Sparrow, fc.

Thornbury Caſtle Glouceſterſhire.

*Pub. 25 March 1784 by S. Hooper.*

THE SOUTH VIEW OF THORNBURY CASTLE. IN THE COUNTY OF GLOUCESTE
THIS cannot be so properly call'd ye Remains of a Castle as the Remains of a very Magnificent unfinish'd one
design'd by Edward Stafford Duke of Buckingham Lord Constable &c. He began it An. 1511. 2d. Hen: VIII. as
appears by an Inscription over ye Gate but he liv'd not long enough to compleat it being beheaded An. 1521.

**Appendix AC 8**

**Extract from Franklin, P (1989) 'Thornbury woodlands and deer parks, part 1: the earls of Gloucester's deer parks' in *Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society*, Volume 107, Pages 149-169**

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# Thornbury woodlands and deer parks, part l: the earls of Gloucester's deer parks

by P. Franklin

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# Thornbury woodlands and deer parks, part 1: the earls of Gloucester's deer parks

by PETER FRANKLIN

## *Introduction*

The medieval deer park was an enclosure set aside for both sporting and economic purposes. It provided its owner with the pleasures of the chase – which the king and his retinue enjoyed in royal forests – and with fresh meat, and also enabled him to control the supply of timber and underwood and the pasturing of domestic livestock. It was an important feature of the English landscape and had a substantial influence upon its development, both by protecting old woodland from the encroachment of agriculture and by taking in arable, pasture and waste. Nothing demonstrated the power of feudal lords over the development of the landscape itself more clearly than their ability to make and maintain parks to the detriment of their tenants, who found access to the timber, underwood and grazing essential to their own economies suddenly restricted or cancelled altogether, and who sometimes saw their arable land enclosed within park pales and their settlements forcibly relocated. In consequence, parks were often a contentious issue: William Harrison attacked them in his 16th-century *Description of England* as causes of agrarian and demographic decline, but popular opposition was much older and the Gloucestershire antiquary John Smyth recorded that at the end of the 14th century local people had made physical attacks upon Sir Maurice Berkeley's new park at Stoke Giffard.[1]

Gloucestershire has been described as 'remarkable for the number of its deer parks', though recent work suggests that some counties had even more.[2] Many Gloucestershire deer parks appear in John Leland's *Itinerary*, the account of his journeys through England in the 1530s and 1540s, and his was the first account by a traveller or antiquary to mention Thornbury's three deer parks and the bad relations between lord and tenants to which imparking by Edward Stafford, Duke of Buckingham, had contributed in his time.[3] Two of those parks, however, were much older, and it was research into the economic and social history of the estate in the 14th century which began my interest in the origins and development of its parks. As part of that work, I attempted to reconstruct local land use on the eve of the Black Death of 1348–9 from a combination of local records and geological maps, in order to investigate the absence there of the severe shortage of land from which rural England is usually believed to have suffered in the period.[4] It was only when I afterwards read some of the many papers on medieval deer parks published by L.M. Cantor and his co-workers that I became aware that it might still be possible to locate Thornbury's deer parks and to measure their areas by mapping the remains of park pales.[5] This would not only enable the account of land use to be refined, but a study of local parks could be undertaken which would combine a large body of documentary evidence with the physical evidence of boundary banks and ditches. The modern Thornbury landscape owes enormous debts to the labour of medieval peasants, but so much of their handiwork in detail has perished that the discovery of the remains of the park pales which they had to erect and maintain

for their lords would offer an interesting point of contact with the past. References to these parks have appeared in print since at least 1779, but no detailed account of their creation, boundaries and areas, or sporting and economic functions has ever been published.[6] Such an account is long overdue, but this twofold approach can only be pursued adequately in a series of papers, both because local woodland and parks have long and complicated histories, and because the amount of time which I can devote to fieldwork whilst living in the North Country is limited. This first paper looks briefly at local woodland before the initial stage of imparking, but deals chiefly with the earls of Gloucester's two parks from their creation down to the eve of the Black Death. Further fieldwork may make it possible to refine its conclusions in detail.

*Kingswood Forest and the origins of the first Thornbury parks*

The medieval manor of Thornbury stood beside the Severn about twelve miles north of Bristol. With Thornbury borough, it formed one of the richest possessions of the Clare earls of Gloucester and Hertford, and of the Stafford earls of Stafford and dukes of Buckingham, families which have found biographers to record their greatest periods.[7] The estate covered about 10,670 acres (4320 ha), only about 6000 acres (2430 ha) of which had been reclaimed for agriculture when the Black Death struck, the progress of reclamation reflecting long-term underpopulation which has been attributed partly to the effects of malaria.[8] For centuries before any parks were made the whole estate lay within the bounds of a great and ancient hunting preserve, the royal Forest of Kingswood or Horwood (FIG. 1). J.S. Moore has traced the Forest's history back into the Anglo-Saxon period and suggested that it may have originated as a late Roman hunting ground. The battle of Dyrham was fought within it in 577, and *Dyrham* means 'deer enclosure'. His study confirmed the Forest's boundaries as the Bristol Avon, the Severn and the Little Avon, and suggested also that the Cotswold ridgeway bounded it on the east.[9] Domesday Book makes no mention of it, but reveals the presence of extensive tracts of woodland on many estates within its area.[10] Moore describes these as falling into four main districts based upon the administrative division of the county into hundreds,[11] but it is more helpful to think of a broad band of woods stretching from the Severnside marshes to the Cotswold Edge, with some outliers to the south. The westernmost woods were at Thornbury and Rockhampton, the easternmost clustered beneath the Cotswolds in a line from Hawkesbury to Old Sodbury. Gloucestershire's Domesday woodland was assessed in terms of linear measurements, and there has been a long and inconclusive debate about what areas should be understood from these leagues and furlongs, and, indeed, on whether they can be converted directly into areas or represent purely fiscal notions.[12] The centre of gravity of the recorded woodland was towards the east and north of the Forest and none was recorded in its south-western half, but the Domesday commissioners were not particularly interested in, or knowledgeable about, woodland, and the record may well be incomplete.[13]

Thornbury was said to have 'woodland 1 league long and one wide' in 1086, as much as any Forest manor except Hawkesbury and Horton.[14] The boundaries of the neighbouring estate of Olveston, set out in an Anglo-Saxon charter, emphasise the wildness of the area with references to hawks (*hafoc hylle*) and wolves (*wulfhricge*, *wulfputt*),[15] but an analysis of Domesday Book reveals that this part of southern Gloucestershire had experienced as much economic growth as the rest of the Vale division. There were as many recorded people and ploughteams in the Forest as in any other area of the county of comparable size. Thornbury itself had no fewer than 103 recorded inhabitants, 25 ploughteams, meadow worth 40*s*. per year – which suggests substantial involvement in stock raising around the great Oldbury Marsh – and a flourishing market worth 10*s*. per year, one of only six in the county.[16] Hawks and wolves were probably rare. The course

of the parish boundary of neighbouring Rockhampton shows how reclamation was eating into the Eastwood in the late Anglo-Saxon period when these were established, and it is likely that Thornbury's woodland had already broken down into three or four major divisions. Land clearance around the town had almost certainly divided the Eastwood in the north of the estate from the Marlwood in the south. Two stretches of parish boundary run roughly parallel to the Bristol to Gloucester road (now the A38), indicating that this Roman route – which originally ran from Sea Mills to Gloucester – was still in use: this must have cut off all woodland in the extreme east of the estate. In addition, if the Thornbury to Alveston road (now the B4061) was in use at this time it would have divided the Marlwood from Vilner Wood. The western end of the

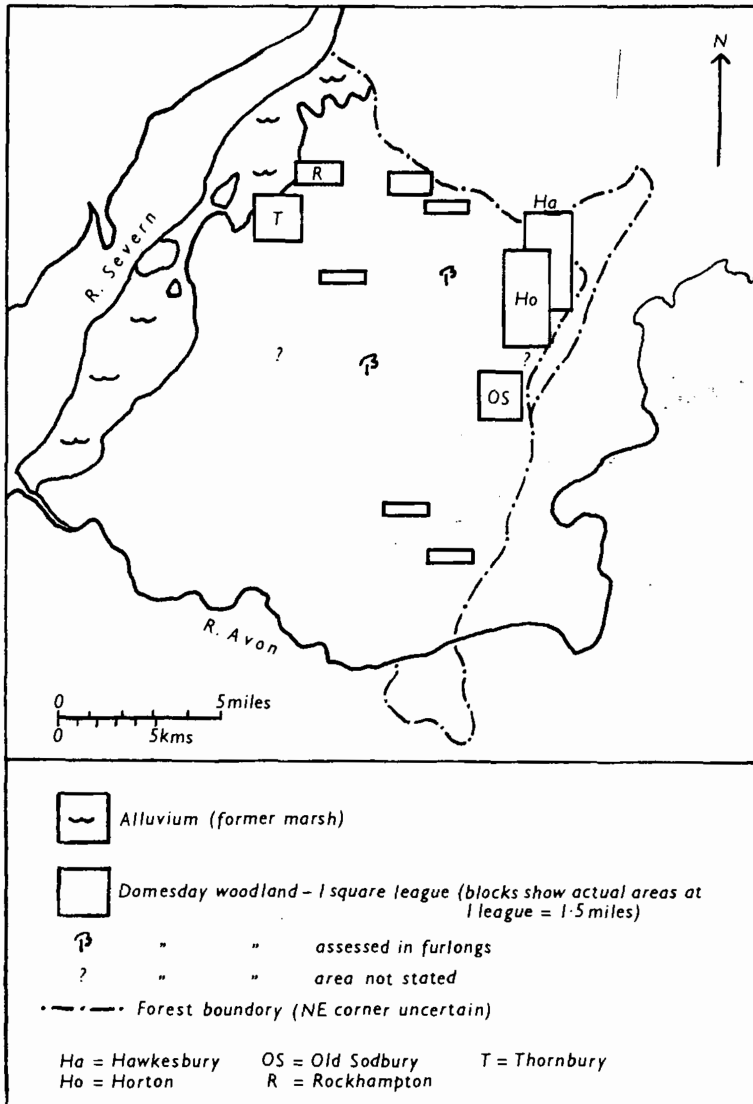


FIG. 1 The Forest of Kingswood

Forest's woodland was breaking down, but Domesday's concern with individual estates over-emphasises this. In the 14th century, Thornbury's chief surviving woods all stood back against the estate and parish boundary, and there can be little doubt that the Domesday woods recorded on three adjacent estates were extensions of the Thornbury woodland. Rockhampton's 1086 'woodland 1 league long and half wide' clearly represents part of the Eastwood which extended across the parish boundary. Tortworth had the same amount, which may indicate a continuous belt of woods running eastwards from Rockhampton and broken only by the major road. Tytherington's 'woodland half a league in length and width' may have linked up with woods in the south-eastern corner of Thornbury manor, where some certainly survived in 1322, in similar fashion.[17] The Marlwood and Vilner Wood may also have extended south into Alveston: Domesday Book mentions no Alveston woodland, but there was probably a park there in William II's time and John Leland described the route from Iron Acton to Thornbury as well wooded.[18]

Reconstructing land use on a late 11th-century estate is a hazardous exercise which relies upon combining Domesday Book with geological evidence, and upon assumptions that the boundaries – and, in this case, the coastline – of much later times were also those of 1086. The assumption about boundaries is particularly questionable in an area as heavily wooded as this, but the exercise is worth undertaking if these limitations are borne in mind. If the ploughteams of 1086 are interpreted at the conventional rate of 120 acres (49 ha) each, there would have been 3000 acres (1215 ha) of cultivated land in Thornbury.[19] It is unlikely that much marsh reclamation had taken place by then, and geological and landscape evidence suggests that nearly 3300 acres (1340 ha) should be allowed for marshland. This leaves more than 4300 acres (1740 ha), or 41 per cent of the whole estate, for woodland and heath, the latter being concentrated at Milbury Heath in the south east.

