

## Chapter 6: Documentary Evidence

### INTRODUCTION

Since only a small number of the manorial buildings were excavated, the scope of the documentary research has been limited to those sections of the Winchester pipe rolls dealing with the manorial buildings (see Blair below). The results of the comprehensive researches of Simon Townley and Alan Crossley that deal with Witney have been made available for this chapter.

### THE EVIDENCE OF THE WINCHESTER PIPE ROLLS, 1208–1398

by John Blair

#### Introduction

The bishop of Winchester's annual account rolls contain a mass of evidence for the management of the estate in all its aspects, including the never-ending process of repair and piecemeal rebuilding which any complex manorial site required. In the case of Witney, the excavation of the central buildings should in theory give a splendid opportunity to correlate the written and archaeological records.

In practice, this opportunity is rather limited. The most complex excavated phases of the site are of the mid to late 12th century, but the pipe rolls only begin in 1208. By that stage the ground floor of the solar tower and the extensions around it comprised a largely filled-in platform; the rebuildings above this, at the main residential level, were found by excavation to have disappeared almost without trace. While there can be some confidence about the positions of the great chamber, the chapel, the north gate and the perimeter wall of the main curia or enclosure, the mass of other buildings mentioned in the accounts are not represented on the ground, but must be located schematically from references to their abutments on other buildings. It is in their evidence for the overall layout and boundaries of the site, providing a context for the excavated buildings at their fully-developed stages, that the accounts are most valuable (see proposed reconstruction of the layout of the manor, Fig. 6.1).

It has not been possible to analyse the huge quantity of economic data on the Witney membranes of the rolls. Only the *custus domorum* section, dealing with building maintenance, has been searched (1208/9–1363/4 by John Blair, 1364/5–1398/9 by Ralph Evans), and a year-by-year digest of specific references to buildings has been prepared. Similar extracts for thirteen randomly selected years in the 15th century were made by Christopher Day. These digests, which are deposited with the site archive, form the basis of the following analytical account. No attempt is made to note every reference to every building, or to chart the fluctuations in expenditure

or maintenance: the aim is a spatial reconstruction, noting reorganisations and the appearances of new buildings where possible. The first reference is normally noted; a date followed by 'etc.' indicates that there are several later ones. The appearance on the same account of works both in the main manorial curia and at the park-lodge may occasionally confuse, though the clerks were generally careful to distinguish between them. It is recognised that the amalgamation of references over a broad timespan is likely to disguise replacements and even perhaps radical replannings, though it is worth noting that contradictory abutments have only been encountered in the single case of the dovecot.

#### The environs and the perimeter walls

Abutments give some impression of the immediate environs of the site. Arable in 1248/9 included 8 acres in the field between the curia and the lord's park (which is hard to understand), and 18 acres in the field between the curia and the meadow. Forty perches behind the curia were ditched and hedged as a pasture for calves in 1254–5. Various gates in the perimeter walls were known by the features which they faced: the gate by the fishpond (1208/9, 1357/8), the gate towards the croft (1245/6), the gate against the field (1356/7, 1357/8), the Pirihey gate (1331/2, 1357/8), and the 'middle-gate' (*middulyate*) on the south side (1369/70). The fishpond and mills lay eastwards, by the river (Fig. 6.2). A tunnel (*spelunca*) made in 1232/3 began at the byre and led to the corn-mill and the fulling-mill held by Herbert Pirc. The lord's fulling-mill and the lord's mill both occur in 1385/6. The fishpond was re-made in 1254/5, and provided with a new sluice in 1325/6; the fishpond and an adjoining garden were enclosed by a hedge in 1358/9.

The *great gate* at the entrance to the curia (1220/1 etc.), which had a room above (*solium supraportam*) (1220/1), was probably the north gate found in the excavation. A series of references indicate, however, that there was also an outer enclosure with its own gate. It occurs as the 'external gate of the manor' (1346/7) and the 'great outer gate' (1381/2), and had a room (*3atsoler*) above (1384/5). The great gate and the 'postern towards the town' were both repaired in 1349/50, and the gates *ad introitum curie* and *infer' cur'* in 1360/1. The walls on the north side are described variously as between the external enclosure and the town (*inter exterior' claus' et vill'*) (1327/8), around the external enclosure of the curia (*circa exteriorem clausum curie*) (1330/1), the high wall towards the town (1349/50), between the two *curiae* on the north side (1369/70), and between the outside of the curia and the common pasture called *le churchgrene* (1470/1). The 'chamber outside the gate' occurs between 1245/6 and 1336/7. In fact this seems to have been in the area between the inner and



