

THE DEAN FARM ESTATE IN KILMESTON

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ABSTRACT

This paper assembles elements of the history of a Hampshire estate both before and after its acquisition as a foundation endowment for one of the colleges of Oxford University. The elements have been drawn from an exceptional combination of documents and maps in the college's archive which clearly demonstrate the estate's origins as an early, aggregated freehold. The constraints imposed by statute upon the tenancy under the landlordship of the college are examined, as are their effects on its value to both lessor and lessee. Topographical features are also discussed, as well as the geographical locations of three manors whose boundaries have apparently been hitherto unknown.

INTRODUCTION

The property of religious (and often of educational and medical) institutions was held in *mortmain* until the 19th century and could not be alienated except by the authority of an act of parliament. Thus, an estate that was present at one date often existed in the same form several centuries away. The value of these constants for the study of urban topography is now well established, but the methodology can also be applied to rural properties (M. Hicks, *pers. comm.*). An earlier article discussed the lands in Hampshire that were acquired by Bishop Richard Fox for the endowment of his new college of Corpus Christi at Oxford in 1517 (Waight 1996). The College's splendid series of Langdon Maps drawn in the first two decades of the 1600s, its contemporary 'Description of the Estates' and the Twyne Transcripts of 1647 can be used in a rare combination to cast light on these estates, not only during

the period to which they belong, but also in the past, before the College's foundation (CCC MS 533/2/9 and 10; CCC Mc 13/1; CCC TT, Vol. IX, Ch. 8, Fasc. 2). Lease books, court books, correspondence and other documents then carry the account forward, so that pictures bridging periods between the 13th and the 20th centuries can be drawn. Previous articles have applied this technique to Marwell Woodlock in Owslebury and Shelley Farm in Eling (Waight 1998; Waight 2007). This paper applies the method to the Dean Farm Estate in Kilmeston and Warnford and thus provides a basis for future studies of the landholding, economy, and landscape of this neglected area in Hampshire.

CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE'S ESTATE AT KILMESTON

The parish of Kilmeston lies on chalk downland about five km (eight miles) south-east of Winchester (Fig. 1), and the present-day Dean Farm is centred on SU 594 258. The estate that was subsequently known as Dean Farm was acquired in 1517 as a foundation endowment for Corpus Christi College in Oxford, hereinafter referred to as Corpus Christi or the College (CCC TT, Vol. IX, Ch. 8, Fasc. 2, Ev 31). At the time of acquisition it comprised a group of closes in the south-east corner of the village, together with about 50 strips in the open fields of Kilmeston and a discrete piece of land in the neighbouring parish of Warnford known as Warnford Lomer (CCC MS 533/2/9 and 10; CCC Mc 13/1). Although it remained in the freehold of the College until 1920, the land in Kilmeston had come to be regarded as part of the larger

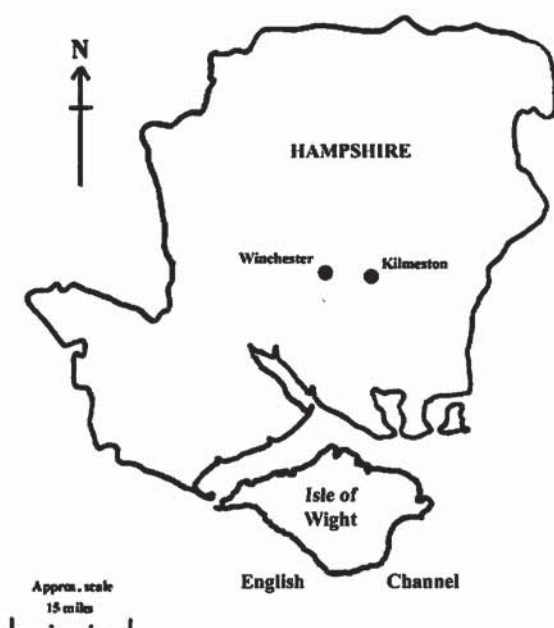


Fig. 1 Location map

Dean House Estate long at least by 1835 (HRO 187M84/7/7). References in this paper to 'the Kilmeston estate' include Warnford Lomer up to 1812.

Corpus Christi's holding in Kilmeston is comparable with a number of other estates in Hampshire in that it is known to have been built up by aggregation in the 12th and 13th centuries (see below). It is also one of very few estates for which both pre- and post-enclosure maps survive (CCC MS 533/2/9 & 10; HRO 187M84/7/7). As such, it is an example of a freehold estate, as distinct from a copyhold, that was originally widely scattered in composition. It thus provides additional evidence to support the conclusion reached in an earlier article (Wright 2001) that early freehold properties made up of widely scattered elements were quite commonplace in their time. Such estates were usually formed by aggregation, but documentary evidence alone cannot demonstrate that the elements were discrete. Scatter can only be proved where pre-enclosure maps have survived. It is also an example of the suc-

cessful construction of a compact estate by the Enclosure Commissioners.