The general trends of the following 250 years are clear. As economic development accelerated, the area of cultivated land rapidly increased as peasants made great inroads into the Domesday woodland and lesser assarts around the fringes of Oldbury Marsh. The results of this process can be seen in some detail in the manorial records which survive from 1327 onwards, and which suggest that there were by that time about 6000 acres (2430 ha) of cultivated land, but only general inferences can be made about the movement's timing. Forest law was in operation for the first 140 years and local foresters should have resisted the clearing of woods with the backing of harsh penalties.[20] But royal interest in this forest had been declining for many years, perhaps even before King Edmund was killed within its bounds at Pucklechurch in 946, and its special legal status seems to have had little effect upon the district's economic development. This was evidently an area where woodland could be cleared providing that fines were paid to the Crown. A large fine from the people of Hawkesbury is recorded in the Pipe Roll of 1186–7, and a regular series of payments from the 'vill of Hope Hunaldi'.[21] The latter name has proved difficult to trace, but few Hopes are known from medieval Gloucestershire and it may well be identical with the sub-manor of Hope in the south east of Thornbury manor[22] (FIG.2). The names of the little settlements of Buckover and Falfield appear first in 12th-century Pipe Rolls, which may reflect woodland clearance in the east of the estate at that time. The names of Whitfield and Falfield hamlets both refer to areas of cleared land on the edges of surviving woods.[23]

Forest status did not prevent the economic development of the area, but it left the people of Kingswood subject to a set of burdensome restrictions which they thought it worthwhile to pay the Crown £133 *6s. 8d.* to remove in 1228.[24] Disafforestation made the control of woodland resources and reclamation in Thornbury purely matters between local peasants and the lords of the manor, the Clare family, who had acquired it in 1217. The Clares took a strong interest in their Gloucestershire possessions, at least from the mid-13th century when Richard Clare II

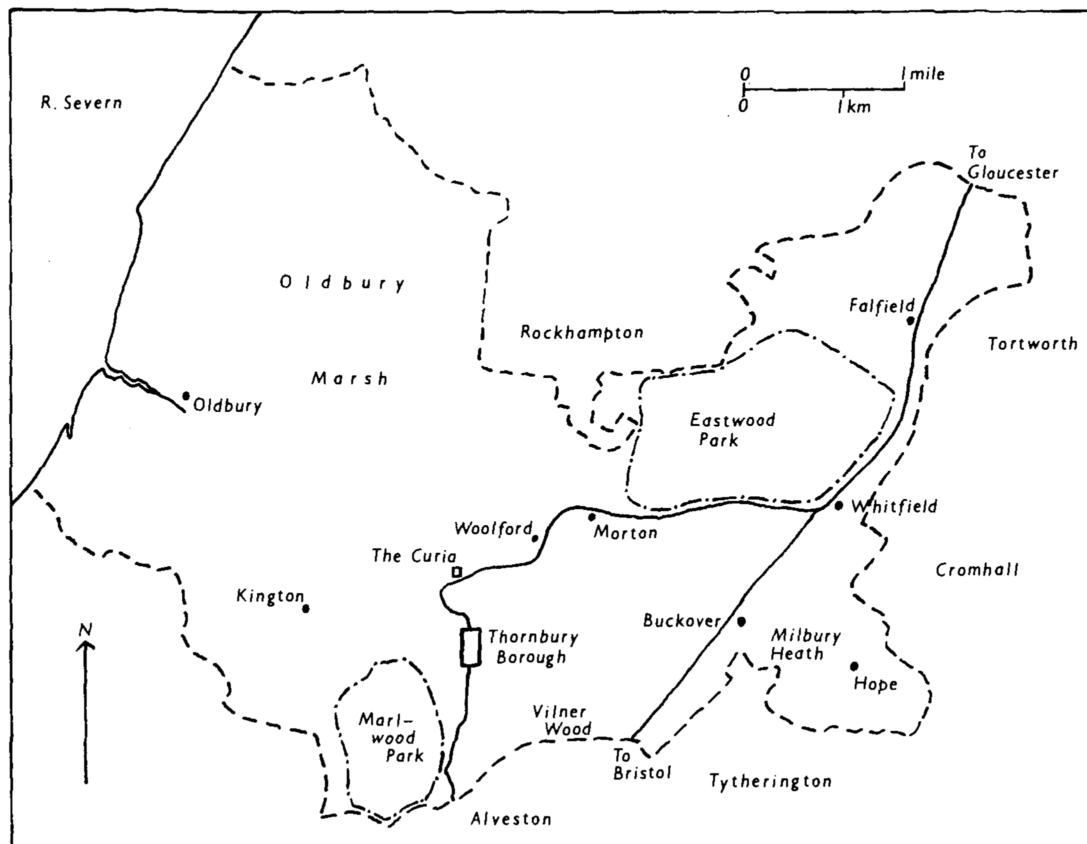


FIG. 2 Thornbury Manor and Parish *c.*1300

granted burghal status to Thornbury town and Fairford town, and made attempts to recover the formidable Bristol Castle which his predecessors the Norman earls of Gloucester had lost to the Crown.[25] They are not known to have been active in reclaiming land here or on their other estates, but were interested in expanding their demesnes by acquiring assarts made by peasants.[26] A very late case of this occurred at Thornbury at the 8 September 1332 manor court – actually after the Clares' time – when the bailiff of the manor bought 2½ acres (1 ha) on the edge of the Marlwood from Thomas Good I of Kington, an unfree middle peasant, for 26*s.* 8*d.* This was added to the adjacent demesne furlong called *Morlewoderuydinge* and sown with wheat within two months.[27] The particular contribution of Richard Clare II's son Gilbert IV to his family's growing interest in the estate was the creation of the two Clare parks of Eastwood and Marlwood (*parcum de Estwode* and *parcum de Morlewode*) as private enclaves in which he could enjoy both direct control over valuable economic resources and the sporting activities most appropriate to his class. A.H. Smith gives references to Eastwood Park, or rather chase (*chacia*), from documents of 1199 and 1200, but both actually refer only to a dispute over half a hide of land at *Estwod'* or *Estwode* in Gloucestershire.[28] Neither source mentions a park or chase, and there is no proof that this was the Eastwood in Thornbury. The earliest known reference to either park occurs in the

Patent Rolls: it is dated 11 November 1281 and marks the cancellation of a legal inquiry into Gilbert Clare IV's right to Eastwood Park.[29] This strongly suggests that it was a recent creation, though no licence to impark survives for either of the Clare parks. Such licences appear to have been unnecessary when park-making did not interfere with the Crown's rights, but royal officers probably saw Eastwood Park as a danger to the royal park at Alveston, only two miles away.[30] If deer escaped from Alveston, where else would they be more likely to go? The failure to obtain licences reflects both the exalted social position of the family and their bad relations with Edward I, but the King let them off on this occasion. Marlwood Park was not mentioned then, but must belong to the same period because two (unnamed) parks were recorded in the 1296 Extent of the manor drawn up after Gilbert IV's death.[31] It may have been established a few years after Eastwood Park, or have been made without the deer-leaps which would have enabled stray deer to enter it.

A number of parks made by local gentry may have been created in imitation of Gilbert IV's work at Thornbury. Again, there are no licences to impark, but S. Lay and R. Iles found that Yate Park first appeared in a printed record of 1302 and Tormarton Park in one of 1336. Sir Nicholas Kingston, the lord of Tortworth who obtained a grant of free warren for his lands there in 1304 was a tenant of the Clares and held land in Thornbury: his successor Sir Peter Veel I died in 1343 holding parks in both Tortworth and Charfield.[32] The 'King's Park' at Old Sodbury was first noted in 1310 when in the possession of Gilbert Clare V, and may be another of his father Gilbert IV's creations.[33]

Extents in *Inquisitiones post mortem* made after the deaths of lords of the manor testify to the parks' existence, but, as is usual with these sources, provide little further evidence.[34] Those of 1296, 1307, 1314 and 1347 record the presence of two parks and additional woodland, but a fuller account comes only from the 1322 Extent, which, while ignoring Eastwood Park, states that Marlwood Park contained 200 acres and Vilner Wood 40 acres, and that there was another eight acres of woodland within the sub-manor of Hope.[35] Acres used to measure woodland may, of course, have been larger than statute acres and attempted metric conversions may be misleading. The latter document, drawn up when Hugh Audley II, the Clares' immediate successor, forfeited his estates for his part in Thomas of Lancaster's rebellion, is the most detailed surviving Extent of the manor, but, because of an agreement dating back to the marriage of Gilbert Clare IV and Joan of Acre in 1290, the estate was considered legally to be held *jointly* by its lord and lady. Only the lord's half was seized and surveyed in 1322, so the Extent is very incomplete: it can be shown to include little more than half of the demesne arable, and to divide many individual tenants' holdings.[36] Those sizes may thus be very incomplete, but one park is shown to have been of substantial size, and these are the first named references to smaller woods.

*Medieval park management*

The valuable series of Thornbury manorial records which begin with the 1327–8 account roll and the 18 October 1328 court roll provide much miscellaneous evidence for the maintenance and economic uses of the parks and for their place in the lives of local peasants, but no connected accounts of their running made by the parkers survive.[37] There are materials here for a broad account embracing many aspects of the parks in the twenty years before the Black Death, but little can be said about boundaries, areas, or, indeed, about the management of the deer and the lord's hunting. The parker was a person of some local importance who received a wage of 2*d.* per day when Audley's estates were restored in 1327, calculated in the account rolls to be 60*s.* 8*d.* per year, when the bailiff in overall charge of the estate received 3*d.* per day. Comparison with the wage labourers' pay mentioned below shows that this was not intended to be his only source of

income, but it was increased to *3d.* per day from 29 September 1332, taking the parker's annual income to £4 11*s.* 0*d.* or £4 11*s.* 3*d.* (After a brief period of parity, the bailiff's wage was increased to 4*d.* per day after 27 March 1334.)[38] Other medieval parkers, including those employed by the Duchy of Cornwall, were commonly paid the same rates.[39] Richard Clare II had granted a large holding of free land to his parker at Thaxted, Essex, and both the tenement and the office became hereditary there.[40] But the only Thornbury parker who was a local man was the rich Kington peasant Robert atte Nelme I who held the office in the early years of the Audley restoration, and who blotted his copy-book by tearing up (*scindidit*) a list of offenders, for which he was ordered to forfeit 20*s.* at the court of 18 February 1332. The rest of Audley's parkers were – like most of his bailiffs – posted to Thornbury for a few years and then transferred elsewhere. Their social status was apparently below that of his senior officers – such as the chief steward, treasurer and general receiver – who were usually knights. No local record gave a parker the titles *miles* or *dominus*, often used to indicate knights in medieval sources, and gifts or payments to them in addition to wages are rare, though John Mostel was given a gown worth 13*s.* 4*d.* in 1333–4. None of their names appears in N. Saul's study of the county gentry, though Walter Dymock, parker in 1338–9 and 1339–40, must have had strong Gloucestershire connections to bear such a surname.[41] The names of the parker's staff are rarely given, but some local people and one or two from neighbouring parishes had subordinate roles in running the parks. William Borough, a rich freeman from Rangeworthy, was given the custody of Eastwood Park under John Mostel in 1333 – the only reference to such an arrangement – and the 1336–7 account roll reveals that he was later responsible for pasture sold in Marlwood Park.[42] That year's roll is more informative than most, and reveals that the rich peasant Robert French/Sibland II, then serving as granger, was responsible for £36 17*s.* 1*d.* received from the sale of wood, that Robert King, a middle peasant who had been the Oldbury tithingman, was responsible for 51*s.*, and that John atte Pleystud, a poor peasant who had been the Kington tithingman, was paid 12*d.* to collect £7 13*s.* 3*d.* from wood sold in Marlwood Park between 29 September and 21 December 1336.[43] John French, who was the younger son of a rich peasant family and perhaps Robert French/Sibland II's younger brother, was described as the parker's servant in 1344 and had been responsible for 16*s.* received from pasture sold at *Castewode* some years earlier.[44] But the identities of the gate-keepers (*clausatores*) remain obscure. Three are known, all from Marlwood Park, but it is unclear whether Richard Bartelot was a peasant or a member of the burgess Bartelot family, and William Hayward and John Symondes cannot be traced in local records under those names.[45]