# Mount House, Witney

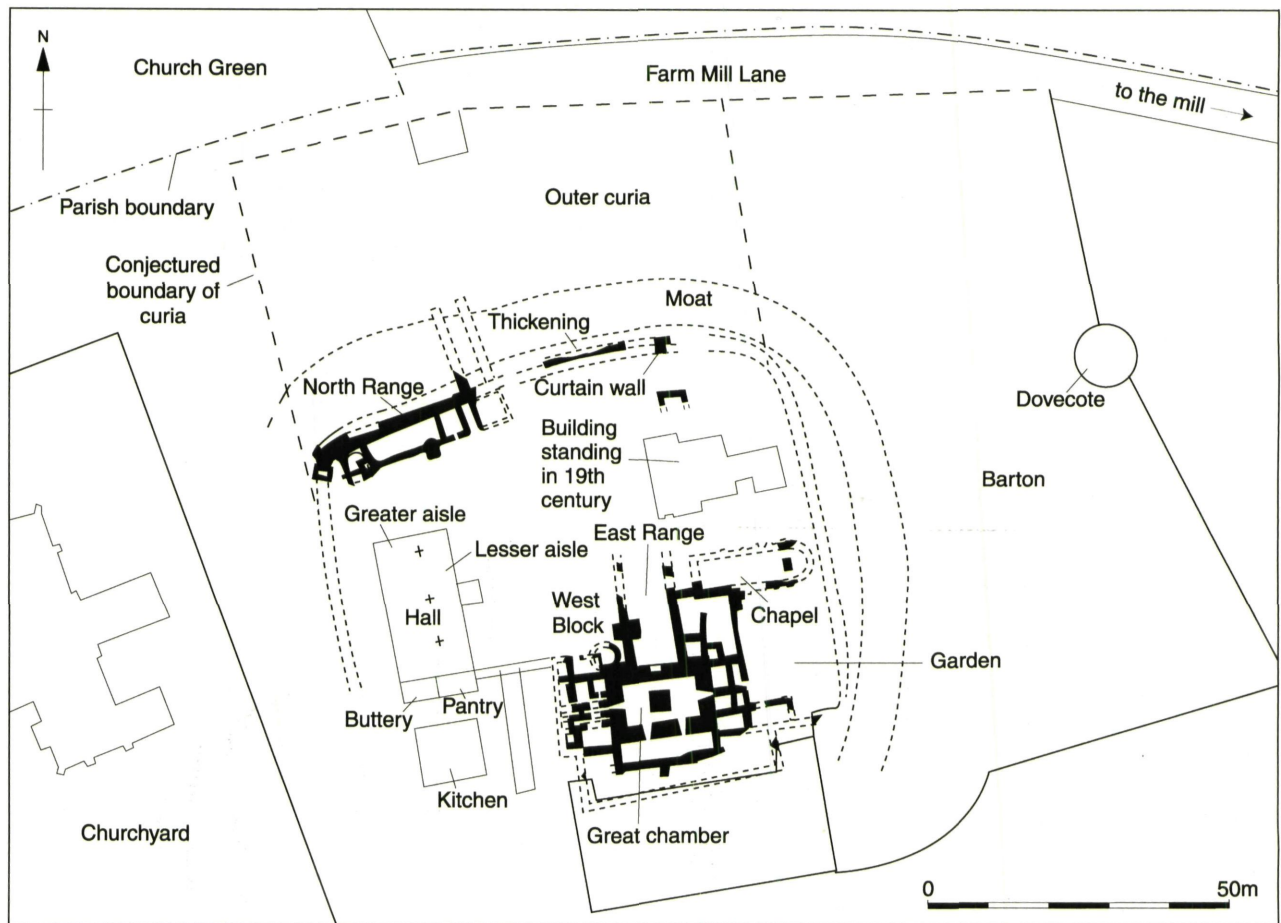


Figure 6.1 Plan of curia reconstructed from documentary and map evidence.

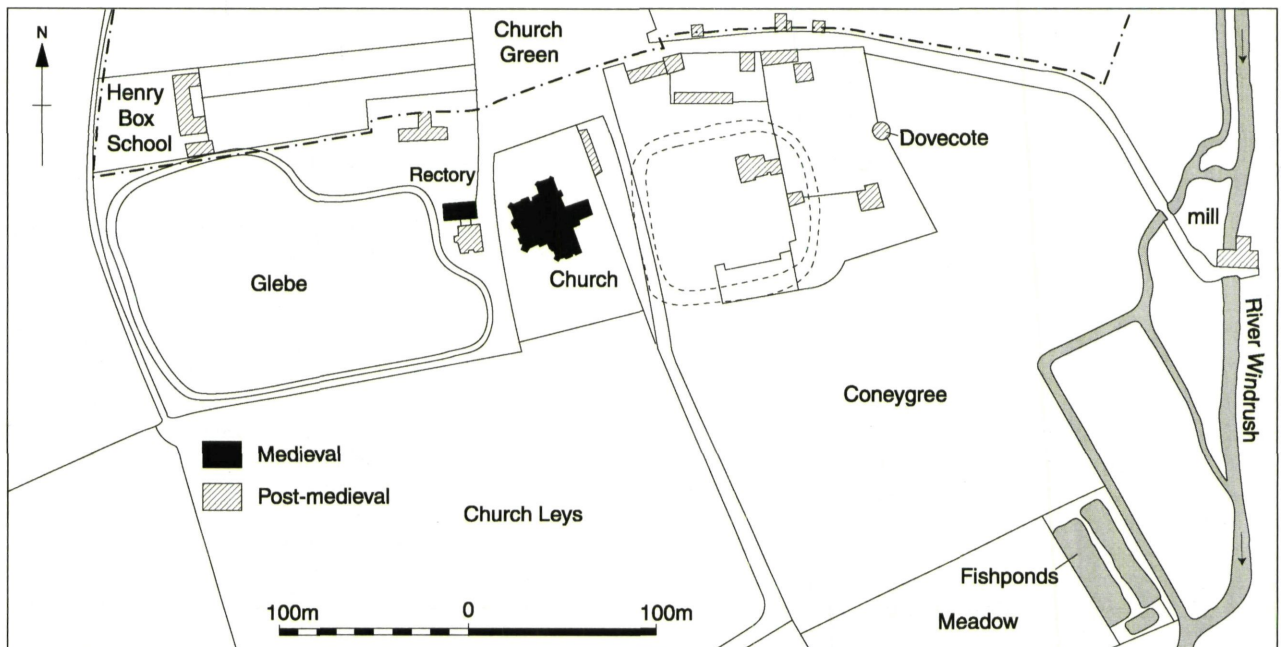


Figure 6.2 Drawing of detail of Tithe map (1843) with approximate position of moat superimposed.



outer walls, since in 1346/7 two buttresses were added to the 'chamber beyond the inner gate' (*camera ultra portam interior*), a description used again in 1377/8. The 'long stable' was apparently also in the outer court, since there was a wall between it and the external gate of the manor (1346/7) containing 11½ perches [57.8 m with a 16½ ft perch, 63.0 m with an 18 ft perch] (1389/90).

