaptable work-force, but condemned poorly endowed manorial tenants such as John le Douke to spend a large proportion of their life working for the priory on the demesne farm, either through custumal obligation or in order to pay their cash rent.

This pattern can be seen at the other manors of the priory with larger amounts of demesne than land at farm. Whilst at Nether Wallop, Longstock and East Dean, where there were greater numbers of free-tenants, the trend was for more land to be leased and for the villeins to hold larger acreages, pay larger cash rents, and owe less custumary service.

As with the actual management of the land, the custumary tenure at the Mottisfont home manor differs from the rest of the estate. Here, there were 44 tenants in the village paying on average 4*s.* 8*d.* a year for their holdings. But they were all free-tenants and they only leased a little over five acres between them in the open fields (HRO 13M63/3, fols 5^{r}–8^{v}). Some tenants, such as Agnes le Rede (HRO 13M63/3, fol. 5^{r-v}), were paying what sound like recently commuted work-services by rendering cash for the lighting of candles in the priory church, but most paid straight cash rents. From this it must be deduced that, if they did not hold land elsewhere as suggested above, they were either wage-labouring or carrying out a trade in the village. Several tenants are explicitly recorded as tradespeople in the village: John le Kyng, a tailor; John de Chalke, a baker; and John le Boult who is described as a *sciswon* (HRO 13M63/3, fol. 7^{r} & 8^{v}). This probably indicated that he was the village smith – in Clent, Worcestershire, a *siyer* was the medieval name given to a scythsmith (Currie 1998b, 190). Other trades and professions are hinted at from surnames such as John le *Tynckere*, Agnes le *Boghyere*, Adam le *Tannere*, John le *Mareschal*, and John le *Muleward* (miller). This certainly suggests that there was a fair amount of village industry taking place at Mottisfont and that a proportion of the inhabitants of the village were tradespeople who secured an income by recourse to the market rather than agricultural work.

Nevertheless, there still must have been a number of free-tenants (and their families) who needed to work on the priory's demesne in order to pay their rents. Paying for wage-labour to work its demesne was evidently an arrangement which suited the priory and allowed it to keep almost its entire home manor in hand, enabling it to practise the intensive mixed-farming discussed without having to negotiate the practicalities of the system with its tenants. The priory would also have housed a *famulus* of estate workers within the outer precinct, allowing the manor to be farmed in much the same way (though on a smaller scale) as was much of the Bishop of Winchester's estate from at least the 13th century (Postan 1954b; Farmer 1996). In 1536, when more demesne would have been leased than in 1340, there were 29 servants (Gasquet 1894, 271), most of whom would have been employed as agricultural labourers, so implying a much greater number in the pre-Black Death period. These wage labourers and *famuli* were not tied to custumal obligations as were the villeins on the priory's other manors, but they could have been little better off in economic terms which would help explain the low lay subsidy assessment for Mottisfont in 1334 where only eleven people were paying £1 4*s.* 5*d.* between them – considerably lower (both in numbers of people and in tax value) than the county average (Stamper 1983, 294). Having said this, it must continually be borne in mind that when the evidence is drawn mainly from this single-source survey there will always be a distortion of the communities it records and will suggest a greater deal of socio-economic self-containment than may have been the case.

So, the priory's tenants in Mottisfont may have enjoyed free status and have been unburdened with work-services, but for those who had no trade, or landholdings outside the parish, and relied on agricultural wage-labour for their income, they would have been as vulnerable to any harvest-related economic hardships as the custumary villeins on the priory's other manors. They were thus reliant on the success or otherwise of the priory's land management strategies (as well as market forces) to a far greater degree than the other manors where custumary tenure and leasing were the norm.

CONCLUSION

The 1340–42 survey allows us to make some far reaching assessments and interpretations of the land management strategies and the custumal diversity of the manors of Mottisfont Priory on the eve of the Black Death. Although there are parcels of land that are not recorded in the survey, it does contain a great deal of detail as to the landscapes and tenants of its owned manors. However, the main limitation of the survey as a historical document is the lack of supporting documentary evidence from the 14th century. There are, for instance, no sources such as manorial accounts which would allow any computation of grain yields or wage costs from the priory's manors (as there are for the neighbouring Bishop of Winchester's estate) so allowing us to see the success or otherwise of the various agricultural approaches (Titow 1972; Campbell 2000, 306–85). Nor can any comparative study be made from earlier or later in the century in order to assess the chronology of any changes in land management or custom on the priory's manors. But what does emerge from the survey is an indication of the localised diversity in land management strategies and in the custumal conditions of tenure throughout the priory's estate at a fixed moment in time just before the first introduction of the Black Death. The amount of land still held as demesne, and the servile status of villeins performing work-services at many of the manors fits the generally recognised pattern of pre-Black Death agricultural conditions throughout lowland England. But Mottisfont Priory was also practising widespread leasing of its demesne farm at this date, carrying out intensive mixed-farming on its home manor, and commuting work-services for cash rents, which suggests that the conditions generally prevalent in the later 14th century were already to be found on the priory's estate before the Black Death.

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Readers interested further in the larger landscape study should be aware that publicly available copies can be seen at the National Monuments Record, Kemble Drive, Swindon, Wiltshire; the Hampshire Record Office, Sussex Street, Winchester; the Cope Collection, Hartley Library, University of Southampton, and the County Sites and Monuments Record, Planning Department, Hampshire County Council, The Castle, Winchester, Hampshire.

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Abbreviations

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C.Pat.R – Calendar of Patent Rolls
VCH – Victoria County History of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight

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