EARTHWORKS AT LAVENDON

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Surveys of the Castle and Abbey at Lavendon and of the moated site at Uphoe are described. The history and topographical significance of the sites are discussed, with particular emphasis on the development of the Castle as a high-status residential complex in the earlier thirteenth century, and the creation in the early seventeenth century of an elaborate water garden on the site of the Abbey.

This paper is an account of surveys of three earthwork sites in the parish of Lavendon, undertaken with the aid of adult students attending a course on archaeological field survey organized by the Department of Adult Education of the University of Leicester and held at Knuston Hall, Northamptonshire in 1983 (Fig.1).

Lavendon Castle

At the time of Domesday (1086) four holdings in Lavendon were attributed to the Bishop of Coutances. The precise descent of all of them is obscure, but a manor held by William, the bishop's steward, and in the hands of eight thegns in 1066, can be shown by the first half of the twelfth century to have passed into the hands of Halnath de Bidun, quite possibly William's heir and a minor official of Henry I. Halnath had other lands close by in Buckinghamshire, at Filgrave, Lathbury and Weston Underwood, as well as properties in Bedfordshire and Northamptonshire. He also held, under Roger Bigod, territories in Norfolk, and, as a tenant of the Earl of Arundel, Watlington in Oxfordshire.

These estates became known as the Honour of Lavendon; the name implies that Lavendon was the *caput* of the barony and that it was there that its castle lay. It is during the lifetime of Halnath's son John, sheriff of Buckinghamshire in 1154, that the earliest references to this small grouping occur in documents which set out its feudal obligations. The knight service due from the honour was fixed variously at 5½ (in 1166) to 5¾ fees (in1165), with 2½ due from the demesne lands in Buckinghamshire and a number of places in Norfolk. John de Bidun was succeeded by his son, also John, who died young *c*1183–84, and the lands and what service they owed expressed as fractions of knights' fees, were divided among his five sisters. One portion went to Hugh (or Henry) de Clinton, the husband of John's eldest sister Amicia, who held one knight's fee *de honore de Lavenden* in 1201; another went to Amabel, the second sister, and passed to her heir Miles de Beauchamp, who died in 1264. In 1204 King John gave the Honour of Lavendon to William Briwerre and the existing tenants therefore owed their service to the king through him; this overlordship was divided up among the heirs of William's son, another William, and lost its separate identity in the thirteenth century. In the early fourteenth century the estate itself eventually became divided up between Cecily, daughter of Richard de Beauchamp, and Adam Grosset (Round 1913, xli xliii; Farrer 1923, 1–5; VCH 1927, 380–81; Sanders 1960, 128; Chibnall 1979, 169).

Some of the former Coutances land was sold before 1251 to Paulin de Peyvre (or Pever). Paulin Peyvre was a major figure in Henry III's reign. He was a Buckinghamshire knight who had risen through service to William de Cantilupe, one of the king's household stewards, to become a royal steward himself in 1241 and one of the dominant members of the king's council, particularly after 1244 when the influence of the earls and barons on its operations had been severely reduced in favour of men who surrounded the king's person. Such people were well placed to pick up shrievalties, castle custodianships and the farms and keeperships of royal manors; Paulin Peyvre, for example, was sheriff of Buckinghamshire and Bedfordshire in 1239 and, although a layman, kept the Diocese of Winchester during its vacancy between 1238 and 1244. According to Matthew Paris he was an ambitious, acquisitive and none too scrupulous man who, 'when he went to court was not possessed of two carucates of land, but by means lawful or unlawful soon became possessed of two hundred'

