

THE USE OF THE LAND IN BUCKHOLT, A HAMPSHIRE ROYAL FOREST, FROM 1200–1900

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ABSTRACT

An earlier article traced the boundaries of Buckholt Forest in Hampshire from the Norman Conquest onwards (Baskerville 2008). This paper explores the history of its land use over a similar period. During medieval times Buckholt was a royal hunting forest, an area reserved not only for sport and venison for the king but also as a source of timber. The more open parts were used by the local population for agricultural purposes, including rabbit warrens. Agriculture increased as the hunting forest declined in importance and the gradual change by informal enclosure from medieval open fields and common grazing to enclosed farms is described. The probable sites of the open fields are also discussed.

INTRODUCTION

Public interest in the history of the countryside and a raised awareness of environmental concerns has led to an increased appreciation of the history of the old medieval royal forests, which in the 12th and 13th centuries covered large areas of the country. At least a third of England was included in royal forests or private chases, and 86 of 142 forests were royal (Rackham 2003, 177–9). Many of the former forest areas are still identifiable today, particularly the New Forest and the Forest of Dean, as well as the moorland forests, which include Exmoor and the Peak Forest. Such regions are heavily used as holiday destinations, and a knowledge of their history helps to promote an understanding of the need to preserve them. A study of previous land use also provides a valuable insight into the present ecology of an area.

There has been a corresponding increase in academic research on the medieval forests, most notably the ongoing multidisciplinary study at St John's College Research Centre, Oxford which aims to explore the history, geography and ecology of the former forest areas (<http://info.sjc.ox.ac.uk/forests>; Langton and Jones 2009). A considerable body of literature has also recently been produced on Hampshire's most important forest, the New Forest. Its documents have been collected together in three volumes in the New Forest Record Series (Reeves 2006, 2007; Roberts 2006), while an interesting investigation has been carried out into the effect of human impact on its natural vegetation development from the Mesolithic to modern times (Grant 2006). More pertinent to this study, Amanda Richardson has recently published an extensive study on Clarendon Forest and Park in Wiltshire; the close association between the forest and the royal palace of Clarendon made it of particular importance (Richardson 2005). Attached to Clarendon Forest were a number of adjacent smaller forests, Melchet, Groveley and Buckholt, which for part of their history were administered as a group from Clarendon (see also Richardson 2009). Buckholt was in the anomalous position of being a Hampshire forest when the royal forests were reviewed on a county basis, but was administered as part of the Wiltshire group.

The administration of the royal forests, because it left written records, provides a wealth of documentation about how the countryside was used in medieval times, particularly in the woodland and marginal areas. Buckholt is not one of the better-known royal forests and has not hitherto attracted much interest



Fig. 1 OS Landranger map 184/185 to show the area around Buckholt Forest. Crown Copyright Ordnance Survey. All rights reserved. Scale 1cm. to 2km.

for itself. However, because of the extensive documentation concerning the region while it was a royal forest, and because it later became an identifiable local estate, Buckholt provides a good opportunity to investigate the history of an area of Hampshire countryside in some detail. It lies in the south-west of the county immediately adjacent to the Wiltshire boundary (Fig. 1)

Royal forests were created in Norman times for both political and sporting reasons, as well as to provide reservoirs of wild animals, particularly deer, for food. The land which had been designated as hunting forest was used in many ways; not only by the Crown, but also by local landlords and their tenants. These uses of the land continued long after the subjection of areas to forest law had been abolished.

Since humans ceased to be hunter-gatherers, their basic requirements from the land had changed very little. They needed water, land to grow crops, grazing for animals and woodland for fuel and timber. In addition, they continued to hunt the wild animals and to harvest the fruits of the trees and plants. The land which became Buckholt Forest under the Norman kings was used in all these, often interrelated, ways throughout the centuries which followed.

The boundaries of Buckholt have already been described (Baskerville 2008), and the area taken to represent Buckholt in this paper is the land which was included in the east and west bailiwicks in the 14th century (Fig. 2). As a simple guide this roughly equates with the modern civil parish of Buckholt (east bailiwick)

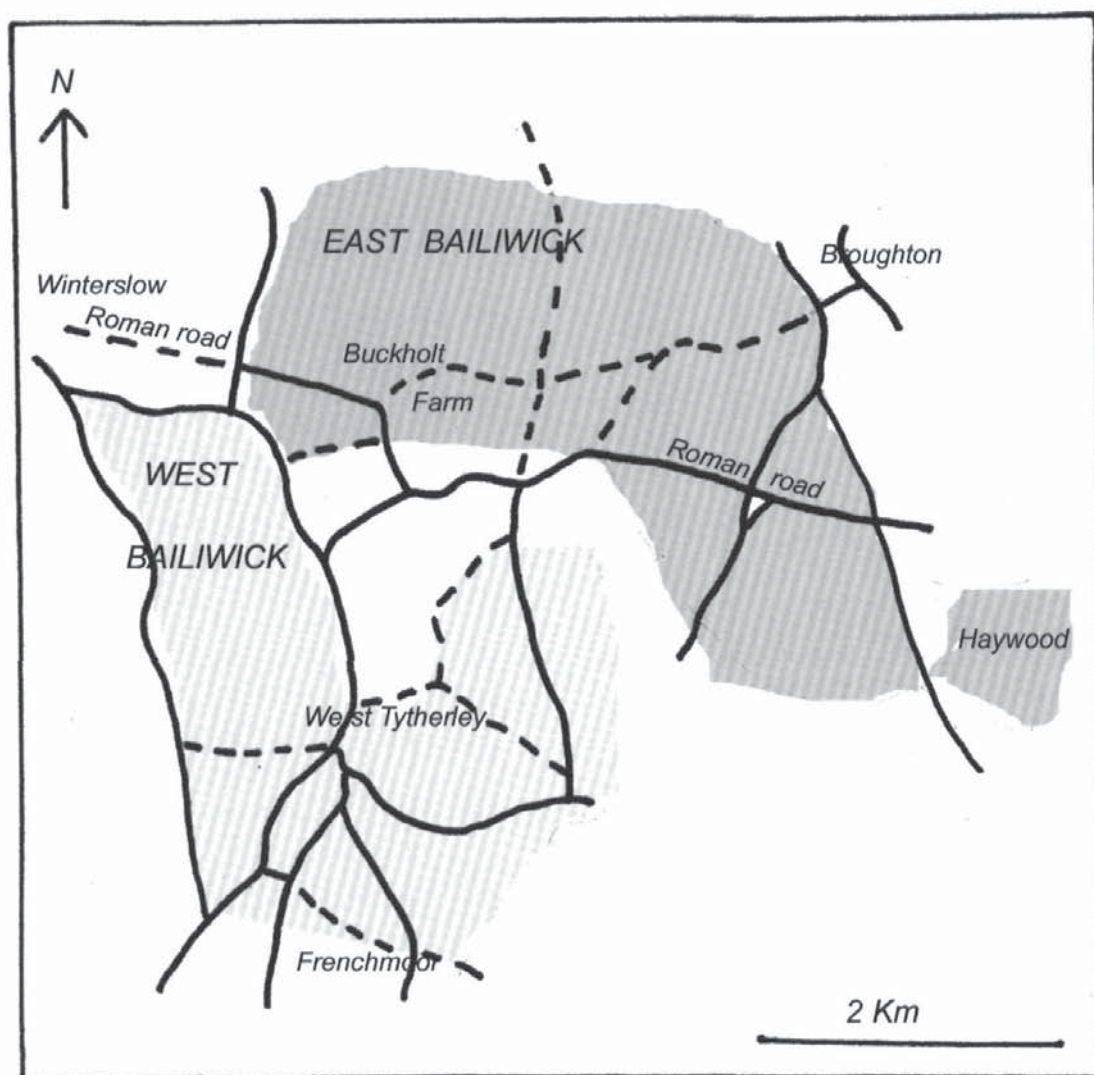


Fig. 2 The east and west bailiwicks *circa* 1300.

Modern roads — tracks ---- parish boundary — Scale 1:50000.

and the original parish of West Tytherley (west bailiwick), excluding the 20th century addition of Frenchmoor. The land which later became Buckholt Farm is in the civil parish of Buckholt, and from the 16th century onwards it was included in the west, rather than the east, bailiwick.