Westwards, a new stone wall between the churchyard and curia, 11 perches long [55.3 m with a 16½ ft perch, 60.3 m with an 18 ft perch], was made in 1327/8. There are references to the gate outside the postern towards the churchyard (1244/5), the gate between the churchyard and kitchen (1309/10, 1318/19) and the gate towards the church (1349/50). This is important evidence that the kitchen, and hence the other services connected with provisioning the hall, were on the western edge of the site. The bakehouse-gate (*bakhous3lat*) mentioned in 1346/7 was therefore probably also on this site. It is fairly clear that the curia extended right up to the churchyard boundary, across the present Station Road and perhaps under the almshouses which now border the churchyard.

East of the inner enclosure lay the barnyard or barton (*bertona* in the accounts), bounded northwards by Farm Mill Lane and extending eastwards towards the river. When the accounts began it may not have been fully enclosed, since in 1211/12 it was necessary to make a ditch between the mill and the barn(s). The barton gate was re-made in 1225/6, a wall built around the barton in 1232/3, and three gates made in this perimeter wall in 1244/5; 35½ perches of wall [178.5 m with a 16½ ft perch, 194.8 m with an 18 ft perch] were built around the barton in 1247/8. The wall 'by the king's highway on the north side' repaired in 1369/70 was clearly the boundary along Farm Mill Lane.

Renovation of the perimeter walls in 1354/5 involved building 60 perches of wall [301.7 m with a 16½ ft perch, 329.2 m with an 18 ft perch] around the pinfold, the external enclosure next the garden, the barton of the manor, and by the road towards the mill (ie Farm Mill Lane). In 1385/6 the premises were raided by royal retainers, the 'necessary expenses' for that year including repairs to the broken locks of several stores and chambers. This attack seems to have prompted another overhaul of the defences, itemised in the account for 1388/9. Stone was dug for repairing and building the walls of the manor (*pro parietibus ad manerium emendandis et faciendis*), and the gate-room was shored up for repairs to the contiguous wall. A length of wall around the inner enclosure was pulled down to make a foundation for part of the new wall, and the *combynge* [coping?] of part of the same wall was renewed. Elsewhere the stone wall was newly 'combed' and its foundation 'rammed' (underpinned?). It seems possible that this work included the Period 7 thickening of the north face of the north curtain wall, identified by excavation (see Chapter 2).

### The inner curia

As is clear from the excavations, the site was built up with massive masonry structures by the time the accounts start. The first accounts show major works in progress on the central buildings: making two garderobes in preparation for a royal visit (1208/9), and finishing the great chamber and making two garderobes and two pentices (1210/11).

The *aula* or hall (which was repaired in 1211/2 after a storm) must have lain somewhere in the western half of the enclosure, north or east of the kitchen and associated buildings (which as shown below can be located in the south-west corner), and west of the great chamber. The distinction between the 'great aisle' and the 'aisle next the great chamber' (1244/5) suggests that the hall was aligned north-south. The 'great aisle' may in fact have been the nave of a single-aisled hall, with the aisle proper on its east side facing the excavated chamber complex. A payment in 1247/8 for leadwork 'for the aisle before the chapel' (*pro ala ante capellam*) is hard to reconcile with the other references, and it may be that some structure different from one of the hall aisles is meant. The great aisle had windows and two doors (1245/6), one with a step (1331/2). Major works in 1245/6 involved covering walls (presumably half-built) during winter and the purchase of freestone for windows, walls and benches. The hall had a great chimney (1225/6), glazed windows (1246/7, 1300/1), a louvre (1317/18), and a porch (1272/3 etc., up to 1396/7) containing a bench (1340/1). There was work *de mantel aule* and *pro pariete in le mantell* in 1395/6. A 'tower' (1336/7), with a lead roof, adjoined one end of the hall (1359/60, 1360/1) and in 1386/7 was being used as the bailiff's chamber; the quoins on its east side were repaired in 1396/7, and the 'tower chamber' occurs in 1441/2.

Standard services, a timber *spence* and 'buttery' with a stone wall between them, were built in 1247/8 (*in dispensa et botelia carpentand*; *in muro faciend* *inter dispensam et boteliam*); the next reference, in 1267/8, uses the more up-to-date terminology of 'pantry and buttery'. Also in this area were the 'chamber next the hall' (1235/6), perhaps identical with the 'long chamber next the hall' (1293/4) and the 'chamber below the hall' (1365/6), and probably the *salsary* (1246/7, roofed 1396/7). The wine-house (*domus vinositor*) (1309/10), the wine-cellar (1312/13, 1334/5) and 'the building called *wynsoler*' (1396/7) were presumably the same or associated structures.