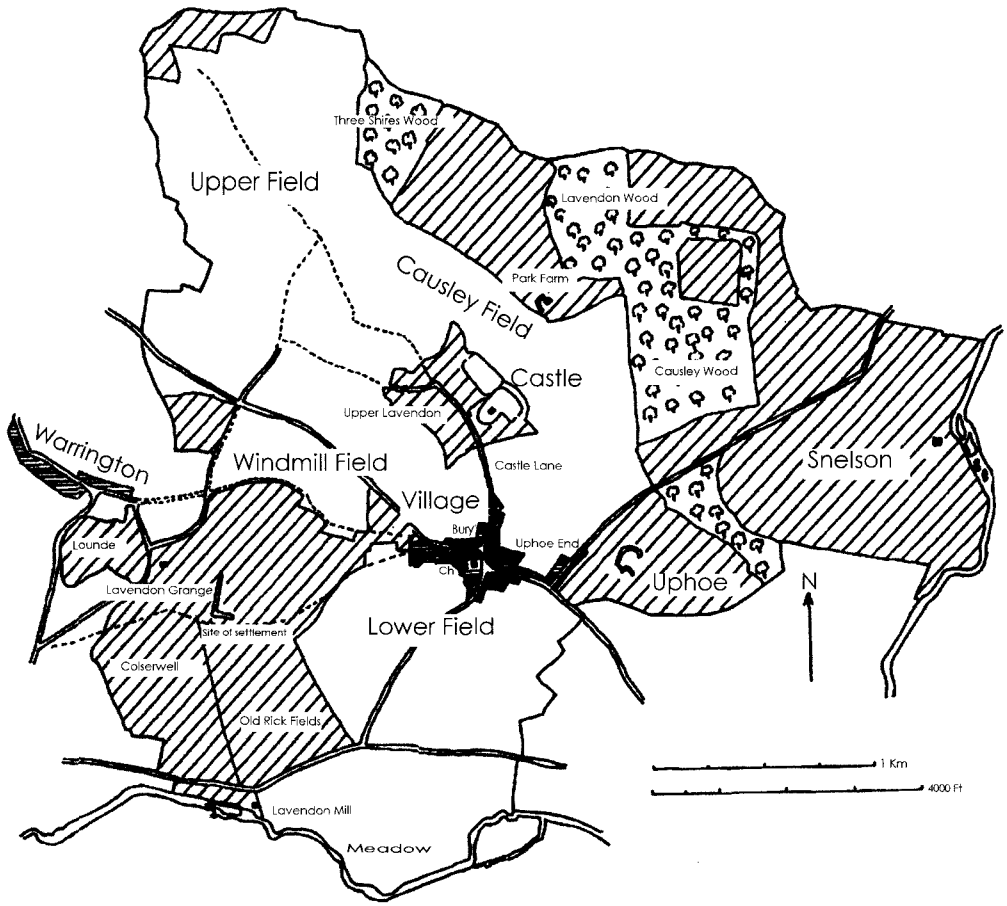

FIGURE 1 The parish of Lavendon showing places mentioned in the text. The shaded areas represent land already enclosed at the time of Parliamentary Enclosure in 1801.

and whose main focus of building activity was at Toddington in Bedfordshire (Luard 1857, 242; Fowler 1926, 316–19; Beresford 1957, 182; Meekings 1981, 1, 220; Stacey 1987). It is only now that we get a documentary reference to the castle as the head of the Honour, a position it must have held for a century or more; in 1276 jurors said that the suit to the hundred court due from the half fee belonging to the castle of Lavendon and the quarter fee in Weston Underwood had not been made by Paulin for the last twenty-four years. In 1279 the Hundred Rolls name Paulin's son John Pever as the holder of the castle, with a demesne of 95 acres and 15 acres in villeinage held by five named individuals with three acres apiece. Other portions of the castle estate, amounting to 57 acres (12 of them demesne ones) and a water mill, were held as tenants by a range of members of the landowning class, including Henry of Norwich and Alice, *domina de Hyda* (Olney Hyde). In 1249 Paul Pever obtained the grant of a Tuesday market at his manor and a fair on the vigil, feast and morrow of the Assumption (15 August), along with free warren on his demesne lands (*Rotuli Hundredorum* 1812, 37, 45; 1818, 349; *Calendar of Charter Rolls 1226–57*, 341; VCH 1927, 381).

There are very few references to the structure of the castle or to events associated with it. In 1192–3

during John's rebellion against Richard 1, Henry de Clinton received twenty loads of wheat *ad muniendum castellum de Lavendon* (Renn 1968 222). In 1231 the Abbot of Lavendon presented Nicholas de Emberton to the vicarage of Lavendon. The document in which this is recorded makes it clear that among his duties was to officiate in the chapel of the lord in the castle at Lavendon twice a week (Phillimore 1907, 86).

