The Stour Valley Heritage Compendia

The Historic Landscape Compendium

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Acknowledgements

No writing is entirely a fresh creation and this less than most. The extent to which I have drawn the superb Historical Atlas of Suffolk (Dymond and Martin 1999) is evident in the list of references below, but I have also used extensively the comprehensive and detailed Stour Valley Landscape Partnership's Historical Landscape Study (Amstutz, Blake, et al, 2008), which forms the backbone of Section 4 of this chapter of the Compendium. It would be invidious to pick out any authors whose landscape work is prominent here, but the giants tend to be visible anyway. Norman Scarfe is perhaps the grandfather of Suffolk landscape studies, and he has worthy followers in the outstanding staff of the Suffolk County Archaeology Service – County Archaeologist Stanley West, his successor Keith Wade, and Judith Plouviez. But I would particularly like to mention one man whose work underpins so much of what I have drawn on here, and that is Edward Martin.

At a national level, Christopher Taylor, Tom Williamson, and more recently Stephen Rippon, are pre-eminent among landscape archaeologists. In Essex, the County Archaeologists David Buckley and Owen Bedwin oversaw a period in which much landscape archaeology was carried out, and the work of John Hunter who was then head of Environmental Services at ECC deserves wider recognition. .

Amateur archaeologists have always played a major role in detecting and exploring local archaeological sites. To mention a few, the Colchester Archaeological Group and the Haverhill Archaeological Groups, Mike Matthews in Cornard, and the Nayland Fieldwalking Group under John and June Wallace. Now that lottery funding has enabled local amateur archaeologists to bring in professional expertise, CAG have carried out landscape projects in Wormingford and Bures, and Carenza Lewis's Access Cambridge Archaeology team have run fieldwalks, test-pitting and excavations in Clare, Bures, Long Melford and Nayland. All of these Managing a Masterpiece projects have encouraged many with no previous experience to 'have a go' at archaeology. This chapter draws on the work of all these people.

Special thanks to my editor Nick Dickson for his patience in waiting for the arrival of the overdue manuscripts. Compiling works such as these takes an immense amount of time and stamina, and now my wife Katrina knows what I was doing on those Saturdays when I disappeared into the countryside with my boots and camera.

Contents

Introduction

What is landscape?

The Stour Valley can be a wonderful experience, whether we are taking afternoon tea in Cavendish, watching rowing boats drift by at Flatford, or enjoying the gorgeous views of the countryside so vividly encapsulated in the works of Constable and other local artists.

View of the Stour Valley landscape

We could be forgiven for thinking "how wonderful it is to be in such an unspoilt and natural environment" – but we would be wrong. Apart from the ground beneath our feet, absolutely every aspect of Constable Country is man-made. In fact, there is no such thing as the natural countryside - decisions made by our ancestors hundreds of years ago have influenced the location of our homes and villages, and the roads and tracks which lead to them. All the trees and hedges have been planted (or at least encouraged) by farmers, and the shapes of our lovely fields and woodlands are also the product of farming.

What is landscape archaeology?

To understand the way we have created the world we live in, we will need to become landscape archaeologists, studying the evolution of the Stour Valley landscape through all available evidence. There are three main classes of evidence: first, the hidden landscape uncovered by archaeology. Second, the medieval and later landscape as revealed by documentary sources (maps, documents, place names and historical records such as the Domesday Book). Third, the present landscape of hedges and field, woods, roads and tracks.

The hidden landscape: how archaeology reveals the world of the Roman and Saxons

techniques

It is easy to think that the landscape we see today is all that there is. But archaeology shows us that the present landscape is actually only the top layer, and that below it are several different layers of our past. And archaeology, whether carried out by County-based professionals, local amateurs, or TV programmes such as Time Team is the key to peeling back the top layer, and uncovering the buried past.

Below is a brief introduction to the various different types of archaeology which can be used to study our landscape.

Air photography

Growing crops can reveal vanished landscapes through the patterns visible in growing crops (and sometimes on bare earth).

A Neolithic cursus at Bures (Essex County Council Historic Environment)

Geophysical survey

Archaeologists use a variety of geophysical survey tools such as gradiometers, resistance meters and ground-probing radars to create ground-plans of buried features such as old field boundaries, buildings, and even villages.

Fieldwalking

Our fields are covered in archaeological finds, mainly pottery, brick, tile, and flints. These can be collected and plotted, to show previously unknown 'sites'. The value of fieldwalking evidence varies by period. For instance, there are no contemporary written accounts before the Roman period, so fieldwalking evidence can be a major element in our knowledge of prehistory in the Stour Valley. By contrast, it may be possible to link medieval fieldwalking finds with local churches or villages, or with written sources.

Aline and David Black carrying out resistivity survey at Wormingford

Fieldwalking on the valley hillside at Wormingford

Finds from fieldwalking the valley floor at Mount Bures

Excavation

Archaeological excavations can fill in the gaps in our previous knowledge, but they often throw up much more data than we had before on the development of local settlement patterns. For instance, Carenza Lewis's Managing a Masterpiece excavations on Mount Bures motte and on Bures Common. However, some excavations bring to light sites which have entirely disappeared from the landscape, such as Colchester Archaeological Group's Managing a Masterpiece excavations which revealed the lost Tudor Hunting lodge in Wormingford.

Colchester Archaeological Group excavating the foundations of the Tudor hunting lodge tower during the Managing a Masterpiece dig on Lodge Hills, Wormingford
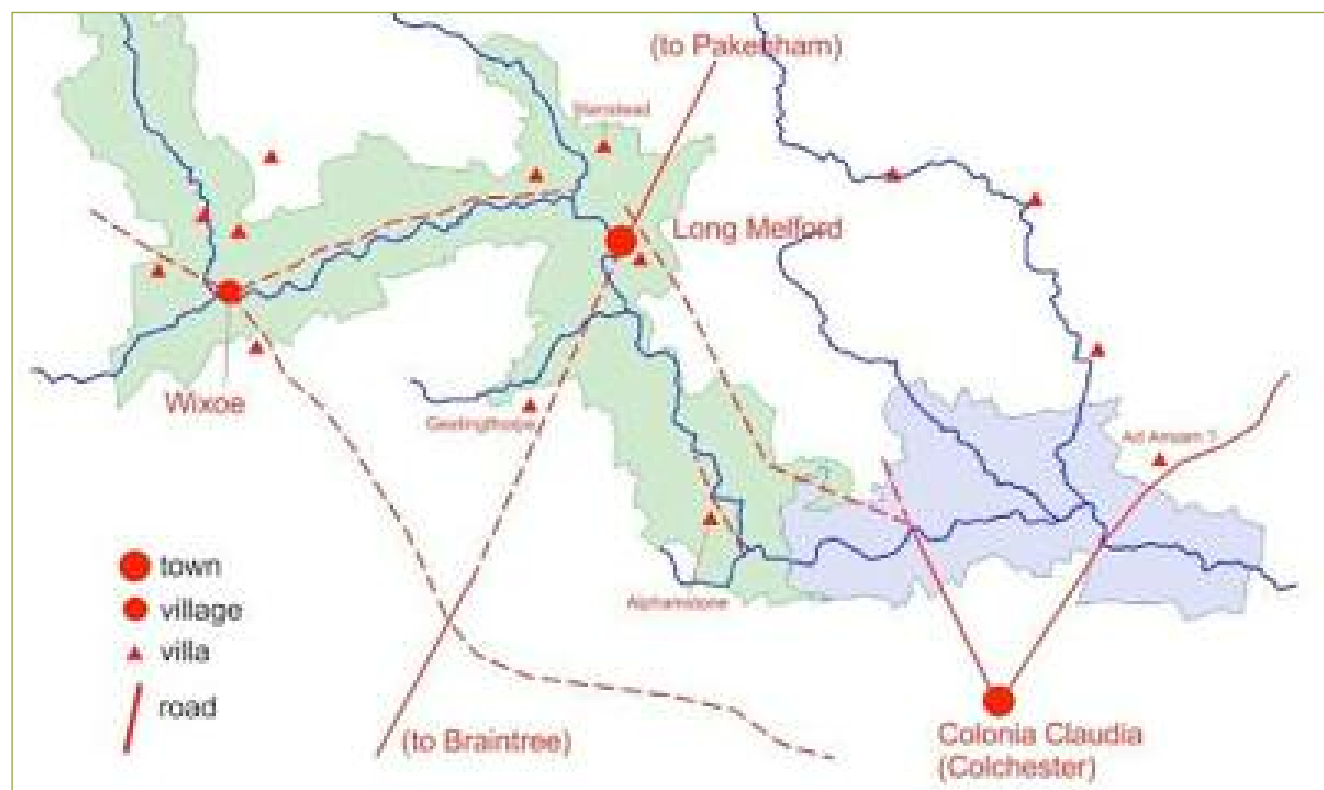
The Roman landscape in the Stour Valley

The prehistoric archaeology of the Stour Valley has been explored in another chapter of the Compendium (by Dan King). Our story starts with the Roman period.

Early trade contact

In the popular imagination, the Roman period is all about the arrival of the Roman armies in 55 BC under Julius Caesar and the Emperor Claudius in AD 43 and the eventual departure of the army in around AD 410. Between these two dates, Roman roads were laid out, villas and towns were imposed on an unwilling populace, and so Britain was brought into the civilised world. But this is no longer the mainstream view. Modern scholars point out that a large part of the east of England (including the Stour Valley) had been importing Roman luxury goods such as wine, pottery, jewels, for a century before the Roman invasion of AD 43. Why? Because the native Britons aspired to a Roman way of life, even to the extent of issuing their own coins in the Roman fashion. The extent of trading between locals in the Stour Valley and other parts of the Roman Empire before AD 43 is shown by the 19th-century discovery of a Late Iron Age wine amphora in Kedington, which probably came from the burial of a local chieftain. So, the landscape into which the Roman armies marched in AD 43 was a settled and farmed land, with some wealthy native farmers, many of them of high rank or of chiefly status. The local rulers are sometimes known by name, the most famous being Cunobelin in Camulodunum (Colchester) 10 miles south of the Stour Valley. But there were other local chieftains rich enough to be buried in splendid tombs, such as the Late Iron Age (early 1st century AD) nobleman whose grave furnished with iron firedogs, wine amphorae and other pottery and glass vessels, was found at Mount Bures in 1849.

Roman infrastructure in the Stour Valley – roads, towns, villas

Roman roads and towns

Although there would certainly have been tracks connecting the villages and farms in the Stour Valley before the Roman period, the Roman authorities laid out a new and comprehensive network of roads. Some of these main roads were effectively arterial roads such as that running north out of Colonia Claudia (Colchester) through Langham, crossing the Stour at Stratford St Mary (Stratford = 'the street by the ford') and running north to Venta Icenorum ('Market of the Iceni'): Caistor by Norwich. Another Roman road runs from Colchester through Great Horkesley northwards to Nayland, and possibly as far as Boxted. Another, which can be traced from Braintree in Essex runs north past Halstead, crosses the Stour at Melford, and heads north through Pakenham. In many cases the Roman roads survive as modern roads, particularly the London to Norwich Road (now the A12).

The roads were initially laid out to aid the movement of troops, and the presence of early Roman military sites at Pakenham and Coddenham may imply that the Colonia/Coddenham/Venta and the Braintree/Melford/Pakenham roads were among these early military routes.

Some major towns were founded in the Roman period - Colonia Claudia (Colchester) and Venta Icenorum (Caistor by Norwich). The Roman towns in the Stour Valley were on a smaller scale than Colonia or Venta, and their names are generally not known to us. However, there is one fascinating exception to this. A Roman source known as the Antonine Itinerary lists a place-name Ad Ansam, and gives its mileage from Colchester. Although we do not know how large this place was, or even its exact location, it must have been close to where the Roman road from Colchester to Norwich crossed the Stour at modern Stratford St Mary. The nearest substantial structure is the Roman villa at Higham.

The largest Roman town in the Stour Valley was at Long Melford. Roman roads converge towards Long Melford and there may have been a Roman military presence there (and indeed a Roman iron sword of the 1st century AD has been found in Melford). Certainly, a substantial Roman settlement underlies the medieval market town.

Roman villas

In much the same way that modern Melford is surrounded by the substantial country houses of Melford Hall, Kentwell Hall and Acton Place, Roman Melford was surrounded by Roman villas. One of a number surrounding the Roman settlement at Long Melford was near Rodbridge Corner, and another was at Stanstead (this site has been partially excavated). There are the remains of Roman buildings, probably villas, at Wixoe and Kedington in the upper Stour valley. It is no longer fashionable to think of villas as the residences of immigrant Roman families, and the modern view is that these are the homes of local people who aspired to the Roman way of live, and built (or rebuilt) their farms in the new and fashionable Roman style with mortared masonry walls and tiled roofs (and, exceptionally, with painted walls and under-floor heating). On the Essex side, there are Roman masonry buildings at Alphamstone (immediately south of the church), and an exceptional example at Gestingthorpe, where the Cooper family have collected Roman finds which amply demonstrate a 'villa-type' status from a site which has yielded evidence of a large masonry building and associated timber structures (Draper 1985). In much the same way that Roman villas crowd around Long Melford (above), there are also Roman villa-type sites around one of the lesser-known Roman sites in the Stour Valley – the Roman village at Wixoe. Roads radiate from Wixoe, east along the Stour Valley towards Long Melford, north towards Haverhill, south-west into Essex heading for Radwinter, and south-east towards Halstead.

It would be wrong to think of the Stour Valley Roman landscape merely as a road network linking Roman towns, villages and villas. Intensive study of any parish, either by fieldwalking, landscape study, air photo study, or by metal detecting, leads to a huge increase on the number of smaller Roman sites which (if excavated) would probably be smaller farmsteads a notch below villa status. Judith Plouviez (1999) notes that the total number of known Roman sites in Suffolk is 1,000, but that the true figure might be as high as 4,000. In the Stour Valley, the work of the Haverhill Archaeological Group, and of Mike Matthews is abundantly clear from the number of Roman sites now known around Haverhill and Great Cornard respectively. The figure of four small Roman sites in Haverhill, and five in Cornard may be a true reflection of the true intensity of occupation and farming of the Stour Valley in Roman times (and a figure of four or five farms per parish is arguably no different to the number of farms in the medieval or modern landscape). Similar fieldwork or study elsewhere would undoubtedly increase our knowledge of Roman period in the Stour Valley. At Birdbrook, a Roman cemetery was found in 1779. This must be connected to a Roman villa or farm whose site is unknown.

Mount Bures church

Roman brick in Mt Bures church door demonstrates the proximity of a Roman building of villa status, even though its exact site is unknown

Langham church.

Roman brick in Langham chancel wall

The presence of an undetected Roman villa can also be shown where a medieval church contains Roman bricks in it walls or towers, indicating nearby sources of Roman building materials. This is the case at Little Cornard, Wormingford, Langham, Mount Bures, Alphamstone, and Kedington. At Alphamstone, the villa site is indicated by substantial quantities of Roman brick and tile on the field immediately south of the church of St Barnabas.

At a smaller scale, archaeological finds of Roman artefacts in the Glem valley at Boxted and a Roman amphora at Great Wratting show some Roman-period activity there. Most of these sites are unexcavated, but if excavated would probably reveal small Roman farmsteads.

Roman industry

Industry in the Roman period is represented by kiln sites producing tiles and bricks for buildings, and pottery for the kitchens and tables of local residents. A Roman tile kiln has been excavated at Alphamstone. Roman pottery kilns are known at Nayland. To the North of the Stour Valley, there are kilns at Hartest, and there is a major cluster of kilns on the north Suffolk border (Rickinghall/ Wattisfield/ Hinderclay/Redgrave area).

A Roman landscape?

So far we have been concerned with Roman roads, towns, villas and farms. Of course, any consideration of landscape should also take into account fields, tracks, woodland and hedges. Do any Roman hedges or tracks survive in the Stour Valley? There have been claims for the survival of elements of a Roman and even pre-Roman landscape in various parts of East Anglia. Essentially, this comes down to two things. First, if you strip away all the modern elements from a large-scale 19th-century Ordnance Survey map, you may end up with a regular grid pattern of fields which specialists call 'co-axial' landscape. This is interesting in it own right, as it shows us a pattern of fields and tracks which may have very old origins – potentially medieval (11th-16th centuries), or perhaps much older. Second, when you trace out the route of Roman roads, some of them seem to cut blindly and obliquely across the co-axial landscapes, leaving small triangular fields of no agricultural use. This, it has been claimed, is proof positive that the co-axial landscape must be pre-Roman, in other words Iron Age or older.

There are no cases of co-axial landscapes in the Stour Valley, but claims were made by Warwick Rodwell and Paul Drury that there were pre-Roman landscapes in the Dengie Peninsula and around Thurrock in Essex (Drury and Rodwell 1980). Later studies, particularly by Tom Williamson, have highlighted landscapes around Yaxley, where the Roman road (now A140) cuts across an apparently earlier co-axial (ie Iron Age) landscape (Williamson 1999), and also in the Aspall/Crowfield area. Not everyone is convinced by the argument for the survival of pre-Roman landscapes. However, a consensus is that there may be something in it - even if the small scale details of field patterns may not be ancient, the alignments of the larger elements of major land boundaries may be based on much older elements of the landscape, certainly of Late Saxon date, perhaps earlier. A recent parish study in Wormingford concluded that although the antiquity of individual fields could not be demonstrated, there is a pattern of longer boundaries which may have been ancient.