The *coquina* or kitchen (1220/1 etc.) rebuilt in 1223/4 and 1325/6, adjoined the western boundary (above); the 'kitchen below the hall' (*coquina infra aulam*), tiled in 1346/7, was presumably a separate and subsidiary structure. In 1251/2 the building of a chamber next the kitchen involved making a wall between the kitchen and 'bakehouse'. There were other walls between the bakehouse and 'dovecot' (1334/5, 1355/6) and between the lord's chamber and the bakehouse (1306/7). A wall linking the



bakehouse to the well (*a puteo usque ad furnillum*, 1211/12) could provide important evidence for the position of the whole service complex, as a well was located adjacent to the tower in the south-east of the enclosure (Chapter 2, Period 5a). If this is the same well it would establish that the services were at the south rather than the north end of the hall, although the wall in question was not found, perhaps because the excavations were not bottomed in this area. The bakehouse and 'brewhouse' were repaired in 1325/6; the rebuilding of the wall on their east side (1370/1) suggests that they comprised a single range aligned north-south. The 'dairy' (1244/5 etc.) was linked to the kitchen by lead gutters (1247/8). All this suggests that these buildings were grouped tightly in the south-western part of the inner enclosure, west of the great chamber. This zone probably also included the 'granary' (1244/5 etc.), the 'chamber next the granary' (1251/2, 1264/5) and 'the latrine behind the granary' (rebuilt 1364/5). It is unclear if the 'stable next the kitchen' (1245/6, 1246/7) was identical with the 'great stable' (1264/5, 1349/50) or 'lord's stable' (1349/50); these could have been in the outer court with the long stable (above).

The 'great chamber' (*magnum thalamum*, *magna camera domini*, etc.) must be the big Romanesque structure shown in the Buck drawing (Fig. 6.4), and can be confidently located on the extended and largely in-filled platform of the major excavated structure (called the Solar Tower in this report). It is mentioned regularly, for instance in references to whitewashing (1246/7) and to frequent re-roofings. It had at least five windows (repaired in 1360/1), a chimney (1349-50), and a garderobe (1312/13 etc.) with stone door-jambs (1331/2).

There was a pentice linking the great chamber to the chapel (*pro carpentria j penticium inter capellam et thalamum domini*) (1273/4), as well as a raised walk (*alura*) linking the great chamber to the hall (1312/13). The 'private chamber' (*secretum thalamum*) next the great chamber' (1245/6) can perhaps be identified with the 'chamber behind the lord's great chamber' (1361/2), and the 'chamber next the great chamber' (1454-61). The 'door between the great chamber and the little chamber' occurs in 1480/1. Also probably linked to the main chamber were the 'wardrobe', which had a door and two windows (1245/6 etc.); the 'lord's study', with glazed windows (1330/1, 1337/8); and the 'middle chamber opposite the chapel' (1479/80). A 'cellar' occurs in 1220/1, 1245/6 and (as 'the great cellar') in 1248/9; the door of the cellar under the high chamber (*celar' sub altam cameram*) was mended in 1330/1. The 'well' was heightened and covered (*in puteo hauriend' et claudend'*) in 1211/12, given a timber and boarded enclosure in 1329/30, and a kerb in 1362/3. The progressive heightening described here is consistent with the evidence from the excavated well in the western angle of the great chamber-block or tower. A 'garderobe next the well' (probably that excavated in the West Block) was roofed in 1320/1.

The 'chapel', located in the excavation, occurs regularly, when linen cloths were bought for its windows (1215/16) or an iron wedge (*cavillo ferreo*) for its cross (1251/2). In 1465/6 the chapel walls were repaired and raised, and the chapel roof, the 'lower roof within the chapel' and the 'roof over the chapel altar' were re-made: these phrases imply that by then the chapel had some kind of internal structure, perhaps a loft over the east end. A room above the chapel door (*hostium*) was approached by a stair (1364/5). A garden adjoined both the chapel (a payment *pro muro herbarii iuxta capellam* in 1254/5) and the great chamber, which may have been entered from it up a stair (repairs *ad steyram iuxta herbag' extra cameram domini* in 1304/5). This locates the garden in the south-east corner of the site, east of the great chamber and south of the chapel; the 'garden door towards the lord's chamber' occurs in 1480/1.

It is the range of additional chambers which marks the site out most clearly from a normal manor house. The 'bailiff's chamber' occurs frequently (1248/9 etc.), though it is unclear whether it was already in the tower by the hall (above); the 'bailiff's hall' (1335/6) and the 'chamber next the bailiff's chamber' (1348/9) are each mentioned only once. A 'new chamber' was built in 1248/9, apparently of timber, above an (existing?) cellar that had a masonry doorway and window. The 'warrener's chamber' adjoined a gate, and was linked by a stone wall to the 'bailiff's stable' (1381/2). The 'chamber by the lower gate' was repaired in 1387/8, and the work included demolishing a chimney and partly rebuilding the walls. Several lesser chambers are unlocated: the 'clerks' chamber' (1225/6 etc.), which had at least nine windows (1300/1) and a garderobe (1375/6); the 'sergeants' chamber' (1251/2 etc.); the 'knights' chamber' (1264/5, 1273/4); the 'esquires' chamber' (1293/4, etc., called 'old' in 1362/3); the 'almoner's chamber' (1294/5, 1298/9); and the 'monks' chamber' (1311/12, 1346/7). The 'lord's new chamber' had work done on its garderobe in 1479/80.