In 1429 the estate passed by descent in the female line to the Zouch family. References to it in documents cease and presumably it fell into disuse and much of its stone was taken away for use elsewhere. However, it continued to give its name to the Castle Manor in legal transactions and its land in the common fields was specifically identified in abuttals in terriers (WRO CR/133/47, 1607;'land belonging to the castle', BRO, BAS 643/37, 1663–4). In 1537 John lord Zouch sold the manor of Lavendon *alias* the Castle Manor to John Lord Mordaunt, lord of the neighbouring manor of Turvey in Bedfordshire. The fine recording the transaction does not mention the castle specifically and it is not possible to say whether it was included among the 10 messuages, 5 tofts, 300 acres of arable, 200 acres of pasture, 40 acres of meadow, 40 acres of wood, 20 /- rent and various manorial appurtenances listed in the document (VCH 1927, 380–82; BL Add MSS 5839). By the time of enclosure in 1801 the castle has simply become a farmhouse standing in an island of enclosed demesne land amounting to 43 acres (17 ha) within the common fields.

The Site (NGR SP 9170 5435; Fig. 2; Pl 1)

Lavendon castle stands at the end of a spur of land projecting westwards into the valley which gave Lavendon its name (*Lafa's* valley, Mawer and Stenton 1925, 9), with ground rising gently to over 90 m to the north-east.

The former existence of the castle was known to John Leland, but he did not visit it (Chandler 1993,24). In the early eighteenth century Browne Willis recorded what he described as 'the Ruins of the castle: it was moated and ditched about. A Farm House is built on the Scite and nothing remains of it but a piece of Wall about 40 Foot long and 10 Foot thick' (BL Add MSS 5839). The frequent discovery of 'foundations of great size' and the fact that 'dressed stones in considerable quantities are continually unearthed' were commented on in 1862 (Sheahan, 553, followed by Ratcliff 1900, 8). The fishpond to the north of the farmhouse was found to have been paved when cleaned out in the 1890s. A simplified plan of the site dated July 1910 is preserved in the British Library in the name of E A Downman of Essex (Add MSS 38113, f 24); a slightly more detailed drawing appears in the North Buckinghamshire volume issued by the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments in 1913 (163–4). There are brief references to the existence of the site in the general literature on castles published in recent years (Renn 1968,222; King 1983, 28), but given that the farmhouse now occupying the site is of seventeenth century date the statement by Jope and Threlfall that the motte was destroyed in 1944, yielding much twelfth century pottery (1959, 239 n1) requires qualification.

Many accounts assume that the castle had a motte, but this was not necessarily the case and there may equally well have been a ringwork; what remains now is a level platform A, 45m across on which the farmhouse sits. A low scarp 60m to the south-west of the house, the curve of which is continued by the modern approach track, might perpetuate the line of an early bailey. The bailey B to the north-east (1.8ha), which would appear to be later, is emphatically rectangular, with massive earthworks, a bank 2.1 m high and a ditch 17.2 m wide and 4.9 m deep above the top of the rampart. The entrance to the castle was probably on the north-west side of this, where there is a gap in the rampart, a causeway across the ditch and a south-facing scarp on the outside of the ditch. The entrance led to a second rectangular enclosure or court (C,2 ha) with a rampart 1.6 m high in places, itself also with an entrance on its north-west side aligned with that of the main bailey. This entrance in turn led into a narrow strip of land D defined by a low bank which, closed off on the north-east, could have been an approach way running down to the road to Lavendon. This rather long-winded way of getting into the castle meant that anyone approaching it from the village would have been obliged to circumnavigate the building, a device intended to encourage the visitor to appreciate the architecture and setting of the castle and hence the standing of its owner. At a later date this entrance system was replaced by the present direct approach to the farmhouse from the west. After this had happened, the rectangular enclosure was overploughed with ridge and furrow.

PLATE 1 Lavendon Castle from the north-west (copyright reserved Cambridge University Collection of Air Photographs).

To the south-west of the rectangular enclosure C, was more ridge and furrow, in one place overlying an earlier scarp, and in another cut by a property boundary running NE-SW. The ridge and furrow blocked the approach way D.

Another later development was the excavation of a narrow ditch running from the western side of the bailey ditch. The earth was piled on both sides of the ditch and a dam and sluice gate at the south-west end formed a small fishpond (E), with a broad outflow channel. The pond lay inside an enclosure defined by a low bank, with an entrance on the north- west. It cut intothe northern side of the motte.