The Early Anglo-Saxon landscape (5th-7th centuries)

Anglo-Saxon Settlement patterns

In the Midlands of England, it is common to find villages clustered around the church and manor, and surrounded by open fields. This pattern is largely absent from Essex and Suffolk. Instead, settlement was more dispersed, often occurring in loose groups ('nucleations') in the valleys, with several manors and hamlets scattered throughout the parish. Though the origins of this pattern are obscure, they are probably of Saxon date.

The period after the collapse of Roman authority in around AD 410 and up to the Norman Conquest of AD 1066 used to be known as the Dark Ages. For good reason - this is a difficult period for archaeology. There are two main reasons for this. First, there are fewer contemporary written records, and scholars wrangle over the meaning of those that do survive. Second, the Roman period saw massive building projects in Britain with structures generally made of stone, brick or tile, and the consumer society of the time produced and discarded a huge amount of debris. So it is quite easy for archaeologists to find Roman sites - you just look for pottery and Roman brick fragments on the field surface. But for the Anglo-Saxon period it is much more difficult - the Anglo-Saxons built timber houses and sometimes did not make pottery (at times, they may have been 'aceramic'). This means the archaeological fieldwalker trudging over the claylands of Suffolk or Essex looking for Anglo-Saxon debris will often come away empty handed and none the wiser. Archaeologists express this problem by saying that the Anglo-Saxons are under-represented in the archaeological record.

There is a broader historical context here. The Early Anglo-Saxon period (the fifth and sixth centuries), is a period of great change, when (in the traditional view based on written sources such as Gildas), the invading Saxons drove out or killed the Romanised inhabitants of Britain. Modern scholars dispute the simplicity of this view, pointing out that some Saxons were actually invited into Britain by the late Roman authorities to fight in the Roman army or to settle lands and act as buffers against invasion by other Anglo-Saxon intruders. Modern genetics also argues against the old view, showing that many inhabitants of Eastern England had Germanic (ie, Anglo-Saxon) origins not merely because of the recent arrival of Anglo-Saxon warriors, but because people with a Germanic origin had been settled in Eastern England for a long time, possibly as early as the Neolithic (4,500-2,500 BC).

The largest excavated early Anglo-Saxon site in Suffolk is the village at West Stow, but what Anglo-Saxon remains do we have in the Stour Valley? On the Suffolk side there is very little, with inhumation burials known in Thurlow, Sudbury and Great Cornard. As far as we can read the evidence, there was far more activity in terms of settlement in North West Suffolk (in the Lark and Black Bourn Valleys) and in the Orwell and Deben (including the famous Sutton Hoo ship burials).

On the Essex side, finds of pottery and belt-fittings indicate some continuity of settlement on the Roman villa site at Gestingthorpe (Draper 1985). But definite evidence of Anglo-Saxon activity is inherent in the sunken-floored buildings, early Anglo-Saxon pottery and probable hut site at Bulmer Tye (Blake 1959). Stanley West's excavation at West Stow showed that sunken-floored buildings were ancillary buildings associated with timber halls, so the Bulmer Tye sunken-floored buildings are unlikely to have been isolated buildings.

The middle and later Saxon landscape (7th-11th centuries)

This is a formative period in English history, when broad historical themes such as the crystallisation of Anglo-Saxon kingdoms and the gradual conversion to Christianity come into play.

Archaeology and fieldwalking

The dense fog which seems to cover the Early Saxon period begins to lift in the middle and later Saxon period. Our fieldwalker trudging over the claylands still has no joy in trying to locate sites of this period in Essex, but the task is easier in Suffolk because of a durable and recognisable type of pottery known as Ipswich Ware, which was current around AD 650-850. Therefore surface scatters of Ipswich Ware sherds can identify previously unknown sites of this period. It is generally true that Ipswich Ware is not found in Essex, but Tom Williamson found some in his massive survey around Saffron Walden in North West Essex (Williamson 1986).

Apart from the evidence of the Ipswich ware, there are other strands of evidence to introduce here to help us understand the later Saxon period (up to the Norman Conquest).

Minsters and monasteries

In some parts of England, before the medieval arrangement of parishes and parish churches, it is possible to discern a framework of early large parishes (parochiae) served by teams of priest operating from minsters (or monasteries) from which groups of monks preached the mission. There were minsters in the Stour Valley at Clare, Stoke-by-Nayland, and Sudbury (Sudbury's original church, St Gregory's, is specifically mentioned in Domesday Book and from its large endowment it must have been an Anglo-Saxon minster church). Other minsters may be inferred by large endowments recorded at Domesday, including Long Melford and East Bergholt. In general, the distribution of minsters seems to be related to principal rivers Waveney, Gipping and Stour. Also, the exceptionally large parish at Hundon suggests that it was the site of a Late Saxon minster church. The well-endowed Domesday church at Hartest could similarly have been a minster. In East Anglia, this pattern seems to have been disturbed by the period of Danish rule (Scarfe 1999a).

Royal vills (villae regales) were essentially estate centres from which the surrounding area was administered by and on behalf of the Crown. They were often the focus for Royal ownership or patronage, leading to the development of estates, and many Royal Vills went on to become hundred centres from the time of Edward the Elder in the later 9th century, or were defended burh sites which developed into medieval towns with markets and mints, administrative and ecclesiastical functions. The only suspected Royal vill is at Bures in Suffolk (where King Edmund was reputedly crowned in AD 856). There are no Essex examples in the Stour Valley, the nearest being further south at Lawford and Great Chesterford.

Saxon churches

Christianity died away at end of the Roman period, but was reintroduced to East Anglia in early 7th century when Bishop Felix established his seat at Domnoc (Dunwich or Walton/Felixstowe) in the 630s.

At a parish level, the church at Stoke-by-Nayland is referred to in the will of Ealdorman Ælfgar of Essex, circa AD 950, and in 1000-2 as the 'holy foundation at Stoke (halgan stowæ et Stocæ) in which my ancestors lie buried' in the will of his daughter Ælfflæd, the widow of Ealdorman Brihtnoth (the doomed hero of the Battle of Maldon). The early origin of Kedington is hinted at by the Late Saxon stone cross with a crucified Christ in the chancel window and the Roman bricks built into the church walls.

St Stephen's Chapel, Bures

Edmund of the East Angles (who was later killed by the Vikings and declared a saint) was crowned in AD 856 at a villa regia called Burna, which a later source says lay on the boundary of Essex and Suffolk on the river Stour. St Stephen's Chapel in Bures is said to have been erected by Abbot Sampson of Bury on the coronation site, but in fact this was a private manorial chapel built for Sir Gilbert de Tany and dedicated 1213-24 by Stephen Langton, Archbishop of Canterbury. The chapel now contains three fine tombs of the de Vere family, earls of Oxford, removed from Colne Priory in Earls Colne, Essex. The identification is not certain, and the coronation site could have been in Bures (Domesday Book, Adburam, Bura and Bure); or even in Sudbury, which was a much more important place at the time.

Saxon villages and towns

The existing framework of villages and towns in Suffolk was established in the four centuries before the Norman Conquest. This includes the towns of Haverhill and Sudbury, Clare and Long Melford (Wade 1999). True 'urbanisation' began with founding of Ipswich in the late 6th or early 7th century. This remained Suffolk's major industrial and trading centre until the mid 9th century. After the Viking/Danish invasion or settlement of 865-79, markets were functioning at Ipswich, Bury, Sudbury, Dunwich, and by 1086, also at Clare and Haverhill.

How place-names indicate the Anglo-Saxon origins of our villages

There are two strands of information in place names – first, geographical and other data, second, the implications for early settlement (in the Anglo-Saxon period).

Firstly, the geographical date. Place-names containing the elements dun (a hill); eg (-ey), an island, give useful information on local topography as it was in the period before Domesday. Particularly important are names ending in -ham (a homestead: Dedham, Langham); leah (-ley) a clearing (Gt and Little Bradley, Horkesley); stede - a place, site of a building (Boxted, Polstead); tun - an enclosure, farmstead (Kedington); worth - an enclosure, homestead; ingas (-ing) the settlement of the people of …… (Martin 1999a)

Other place-names are self-explanatory. For instance -ford clearly indicates proximity to a ford, as in Flatford, Stratford (St Mary), Boxford, Wormingford. Names containing -field and -ley are used to imply a contrast with woodland. Place-names containing these elements are likely to represent settlements established in marginal areas close to woodland.

Secondly, there is a chronological element here. Names with -hams or -ings endings represent a relatively early stratum of settlement that were capable of later subdivision (Dedham, Langham), while the –tons in

many cases seem to represent daughter settlements that were established in areas capable of supporting increased populations (so Kedington would be a later village than Dedham). Haverhill had a market by 1086, and is an Anglo-Saxon village. Belchamp St Paul Hall and the church form a neat church-and-hall complex of likely Late Saxon date.

On the Essex side, between Haverhill and Sudbury, there is a distinctive group of places that all share a common name – Belchamp Otten, Belchamp St Paul, Belchamp Walter, plus a lost Belchamp St Ethelbert. These may be fragments of a large Anglo-Saxon estate which was later subdivided into the current pattern of medieval parishes. Some settlements containing the element 'Green' are probably of late Saxon origin, such as Brockley Green in Hundon (from the Domesday-period settlement of Brochola).

Rural resources

In broad terms, settlement was expanding in the Middle to late Saxon period. This is shown by the -leah,

-feld, and -hyrst place names representing late Saxon 'assarts' (or woodland clearance, usually on parish edges, to create farmland). In North West Essex assarting may be indicated by the names of the adjacent parishes of Finchingfield, Panfield, Wethersfield, Toppesfield and the two Bardfields. In West Suffolk are Stanningfield and the three Bradfields (St George, St Clare, Combust).

One of most important resources was pasture. In Saxon period, grazing on coastal salt marshes was a communal right. In the Stour Valley, valley meadowlands would have been exploited for pasture. Although there are no examples in Stour Valley, fisheries were certainly in operation in the Saxon period. Fish traps on the Essex coast (at Bradwell and Mersea Island, and Collins Creek) have given radiocarbon dates of AD 640-75, and AD 882-957. Likewise, the Suffolk and Essex woodlands and upland heaths would have been managed and exploited for fuel, building timber, and for grazing pigs. Oliver Rackham (1986) has illustrated that woodland was a resource, and was not merely waste waiting to be converted to arable.

Churches

There are no vernacular (ie, non-religious) Anglo-Saxon buildings in the Stour Valley. In fact, they are exceedingly rare in Britain. However, it is likely that many or most of our Stour Valley parish churches have Anglo-Saxon origins. The reason for this speculation is that 345 Suffolk churches are mentioned in the Domesday Book. Clearly, they will not all have been built between the Norman Conquest of 1066 and the compilation of Domesday in 1086. Based on the fact that thorough excavation of the churches at Hadstock, Rivenhall, West Bergholt and Cressing in Essex have all revealed a Saxon church underneath the visible Norman stone structure, it can reasonably be speculated that many or most Stour Valley Norman churches will be of Saxon origin. On the same point, it is argued by former Suffolk County Archaeologist Keith Wade that many Suffolk villages are of Anglo-Saxon origin, and although they may have been ministered to by Brethren from minsters or monasteries, an Anglo-Saxon origin for the development of the parish is logical and compelling. The famous wooden church at Greenstead (near Ongar in Essex) was long been thought to be a rare survival from the Anglo-Saxon period, but a recent reassessment dates it to within a few decades of either side of the Norman Conquest (so it could be early Norman rather than late Anglo-Saxon).

In other cases, there are documentary references to the existence of churches in the Anglo-Saxon period, For instance, Belchamp St Paul was given to St Paul's Cathedral in London in AD 939 (the gift of Bylcham being confirmed by King Athelstan c.970). Paul's Hall and the church form a neat church-and-hall

complex, which is also of probable Late Saxon date. Also, the church at Stoke-by-Nayland is referred to in the will of Ealdorman Ælfgar of Essex, circa AD 950, and in 1000-2 as the 'holy foundation at Stoke (halgan stowæ et Stocæ) in which my ancestors lie buried' in the will of his daughter Ælfflæd, the widow of Ealdorman Brihtnoth (the doomed hero of the Battle of Maldon).

Earthworks

There are some surviving earthworks which may be Anglo-Saxon. The large D-shaped earthwork enclosure on the outskirts of Clare, now called Clare Camp, but formerly Erbury (Old English for 'earth-fort'), may be Late Saxon or possibly even Iron Age in origin. In the Middle Ages it was certainly used as a manorial enclosure with barns, other buildings and yards, but since the 16th century it has been used as a common pasture for the poor of Clare and forms a part of Lower Common.

Clare Camp or Erbury ('earth fort')

Clare Camp or Erbury ('earth fort')

The Vikings

In the late 9th and again in the 11th century, Suffolk came under Danish (Viking) rule. The area controlled by them is known as the Danelaw. The Vikings destroyed several churches at Barking (Essex), and Icanho, which has been claimed as Hadstock in Essex, but is more likely to be Iken in Suffolk. But there are no archaeological finds which relate directly to the Viking conquest of Essex and East Anglia in the 870s other than an apparent Viking burial of circa AD 953 discovered in 1687 in Hundon churchyard.

Although Essex was part of the Danelaw for several decades, and encampments at Benfleet, Mersea, Shoebury and in the Lea Valley in Essex are attributed to them, there is very little evidence for Viking settlements here. A study of Domesday surnames in Colchester revealed that Scandinavian names are no more significant than other ethnic groups. Indeed, the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle says the Danes were expelled, but doesn't specify whether it was from a permanent settlement or temporary encampment.

A hoard from Hadstock, comprising mainly Viking issue coins may show that the extreme north-western corner of Essex came within the Danish east Anglian sphere of influence.

Vikings (Danish) place names

Some place-names show Scandinavian influence: -by (village), -toft (plot), -thwaite (clearing), -lound (wood), and -thorp (secondary settlement or dependant outlying hamlet). The strongest place-name evidence for Scandinavian settlement is around Lowestoft (matching similar evidence in the adjoining part of Norfolk). There are a number of Scandinavian place-names in Essex, notably Thorpe-le-Soken and Kirby-le-Soken, in the north-eastern part of the County.

Aspects of the medieval landscape - Norman Conquest to the 16th century

Documentary sources and Domesday Book

The value of place-names as a source for the Anglo-Saxon period has been discussed above, but it is the medieval period in which documentary sources come to the fore. The most famous and most important is the Domesday Survey, compiled for William the Conqueror, and completed in AD 1086. Domesday is essentially a "then" and "now" list, giving details of who held the land "then" (ie, the last Anglo-Saxon owner in the time of King Edward) and "now" (in 1086). It also lists the names of 'then' and 'now' tenants, the amount of land under plough, and numbers of animals. Although Domesday does not list woodland, it sometimes states how many pigs the woodland would support, thereby giving a roundabout estimate of acres of woodland.

Unfortunately for modern researchers, Domesday was not originally listed by parish, but by landowner. Most of these units of ownership coincide with those sites now identified as manors, halls or farms. As an example, The Domesday entry for Wormingford has been summarised and interpreted as follows (Moore 2012):

IN THE TIME OF EDWARD THE CONFESSOR

Held by Godwine as a manor, 1.5 hides and 10 acres

3 Villans, 2 Bordars, 4 Slaves

3 Ploughs (in demesne), 2 Ploughs (the men)

1 Horse, 5 Head of cattle, 40 Pigs, 6 Sheep, 15 Goats

All worth £4

Plus 19 Soke-men holding 2.5 hides less 6 Acres, 2 ploughs

IN THE TIME OF WILLIAM I

Held by Ilger (from Robert Gernon)

4 Villans, 8 Bordars, 4 Slaves

4 Ploughs (in demesne), 2 Ploughs (the men)

Woodland for 100 pigs, 16 Acres of meadow, 1 Mill, 1 Fishery

6 Horses, 33 Head of cattle, 60 Pigs, 200 Sheep, 47 Goats, 7 Hives of bees

All worth £6

Plus 19 Soke-men holding 2.5 hides less 6 Acres and 8 Bordars, 2 ploughs

Interpretation

1066   "In the time of Edward I" there was a population of 36. The land area of the Manor was 1.5 hides and 10 acres and the land area of the free men was 2.5 hides less 6 acres. Given that 1 hide was roughly equal to 120 acres, this gives a total acreage of about 484 acres. 7 'ploughs' (7 eight-ox plough teams) were required to cultivate the land. A variety of livestock was recorded, with 67 animals in total. The total value was £4

1086   "In the time of William I" there had been expansion in all areas. The population had increased to 43. The land under cultivation now required 8 'ploughs'. The livestock total was up five-fold, mainly due to an increase in sheep from 15 to 200. The River Stour was producing an economic benefit, with both a mill and a fishery recorded. Both woodland and meadow were mentioned. The total value had increased to £6

Suffolk and Essex Domesday

The impact of the Normans on Essex and Suffolk, as seen in their castles and churches, is more visually dramatic than their numbers warrant.

