



A Salisbury-Cathedral-centric view of History.

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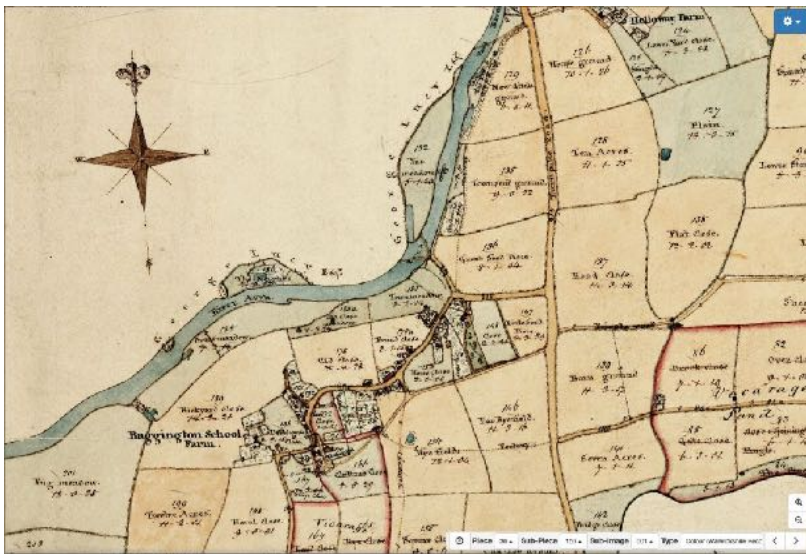
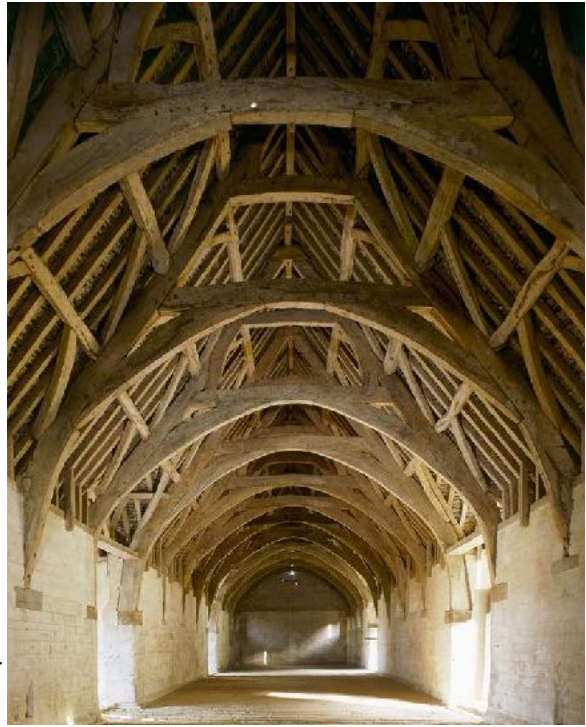
THE DEATH OF THE TITHE

The Chapter minutes for October 1921 contain this passage: *Marquess of Ailesbury* had redeemed the commuted Tithe Rent Charge of £491.11.6, the consideration money, as fixed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, being £6965.8.3 and that such a sum be discharged by the annuity of £400.10.0 payable half-yearly on 30th March and 30th September in every year for the period of 50 years (the first payment to be due on 30th September 1921) and that £26.2.3 part of each half-yearly payment of the said annuity shall be accumulated by the investment thereof and of the resulting income thereof. It was decided that the investment should be made in £21/2% Consolidated Stock in the name of the Dean and Chapter.* This looks to me like a typical ‘Civil Service and Lawyer’ solution to a problem that results in a new department in Government and lots of paperwork and expense for the landowners and farmers.

The old tythes were a 10% of the land’s produce payable in-kind to fund Church institutions, and hence the need for tithe barns (Bradford-on-Avon page 2, *courtesy of English Heritage*). They were divided into great and small tithes with the great comprising corn, grain, hay and timber. The original idea was for the great tithes to go to the Rector and the small to the Vicar but the system varied in each region of the country. With the Reformation, a large number of tithe income passed from the Church to private land owners. The system was fiercely attacked by Adam Smith in his *Wealth of Nations* (1776).

In 1836 the law stated that 'in kind' was to be commuted into rent which was adjusted on a 7-year average of grain prices (hence *Corn Rent*).

The annual value of *tithe rentcharge* was ascertained and published yearly with tables issued which enabled payment-due to be calculated. A tithe-map can be seen below, *courtesy of the Warwickshire Record Office*. However agricultural prices collapsed after 1875 followed by WWI and the 1930s depression. The law changed again in 1936 when there could then be a *redemption of tithes* by paying a lump-sum or *terminable annuity payments* over 50 years (later changed to 60 years). In 1951 small payments were stopped and in 1960 the Tithe Redemption Commission was abolished and collection passed to the Inland Revenue. In 1977 there was an act of parliament finally abolishing tithes altogether with the last payment being doubled. The painting that heads this article is *The Payment of the Tithes* by Pieter Brueghel The Younger (1564 - 1638) *courtesy of Bonhams, in the public domain*.



*I believe that this must be George William James Chandos Brudenell-Bruce the 6th of his line whose titles include being Hereditary Warden of Savernake and (the dreaded) Earl of Cardigan and I believe they also owned Avebury Manor. He was born in 1873 and died in 1961. There is of course another link - in the 1970's Marian Brudenell found a copy of Magna Carta in



her ancestral home. It is that edition which is now in Washington.