During the medieval period, Kilmeston was divided into two manors, namely Kilmeston Plunkenet and Kilmeston Gymmings (VCHH III, 323–5). So far as is known, the geographical division has never been established, but is suggested in this paper.

THE ORIGINS OF THE ESTATE

A series of Evidences known as the Twyne Transcripts in the archive of Corpus Christi was transcribed by students at the College in 1647. It includes a volume of copies of charters and agreements which specifically relate to the College's land in Kilmeston and which date back to the 12th or 13th centuries (CCC TT, Vol. IX, Ch. 8, Fasc. 2.); some of the original documents themselves also survive in the Corpus Christi archive. The Evidences illustrate the aggregation and descent of the estate from the 12th century until its purchase in 1517 by Richard Fox, bishop of Winchester and founder of the College, and record that the major part of his purchase comprised a 35 ha (86 acre) assemblage of open-field strips and closes wholly within the manor of Kilmeston Plunkenet. The proper names in the following paragraphs are written as they appear in the transcripts.

The earliest charter, attributed to the reign of Richard I or John (1189–1216), records the grant from William Langrishe to Hugo and Alice de Brunning of 20 acres of land in Kilmeston that had been held by William le Porter (CCC TT, Vol. IX, Ch. 8, Fasc. 2, Ev. 1). The next, also undated but attributed to the reign of John, is of the grant by Alan de Plogenet, the lord of the manor, of two messuages and two virgates of 'land' to the same Hugo Brinning (*sic*) for the sum of 23s. 4d. (*Ibid.*, Ev. 2). The references to 'land' as opposed to 'crofts' imply that the land was in the open fields of Kilmeston. In further charters, Brinning, also known as Brunning or Browne, divided and passed his lands in Kilmeston to Peter of the Mill of Cheriton (*Ibid.*, Evs. 3 and 4) and Robert le Bole (*Ibid.*, Ev. 6), but they were subsequently reunited by

the purchase of le Bule's portion by Richard, son of Peter of the Mill in 1313 (*Ibid.*, Ev. 8). In the same year the same Richard bought a croft called Berecroft in Kilmeston (*Ibid.*, Ev. 9), and in 1347 he also purchased a croft known as Portirescroft, later known as Priests Field or Priesthill, from John Boen or Bohun (*Ibid.*, Ev. 13). After passing through the hands of Adam atte Hatche, the combined estate was acquired in 1332 by Walter Pourbyke (*Ibid.*, Ev. 12), who granted it to William and Matilda atte Oke and their son Nicholas in several moieties in 1348 and 1358 (*Ibid.*, Evs. 14, 15, 17 and 18). The latter transactions were confirmed by the Feet of Fines in 1359 (FF, Trin, 33 Edw III).

There are no transcripts of documents dated between 1358 and 1517, suggesting that the estate remained in the hands of the atte Oke family throughout this period. Further weight is given to this suggestion by the disposal by John Noost and his wife Margaret, 'sister and heiress of William Roke alias William atte Oke, son and heir of William Roke alias William atte Oke', of one third of their estate to George Bosyat of Kingston upon Thames in October 1517 (CCC TT, Vol. IX, Ch. 8, Fasc. 2, Ev. 30). Later in the same month Noost, his wife and Bosyat sold all their land in 'Kulmeston plonknet and Warneford Lomer' to Richard Fox, bishop of Winchester (*Ibid.*, Ev. 31). The series of transcripts also included quitclaims and other documents confirming the above transactions.

The sale to Fox is the first occasion on which the Kilmeston and Warnford elements are mentioned in the same document, but it is possible that Warnford Lomer had already been held by the atte Oke family for some time. There is no evidence to suggest that the Black Death had any effect on the composition or descent of the estate.

The Evidences show that Warnford Lomer was also known as Lomer Turville, a small manor that was mentioned several times in the 13th and 14th centuries. The Victoria County History gives an account of Lomer Turville up to 1392, but, as in the Evidences, it does not account for the period from then until 1517 (VCHH III, 250-1). It is probable that Lomer Turville was a component part of an area known

as Upwarnford in the Saxon and later medieval periods, where it was linked with Bere Farm, another of Corpus Christi's estates, Wheely and Riversdown (Waight 1990).

That the grants were freehold grants is ultimately proven by the inclusion of Corpus Christi's Kilmeston estate in *Valor Ecclesiasticus*, the ecclesiastical survey of 1534 that was the precursor to the Dissolution. The survey shows that Corpus Christi's tenant, Alexander Seward, was paying a quit-rent of 3s. 4d. to 'Magistro Skelyng', the lord of the manor of Kilmeston Plunkenet, in addition to his rent to the College (VE, 1814, ii, 45; VCHH III, 323-5). Taken together, the documents show beyond reasonable doubt that the scattered Corpus Christi estate had freehold origins at least as early as the 13th century.