The existing framework of villages and towns in Suffolk was already established by the time of Domesday, in fact, many had been in existence for two or three hundred years by that time. This includes the towns at Haverhill and Sudbury, and most of the existing villages (as an example, in the upper Stour Valley, the villages at Stanstead, Poslingford, Boxford, Hartest, Somerton, Birdbrook, Long Melford, Glemsford, Cavendish, Clare, Steeple Bumpstead, and Hundon were all in existence by 1086). In Essex, villages do not seem to have developed so early, but Domesday shows us that villages existed by 1086 at all the modern day village sites – for instance Dedham (Delham), Langham (Lainghaham), Boxted (Bocchesteda), Wormingford (Widdemondefort), Bures (Bura), Lamarsh (Lamers), Alphamstone (Alfelmestuna), Twinstead (Tuinsteda), Henny (Heni), and Sturmer (Sturmere).

Suffolk Domesday churches and religious houses

Domesday shows that 418 approximately (four out of five) of all Suffolk churches existed by 1086. The relative scarcity of churches in North East Suffolk may be due to Danish settlement there. Wills indicate that some minster churches survived from the Anglo-Saxon period or were refounded after the disruption of the Danelaw, at Stoke by Nayland, and Sudbury (Scarfe 1999a).

Two medieval religious houses were situated near the river Stour, at Stoke College (Stoke-by-Clare) and Clare Priory. In 1090 Gilbert de Clare gave a collegiate church within Clare Castle to the Abbey of Bec in Normandy, but in 1124 this was moved to Stoke-by-Clare where a new priory and church were built. It became a college of secular priests in 1415 and was dissolved in 1548. The remains of the college are now a school.

Clare Priory, viewed through the cloister arch

Clare Priory, on the opposite side of the Stour to Clare Castle (but still within a small enclave of Suffolk) was founded in 1248 by Richard de Clare, Earl of Gloucester, as the first house of the Augustinian Friars in England. The burials here of two members of the royal family – Joan of Acre (daughter of Edward I) in 1305 and Lionel, Duke of Clarence (son of Edward III) in 1377 – added greatly to its prestige. After its suppression in 1538, the site was granted to Richard Frende, later 'trumpeter to Edward VI'. The existing house consists mainly of the converted prior's lodgings; the church and most of the remainder of the complex fell into ruins. Since 1953 it has once again been a religious house of the Order of St Augustine.

Domesday estate structure in Essex

By Domesday, Essex was well populated, and had a high density of population and plough-teams.

The multiplicity of Domesday manors with the same name indicates that the mid-11th-century estate structure had resulted from the long process of fragmentation. For example, there were seven Tolleshunt manors at Domesday, and two adjacent Tollesbury manors. Lands belonging to a Toll were probably part of a territory of 12 manors and 42 hides. Another example is Rodings – 16 manors which were grouped into 8 parishes at Domesday. We can postulate an original territory of 29 hides which subsequently split up into at least 16 units. Where Middle Saxon estates can be discerned, they tend to be 30-40 hides: Barking was 40 hides, Havering 40; Rodings 29, Tollesbury 42; Waltham 40, and Wicken 40. These estates tend to be centred on river valleys, with their boundaries up on the watersheds (Rippon 1996). Examples closer to the Stour Valley include the three Belchamps (Otten, St Paul's, Walter), and the four Colnes (Wakes, Earls, Engaine, White).

As for Essex towns, Domesday records burgesses (town-dwellers) at Colchester and Maldon, suggesting sizeable populations at both centres, and archaeological evidence suggests fairly extensive settlements from the late 10th century onwards.

In Essex, the church never came to dominate the landscape. It was a major landowner, but the estates tended to be dispersed. Another characteristic was the limited power of the lay aristocracy. The original Middle Saxon royal estates fragmented to an extreme level, and royal demesnes (land belonging to the manor) shrank considerably. By Domesday, most landowners held just one manor.

Castles and other earthworks

Lordship and castles

Castles first appeared in England in the mid 11th century. After the Norman Conquest, hundreds of castles were built by the new Norman landlords to consolidate and defend their new landholdings. These castles served not only as defended residences, but also as administrative centres of their feudal estates and as an expression of the control which Norman lords held over their territory.

Domesday only gives occasional references to castles, and only Eye is mentioned, the 'caput' (or head) of William Malet. There are two castles in the Stour Valley. These are not the familiar stone-built castle such as the famous example at Colchester, but the motte-and-bailey ("mound and enclosure") castles at Clare and Mount Bures. There are other ringwork fortifications (ie baileys without mottes) at Court Knoll Nayland (below), Great Cornard, and Wissington (Martin 1999b).

The important Norman castle at Clare lies close to the river. Clare Castle is first mentioned in 1090 and it is likely that the castle was built for Richard son of Count Gilbert (a cousin of King William) to be the caput or 'head' of his extensive East Anglian estate that was later known as the Honor of Clare. That he chose to make Clare the caput, and the fact that his dynasty took 'de Clare' as their surname, suggests that it was already a place of some importance. Richard also developed the pre-Conquest market at Clare into a borough with 43 burgesses by 1086. The death of Earl Gilbert in 1314 at Bannockburn brought the male line to an end and his great estates were divided between his three sisters. Clare fell to the lot of Elizabeth de Burgh, the widow of the heir to the earldom of Ulster, and from 1317 until her death in

1360, Clare Castle was the principal home of one of the wealthiest noblewomen in the country, and both castle and town were extensively rebuilt as a consequence. Her accounts also reveal that she had an exceptional private garden or herber within the castle precinct. After 1360 the castle again declined in importance and it was probably allowed to fall into decay during the later 15th century, with the structures being robbed for building materials. By the beginning of the 17th century it probably looked much as it does today, the site being used for a garden and for grazing purposes. It now forms the Clare Castle Country.

The medieval motte of Clare castle

Clare Camp

Clare Camp

The large D-shaped earthwork enclosure on the outskirts of Clare, now called Clare Camp but formerly Erbury (Old English for 'earth-fort'), may be Late Saxon or possibly even Iron Age in origin. In the Middle Ages it was certainly used as a manorial enclosure with barns, other buildings and yards, but since the 16th century it has been used as a common pasture for the poor of Clare and forms a part of Lower Common.

Court Knoll Nayland lies within a southerly loop of the River Stour. The 'ringwork' is actually more D-shaped, enclosing nearly 2 hectares. It is surrounded by a ditch, but there is little evidence of a bank or rampart. It is likely to have been built for Swein of Essex, who is recorded in Domesday Book (1086) as having a 'hall' at Nayland. Swein was an important landholder in Essex and Suffolk and Nayland served as the centre for his estates on the Suffolk/Essex border. His estate as a whole was later known as the Honor of Rayleigh, after his castle at Rayleigh in Essex. The manorial complex continued to be maintained into the late 13th century. It was probably deserted by 1668 when it was recorded as a piece of pasture, as it still is.

Aerial view of Court Knoll, Nayland (Imagery©2013 DigitalGlobe, Geoeye, Getmapping plc, Infoterra Ltd, Bluesky)

At Mount Bures there is a well-preserved Norman castle motte beside the parish church. There is no direct evidence for the building of the castle, but in 1086 the land here was held by Roger of Poitou (or the Poitevin – so-called because his wife was the heiress of La Marche in Poitou, France), an important Norman nobleman with lands in many counties. Roger's main interests lay elsewhere, particularly in Lancashire, but this may have formed a local centre. Curiously, Roger's mother, Mabel countess of Shrewsbury, had a castle at Bures sur-Dive in Normandy. Alternatively, the castle may be an early 12th century creation by Robert de Sackville, steward to Count Stephen of Blois (later King Stephen) or his son Jordan. Because of their ownership, the parish was sometimes called Bures Sackville.

The motte at Bures Mount

Other earthworks

There is a small (15m diameter) circular embanked enclosure in Abbas Wood at Great Cornard that is undated, but could be early medieval. Another larger (94 x 80m), sub-rectangular banked enclosure is in Grange Wood at Nayland. This too is undated but may be related to the manor of Wissington/Wiston Grange that belonged to Hugh de Hosdene in 1086 and was later given by him to Thetford Priory.

On the western outskirts of Haverhill there are the enigmatic earthworks called Haverhill Castle. The earthworks look more like a moated site than a castle, but may be the remains of a small, non-standard, defensive site belonging to the civil war period in the reign of King Stephen (reigned 1135-1154).

St John the Baptist church at Mount Bures, with the motte (Bures Mount) showing to the right.

Medieval towns and the wool trade

With the exception of later creations such as Leavenheath, a Saxon origin for most of our Stour Valley towns and villages has been argued above. The towns are listed in Domesday, and in some cases their date can be established from the year in which they were given a market charter. For instance, Haverhill, Clare, Sudbury had market charters at (or before) Domesday, Nayland by 1227, Long Melford 1235, Stoke by Clare 1247/52, Bures St Mary 1271, Great Thurlow 1272/3, Stoke by Nayland 1303, Stratford St Mary 1384 (Scarfe 1999b)

Planned medieval towns

At Clare, Callis Street and the Market Place together form an elongated rectangle that stretches almost from Clare Camp to the foot of Clare Castle, with the parish church near the centre. This layout is a planned layout dating from the late 11th century: the market forming a link between the two main administrative centres (the castle for the huge feudal estate, and Clare Camp for the Manor farm in Clare), with the church as a central feature. The northern part, called Callis Street, narrows at the site of the ford (bridged by the 14th century) before joining the main market place. The present High Street was earlier the High Rowe of the market. This original large open area was encroached upon by houses and shops in the later Middle Ages.

Sudbury is the major town on the Stour and it had a market and burgesses by 1086. It is strategically situated on a promontory in a loop of the river and has probably been occupied since prehistoric times. Its name is recorded as Sudberi in 798 (when Bishop Ælfhun happened to die here) and means 'the south(ern) fortified place'. Its fortifications can no longer be seen, but their line is fossilised in the town's circular street-plan and 10th-century ditches have been found through excavations. It was important enough to have a mint producing coins from around 997 to 1140. Around 1100 the town's moneyer, Wulfric, gave the church or chapel of St Bartholomew to Westminster Abbey, for the foundation of a

small priory cell at Sudbury. The single cell chapel still survives on the edge of the town. The town expanded in the 12th century, with the addition of a new market place and two new churches – St Peter's in the market place and All Saints near the bridge across the Stour.

The original church, St Gregory's, is specifically mentioned in Domesday Book and from its large endowment it must have been an Anglo-Saxon minster church. In 1375 St Gregory's was made into a college of canons by the sons of Nigel Theobald, one of the town's wool merchants. One of the sons, Simon of Sudbury, became Archbishop of Canterbury in 1375 and Chancellor of England in 1380 – in the latter role he introduced the hated Poll Tax and was beheaded by rebels in the Peasants Revolt of 1381 (his skull is still preserved in St Gregory's church). The college was surrendered to the king in 1544 and the college building was granted to Sir Thomas Paston (it has since disappeared under a 19th-century workhouse which later became a hospital). The Archbishop and his family also played a part in enlarging the Dominican friary in the town, which had be founded before 1247 by Baldwin de Shipling. This was suppressed in 1538 and the site granted to Thomas Eden, clerk of the king's council – its site is now remembered only by the name Friars Street. Commercial life in the town expanded with the implementation of the Stour Navigation circa 1709 and by the arrival of the railway in 1849. Urban development has now expanded into the neighbouring parishes of Ballingdon, Chilton and Great Cornard.

The medieval wool trade

Clare was one of the early centres of East Anglia's medieval wool trade and that trade was responsible for the growth of many towns and villages in the Stour valley and its tributaries, as at Cavendish, Glemsford, Long Melford, Sudbury, Bures, Nayland, Stoke-by-Nayland, Stratford St Mary, East Bergholt and Dedham.

Their medieval and Tudor prosperity shows in their exceptionally rich heritage of fine timber-framed houses and magnificent churches – the latter often termed 'wool churches' in recognition of the industry that paid for them.

Medieval housing around the lovely green at Cavendish, with St Mary the Virgin behind.

St Mary's, Dedham

Holy Trinity, Long Melford

Dedham, which has been described as 'easily the most attractive small town in Essex', was involved with the wool trade by the mid-13th century and its prosperity reached its peak in the 15th century. It did however experience a revival as a 'genteel' town in the 18th century and gained an Assembly Room circa 1745.

Shermans in the High Street is one of the town's most visually striking buildings – its pediment, multi-coloured brick and other decoration being added 1730-1 to an earlier timber building. It takes its name from Edmund Sherman, a clothier who founded a school here in 1601 (his son Edmund emigrated to Massachusetts – as did many Protestants from the Stour valley –

Earlier timber-framed buildings in Dedham are masked by gentrified Georgian brick facades

and was the ancestor of the American Civil War general, William Tecumseh Sherman). John Constable went to school in Dedham, and the town features in many of his paintings. He used the term 'Dedham Vale' for several sketches and paintings from 1802 and this has been become a recognised name for the lower Stour Valley – it was used for the Dedham Vale Society in 1938 and as the name for the Stour valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) when it was declared in 1970.

The workshops of the medieval cloth trade have left few obvious traces, as most were accommodated within domestic settings. The industry was in decline by the 17th century. There was some textile manufacturing in Haverhill in the Middle Ages, but its textile industries grew greatly from the late 18th century.

Medieval hunting parks

Deer parks fulfilled a number of roles in the medieval economy and landscape. They were status symbols (the means for royalty and wealthy landowners to practice deer hunting, as an expression of social status) places of leisure and recreation, and were a store of venison and other produce for surrounding manors and estates (Hoppitt 1999).

Parks were generally a Norman development (Ongar in Essex is a late Saxon exception), coinciding with the introduction of fallow deer. Usually of 200 acres or more, they included areas of wood pasture and coppiced woodland. They were surrounded by combination of ditch/bank and pales or fences, and usually had a central main lodge. The High cost of labour in maintaining boundaries was offset by production of timber, wood, fuel, fodder and lease of grazing (agistment).

In Suffolk, the physical evidence for parks is limited, and their location is gleaned mainly from historical maps, place names and field names ('Park Farm', 'Park Wood' being the best indicators). Parks were often prerogative of wealthy landowners, and were often located near their caput, along with major investments such as a castle or market. Documentary sources show a boom in park building in the 13th and 14th centuries. The total number of parks declined in 15th century, but recovered in Tudor period as owners grew wealthy from trade invested in rural estates.

Early parks were on high ground near parish boundaries, and associated with areas of woodland and common, and were therefore at a distance from the manor house. By contrast, later parks were associated with manor houses and were used to enhance their setting. By the 16th century, most had been 'disparked', and the land brought under cultivation. There are some later aesthetic parks such as Long Melford.

In some cases, medieval deer parks seem to have evolved out of blocks of older forest or woodland. In Great Horkesley there was a park attached to the manor of Nayland (on the Suffolk side of the Stour) which later became the Horkesley Park estate. There was an ancient oak here called King John's Oak which finally blew down in 1928. In 1189 Henry of Cornhill was granted the right to enclose and impark his woods at Langham. This is referred to as the parcum de Leineham in 1221 and as Leyngham Park in 1292; it now is represented by Park Lane Farm. Large areas of woodland associated with the park were still surviving in 1777 (as Langham Lodge Woods), but these have disappeared.

1576 map by Saxton showing hunting parks at Wormingford, Bures (2) and Stoke-by-Nayland

1713 map by Overton shows enclosed hunting parks at Bures (2) and Wormingford.

Colchester Archaeological Group excavations in 2007-11 on the lost Tudor Hunting Lodge site on 'Lodge Hills', Wormingford

Medieval moats

Suffolk's moated houses are amongst the most evocative and impressive survival of the medieval landscape. There are over 850 in Suffolk, a figure only matched by Essex. The defining feature is a central island surrounded by a water-filled moat. Great lords had their castles, while lesser members of the free classes had moated manors and houses.

Moats Differ from castles in not having defensive banks and were a way for landowners to display their wealth and status. Their distribution is related to water-holding boulder claylands of central Suffolk and Essex. The earliest moats (often circular) date to the 12th century and they peak in the period 1200-1350. There is a hierarchy of sizes: an acre or more tend to be on manorial or monastic sites: those of half an acre are likely to be associated with parsonages or ancient free tenements. At the smaller end of scale, it is difficult to ascertain status - a 5m-wide moat is an indicator of true moated sites, but below that width indicates farms which are merely ditched (Martin 1999c).

From a landscape perspective, moats may represent 'dispersed settlement' in the medieval period, in other words new farms and houses built away from the manorial centre in the general period of expansion of farming and population in the 12th and 13th centuries.