A GOOD READ

My peregrinations around the charity shops has resulted in a small collection of local history books. Here are some excerpts:

The chalk ridge above Laverstock is known as Cockey Down *where you can still see parts of the massive bank and ditch of the outer [Clarendon] park pale or boundary of 10.2 miles (16.5 km), designed to keep in the deer*. Part of Laverstock was in the *Liberty of Clarendon* and came under the Dean so *David Rattay (Rattue) of Laverstock was entitled to marry Mary Erwood (Yerwood) in the Cathedral*. The Swing Riots of 1830 resulted from agricultural labourers desperate at only earning seven shillings a week. The mob destroyed threshing machines which as a consequence resulted in 339 prisoners being brought to trial in Salisbury. *Two men at Salisbury were sentenced to death,*

although later reprieved, but 150 were sentenced to transportation, for periods of at least seven years with little hope of return.

The Duck Inn at Laverstock by tradition still retains an egg inserted into a side wall. which must never be removed. Laverstock hit the national headlines in 1842 when two cousins settled a quarrel with a bare-knuckle prize fight of at least 23 rounds. When one fell and hit his head he died. The subsequent inquest brought in a verdict of Manslaughter but this was overturned on appeal at the Wiltshire Assizes in Salisbury Guildhall. The village was in The Times again in January 1969 when a mysterious panda appeared on Cockey Down. It transpired that it was a Rag-week prank perpetrated by students from University College of North Wales, Bangor, with one being an ex Wordsworth pupil. The police became involved but by 'luck' the University Principal had connections with the landowner so no more was said. A faint outline can still be seen.



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In the 18th century, the Thistlethwaite family dominated Winterslow and especially as Rector. The incumbancy eventually passed to the Brodie family but when they arrived the rectory had been rented out to the Northeast family. I mention this as earlier this year we needed a furniture repair and had been recommended to a cabinet-maker in Winterslow, a certain Nigel Northeast. Whilst in Winterslow, Cooper Farm was purchased by Major Robert Poore who proposed that the property be divided up and leased out on 2,000 year leases (subsequently converted to freeholds) with a Land Court of tenants chaired by the Rector to administer the scheme. So, a co-operative!

Looking at evidence for marblers carving their stone at Salisbury rather than at the quarry: in 1231/2 marble for an altar, together with sixteen columns, capitals and bases were carried from Salisbury to Southampton by order of Peter des Roches, Bishop of Winchester. These were probably destined for the newly founded abbey of Titchfield, shortly after visited by Elias of Dereham (who probably laid out the design).



In Anglo-Saxon Wessex, Alfred the Great defended his territory from the Vikings by building fortified towns or *Burhs* joined together by *Herepaths*. This last term means a military road such as the one, left, at Avebury. The herepath from Tisbury to Hindon results in the alignment of the High Street we can see today.

Books pillaged include *Laverstock and Ford* (Sarum Chronicle 2019); *Crying in the Wilderness*, Clive Cohen (Winterslow Parochial Council 1996); *A Thirteenth-Century Portrait Gallery at Salisbury Cathedral*, Selby Whittingham (Friends



BEATING THE BOUNDS

Natural history writer Richard Mabey in his *The Flowering of Britain* (Hutchinson 1980) looks into the ancient practice of marking boundaries by leaving certain trees unfelled. He starts by mentioning that in 1953 Danish archaeologists practiced felling trees using 4,000 year old axe-heads tied onto copies of original handles. These were short so employed a different technique to that used by modern foresters. Three archaeologists cleared 150 square yards of forest in an

hour.

In the Middle Ages it was common to walk the boundaries and then record the description in *Perambulations*. The late Professor Oliver Rackham, the acknowledged expert on the history of the countryside, quotes from one at Hurstbourne Priors in Hampshire: *..along the road to Ceardic's Barrow; then to Withy Grove...then along the road to the pollard oak...by the little hedge along the spinney...along the hedge to the old maple tree...* In the *Cartularium Saxonicum* he finds trees mentioned as boundary features in more than half the descriptions. The descendants of some of these trees are still with us. Some of these are *Gospel Oaks* which mark the point in the *beating of the bounds* where the gospel for Rogation Day was read (Polstead, Suffolk Gospel Oak, above). *Beating the bounds is a remarkable amalgam of pagan plant ritual, Christian benediction and civic lecture.* These were held around Ascension Day but obviously descended from pagan fertility rites to encourage crops.

Our George Herbert in *The Country Parson* (1652) sites three reasons in defence of this custom: *A blessing of God for the fruits of the field; justice in the preservation of bounds; charitie in living walking and neighbourly accompanying one another, with reconciling differences at that time, if there be any.....* The actions accompanying these ceremonies were often quite rough in order to impress the boundaries on the younger generation (Horrabridge, Devon, above).



WINDOVER HOUSE

Trevor Austreng, partner in Fawcetts the accountants (and incidentally a trustee of the Salisbury City Almshouse and Welfare Charities), very kindly allowed me to take photos of their remarkable offices. I say remarkable because its Georgian frontage gives you no clue as to what is inside.



My guide was the ever-useful *Ancient and Historical Monuments in the City of Salisbury* by the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments (HMSO 1980). The plan shows an unusual feature with the front building in line with St. Ann Street and the older and larger rear building in line with The Friary.

The building was erected for Salisbury merchant William Windover who died in 1632 but the origins are much older with the Hall believed to be 14th century. *The theory that the house includes part of the former Franciscan convent cannot be sustained.* This is a shame as it is part of Salisbury folklore. However the wall at the back of their small car-park is very likely to be part of the precinct wall of the convent.

I find it interesting that the walls, both externally and internally are founded on masonry blocks which could possibly have been taken from the Franciscan building. The middle bay was originally a carriage-way through. The west part of the south range was rebuilt around 1600 and includes an oak staircase with bulbous finials. The photo on the left shows how the 19th century mathematical tiles were hung. Altogether a fascinating building.

Best wishes for the New Year.