WOOD AND TIMBER

Wood was a vital commodity for daily life, and was needed in ever-increasing quantities before the discovery of fossil fuels and the development of modern building materials. Large areas of woodland were cleared by the time of

the Norman Conquest, and what remained was actively managed to provide sustainable supplies of wood for all purposes. Naturally-grown trees of the desired species were encouraged and protected, either in enclosed areas of woodland or on wood-pasture. Small-diameter wood was produced by coppicing or pollarding trees at regular intervals to provide a crop of similar-sized poles at each cutting. When all the stems were cut just above ground level a coppice 'stool' was produced from which new growth sprouted. Trees growing on open ground were pollarded, a similar process except that the stems were cut off a trunk several feet high to prevent domestic livestock and deer from eating the new growth (Rackham 2003, 5).

Standard timber trees, particularly oak, were allowed to grow among an 'underwood' of coppice, particularly hazel, providing that they did not become too dense as they matured, thereby suppressing the growth of the underwood. However, beech trees have a particularly dense canopy which does not allow much light to penetrate and other tree species will not thrive beneath them. This produces beechwoods rather than mixed-species woods, both in natural and in managed woodland. The name Buckholt, derived from the Old English *boc* beech, and *holt* a single-species wood, suggests that in Saxon times there were extensive beechwoods on the hills above the royal manor of Broughton, which lay in the valley below.

The original territory of Buckholt Forest extended from the chalk escarpment known as the Buckholt Hills southwards to the Dean Valley, and included two geologically distinct areas, the chalk land in the north giving way to the Reading Beds and London Clay further south. Beech grows well on the chalk hills and dense beechwoods were the natural vegetation; the beechwoods present on the Buckholt hillside in medieval times had grown up on what had been prehistoric farmland (HAHBR). Oak trees thrived better on the clay soil, although some would have survived on the chalk, as they do today. Records of wood taken from Buckholt in the 13th and 14th centuries include many references to '*robora*' which are thought to have been oaks unsuitable for timber, partic-

ularly old or dead pollards (Rackham 2003, 182). Pollards were most often grown on wood-pasture, suggesting that Buckholt Forest included large areas of open wood-pasture as well as woodland.

The extent of Buckholt as a hunting forest diminished considerably over the centuries (Baskerville 2008). From AD 1300 onwards it consisted of two separate administrative areas, or bailiwicks. Records of timber and firewood taken from Buckholt make no mention of which bailiwick they came from. However it is likely that most of the beech was from the chalk hills in the east bailiwick, while oak was probably mainly from the west bailiwick. There are also no records of the size of trees cut down and it probably varied considerably according to availability. Timber trees were not normally allowed to grow any larger than necessary, and did not have to be large enough in diameter to cut straight edges. Building timber often had 'wany' or rounded edges where it met the outside of the log and often retained the bark (Rackham 2003, 145).

Of the many records of wood ordered from Buckholt in medieval times, orders for building construction were principally for oak. Amesbury Priory was one establishment for which timber oak was sometimes provided. Two oaks were granted in 1231 for repairs to the monks' stalls at Amesbury priory (CCR 1227–31, 486), and 20 in 1280 for works for Queen Eleanor, the king's mother, who was resident there (CCR 1279–88, 14). Oak was also ordered for work at Clarendon, Old Sarum, and Salisbury Cathedral, such as the 15 oak trunks required for roof shingles at Clarendon in 1276 (CCR 1272–9, 309). Beech has poor durability when used as building timber, making it unsuitable for exposed locations, but it is a hard, dense wood which could be carved and bent easily into shape. Some orders for beech from Buckholt were therefore for furniture or panelling. Three beeches were ordered for making the high tables in the halls at the king's houses at Marlborough and Ludgershall Castle (CCR 1242–7, 464) and in 1259 two beeches were granted for panelling a chapel (CCR 1259–61, 227).

A rather different use was that of the 80 beech

saplings ordered from Buckholt for repairs to the mill pond and sluice below Old Sarum in 1270 (*CLR* 1267–72, 131), and beech from Buckholt was again specified for repairs to the water-mill at Old Sarum in 1321 (*CCR* 1318–23, 309). On this latter occasion large quantities of oak had been ordered from Clarendon, Melchet and Chute during the previous year, for a major rebuilding of the Sarum water mills (*CCR* 1318–23, 193, 195). This was an unusual use of beech considering its poor durability. The 13th- and 14th-century Calendars of Close, Patent and Liberate Rolls contain many orders of wood for the construction and repair of water-mills throughout the country and although the type of wood is often not named, where it is, oak (*Quercus*) is almost invariably specified. The only other order for beech for mill repairs was for 16 beeches and 12 oaks for repairs to the mill at Cokeham, Windsor, in 1369 (*CCR* 1369–74, 64). However, beech saplings were ordered for repairs to the sluice of a fish-pond in 1246 (*CCR* 1242–7, 465) and for use in the foundations of the Friars Minor church in Winchester in 1239, another very damp situation (*CLR* 1226–40, 394). In a different context there are also records of beech from the New Forest being used for shipbuilding at Portsmouth and on the Hamble. Beech was sometimes used as a substitute for elm for the keel (Greenwood 2004, 28–9). These uses of beech as a timber indicate that, like elm, its durability is improved when kept constantly wet, and that where it was readily available it was sometimes used for such conditions.

Most of the wood ordered or sold from Buckholt was for fuel, for which there was a huge and continual demand. The wood taken included both beech and oak, the latter usually specified as *robora*, or as 'oaks not bearing leaves'. In addition to the many gifts of small numbers of tree trunks from the king to various recipients recorded in the Calendars of Close and Patent Rolls, there were some larger orders for firewood. Edward I provided fuel for his daughter Mary, who had become a nun at Amesbury Priory in 1285, aged seven years (Kerr 1999, 109). In 1295 she was granted 20 oaks per year for life from Buckholt and the same from Chute Forest. This was increased

by another ten oaks yearly from each of the two forests in 1305 (*CPR* 1301–7, 342, 454). Mary died in the priory in 1332. Another nun at Amesbury with royal connections who received regular fuel supplies from Buckholt was Isabella of Lancaster, daughter of Henry, Earl of Lancaster and great-granddaughter of Henry III (Kerr 1999, 109). She was granted 12 beeches yearly in 1342 (*CPR* 1340–3, 425). These were personal grants of firewood, given in addition to the daily cartload of wood from five different forest areas which the priory already collected. Two of these areas, Bentley Wood and Nether Wallop woodland, were immediately adjacent to Buckholt so there must have been regular traffic on the local roads to and from Amesbury hauling firewood. The cost of doing so was considerable; in 1371 John Gerberge was granted £15 19s for the expenses involved in felling and transporting 30 oaks from Buckholt to Amesbury (*CCR* 1313–8, 547).

The routes used for transporting the loads of wood to Amesbury are not known for certain, but the Roman road from Winchester to Old Sarum is likely to have formed the first part of the journey (Figs 1, 3). The carts might then have followed the old tracks from Winterslow to either Porton or Idmiston, to cross the river Bourne. Alternatively, they could have continued along the Roman road and then crossed into the Bourne Valley further downstream.

Successive kings also ordered that trees in Buckholt should be cut and sold to raise money. In 1359 *robora* and beech to the value of £20 were to be sold to pay the wages of local foresters, and in 1371 there was an order to sell all the dead wood within the forest (*CPR* 1368–77, 109). During the 15th century there were some big sales of wood to finance building and repairs at Clarendon, and to the foresters' lodges in Buckholt, Groveley and Melchet Forests. In 1405, 150 beeches were sold (TNA E101/140/10), 300 beeches in 1423 (TNA SC/6/1050/22) and another 400 in 1442 (TNA E101/140/10). Most of this wood was likely to have been used for fuel, the main general use for beech in medieval times (Rackham 2003, 323). However there were also other requirements. In 1253 the sheriff of Wiltshire was



Fig. 3 Part of the Roman road from Winchester to Old Sarum as it is today in the vicinity of Buckholt.

ordered to build a lime kiln in Buckholt Forest for the works at Old Sarum castle and the manor at Clarendon (*CLR* 1251–60, 412). Lime kilns used huge quantities of fuel, and the kiln would have been sited where the subsoil was chalk, for making the lime, and where there were plentiful supplies of wood for fuel close by. In addition, Norman Court manor and the local farms and cottages of West Tytherley needed large amounts of wood for building, fencing, making carts and implements. Their fuel would have been taken from the hazel, ash and field maple which were managed as underwood in the coppices. The common rights of the villagers would also have included cutting the branches of the pollards growing on the open land and in the hedgerows.