### The barton

The accounts give an impression of agricultural buildings close up against the west side of the barton, separated by a wall from the east end of the chapel and the lord's garden. There are references to the wall between the pinfold and the chapel (1247/8), the wall between the chapel and the barn of the curia (1364/5), the wall between the lord's chapel and the barn and thence as far as the pigsty (1363/4), the garden gate next the barn (1301/2, 1305/6), the gate towards the garden (1309/10 etc.), and the pinfold and barton gates (1349/50).

The 'barn' (1311/12 etc., usually referred to as 'in the curia' or 'in the manor' to distinguish it from barns in the park-lodge, had a porch (1326/7); repairs to the roof over its west head (1327/8) show that it was aligned east-west. There was a 'chamber next the barn' in 1262/3; the wall between the *byre* and the barn occurs in 1365/6, and the new wall between



the 'cow-house' and 'pigsty' in 1369/70. The 'bullock-house', 'calf-house' and 'hen-house' sometimes occur.

The site of the 'dovecot', first mentioned in 1248/9, is problematic. In 1334/5 and 1355/6 it was said to be near the bakehouse (above). On the other hand a 'new gate behind the curia towards the dovecot', made in 1299/1300, occurs often thereafter as the gate leading at or towards the dovecote (e.g. 1334/5, 1341/2); in 1343/4 it was the 'field gate next the dovecote', and in 1346/7 the 'gate towards the old dovecot'. All this suggests that the building stood just outside the curtilage, as does a payment in 1356/7 for making a hedge for the enclosure around the dovecote (presumably rebuilt). Furthermore, repairs to a wall between the barn of the manor and the dovecot (1369/70) and to a wall adjoining the dovecot and cart-stable (1388/9) locate it unambiguously near the barnyard. Evidently there were two dovecots, but it is remarkable that this is the only such problem encountered in the whole body of data.

### POST-MEDIEVAL EVIDENCE FOR THE BUILDINGS

by Alan Crossley

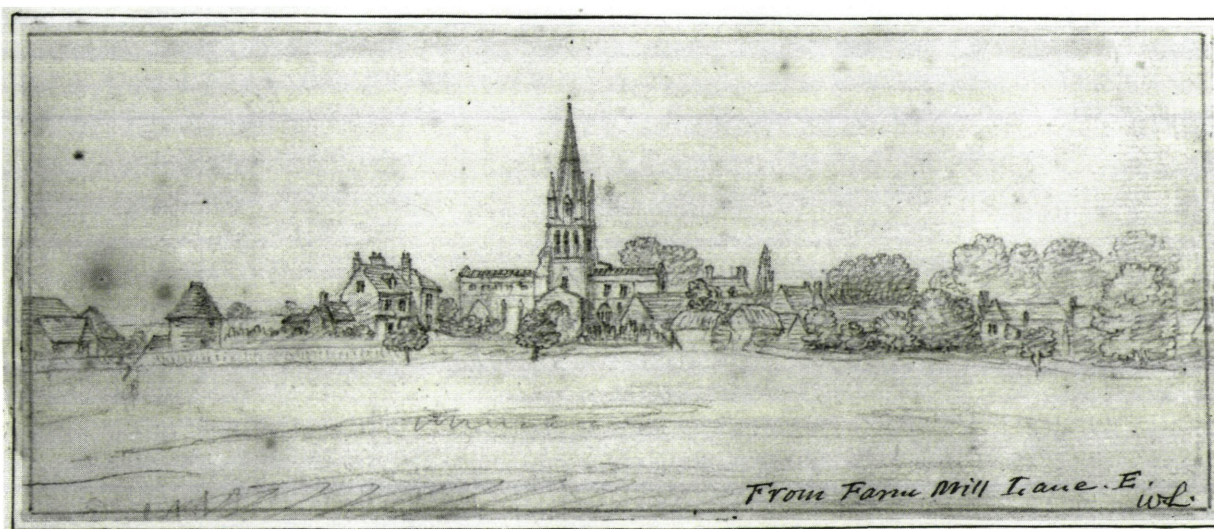
The surviving Mount House, an Edwardian structure probably built by J F Marriott before 1907 (see Chapter 1: Post-medieval history), replaced a house on much the same site shown in plan on a map of 1898.<sup>1</sup> Vestiges from the rear of the earlier house survive behind the new house, and the cellars of the new house are probably those of its forerunner.

The house, demolished in the early 20th century, was substantially unchanged in plan from that shown on maps of 1814–16, 1840 (see Fig. 6.2), and 1876.<sup>2</sup> It was described by the Revd J A Giles (1852)

and by W Langford in the 1850s. Giles described it as 'modern', but mentioned foundations, ancient windows, and other features, indicating a larger building on the site (see opening quotation to Chapter 1): his wording suggests that part of one of the medieval ranges had been incorporated into the then existing building, but that this was substantially rebuilt.<sup>3</sup> Curiously, Langford, an observant commentator fully aware that he was on the site of the bishop's medieval palace, concluded that of the ancient buildings 'scarcely a vestige can now be traced' beyond a stretch of peripheral walling.<sup>4</sup>

It seems certain, therefore, that the house shown in plan on the map of 1814 was fairly new; and was probably substantially the house rebuilt by the solicitor James Gray after 1757 (Chapter 1: Post-medieval history). By 1814 it was named The Mount or Mount House, reflecting its transformation into a gentleman's residence with landscaped grounds and a carriage entrance and driveway; the gate piers are consistent with a late-18th-century rebuilding. The name presumably alludes to its elevated position when viewed from the river meadows to the east and south. It was depicted from the east by Langford in mid-century, his two views matching well with the house-plan shown on the maps of 1814 to 1898 (see Figs 6.2 and 6.3). At its east end a single storey range projected eastwards from a two-and-a-half storey east-west range, which itself stood behind a larger north-south range with hipped roof and tall end-chimneys;<sup>5</sup> map evidence for the driveway confirms that the entrance front was on the west.<sup>6</sup> When sold in 1886 the house was described as a five-bedroomed building.<sup>7</sup>