The early charters included the named crofts Berecroft, le Longacre, Vreny and Watdene, later known as Waddings, all of which appear in a 1615 volume entitled 'Description of the Estates' (Mc 13/1, 35), and as Bear Croft, Vernay Close and Wadins Piece in a survey of c. 1861 (HRO 187M84/7/6). The College map of 1615 shows that these closes formed a compact group (CCC MS 533/2/9), while current Ordnance Survey maps show that the external boundary of the group remains in place today (OS Pathfinder 1264, SU 595255).

THE COMPOSITION OF THE ESTATE

As religious corporations, university colleges held their lands *in mortmain* until an act of parliament freed them from the ban on alienation in 1858 (Waight 2001; Public General Statutes). Consequently, when Thomas Langdon drew his maps of the Kilmeston estate for Corpus Christi in 1615 or 1616 (CCC MS 533/2/9 and 10), he was mapping it as it had been at purchase in 1517. The land was so scattered that it required two pages of his atlas, which are reproduced at Plates 1 and 2. Plate 1 shows strips in the East Hook and West Hook open fields of Kilmeston and the group of closes (CCC MS 533/2/9). Plate 2 shows strips in the North Field of Kilmeston, and one close known as Priests Hill (CCC MS 533/2/10).

Furthermore, Langdon's accuracy was such that all his maps can be superimposed on the 1st Series of 6" Ordnance Survey maps for Hampshire with great precision; those for Kilmeston have been overlaid upon an outline map of the parish at Fig. 2. (Lomer Turville, in Warnford parish, is just south of the Kilmeston boundary). Since the charters among the Twyne Transcripts consistently refer to the scattered strips as part of the manor of Kilmeston Plunkenet, it may be speculated that the blank areas to the east of the village represent that manor's woodland and commons. It may also be conjectured that the blank area on the western side represents the manor of Kilmeston Gymming.

The contents of the estate were also set out in an account that was contemporary with the maps and shows the extent as follows (CCC, Mc 13/1, 35):

	<i>a</i>	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>
The Tenem[en]ts and severall grounds in the tenure of Edm[un]d Austin do contain)	49	0	28
The field land in West-hooke contain	3	1	25
The lands in the East hooke	18	0	2
In the North field	13	2	20
Besides Priests Hill	2	1	0
Sum Tot[al]	86	1	35

In this account the term 'severall grounds' means 'discrete' or 'enclosed' lands, and refers to the closes already mentioned above, including Warnford Lomer. The total area does not agree precisely with the Kilmeston and Warnford tithe awards but slightly more than half of the 49 acres were in Warnford (HRO 21M65/F7/131/1 and 244/1). It is noteworthy that Edmund Austin, also known as Edmund at Noke, became tenant in 1589, 72 years after his ancestor had disposed of her freehold interest to bishop Fox (see Table 1 [CCCLB 1-42 *passim*: TNA HO 107/404/12/8; HO 107/1666/67; RG 9/702/50; RG 10/1223/61; RG 11/1243/56; RG 12/948/50; RG13/1096/57]).

The Langdon map shows that a messuage

stood within the group of old closes in Kilmeston (CCC MS 533/2/9), but no domestic building exists on its site today and the present modest, brick-and-tile-hung, farmhouse of Dean Farm at SU 594258 appears to be of 18th-century construction.

So far as is known, the College documents for Kilmeston, including one of the Langdon maps (CCC MS 533/2/9), give the only existing indication of Lomer Turville's geographical location. This discrete part of Corpus Christi's Kilmeston estate is clearly identifiable in the First Series 6" Ordnance Survey map of 1871 (Sheet 51), in which the boundaries of a woodland plantation correspond precisely with those of one of the closes in Langdon's map; the area is unchanged today, and a stretch of the southern boundary of the detached estate is still defined by a degraded hedgebank. Its location is also shown in Fig. 2. Cottages in Warnford Lomer and Priests Hill are mentioned in the description of the estate given in the early leases, but they do not appear in Langdon's maps.

THE TENANCY

From the outset, the land and buildings in Corpus Christi's Kilmeston estate were leased, although the coppices were kept in hand as a separate source of revenue. The College scribes were very conservative, and the wording of the leases changed little over the years (CCC, LB *passim*). Throughout the College's landlordship, even into the 19th century, the lease indentures described the estate as 'A messuage, garden, 2 yardlands and more in Kilmeston, commons for 100 sheep 5 horses and 5 kyne in the common, 1 parcell arable ground in Warnford called Lowmer Ground and two cottages one called Porters in Culmiston and the other in Warnford' (*Ibid.*). The stint of 100 sheep on the commons of Kilmeston Plunkenet suggests that a large flock was maintained in the manor as a whole and that sheep-corn husbandry was practised here as in other parts of downland Hampshire.

During the 15th and early 16th centuries, towards the end of a long period of economic stability, leasehold rents had assumed constant

Table 1 Corpus Christi's tenants in the Dean Farm estate 1517 to 1920. It included the Lomer Ground until 1812.