The southern side of the main bailey B was cut by an entrance sliced obliquely through the ditch , affording access to the fields to the south-east of the castle. To the south of this were closes of two phases (F) defined by low banks with shallow ditches.

The rectangular enclosures and fishponds (B, C, E) are secondary to the original structure A and would have made the castle a much more impressive structure than it was originally. It is therefore apposite to recall what Matthew Paris had to say about the fine house which Paulin Peyvre built for himself at Toddington: 'like a palace and as enviroined with orchards and parks in a manner which, with its chapel and other outbuildings roofed with

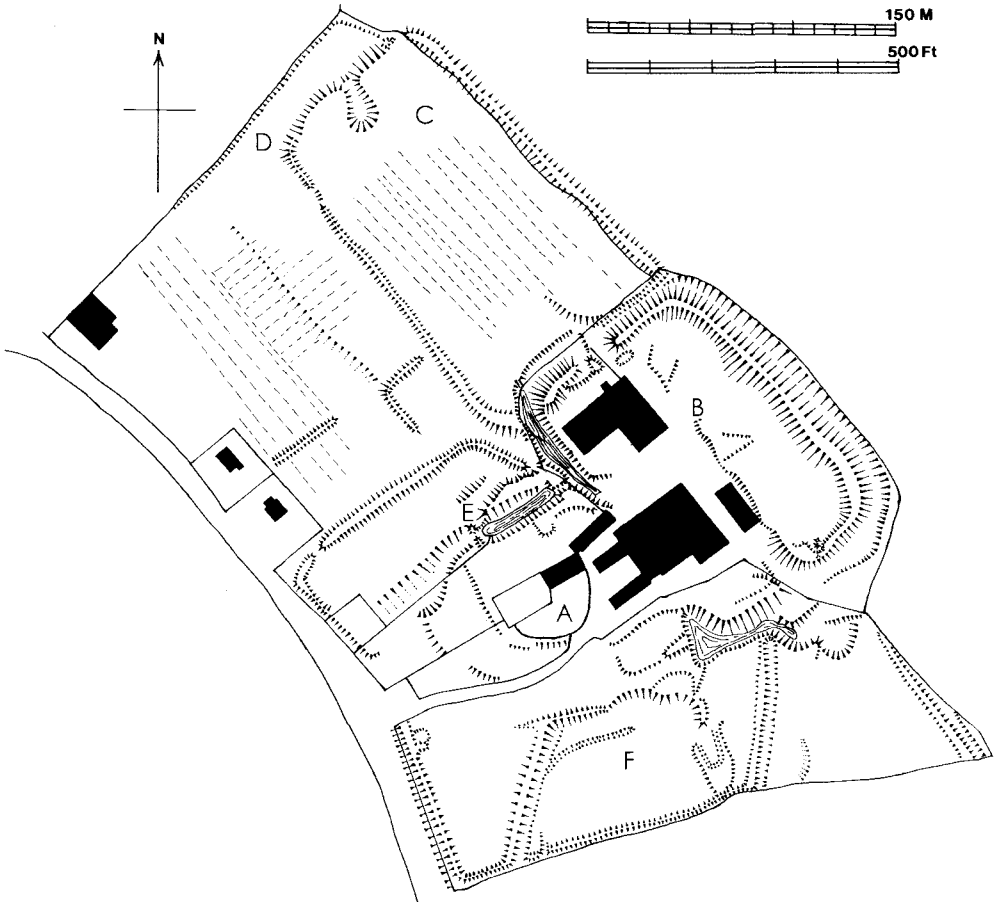

FIGURE 2 Lavendon Castle.

stone and lead, astonished all beholders.' It is possible that the, perhaps quite small, castle at Lavendon had been turned into something similar, with an impressive domestic structure within the bailey B, the motte or ringwork A being retained as a symbol of ancient baronial authority. A model for what could have been attempted at Lavendon was readily available to Paulin Peyvre, a man in close attendance on the king's person; it was in the 1240s and 1250s that Henry III put in train an exceedingly ambitious domestic building programme at Windsor, with residential suites of great refinement in both the Upper and Lower Wards, while retaining and enhancing the existing defences, including the motte, a highly visible symbol of established royal power (Keen and Scharff 2000, especially the contributions by V Jansen, C Wilson and T Tatton Brown). All this was of course expensive – ' just get the money however you can' were Henry's instructions in 1240, the total sum expended at Windsor amounting to £15,000; so probably with Paulin Peyvre at Toddington, where his weekly wage bill could easily range from £5 to 10 marks (£6..13s..4d Certain specific details of the work at Toddington can be paralleled at Lavendon, namely the interest in fishponds; it is known that Paulin Peyvre received fish for his ponds there from the king (Blundell 1925, 21).