Many of the royal forests acted as reservoirs

of timber and fuel, and it can be seen from the above that Buckholt was no exception. In a comparison of the relative numbers of standard trees ordered from the forests in the Clarendon group, 1215–1339, 1000 were from Clarendon, 800 from Melchet, *c.* 575 from Buckholt and *c.* 475 from Groveley (Richardson 2005, 49). This gives some indication of the relative importance of these forests for the provision of wood during that time period. However, much of the wood from Buckholt was beech for use as fuel rather than for timber.

The large-scale cutting of woodland inevitably led to shortages in all of the forests within the Clarendon group (Richardson 2005, 49). Trees grow slowly and many years' growth are needed to produce timber; oak was usually harvested at 20–70 years in the Middle Ages (Rackham

2003, 145). The chronic shortage of wood was nationwide, and measures were taken from time to time to reduce the numbers of trees being cut down. In 1413 all foresters south of the Trent were ordered 'to execute no warrant for oaks, lopping of boughs or underwood' (CCR 1413-19, 16). This shortage was not an isolated event. Throughout history, the long-term supply of timber has been compromised whenever immediate requirements have taken priority. The Preservation of Woods Act in 1543 was an attempt to address the problem of potential timber trees being cut and used as underwood. In the 17th century the rapid expansion of shipbuilding in the south coast naval shipyards put considerable pressure on oak supplies in the New Forest and other woodland within easy transport distance. It was still a problem in the 20th century when the blockade of ships bringing in imported timber during the First World War demonstrated just how precarious native supplies were, and led to the formation of the Forestry Commission in 1919 (James 1981, 207-12). A comparison can be drawn with the situation today, when the easy transport of wood around the world has greatly reduced the value of home-grown timber, making long-term planning more difficult.

There was also the problem of local landowners cutting down their own woodland without permission – illegal within a royal forest. It was recorded in the venison pleas of the New Forest in 1244 that 'the wood of Walter de Budesthorpe and John de Ivetis which is called Bokholte is wasted by Walter'. They were fined 2s. Also John de Mynstede had wasted his wood called 'la Bokholte' and was duly fined 6s. 8d. (Stagg 1979, 205).

A survey of crown forests was carried out in 1564 by Roger Tavenor, and it provides a good description of Buckholt Forest at that time (TNA LRRO/5/39).

Survey of Crown Forests 7 Elizabeth I: Forest de Buckholt

Officers within the said forest

The Earl of Pembroke Ranger by Patent
Alexander Thistlethwaite Gent. Deputy Ranger

Anthony Vuydale Esq. Forester in Fee
Richard Whithed Esq. Forester in Fee

The East Bailiwick

The East main wood well set with beech of 60, 80, 100 and 200 years growth 278 acres.

Haywood well set with Oak and Beech of like divers ages containeth 96 acres.

Dunmere wood well set with Beeches of Great Age containing 26 acres

(Total) 400 acres.

The West Bailiwick

The West Mainwood otherwise called Buckholt wood set with Beech of divers ages containing 464 acres.

The Horseshoe hill and Noremare being likewise set with Beech of divers ages containing 110 acres.

(Total) 574 acres.

Total woodland within the said Forest of Buckholt 974 acres.

In 1571 the underwood was let out in two separate leases; the 'east walk' and the 'west walk'. The leases were for 21 years with provision for two cuttings, which gives an indication of the length of coppicing cycles at that time. The coppices had to be enclosed for seven years after cutting (CPR 1569-72, 462, 463).

At about the same time, glass makers appeared in the Buckholt woodland. Beechwoods had long been favoured sites for what were known as glass houses, and in the 1570s French glass makers, who had previously been working in the Sussex Weald, set up their furnaces in the beechwoods of Buckholt. Vast quantities of wood were needed as fuel for a glass furnace, and beech was particularly suitable, since the beech wood ash was used as a constituent of the glass. As an indication of the amount of wood used in a glass furnace, a 4-pot glasshouse in 1585-6 used 543 cords of wood in 32 weeks – equivalent to about 1.6 ha of 15-year coppice per month (Charleston 1991, 244). Buckholt also had an abundance of flints to provide silica for the glass, and chalk which was used as a flux. Two furnace sites have been identified, one of

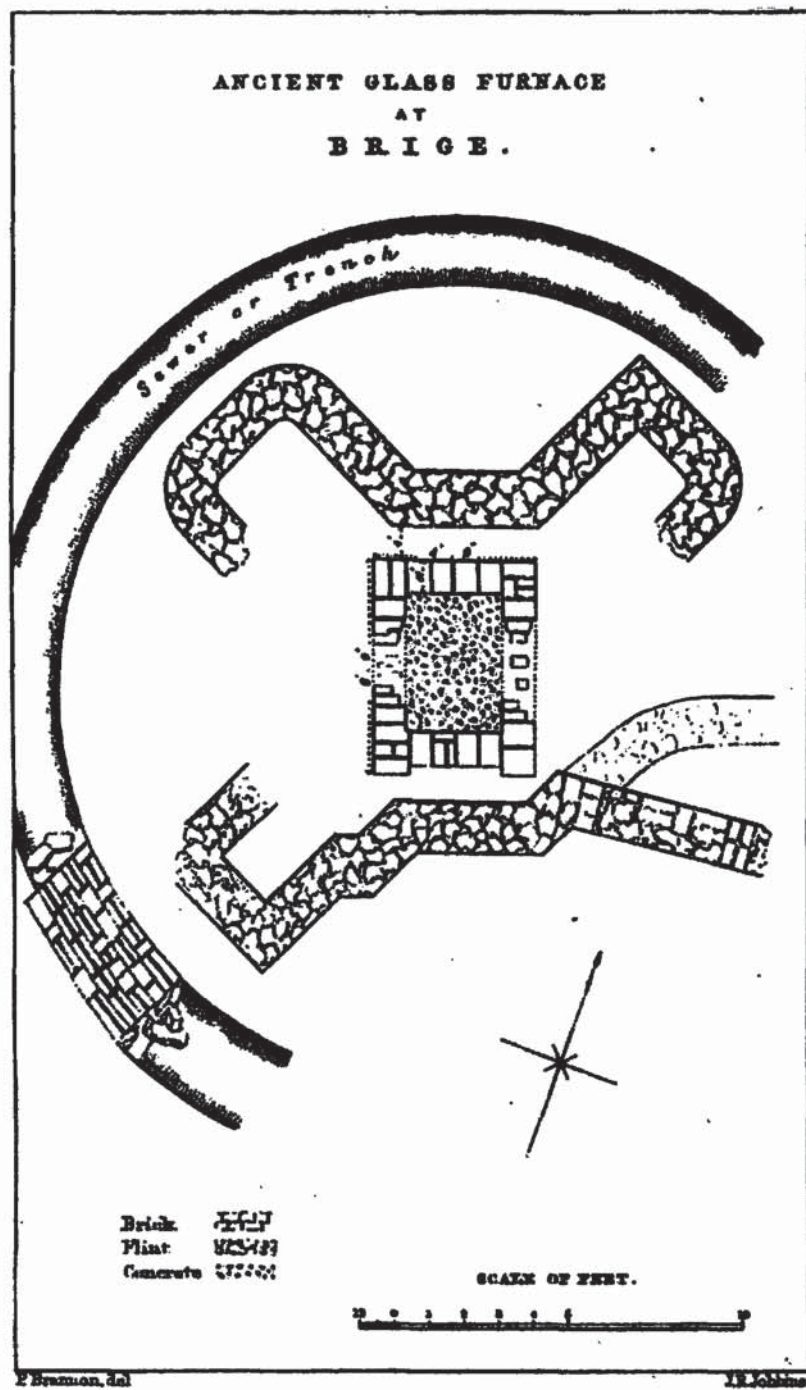


Fig. 4 Glass furnace excavated at Buckholt, 1860.