<i>Date of Lease</i>	<i>Tenant's Name</i>	<i>Amount of Fine £. s. d.</i>
1517	Alexander Seward	Not known
1560	Alexander Colett	Not known
1568	William Kindge	Not known
1589	Edmund at Noke alias Austin	Not known
1597	Edmund at Noke alias Austin	Not known
1608	Edmund at Noke alias Austin	Not known
1622	Edmund at Noke alias Austin	Not known
1633	Edmund at Noke alias Austin	23.0.0.
1649	Edmund at Noke alias Austin	25.0.0.
1663	Edmund at Noke alias Austin	29.0.0.
1671	Edmund Austin's executors	19.0.0.
1677	John Spencer	14.0.0.
1684	John Spencer	17.0.0.
1691	John Spencer	17.0.0.
1698	John Spencer	18.0.0.
1706	John Spencer	20.0.0.
1714	John Spencer	20.0.0.
1721	John Spencer	21.0.0.
1728	John Spencer	21.0.0.
1735	John Spencer	21.0.0.
1749	Thomas Spencer	21.0.0.
1756	Thomas Spencer	21.0.0.
1763	Sarah Spencer, widow of Thomas	21.0.0.
1770	Sarah Spencer, widow of Thomas	21.0.0.
1777	Sarah Spencer, widow of Thomas	50.0.0.
1784	Sarah Spencer, widow of Thomas	50.0.0.
1791	Sarah Spencer, widow of Thomas	50.0.0.
1798	Sarah Spencer, widow of Thomas	59.9.6.
1805	Charles Graeme	Not known
1812	Charles Graeme	Not known
1819	Charles Graeme	138.16.6.
1834	Sir Henry Warde	130.10.6.
1841 Census	Olive Codrington	
1847	Olive C. Codrington	156.14.0.
1851 Census	Olive Calley Codrington	
1854	Olive C. Codrington	158.0.0.
1861 Census	Widow Henrietta Codrington was in residence	
1861	Rev. E.L. Bennett (possibly as Trustee)	200.0.0.
1871 Census	The lessee was not in residence	
1881 Census	Widow Henrietta Codrington was in residence	
1891 Census	The lessee was not in residence	
1901 Census	John M Walpole	

(CCC LB 1-34 *passim*)

Table 2 Corpus Christi's tenants in the Lomer Ground 1812 to 1862 (LB *passim*).

<i>Date of Lease</i>	<i>Tenant's Name</i>	<i>Amount of Fine</i> £. s. d.
1812	Walter Long	46.8.6.
1819	Walter Long	23.16.6.
1826	Walter Long	20.2.0.
1833	Walter Long	20.2.6.
1841	Walter Long	23.18.0.
1854	Walter Long	30.3.6.

(CCC LB 30-34 *passim*)

money values, and when the initial rent for the Kilmeston estate was set at £1 10s. 0d. in 1517 (CCC LB 1, unpaginated) no future change could have been envisaged. However, rising prices caused by a population explosion during the latter part of the 16th century created major problems for the university colleges, which had to be rescued by act of parliament in 1576 (Journal of the House of Commons, 1547-1629, I, 112). The act required them to take at least one-third of their leasehold rents in corn or its market value, and the formula that Corpus Christi applied in Kilmeston was £1 0s. 0d. in cash plus the value of 6 bushels of wheat and one quarter of malt. When the estate was divided in 1812, a new formula was devised and a rent of 13s. 0d. plus 45 gallons of wheat and 55 gallons 2 quarts of malt was levied on Dean Farm, while a rent of 9 gallons of wheat plus 13 gallons of malt was charged for Lomer Turville (CCC LB 30).

The standard term for a College lease was 20 years, and the grant or renewal was also subject to the payment of a fee or fine. A change of sub-tenant required renewal of the lease, but where such changes were frequent the tenant could opt for seven-yearly renewals; it is evident from Table 1 that the Spencer family were regularly sub-letting, indeed, Thomas Spencer's will of 1760 shows that the Lomer ground was let to and occupied by one Isaac [surname omitted] (HRO 187M84/7/9).

The corn-rent formula stayed in force for over

250 years, fluctuations in the price of grain alone protecting the College against the very worst effects of inflation. In fact, the combination of corn-rents and renewal fines fees failed to give the colleges a fair income from their estates at any time and the tenants made good profits as a result. This is graphically illustrated in the case of the Dean Farm estate by Sarah Spencer's assignment of the lease to Charles Graeme in 1800 for £1,200 (187M84/7/12), this at a time when the last renewal fine paid to the College was £59 9s. 6d. and the annual rent remained at £1 0s. 0d. in cash plus the value of six bushels of wheat and one quarter of malt (see Table 1). The College's Lease Books and Grant Books provide an almost unbroken record of the tenants' leases and fines (see Tables 1 and 2).

ENCLOSURE IN KILMESTON

Enclosure in Kilmeston was achieved through a parliamentary act of 1803, during the tenancy of Sarah Spencer. Although both the map and the award have survived (HRO, 109M94/PD1 and Q23/2/72), the result for the Dean Farm estate is best illustrated by an estate map of 1835 which contains the same detail but at a larger scale (HRO 187M84/7/7).

