



A Salisbury-Cathedral-centric view of History.

Editor: Mark Brandon: markandsuebrandon@outlook.com

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DOUBLE DYKES

Travelling from Salisbury to Blandford Forum, Cranborne Chase is to your right. On your left is Ackling Dyke (photo right top) which is the Roman road from Old Sarum (Sorviodunum) to Badbury Rings (Vindocladia), between Blandford and Wimborne. There is a second dyke between Woodyates and Martin that meanders on both sides of the road. This is Bokerley Dyke (right bottom) that forms a boundary between Hampshire and Dorset and could originally have been Bronze Age though no doubt it was also used to try and keep back the Saxons.

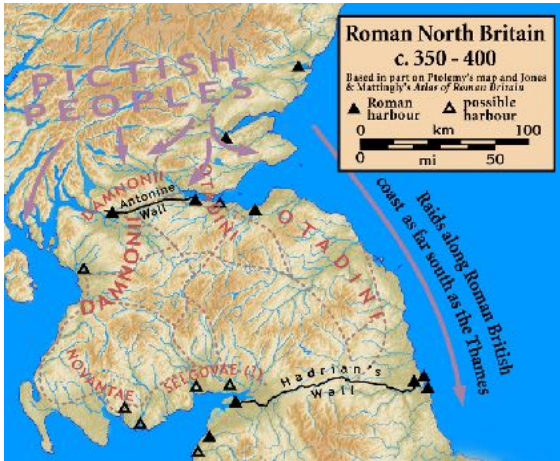


THE GREAT CONSPIRACY

I must confess that this was new to me. In the winter of 367, the Roman garrison on Hadrian's Wall apparently rebelled, and allowed *Picts* from Caledonia to enter Britannia. Simultaneously, *Attacotti*, the *Scotti* from Hibernia, and *Saxons* from Germania landed in what might have been coordinated and pre-arranged waves on the island's mid-western and southeastern borders, respectively. *Franks* and *Saxons* also landed in northern Gaul.

These war-bands managed to overwhelm nearly all of the loyal Roman outposts and settlements. The entire western and northern areas of Britannia were overwhelmed, the cities sacked and the civilian Romano-British murdered, raped, or enslaved. Nectaridus, the *comes maritime tractus* (commanding general of the sea coast region), was killed and the *Dux Britanniarum*, Fullofaudes, was either besieged or captured and the remaining loyal army units stayed garrisoned inside southeastern cities.

The *miles areani* or local Roman agents that provided intelligence on barbarian movements seem to have betrayed their paymasters for bribes, making the attacks completely unexpected. Deserting soldiers and escaped slaves roamed the countryside and turned to robbery to support themselves. Although the chaos was widespread and initially concerted, the aims of the rebels



were simply personal enrichment and they worked as small bands rather than larger armies. *Courtesy of Wikipedia.*

CRANBORNE CHASE

This book by Desmond Hawkins (Dovecote Press 1993) is a treasure trove. The Chase was three times the size of the New Forest and bounded by the towns of Salisbury, Shaftesbury and Blandford Forum. The term *Chase* is almost identical to that of *Forest* in Medieval times; an area owned by the king and not necessarily wooded. Here are some

excerpts:

You could be required to pay a toll called *cheminage* for any form of transport over the Chase roads if this might be harmful to the deer, notably when they are breeding. As late as the early 1800s a pair of antlers was set up on Harnham Bridge in the outskirts of Salisbury during the fence month - fifteen days before Midsummer Day and fifteen days after - to indicate that Lord Rivers (precursor to Pitt-Rivers) was exercising his right to levy fourpence for every waggon and one penny for every packhorse.

In Saxon times Cranborne was one of the manors that were grouped together in what was known as *the Honour of Gloucester*. In this sense of the word a seigniorship of several manors under one baron; in this case substantial enough to include Bristol. It had passed through the ownership of a Saxon to the Count of Flanders whose daughter, Matilda, married William the Conqueror. In turn it passed to son Rufus who gave it to his cousin Fitz-Haymon, whose daughter Mabel married the Earl of Gloucester. Their Grand-daughter *Hadwisa* (are you still with me?) became King John's first wife. So John became Earl of Gloucester and took over Cranborne Chase.

As mentioned before the first tranche of landowners in this area were a wicked lot. The first Pembroke was known as Black Will (right, *courtesy of the National Museum of Wales, in the public domain*). When Mary I came to the throne he had to face the nuns returning to Wilton. He was supposed to have fallen to his knees in front of them crying *peccavi* (I have sinned), but a little later when Edward VI inherited the throne he turfed out the nuns crying *Out ye whores, to worke, to worke - ye whores, goe spinne*.

When land once subject to forest law was disafforested it acquired a twilight status which those who know Dartmoor will recognise as *venville* land and which elsewhere was known as forest *purlieu* or *percursus* - as in Dibden Purlieu



on Southampton Water.

The village of Martin was in the Hundred of Domerham which belonged to Glastonbury Abbey.

In bad times there was warfare between the poachers and the landowners but in good times it was more civilised although aristocrats might break the law for the adrenalin rush. One noble sportsman, Sir William Hanham of Ebbesbourne had just finished entertaining his guests to dinner a person came into the room saying that a buck had been disturbed by reapers in a local wheat field and was now amidst barley not 500 yards away. A couple of brace of greyhounds were quickly obtained and the deer caught, after which they returned to their claret. However a keeper called, saying he was sorry to offend but was only doing his duty and would have to report the matter to Mr Jones at Rushmore Lodge. Hanham instructed the keeper to invite his master round, Lord Castlehaven as spokesman said Jones, *we all stand here as criminals and plead guilty: what are the damages to be paid?* They agreed on £30 of which half was to go to the parish poor and three guineas sent to the keeper. Mr Jones was presented with a bottle of claret on condition he did not leave the company until he had drunk it.