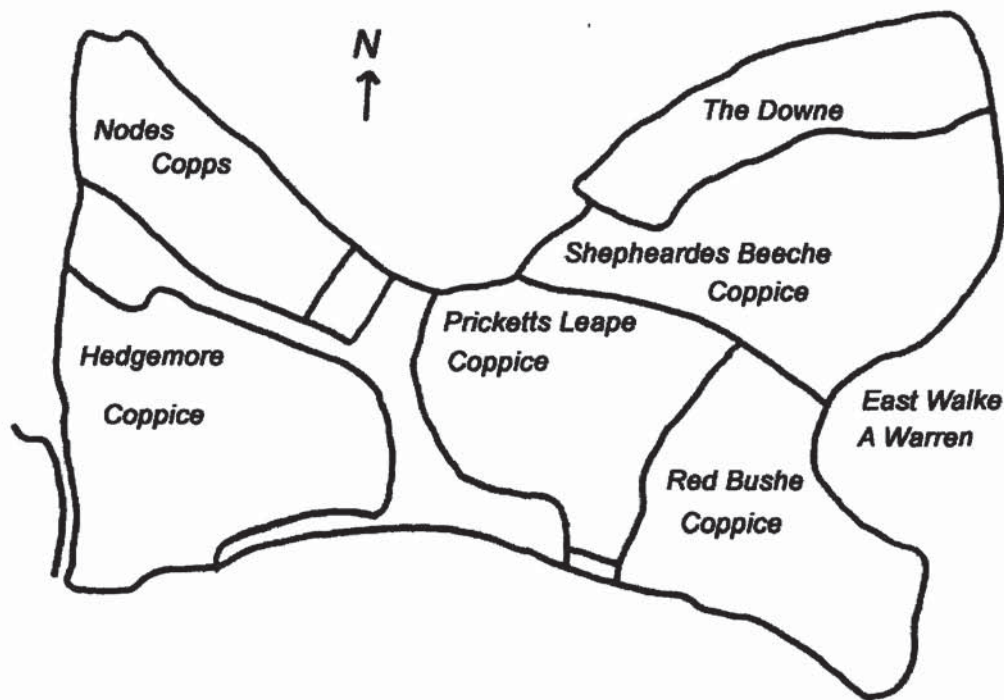


Fig. 5 Taken from Norden's survey of Buckholt coppices, 1610.

which was excavated in 1860 by the Reverend E. Kell. He found a brick-built kiln and fragments of glass (Fig. 4) (Kell 1861, 55–9). The glass makers were thought to have moved away from Buckholt in about 1579 leaving the woodland decimated (VCHH V, 491).

The devastation of the beech woods was still apparent 30 years later. In 1610 the Buckholt coppices were inspected during a general survey of coppice woodland on Crown land for James I by John Norden (Fig. 5) (TNA LR 2/203). The area surveyed involved only the west bailiwick but included some land which had originally been in the east bailiwick (Fig. 6). This survey revealed that most of the wood had been cut down, and that there was very little growth of the underwood. The only woodland in good order was Noads Coppice, so Norden recommended that while most of the area (182 ha) should be put to other agricultural uses, Noads

Coppice (40.4 ha) should remain as coppiced woodland. Fig. 7 shows the area where the beechwoods once stood, and which is now open arable land. The fringe of beech trees along the horizon marks the old northern boundary of the east bailiwick.

The map accompanying the 1610 survey shows the coppice areas as they were at that time. Some of the names, as shown in Fig. 5, are interesting. Red Bush Coppice indicates that dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*) formed a significant part of the shrub layer there. Dogwood grows vigorously on the chalk soil and when it has been cut back the new shoots on bushes which are growing in full sunlight are a brilliant red during the winter. Hedgemore Coppice denotes an enclosed area which had later become coppice. Another coppice was Prickett's Leap, as discussed below.

In 1748 and 1779 leases of the remaining

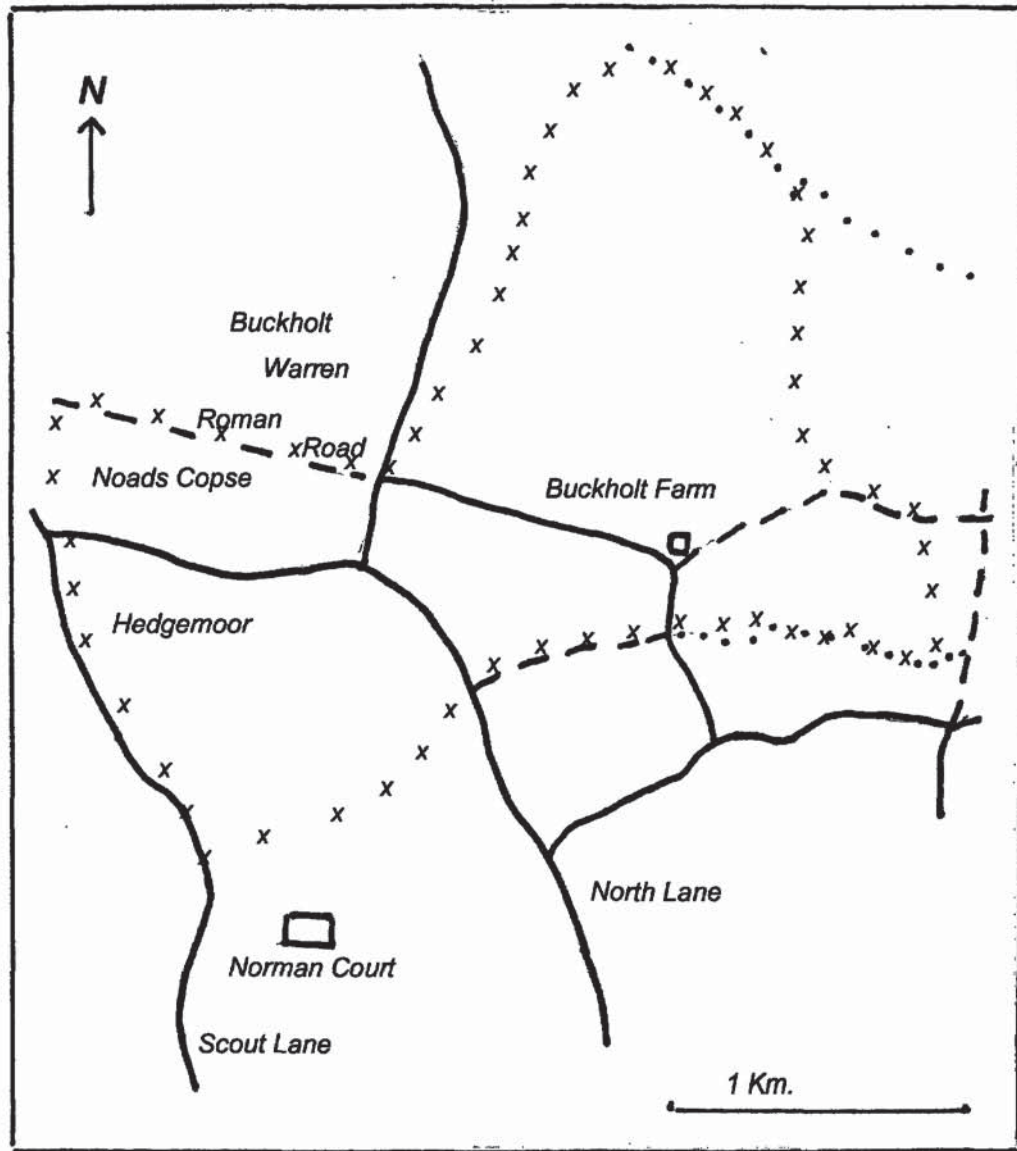


Fig. 6 The area of Buckholt included in the Norden survey. Scale 1:25000. Modern roads — tracks ---- parish boundary

Crown Land of Buckholt refer to the area as 'formerly called Great Firewood Beeches' (TNA E367/7119; HRO 16M57/80). It never recovered as woodland, becoming first a rabbit warren and, by 1779, pasture and arable

fields. The 1807 survey of the Norman Court estate (HRO 85M71/PZ2) shows the extent of woodland still remaining in the former east and west bailiwicks, by then all part of the estate. The beechwoods had gone and only

four small areas of woodland, 13 ha in total, remained on the chalk hillsides which had been the east bailiwick. However, both timber and underwood were still an important part of the estate's economy, and in what had been the west bailiwick 143.6 ha were still woodland. Much of this was the traditional coppice-with-standards, and continued to be so into the 20th century. Plantation woodland, where trees are grown in a nursery and the saplings then transplanted, was beginning to appear around the estate by 1807. The exact extent at the time of the survey cannot be determined, but the names of some areas were 'wood', apparently to differentiate them from 'coppice', which may indicate a change in management. Recently planted strips of woodland were obviously plantations.

Ancient common land was also disappearing and becoming woodland. Tytherley Common was covered with woodland by 1807, and by 1890 there was timber for sale from the plantations which had been planted on the old common land (HRO101/M96/3/2). Some mistakes were made when the enthusiasm for new ideas failed to take into account the local soil type and conditions. In 1888, Shore noted 'the unsuitability of chalk for the growth of fir is well illustrated at Whiteshoot Hill (on the Buckholt Hills), where a large fir plantation is in a decaying condition' (Shore 1888, 56).