There are also occasional farmsteads on the edge of the valleys or on locally higher spots, including some significant medieval and Tudor moated sites, such as Pentlow Hall, Boxted Hall, Parsonage Farm in Long Melford, Smallbridge Hall in Bures St Mary, and Garnons Farm in Wormingford. At Pentlow an oval moated site close to the river contains a fine timber-framed hall built circa 1500 for Edmund Felton, however its position close to the church suggests that the site is much older. At Boxted (Suffolk) a relatively small moated site close to the River Glem is largely covered by the red-brick Hall built by the Poley family in the 16th century; this is set within a park and the moat has a tail-like extension leading to a small island that once probably bore a dovecote. Parsonage Farm, on Melford's western boundary, was formerly the Rectory and has the remains of a moat around it, reflecting the status of the medieval rectors. The additional possession of a ponde yarde with a swann's tofte and two fish pondes, and a Dovecoate with a small flight of Doves doubtless added to their status. Smallbridge, first mentioned in the 12th century, was later a seat of the important Waldegrave family. Sir Richard Waldegrave, Speaker of the House of Commons 1381-2, was granted the right to turn his mansion here into a castle in 1384, but the house was rebuilt as a brick mansion, circa1555-72, by Sir William Waldegrave, and was visited by Queen Elizabeth in 1561 (the house has since been extensively rebuilt, 1893-4 and 1920). Garnons takes its name from the Gernon family who owned it in the 13th and 14th centuries. In 1231 Henry III gave Ralph Gernon ten oaks for restoring his stockade which had been destroyed by fire.

The high arable capability of the Stour valley sides is reflected in a preponderance of former manorial halls, some of which show their status by being moated, such as Ashen House, Blacklands Hall in Cavendish, Smeetham Hall in Bulmer, Shelley Hall and Braham Hall in Brantham. At Shelley, the brick hall built for Sir Philip Tilney in the 1520s is not moated, but its contemporary garden is. The Tilneys were cousins of Queen Elizabeth I and in 1561 she visited their house.

The remains of a circular moat surround Acton Hall. Acuntune is recorded in AD 1000-2, but the moat was probably constructed in the later 12th or 13th century by the Norman Hodebovile family. The Hall was later the home of Dame Alice de Bryene, whose Household Book 1412-13 is one of the key documents for life in a 15th-century knightly household and has been published in several forms. She

died in 1435 and her fine monumental brass is in nearby Acton Church, as is the famous military brass of her great-grandfather, Sir Robert de Bures, who died in 1331.

At the western end of the Stour Valley, there is a sprinkling of moated, substantial dispersed farmsteads of medieval date, eg Norley Moat House in Little Bradley, the Old Rectory at Barnardiston, Pinhoe Hall in Hundon, Chantry Farm in Withersfield and Great Wilsey Farm in Little Wratting. The settlement at Norley Moat was also called Overhall and was in existence by the 1190s. A number of these moated sites were still occupied farmsteads in the 19th century, but are now deserted, eg Glebe Farm in Great Thurlow and Ganwick on the Great Wratting/ Barnardiston boundary. Another now empty moated site at Little Thurlow, called The Island, is shown as being a lodge within the deer park attached to Little Thurlow Hall on a map of 1735.

Medieval woodland

Medieval England was not a very wooded land, and Suffolk and Essex were less wooded than most counties. The whole country had once been covered in wildwood, but most of this was destroyed in prehistoric times to make way for farmland. At Domesday, only 9% of Suffolk was wooded, and most of this was in north-east Suffolk. For a few places, the Domesday swine assessment (the number of pigs, from which a calculation of woodland is possible) had reduced by 1086, showing a reduction of woodland between the conquest and Domesday.

At least half of the 9% was grubbed out before 1350. Such woods as survived to 1350 persisted for the next 500 years, and some of them are extant today. By 1350 the big woods of the north-east of Suffolk had gone, and most of the surviving woods were in the south-west. These were natural woods, not plantations. They were intensively managed as a renewable resource. Every five to 25 years, wood was cut down and allowed to grow again from the stools to yield underwood – poles and rods for fuel, fencing, wattle-and-daub, etc. Scattered among the underwood were oaks, allowed to stand for 25 to 100 years for timber – beams and planks. From the late 17th, landowners also deliberately created plantations by planting trees (Rackham 1999).

Kings Wood, Poslingford

Greens, Commons, and Tyes

Green, Common or Tye are all terms in Suffolk for areas of common pasture. Common was used by the 12th century for pieces of unenclosed land or waste belonging to local manors. The word Tye is from the Old English taeg, meaning enclosure, but in Suffolk and Essex it's developed the meaning of common pasture. Physically, greens and tyes are usually found on clay soils, and have farmsteads and houses around their edges. In the more dissected landscape of South Suffolk, narrow strip greens along roads were more usual.

Archaeological evidence suggests a 12th century origin for many of the settlements around greens, which is consistent with place-name evidence. Greens tend to be located on high heavy land with poor natural drainage, often on the periphery of their parish, suggesting that they are secondary features in the medieval landscape. This is supported by the distribution of churches, which are rarely associated with greens. Greens often share same location as woods, and have 'wood' names. This suggests that some arose from the felling of woods or over-grazing of wood-pasture. Rights of pasturing were normally attached to land holdings bordering this pasture, and were carefully regulated. Many pieces of common were encroached upon, from medieval times onwards. Nevertheless, Hodskinsons map of 1783 shows that a large acreage survived to be enclosed by the Parliamentary Acts in the late 18th and 19th centuries (Martin 1999d).

Housing around green edges at Polstead and Stoke-by-Nayland

The settlement that has grown up around Stoke-by-Nayland church has developed around two small adjacent greens (Church Street and The Downs) on one side, with two parallel streets (Back Street and Polstead Street) forming a further two sides.

Bulmer Tye is shown as a long narrow green on 18th century maps but has lost its green character (it is recorded as Bulmere Tye in 1310, suggesting that it and the main village of Bulmere probably take their name from a former mere in the valley of the Belchamp Brook). There were similar linear greens at Alphamstone Green, at Cornard Tye and at Whitestreet Green in Polstead, but they too have lost their green character. Smaller, mainly triangular greens, are recorded at Borley Green, Twinstead Green (Twinstead Tye 1600), Horne's Green in Bures, Cuckoo Tye in Long Melford (Thurgoristye 1442, Cowckhouse Tye 1580 and finally evolved into Cuckoo Tye by 1783), Newman's Green in Acton, Bures Green, Sacker's Green in Newton, Dorking Tye in Assington, Hagmore Green in Boxford, and Withermarsh Green in Stoke-by-Nayland. This may be the Wythermerested of 1327, but much earlier Withermarsh formed part of one of the estates of the noblewoman Ælfflæd and is named in her will, 1000-2, as Wifærmyrsc and Hwifermirsce ('the quivering marsh'). The avenue that leads from this green to Gifford's Hall was already in existence in 1783. Potters Tye Farm on the Long Melford/Acton boundary is a relic of a triangular green which had characteristically complicated name evolution – Tallichetye in 1442, Tallydge Tye 1580, Talage Tye 1660/1, Stalage Tye 1783 and Stalhouse Tye 1873. Highlanders Farm in Long Melford is a relic of Cox Green and the isolated late medieval house at Sawyer's in Bures is the last surviving property on the former Sayers tye, which takes its name from its 14th century owners (Martin 1999d).

At Bumpstead, there is a small scattering of hamlets with 'green', 'end' and 'street' names, such as Cross Green in Hartest , Bulley Green in Poslingford, Finkle Green in Birdbrook, Fenstead End in Boxted, Mile End in Hartest, Wales End in Cavendish, and New Street, Plum Street and Brook Street in Glemsford. The greens tend to be small and triangular.

Deserted medieval settlements

Suffolk and Essex do not have the large number of deserted medieval villages seen in the Midlands, but there are a few examples of desertion. Chapel Farm on the Haverhill/Little Wratting border is the site of the medieval chapel of Our Lady in the lost settlement of Alverton or Alderton, recorded in the 15th century. A more recent loss is the hamlet of Hogstreet in Kedington, which has gone since the 19th century, as has the nearby farmstead of Little Wilsey in Little Wratting. Sotterley Green and Granger's Green in Great Wratting have also gone. Further to the east, the medieval settlement of Fornham in Stoke-by-Clare has also disappeared (together with its 13th century oratory) – its final manifestation was as Farnham Wood in the 19th century. This tendency for the desertion of small settlements on the one hand, and the growth of the larger villages on the other, has accentuated the nucleated settlement pattern and the emptiness of the surrounding farmland.

Understanding the present day landscape

Ancient woodland, hedges and trees

After the melting of the ice sheets at the end of the last Ice Age (around 10,000 yrs ago), woodland recolonised Britain. First came the trees which favoured cooler weather (such as pines), then woods which favoured a warmer climate (such as oak ash, beech etc). This primeval woodland is generally referred to as the wildwood. So, why is Britain not now covered in wildwood? The answer is that over the past 10,000 years, the woodland has been cleared to make space for arable farming. No wildwood survives in Britain now.

From the viewpoint of landscape studies, the principal interest in hedges and woodland is – how old are they? Modern plantations can often be spotted because of a 'plantation' element in their names, or because the trees are planted in straight rows, or do not match local wild species. But if woodland is not obviously modern, how do we define its age? And is it Ancient Woodland? Unfortunately, there are several different definitions of Ancient Woodland. The doyen of woodland studies, Oliver Rackham, defines it as woodland over 500 yrs old, whereas English Nature defines it as anything over 200 yrs old. In fact, there are today very few pieces of woodland which are described as ancient - only 20% of English Woodland is "ancient" in the Rackham definition. As for the Stour Valley, there are something like 200 areas of ancient woodland here. These tend to be small blocks, off the beaten track, where land unsuitable for crops has been used to produce timber and wood (by pollarding or coppicing).

Woodland in the Stour Valley

At the extreme northern end of the Stour Valley, woodland cover is strongest in the Wrattings, Thurlows and Bradleys. Significant ancient woods include Trundley Wood in Great Thurlow, Abbacy Wood (Ashburnhay Coppice 1543-4 – 'the hay [wood] by the stream called the Ashburn') in Great Wratting, and Littley Wood and North Wood in Withersfield. Trundley Wood has maintained its size, but Abbacy Wood is much reduced from its 18th century size.

Ancient Woodland - Trundley Wood, Great Thurlow

Littley Wood, Withersfield occupies a lonely elevated position, which has helped it survival

Park Tuft in Little Thurlow is a wooded-up part of the deer park recorded there in 1735 (the nearby Park Grove lay outside the park and appears as a partial plantation in 1735). The largest ancient wood in the southern part was Lord's Wood in Stoke-by-Clare, but this too is now reduced in size. This is recorded as the wood of the 'lord prior' of Stoke-by-Clare Priory in the 13th century, when it was called Stokeho. It was a coppice wood when it was given to the priory in 1124, indicating a long history as a managed woodland.

Around Long Melford, the Ancient Woodland is mainly confined to the upper slopes of the valleys and is mostly in relatively small parcels. Two significant large woods partly in this landscape are the adjacent Lineage Wood and Spelthorn Wood in Long Melford (both recorded by name from the 14th century). Ancient Woodland is more numerous in the lower valley, with examples at Arger Fen in Bures St Mary, Nayland End Wood in Nayland, Creak's Grove in Little Horkesley, Slough Grove in Great Horkesley, and Little Wood, Boxtedhall Wood, Cophedge Wood and Ash Wood, all in Boxted (Essex).

The area north-west of Long Melford is well stocked with ancient woods. Stanstead Great Wood, at 55ha (137 acres) is the largest, but there are many others of moderate size: Hundon Thicks; Easty Wood in Cavendish; King's Wood, Long Wood and Shadowbush Wood in Poslingford; Asgood Wood, Park Wood, Lownage Wood, Longley Wood and Oak Grove in Boxted; Court Wood and Lumpit Wood in Glemsford (both coppice woods in 1840). Many of the groves on the Kentwell Hall estate in Long Melford, appear on a map of 1613: Kiln Grove (The Kell Grove), Cold Grove (Ten Acre Spring), Ashen Grove (The Cock shot spring), Long Spong (Puttock Row Spring) and Blakes Ley Grove (Blakes Grove). These woods are usually situated on the tops of the more poorly-drained clay hills. The long-enclosed nature of the landscape has helped to preserve the woods by excluding the grazing livestock that would otherwise have grazed the coppice stools.

Around Sudbury, the woodland cover is largely Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland consisting of oak, lime, cherry, hazel, hornbeam, ash, holly and elm. The presence of small-leafed lime in many of the woods in the eastern part of the area is especially noteworthy. There are many scattered parcels of woodland here, but there is a more significant group between Bulmer and Twinstead, comprising Parsonage Wood, Butlers Wood, Waldegrave Wood and Twinstead Hall Wood – but even here 19th century and earlier maps indicate that there was formerly more woodland here.

Abbas Hall Wood in Great Cornard is supposed to be the wood portrayed in Thomas Gainsborough's early masterpiece of circa 1748 that was later entitled 'Gainsbough's Forest', with the additional subtitle of 'Cornard Wood' in 1828 (now in the National Gallery). A church tower with a spire is glimpsed through the middle is taken to be Little Cornard, but that church has only a small (possibly 19th century) pointed lantern on its tower rather than a spire.

In the middle Stour Valley, the largest group of surviving Ancient Woodland is at Cornard and

Ancient Woodland: old coppice stool in Assington

Assington, where Assington Thicks, Mumford's Wood and Lord's Wood were all once part of a larger Assington Thicks. (Mumford's Wood commemorates George Mumford of nearby Costen's Hall).

Leadenhall Wood is a much reduced fragment of a larger wood that formerly fringed the northern edge of Leaden Heath. There were woods on the southern edge too – Rowley Grove and Breach Grove still survive but Kingsfield Wood and Farthing Grove have gone. There were also woods around the edges of Polstead Heath: Stack Wood on the north, Howe Wood and King Harry's Grove on the

Studying an Ancient Wood in Wormingford (during Wormingford Historic Landscape Survey)

west side, and Millfield Wood on the south – though some are reduced in size. The occurrence of these heath-edge woods supports the idea that the heaths themselves were once probably wooded too (see about Leaden Heath, above). Between Polstead and Withermarsh there is another group of Ancient Woods – Mark Wood, Long Wood and Hazel Grove.

In the lower Stour Valley the large heaths in the southern part were originally part of a large royal forest that extended southwards into West Bergholt, Lexden and Mile End. Named as a wood called Cestrewald in 1181 and as foresta regis de Cestrewald in Kingeswod in 1249, its name means the 'fort at/in the wood' and is probably a reference to Pitchbury Ramparts, an Iron Age fort in the southern part of Great Horkesley. Originally it was much wooded, and timber was being taken from it for buildings in the 13th century

Coppicing and pollarding – what are they?

From prehistory to the medieval period, woodland was intensively managed as a renewable resource. In the classic medieval woodland model (as described by Rackham, 1986) every 5 to 25 years, wood was coppiced (ie, cut down to near ground level, and allowed to grow again from the resulting stools). This process produced underwood, or poles and rods which had various uses including fuel, fencing, wattle-and-daub. Old coppices, and therefore managed woodland, can be recognised by old coppice stools in the Stour Valley hedges or woodland. Scattered among the underwood were standards, or trees allowed to stand for 25 to 100 years to produce timber for house beams and planks.

Old coppice stool in Wormingford (Neil Catchpole)

The disadvantage of coppicing is that the ground-level stools could be grazed by animals, leading to a loss of an underwood crop. The answer was to pollard the trees (in other words, to coppice them down to head height only). As the new growth on pollards was above the reach of grazing animals, they could be grown on fields full of grazing animals, in a regime known as wood-pasture.

Historic hedges

In one sense, landscape archaeology is all about fields – their age, shape, and distribution. As discussed above, we have some measure by which we can define the age of woodland, but what about hedges?

If we compare the number and position of hedges on historic map coverage, either the early editions of the Ordnance Survey, 19th century tithe maps or (where they survive) 18th century estate maps, it is immediately clear that the historic pattern of field boundaries has been severely degraded through 20th century agricultural rationalisation which has resulted in a large number of hedges being removed.

Old pollard in Wormingford (Neil Catchpole)

In the last century, there was a fashion for Hooper's Hedgerow Hypothesis (Hooper, 1971). Max Hooper defined a methodology, a shorthand interpretation of which is that the number of species in a given 100 foot (30m) length of naturally grown hedge will equate to 100 years of hedge growth. In other words, if you count 6 species in your 100 ft sample, then that hedge is 600 years old. The charm and simplicity of this method attracted many followers, but some critics pointed out that (as, in fairness, Hooper had said) it was not universally applicable across the country. Reasons included that fact that some species (notably elm) will successfully invade hedges and drive out other species, and in some hedges mature trees (standards) will 'shade out' certain species, allowing only the stronger ones to flourish. I am indebted to my friend Neil Catchpole for the observation that in the last few decades especially, farmers' spraying of fields will also kill off the more sensitive hedgerow shrubs. All these will reduce the number of species in the hedges, thus undermining Hooper's Hypothesis.

Historic hedge survey in Wormingford.

Field boundaries in Wormingford parish reflecting a field pattern which may be of ancient origin (thanks to Marc Brewster).