Lavendon Abbey

Lavendon Abbey was founded between 1155 and 1158 as a house of Premonstratensian canons by John de Bidun, and colonized from Sulby in Northamptonshire. It was dedicated to the Virgin and St John the Baptist (Colvin 1951, 83–4; VCH 1905, 384–6). The medieval documentation about its properties is notably poor, consisting essentially of a confirmation charter of 1227 (Dugdale 1817–30, 888–9), but there seems to be little doubt that its endowments were small; by the late thirteenth century it had lost most of the churches with which it had been endowed in Northamptonshire, Bedfordshire and Norfolk, retaining only the ones in Buckinghamshire; the two cells in Buckinghamshire and Kent were also lost. The document which confirmed the appropriation to it of the church of Easton Maudit in Northamptonshire in 1397 complained of poverty – the abbey lay close to the common street (actually two main roads, from Wellingborough to Newport Pagnell and from Northampton to Bedford) and was expected to provide hospitality; revenues had gone down because of the plague; lands were barren, labourers few and wages high (*Calendar of...Papal Registers,* 73–4). The impression of a poor house is borne out by other independent pieces of evidence. A series of visitations between 1482 and 1500 by Richard Redman, then Bishop of St Asaph and the Abbot of Premontre's permanent representative in England, disclosed various shortcomings in the behaviour of the canons - improper dress, playing tennis and gambling, women - but also required the repair of the dormitory, cloister, bell tower and mill (Gasquet 1906, 32–43). At the Dissolution the buildings were said to be in ruin.

It was certainly at the lower end of Premonstratensian houses in terms of size –ten canons in 1475–8, nine in 1500, eleven in 1534 (Colvin 1951, 358). Since its income fell below £200 a year (actually only £79..13s..8d) it was dissolved under the first Act of Suppression in 1536. The site was then leased to Sir Edmund Peckham of Denham, who bought it outright in 1543 (VCH 1927, 384). It was leased by the Peckhams to John Waters of Aston Mullins in Dinton, Buckinghamshire, in 1550. In 1558 it was granted to Thomas White and others and in 1573 sold to Sir Roland Heyward, alderman and lord mayor of London , founder of the Muscovy Company and promoter of voyages to the orient. It had therefore passed through the hands of a number of speculators.

In 1615 the Heyward family sold it to William and Humphrey Newton. The Newtons came from Axmouth in Devon and were a family of some pretensions; the current head of the family was routinely described as an esquire and junior members as gentlemen in seventeenth century deeds (BRO D117 43–4, 1616; D X66/7, 1635). At some point before 1566 William Newton married Joan, the daughter of William Mallock, also of Axmouth. Their son John married Mary, daughter of William Botiler of Biddenham in Bedfordshire, and moved there. It was their sons William and Humphrey who bought the Lavendon estate; the elder, William, remained at Biddenham, being described as of that place in an heraldic pedigree of 1634; the younger, Humphrey, lived at least for a time at Lavendon, since he is referred to as 'of Lavendon' in deeds of 1616 (Blaydes 1884, 127;Vivian 1895, 546–7; Rylands 1909, 187–8; 1915, 182). The Newtons may well have had Puritan leanings. Both William and Humphrey were baptized at Colyton, a small market town near Axmouth; both places were major centres of Puritanism in east Devon and a source of considerable concern to the diocesan authorities until well into the 18th century (Murch 1835, 332–42; Sharpe 2002, 30–7). They were also places with an interest in the colonization of New England, and the Newtons were probably acquainted with, and indeed related to, people who were directly concerned with this; Richard Mallock, of the same family as that married into by William Newton, married Joan the daughter of John Younge of Colyton in 1597. He was an investor in the Dorchester Company in 1623, a scheme to found an agricultural, fur-trading and fishing colony in America, to propagate Puritan views there and to form a refuge for moderate nonconformists. As part of this expedition, Anthony Newton of Colyton, possibly another relation, sailed in the *Anne*, maybe with his wife Ellen. In 1646 John Newton, surgeon of Colyton, left money in his will to his son and daughter now in New England (Brown 1963, 232; Sharpe 2002, 36–7). But as representatives of the gentry class, the sort of people keen to register their coat of arms when the heralds came round on visitation, it seems that the Newtons were moderate in their attitudes. Humphrey sent his son John to St Edmund Hall, Oxford, in 1637, where he remained loyal to the