THE LINCOLN MAGNA CARTA

One of my objectives when visiting Lincoln was to see how their approach to displaying Magna Carta differed from ours. We made the visit and then arranged to speak to the senior guides. Ironically the head guide had recently visited Salisbury to see what we were doing.

The first thing to note was that MC is in the castle not in the Cathedral which seems to have reduced their footfall. Secondly, their building was financed by a philanthropist and is purpose built (right), complete with wrap-around cinema and a beautifully wall incised with the translation (page 4). The room housing the Magna Carta was quite small and the Charter of the Forest was also there. If I am being critical, I don't think that there was much



that I would recommend Salisbury copying.

However, there was one huge difference. The guide who introduced me to Magna Carta could not be faulted on her knowledge, whereas our guide that the Lincoln delegation saw was unable to answer their questions! I think I am right in saying that only the Monday afternoon team at Salisbury has dedicated Magna Carta guides and that is the main

problem - and does not require money to solve it.

MATERA

The photo below is of the *Sassi di Matera* in Basilicata, Italy (courtesy of Bönisch under Creative Commons licence). It was named a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1993. It does not look very prepossessing but its troglodyte dwellings have been in continuous use for 9,000 years!!!!!! Its poverty-stricken and malaria ridden economy has been transformed by EU grants and the consequent tourism. *Courtesy of Wikipedia.*



WATCH THE WALL MY DARLING....

Before living in Salisbury we were in West Moors near Ferndown. Our local farm was *Gulliver's*, now a thriving organic farm shop and restaurant. I often wondered where the name came from (Poole has *Lilliput*) - but now I know.

Isaac Gulliver, born in 1745 near Trowbridge and was the most famous smuggler of Dorset. In his early years he was the tenant of the Thorny Down Inn on the new Great Western Turnpike and married an innkeeper's daughter from Sixpenny Handley. By 1778 he was prosperous enough to buy a farm at Longham and then Howe Lodge at





Kinson, both strategically placed for the smuggling centres of Christchurch and Poole where some thirty vessels were involved. As his income rose he acquired two farms at Crichel as well as the one at West Moors. At his farm at Eggardon Hill he planted trees as a navigation aid.

He ran fifteen luggers out of Poole and came to control smuggling activities from Lymington to Torbay. Howe Lodge was purpose built for the trade and when demolished in 1958 a number of hiding places were found, including a door ten feet up a chimney. Once when the customs men came to arrest him he powdered his face and lay in an open coffin whilst his wife mourned him loudly. The miniature by Thomas Goffe (left) is at Chettle House on Cranborne Chase *courtesy of Olbigsoul under a Creative Commons license.*

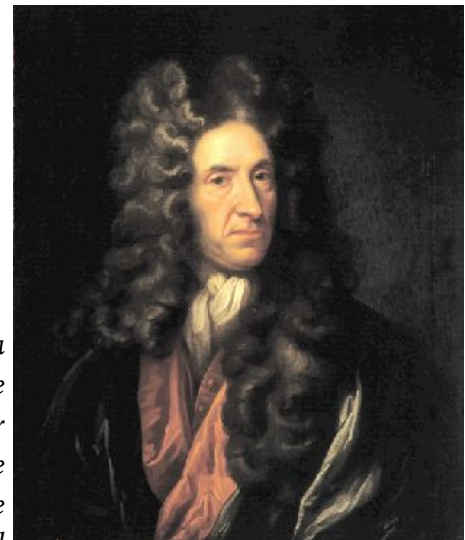
Gulliver's men were known as the *White Wigs* so that they looked like respectable servants; whilst he was known as the *Gentle Smuggler* as his men (unusually) never killed an exciseman. It is possible that the authorities gave him something of an unofficial free hand in exchange for obtaining intelligence from France. In fact in 1782 he was granted a king's pardon.

After this he gave up smuggling tea and spirits, sold his packhorses and became a wine-merchant (though his sources may have been suspect). He took up the post of church warden at Wimborne Minster and saw one daughter and one granddaughter married to bankers. Two of his grandsons were knighted and one was the first Lieutenant-Governor of Burma. At his death he left some £60,000, say £8.5 million in today's money - who said that crime does not pay?

Five and twenty ponies,
Trotting through the dark –
Brandy for the parson, 'baccy for the clerk.
Laces for a lady; letters for a spy,
Watch the wall my darling while the Gentlemen go by!
From Rudyard Kipling's Smugglers Song.

A QUESTION OF TASTE

The Choir of Salisbury resembles a theatre rather than a venerable Choir of a Church; it is painted white, with the panels golden, and groups and garlands of roses and other flowers intertwined round the top of the stalls; each stall hath the name of its owner in gilt letters on blue writ in it, and the episcopal throne with Bishop Ward's arms upon it would make a fine theatrical decoration, being supported by gilt pillars, painted with flowers upon white.



The visitor was Daniel Defoe (1660 - 1731) and it was being reported in *The Glories of Salisbury Cathedral* by Jeffrey Trubey, published in 1948 at a time when we had a reredos and the Skidmore screen. The portrait is in the style of Sir Godfrey Kneller, *Courtesy of the National Maritime Museum, in the public domain.*