The present-day landscape: settlement patterns

Having discussed the present-day hedges and woodland, we will look at the broader settlement patterns to see how villages, hamlets and farms fit into the pattern of fields, tracks and hedges. Landscape historians from the pioneer WG Hoskins (1955) to modern scholars such as Oliver Rackham have defined two major landscape types: 'Ancient' and 'Planned' landscapes. What do these mean? Rackham's definitions have not been bettered. In his words, 'Planned' landscape is:

The England of big villages, few….roads, thin hawthorn hedges, wind-swept brick farms, and ivied clumps of trees in the corners of fields: a predictable landscape of wide views, sweeping sameness, and straight lines.

'Ancient' landscape is:

The land of hamlets, of medieval farms in the hollows of hills, of lonely moats in the clay-lands, of immense mileages of quiet minor roads, hollow-ways, and intricate footpaths; of irregularly shaped groves and thick hedges colourful with maple, dogwood, and spindle (Rackham 1986, 5)

Sunken lane at Flatford.

*Sunken and winding lane at Wormingford*
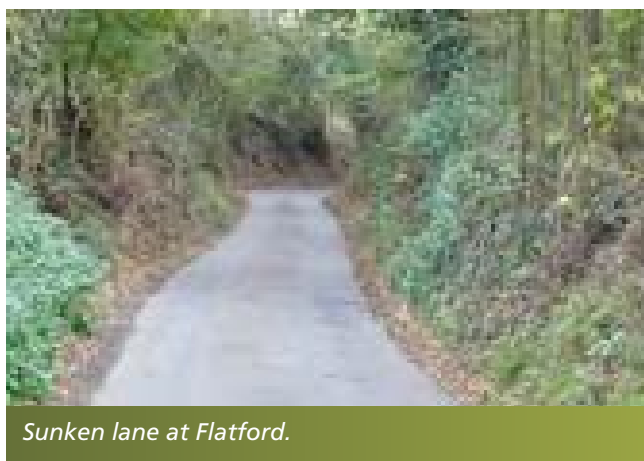
It only takes a short drive or a walk through Constable Country to convince us that we are overwhelmingly in Ancient landscape here - witness the sunken lanes (hollow ways) where the roads run down to the valley bottoms, the winding roads, and the isolated farms so typical of this area. It is generally true to say that the lower and middle Stour Valley is all Ancient landscape, but in the Upper Stour Valley there is Planned landscape at Great Bradley, Great and Little Wratting, Great Thurlow, Haverhill, Kedington, Sturmer, and Withersfield. This is characterised by larger and more rectangular fields and straighter roads created by Parliamentary Enclosure in the 19th century.

Modern classifications of landscape

In the earlier sections of this chapter, we explored the importance of archaeology in uncovering the buried past, and then of the increasingly important part played by the study of documentary sources such a place- names, maps, and the Domesday survey to understand how the landscape developed. Now it is time to go in deeper, and take account of some of the themes explored by modern landscape historians and archaeologists. This is generally referred to as Historic Landscape Characterisation or Assessment (HLC/HLA), by which modern scholars have developed a series of landscape descriptions based on the shape of the fields, and the history of settlement, but also taking into account woods and hedges, farming history, visual appearance and character.

It is fair to say that Historic Landscape Assessment is rich in planning jargon, and the non-specialist may find it difficult, or even intractable. One of the doyens of landscape studies, Christoper Taylor (2012) has recently denounced the whole concept of Historic Landscape Assessment as something explored before and found wanting. However, it would be wrong to ignore it for the simple reason that it is now common currency among landscape archaeologists, planners, and environmental scientists. In particular, we benefit from the detailed studies of various parts of the Stour Valley which have been carried out in this modern tradition of Historic Landscape Assessment. Some of the more technical discussion in Sections 2 and 3 above have drawn heavily on the Stour Valley Partnership's Historic Landscape Assessment (Amstutz, Blake, et al, 2008) has been heavily drawn on in this chapter in general, and in this Section in particular. There are also Historic Landscape Assessments for Colchester District (covering the Horkesleys, Dedham, Langham, Boxted), and in preparation for Braintree District in Essex (Mount Bures, Alphamstone, Bulmer, etc).

The map shows the basic Historic Landscape Assessment land types (Historic Landscape Study (Amstutz, Blake, et al)), and there follows a description of each of the landscape types in the Stour Valley, focusing in particular on settlement patterns.

Map of Stour Valley HLC landscape types, referred to below.
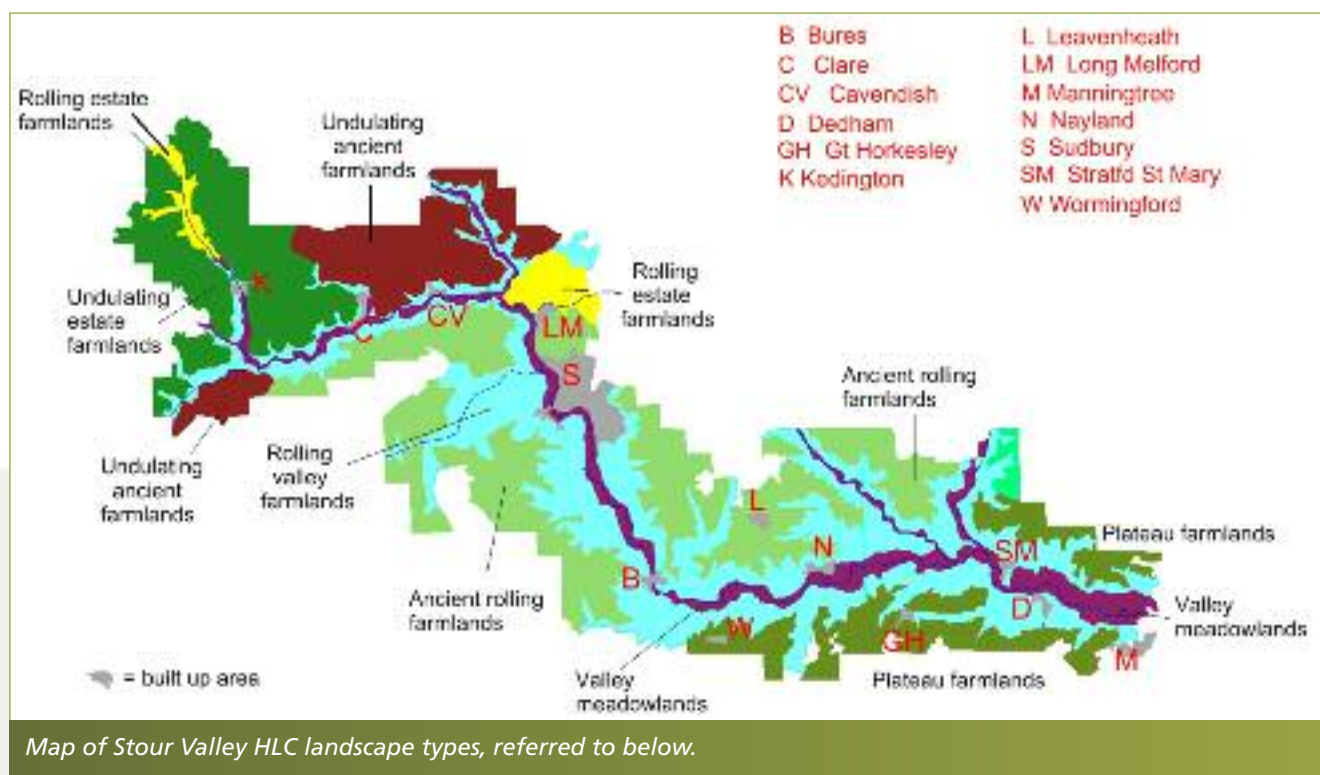
Rolling Estate Farmlands

Upper Stour valley: Great Wratting, Great Bradley, Long Melford area

Settlement in the upper Stour valley is mainly concentrated in a string of small villages close to the river. The parishes are long and thin, with the villages and the river at their centres and their farmland extending up on both sides of the valley in narrow strips. Flint is very much in evidence as a building material, often used with red brick, but white brick is used as a status symbol for some of the larger houses. Notable among the villages is Little Thurlow, the centre of an estate formed by Sir Stephen Soame, Lord Mayor of London 1598-9. His brick school and E-plan almshouse (both with heraldic displays over their entrances) remain, but his mansion burnt down in 1809, to be replaced by the existing Little Thurlow Hall in the 1840s. The layout of its splendid early 18th century formal garden, shown in detail on a map of 1735, survives largely intact, including the long garden canal.

At Great Thurlow there is a medieval hall-and-church complex at the heart of the village, with the existing Hall being an 18th century stuccoed brick structure, probably built for the Vernon family who were there by 1736. Through the inheritance of larger Vernon properties (Orwell Park in Nacton and Wherstead Hall) the use of this Hall was reduced and by the mid-19th century it was only in seasonal use as a shooting box. Both Thurlows are now part of the extensive Vestey estate. The 18th century and later farm buildings include an impressive 8-bay black-boarded barn which flanks the road and a timber-framed and plastered dovecote, now converted to domestic use.

Great Bradley also has a hall-and-church complex, with the parish church lying in front of the remains of a moat that surrounded the demolished hall – its brick replacement now stands just outside western side of the moat. A possible garden canal lies to the east of the moat, parallel with the river. Earthworks in the semi-parkland field to the north of Little Bradley church may be the sites a former manor house and a parsonage. The Le Hunt family inherited the manor of Harveys alias Bradley Netherhall in the 16th century but suffered as a result of the Civil War, and seem to have abandoned their house in the later 17th century. In the 18th century the estate was held by the non-resident Dickens family of Branches Park in Cowlinge and later by the Lamprell family, who developed Little Bradley Hall (now Hall Farm) to the east of the church and Little Bradley Place (now Little Bradley House) to its north. One of the Lamprells, William, was also a malster and had developed Maltings Farm as an orderly malt office by 1843.

In the middle Stour valley the dominant settlement is the large village of Long Melford, though there are a number of dispersed farmsteads and major houses within its large parish. Melford was an important estate of the abbots of Bury St Edmunds, gifted to them c.1042-66 by 'earl' Ælfric son of Wihtgar, the administrator of West Suffolk, and granted a market and a fair by the king in 1235 (with another grant in 1330). The long main street of the village, thick with historic timber-framed buildings, gives way to a large, open, triangular green at its north end. The narrow end of this green starts just beyond a bridge over

Settlement beside green at Long Melford

the Chad Brook and extends up the slope to the cathedral-like parish church at its high, wide, northern end. It is recorded as Le Chirchetye in 1442 and as Melforde Greene in 1580. Within the green there is a 16th century ornamental redbrick water conduit and the base of a former medieval cross. Melford Fair was held here for three days in Whitsun week, the last day being a cattle sale. The redbrick and turreted mass of Melford Hall dominates the east side of the

Melford Hall gatehouse and banqueting hall.

green – this, the imposing mansion of Sir William Cordell, Master of the Rolls 1557-81, replaced an earlier manor house of the abbots of Bury St Edmunds. Originally quadrangular and with two entrance forecourts on the side furthest from the green, it was later reduced to its present E-shape (now in the care of The National Trust). Extensive gardens are shown around the Hall on a map of 1613, including three large rectangular ponds with a cruciform building (probably a dovecote) between two of them (these are named as the ponde yarde in 1580 and still survive as the prosaically-named Square Pond and Horse Pond – the last being an amalgamation of two of the ponds. A visitor in 1621 enthused about the gardens and noted that 'there are few the like in England'. The gardens are now mainly 20th century in character, with some fine specimen trees.

An octagonal Tudor banqueting house perches on the brick wall dividing the Hall garden from the green, simultaneously providing the occupants with views of both. Along the west side of the green there is a mixed fringe of large brick houses and terraced cottages, mainly 18th and 19th century in appearance but often of medieval origin. The orderly arrangement of house plots around the margin of the green may indicate settlement planning by the medieval abbots. At the north end, and clearly an intrusion onto the green, is Trinity Hospital, a quadrangular group of redbrick and stone almshouses that was founded by Sir William Cordell in 1573 and remodelled in 1847. This partly obscures Holy Trinity church, which was rebuilt in the late 15th century by two of the region's great master masons, Simon Clerk and John Melford, and is widely regarded as one of the finest churches in England.

To the north of the green, and set apart in the middle of its own lands, is Kentwell Hall. Kentwell appears as a separate vill or settlement in Domesday Book (there named as Kanewella) and has always had a separate manorial history to the rest of Long Melford. The name seems to contain a Celtic river name (as in the several rivers named Kennet) plus an explanatory Old English wella 'stream' and probably refers to a small tributary of the Glem that flows south-westward past Kentwell Downs from a plantation 600m to the north-west of the present Hall. The plantation is said to contain the site of the medieval chapel of St Ann and may also be the site of the medieval Kentewellehalle – the present Hall originated in a property acquired by a John de Luton in 1315/6 and is referred to in 15th and early 16th century documents as Lutons or Lewtons. The knightly Clopton family acquired it in the late 14th century and built the existing

redbrick E-shaped house in the 16th century. This is set within a large rectangular moat and has a separate garden moat at its rear. The approach to the house is down a long tree-lined avenue referred to as the 'New Walk' in 1678.

A series of industrial estates (Crestland, Bull Lane and Acton Place) now occupy the site of Acton Place, a great mansion with a sad history. The property was acquired in 1708 by Robert Jennens, the son of a wealthy Birmingham ironmaster and an aide-de-camp to the duke of Marlborough. Before his death in 1725 he employed James Gibbs to build him a large house with two equally large linked pavilions. His son William, who was a godson to King William III, became a reclusive miser who died in 1798, reputedly worth in excess of £800,000. Dying without a will, the inheritance of his great estate was disputed and is said to have provided inspiration for Charles Dickens's Bleak House. The main block of the house and one pavilion were demolished circa 1825 and the remaining pavilion went in 1961. The remains of an early 18th century garden canal do, however, survive between the industrial estates and the road – the last remnant of the glories of Acton Place.

Landholding and enclosure pattern

Although there was some parliamentary enclosure of common-field arable in the upper Stour valley area (Great Bradley 1815, Great Thurlow 1825, Great Wratting 1817), the amounts were small and its landscape effect was limited. Much of the landscape was already enclosed by the early 18th century, as is shown on a 1735 map of the Thurlows. In the Melford area there was no parliamentary enclosure and there is a high correlation between the fields shown on late 16th and early 17th century maps and those existing now or recorded on 19th century maps. The eastern edge of the Melford area includes a part of the western boundary of a Late Saxon estate whose bounds were recorded in AD 1000-2 – in the will of Ælfflæd, the widow of Ealdorman Brihtnoth of Essex. This part of the boundary runs along the Chad Brook (burnan) from Roydon Drift (Rigendune) to a bend called Humelcyrre (later Humbelchar). The eastern boundary of the estate runs along an 'old hedge' (ealdan hege) underlining the potential ancientness of parts of this landscape.

The 16th and 17th century maps show both Melford Hall and Kentwell Hall surrounded by their demesne fields, with peripheral areas of parkland. For Melford Hall this was a wooded area 770m to the east of the Hall, on a slope beside the Chad Brook, referred to as le Small Park (60 acres) in 1386, Lytle Park wode (77 acres) in 1442 and Little Park in 1580, with an adjacent area called The Warren (1580). At Kentwell a park to the northwest of the house near Kentwell Downs is mentioned in 1501 and a map of 1613 has fields in that area (on the plateau some 700m from the Hall – in Undulating Ancient Farmlands) called The Park, The Park Laye, Park Ponds and Coney Hill. But by 1736 a landscape park had been established encircling Melford Hall and other were to follow at Kentwell Hall and Acton Place by 1783. The Acton one was largely disparked in the 19th century but the other two parks reached their greatest extent in that century, before suffering partial in the earlier part of the 20th century. In the later 20th century there was some parkland restoration and new oak avenues planted in the 1980s in the Melford park.

A substantial deer park containing a moated lodge was in existence to the north of the gardens of Little Thurlow Hall by 1735 and may have been established by Sir Stephen Soame around 1600 – its form can still be traced but it is no longer a park. A park was also established around Great Thurlow Hall by 1783, but on a more modest scale.

Undulating Estate Farmlands

Steeple Bumpstead, Kedington, Great Bradley, and North of Haverhill

Settlement

The town of Haverhill and a number of substantial villages, such as Kedington, Steeple Bumpstead, Clare, and Stoke-by-Clare, lie on the edges of this landscape type, but within it, settlement occurs mainly in widely spaced small greens or small linear hamlets (often called 'ends' or 'streets'), with a scattering of dispersed farmsteads, sometimes moated. This settlement pattern is a reflection of the farming history of this area, with a higher incidence of common fields resulting in a tendency for nucleated settlements. As already noted, these nucleated settlements lie on the edges of this landscape type. The component parts of the Undulating Estate Farmlands are mainly made up of the 'upland' parts of the territories of those settlements. The hamlets variously named 'greens', 'ends' and 'streets' mostly represent small daughter settlements in that upland.

Haverhill had a market by 1086 (a third of this belonged to Tihel of Helléan, a Breton lord who is commemorated in the name Helions Bumpstead), but the ownership of the remainder is not recorded in Domesday Book, but it must have been the de Clare family). Its Domesday-period church has disappeared, but lay on the higher ground on the outskirts of the later town and from this was known as the Overchurche or Bovetownechurch, sometimes abbreviated to Botton church, a name now surviving as Burton End. By the 12th century the market was in its present position nearer the river and had acquired a chapel of St Mary (the earlier church was also dedicated to St Mary, but because of the Botton name, was later misidentified as being dedicated to St Botolph). This became the Netherchurch and finally, from the late 16th century, the only church.