In the 18th and 19th centuries, the rise of shooting as a major leisure activity for estate owners had a considerable effect on the management of woodland. Norman Court estate was no exception. Providing cover for young birds became an important function of the coppices, and extra strips of woodland appeared around the estate with this as their primary purpose. When Norman Court estate was sold in 1906 the sale brochure advertised Buckholt Farm mainly for its sporting potential, 'The Buckholt Estate, a freehold sporting property'. The 18th century was also a time when trees began to be planted for their aesthetic as well as functional properties. Beech became the fashionable timber tree species to plant on estates, and during the 19th century rows of beech trees were planted along the Norman Court field and woodland boundaries, beside some of the tracks and

roadsides, and most notably, along the crest of the Buckholt Hills. By 1890 timber sales from the estate featured large quantities of beech. Fir was also being sold by that time from the new fir plantations (HRO 101M/96/3/1-14). Planting continued into the 20th century so that today beech trees are once again a feature of the Buckholt landscape, the difference being that they form individual lines of stately mature trees, and not a dense mass of beechwood.

DEER

Deer, particularly fallow, roamed Buckholt at will during medieval times, though probably not in the large numbers which live in the area today. Some indication of numbers can be gained from records of royal orders for deer, or permission granted to take them, in the 13th-century Calendars of Close and Patent Rolls. Between 1231 and 1300 only 70 deer were taken from the Forest of Buckholt, all fallow and mainly bucks (54) rather than does (16), and no order was for more than seven animals. A hundred bucks were ordered in 1243, but this was a combined order with the New Forest and Blackmore Forest. The numbers of deer taken were very low when compared with Clarendon (Richardson 2005, 26-9), but Clarendon had a deer park and could supply large orders more easily. Although deer caught towards the end of the 13th century were likely to have been hunted within the 1300 boundaries of Buckholt, those taken at earlier dates could have come from anywhere within the original forest boundaries (Baskerville 2008). There are no records of roe or red deer in Buckholt, but their presence in neighbouring forests suggests that small numbers may have occurred. The predominant species ordered from Groveley between 1229 and 1266 was the red deer, and 30 red deer stags were ordered from Clarendon in 1312. Very small numbers of roe were recorded in both forests (Richardson 2005, 29-33). Many deer were of course likely to have been hunted unrecorded, or poached, an activity carried out by all levels of society. The venison pleas of the New Forest in 1257 included the two sons of



Fig. 7 The Buckholt landscape today.

Lady Mabel de Boscombe and three other men in her service. They had taken two beasts in the forest of Buckholt using Lady Mabel's greyhounds, for which deed they duly paid a fine (Stagg 1979, 73).

Today, herds of wild fallow deer travel long distances across the Clarendon, Melchet and Buckholt forest areas, but under medieval conditions they would probably not have done so to the same extent. Modern deer are more likely to be disturbed by human activities, traffic and agricultural practices. Langbein and Chapman give the summer range size for fallow bucks in the New Forest, the nearest equivalent modern landscape to the medieval countryside, as 110 ha, with a 50% increase in winter. Fallow have a high social tolerance and while the normal population density of wild fallow is 5–20 deer/km², much higher numbers are not

uncommon (Langbein and Chapman 2003, 25). Fallow deer are predominantly grazing, rather than browsing, animals, and modern agriculture, with its emphasis on autumn-sown cereals, provides them with excellent winter keep. Under medieval conditions deer were dependent on wood-pasture areas for grazing, which would not have supported the same high populations.

One of the coppice areas on the 1610 survey map (TNA LR 2/203) was called Prickett's Leap, a reminder of earlier hunting activities in Buckholt Forest. A pricket is a young fallow buck and a deer leap, when not on the boundary of a deer park, probably indicates the position of a buckstall for the capture of deer. Indeed John Leland, Henry VIII's antiquary, travelled through the area on one of his journeys *c.* 1542 and commented 'passing a three miles farther

I left, a mile off on the right hand, Buckholt Woode, a great thing, wher in tymes past, by likelihod, hath bene a chace for dere' (Colt Hoare 1837, 149).

PANNAGE

Foraging in woodland had been an integral part of keeping pigs since they were first domesticated. It was of particular importance to the agricultural economy in Saxon times, when very large herds numbering thousands were kept in the wooded areas of Britain. The most valuable foraging period was the early autumn, when acorns and beech mast fell to the ground. Pannage was the right to turn swine out into woodland to take advantage of this. The vast expanses of woodland were gradually reduced during later Saxon and early Norman times, and pigs were then only allowed into the woods for a restricted time during the autumn, from mid September until mid November, for which a payment was made to the lord of the manor or to the Crown in royal woodland (Urquhart 1983, 26–7). Formation of the Norman hunting forests may also have had an influence. The reduced period of pannage would have facilitated the hunting of the deer; both the fallow buck season in summer and the doe season from mid-September onwards would have benefited from restricting the access of large numbers of pigs.

Acorns are toxic when eaten by ruminants and horses, but cause no harmful effects in pigs. They have a feeding value of about half that of barley meal, and as long as there was a reasonable crop, pigs could be fattened for slaughter before the onset of winter without the provision of cereals or other scarce resources. In beech woods the beech mast was used, although it was more fibrous than acorns, and bracken and couch grass also had good nutritive value (Trow-Smith 1957, 82–3). This diet would have been supplemented with earthworms and other invertebrates, which pigs endlessly search for while turning over the surface of the soil. Excessive rooting by pigs causes considerable damage and in order to prevent this, pigs were

sometimes provided with a peg or ring in the nostrils. However, a certain amount of turning over of the ground was beneficial, particularly in beechwoods such as Buckholt, since beech seedlings germinate better when the surface soil has been disturbed. A really good crop of acorns or beech mast is referred to as a mast year, which only occurs every two to three years for beech and three to four years for oak, when there are sufficient food reserves in the tree. The main factor which affects both tree growth and the storage of food is the weather. Bad weather may prevent buds from forming, or kill them later, and thus prevent masting even when the food supplies are adequate. Mast years are roughly synchronous over a wide area but local differences in weather conditions may cause some variation (Thomas 2000, 147–9).

The only specific information on pannage in Buckholt Forest is in medieval accounts from the royal forests showing the money which had been received from pannage payments. For the year 1223–4, 33 shillings were received for pannage in Buckholt (TNA E372/68) and 100s were paid into the royal accounts in 1252 (CCR 1251–53, 293). Richardson has compared the pannage exits taken from the forest inquiries for several royal forests for the period 1373–5, which show that the 41s. received from Buckholt for 1374 and 1375 was relatively high, and higher than the adjoining forests of Clarendon and Melchet. The lower figures from other forests were likely to have been due to depletion of mature trees following excessive felling, and possibly the increased use of Clarendon Forest for hunting from the mid-13th century (Richardson 2005, 40).

Local pigs in Buckholt Forest were likely to have come from two different directions. Broughton, originally a royal manor, lay directly below the Buckholt hills of the forest's east bailiwick, and the inhabitants probably took their pigs up into the beechwoods there for pannage. The oakwoods around West Tytherley would have provided foraging for the pigs of Norman Court and West Tytherley, and possibly for the manor of East Tytherley as well. Pigs were often sent long distances for pannage in the autumn, for example when wealthy landowners

or monastic estates had no local woodland, but there are no records of Buckholt being used in this way.

Following the progressive reduction of woodland in southern England, large herds of pigs ceased to be the cornerstone of the agricultural economy, and were replaced by sheep and cattle. Small numbers of pigs were kept by most farmers and cottagers until the early 20th century and where there was woodland in the vicinity they continued to take advantage of pannage, just as they do in the New Forest today. The forester-in-fee for the bailiwick also had rights of pannage and Henry Whithed of Norman Court still claimed to have pannage and herbage rights in the west bailiwick in 1610 (TNA LR 2/203).

WARRENS

Rabbits were introduced by the Normans, after which they spread slowly around Britain. They were farmed in warrens, or coneygars as they were originally called, rather than breeding in the wild. The first record of rabbits on mainland Britain was in 1235, and the earliest more local records were in Groveley Forest in 1289 (Richardson 2005, 35). The species was ill-adapted to the conditions in Britain to start with, but when maintained in a protected enclosure and provided with banks of loose soil to burrow in, it gradually became established. A rabbit warren was an excellent way of using an outlying area of downland to produce meat. However, some additional feeding was required and crops such as dandelions or sow-thistles were often grown on the warren to provide rabbit food. The warren had to be enclosed by a bank or wall to prevent escapes and the resulting damage to crops in the surrounding countryside. By the 1690s the rabbit population in England was about one million, compared with two million pigs and four and a half million cattle. The figures are very approximate, but provide a useful comparison (Sheail 1971, 87).