The best-recorded aspect of park management is the maintenance of the palings and hedges which confined the deer. As was common, much of this work was done by tenants' unpaid labour, extracted through Thornbury's highly-developed corvée system.[46] More than 95 per cent of the work required was done in this way, but small specialised jobs were done by hired wage workers. Major repairs to the long sea wall by the Severn took many labour services in these years, but park pale repairs came a close second. Villein tenants owed nine kinds of labour service, but most park repairs were carried out using the 'manual works in winter' due between 29 September and 24 June each year, when there was less demand for peasants' labour in demesne agriculture. The great amount of work done may suggest that maintenance had been neglected when the estate was in the hands of the Crown between 1322 and 1327. The first repairs were made to 199½ perches (1 km) of Marlwood Park's boundary between 29 September 1327 and 24 June 1328, the first year of Audley's restoration.[47] The use of labour services to repair 78 perches (390 m) there during the following corn harvest suggests that the work was urgent: labour was rarely spared from getting in the lord's crops, though in 1333/4 90 'harvest works' were used to restore 30 perches (150 m) of Eastwood Park hedge which had been blown down by 'tempest and a great wind'.[48] Work at Eastwood Park was first recorded in 1329/30 (the

previous year's account roll is lost) when 1344 labour services were used to repair 1 mile 126 perches (2.2 km) of hedges. A deer-leap, designed to allow any deer outside the park to enter it but prevent those inside from escaping, was built into the pale by unpaid peasant labour, but had to be repaired the same year by a carpenter hired for 15½ days at 2*d*. per day. A gate was made next to the deer-leap – probably the 'gate of Reodesȝet' for which two sets of hinges with nails were bought for 10*d*..[49] Hired labour mended the Marlwood Park deer-leap at a cost of 12*d*. in 1331/2, and in 1333/4 two men hired to dig stones in Eastwood Park for building a lodge (*logga*) there received 2½*d*. per day for 7½ days. This would have been useful if Audley intended to stay out hunting for several days and nights, as his contemporary Thomas Berkeley III did, but the lodges were expensive to build and work on this one was abandoned.[50] After the first year or two of the Audley restoration, work focused chiefly upon Eastwood Park where two-thirds of the labour services expended upon park maintenance were used in repairing more than 5 miles 40 perches (8.2 km) of palings and hedges. Work at Marlwood Park was less intensive, but more than 4 miles 70 perches (6.8 km) of boundaries were repaired there over the same period. In each individual labour service a peasant commonly had to repair one-third of a perch (5½ feet or 1.7 m) of the Eastwood pale or half a perch (8¼ feet or 2.5 m) of the Marlwood pale, which seems to have been in better condition. The figures suggest that both parks were of substantial sizes and that Eastwood was the larger, but it is often not possible to distinguish work on the pale from that on internal divisions.

The lack of information on the numbers and management of the deer is disappointing, but it is a common shortcoming and good evidence like that from the Duchy of Cornwall parks is rare.[51] The 1307 and 1314 Extents record 'wild beasts' in both parks but give no details, and account rolls only record the numbers and kinds of domestic livestock kept.[52] They and the court rolls do, however, make occasional references to deer: in 1334/5, for example, four caught in Pucklechurch Park were received as a gift from the bishop of Bath and Wells, and in 1336/7 four from Thornbury were sent to Audley's mother, who had an estate at Eastington, and to his brother Roger at a cost of 16*s*.[53] Red, fallow and roe deer were all known in medieval England, and the use of the word *dama* suggests that fallow deer at least were kept in pre-plague Thornbury.[54] Three-quarters of the deer poached in the late 13th-century Forest of Dean were of this species.[55] The existence of two local parks may suggest that one was intended for fallow deer and the other for red: John Leland recorded this at Iron Acton, but by the later Middle Ages there were often two or three parks within one manor and the number may simply have been a status symbol.[56] Edward Stafford kept both species in early 16th-century Thornbury, but his Household Book records 500 fallow deer and 50 red together in Eastwood Park. At that time there were also at least 300 deer of unspecified species in Marlwood Park, but there is no reason why these numbers should have obtained at an earlier period.[57] Smaller game available on the estate before the Black Death included the hares, partridges and *fesauntes* which sometimes fell victims to poachers.[58]

It is also disappointing to find that local records do not contain many actual references to hunting, for this was one of the golden ages of English sport, when the unspeakable fully pursued both the eatable and the uneatable and was beginning to do so with the aid of written guides – most notably the *Vénerie* by William Twiti (or Twici) who was one of Edward II's huntsmen, and the *Livre de Chasse* by Gaston Phoebus, comte de Foix, born 1331, who was a remote relative of Thornbury's lords through his connection with the English royal family.[59] It may be that little hunting took place on the estate. Many things had been allowed to run down when it was in the hands of the Crown. Audley spent large sums of money in repairing the domestic and agricultural buildings in the *curia*, but his household only made long visits to the manor in 1331 and 1332. The summer of 1333 brought both an epidemic which has been interpreted as malaria and the beginning of the war with Scotland which played an important part in his career.[60] In the lord's absence, however, his

relatives and senior officers were allowed to use the parks when they visited Thornbury. The largest such party took place some time between 9 November 1334 and 25 January 1335, when Sir Richard Lymes and Sir John Mauger, the chief steward, hunted in both parks accompanied by many Audley servants and probably by the lord's nephew James Audley IV, who was to become one of the first Garter knights, incurring total expenses of 75*s*. 9¼*d*..[61] Such parties were usually much less expensive: one led by Sir John Caylemersh, the general receiver, in 1338/9 cost only 12*s*.. Huntsmen and falconers were not stationed permanently in Thornbury, but travelled about either with the lord's household or separately, as when 4*s*. 7¼*d*. was paid in 1331/2 for William Faukoner's expenses at Newport, Gwent, with his falcons. He was allowed 13*s*. 4*d*. when in Thornbury the same year, with a payment of 2*s*. to a second falconer. Two years later, a crossbowman took one of Audley's greyhounds to Newport, at a cost of 5*d*.[62]

### *Offenders in the parks*

Offences in the parks were a recurrent problem, and poaching and timber stealing were the most intractable.[63] Prosecutions of two groups at the 27 January 1329 court suggest that poachers had become bold while the estate was in the hands of the Crown. The first group comprised three Thornbury burgesses, five local peasants – both villeins and freemen – and an outsider who lived just across the manor and parish boundary at Newton in Rockhampton, who were said to have gone hunting in Eastwood Park with three dogs.[64] This is interesting evidence of an activity which united townsmen and peasants, free and unfree. Some of them were said to have hunted deer there on a second occasion, to which the jurors gave the date 23 May 1328, in a party of six. Those found guilty were amerced, but Adam White, a free peasant from Hope or Buckover, re-offended early in 1335. In contrast to the earlier cases, this one involved a homogenous little group of three freemen from the eastern part of the estate, all part-time brewers, who were caught in Eastwood Park and amerced 20 February 1335. One of Adam's accomplices was a Robert White who may well have been his son, and who trespassed there again and was amerced 29 January 1338. The third was William Heneage, whose family show no signs at this date of the prosperity which led to the building of Heneage Court in the 17th century.[65] One thing which bound together all the poachers who were named was the fact that they were men. The independent status which many peasant widows achieved in this period did not bring them invitations to poaching parties.[66]

Peasants and burgesses were not the only offenders. Like the royal forests – where the founder of Thornbury borough Richard Clare II and Audley's grandfather James Audley I had both been caught poaching in their time[67] – local parks attracted some members of the ruling class. Sir William Wauton of Cromhall had accompanied the Berkeley family on at least ten military campaigns and had served as a keeper of the peace for Gloucestershire in 1327. He was one of the handful of gentry whom N. Saul found to have borne 'the brunt of county administration', but he was discovered in Eastwood Park with his hounds in 1336.[68] This is but one of many examples of crimes by members of gentry families who held official posts and these may have been especially prevalent in the early 14th century: this was, for example, the time when the notorious Folevilles were active in Leicestershire.[69] Offenders against forest law had risked death, mutilation or outlawry until the 1217 Charter of the Forest, but Thornbury poachers were simply amerced; it should, however, be noted that in none of the above cases were deer proved to have been taken. A case of 8 December 1347 shows a sterner attitude, either because a deer had certainly been taken or because Ralph Stafford, Audley's son-in-law, had just inherited the estate. It was reserved until the lord's council should come. The accused were Walter Edward, a poor peasant from Morton tithing who died in the Black Death holding a messuage and six acres

of land, and a John Hayward of Cromhall whose surname may indicate that he was an official of Wauton's. Hayward seems to have survived the plague, but the case against him was not pursued.[70] The major cases of deer poaching sound like unlicensed hunts in broad daylight, and make no reference to the stealth which local peasants must have employed when setting bird-traps and snares.[71]

Because the offenders in the parks include a wide cross-section of local society, their activities cannot be linked closely to the developing Thornbury Peasant Movement of this period. The movement claimed either privileged ancient demesne status or, more probably, personal freedom, for local villeins.[72] It achieved very wide support among the unfree peasants who made up most of the estate's population, and other disputes were drawn into, or affected by, the basic conflict. The dispute between lord and peasants over the pasturing of livestock in Eastwood Park was affected at least in its timing. Shortage of pasture was a major problem of local peasant agriculture in the early 14th century. Thornbury peasants were unusually well-equipped with draught animals, but the numbers of their other stock were limited because the extension of the arable, the use of the marsh as a tidal reservoir to power the corn mills at Oldbury and the creation of two parks had severely restricted the supply of grazing.[73] Four bye laws regulating the use of meadows and pasture were made within a decade, indicating a serious difficulty.[74] Grazing had to be reserved primarily for draught animals, and the rich peasant-dominated juries who made these regulations saw sheep as a particular problem. Pasture for pigs was a different matter, as under the medieval agricultural régime they spent autumn and winter foraging in the woods for food which was useless to other stock, but seigneurial control of woodland severely restricted the numbers which peasants could keep.[75] The lord's income from pasturing peasants' livestock in parks and woods was assessed by the 1296 Extent as 20*s.* per year, but that of 1307 valued Eastwood Park's pasture at only 3*s.*, besides that which was needed to feed the deer, and Marlwood's at nothing 'because it is common to all the tenants'. The 1314 Extent repeated the latter account and added that Vilner Wood's pasture was also common.[76] Extents frequently undervalue assets, but these accounts suggest that tenants were engaged in a long-running dispute with their lords over access to grazing land and had enjoyed a substantial victory when Joan of Acre, the daughter of Edward I and widow of Gilbert Clare IV, was lady of the manor between 1295 and 1307, which may have been extended in her son Gilbert Clare V's time. But payments were enforced again when Hugh Audley II became lord, for the 1322 Extent records 6*s.* 8*d.* received each year from Marlwood Park's pasture and 2*s.* from that of Vilner Wood. After the Audley restoration, income from pasture varied considerably from year to year, the mean being 27*s.* 8½*d.* from Eastwood Park and 16*s.* 4*d.* from Marlwood Park. Maximum income from both was received in 1333/4, probably because increased numbers of beasts were pastured there at the end of the long drought of 1333.[77] Peasant opposition to such payments seems to have intensified in 1339 when the peasant movement was also gathering strength. A group of fourteen people – including two women – put their beasts into Eastwood Park and claimed common pasture rights there, but they were amerced 16 April that year. Most came from Falfield, but Walter Edward and a few more Morton men were involved. Unlike earlier kinds of offence, those involved were all middle or poor peasants, though both villeins and freemen still took part. A later record shows that at least one man fared better: early in 1342, a foal belonging to William Heneage was seized in the same park, but on 22 April he won his claim to have common pasture there 'all the year with all his beasts'. But the 7 October 1343 court, which marked a limited victory for the peasant movement, also marked the loss of the pasture dispute when Heneage was amerced 6*s.* 8*d.* for failing to pay for pasture 'for four years and more'.