There was some textile manufacturing in Haverhill in the Middle Ages but its textile industries grew greatly from the late 18th century. The firm of D. Gurteen and Sons was founded in 1784 and their large Chauntry Mill works have dominated the centre of the town since they were built in 1856. Initially making drabett (a coarse linen and cotton cloth) and smocks, they later expanded to other textiles including horsehair-weaving and coco-matting. Silk works were brought to the town in 1828 by Stephen Walters of Spitalfields in London. In 1828 Stephen Walters of Spitalfields in London brought silk works to a town that was then essentially one long street that ran parallel to the Stour Brook. Enlargement came when the railway reached the town from two directions – in 1863 from the Colne Valley and Halstead line to Haverhill South, and in 1865 from the

Great Eastern line to Haverhill. From 1955 onwards further enlargement came as part of the London 'overspill' plan. (The bombing of London in World War II created a housing shortage in a time of expanding population. Consequently, the Government created New Towns such as Harlow to absorb some of the displaced Londoners, and others were settled in existing towns such as Haverhill and Long Melford).

London overspill is the term given to the communities created - largely consisting of publicly provided housing as a result of the Government policy of moving residents out of Greater London and into other towns in the south-east,

Kedington has also grown since 1960 as a dormitory settlement to Haverhill. Up until the end of the 18t century the village was dominated by its moated Hall, but both are now gone. Here was the 'Godly household' of the Puritan Barnardiston family, leaders of the Parliamentarians in Suffolk in the English Civil War, and the home to the young Sir Samuel Barnardiston, who, with his neatly cut hair, was the original 'roundhead'. The adjacent church, however, still has an impressive series of Barnardiston monuments – so much so that is has been dubbed the Westminster Abbey of Suffolk. An earlier history for the settlement is hinted at by the Late Saxon stone cross with a crucified Christ in the chancel window and the Roman bricks built into the church's walls. The Risbridge Union Workhouse was built here in 1856 and later transformed into the Risbridge Hospital, and since the 1990s, into a housing development.

More characteristic of the landscape type are the small greens such as East Green and Ever Green in Great Bradley, Calford Green and Woodland Green in Kedington, Sowley Green in Great Thurlow, Little Thurlow Green, and Burton Green in Withersfield. In a few cases, there are hints that some of these settlements have Late Saxon origins – Brockley Green in Hundon, for instance, stems from the Domesday-period settlement of Brochola. The 'ends' – Dash End in Kedington, Kedington End on the Kedington/Sturmer boundary, Boyton End in Stoke-by-Clare and Temple End in Little Thurlow – have a similar distribution to the greens, but lack the their characteristic open spaces, being essentially roadside hamlets. Temple End commemorates a land grant there, before the 1270s, by Roger and William le Bretun to the Knights Templars. Boyton End lies near to the former Boyton Green and to the existing Boyton Hall Farm, all descended from the Domesday settlement of Boituna. Domesday Book also refers two Boitunas (one distinguished from the other by the term alia 'other'), the second being Boyton Hall on the Little Wratting/ Haverhill boundary. Both Boytons are near parish boundaries (as are many of the other Boytons) and the first element may be Old English boia 'a boy, a servant' – perhaps in the sense of the Boytons' relationship to their 'parent' settlements.

In addition to the greens and ends, a sprinkling of moated sites indicates that there were also a number of substantial dispersed farmsteads of medieval date, eg Norley Moat House in Little Bradley, the Old Rectory at Barnardiston, Pinhoe Hall in Hundon, Chantry Farm in Withersfield and Great Wilsey Farm in Little Wratting. The settlement at Norley Moat was also called Overhall and was in existence by the 1190s. A number of these moated sites were still occupied farmsteads in the 19th century, but are now deserted, eg Glebe Farm in Great Thurlow and Ganwick on the Great Wratting/ Barnardiston boundary. Another now empty moated site at Little Thurlow, called The Island, is shown as being a lodge within the deer park attached to Little Thurlow Hall on a map of 1735.

Chapel Farm on the Haverhill/Little Wratting is the site of the medieval chapel of Our Lady in the lost settlement of Alverton or Alderton, recorded in the 15th century. A more recent loss is the hamlet of Hogstreet in Kedington, which has gone since the 19th century, as has the nearby farmstead of Little Wilsey in Little Wratting. Sotterley Green and Granger's Green in Great Wratting have also gone. Further to the east, the medieval settlement of Fornham in Stoke-by-Clare has also disappeared (together with its 13th century oratory) – its final manifestation was as Farnham Wood in the 19th century.

This tendency for the desertion of small settlements on the one hand, and the growth of the larger villages on the other, has accentuated the nucleated settlement pattern and the emptiness of the surrounding farmland.

Landscape

Common or open fields form a strong part of the agricultural history of this area, particularly of the lands to the west of the Stour. 18th and 19th century maps of Haverhill show extensive common fields around the town – Chimswell Common, Wallstreet Common, Broad Croft Common, Little Mill Field, Rookwood Common, Small Hill Field, Hales Common, Chapel Common, Mill Hill Field, West Field, Building Common, France Building Common and Mill Field Common. Similar areas are recorded at Great Wratting (Snite Field, White Croft Field, Wratting Mill Field Common, Red Field, Mayners Common Great Galley Field and Great Rowleys Common) and Kedington (Dane Common, Blackmoor Common, Sturmere Common, Mere Common and Foxearth Common). The use of the term 'common' in these names to mean 'common fields' rather than 'common pastures' is more typical of counties to the west, such as Hertfordshire.

There was 19th-century parliamentary enclosure that included common-field arable at Great Bradley (1815), Great Wratting (1817), Great Thurlow (1825), Haverhill (1853 and 1857), Kedington (18530, Little Wratting (1853), Sturmer (1853), and Witherfield (1854). As a result, the area has greater similarities to adjacent areas of Cambridgeshire than to most of the rest of the Stour valley. The late enclosure of these common fields has given a landscape with many straight field boundaries and a scattering of straight-sided plantations.

Estates were frequently the movers behind the parliamentary enclosure in the 19th century and there is a strong estate character throughout much of this landscape.

Undulating Ancient Farmlands

Long Melford, Glemsford, Steeple Bumpstead

Settlement

The area contains a number of villages of moderate size – Stanstead, Poslingford, Boxford, Hundon, Hartest, Somerton and Birdbrook – as well as five larger ones on its edge: Long Melford, Glemsford, Cavendish, Clare and Steeple Bumpstead. All were in existence by 1086 and the sizeable endowment of Hundon church, together with its exceptionally large parish, suggest that it was the site of a Late Saxon minster church. The discovery in 1687 of an apparent Viking burial of circa AD 953 in the churchyard strengthens this possibility. The well-endowed Domesday church at Hartest could similarly have been a minster, though Hartest is also unusual in that the medieval church is situated at the south-east corner of a triangular green of about 2 acres. It is first recorded as Herdherst ['herd or stag wood'] around 1030, when it already belonged to the abbey at Ely, having been given by the parents of Abbot Leofsige around AD 990.

Glemsford is situated on a spur between the Stour and the River Glem, and has evolved from the knitting together of five settlement clusters – the church area, a small triangular green called Fair Green (where a fair for 'pedlery and toys' was held every 24th June) with a northern extension called Brook Street, another triangular green called Tye Green and a southern street extension along Skates Hill. It was an important centre for the late medieval and Tudor wool trade, with a large number of clothiers. It even produced its own distinctive undyed white cloths called Glaynesfordes. The woollen cloth trade had

declined greatly by 1824 when a silk mill was set up here. The textile industry was further supplemented in 1844 by the establishment of a horsehair-seating and cocoa-nut-fibre matting works by H. Kolle & Sons of London. Glemsford's industrial portfolio also included a soap and candles works, brick works, and a flax factory. The silk works remain, but the three-storey horsehair factory has been converted to housing.

The steeple of Steeple Bumpstead is not a spire, but a reference to its substantial, late 11th-century, church tower – it was Bumstede ad Turrim ['Bumpstead at the tower'] in 1259. The settlement grew up beside the Bumpstead Brook and the second part of the name means 'the place at the reeds'. In area, it is the smaller of the two Bumpsteads and was sometimes called Parva or Little Bumpstead. Although not officially a market town, its inhabitants were wealthy enough to build a fine Moot Hall in the late 16th century.

In addition to the villages, there is a small scattering of hamlets with 'green', 'end' and 'street' names, such as Cross Green in Hartest , Bulley Green in Poslingford, Finkle Green in Birdbrook, Fenstead End in Boxted, Mile End in Hartest, Wales End in Cavendish, and New Street, Plum Street and Brook Street in Glemsford. The greens tend to be small and triangular, while the ends and street are usually linear roadside settlements. There are also a number of dispersed farmsteads, some of which can be shown to be of some antiquity. Clopton Hall in Poslingford is recorded as Cloptuna in Domesday Book and Houghton Hall in Cavendish is recorded there as Hoketona. Houghton Hall later acquired the status symbol of a moat and medieval moats surround a number of the other dispersed farmsteads: Moat Farm in Boxted, the Old Rectory and Moat Farm in Birdbrook, and Latchley's Farm (named after Henry de Lacheleye, 1310) in Steeple Bumpstead. There are also the remains of a moat around the grand (Listed Grade I), a 16th or early 17th century house of timber and brick built by Sir Thomas Gent and his son Henry at Moyns Park in Steeple Bumpstead, though the property takes its name from the family of Robert le Moigne, who was there in 1254.

Gifford's Hall in Shimpling formerly lay on the edge of a small triangular green and was recorded as Gyffords Farme in1580, taking its name from the family of Robert Giffard who was living in 1327. New House Farm in Poslingford, despite its name, is also an old property – it is referred to in 1572 as 'a messuage newly built called the Newhowse'. Even then, it was not totally new because it was built on the site of the manor of Bustalmynes, named after John Burstemyn who was also living in 1327. The property was further enhanced in the early 18th century by the Golding family, who constructed a garden canal and avenues within their small park there. Kiln Farm at the northern end of Long Melford (recorded as The Kell Home Stall in 1613 and as Kilne ffarme in 1660/1) probably takes its name from a kiln producing bricks for the nearby 16th century mansion of Kentwell Hall, the fuel coming from the adjacent Kiln Grove (The Kell Grove in 1613).

There is a wealth of medieval and Tudor timber-framed and brick buildings in this area, as can be seen around the edges of the very picturesque green at Hartest and at Steeple Bumpstead.

Landscape

This is predominantly an area of 'ancient enclosure', with an irregular pattern of fields bounded by large, long-established hedges. However in Glemsford it was noted as late as 1855 that 'Part of the parish is still in large open fields' and the tithe map of 1840 records a number of one-acre strips in large fields called Gravel Pit Common, Longland Common, Great and Little Seldom Field, and Great Cobs Croft running up the valley side in the south-west corner of the parish. The common-field strips have disappeared without

a formal enclosure award, but this is still a large, open, arable area. The small enclosure parcels have given fields that are among the smallest in the Stour Valley area. It is noticeable that in the upper Stour valley, from Long Melford westward to Steeple Bumpstead, all the larger villages are on the north (Suffolk) side of the valley; to the south (in Essex) there are only small hamlets and dispersed farmsteads. The reasons for this are not completely clear, but it may be linked to the extent to which the land was organised into common fields in the Middle Ages. Another factor may be the strong involvement of the Suffolk villages with the medieval wool trade.

Ancient Rolling Farmlands

The higher ground in the upper Stour valley: Long Melford, Sudbury, Great Cornard, Bures, Leavenheath, Stoke-by-Nayland, Bulmer.

Settlement

The settlement pattern in the two areas of this landscape type is similar, with dispersed farmsteads of medieval origin interspersed with some occasional small villages and hamlets. There is a frequent occurrence of small to moderate sized greens or tyes, frequently linear or triangular in shape. These greens mostly represent subsidiary settlements within their parishes and many were enclosed in the 18th and 19th centuries. After enclosure they were often infilled with housing and now survive only as place-names.

The farms are large but are predominantly owner-occupied rather than estate owned. The farmstead buildings are predominantly timber-framed, the houses colour-washed and the barns blackened with tar. Roofs are frequently tiled, though thatched houses can be locally significant.

On the Essex side, between Haverhill and Sudbury, there is a distinctive group of places that all share a common name – Belchamp Otten, Belchamp St Paul, Belchamp Walter, plus a lost Belchamp St Ethelbert (Bello Campo Sancti Adelberti 1230, which was incorporated into Ovington in 1473). The modern forms of the name have been influenced by the French for a 'beautiful field', but this is really an Old English name that meant something like 'the settlement on the baulk or ridge', referring to the peninsula of land that lies between the Stour and the Belchamp Brook. Belchamp St Paul was given to St Paul's Cathedral in London in AD 939 (the gift of Bylcham being confirmed by King Athelstan circa 970). Paul's Hall and the church form a neat church-and-hall complex of likely Late Saxon date. The existing Hall is a timber-framed building of early 16th-century date, but there is also a 7-bay aisled barn that was rebuilt circa 1200 incorporating a pair of posts that are two centuries older. There is another hall-and-church complex at Belchamp Walter. This Belhcham was willed by the Anglo-Saxon noblewoman Leofgifu to 'her lady' (the queen) circa1040, having freed all the men on the estate. It takes its present name from Walter de Teye, its owner in 1297, being earlier called la Contesse (1285) after the Countess of Oxford. There are other hall-and-church complexes at Gestingthorpe (another of Leofgifu's possessions – Gristlyngthorp was given to the abbey at Bury St Edmunds) and at Ovington. The Ryes at Little Henny (a brick house built in 1809 for Nathaniel Barnardiston) also represents a former a hall-and-church complex, but the adjacent church of Little Henny was already in ruins by the 18th century and the hall now bears a name derived from its owner in 1269, John de Ry. The park around the house was developed by Barnardiston to complement

his new house on the site of the old hall. At Ridgewell the hall and church form a loose group on the eastern edge of the village which has formed around a small green. Foxearth church and its moated late 13th century Hall also form a loose hall-and-church group.

The church at Stoke-by-Nayland is referred to in the will of Ealdorman Ælfgar of Essex, circa AD 950, and in 1000-2 as the 'holy foundation at Stoke (halgan stowæ et Stocæ) in which my ancestors lie buried' in the will of his daughter Ælfflæd, the widow of Ealdorman Brihtnoth (the doomed hero of the Battle of Maldon). The gifts to this church by the families of the ealdormen of Essex suggests that they intended it as a major monastery, but in that they were thwarted by royal intervention after Ælfflæd's death and the bequests ended up powering the growth of the abbey at Bury St Edmunds. The property now called Stoke Priory was built by Isaac Hoy in 1829 and named in memory of this early monastery. The settlement that has grown up around the church (Stoke-by-Nayland) has developed around two small adjacent greens (Church Street and The Downs) on one side, with two parallel streets (Back Street and Polstead Street) forming a further two sides. The church has a prominent position overlooking the Stour valley and its lofty tower features in several of Constable's paintings.

Bulmer Tye is shown as a long narrow green on 18th century maps but has lost its green character (it is recorded as Bulmere Tye in 1310, suggesting that it and the main village of Bulmere probably take their name from a former mere in the valley of the Belchamp Brook). There were similar linear greens at Alphamstone Green, at Cornard Tye and at Whitestreet Green in Polstead, but they too have lost their green character. Smaller, mainly triangular greens, are recorded at Borley Green, Twinstead Green (Twinstead Tye 1600), Horne's Green in Bures, Cuckoo Tye in Long Melford (Thurgoristye 1442, Cowckhouse Tye 1580 and finally evolved into Cuckoo Tye by 1783), Newman's Green in Acton, Bures Green, Sacker's Green in Newton, Dorking Tye in Assington, Hagmore Green in Boxford, and Withermarsh Green in Stoke-by-Nayland. This may be the Wythermerested of 1327, but much earlier Withermarsh formed part of one of the estates of the noblewoman Ælfflæd and is named in her will, 1000-2, as Wifærmyrsc and Hwifermirsce ('the quivering marsh'). The avenue that leads from this green to Gifford's Hall was already in existence in 1783. Potters Tye Farm on the Long Melford/Acton boundary is a relict of a triangular green which had characteristically complicated name evolution – Tallichetye in 1442, Tallydge Tye 1580, Talage Tye 1660/1, Stalage Tye 1783 and Stalhouse Tye 1873. Highlanders Farm in Long Melford is a relict of Cox Green and the isolated late medieval house at Sawyer's in Bures is the last surviving property on the former Sayers tye, which takes its name from its 14th century owners.