Langford's two eastern views of the site also show important outbuildings, confirming evidence



BODLEIAN LIBRARY, UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD. BL MS. Top. Oxon d 212-213

Figure 6.3 Langford's view of the Mount House from the east, showing dovecot and barn. Copyright: Bodleian Library MS Top. Ox. 01 d. 216 f. 85r.



from the maps of 1814 and 1840 (Fig. 6.3). On the eastern edge of a close immediately east of Mount House was a circular building<sup>8</sup> and to the south-west, within the same close, a large rectangular building; in 1840 the group was described as the Mount barn, outbuildings, and yard. Langford's views confirm that the circular building was indeed a dovecot, by then fairly derelict, and that the large barn had an entrance porch on the north; he shows a perimeter wall and other smaller outbuildings, all in conformity with the map evidence. By 1876 the dovecot had gone,<sup>9</sup> probably very recently since an annotation of Giles mentions the removal of a round building near the Mount in the 1870s.<sup>10</sup> The barn, its north entrance approached by a cartway from Farm Mill Lane, survived in 1898, but was demolished shortly afterwards to make way for Mount Mills.<sup>11</sup> The mills in turn were demolished in the 1990s.

The surviving buildings on the north side of the Mount site, notably No. 29 The Green, formerly The Cottage, and various barns and outbuildings to the south and east, were shown on maps of 1814 and later. No. 29 was built before 1738, when it was described as the house built on waste 'next to the yard of the capital messuage of the lord of the manor'.<sup>12</sup> Since court rolls tend to repeat established property descriptions the building may not have been new in 1738, although an early-18th-century date would accord with its architecture. The reference to waste suggests that, when built, 'the Cottage' lay outside the perimeter of the manorial site rather than being an encroachment within it.

#### THE BUCK ILLUSTRATION: THE DRAWING (FIG. 6.4)

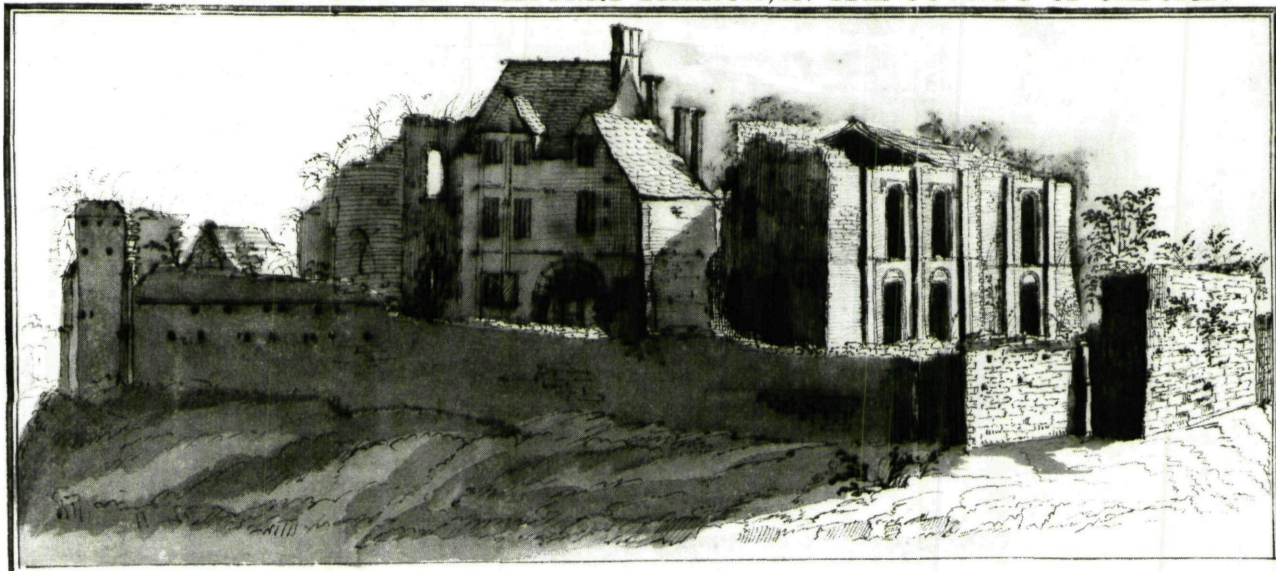
by Alan Crossley

As for the building altered or replaced by Gray after 1757, Langford, along with all later enquirers into the history of the Mount site, assumed that it was the 'bishop's palace' as depicted in the early 18th century by Samuel Buck (Fig. 6.4).<sup>13</sup> Buck, with his brother Nathaniel, an engraver, published a great series of engravings of historic buildings in 'county sets' from 1729 onwards.<sup>14</sup> Samuel's ink and monochrome drawing, entitled 'The South-West View of Whittney Palace in the County of Oxford', was neither engraved nor published, although prepared within a frame of the kind which, in the Bucks' published engravings, included a brief text.<sup>15</sup> The drawing, although neither signed nor dated, may safely be attributed to Samuel Buck c 1729.