When Corpus Christi's tenant Sir Henry Warde entered his lease in 1834, the indenture included a farmhouse with outbuildings and

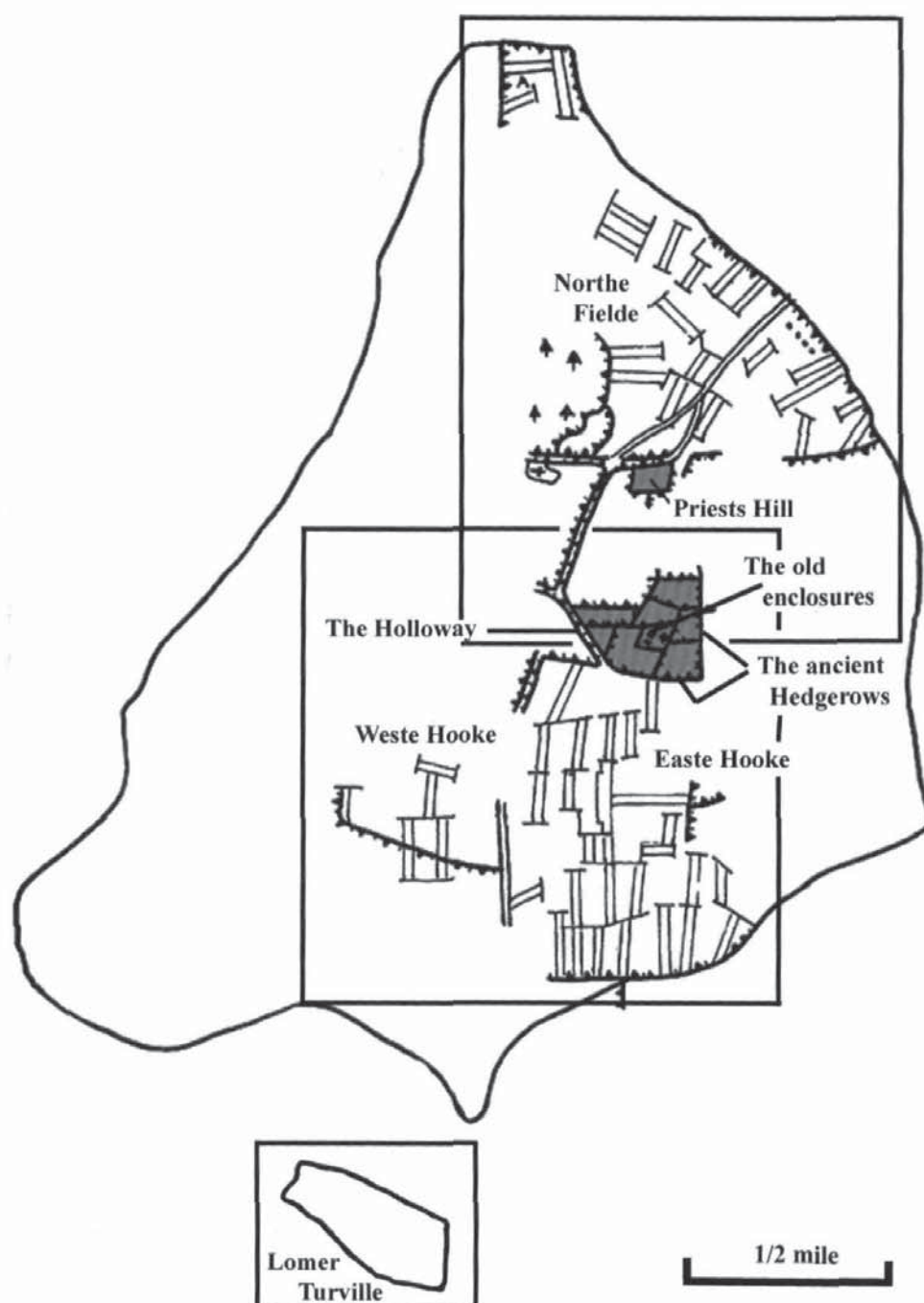


Fig. 2 Elements of Langdon's maps overlaying an outline map of Kilmeston parish.