Early place-names record ash, oak and thorn trees in south Gloucestershire, and Anglo-Saxon charters confirm these and add references to fruit trees, but all such names may derive from

single unusual trees chosen as landmarks rather than from particular kinds of woodland.[78] The Tortworth Chestnut, a sweet-chestnut said to be of medieval origin, stands within a mile of the former boundary of Thornbury manor at O.S. ST 704933, but no references to this species have been found in Thornbury's medieval records.[79] Beech made the most appearances in these, then thorn, followed by oak, ash, apple, birch, elm, hazel, poplar, willow and pear in that order. Eastwood Park appears to have contained mainly beech with thorn, apple and oak. Thorn seems to have been common in Vilner Wood, suggesting that the estate took its name from the vegetation of its southern area.[80] There were also oaks in Marlwood Park, and hazel in an unspecified park. Ash and birch grew at Woolford, and apple in the lord's orchard there – which was said to contain 7 acres 3 roods 19 perches (3.2 ha) after the Black Death[81] – and also in a garden which probably stood beside the *curia*. Some peasants had their own orchards and grew both apple and pear, for perry was a traditional local drink made in large quantities on the 14th-century Berkeley estates.[82] A survey of the trees growing in Thornbury's parks in 1557 shows that oak, ash, beech and elm were all important at that time and that thorn and maple were grown along with fruit trees of unspecified kind[83] but it is difficult to make comparisons with the fragmentary 14th-century material. Oak figured prominently in 1557 because of its value as timber, but most of the timber oaks and elms noted then were in the 'New Park' made by Edward Stafford, and before that was made they would have been growing in copses or as standard trees in hedgerows, as his Household Book had earlier recorded.[84] This was the case with the elm which the rich peasant John Fortheye had felled beside the king's highway in 1347.[85] By the 16th century, at least, trees on the rest of the estate appear to have been of superior quality to those in the original parks, most of which were only valued as firewood.

The sale of timber and wood from the parks produced a mean annual income of a little more than £12 before the Black Death, but there were large fluctuations which probably reflect, in part, the cutting cycles of standard and coppice trees, details of which are not given in the records. Swifts Wood was certainly being managed as a coppice by 1557.[86] But low income in the early years of the Audley restoration owed something to the activities of the Eastwood Park timber-stealing ring, whose members were brought to book at the 1 October 1331 court. This was a joint venture of local peasants, officials and outsiders. Thomas Wyther and Thomas Picher I were rich Morton villeins who served on 31 and 25 manor court juries respectively. Wyther was a churchwarden and among six rich peasants chosen as 'manorial surveyors' to take a special responsibility for the running of the estate, 30 September 1344. He had been assessed to pay 2*s.* tax in the 1327 Lay Subsidy. Picher held almost 100 acres (40 ha), served briefly as reeve, and had been assessed to pay the very high sum of 3*s.* 8½*d.* in 1327. Thomas Monseye of Falfield, a poor peasant, was described as the 'servant' of another group member, an outsider called William Axeped. Axeped probably came from Wotton-under-Edge, but Sir William Wauton acted as his pledge.[87] Little is known about two others, the parker Roger Trompour and his servant Adam. All were given heavy amercements, from Wyther's 100*s.* down to Monseye's 40*d.*. Trompour lost his post, being paid only up to 29 September, two days before the court sat. Income from sales rose but thefts continued. Wyther was amerced again, 18 May 1333, and the 6 November 1337 court heard that four men had felled two oaks at Eastwood, four at a place called *Bernet* and four beeches at an unspecified place; two oaks were also reported to have been felled illegally in Marlwood Park.

Local woods and parks also had a range of lesser economic uses. Fruit trees were grown in Eastwood Park and bees were kept there for their honey and wax. Bees were also kept in Vilner Wood, from which John French and another man took a hive in 1334.[88] A fishpond was made in Marlwood Park in 1334/5, at a main cost of 33*s.* 6*d.*, and stocked with eels in the same year.[89] Woodland activities also included nut-gathering and charcoal-burning: whether the latter was

carried on within parks is not clear, but the range of activities undertaken was so wide that Marlwood at least was divided into compartments by hedges or fences in the way that O. Rackham has described, so that the pleasures of the chase should not impinge upon those of economic gain.[90]

The offenders in the parks represent a wide cross-section of medieval south Gloucestershire society, but particular kinds of people were associated with particular offences. It was middle and poor peasants of both sexes who claimed pasture rights in Eastwood Park. Timber thieves included rich peasants and outsiders. The composition of individual poaching parties varied greatly, but peasants of all economic groups, burgesses and outsiders – including gentry – were involved at times. Women were not admitted to the ranks of the known timber thieves or poachers. Offences in Eastwood Park had a strong local element: this was obviously true in the case of the pasture claimants who all lived nearby, but the local men who stole timber there all came from Morton or Falfield tithings and only poaching drew in men from the borough and from Oldbury and Kington tithings. Little is known about lesser offenders in this period, but the Thornbury poachers can be compared usefully with J. Birrell's analysis of those in late 13th-century royal forests. Eastwood poachers were generally of much lower status than those at work in the Forest of Dean, and Staffordshire and Northamptonshire forests. Forest poachers were mostly gentry out for both sport and fresh meat and hunting near their own lands, as was Wauton in Eastwood Park. Peasant poachers in the forests were simply out for food and often worked alone, or in pairs, and at night.[91] The Thornbury poachers of the late 1320s took part in illegal hunts in broad daylight until Audley's men cracked down on them, but the later parties of two and three men look much more like conventional poachers. Corrupt officials may have played a part in local poaching as they did in royal forests.[92] The presence of Adam *Parker* in both the illegal hunts of the late 1320s is probably misleading, as this was the established surname of two families, one of burgesses and one of unfree peasants.[93] But the burgess Nicholas Denison who also took part in both was a minor official responsible for 24*s*. received from sales of dead wood in 1329/30,[94] and it is suggestive that on the second hunt they were joined by a John *Forester*, though nothing more is known of this man.

*Tracing the pales*

After undertaking preliminary work on all the surviving maps of the parish, I set out on foot to discover the boundaries of the Clare parks.[95] Medieval park boundaries often included substantial linear earthworks which, planted with hedges, often remain in use as field boundaries even after disparking and centuries of neglect. Minor modern place-names showed the approximate sites of both parks, and, taking these as a basis, maps of those areas were searched for evidence of surviving boundary banks. Park pales often followed gentle curves in order to minimise the lengths requiring building and maintenance, so long, curving field boundaries were noted in particular.[96] Too much reliance was not placed upon this process and it was essential to check all such suggested boundaries in the field, but the predicted boundary lines frequently indicated surviving remains of boundary banks or ran parallel to such remains at a distance of one field's width. Fieldwork was undertaken with very basic equipment, all features of interest being marked directly onto photocopies of O.S. 6 inches = 1 mile maps.[97] The following summary of the field survey is intended to be read in conjunction with the accompanying sketch maps. Fieldwork was undertaken with little botanical knowledge, and no attempt has been made to date the hedgerows which grow along the tops of almost all the surviving boundary banks.

Marlwood Park (FIG. 3) lay in the southern part of the estate, to the west of the Thornbury to Alveston road (B4061). It was easy to locate its general area, for the O.S. 6 Inches = 1 Mile map

shows Marlwood Grange, Marlwood Farm and Lower Marlwood Farm. This area still contains substantial amounts of woodland and many standard trees in hedgerows. Land at its northern end, a little to the west of Thornbury town, has an elevation of little more than 100 feet (30 m) above sea level, but it rises to more than 300 feet (91 m) at the southern end, by the parish boundary. The Marlwood area includes much of the highest land on the old estate, and most of its Upper Old Red Sandstone and Carboniferous Limestone.

The boundary bank was first located at point 1 (ST 632897), where it may be seen clearly when approaching via the public right of way from Thornbury town. Erosion is occurring where

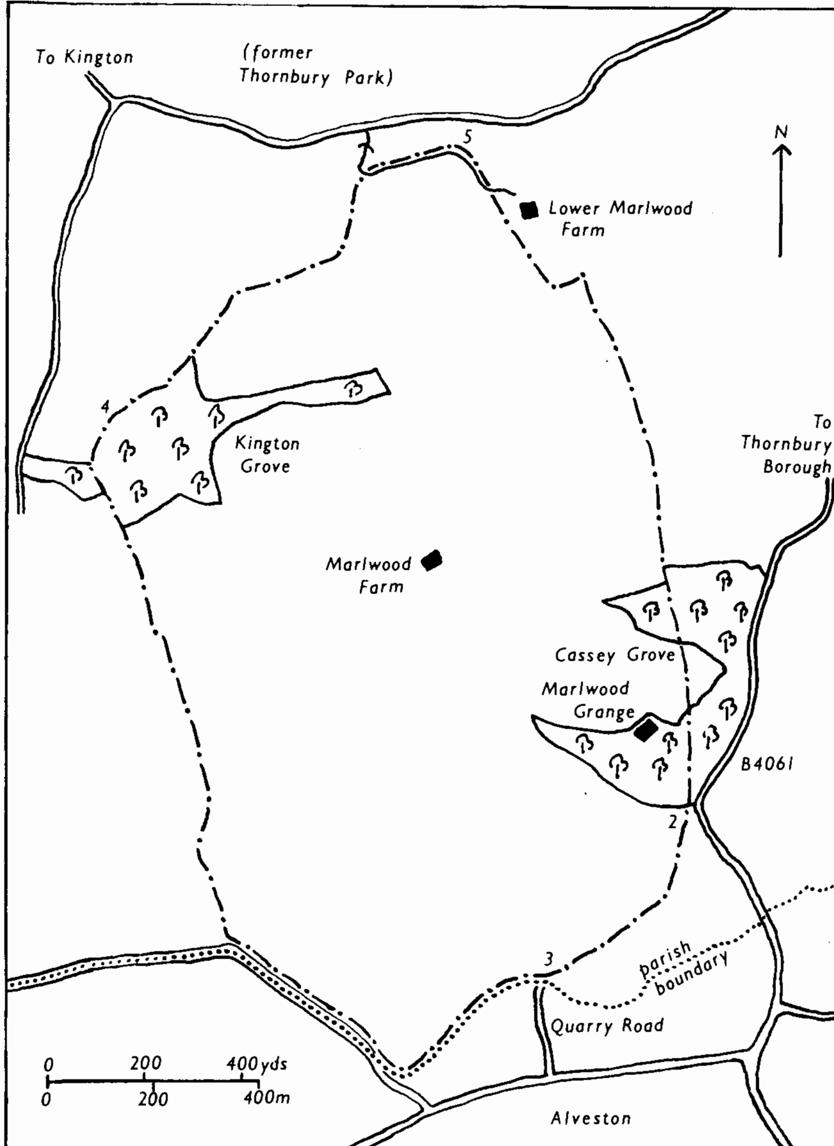


FIG. 3 Marlwood Park

it is protected from the effects of weather only by a thin hedge, and the strong red colour of the bare earth of the bank's side is immediately noticeable. It still stands to heights of between 2 feet 6 inches and 3 feet (75–90 cm) in this section, which runs south of south-east up towards the B4061 road. After a gap, it begins again near the Lodge of Marlwood Grange, point 2 (ST 634887), and runs roughly south-westwards beside a public right of way, terminating sharply at the parish boundary close by the north end of Quarry Road, Alveston, point 3 (ST 632884). This section of bank is generally 2 to 3 feet (60–90 cm) high. There is no evidence that the park extended into the neighbouring parishes of Alveston or Olveston – although Cantor and Moore have shown how this might be done in order to gain the advantage of rising ground for a pale[98] – and it is most likely that the lost bank formerly extended along the curving line of the parish boundary where there has been much building work in recent years. The western section of the bank largely survives and is, again, generally 2 to 3 feet (60–90 cm) high, but it includes what is perhaps the best-preserved part of the Marlwood Park pale at point 4 (ST 623894), on falling ground to the north of Kington Grove, where the bank still stands to a height of about 4 feet (1.2 m) and is about 5 feet (1.5 m) wide at the top. The northern boundary of the park presented a problem, for there is a considerable length with no trace of a boundary bank, nor of any building or road-making work which might account for the destruction of one. In addition, the early 16th-century Household Book states that 'noething . . . but the bredth of an high waie' separated Marlwood and Thornbury Parks, and – looking ahead to a later paper – the latter lay just north of the lane from Thornbury to Kington.[99] The boundary had to be located only a little to the south of that lane. The most likely solution is that it followed the stream which runs roughly parallel to the lane and about 70 yards (65 m) south of it. Cantor and Hatherly have described the use of rivers and marshy areas as boundaries, though this is only a small stream and would have required reinforcement with a paling.[100] A few yards of earth bank about 3 feet (90 cm) high stand on the northern bank of the stream at point 5 (ST 629899), giving support to this interpretation and suggesting that at some stage there was a plan to continue the earthwork which was later considered to be unnecessary. This would also have been the obvious area in which to make the new fishpond of 1334/5.