The spelling of Whittney is a form not found on other documents of the period, but the attribution to the county of Oxford is clear, ruling out Whittney in Herefordshire. Spellings on informal documents of this nature are often more idiosyncratic than on official documents. Now that the Norman remains at the Mount House have been found, the possibility that the drawing could have been of the buildings at the moated enclosure at Park Farm is extremely remote. It is likely, therefore, that the drawing is intended to represent buildings at the Mount House, but in many respects it deserves cautious reassessment.

Firstly, it depicts a building which makes little architectural sense: the apparently inhabited part to

THE SOUTH-WEST VIEW OF WHITTNEY PALACE, IN THE COUNTY OF OXFORD.



BODLEIAN LIBRARY, UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD. BL Gough Maps 26, f60

Figure 6.4 Buck illustration c 1729. Copyright Bodleian Library Gough Maps 26, f. 60.



the north has an impossible roof structure and such features as a supporting buttress which descends to a window opening; the large Romanesque doorway on the west front includes a hotch-potch of zig-zag and other mouldings which seem unlikely even if reused.

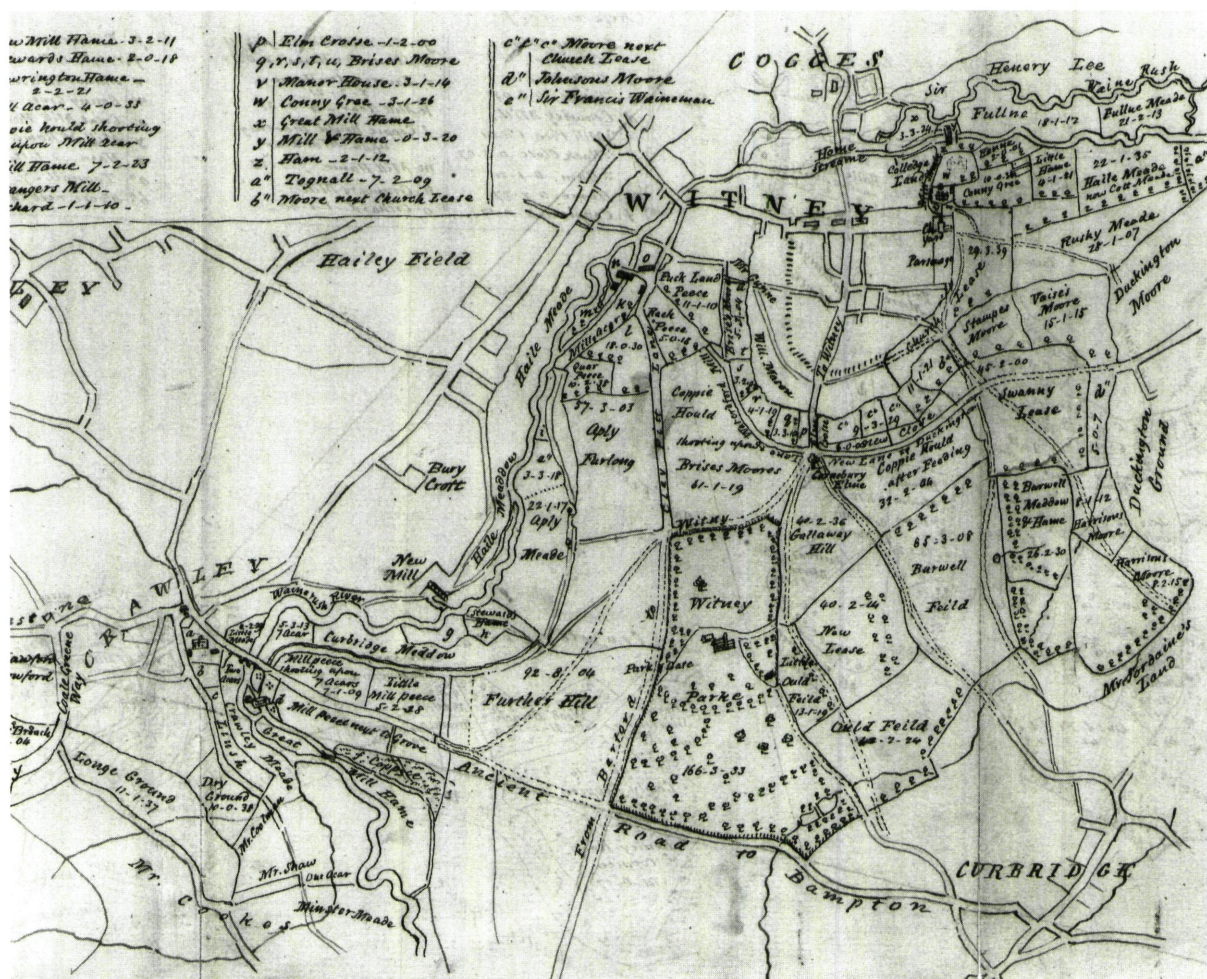
Second, there are reasons to suspect that the ruinous South Range had been removed long before Buck made his drawing. A map of 1662 which survives as a 19th-century copy by Langford (Fig. 6.5), shows a three-gabled house of Tudor or Stuart type on the manor house site. This might possibly be a conventional symbol, except that the same mapmaker depicts Witney Park Farm as a quite different building, with a tall end chimney and lower wing.<sup>16</sup> Elsewhere the map's impressive accuracy, its careful field boundaries, and the inclusion of small outlying buildings confirmed by later maps, suggests that the mapmaker was on site in Witney, intent on representing reality. If Buck's ruins had been there in 1662 the mapmaker would surely have shown at least an L-shaped building and an impressive curtain wall.