king and subsequently attained distinction as a mathematician and astronomer (DNB 1894, 394–5). Humphrey may well not have stayed at Lavendon for any length of time since John was born at Oundle in Northamptonshire in 1622 and Humphrey was described as 'of Oundle' in the heraldic pedigree of 1634.

The Newtons were responsible for putting up a house at Lavendon Abbey. The evidence comes from Browne Willis, who visited Lavendon during the incumbency of Noel Lawson, ie sometime between 1701 and 1721. He referred in his notes to the current ownership of the Abbey estate by Mr (Richard) Newton of Yardley Hastings and made the assumption that this person was a descendant of the family of the same name which was there in the early seventeenth century. Willis says that the ancestors of the Newtons 'built a house of the ruins about fourscore years ago', sometime roughly therefore between 1621 and 1641. This is actually slightly late for Humphrey Newton, but must refer to him since the next sentence in the notes separately describes the Grange, which was not put up by any member of the Newton family (BL Add MSS 5839; Stowe 1051 f. 95; Bodleian MS Willis 24, fos.66–7).

In 1626 Humphrey Newton sold the Abbey to Robert Eccleston. It was Robert Eccleston who built the present Lavendon Grange; he is described as 'of Lavendon Grange' in 1639 and clearly lived there; Browne Willis recorded the initials REE and the date 1626 over the door. Henceforward the abbey estate is referred to as Lavendon Grange in documents.

That Robert Eccleston was a man with London connexions seems to be made clear by the fact that his eldest son John was born in London in 1612 and went to school there; so did his younger son Robert, at Aldermanbury (Venn 1922, 83). If so, then it is highly likely that he was the Robert Eccleston who was admitted a freeman of the Merchant Taylors Company in on 13 March 1614; the John Eccleston who was so admitted on 7 February 1583 might well have been his father and the person responsible for establishing the family fortune. In 1620 Robert Eccleston left an annual rent of £11 to the parish of St Mary the Virgin Aldermanbury to fund a distribution to the poor. This was done in association with Sir John Davey, a City financier known to have bought the Recievership of Crown Lands in 1604 and to have been involved in lending money to government officials later on, perhaps therefore an indication of the kind of man Robert Eccleston was (GL MS 34037/2; 2480/3, p.822). He paid by far the largest sum (£5) in Lavendon in the tax levied in 1642 for the relief of Ireland; his servants paid a further ten shillings, impressive figures out of a parish total of £11..19s..6d (Wilson 1983, 31). He sent both his sons to Cambridge (John to Christs in 1629 and Robert to Sidney Sussex in 1632); John proceeded to Lincolns Inn in 1633 and sent his own son Robert there in 1655/6 (Lincoln's Inn 1896, 221, 272). The association with Cambridge might indicate a Puritan outlook, but the fact that in 1632–3 Robert senior sold the rectory and advowson to Anthony Elcocke, quite probably as a trustee for the royalist Edward Noel, Viscount Campden, does not suggest someone with an intense desire to ensure a godly ministry to the people of Lavendon (VCH 1927, 386); his Puritanism may have been moderate and of a personal kind.

In 1671 Lavendon Grange was sold to Thomas Newton of Yardley Hastings in Northamptonshire, whose son Richard Newton, founder of Hertford College, Oxford, at times lived there, sometimes taking undergraduates with him; he died in 1753 and was buried in Lavendon church (DNB 1894, 399–400;VCH 1927, 384–6).