Most of the boundary bank survives to heights of 2 to 3 feet (60–90 cm), usually topped by hedges, but there are substantial breaks in its circuit which make it impossible to produce exact figures for its total length or for the area of the park. It must, however, have been substantially larger than the 200 acres recorded in 1322, so that Extent must have divided it along with many other estate assets. If the missing portions followed the courses suggested above, then the total length of the pale would have been about 2.7 miles (4.4 km), which agrees well with the Household Book's measurement of 'nigh iij myles'.[101] Its total area with those boundaries would have been about 320 acres (130 ha).

Eastwood Park (FIG. 4) lay in the north-eastern part of the manor, west of the main Bristol to Gloucester road (A38), where its name survives as that of a country house built for the Earl of Liverpool, Prime Minister from 1812 to 1827.[102] This area's elevation and considerable remaining stretches of woodland make it distinctive to anyone approaching from the low-lying parts of the estate or travelling northwards along the A38. The maximum elevation is only 235 feet (72 m) above sea level, but this is substantially above the level of Thornbury town and the Severn's flood plain. The western part of the area is the highest, and the land slopes down quite steeply to the west and more gradually towards the east and north-east. Much of this area is Lias and clays, including the Keuper Marl which is very common in Thornbury.

In many ways Eastwood Park is the most interesting of the local deer parks and the most challenging to fieldwork. Marlwood Park is the creation of a 13th-century earl of Gloucester and Thornbury Park – to be described in a later paper – that of a 16th-century duke of Buckingham,

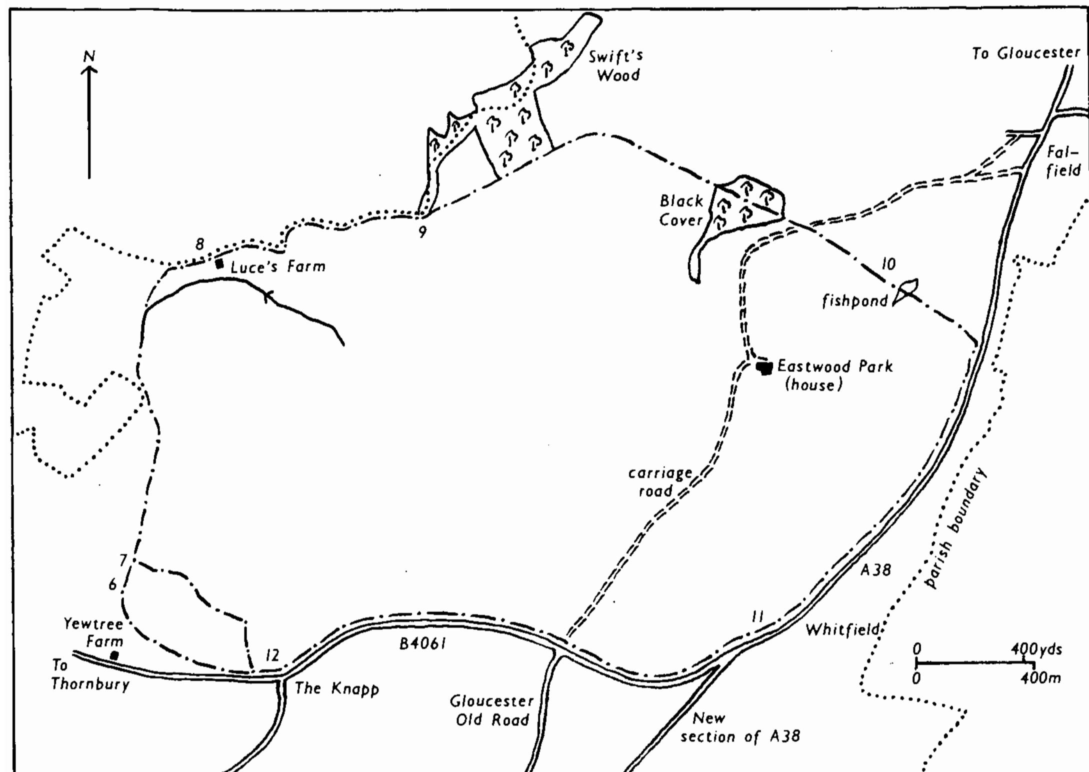


FIG. 4 Eastwood Park

but Eastwood combines substantial work of both periods.[103] I set out at first to trace the original boundaries of the park. Well-preserved sections of earth bank surround an enclosure of about 22 acres (9 ha) at the park's south-western corner. The outer bank leaves the side of the Thornbury to Whitfield road (B4061) and runs in a sweeping curve north of Yewtree Farm, standing 3 feet (90 cm) high and 4 to 5 feet (1.2–1.5 m) wide at the top at point 6 (ST 653915) with an *external* ditch, perhaps for drainage. At point 7 (ST 653917), where the bank begins to run almost due north, it is joined at a right-angle by a bank which runs east-south-east and later east of south to complete the enclosure. In the best sections, this stands up to 3 feet 6 inches (1.05 m) high and several feet wide at the top, with traces of a ditch on its northern and eastern sides. From point 7, the single bank runs east of north beside a public right of way, but is not continuous. Its line is continued by a stream which is the most likely boundary because it follows a gently curving line which would enable an awkwardly-shaped corner of the estate to be left outside the park, but it must have been reinforced with a paling. it seemed at first that the course of this stream a little south of Luce's Farm would constitute the park's northern boundary, but the earth bank was located again at point 8 (ST 655928), a little north-west of the farm buildings, where it runs along the parish boundary and survives in places to a height of about 3 feet (90 cm). The original pale followed the parish and estate boundary until point 9 (ST 663929), after which the latter go off to the north but the pale ran east-north-east and then east-south-east, down

almost in a straight line to meet the A38 about 0.3 miles (0.5 km) south of Falfield. There seems little doubt that this long line – which is a distinctive feature on large-scale maps because almost its entire length is still in use as field boundaries – was the 13th-century park boundary, but in most sections there is now very little to be seen on the ground. To take an extreme example, between the Black Cover and the fishpond at point 10 (ST 677927) the hedge has been removed and a fence stands upon the remains of the bank which has almost disappeared. The line of the boundary runs through the centre of the fishpond (at ST 679927) which cannot, therefore, have been an amenity of the original park. The condition of this boundary leaves little doubt that it was deliberately slighted at some time, perhaps when Edward Stafford extended the park. The eastern and southern sections of the boundary bank running beside the A38 and B4061 roads are in a very irregular state of preservation. At point 11 (ST 674916), beside Whitfield hamlet, it is less than 2 feet (60 cm) high but several feet wide, and there are sections of similar size at The Knapp, point 12 (ST 658914). Its poor condition suggests strongly that much earth has been taken for road improvements.

Most of this park's boundary bank survives, and there are traces of ditches in some places. The bank is generally less well-preserved than that of the other Clare park, and there are, again, breaks in its circuit which make it impossible to produce exact figures for the total original length of the pale or area of the park. It was, however, clearly of a different order of magnitude to Marlwood Park, and, if the arguments set out above are accepted, the total length of its pale would have been about 5.1 miles (8.2 km). No comparisons with the early 16th-century accounts are possible because they relate to the enlarged park. The total area within the original pale would have been no less than about 945 acres (385 hectares), making it a very large park by medieval standards.

*The impact of the Clare parks*

The two parks which Gilbert Clare IV created at Thornbury were good examples of the products of the main phase of medieval imparking which lasted roughly from 1200 to the eve of the Black Death, the time when the greatest amount of unpaid peasant labour was available to build and maintain them. Both stood up against the estate and parish boundary, largely on poor soils, in the common way. Deer parks of this period varied enormously in size, and these may have begun as smaller enclosures which were gradually enlarged, but no evidence for this common practice has yet been found.[104] Marlwood must be the 'small park' of the 1307 Extent, but it ranks beside the nearby parks at Tormarton, Tortworth and Yate, which have all been estimated at about 300–350 acres (120–140 ha) and which may all date from this period.[105] These were only small in comparison with Eastwood, which stands on a par with the thousand-acre parks of the greatest lay and ecclesiastical lords, amongst whom, of course, the Clares must be numbered. Like many of this date, the Clare parks were the scenes of a wide range of economic activities, and their products ranged from full-grown trees for building and smaller wood for many craft uses and for fuel down to fruit, fish, wax and honey. They provided pasture for the lord's and peasants' domestic livestock which were fattened there, as well as for the deer which provided the fashionable combination of sport and fresh meat. Hunting appears to have been a secondary concern in the period immediately prior to the Black Death, but much labour went into their upkeep and their facilities were improved by the provision of a new gate and deer-leap at Eastwood – though a projected hunting lodge was not proceeded with – and a new fishpond at Marlwood.

The major economic aims of imparking were to secure close control over both woodland and pasture, and it is not possible to say how much woodland the Clare parks actually contained.

Hunting also required a combination of the two, for woodland alone would support only limited numbers of deer, and medieval parks needed to maintain plenty of cover but might also contain quite large areas of open pasture or 'laund', which probably formed central clearings in those which were divided into compartments.[106] The records of the twenty years before the Black Death give the impression that Marlwood Park was the more heavily wooded and Eastwood the better provided with both game and pasture. During the dry spell of 1339/40, all the pasture in the former park which was not required by its game was said to have sufficed only to feed the lord's bullocks, of which there are known to have been only sixteen that year.[107] The opportunities for poaching and timber stealing in Eastwood may simply reflect the problems of policing so large a park, but it was the only one affected by the pasture dispute – a quarrel which may be seen as an attempt to recover ancient rights lost because of imparking. There is no proof that peasants' arable land or houses had been enclosed within the parks at this stage, but this is certainly possible. Local peasants lived in scattered hamlets rather than in nucleated villages, and colonists engaged in opening up the main woods may well have lived within the areas imparked. Settlement sites may have moved since the 13th century, but Eastwood Park's pale ran very close to Upper Morton, the 'Morton' of medieval records, and Whitfield hamlet now stands only just outside it.[108] The grandfather of a tenant who was active in 1327 had been granted former demesne land 'in the earl of Gloucester's time', which almost certainly refers to the lordship of Gilbert Clare IV, the park-maker.[109] Was it compensation for lost land? A large amount of this *Oldefeldelond* had been let out, for one tenant died in the Black Death holding no less than 80 acres (32 ha).[110] Imparking also sometimes blocked the courses of existing roads and made it necessary to construct new ones around the outside of the pales, and the relationship of the Eastwood pale to the local road network suggests that this occurred in medieval Thornbury.[111] The present course of the A38 between the old park and parish boundaries is believed to follow the line of the Roman road from Sea Mills to Gloucester, but part of its route south of Whitfield is of very recent construction and earlier travellers had to take a more westerly route along Gloucester Old Road and then turn right to reach Whitfield.[112] The 6 inches = 1 mile map of 1890 shows the line of the Old Road continued through the park to rejoin the A38 at Falfield by a choice of two routes. At that time these were carriage roads serving the house called Eastwood Park, but they may preserve the course of an older road to Gloucester which was closed off when the park was made 600 years earlier.

Now that the approximate areas of the parks are known, it becomes clear that the Clares' activities must have left several hundred acres of existing woodland outside them. The largest of these external woods was probably Vilner Wood (*boscum de Filnoure*) which the 1322 Extent records at a size of 40 acres, but which was said to contain 100 acres in the early 16th century.[113] It is the only such wood from which it is known to have been worth the lord's while to collect payments for pasturing livestock. This suggests that access was restricted, but no remains of a bank or ditch have yet been traced. It must have stood up against the estate's southern boundary, where Vilner Farm (ST 644891) preserves the modern form of its name.[114] Nearby stood a wood called *Petifilnore*. Comparison with other documents suggests that the 1322 Extent's account of the sub-manor of Hope in south-eastern Thornbury is substantially accurate, so the assessment of its woodland at a mere eight acres reveals that woodland had broken down into very small units in this part of the estate. Some woodland is known to have survived near the mills at Woolford, and references to trees there may be identical with those to *Wolfordesgrove*, but the remaining woods such as those at *Rocwood* and *Bernet* – both places where there was also arable land – and at *Brech* are now only lost place-names. The distribution of woodland on the first complete map of the parish, the Tithe Award Map of 1838, however, suggests that most minor woods formed the remains of a wooded fringe along the southern boundary of the estate.