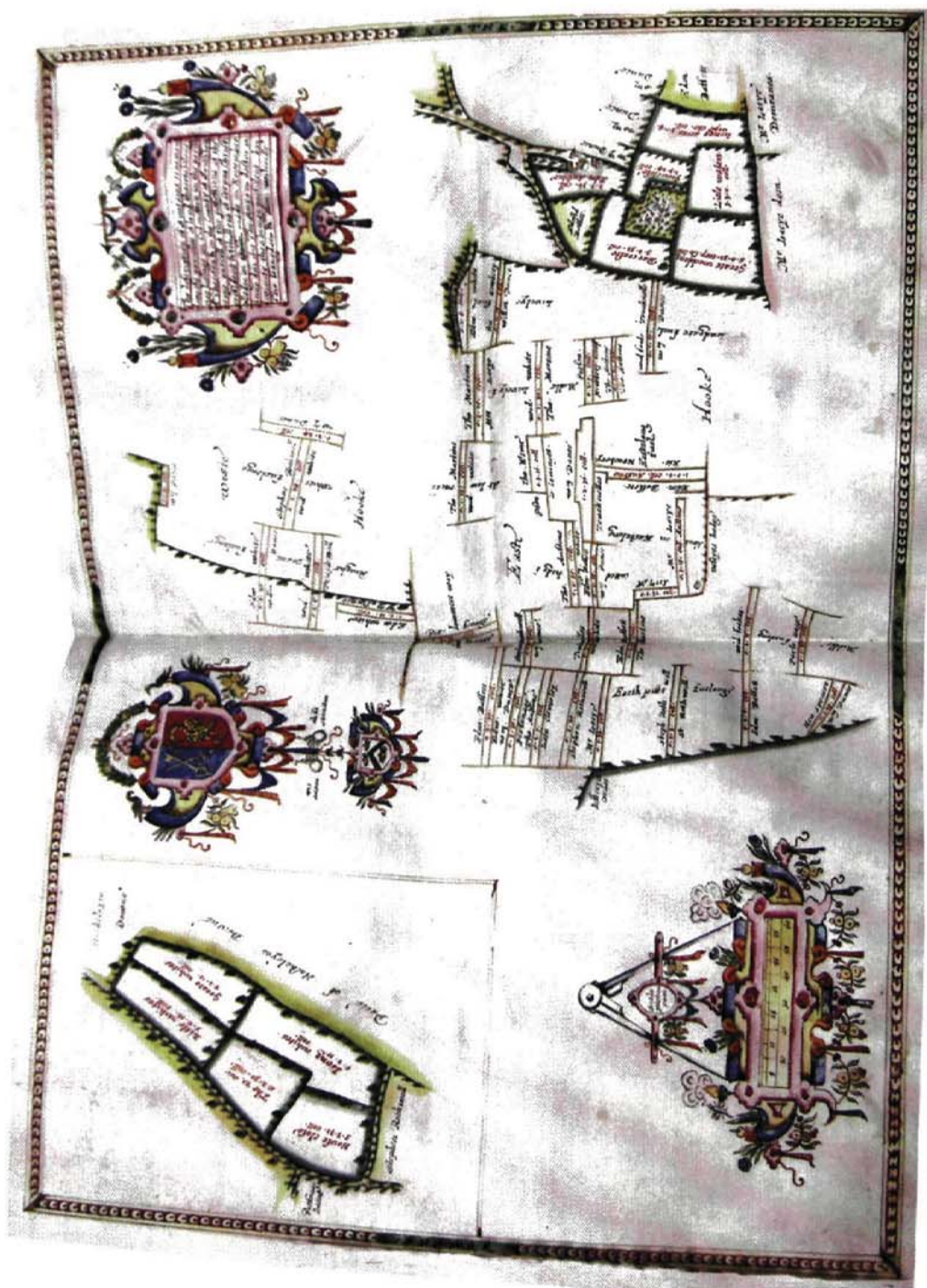


Plate 1 Langdon's 1615 map of strips in the southern open fields of Kilmeston. Lomer Turville, also known as Lomer Turville, is inset top left. North is to the right.