No documentary record of a warren in Buckholt Forest exists for the Middle Ages. However, the road leading past land known

to have been a warren in the 17th century was already called *Warynstrete* in 1363 (CIPM Ed. III, 207), implying that a warren existed there by that time. This land, in the parish of Nether Wallop, had been part of Buckholt Forest until the late 13th century and it was still referred to as Buckholt (Fig. 6). The earliest direct record of Buckholt Warren is in 1660 (HRO 11M49/466), when the lease of an area of land on Nether Wallop estate, immediately adjacent to *Warynstrete*, included permission to have a warren. The lessee was referred to as a 'warriner'. A Wallop estate survey in 1765 still named it Buckholt Warren but there was no mention of a warren there, only pasture and downland (HRO 11M49/84). By the 19th century it had become Warren Farm and the Nether Wallop tithe map of 1840 still shows the hill in the centre of the farm land as Warren Hill.

There was also another warren within Buckholt. Part of the remaining crown land in the old east bailiwick, which had originally been covered with beech trees, became a warren following the destruction of the woodland there by the glass makers in the late 16th century. The earliest record of it was on the edge of the 1610 map (Fig. 5) (TNA LR2/203). In 1748 the land was described as 'a rabbit warren following the uprooting and devastation of Great Firewood Beech' (TNA E367/7119). The warren must have been present there for about 150 years; in 1779 a lease of the land describes it as 'a former rabbit warren' (HRO 16M/ 57/80).

AGRICULTURE

Some royal forests, particularly those on land unsuitable for agriculture, remained, at least in part, as areas of woodland or open common land. The New Forest, for example, was – and is – a vast stretch of common land surrounded by small farm units which relied on their common rights to be self-sufficient (Tubbs 2001, 111–2). In contrast, the land at Buckholt was mainly suitable for agriculture. Although much of its east bailiwick was woodland in medieval times, the west bailiwick was a more broken

landscape and included one nucleated village, West Tytherley, surrounded by agricultural land, beyond which lay woods and coppices. Just as other forms of land use in Buckholt were dictated by the underlying geology of the region, so too was the medieval agriculture. The soil type changes suddenly across the middle of Tytherley parish, from a continuation of the thin chalk soil of the Hampshire downland to areas of heavy clay. The heavier clay land remained as oak woods or rough grazing, whereas the chalk soil, which had supported the beechwoods, became arable or grazing downland. In addition there are patches of flints where the fields throughout history have been known by such names as Stonycroft, or Stanfield.

LAND TENURE

In the 12th to the 14th centuries, when the administration of Buckholt as a royal hunting forest was of paramount importance, 200 acres of arable land and four acres of meadow accompanied the keeping of the west bailiwick of the forest of Buckholt (*CIPM* Ed. I, 258), and this became the nucleus of the later Norman Court estate. It is worthy of note that in 1806 the 'mansion and home farm' area was still 200 acres (*HRO* 4M53/434). In addition to Norman Court, there was the manor of West Tytherley, which was held as two separate parts by serjeanty in the 13th century by Geoffrey de Porton and Richard de Cardville. The descent of the three manors is given in the *Victoria History of Hampshire* (*VCHH* IV, 519–23), but it includes very little detail about the land itself.

The land which became Norman Court was probably an area around where Norman Court Farm now stands, and near to the woodland of the west bailiwick. The Cardville part of West Tytherley manor may have included the village area, the open arable fields and the land towards the eastern boundary of the parish. The land south of Norman Court and the village was probably the Porton part, and the three manors between them included all the land in the parish. Various small parts of the

Porton land had been alienated by 1252 (*CIM* 1219–1307, 47). Two areas, given to Lambert Salmon and to Richard Wale, included pasture for sheep, and both of these holdings can still be identified in 19th-century documents, as Salmon's Field and Whales Pike.

In the 14th century, the local landscape suffered from a long period of neglect, probably because the Black Death had taken its toll. In 1380 Walter Chippenham, farmer of the manor of Tytherley, was ordered to take labourers to root up thorns and thistles and to carry out repairs to the manor (*CPR* 1377–81, 518). Likewise in 1384, Chippenham and Richard Wale were ordered to take labourers for stubbing the overgrown meadows and pastures, and to repair the buildings 'in danger of utter destruction by reason of the neglect of the past 20 years' (*CPR* 1381–85, 427).

In 1334 Norman Court manor and the keeping of the west bailiwick was bought by Roger Normaund, who held the manor of Shirley, Southampton, and ever afterwards the manor bore his name. The Whitheds acquired Shirley and Norman Court in 1433 (*VCHH* IV, 429) and they began a long drawn-out process of acquiring the surrounding land, until West Tytherley parish and all the land in the east bailiwick became part of the Norman Court estate. In the 1430s they added an area of land in Scout Lane adjacent to Norman Court when two tenements and the 70 acres which was Salmon's field were exchanged for 60 acres in Thornhurst field (*HRO* 4M53/141, 18). Sir Henry Whithed (1574–1629) inherited the estate in 1593, and he accelerated the process of acquisition. He bought the Porton part of West Tytherley manor from John Ryman, which also included a moiety of the Cardville manor (*VCHH* IV, 520), and in 1600 he acquired the manor and lordship of Cardville (*HRO* 4M53/141, 33). Henry Whithed also held 607 acres of the remains of the Crown woodland of Buckholt, on a 30-year lease at a yearly rent of £47 40s. This included much of the woodland of the old east and west bailiwicks, by 1610 known as the west bailiwick (*TNA* LR2/203 F15, 12).

Thus, by the early 17th century Sir Henry Whithed held a much enlarged Norman Court

estate, which his successors continued to expand until the 20th century. At a time when many land transactions were not documented, Henry Whithed obviously felt the need to show that he had a legal right to all the land which the Whitheds had acquired, so he carefully wrote down all the relevant information in Henry Whithed's Register of 1612 (HRO 4M53/141). Some of the detail in this document is a useful source of information on land tenure and the open fields in West Tytherley in the 16th century. There were no estate surveys before 1807 but the 16th- and 17th century wills and probate inventories of people living in West Tytherley provide some information on land tenure, as well as the nature of the agriculture and the enclosure of its open fields and common land. The wills and/or inventories of 49 people who died between 1550 and 1750 (HRO West Tytherley wills and inventories) were therefore examined, taking as far as possible people who had been involved in agriculture, which in the 16th century was most of them. Many were described as 'yeoman'. Yeomen straddled the gap between the peasantry and the gentry, gradually moving socially upwards to become prosperous farmers (Harriss 2005, 240).

Until the middle of the 16th century most of the land in West Tytherley was held by customary, or copyhold, tenure through one or other of the manor courts. Copyhold tenure was subject to the 'custom of the manor', which dictated the farming policy to which both tenant and landlord had to adhere and which was upheld by the court. Payment of an entry fine when taking up a tenancy, widow's rights and the right of the landlord to take the best beast when a tenant died (heriot), were also all part of manorial custom. Henry Whithed refers to both Ryman's and the Cardville manor courts. Land and tenements were granted for lives by the Cardville court in 1553, and quit-rents are also listed (HRO 4M53/141, 29). Copyhold tenancies were granted through the courts and therefore would not appear among the goods and chattels in probate inventories. There are no records of leasehold tenure in the 16th-century inventories. One will of 1596, that of William Blake, leaves the testator's

yardlands in the common fields and refers to his copyhold.

During the 16th and 17th centuries there was a gradual move towards the leasing of land in the country as a whole. The major difference was that leasehold tenure for a fixed term of years, or for lives, was not subject to manorial custom. This removed such burdens as payment of heriots for the tenant, and the landlord could incorporate rights in the lease and could regulate subletting. Leases were usually granted for 99 years, based on three lives, but short leases for terms of seven, 14 or 21 years also became common (Edwards 1991, 126–130). In five of the 16 West Tytherley wills dated 1550–1600, the deceased left a lease in his will. From 1600 onwards, when Henry Whithed and his successors held the whole combined manor, the lease of a house or land is included in ten of twenty wills and/or inventories. The term 'chattel lease', or lease for a fixed term of years, is mentioned in four of the 17th-century inventories. The manor courts continued to operate into the 18th century for the remaining copyhold leases, the last record of a court baron being held by Norman Court is 1712 (HRO 5M50/2578). By 1806 the change was almost complete, and the tenure of holdings on the estate was leasehold for either 21 years, or 99 years based on three lifetimes. (HRO 4M53/434).