*Summary*

There have been a number of periods when members of the ruling class have shown a stronger than usual interest in Gloucestershire, and at times when such people had a major interest in hunting – especially in deer hunting – this concern has led to the extension of their control over the area's natural resources by the creation of forests like the ancient Kingswood and parks like the 13th-century Clare parks at Thornbury. The latter were large preserves characteristic of the main phase of medieval imparking and reflecting both the Earl of Gloucester's economic and sporting interests in the estate. After centuries of neglect, the remains of their earth boundary banks still run for miles across the countryside and form evocative monuments to feudal power – the power to command vast reserves of unpaid peasant labour. Deer parks were established at the direct expense of the peasantry, for they represent the appropriation of natural resources for the economic advantage of the ruling class as well as the establishment of private hunting preserves for their pleasure and social prestige. This is not to say that they did not have a genuine role in the conservation of woodland and wildlife, but it was conservation undertaken purely for the benefit of an élite. Attempts by peasants and other local people to continue their enjoyment of those resources became illegal and were sometimes the objects of long struggles. In these particular instances Thornbury people were the losers, but the establishment of these two parks by so prominent a nobleman may have precipitated a wave of imparking by local gentry who now sought to bring the economic resources of their own estates more closely under their control and to join the hunting set.

*Acknowledgements*

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*Notes*

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10. A. Farley (ed), *Domesday Book seu Liber censualis Wilhelmi Primi regis Angliae* **1** (1783) ff 163, 165–6, 168–70. The text is reproduced conveniently in J.S. Moore (ed), *Domesday Book 15. Gloucestershire* (Chichester 1982), but I have not used that translation.
11. Moore, 'Medieval Forest', 11.
12. H.C. Darby, 'Domesday Woodland', *Econ Hist Rev* 2nd ser. **3** (1950–1), 21–43. For a recent contribution to this debate see J. McDonald and G.D. Snooks, 'How Artificial Were the Tax Assessments of Domesday England? The Case of Essex', *Econ Hist Rev* 2nd ser. **38** (1985), 352–72.
13. O. Rackham, *Trees and Woodland in the British Landscape* (1976), 58.
14. Farley (ed), *op. cit.*, ff 163 (Thornbury), 166 (Hawkesbury), 168 (Horton).
15. D. Hooke, *Anglo-Saxon Landscapes of the West Midlands: the Charter Evidence* (BAR Brit Ser. **95** 1981), 141, 151.
16. This argument will be developed fully in my forthcoming book on medieval Thornbury.
17. Farley (ed), *op.cit.*, ff 165 (Tytherington), 168 (Rockhampton), 169 (Tortworth).
18. Farley (ed), *op.cit.*, f 163; Moore, 'Medieval Forest', 12; Toulmin Smith (ed), *op.cit.*, 99.
19. Thesis, 24.
20. Ibid., 35–7, Table 1.2 41; A.L. Poole, *From Domesday Book to Magna Carta 1087–1216* (2nd edn. Oxford 1955), 32–5; H.L. Savage, 'Hunting in the Middle Ages', *Speculum* **8** (1933), 30–41; G.J. Turner (ed), *Select Pleas of the Forest* (Selden Soc. **13**, 1901).
21. Garmonsway (ed), *op.cit.*, 112; *Pipe Roll 33 Hen.II, A.D. 1186–87*, 139; *Pipe Roll 2 Ric.I, Michaelmas 1190*, 55; *Pipe Roll 3 & 4 Ric.I, Michaelmas 1191 and Michaelmas 1192*, 94, 287; *Pipe Roll 5 Ric.I, Michaelmas 1193* 115; *Pipe Roll 6 Ric.I, Michaelmass 1194*, 234.
22. Smith, *PNGl* **1–4** lists seven Hopes, of which two from Kingswood and one from the Forest of Dean are of medieval origin. The Thornbury Hope is the only one mentioned by Rudder, *op.cit.*, 757. The second element may derive from a personal name 'Hun(w)ald', but some chroniclers used 'Hunaldos' to mean 'Hainaulter'.
23. *Pipe Roll 13 Hen.II, A.D. 1166–67*, 148 ('de Bochoura' as surname); *Pipe Roll 34 Hen.II, A.D. 1187–88*, 15; Moore, 'Medieval Forest', 11.
24. *Cal. Charter Rolls 1226–57*, 75, 84; J. Smyth, *The Berkeley Manuscripts* **3**. *A Description of the Hundred of Berkeley in the County of Gloucester and of its Inhabitants* (ed. Sir J. Maclean, Gloucester 1885), 237.
25. M.W. Beresford and H.P.R. Finberg, *English Medieval Boroughs. A Hand-list* (Newton Abbot 1973), 113, 116; Sir M. Powicke, *The Thirteenth Century 1216–1307* (2nd edn. Oxford 1962), 173n, 519.
26. Altschul, *op.cit.*, 296.
27. The Thornbury manorial court rolls of this period are Staffs. R.O. D641/1/4C/1(i) 1328–33, /1(ii) 1333–6, /1(iii) 1337–9, /2 1341–52. To avoid superfluous footnotes, references are not repeated below for individual sessions.
28. Smith, *PNGl* **3**, 6; *Placitorum in Domo Capitulari Westmonasteriensi asservatorum Abbreviatio* (Record Commissioners 1811), 24; *Rotuli Curiae Regis* (Rec. Comm. 1835), ii, 221.
29. *Cal. Patent Rolls 1272–81*, 463.
30. Shirley, *op.cit.*, 192; D.M. Stenton, *English Society in the Early Middle Ages (1066–1307)* (Harmondsworth 1951), 107; Cantor and Hatherly, *op.cit.*, 73; L.M. Cantor and J.S. Moore, 'The Medieval Parks of the Earls of Stafford at Madeley', *N Staffordshire J Fld Stud* **3** (1963), 37, found no licences for any of the Stafford family's three parks at Madeley, Staffs.
31. Powicke, *op.cit.*, 329; S.J. Madge (ed), *Abstracts of Inquisitiones post mortem for Gloucestershire* **4**. *20 Hen.III to 29 Edw.I. 1236–1300* (1903), 182.
32. S. Lay and R. Iles, 'Medieval Deer Parks in Avon', *Avon Past* **1** (1979), 5–12; Thesis 137; E.A. Fry (ed), *Abstracts of Inquisitiones post mortem for Gloucestershire* **5**. *30 Edw.I to 32 Edw.III. 1302–1358* (1910), 300.
33. Lay and Iles, *op.cit.*, 11.
34. Cantor and Hatherly, *op.cit.*, 81.
35. Madge (ed), *op.cit.*, 182 (1296); Fry (ed), *op.cit.*, 85–8 (1307); P.R.O. C134 File 42 (1314), E142 File 24 (1322), C135 File 87 (1347).
36. Thesis, 35–7.
37. Account rolls run from Michaelmas (29 Sept) to Michaelmas. The first is Staffs R. O. D641/1/2/116.
38. Thesis, 35; Staffs R. O. D641/1/2 121, 122.
39. J. Hatcher, *Rural Economy and Society in the Duchy of Cornwall, 1300–1500* (Cambridge 1970), 46.
40. K.C. Newton, *Thaxted in the Fourteenth Century. An Account of the Manor and Borough, with Translated Texts* (Chelmsford 1960), 11, 43–4.
41. Staffs R. O. D641/1/2/122, /125, /126; N. Saul, *Knights and Esquires: The Gloucestershire Gentry in the Fourteenth Century* (Oxford 1981).

42. Sir T. Phillipps, *Gloucestershire Subsidy Roll, 1 Edward III. A.D.1327* (Middle Hill Press n.d.), 45 ('Willo. de Borugh.' assessed to pay *3s.* $7\frac{1}{2}$*d.*); Thornbury court roll 9 Feb 1333; Staffs R. O. D641/1/2/124.
43. For Thornbury tithings see Franklin, 'Malaria', 115, Fig.2 118.
44. Thesis, 56–7, Fig.2.1 60, Fig.2.2 62; Thornbury court roll 17 June 1344; Staffs R. O. D641/1/2/124.
45. Thornbury court rolls 12 Mar 1334, 21 Feb 1345.
46. Cantor and Hatherly, *op.cit.*, 73; Thesis, 104–6.
47. Staffs R.O. D641/1/2/116. Boundary lengths were always given in perches (*perticae*) which have been interpreted at a standard $16\frac{1}{2}$ feet each. This may be an underestimate, as John Smyth records an 18-feet perch in use in Berkeley Hundred in the 17th century, but no evidence has been found for its use in medieval Thornbury: Smyth, *Berkeley MSS* **3**, 36.
48. Staffs R. O. D641/1/2/122.
49. Staffs R. O. D641/1/2/117; Shirley, *op.cit.*, 85, 191.
50. Staffs R. O. D641/1/2/120, /122; Smyth, Berkeley MSS **1**, 324; Hatcher, *op.cit.*, 166n.
51. L.M. Cantor, 'The Medieval Parks of Leicestershire', *Trans Leicestershire Archaeol Hist Soc* **46** (1970–1), 13; Hatcher, *op.cit.*, 179.
52. Fry (ed), *op.cit.*, 85; P.R.O. C134 File 42.
53. Staffs. R. O. D641/1/2/123, /124; Thesis, 33.
54. Cantor, 'Leicestershire', 9.
55. J. Birrell, 'Who Poached the King's Deer? A Study in Thirteenth Century Crime', *Midland Hist* **7** (1982), 21.
56. Toulmin Smith (ed), *op.cit.*, 99; Cantor and Hatherly, *op.cit.*, 74.
57. J. Gage, 'A Letter from John Gage, Esq. Director, to Sir Henry Ellis, Secretary, accompanying extracts from the Household Book of Edward Stafford, Duke of Buckingham', *Archaeologia* **25** (1834), 313.
58. Thornbury court rolls 8 Jan 1338, 6 Mar 1348, 18 May 1351. Vide Cantor, 'Leicestershire', 14.
59. Savage, *op.cit.*, passim. G. Tilander (ed), *La Vénerie de Twiti* (Cynegetica **2**. Uppsala 1956), noted that the oldest MS. of this work was in the possession of Sir T. Phillipps, the Gloucestershire antiquary, but the edition printed at his Middle Hill Press by Sir H. Dryden is very difficult to obtain. G. Tilander (ed), *Gaston Phébus. Livre de Chasse* (Cynegetica **18**. Karlshamn 1971).
60. A.D.K. Hawkyard, 'Thornbury Castle', *TBGAS* **95** (1977), 52; Thesis, 44–5; Franklin, 'Malaria', passim; R. Nicholson, *Edward III and the Scots. The Formative Years of a Military Career 1327–1335* (Oxford 1965), 105–18.
61. Staffs R. O. D641/1/2/123.
62. Staffs R. O. D641/1/2/120, /122, /125.
63. Cf. J.M. Steane, 'The Medieval Parks of Northamptonshire', *Northamptonshire Past Present* **5** (1975), 216; Hatcher, *op.cit.*, 184.
64. 'Thomas Puriton ate Nywetoune' was not assessed in the 1327 Lay Subsidy, Phillipps, *op.cit.*, 47, but that surname appears four times in a list of Rockhampton free tenants in John Giffard's *Inquisition post mortem* of 1299: Madge (ed), *op.cit.*, 213–14.
65. Phillipps, *op.cit.*, 44 ('Adam le White'); D. Verey, *The Buildings of England. Gloucestershire* **2**. *The Vale and The Forest of Dean* (Harmondsworth 1970), 184.
66. P. Franklin, 'Peasant Widows' "Liberation" and Remarriage before the Black Death', *Econ Hist Rev* 2nd ser. **39** (1986), 186–204; Birrell, *op.cit.*, 19.
67. Birrell, *op.cit.*, 11–12. Cf Stenton, *op.cit.*, 117 for the involvement of some of Richard Clare II's officers in a hunt of doubtful legality.
68. Saul, *op.cit.*, 53–4, 70, 83, 154, 161; Thornbury court roll 28 May 1336. It is unlikely that he was the same man as 'William Walton', the Thornbury parker in 1327/8 and 1329/30, as the latter was never given a title. Staffs R. O. D641/1/2/116, /117.
69. E.L.G. Stones, 'The Folevilles of Ashby-Foleville, Leicestershire, and their Associates in Crime, 1326–1347', *Trans Roy Hist Soc 5th ser.* **7** (1957), 117–36.
70. Thornbury court rolls 24 Nov 1348, 16 Nov 1350.
71. Thornbury court rolls 8 Jan 1338, 6 Mar 1348.
72. P. Franklin, 'Politics in Manorial Court Rolls. The Thornbury Peasant Movement, 1328–1352', in R.M. Smith and Z. Razi (eds), *The Manor Court and English Society: Studies of the evidence* (Oxford forthcoming).
73. Thesis, 271–6.
74. Thornbury court rolls 2 Sept 1338 (2), 29 July 1344, 16 Aug 1347.
75. Franklin, 'Malaria', 119; R. Trow-Smith, *A History of British Livestock Husbandry to 1700* (1957), 82–4.
76. Madge (ed), 182; Fry (ed), 85–6; P.R.O. C134 File 42.
77. Franklin, 'Malaria', 119.
78. Hooke, *op.cit.*, Fig.3.9. 170; Rackham, *op.cit.*, 55–6: Rackham's book is an indispensable guide to medieval woodlands and woodland management techniques.