One of the Oxfordshire engravings published by the Bucks in 1729 depicts the ruins of Eynsham Abbey, which had in fact been removed some 70 years earlier: the accompanying text reveals that the engraving was based on a drawing made by Anthony Wood in the 1650s which Samuel Buck had been shown by the Buckinghamshire antiquary Browne Willis. Comparison of the finished engraving with Wood's crude sketch provides a salutary caveat when evaluating the Bucks' work.<sup>17</sup>

## THE BUCK ILLUSTRATION: CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE EXCAVATED ARCHAEOLOGY

by Tim Allen

Despite the caveats discussed by Crossley above, there are a number of points of correspondence with the site as known from both maps and archaeology. In the drawing the southern boundary wall is stepped forward in just the same way as the boundary wall of the site (as known since at least 1816). The boundary



BODLEIAN LIBRARY, UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD. BL (R) MS C17:49 (276) 1814-16

Figure 6.5 Nineteenth century copy of a map of Witney dated 1662. Copyright (R) MS C 17: 49(276) 1814–16.



wall is rectilinear, and is surrounded on both the west and south sides by a dip in the ground level suggesting a ditch or moat. In the middle of the north side of the walled enclosure is a low-roofed building, where the gatehouse is known to have stood up until the demolition of the manor.

In addition, the large Romanesque building shown in the south-east part of the drawing appears to correspond approximately to the position of the enlarged tower block (as shown in Fig. 2.13 Period 5 and thereafter), and its west end does have a door in approximately the right position for the base of the central staircase. The absence of any windows in the south-west corner of the illustrated building would also accord with the presence of a garderobe in this position. The inhabited block with its large Norman doorway, which is separated by a gap from the Romanesque ruin, would then lie towards the north end of the East Range and beyond the excavated area (as the extant Mount House does today). From the excavated evidence it was suggested that the original entrance to the East Range lay in roughly this position. The excavations also indicated two phases of robbing of the medieval buildings, the earlier of which (dated to the mid-17th century) included the excavated part of the East Range (Chapter 2: Period 9c). The north wall of the West Block was apparently rebuilt late in the 16th or early in the 17th century, suggesting that this and the adjacent tower were likely still to have been in use, though pit 54 = 114 and the robbing trenches of the tower walls do not provide clear dating evidence.

There are however problems with the drawing. Only two buttresses were found along the south side of the enlarged tower, not the five shown in the Buck drawing, and these two are not in the positions shown. The absence of the attached pilasters shown on this building by Buck from the archaeological record might be explained by the truncation of the archaeology below first floor level. These decorative features may not have been added to the basement level, which would have been below ground, and may have commenced higher up (as at the keep at Richmond Castle). More significant, however, is the corner drawn by Buck halfway along the south side of the Romanesque range, which appears to indicate that the range was wider to the west than the east, in contrast to the excavated plan.

## THE BUCK ILLUSTRATION: CONCLUSION

by Alan Crossley

Much would be explained by an assumption that Buck never saw the site of 'Whitney Palace', but derived his drawing from a much earlier source. No such source has been traced despite extensive

searches in the collections of Browne Willis and others who shared Buck's interest in ancient buildings. Even so it seems unlikely that the prominent ruins depicted by Buck could have survived in early 18th-century Witney without comment from contemporaries, including several antiquaries known to have visited the town. Even Buck's use of the phrase 'Whitney Palace' arouses suspicion: 'palace' was an acceptable term for a bishop's residence, but its use at Witney is otherwise unrecorded and Buck's contemporaries referred merely to the manor house or farmhouse, with no hint, and probably no memory, of any direct episcopal connection. Finally, the Bucks' failure to publish the 'Whitney Palace' drawing in the Oxfordshire collection perhaps reveals their doubts over its validity, either over the architectural interpretation or the correct identification of the building. Although there are clearly elements of truth in the drawing, it cannot be used to supplement the archaeological record in reconstructing the appearance of the former manorial buildings.

## ENDNOTES

1. Cf O S Maps 1/2500, Oxon. (2nd edn 1898, 3rd edn 1919).
2. BL, (R) MS C 17:49 (276); O R O, tithe maps of Witney and Curbridge; OS Map 1/2500, Oxon. (1st edn 1876).
3. Giles 1852, 39.
4. BL, MS. Top. Oxon. d 213, ff 93–94v.
5. Ibid. d 216, ff 84v., 85.
6. e.g. O R O, Witney tithe map.
7. O R O, Dr. V/i/1.
8. Confusingly the circular shape in two instances (the map of 1814 and the Curbridge tithe map of 1840) is coloured in as a pond, but the Witney tithe map, based on the same survey of 1840, hatches it clearly as a building.
9. O S Map, 1/2500, Oxon. (1st edn).
10. Magd. Coll. Mun., 800(i).
11. Cf O S Maps, 1/2500, Oxon. (2nd and 3rd edns).
12. Blenheim Mun., B/M/154. For its later history see O R O, Batt IX.
13. BL, Gough Maps 26, f 60.
14. Dictionary of National Biography.
15. The complete engravings were republished in Buck, *Antiquities* (3 vols. 1774); the Oxfordshire 'set' are all dated 1729, the year of publication.
16. BL, MS. Top. Oxon. d 212, ff 10–11.
17. Wood's sketch is reproduced in Eynsham Cart., ii (Oxf. Hist. Soc. li), facing xlvi; cf BL, MS. Willis 46, fol 46; Hearne's Colln. (Oxf. Hist. Soc. lxvii), 266, 444.