The pace of change in the form of land tenure varied considerably across the south of England. In Dorset, due to the predominance of very large estates, leaseholding did not become common until the 18th century, before which time land was held by copyhold tenure in the overwhelming majority of cases (Betley 1982, 35). Similarly in 17th-century Wiltshire, copyhold for three lives was by far the most common form of tenure (Betley 2005, xxxiv).

THE OPEN FIELDS

Medieval agriculture in West Tytherley was carried out in the open field system commonly found on chalk land of Wiltshire and Hampshire, though the heavier soil type in

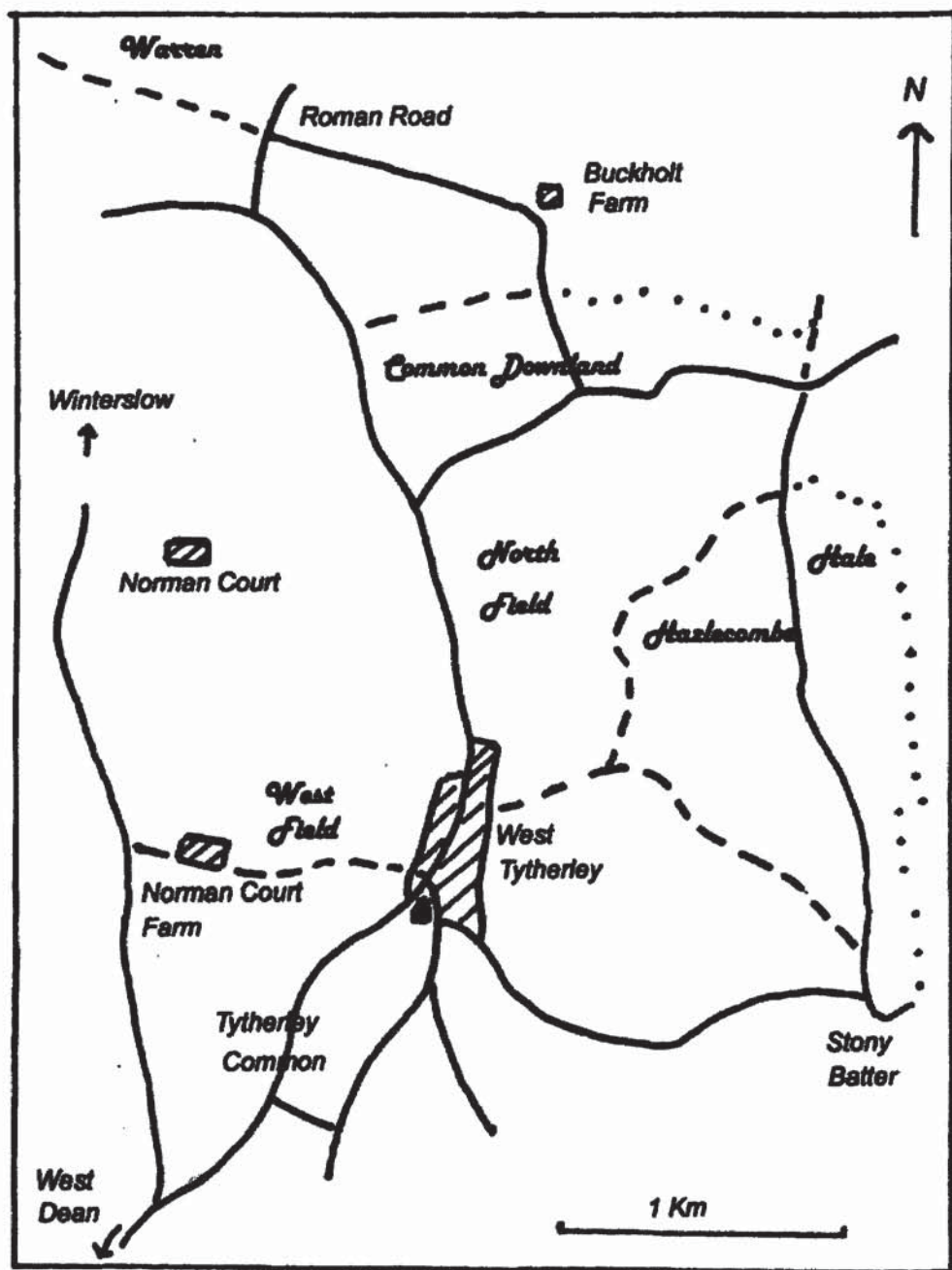


Fig. 8 The open fields and common grazing around West Tytherley *c* 1600. Modern roads — tracks --- parish boundary Scale 1:25000.

the southern end of the parish is more typical of areas of the country, for example parts of northern Wiltshire, where enclosed field agriculture was practised. The open arable fields in West Tytherley lay on the available lighter land.

The evidence for the common fields of West Tytherley and their whereabouts, as shown in Fig. 8, is as follows. The names Northfield, Westfield, Hale and Haselcombe are all given in Henry Whithed's Register as common fields, and North and West fields were obviously likely to have been situated to the north and west of the village. Later field names, such as those included in the 1807 survey of Norman Court and on the West Tytherley tithe map, are useful indicators of where the common fields lay, and both Hale and Haselcombe still occurred as field names at that time. Small fields often bear the name of a landholder, for example 'Cooper's seven acres' and 'Cooper's Hazlecomb', and where there are two or three such fields in different parts of the parish, they may be areas which had been taken out of the common fields when they were enclosed. Similarly the position of dispersed areas of glebe land is another indicator.

The pattern made by the shapes of fields is also useful; fields made by enclosing the strips of a common field usually produce a series of rectangular fields, surrounded by historically recent hedges which contain only a few plant species, particularly hawthorn, and have no bank and ditch. The area of land to the north of the village adjacent to North Lane shows such characteristics, and it included a glebe field and 'Cooper's seven acres'. This was probably North Field. Three fields to the east of the village are called Great Hazlecomb, Hanging Hazlecomb and Picked (pointed) Hazlecomb in the 1807 survey of Norman Court, which probably indicates the position of the open field of that name. Hale was likely to have been the land lying on the eastern boundary of the parish as the name Hale occurs there in the 1807 survey as Great Hale and Little Hale fields, which were part of Sponder's Farm. The name Hale appears to be very old, since the *Inquisition Post Mortem* for Richard de Kardvill in the 13th

century gives his land as one hide in Tuderleg (Tytherley) and one in La Hale (CIPM Henry III, 291). In 1600 Henry Whithed granted Cardville, which was a messuage lying in the east end of West Tytherley, to Joseph Sponder (HRO 4M53/141, 34), and it had become Sponder's Farm by 1807. The origin of the name Hale (Old English *halh*) usually indicates a nook, hollow or small valley, but although the land is in a shallow valley, the alternative origin, 'a piece of land away from the main administrative unit' may be more likely in this case (Gelling 1984, 100–110).

Westfield must clearly have been to the west of the village, suggesting an area between the village and Norman Court Farm, but there are no other strong indicators of its whereabouts. On the tithe map Church Field, likely to have been a field from which the profits were used for church-associated or charitable purposes (Cameron 1988, 210), occupies part of this area. Church Field co-existed with West Field (HRO 4M53/141) and could have been taken out of it. Unfortunately there are no remaining signs of ridge-and-furrow ploughing anywhere in the parish, and aerial photography has not revealed any other signs of medieval cultivation, such as old headlands in the open fields. Such features normally only survive where the land has subsequently been managed as pasture, or not subjected to regular modern ploughing.

In addition to the common arable fields there was extensive common grazing land around the village. Tytherley Common lies to the south west of the village, and today much of it is covered with woodland. The original common was more extensive than the present-day woodland, and it narrowed down towards the village. Cottages, followed by 19th- and 20th-century houses, have been built on what was originally common land, and some fields appear to have been enclosed around the edge of the common. The land in this part of the parish is much heavier than the chalk soil and would have been harder to cultivate. It was therefore left as rough grazing land and wood pasture.

An area of chalk downland lying between Yew Tree Lane and the Buckholt parish boundary

to the north of the village was also likely to have been common grazing land. Most of the field names in that area in the 1807 survey are called Down, for example Cooper's Down and Frith's Down, and by 1807 it had become Down Barn Farm. The land appears on modern maps to have the typical ladder appearance of former open common land which has been enclosed, having two roughly parallel old sinuous boundaries with rectangular fields across the space between them (HHLA, I, 8). As well as the open fields and commons there were many small closes, or enclosed fields, both arable and meadow, around the tenements which are recorded not only in Henry Whithed's Register but also in many of the 16th- and 17th-century wills as being held in severalty, or separate from the communal fields.