79. Rackham, *op.cit.*, 98. It is within the bounds of the former Tortworth Park: Lay and Iles, *op.cit.*, 6, 9.
80. Smith, *PNGl* **3**, 14.
81. Staffs R. O. D641/1/2/134.
82. Thornbury court rolls 20 Feb 1335, 16 Apr 1339, 30 Mar 1345, 14 June 1350; Smyth, *Berkeley MSS* **1**, 303, 365.
83. Staffs R. O. D(W)1721/1/6.
84. Gage, *op.cit.*, 312.
85. Thornbury court rolls 4 Dec 1346, 15 Jan 1347.
86. Rackham, *op.cit.*, 70–2; Staffs R. O. D(W)1721/1/6.
87. Phillipps, *op.cit.*, 45. A Walter 'Axepode' of Wotton-under-Edge was assessed to pay 21*d.* in 1327: Ibid., 25.
88. Thornbury court rolls 8 Sept 1332, 15 June 1334, 6 Aug 1334.
89. Staffs R. O. D641/1/2/123.
90. John Smith was amerced for not coming to make an enclosure in Marlwood Park, Thornbury court roll 6 Nov 1333; Rackham, *op.cit.*, 147–8.
91. Birrell, *op.cit.*, 11, 20.
92. Birrell *op.cit.*, 16.
93. An Adam Parker first paid 1*d.* new borough rent in 1342/3: Staffs R. O. D641/1/2/128.
94. Staffs R. O. D641/1/2/117.
95. The most useful were the Tithe Award Map of 1838, P.R.O. IR30/13/196, and the O.S. 6 Inches = 1 Mile 1st edn. maps of 1888–90, sheets 55, 63.
96. Cantor and Hatherly, *op.cit.*, 72, 84.
97. C. Fox, B.H.St.J. O'Neill and W.F. Grimes, 'Linear Earthworks: Methods of Field Survey', *Antiq J* **26** (1946), 175–9; O.G.S. Crawford, *Man and His Past* (Oxford 1921), esp. 185–91: an umbrella is more useful for taking rough measurements than his walking stick; M.W. Beresford, *History on the Ground – Six Studies in Maps and Landscapes* (rev. edn. 1971), passim.
98. Cantor and Moore, *op.cit.*, 39, 45.
99. Gage, *op.cit.*, 312–3.
100. Cantor and Hatherly, *op.cit.*, 71.
101. Gage, *op.cit.*, 313.
102. Verey, *op.cit.*, 184. Rebuilt after 1865, it is now the headquarters of the Hospital Estate Management and Engineering Centre.
103. Toulmin Smith (ed), *op.cit.*, 101.
104. Cantor and Hatherly, *op.cit.*, 72–4; Cantor, 'Leicestershire', 12–13.
105. Lay and Iles, *op.cit.*, 5, 9, 10.
106. Cantor and Hatherly, *op.cit.*, 72; Rackham, *op.cit.*, 147.
107. Staffs R. O. D641/1/2/126.
108. Thesis, 23–4.
109. The widow Gonilda Hodelond was already a tenant in 1327, when she was listed as 'Gonnild. Hobelonde': Phillipps, *op.cit.*, 45. A case in the 11 Apr 1345 court roll records the earl's grant to Adam Pacher I, who was her grandfather.
110. Thornbury court roll 24 Nov 1348 (Sanford).
111. For another local example see Lay and Iles, *op.cit.*, 6–7 (Tortworth).
112. I.D. Margary, *Roman Roads in Britain* (3rd edn. 1973), 140–1.
113. Gage, *op.cit.*, 313n.
114. Smyth, *Berkeley MSS* **3**, 23.

*December 1987*

**Appendix AC 9**

**Extract from Rackham, O (1986) *The History of the Countryside: The classic history of Britain's landscape, flora and fauna* (Dent)**

Manorial courts rarely tried to enforce a *regular* pollarding cycle. Sometimes they understood the ecology of trees remarkably well, as with the sixteenth-century byelaws that preserved the lime trees on Dedham Heath, Essex (p.291).

**Pannage** A famous though not very important use of wood-pasture, and to a lesser extent of woodland and non-woodland trees, was for the *pannage* of pigs. Tame swine were fed in autumn on the acorns (or beechmast if any) before being slaughtered and salted down. For this common-right the lord received a rent or one pig in ten. Pannage customs were often jocular or fanciful, and sometimes deterrent, as at Hatfield Broad-oak (Essex) in the fourteenth century, where every pig-keeper was supposed to give the lord two swine for 'avesage':

> If he has [only] two pigs he shall give them for Avesage. And if he had [only] one pig he shall buy another identical pig and give both for Avesage. And if he has no pigs he shall give nothing for the same.[190]

How did the idea of pannage compare with reality? The idea is familiar from medieval pictures of the Labours of the Months and has become a commonplace of historical thought;[191] many archaeologists unthinkingly equate pigs with woodland. This may be justified on the Continent (where the Labours of the Months originated) but not with us. In France or Italy, acorns abound in most years and pigs (and occasionally men) may depend on them. In medieval, as in modern, Britain, the oak's bounty was worth something only in about one year in three, 'when it happens' (*cum acciderit*). To breed animals to use so unpredictable a crop was not practical. The chief stronghold of pannage was in the Weald, where the woods were still too vast to exploit more fully, but even there it was in decline by the eleventh century.[139] Elsewhere, the livestock statistics of Domesday and later sources make it quite clear that pig-keeping (eg. in the Cambridge area) was not dependent on woodland. Pannage was written into manorial customs all over England and Wales (rarely Scotland), but was only an occasional bonus to the pig-keeper and brought in an erratic and usually trivial rent to his lord. It lingered in some places until the end of the Middle Ages. In the New Forest it is an active common-right even now.

**Continuity** Manorial courts did not always successfully preserve trees on commons. If trees disappeared through long-continued severe grazing, the common remained a common and trees could return if grazing diminished (for example Mousehold Heath, p.302). It is more difficult to establish the historical continuity of trees in wood-pasture than in woodland: if a wood loses its trees it ceases to be a wood and disappears from the record.

## Parks

A park in this book means a deer-park, a piece of private land surrounded by a deer-proof fence called a *park pale*, which the owner uses for keeping deer.

**The making of parks** The park tradition goes back to ancient times. Columella in the first century BC gives its essential features: the emparking of existing woods within wooden pales or stone or mud-brick walls; the keeping of





beasts, both native (red and roe deer, wild swine) and exotic (fallow deer, gazelles); water supply and winter feeding.[192] He indicates that parks were a familiar luxury in Italy and Gaul. Although utilitarian (the produce was sold) they were placed where the owner could see them, and appear to have continued a tradition of parks as beautiful landscape, derived by scholars from Achaemenid Persia if not from the Garden of Eden itself.

If there were Roman parks in Britain they did not outlast the Empire. Parks are conspicuously absent from Anglo-Saxon, though common in medieval, perambulations. Our park tradition derives from the Normans' interest in deer husbandry. This began before Domesday Book, in which thirty-five parks are recorded. But there is one pre-Conquest reference: at Ongar (Essex) a will dated 1045 mentions 'the wood . . . outside the deerhay'.[145] The Anglo-Saxon word, *derhage*, is ambiguous – it normally means a hedge for keeping deer out or a device for catching them – but Ongar is the site of one of only two Domesday parks in Essex, well known in later centuries as Ongar Great Park. The Norman fashion for parks therefore began to penetrate England just before the Conquest.

Parks multiplied in the twelfth century, doubtless because of the introduction of fallow deer (Chapter 4) which were easier to keep in a confined space than native species. In the thirteenth century we have a systematic record of park-making, because a new or enlarged park required 'planning permission' in the form of a licence to empark. The Close Rolls abound with such licences, often accompanied by gifts of deer from the king's Forests to start new parks.

Many historians have searched for written records of parks. I estimate, from the lists of myself and others in eight well-studied counties, that there were about 3200 parks in England in the heyday of parks around 1300 (Rackham 1980 p.191). Not all the parks of which we have records existed at one time; but this factor would be offset by the existence of many parks of which no record has yet come to light. Professor L.M. Cantor has listed parks all over England and has produced a map of 1800 places (Fig. 6.1). (This smaller number is due partly to some counties being less well documented than others, and partly to different listing conventions, such as counting only one park where there were two or three in the same locality.) If the average area of a park was 200 acres, parks would have covered up to 2 per cent of England.

Whatever the original habitat of the fallow deer may have been, the medievals thought it to be a woodland animal. Many records of parks specify woodland, and their distribution closely reflects that of woodland in Domesday Book (Fig. 5.4). In general parks were thickest on the ground in well-wooded areas such as Worcestershire, Staffordshire, north-west Warwickshire, south-east Berkshire. The most parky county of all appears to have been Hertfordshire, with ninety known parks, one to seven square miles of land.[194] There were few parks where woodland was scarce, as in Lincolnshire, Cambridgeshire, south-east Warwickshire, north-west Berkshire, Devon, and Cornwall. Even small groups of woods, as in west Cambridgeshire and near King's Lynn, generated parks.