Claret Hall in Ashen is on the site of a Domesday settlement called Clare, which later acquired a French diminutive ending to become Clarette (1125-47) or 'little Clare' to distinguish from the larger Clare on the Suffolk side of the Stour. Abbas Hall in Great Cornard takes its name from its ownership by the Abbess of West Malling in Kent; Cornard having been granted to it by Robert fitz Hamo, the Norman conqueror of Glamorgan (d. 1107). The existing house was built for the steward of the abbess's manor in Cornard and its 2-bay aisled hall has been dated to c.1290 by dendrochonology. Moated Clees Hall (Cleys Hall 1640) in Alphamstone takes its name from John Clee who was living in 1372, but was earlier the 'manor of Fytz Jeffreys', named after Ralph fitz Geoffrey de Alfameston, living in 1248. It was also called Fytz Jeffrys Stubbyng, suggesting the property was formed from a woodland assart.

Costen's Hall in Little Cornard (now demolished) was previously known as Caxton's or Cawston's, taking its name from Richard de Caketon, who was alive in the 1290s. The Hall has been demolished but its farm buildings largely survive. These are a striking group of brick buildings set around an octagonal

courtyard. They date from 1844 and were built for George Mumford, the tenant of Lord Walsingham. Peyton Hall in Bures Hamlet was the property of Robert de Peytone circa1320 and Gedding Hall in Leavenheath was the property of Edmund de Geddyng in 1327.

Leavenheath is largely a creation of the 19th and 20th centuries. 18th century maps show a large heath on the borders of Assington, Polstead, Nayland, Stoke-by-Nayland and Wissington called Leaden Heath (Levynhey 1292, Levenesheth 1351, Leaden or Leaven Heath 1838). The 1292 form of the name suggests that this was originally a hey or wood. The heath was enclosed in 1817, giving a landscape of straight roads and geometric land units. Leavenheath became a separate chapelry in 1863 and a parish in 1868. Parts of the former heath saw substantial residential development in the 20th century, including the creation of a new village green. Cock Street is a settlement on the former eastern edge of the heath and Honey Tye is on its southern edge. The nearby Polstead Heath was also enclosed in 1817 and has similarly seen residential development on the post-enclosure land parcels.

Pentlow Tower is a landmark on the southern side of the Stour. This 28m (90ft) tall hexagonal brick tower was built by rev. Edward Bull in 1859 as a monument to his parents. It is said to command a view of 41 churches in the surrounding landscape.

Landscape

The enclosure pattern over a lot of the landscape retains much of the organic pattern of ancient and species-rich hedgerows and associated ditches. The hedges are frequently high and wide and have a strong visual impact. There are however some areas of field amalgamation and boundary loss, especially on the interfluves between the numerous small valleys. The dissected form of this landscape has reduced the scope for the really extensive field amalgamation found in some other parts of the county. It has ancient woodland scattered throughout in blocks that are often larger than the surrounding fields.

There was some Parliamentary enclosure of common-field arable in the Sudbury area: at Belchamp Otten and Belchamp Walter (1840) on the Essex and at Great Cornard (1813) on the Suffolk side. This has given some larger, more regular and, despite the enclosure, still relatively open fieldscapes. There were also some substantial heaths to the east of Sudbury. These were enclosed in the 18th and 19th centuries and now only survive as place-names associated with late field boundaries, as at Leavenheath and Polstead Heath. South of a line between Hadleigh and Sudbury orchards become a much more prominent land use.

Rolling Valley Farmlands

The Stour valley sides from Lawford and Brantham, the Brett and Box valleys, and the Cambridge, Belchamp and Chad Brooks

Settlement

Dedham, which has been described as 'easily the most attractive small town in Essex', was involved with the wool trade by the mid-13th century and its prosperity reached its peak in the 15th century. It did however experience a revival as a 'genteel' town in the 18th century and gained an Assembly Room circa 1745. Shermans in the High Street is one of the town's most visually striking buildings – its pediment, multi-

coloured brick and other decoration being added 1730-1 to an earlier timber building. It takes its name from Edmund Sherman, a clothier who founded a school here in 1601 (his son Edmund emigrated to Massachusetts – as did many Protestants from the Stour valley – and was the ancestor of the American Civil War general, William Tecumseh Sherman). John Constable went to school in Dedham and the town features in many of his paintings. He used the term 'Dedham Vale' for several sketches and paintings from 1802 and this has been become a recognised name for the lower Stour Valley – it was used for the Dedham Vale Society in 1938 and as the name for the Stour valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) when it was declared in 1970. Castle House on the outskirts of Dedham is a 15th century timber-framed house that was the home, 1919-59, of the painter Sir Alfred Munnings and is now the Munnings Museum.

Landscape

The valley sides have a long history of arable use. The evidence for the former presence of 'common' or 'open' arable fields in these valleys is strongest in the western and central parts of the Stour valley. There was 19th century parliamentary enclosure that included some common arable at Haverhill (1853 and 1857), Kedington (1853) and at Cornard (1813). On the Essex side of the Stour, there was parliamentary enclosure at Sturmer (1853), Belchamp Otten and Walter (1840) and Middleton (1843); there was also some at Dedham on the lower Stour (1802). There is map evidence of 1600 for some common arable at Great Henny, but only very limited suggestions of common fields on the detailed 1580 and 1613 maps of nearby Long Melford.

The overall impression is one of limited panels of former common fields on some of the valley sides, particularly in the west, but counterbalanced by a large amount of anciently enclosed fields without a common field ancestry. The field patterns reflect this, with large amounts of sinuous field boundaries with substantial hedges interspersed with some more rectilinear fields where larger units have been enclosed or reorganised. Roads running up the valleys sides can be deeply set, caused by long use on soft substrata, as can be seen at Great Henny.

It is noticeable that in the upper Stour valley, from Long Melford westward to Steeple Bumpstead, all the larger villages are on the north (Suffolk) side of the valley; to the south (in Essex) there are only small hamlets and dispersed farmsteads. The reasons for this are not completely clear, but it may be linked to the extent to which the land was organised into common fields in the Middle Ages. Another factor may be the strong involvement of the Suffolk villages with the medieval wool trade.

The high arable potential of most of the soils means that greens and other areas of common pasture are infrequent. Some of the place-name evidence for 'commons' – such as Sturmer Common and Dane Common in Kedington, Kedington Common, Southfield Common and Welchmere Common in Little Cornard – refer to former common arable fields not common pastures (a usage more typical of counties such as Hertfordshire than Suffolk).

Valley meadowlands

The Stour valley floor from Manningtree upstream to Great Wratting, and the Box, Brett and Glem valleys.

Settlement

Due to their wetness, these landscapes are now generally unsettled except for former watermill sites. At least 40 mills, some dating back to the time of Domesday Book, are known to have existed along the Stour and its tributaries. Most were flour mills, but some had more specialised uses such as fulling and paper-making. Virtually all have ceased production and have been converted to other uses, mainly domestic. The list includes Flatford Mill in East Bergholt, a brick building of 1733 made famous because of its ownership by the Constable family and its appearance in the paintings of John Constable.

There are also occasional farmsteads on the edge of the valleys or on locally higher spots, including some significant medieval and Tudor moated sites, such as Pentlow Hall, Boxted Hall, Parsonage Farm in Long Melford, Smallbridge Hall in Bures St Mary, and Garnons Farm in Wormingford. At Pentlow an oval moated site close to the river contains a fine timber-framed hall built circa 1500 for Edmund Felton, however its position close to the church suggests that the site is much older. At Boxted (Suffolk) a relatively small moated site close to the River Glem is largely covered by the red-brick Hall built by the Poley family in the 16th century; this is set within a park and the moat has a tail-like extension leading to a small island that once probably bore a dovecote. Parsonage Farm, on Melford's western boundary, was formerly the Rectory and has the remains of a moat around it, reflecting the status of the medieval rectors. Smallbridge, first mentioned in the 12th century, was later a seat of the important Waldegrave family. Sir Richard Waldegrave, Speaker of the House of Commons 1381-2, was granted the right to turn his mansion here into a castle in 1384, but the house was rebuilt as a brick mansion, circa1555-72, by Sir William Waldegrave, and was visited by Queen Elizabeth in 1561 and 1579 (the house has since been extensively rebuilt, 1893-4 and 1920). Garnons takes its name from the Gernon family who owned it in the 13th and 14th centuries. In 1231 Henry III gave Ralph Gernon ten oaks for restoring his stockade (or, park pale?) which had been destroyed by fire.

Landholding and enclosure pattern

The damp nature of this land has led to a long use as meadows. The meadows of the burgesses of Sudbury, which now form part of the Sudbury Common Lands are actually mentioned in Domesday Book. These meadows are now used as animal pastures rather than for hay production, as is the case with most of the surviving meadows. In the upper reaches of valleys the meadows are often narrow, but in the middle and lower reaches can be broad and substantial, as in the case of Dagfen or Henny Common Meadow at Great Henny. The meadows are divided by wet ditches or dykes that may sometimes be lined by trees or scrubby hedges. Common meadows, such as Dagfen, were also formerly partitioned internally into strips – as can be seen on the 1840 tithe map of Great Henny. The introduction of more effective land drains in the 20th century has, however, resulted in the conversion of many meadows to arable land. In the wettest areas there are occasional small reed beds.

Meres and osier beds

The greater part of Stour Mere in the upper Stour valley lies in the Suffolk parish of Wixoe and was being used for osier beds in the 19th century. It is now largely infilled and overgrown, but a smaller part survives as a wet area across the county boundary in Essex, where it gave name to the parish of Sturmer. Sturmere is recorded in the Anglo-Saxon poem about the Battle of Maldon written around AD 1000, and, as Sturemara in 12th century documents concerning fishing rights in the river between it and Clare.

Wormingford Mere is famed for its story of a dragon. According to the Chronicle of St Albans, a dragon appeared at Bures in 1405 and killed the sheep of the local inhabitants, before being attacked by the bowmen of Sir Richard Waldegrave of Smallbridge Hall in Bures (just across the river from the mere). But arrows failed to piece the hide of the monster and it took refuge in Wormingford Mere, never to be seen again. The legend was probably inspired by a misunderstanding of the name Wormingford – the first element being interpreted as being Old English wyrm 'a dragon or reptile'; the name in fact means 'Withermund's ford'.

2012 floods near Wormingford mere above. Plants such as willow thrive in this wet ground. The Mere was an osier bed in the 19th century (producing willow wood products)

More prosaically, the mere was used as a duck decoy in the 19th century. A fine dragon is however depicted in the 13th century wall paintings in Wissington church.

A hill figure of the Wormingford dragon (or 'worm') appeared in Bures in 2012

The river itself is first mentioned (as the Sture) in connection with battles at its mouth between King Alfred and a Viking fleet in AD 885. The name, which it shares with four other English rivers, is of ancient Celtic origin and probably means 'strong, powerful river'. Pronunciation varies from Stowr to Stoor.

In 1705 Parliament passed an Act for making the River Stower navigable from the town of Manningtree, in the county of Essex, to the town of Sudbury, in the county of Suffolk. It featured horse-drawn pairs of barges known as 'lighters' that took goods, particularly bricks, down the river and other goods back. The entire Sudbury fleet of about 20 lighters was scuttled in the Ballingdon Cut in 1914 because of invasion fears at the start of the 1st World War. The navigation never recovered and was largely disused by the 1920s, but it has an enduring fame through the depiction of its lighters and locks in the paintings of John Constable. There is also a substantial legacy of locks and weirs on the river. In the 2nd World War the western bank of the Stour from Bures to Long Melford formed part of the Eastern Command 'Stop-Line' of 1940 and was defended with a chain of pill-boxes and gun emplacements, most of which still survive as features on the river bank.

The soils of the flanking flat valley floors are mainly seasonally wet clays overlying alluvial deposits and peat.

Plateau Farmlands

Wormingford, Dedham, Langham, and East Bergholt.

Settlement

The settlement pattern is generally one of hamlets, with occasional larger villages and dispersed farmsteads in the north, whilst in the south there is now a strong linear character to the settlements as houses have spread along the roads. At East Bergolt, several of the settlements on the edge of the former East Bergholt Heath (enclosed 18178) have experienced significant 20th century growth, becoming more nucleated villages, their origin being only dimly acknowledged in place-names such as East End and Gaston End. The enclosure of even larger areas of heathland in Dedham, Boxted and Great Horkesley (mainly 1803 for Dedham and 1815 for Boxted and Horkesley) has however resulted in the growth of linear settlements along the post-enclosure road, though the more nucleated hamlet of Boxted Cross has grown at the northern end of the former Boxted Heath.

There was some earlier linear settlement beside the long Horksley Causeway (so-called in 1838) in Great Horkesley, a narrow linear green on the line of a former Roman road. This was Horkesley Street in 1443, The Causeway in 1777 and is now the A134 road – the wide 'roadside wastes' having been enclosed in 1815. Hey Green, also in Great Horkesley, was another smaller linear green – it was Heyestreet in 1328-9 and Hey Green in 1777, but is now a deserted spot in farmland. A third linear green in that parish was called Westwodetye in the late 14th century, Westwood Green in 1777 and seems to have been partially replaced soon afterwards by the enlarged grounds of Westwood House, now Westwood Park. The small triangular green called Langham Moor (1777) is now just a hamlet at a crossroads.

Boxted church with its Norman tower lies on a slight promontory not far from Boxted Hall. The latter is a timber-framed house of mixed date, part of which follows a layout that was documented in 1325 on the death of Peter de Boxted. The house was then moated and had an upper chamber over its drawbridge –

some ponds east and north-east of the house may be the remains of the moat. Rivers Hall, also in Boxford but on another promontory, takes its name from Richard de la Riviere (living 1310) and was called Ryvereshalle by 1391. It had an 'outer' moat in 1586, but is now only partly moated and the existing timber-framed L-plan house is 16th century in date, with pargetting dated 1715. Songers, an isolated house in Cage Lane near Boxted Cross, is perhaps the oldest non-manorial house in Essex and is small two-bayed aisled hall of the first half of 13th century.

Lawford Hall, set within its own park, is a timber-framed house of 1583, built for Edward Waldegrave, which is hidden behind a Georgian brick façade of circa 1756. The grazed parkland has some large tree, mainly oaks. Lawford church, just outside the park, has a chancel that has been described as 'one of the most splendid monuments of its date in Essex' – its date is early 14th century and material whitish-yellow bricks banded and chequered with flint and other stone. In a much more modern style is the Boxted Waterworks, built in 1932-3 for the South Essex Waterworks Company.

Landscape

The landscape around Dedham, Boxted and Great Horkesley is variable in character: there are areas of 'ancient countryside' with old, sinuous hedge lines, but also substantial areas where the boundaries are the straight type of 'planned landscape'. In the southern part, there was Parliamentary enclosure of common field arable in Dedham in 1803. The enclosure award also included a large area of open heath, and the large areas of heathland were similarly enclosed in nearby Boxted and Great Horkesley in 1815. East Bergholt Heath, in the northern part of this area, was also enclosed by a Parliamentary Act, in 1817-8. The enclosure of all these heaths has resulted in a landscape with straight 'surveyors' roads and the geometric fields and land units typical of late enclosure. The straight Long Road in Dedham is a good example of this.

Apart from the ancient landscape types mentioned above, there are a few places in the Stour Valley where Common Fields show that there were areas of 'Planned Landscape' as well. The evidence for the former presence of 'common' or 'open' arable fields in these valleys is strongest in the western and central parts of the Stour valley. For example, there was 19th century parliamentary enclosure that included some common arable at Haverhill (1853 and 1857), Kedington (1853) and at Cornard (1813). On the Essex side of the Stour, there was parliamentary enclosure at Sturmer (1853), Belchamp Otten, Belchamp Walter (1840) and Middleton (1843); there was also some at Dedham on the lower Stour (1802). There is map evidence of 1600 for some common arable at Great Henny, but only very limited suggestions of common fields on the detailed 1580 and 1613 maps of nearby Long Melford.

The overall impression is one of limited panels of former common fields on some of the valley sides, particularly in the west, but counterbalanced by a large amount of anciently enclosed fields without a common field ancestry. The field patterns reflect this, with large amounts of sinuous field boundaries with substantial hedges interspersed with some more rectilinear fields where larger units have been enclosed or reorganised. Roads running up the valleys sides can be deeply set, caused by long use on soft substrata, as can be seen at Great Henny.

There has been little in the way of common pasture in this landscape because of the quality of the soils. Where common pasture existed at all it was found in valley floor locations such as at Sudbury. Other reference to commons in this landscape usually refers to former common arable land, such as Kedington Common, Southfield Common and Welchmere Common. There were, however, a few small greens

which are now remembered, if at all, by their names – such as Smith's Green at Steeple Bumpstead, Cranmore Green in Long Melford, and the vanished Bures Green and Weston's or Wiston Green on the north side of Smallbridge Hall (the names reflect the fact that the green was divided by the Bures St Mary/Wissington (or Wiston) parish boundary).

It is noticeable that in the upper Stour valley, from Long Melford westward to Steeple Bumpstead, all the larger villages are on the north (Suffolk) side of the valley; to the south (in Essex) there are only small hamlets and dispersed farmsteads. The reasons for this are not completely clear, but it may be linked to the extent to which the land was organised into common fields in the Middle Ages. Another factor may be the strong involvement of the Suffolk villages with the medieval wool trade.