ENCLOSURE

Enclosure in West Tytherley came about gradually from the late 16th century onwards. In the country as a whole it was achieved by a variety of means; formal agreement, informal enclosure or parliamentary enclosure, and all three methods were used in different parts of Hampshire. Informal enclosure was particularly easy where the whole parish belonged to a single landowner (Chapman and Seeliger 1997, 2-3). Henry Whithed had assiduously drawn all of West Tytherley parish into his estate, and it was therefore relatively simple for him and his successors to change the system by informal means. Land could gradually be reallocated in blocks when the leases ran out.

There is no record of precisely when enclosure occurred, as it would have been a gradual process. Whithed was still granting leases of land in the common fields at the end of the 16th century. He granted a lease of 21 acres in 1597, and another in 1602 (HRO 4M53/141). In 1613 William Benat left eight acres in the common fields in his will. Rights of common pasture were also granted in leases of tenancies in 1648 (HRO 11M79/E/T4) and in 1688 (HRO 11M79/E/T6). The lease of 1648 includes 'a field taken out of Northfield', sug-

gesting that the open field had recently been divided up. There are no further records of open fields or common rights after the 1688 lease. By 1730 a number of fair-sized farms had been created, as appear in a one year lease of the whole estate (HRO 4M53CB37). The estate survey in 1807 shows enclosure now complete, and Tytherley Common has become woodland called Tytherley Forest. However, vestigial limited common rights are included in the 1807 sale indenture.

Enclosure may not always have been straightforward. Some of the tenants may have had reservations about the new system of agriculture, especially if they suffered a loss of grazing rights. In 1597 a letter was written by the Earl of Hertford's steward, regarding the enclosure of land on Dean Heath. This was land immediately outside the Norman Court estate boundary, and Whithed had rights there, together with Thomas Dowse, lord of the manor of Broughton; 'Mr. Dowse hath inclosyd the one half and made it coppice for 2 yeares paste' and 'now I do enclose these for his lordship's [the Earl of Hertford's] profit these commoners do marvelously murmer and grudge at it and saye they will pull uppe the hedge' (WRO 1300/104).

In 1610 Henry Whithed held on lease 607 acres of woodland from the Crown, representing the remains of the west bailiwick of Buckholt Forest. At that time John Norden, who was carrying out a survey of royal forests, recommended that most of the area was so wasted that it would be more profitable to disafforest it and put the land to other use. Disafforestation meant the loss of any common rights there, which may be why Norden wrote in his report 'Sir Henry Whithed pretendeth to have *herbagium, pannagium et copagium* to him and his heirs for ever' (TNA LR2/203). However, the end result was the creation of Buckholt Farm out of the land in question, owned by Sir Henry. In 1730 it was listed in a one year lease of Norman Court estate as a farm of 550 acres in the tenure of Thomas Gatehouse. The Gatehouses also held the tenancy of Queenwood Farm in the adjacent parish of East Tytherley, as did their successors at Buckholt, the Brownjohns. In 1746 Joshua Brownjohn wrote a

series of letters concerning stock and repairs at Buckholt Farm. He was principally concerned with asking for more money from the estate, but the letters do show that Buckholt at that time was an arable farm, growing wheat and barley in fields, some of which at least had hedges and fences (HRO 28M60/47). The description of Buckholt Farm in the 1807 survey shows that it was still the same size, and also that there was very little woodland on it. By that time it had a very fine house with substantial farm buildings, and a dovecote. There must also have been sizeable sheep flocks at Buckholt, both on the newly-created farm and on the final remains of the east bailiwick Crown land adjacent to it. Buckholt was a dry chalk hillside and the sale indenture of 1807 included an annual payment for a sheep walk down to water into Broughton, in the Wallop Brook valley below.

CROPS AND LIVESTOCK

The wills and inventories from West Tytherley provide many records of the crops grown in the common fields around the village. Wheat and barley were the principal cereal crops but there were also smaller acreages of oats, peas, vetches and dredge corn (mixed barley and oats) which were grown mainly to provide food for the horses and cattle. To maintain the fertility of the soil medieval farmers rotated their crops, and normally left the ground fallow one year in three. In a common field system the rotation had to be agreed communally, and all the strips in a specified part of the field were sown with the same crop. Where cereal crops were grown on thin chalk soil, as on the Wessex downland, all the sheep of the demesne farm and manor tenants were folded at night on the common arable land, after spending the day grazing on the downs. The sheep were packed tightly in a small pen, and moved onto a fresh area each night. The manure which they deposited improved the fertility of the soil. The Tytherley combined sheepflock was unlikely to have been very large, as there were not the large areas of grazing downland which were available in parishes further north, and none of the

West Tytherley inventories include very large numbers of sheep.

Medieval farmers used oxen for ploughing and heavy haulage, work which was only gradually taken over by horses. Horses were used for ploughing on light soils by the 16th century, but oxen were used for at least another 200 years where the soil was deep heavy clay. In West Tytherley no plough oxen were included in any of the probate inventories examined, and there were no wains, or ox carts. Contemporary wills from elsewhere in Wiltshire, including areas with heavy soils, do include oxen (Betley 2005, 95–113). The lack of oxen in West Tytherley at that time helps to confirm that the common arable fields were on the chalk soil.

As the 17th century progressed, new crops began to appear. Better fodder crops were needed to help to feed more animals over the winter months when there was little grazing for them. Corn production could only be increased if greater numbers of sheep were available to provide manure, and more sheep needed more food. Grass seed is included in inventories in 1699 and 1703, suggesting a change to the newer ryegrass and clover crops for fodder. In addition to the development of fodder crops, the 16th and 17th centuries saw the introduction of industrial crops around southern England. Plants such as woad, weld and madder, used to provide dyes for the cloth industries, began to be cultivated across Wessex instead of being imported from France, Belgium and Holland. Salisbury was an important centre of the production of woollen cloth and by the early 16th century, woad was cultivated in many parts of the Wiltshire countryside. Much of the production was in small plots of around 1.5 ha, but there were also some larger producers. Large-scale production was carried out by a few entrepreneurs, who built up big businesses selling woad to the clothiers and dyers. One of the most prominent local figures involved in this trade in the late 16th and early 17th centuries was Henry Sherfield, a Salisbury lawyer and member of Parliament (Betley 2005, 267–292). In 1529 a Henry Shyrfield had held a tenement and land in West Tytherley, including



Fig. 9 A modern view of Norman Court mansion house

'one close called Wedeacre' (HRO 4M53/141, 40). The Dutch for woad was *Weede*. Thus it seems more than likely that the forebears of Henry Sherfield MP had learned the art of cultivating woad on a small plot in West Tytherley 70 years earlier.

CONCLUSION

The finishing point of a description of the use of land is inevitably rather arbitrary, since land use is a continuous and constantly evolving process. However, by the end of the 19th century the last remaining piece of Crown land which had originally been Buckholt Forest had been sold. The old medieval way of life and management of the countryside was now over; crops and farm livestock were in enclosed fields, and the Industrial Revolution had heralded the beginning of the mechanisation of agriculture and forestry. Norman Court became

primarily a shooting estate in the 18th and 19th centuries, and a new mansion house was built in 1752 (Fig. 9). However, the estate still had a major interest in both timber and underwood production, and was enlarged to include the c. 690 ha of woodland in nearby Bentley Wood during the 19th century. An estate for hunting or shooting game as a sport, combined with the production of timber and set against a background of agriculture sounds remarkably like Buckholt's earlier incarnation as a medieval royal hunting forest. The countryside may have looked different but the use of the land was still essentially the same. Only the details had changed.

Buckholt was never a major royal forest in its own right; compared with the New Forest or Savernake it did not cover an extensive area. Its importance lay in its proximity to Clarendon Palace and its inclusion within the Clarendon group of forests. It was unusual in having very extensive beechwoods, which adds

to its interest, if not to its value at the time. Beech was useful as fuel, and fuel was valuable, but was not an important construction timber. Buckholt did not retain its separate identity as a forest area into modern times in the way that the New Forest has done. Most former royal forests which have retained their identity included large areas of marginal land, for example the sandy heaths in the New Forest or the high moorlands on Dartmoor – as unsuitable for intensive agriculture today as they were when the forests were created. In contrast, Buckholt became agricultural land surrounded by some woodland, and the name was retained only as a civil parish. Therein lies

its interest, as a well-documented area demonstrating the gradual transformation of a typical area of Hampshire landscape from royal forest to country estate.

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