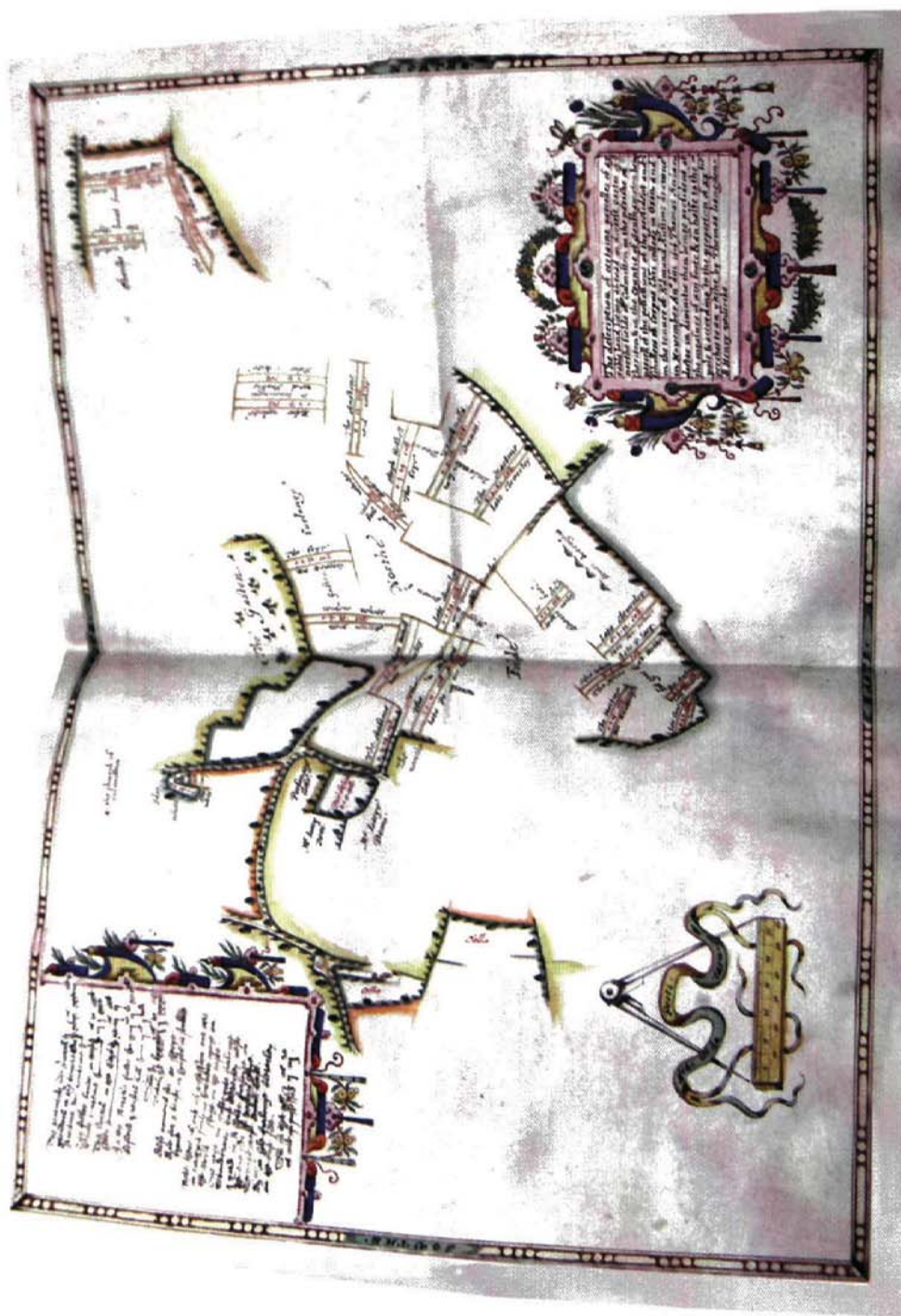


Plate 2 Langdon's 1616 map of strips in the northern open field of Kilmeston. North is to the right.



Plate 3 The ancient and irregular hedgebank along the eastern side of the old enclosures.



Plate 4 The ancient and irregular hedgebank along the southern side of the old enclosures.



Plate 5 The holloway that originally led from the village to the East Hooke open field and later gave access to Corpus Christi's enclosure allotments.

an orchard, Home Close, Wadings Piece, The Coppice, Barecroft, Verneys, and Livelys, and the new allotment (CCC, LB 34). However, although owned by the College, the leasehold was only part of Warde's larger estate; the Kilmeston tithe map and award show that he was holding 138 of the 1670 acres in the parish (HRO 21M65/F7/131/1-2; 21M65/F7/131/1). Warde's 18th-century Dean House still stands on an adjoining site and its internet website records that 'No research has been done on the history of the house but the square central block suggests itself as of Queen Anne or early Georgian origins' (www.deanhousegardens.co.uk); if this assertion is correct it would suggest that the house was built during the Spencer family's tenure of the Corpus Christi lease.

The 1835 map is reproduced at Fig. 3, and shows how the open-field strips of the combined pre-enclosure estates had been converted in 1803 into a block of regular enclosures adjoining the group of old closes (HRO 187M84/7/7). Priests Hill was exchanged during the process. Some of the irregular hedgebanks of the old closes still exist today and must be at least 700 years old (A and B). Those on the eastern and southern sides of the old closes still exist, and are illustrated at Plates 3 and 4. Fig. 3 also demonstrates that entry to the newly-created enclosures was provided by the same lane that Langdon showed to have been used as access to the old East Hook open field; through centuries of continuous use the lane had become the holloway that is still identifiable today (Plate 5). Compare the holloway (Plate 5, C) with the access to the open fields shown in Plate 2.

DISPOSAL

The act of parliament which freed university colleges from the ban on alienation was passed in 1858 (Public General Statutes, 21 and 22 Vict.). It is, perhaps, an acknowledgment of the efficiency of the enclosure surveyors that, while many less-convenient Corpus Christi estates were sold off immediately afterwards, its compact estate in Kilmeston was retained for a further 60 years. Dean Farm was sold to

G.K. Peto for £1,075 in 1920 (CCC LB 42), and is now owned by the National Trust (Lessee, *pers. comm.*). The Lomer land was leased as a separate entity from 1812 until its sale to Walter Long for £500 in 1862 (CCC LB 37).