Heaths

A heath is first recorded at Dedham in 1412-3 and the 'heth' of Boxted is noted in the early 16th century, though John atte Hath and Geoffrey attehethe are recorded in Boxford in 1250 and 1272. Dedham Heath was largely enclosed in 1803 and part of the former heath area became Hill House Park. Horkesley and Boxted heaths were enclosed in 1815.

A large area of woodland called Great Dedham Birch Wood (Byrcherde 'birch yard' in 1432) was still surviving beside Dedham Heath in 1838, but has now disappeared, leaving behind a hamlet called Birch Wood and the Birchwood service station on the A12. The birch component of these heathland woods is reinforced by other 'birch' names in the area, such as Burkett's Lane (= le Birchet 1291 = 'the birches'). In contrast, Boxted is 'the place with beech trees' (Old English boc = beech).

Boxted Heath shown on Chapman & Andre map of 1777. Note: enclosed woods have a distinct boundary.

The post-medieval landscape

Maps as a source for post-medieval landscape

For the study of the post-medieval landscape, maps are a major resource. There are four main types:

16th- to 18th-century 'Historic Maps', such as Hodskinsons in Suffolk and Chapman & André in Essex;
19th-century Tithe maps;
19th-century Parliamentary Enclosure maps;
19th- to 20th-century Ordnance Survey (OS: principally the 1st editions).

For some parishes there may also be 18th century estate maps giving good detail of individual estates, for instance, the Great Henny estate map of 1600 by William Sands (Martin and Satchell 2008, 125). However, these are not common.

Historic mapping

The principal historic map sources are Chapman and Andre's 1777 map of Essex (from which is extracted We have already seen the value of historic maps to show us such detail as the location of deer parks (3.11, 3.12 above), and examples are given below of other Historic Maps, Tithe maps and OS maps. It is obvious that if a sequence of maps survives from the 18th to the 20th centuries, then it is possible to trace through time any change (whether growth or shrinkage) in any specific part of the landscape - field patterns, villages, hamlets or even individual properties. This is known as 'map regression'.

Tithe maps

Tithe Maps were prepared for all English parishes following the Tithe Commutation Act of 1836. This Act allowed tithes (in theory, one tenth of the produce of a farm) to be paid in cash, rather than in goods. The Tithe Map and its accompanying Schedule gave the names of all owners and occupiers of the land in the parish, and is usually the earliest source for field names. Comparison with the 1st edition Ordnance survey and any estate maps allows a map regression exercise to be carried out to plot changes in field patterns, villages and towns.

Hodskinsons 1783 map of Glemsford, Boxted and (bottom right) Kentwell Hall, park and avenue

Parliamentary enclosure

The question of enclosure overlaps that of Ancient and Planned landscapes, as defined by Rackham (1986), and as discussed above (Section 4.1). 'Enclosure' is normally defined as the creation of hedges fields on land which had previously been open, and over which local people had rights to carry out certain activities, such as grazing animals, cutting hay or wood, or fishing. There are certain parts of Suffolk and Essex where we have evidence of that the land was enclosed as a result of Parliamentary Enclosure (in other words, it is Planned landscape). In fact, 'Planned' landscape is much rarer than Ancient in the Stour Valley, and is found only in parishes in the Upper Stour Valley, such as Withersfield, Haverhill, Great Bradley, Great Thurlow and Great Wratting (Dymond 1999, map page 105).

1st edition Ordnance Survey of Clare, and Bures

The Enclosure (or Inclosure) Acts were passed between 1750 and 1860. They legalised the appropriation and conversion of what had been open land into larger and more manageable fields of arable or pasture, and removed the rights previously held by the commoners over that land.

1st edition Ordnance Survey

It can be argued with some justification that the 1st Edition of the Ordnance Survey (OS) is one of the greatest historical documents available to the landscape archaeologist. Although in some places there are earlier Tithe Maps or estate maps, the OS was generally the earliest accurate survey of England. The OS is an astonishing achievement, and by using its various detailed editions, we can carry out 'map regression analysis' of any aspect of the landscape. The larger-scale maps - generally the 6 inches to the mile (1:10,000 in the modern metric version) or the 2.5 inches to the mile (1: 2500) are the most useful for landscape analysis, but some of the smaller-scale maps (1:500) of towns show minute detail such as trees, drain covers, lamp-posts, and privvies, and can be used to analyse social and housing conditions to a surprising degree.

The coming of the railways

A major factor in landscape change in the 19th century was the coming of the railways. This provided the stimulus for the growth in trade and manufacture and the consequent growth of the size of some of our towns, particularly Sudbury and Haverhill. This growth can be seen not only in the construction of factories, wharves, and canals, and other industrial infrastructure, but also in the increase in house building for the enlarging population, along with the consequent extra shops, schools, etc. The three lines

built in Stour Valley were the Eastern Union in 1849, which brought the London line to Sudbury and Bury St Edmunds (via Lavenham), the Colne Valley and Halstead railway of 1860/63 (via Birdbrook and Haverhill), and the Sudbury to Cambridge line of 1865 (via Long Melford, Clare, Cavendish, Stoke-by-Clare and Sturmer: Robertson 1999). Although there had been earlier closures and mergers, it was the Beeching reforms of 1963 which led to the closure of most of the Stour Valley railways, leaving only Bures and Sudbury, the latter as the terminus of the former Bury St Edmunds line. The other stations at Haverhill, Long Melford etc closed, including Clare, which has the unique distinction of being the only station to be built within a medieval castle.

Former Clare Railway Station – the only one in Britain built inside a medieval castle!

Great Houses and their parks

These differ from medieval hunting parks in that they were built for amenity, for driving through and admiring the view of the house and its grounds. The soils on the Stour valley sides are good farming land, so there has been little opportunity or incentive for the creation of large parks. Tendring Park at Stoke by Nayland is one of the more significant exceptions. Originally a medieval deer park called Stoke Park, it takes it present name from its medieval owners who came from Tendring in Essex. Their heirs were the Howards, dukes of Norfolk, who had one of their principal seats here in the 15th and early 16th centuries. Their mansion was rebuilt before 1723 by Sir John Williams, a London merchant who was 'the greatest exporter of cloth in England'. Williams also added a fashionable garden canal to the park which still exists, together with a beautiful Fishing Lodge or Temple at one end, which was added later in the 18th century. The Williams mansion was replaced in 1784 by a new one on a new site, designed by Sir John Soane for Sir Joshua Rowley. The park was redesigned by Humphry Repton (Red Book 1791) for Sir William Rowley. The Hall was demolished in 1955, but the park and the estate still survive.

Other, smaller, parks include Baythorne Park in Birdbrook (stuccoed brick house 1668 for George Pyke), Liston Hall (largely demolished 1951, but two of its four mid18th-century corner pavilions remain), The Ryes at Little Henny (brick house 1809 for Nathaniel Barnardiston; property named after John de Ry, living 1269), Auberies in Bulmer, Langham Hall (stuccoed house 1756 for Jacob Hinde) and Lawford Hall (timber-framed house 1583 for Edward Waldegrave, but hidden behind a brick front of circa 1756), together with Belchamp Hall on the Belchamp Brook and at Gifford's Hall and Polstead Hall in the Brett valley. Auberies provided the setting for Thomas Gainsborough's iconic portrait, circa 1750, of Mr and Mrs Andrews (now in the National Gallery). He shows the newly-wed (and only recently gentrified) Robert Andrews and Frances Carter proudly surveying their estate – the oak tree behind them is still there, but their house was rebuilt by a new owner after Robert's death in 1806, and further enlarged in 1835 (the

property's name commemorates a medieval owner, Thomas Aubery, living 1361). Red-brick Belchamp Hall in Belchamp Walter was built circa 1720 for John Raymond and still has elements of its 18th century garden (though with 19th and 20th century modifications) – a raised terrace with summer houses at each end and a now-dry garden canal (another longer canal with a curved end lies a short distance to the south-east).

Hodskinsons 1783 map of Glemsford, Boxted and (bottom right) Kentwell Hall, park and avenue

At Kentwell, a park to the northwest of the house near Kentwell Downs is mentioned in 1501 and a map of 1613 has fields in that area (on the plateau some 700m from the Hall) called The Park, The Park Laye, Park Ponds and Coney Hill. But by 1736 a landscape park had been established encircling Melford Hall and other were to follow at Kentwell Hall and Acton Place by 1783. The Acton one was largely disparked in the 19th century but the other two parks reached their greatest extent in that century, before suffering partial deparking in the earlier part of the 20th century. In the later 20th century there was some parkland restoration and new oak avenues planted in the 1980s in Melford Park.

Chapels

Religious dissent in Suffolk has a long history, but it was not until the Toleration Act of 1689 that dissidents finally had the freedom to worship at chapels and churches other than the established Church of England. Nonconformist churches and chapels are therefore relatively late introductions to the landscape of our villages and towns. By the time they were built in the 18th and 19th centuries, there were generally no vacant plots in the town centres, so the chapels were usually tend to be built on the outer edge of the main village core.

Clare Baptist Church (1859)

Dedham Congregational Church (1739) now the Arts and Craft centre

Post-medieval industry

Wood craft

In the Valley Meadowlands, the edges of the rivers are studded with trees, notably willows, black poplars and alders, with some oaks and ashes in the drier spots. Native black poplars (Populus nigra) are now rare in the UK and the specimens on the Suffolk/Essex border are a significant proportion of the national total. Riverside willow and alder pollards are a recognised feature and are now more frequent than they were in the days of the Stour Navigation, when they would have been obstructions for the horse-drawn barges. The pollarded crack willows (Salix fragilis) in a popular stretch of the river between Dedham and Flatford can be seen as young specimens in photographs taken around 1900. The working of the 'willow tops' for poles, stakes and hurdles was a local industry in the early part of the 20th century, but was largely over by the early 1950s.

Brickmaking

Rolling Valley Farmlands occur on the sides of the valleys that cut through the thick layer of chalky till deposited by the retreating icesheet of the Anglian Glaciation. Chalk underlies the whole area, but there are only a few places where it outcrops on the valley sides, as at Ballingdon, near Sudbury, where there are disused 19th century chalk pits and lime kilns. The valleys themselves are filled with gravel, sand and silt deposits left by torrential glacial meltwaters.

Kiln Farm at the northern end of Long Melford (recorded as The Kell Home Stall in 1613 and as Kilne ffarme in 1660/1) probably takes its name from a kiln producing bricks for the nearby 16th century mansion of Kentwell Hall, the fuel coming from the adjacent Kiln Grove (The Kell Grove in 1613).

Textiles

There was some textile manufacturing in Haverhill in the Middle Ages but its textile industries grew greatly from the late 18th century. The firm of D Gurteen and Sons was founded in 1784 and their large Chauntry Mill works have dominated the centre of the town since they were built in 1856. Initially making drabett (a coarse linen and cotton cloth) and smocks, they later expanded to other textiles including horsehair-weaving and coco-matting. Silk works were brought to the town in 1828 by Stephen Walters of Spitalfields in London. In 1828 Stephen Walters of Spitalfields in London brought silk works to a town that was then essentially one long street that ran parallel to the Stour Brook. Enlargement came when the railway reached the town from two directions – in 1863 from the Colne Valley and Halstead line to Haverhill South, and in 1865 from the Great Eastern line to Haverhill North. From 1955 onwards further enlargement came as part of the London 'overspill' plan.

Glemsford was an important centre for the late medieval and Tudor wool trade, with a large number of clothiers. It even produced its own distinctive undyed white cloths called Glaynesfordes. The woollen cloth trade had declined greatly by 1824 when a silk mill was set up here. The textile industry was further supplemented in 1844 by the establishment of a horsehair-seating and cocoa-nut-fibre matting works by H. Kolle & Sons of London. The silk works remain but the three-storey horsehair factory has been converted to housing.

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How to find out about archaeology

Both Essex and Suffolk have an online list of all archaeological discoveries. This used to be called the **Sites and Monuments Record** (SMR), but is now generally referred to as the **Historic Environment Record** (HER). Essex has its own searchable website Unlocking Essex's Past, which can be searched by keyword or map square, and has a very good map display and some photographs. Essex can also be searched via the website **Heritage Gateway** (HG), which is the only access to the Suffolk HER. On the HG site, if you choose the More Detailed Search, this brings up a map which you can drag and click to select a search area. The search function will bring up a list of sites and finds on the HER, archaeological excavations and other fieldwork, various photographs, and also a list of Statutory Sites (i.e., Listed Buildings, Scheduled Ancient Monuments) in your search area.

If you prefer to read a book, the best introduction to Suffolk archaeology and history is An Historical Atlas of Suffolk (Dymond and Martin 1999). Essex has no equivalent Atlas, but good period summaries are to be found in The Archaeology of Essex: Proceedings of the Writtle Conference (Bedwin 1996).

The Historic Landscape Glossary

Some terms used have a brief description in the text, but most do not. Listed are a number of technical terms which need some sort of description or clarification for informal learners and non-specialists.

agistment: a lease of grazing land

alluvial: soils deposited by rivers

almshouses: housing for the poor of the parish, usually funded by local benefactors

amphora: Roman wine or olive oil container

assart / assarting: clearing of woodland to make way for farmland

baulk: a ridge of land, or an unexcavated area between archaeological trenches

boundaries: edges of a defined area such as a manor or parish

bordar/border: low-ranking peasant farmer with less land than a villein

burgesses: town dwellers

burh: modern 'borough' is derived from this. Strictly a defended site, or simply a town

caput: main residence in a manor or group of manors (literally "head")

chieftains: men in charge of a group of people or a region (in prehistory)

chapelry: area served by a religious chapel

claylands: parts of the region whose subsoil is clay

commons: land over which locals (commoners) have rights such as grazing sheep

cropmarks: old field boundaries, living sites and burial sites visible from the air due to differential growth of crops over damp ground

conduit: drain

Conquest: the Norman Conquest of AD 1066

coppiced/coppicing: chopping trees down almost to ground level to leave a 'stool'. Wood quickly regenerates from the stool and can be harvested in various sizes for wattles, poles, tool handles, etc

cruciform: cross-shaped

Danelaw : area of eastern and northern England under the control of the Danes (or Norse or Vikings) mainly from the 9th century

demesne: owned by the lord of the manor, farmland situated close to the manor house (and worked from it, as opposed to outlying land worked by tenants)

disparked/ deparking: the process by which hunting or recreational parks were returned to other uses (i.e., to ploughed fields or pasture)

earthworks: any upstanding earthen bank, mound or motte, with associated ditches

Enclosure (award): 19th Parliamentary procedure which transferred land previously held by small farmers into the ownership of bigger landowners

fieldwalking: the gathering of archaeological finds from the surface of a ploughed field

farmsteads: farms, in the sense of groups of buildings

fortifications: defended sites

geophysical survey: a variety of different techniques (magnetometry, resistivity, ground-probing radar) which allow below-ground archaeological features to be examined without digging holes

glaciation: Ice Age

green: small piece of land (usually located at the edge of a parish) over which locals (commoners) have rights of pasture

hamlet: a small group of buildings, more than a farmstead but fewer than a village.

heath: marginal land not suited to ploughing

herber: herb garden

hey: wood

hide: an area of land worked by one ploughman, theoretically 120 acres

hundred : the subdivision of a county or shire, theoretically (but hardly ever) 100 hides

hundred centre: the administrative centre of a hundred

ice sheet: during the Ice Ages, a sheet of ice covered Britain as far south as Suffolk/Essex

inhumation: burial of whole body (as opposed to cremation, where the body is burnt)

interfluves: the land between streams or rivers, often on sloping ground

landholdings: areas of land held by particular people or groups

malster: a person who produces malt for brewing

manorial: to do with the manor house (or the surrounding land)

messuage: a dwelling house, usually with a plot of adjacent land

Moot Hall: the building is which the parish meets

nobleman: man whose status is implicit in his ownership of land, or is conferred by Royal patronage

noblewoman: see nobleman

nucleated/nucleations : literally "grouped together" mainly in reference to manors or villages

oratory: place of worship, often associated with a particular religious group

outcrop: where a type of rock or soil is visible at ground level

patronage: the distribution of favours or property by royalty or nobility to those who support them

pedlery : trade in minor household goods (by a peddler)

pollard/pollarding: like coppicing, but the stool is above head height so that the new growth of wood is not eaten by grazing animals

populace: population/ people

ramparts: earth banks and associated ditches

resistivity: one of the geophysical survey techniques, detects below-ground archaeological features through their varying resistance to a current passed between probes

ringwork: a site defended by a circular earthwork

soke-men: freemen with their own land (ie not villeins)

stockade: a defensive timber fence (usually ontop of a bank)

stool: what is left of a tree when it has been coppiced

substrata: underlying layers

till: to plough the land (or sometimes, a reference to the soil)

tithe: literally "a tenth", the proportion of farm produce which a tenant had to hand to his landlord each year (equivalent to rent)

tofte: small farm with associated plot of land (croft)

tye: an area of pasture used in common (e.g., by local commoners)

underwood: smaller growth underneath big trees

villan / villein: peasant farmer who had to carry out certain jobs for his lord in return for use of his house and land

watershed: the division between two adjacent river valleys (from where rain will run off in different directions)

wattle-and-daub: method of constructing walls using daub (clay mixed with straw or dung) packed around a supporting frame of rods and twigs (wattle)