For many counties there was something like one medieval park (by Cantor's reckoning) to every 1500 acres of Domesday woodland, but there are some anomalies. The Weald – the biggest wooded area of all – had little above the average density of parks; did it lack gentry to establish them? Why were there many parks in poorly-wooded Leicestershire and the non-Wealden part of Sussex, and a number even in the woodless part of east Gloucestershire? As we



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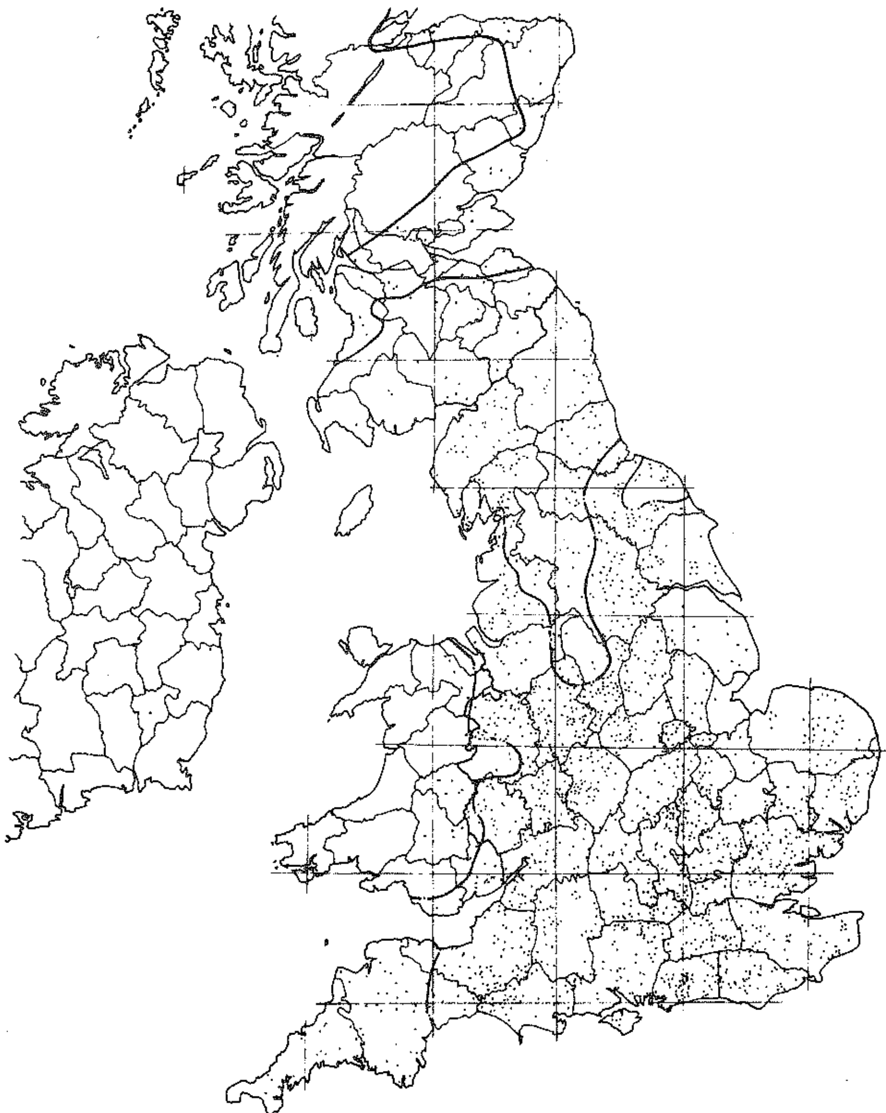

Fig. 6.1 Medieval parks. Each dot represents about 400 acres at the scale of the map; the average size of an English park was about 250 acres. For England (and Ireland) the map is redrawn, by kind permission, from L.M. Cantor[193] and adopts his conventions of ending at the date 1485 and of not counting more than one park in each manor. For Wales most of the information comes from Rees[168] and Linnard (1982), and for Scotland from Gilbert.[85] The boundaries of the Highland Zone and of the Scottish Lowlands are shown.





shall see, although woodland was preferred, parks could at a pinch be made on almost any terrain.

Wales and Scotland were lands of petty Forests; they had but few parks. About fifty medieval parks are known in Wales, mainly near the English border,[193, 195] and about eighty in Scotland.[85] There were a handful in eastern Ireland.

**Organization and management** Anyone could have a park who could afford it. All respectable English earls, bishops, and monasteries had several parks, but the Crown had relatively few. Like other status symbols, parks descended the social scale and even nunneries, minor gentry, and colleges had them.

It is an error to call parks 'hunting preserves'. They could be the scene of hunts: in 1221 Henry III gave permission to chase the fox in Havering Park (Essex) to the Abbess of Barking, perhaps our earliest known fox-hunting prelate.[196] But a confined space full of trees offers little scope for a good hunt. The real purpose of a park was the prosaic supply of venison, other meat, wood, and timber.

The beasts of nine parks out of ten were fallow deer. We hear of parks for red deer and occasionally roedeer, wild swine, wild bulls (Chapter 4), and hares. It was common practice to graze cattle or sheep, to let grazing to local farmers, and to sell hay. Wood came from pollarded or coppiced trees.

But the function of parks was not just economic. Venison was no ordinary meat: it was a special dish for feasts and the honouring of guests. It was beyond price – I have not a single record of a sale or valuation – and a haunch was a gift that money could not buy. Outsize timber trees (p.87) were a rare resource for which some parks were noted.

Ongar Great Park, Essex (Fig. 6.2), the 'deerhay' of 1045, may well have been the prototype of English parks. It survived largely intact, though disused, until 1945; its subsequent destruction is probably the worst loss of a visible Anglo-Saxon antiquity this century, though much can be reconstructed from maps and surviving remains. Like many early parks it was very large, about 1200 acres, and had the typical shape of a rectangle with rounded corners – a compact shape for economy in fencing. Another early feature is that the parish boundaries are displaced to conform to the shape of the park.

The chief expense of a park was the pale. Fallow deer are as strong as pigs and more agile than goats, and even now it is not easy to fence them in. A medieval pale was made of cleft oak stakes individually set in the ground and nailed to a rail (Plate IX). Repairs as the pales rotted were costly in labour and good timber. Sometimes there was a wall instead. The pale at Ongar was set on a mighty bank with a ditch each side. Later parks tend to be smaller and of awkward shapes. Parish boundaries became fixed and were no longer altered to fit park perimeters.

Parks were of two kinds. *Uncompartmented* parks were accessible to the deer at all times; the trees were pollarded to protect the regrowth, and new trees arose either in periods of slack grazing or in the protection of spiny thickets of thorn or holly. Other parks were *compartmented*, with some separation between trees and grazing. A park would be divided by internal banks into coppices, each of which would be felled like an ordinary wood and then fenced in the early stages to keep deer out until it had grown sufficiently not to be damaged. For instance:

There is a park . . . divided into 17 quarters in which 10 acres of underwood can be sold every year, worth £4 at 8s an acre. The pasture is worth nothing because of the multitude of beasts. The nuts . . . when they happen are worth 12*d*.

*Saffron Walden (Essex), 1336*[197]

Some compartments might be accessible to the deer all the time; these are called *launds* and were typically grassland with pollard trees.

About one park in two had some kind of compartmentation. At Ongar some fragments of internal coppice-banks survive. In Monks' Park (part of the Bradfield Woods, West Suffolk), which was founded within seventy years of the Conquest, a system of four coppices and three launds can be reconstructed from surviving banks, the soil-marks of destroyed banks, and written records (Fig. 6.3).

Both at Ongar and at Monks' Park there was a park lodge where the parkers did their business, set characteristically at the highest point and commanding a view of whatever was not hidden by trees. Both parks had waterholes made by digging out natural ponds.

Not every park was wooded. In late medieval Hertfordshire the clergy complained of tithes lost through the emparking of arable land.[194] At Great Baddow (Essex) in 1247 a park was made of sixty acres of heath.[198] At Egton (north-east Yorkshire) the turf-built dike of Julian Park sweeps for more than a mile across the High Moor. The Great Park of Abergavenny (Monmouthshire) included much of the Sugarloaf Mountain.

**Parks down the centuries** A park was a troublesome and precarious enterprise. It often belonged to an absentee unable to give it the necessary attention. Some owners tried to keep far too many deer, which died of starvation and of less tangible causes like 'Garget', 'Wyppys', and 'Rotte'. Henry III had a well-run park of 1100 acres at Havering (Essex), from which he ordered an average of 44 fallow deer annually from 1234 to 1263, besides getting oaks and grazing rents; yet even here in 1251 he ordered the bailiff to remove 'the bodies of dead beasts and swine which are rotting in the park' and to provide hay for the deer (Rackham 1978).

Many particularly of the smaller parks were short-lived. Already by the thirteenth century some had gone out of use:

Item, there is there one park which contains in itself sixty acres by estimate . . . twenty-nine and a half acres of arable land in the launds of the same park which are included in the total of arable land, and the pasture is worth ten pence every acre.

*Pulham, Norfolk, 1251* (Ely Coucher Book)[19]

In the later Middle Ages and especially in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries parks went out of use, and new parks were not made in the same numbers. Even where a place still had a park, the site might be changed: the modern park of North Elmham (Norfolk) is not on the site of the medieval park but of the Anglo-Saxon town.

A disused park might revert to being a wood, often permanently acquiring the name 'Park Wood'. It might become farmland, especially if the deer had



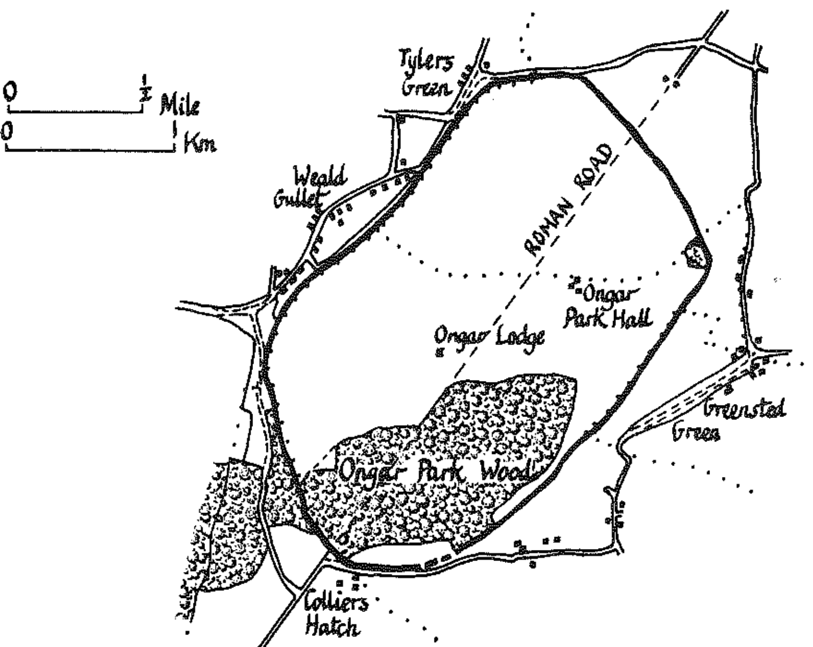


Fig. 6.2. Ongar Great Park, Essex, as it survived until *c*. 1950. The parish boundaries are shown, as is the fragment of park boundary which still exists in the south-west. The rest of the park perimeter survived as a hedge (thick line).

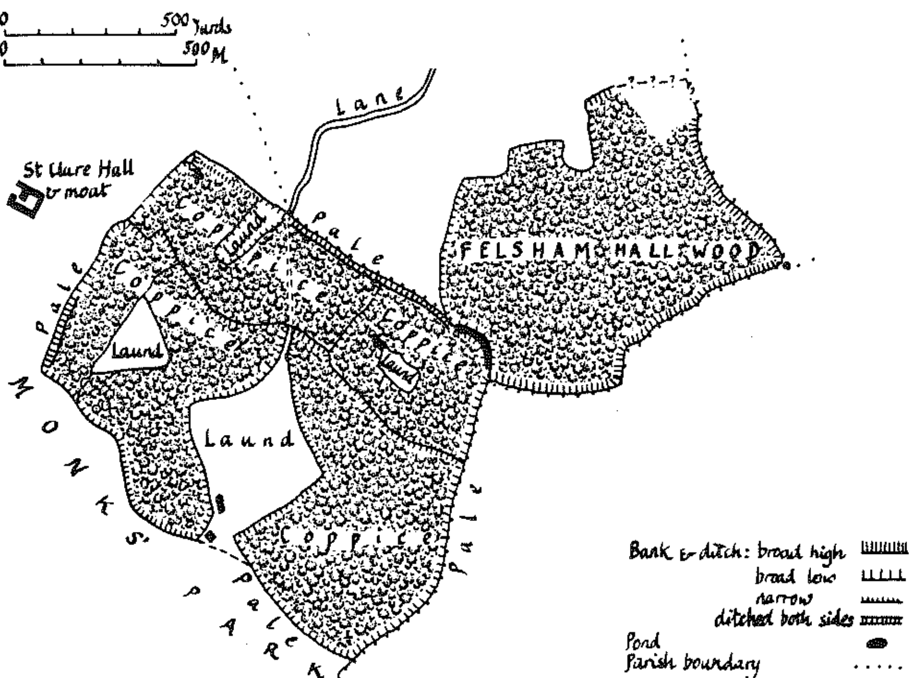


Fig. 6.3. Monks' Park in Bradfield St Clare, Suffolk: reconstruction of the medieval topography with coppices and launds. Felsham Hall was a normal wood excluded from the park.