CONCLUSION

The Corpus Christi estate in Kilmeston was one of the many scattered freehold estates that existed in Hampshire in the late medieval period, and was built up by the aggregation of a few closes and many individual open-field strips. It achieved maximum benefit from the enclosure process, and was one of a very small number of estates in Hampshire for which accurate pre- and post-enclosure maps survive. As with other university leaseholds, the restricted rents and fines failed to provide a proper return for the College. However, unlike other university college estates, it was sufficiently compact and profitable for ownership to be retained after the passing of the 1858 University Colleges act. The Corpus Christi archive, in particular the Langdon maps, sets the College tenure and the distribution of landholding in Kilmeston on a firm basis and provides opportunities for future investigation of the field pattern, agricultural economy and landscape, and to relate these to what is visible today.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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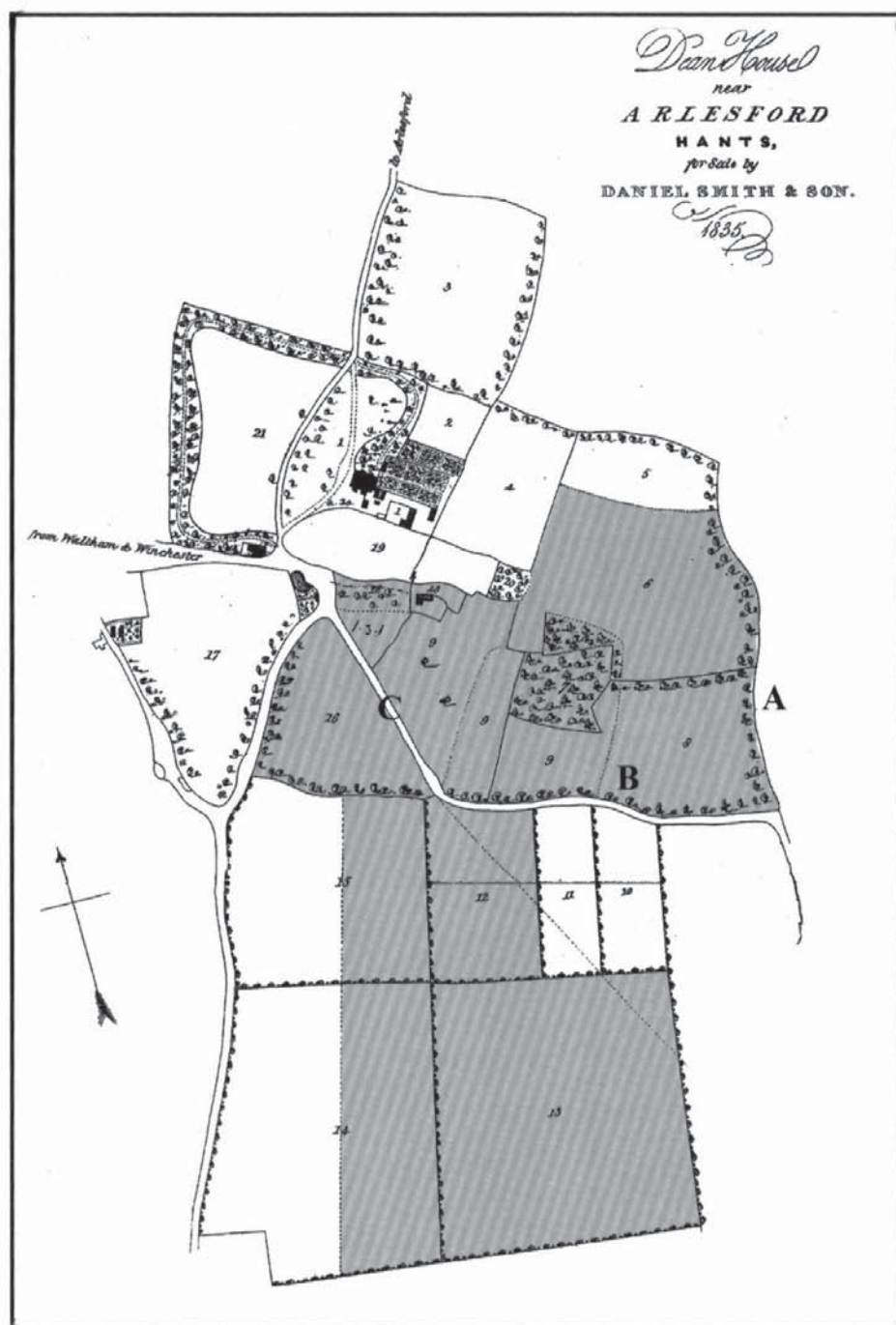


Fig. 3 The combined Dean House estate in 1835. The old enclosures and allotments relevant to Corpus Christi's estate are shaded.

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Abbreviations

Corpus Christi College, Oxford [CCC]
Feet of Fines [FF]
Hampshire Record Office [HRO]
Lease books [LB]
The National Archives [TNA]
Ordnance Survey [OS]
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1803.
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dated 1835.
Q23/2/72 The Enclosure Award for Kilmeston,
1803.

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arranged in chronological order. The
volumes are generally unpaginated.
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Langdon in 1615 or 1616. MS 533/2/9,
said to have been drawn in November
1615, relates to the southern half of the
parish and contains an inset of Lomer
Turville in Warnford; MS 533/2/10,
said to have been drawn in November
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parish.
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