The documents which record the various leases and sales of the abbey estate between 1536 and 1573 contain no detailed surveys of the precinct and its buildings and are rather generalized. 'Certen parcels of pasture and wood abowte the house .....the cytuacon orchards doff howses and gardens a yard callyd the Crowe yard and a pond in the same' (PRO E 315 f17, shortly after the Dissolution); 'houses, buildings, dove house, yards, gardens, orchards within the circuit and precinct of the late monastery' (BRO D/C/1/209, lease to Edmund Peckham, 1536). All of them list as the demesne a 'great field called Colserwell containing 75 acres, another field called Downe Field containing 65 acres (*diversis* in 1573 and therefore in a common field; this was in fact an earlier name for the Windmill Field of Fig 1, BRO BAS deeds), 80 acres in a field called Tenoke (another common field, later on the Upper Field)....a pasture called Windmill Hill Close containing 22 acres, a Bush Ground containing 60 acres, a little wood called High Wood containing 4 acres.' The sale to Sir Edward Peckham also lists twenty one tenants in Lavendon and two

in Cold Brayfield (*Letters and Papers Henry VIII,* 18 (1), no 108).

By the 1730s field names and acreages set out in sales and mortgages show that the large enclosed fields of the sixteenth century had been divided into smaller ones, not quite those of the six-inch Ordnance Survey maps since there was a reorganization after 1848 (BRO D/70/4; D242/4/1,46 (map of 1848)). A warren of four acres is mentioned in 1755; the farmhouse makes its first definite appearance in deeds at the same time (D70/18). A block of land consisting of 69 acres (the Old Rick Fields, to the south of the abbey site and east of Colserwell, Fig 1) which begins to appear in the 1730s could represent the enclosure by agreement of land more or less equivalent in size to the 65 acres in Down Field given in the earlier documents.

The site (NGR SP 9020 5355; Fig 3; Pl 2)

Lavendon Abbey lay 1km west of the village and 1.5 km south-west of the castle in a low-lying position east of a stream which ran southwards from the northern edge of the parish to link with another which ran from Olney Hyde to join the Ouse 750m west of Lavendon Mill.

Earlier antiquarian accounts imply that little was to be seen of the conventual buildings. Browne Willis commented on the paucity of the remains ('no memorial left to testifye to the Antiquity of it but the foundations of buildings, which appear some distance every way about the present Farm-House seem to discover the magnificence of its founders'). He refers to a map of about 1600, since lost, which shows no old buildings. 'The Abbey church is said to have stood in a Close above the house (ie The Grange), where was a Warren of Rabbits, which burrowed away the Ruins as I learn; but nothing of it is now to be discovered' (BL Add MSS 5839). Ratcliff (1900, 9) refers to burials, but the precise location of their discovery is not clear. The RCHME (1913, 163) gives the briefest of references to the so-called moat, with no plan.

Worked stones re-used from the abbey are to be seen in garden walls of the Grange and were made use of in the construction of the porch (Rendell nd, 1–3).

The precinct boundary on the north is represented by a bank A, sometimes with a ditch surviving, which fronts the lane which runs north-eastwards from the Grange and along which the parish boundary between Lavendon and Warrington runs. At B the bank turns abruptly to the east and runs for 80m before turning through ninety degrees to run south. On the west, south-west and south the various road lines probably indicate the precinct boundary, but there is no good indication of where it ran in the south-eastern part of the site.

The principal gateway to the precinct might have been at C, where there is a gap in the earthwork bank at a point which faced the village street of Warrington, 300m away to the west. Set 50m inwards from this was an embanked approach track D, 20m wide. The eastern side of this could also have formed the precinct boundary. The trackway ran for 220 m before turning through ninety degrees westwards to run for a further 60m into what could have been the inner monastic enclosure, now represented by gardens south of the Grange. The location of the conventual buildings is unknown, but could well have been in this area, as is implied by the remarks by Willis about the presence of foundations around the farm house. To the north of the approach track was a small embanked enclosure E containing now a series of shallow drainage ditches, and to the west of it another enclosure, F, this time ditched, with ridge and furrow. To the west of this again were four small enclosures of various sizes separated by three banks with ditches on their eastern sides (G). There are good parallels at Sulby for an approach track defined by earthworks with enclosures like this attached to it.

To the west of the Grange was a piece of land known as Lounde, Lowne, Lawne or Lown in sixteenth to nineteenth century documents (eg BRO D70/4, 49,50,76; Fig 1), clearly the same as the *terram de la Lunde* mentioned in the confirmation charter as having been given to the Abbey by Ranulf Earl of Chester in the twelfth century. This piece of land is now in the parish of Lavendon, but the way in which its boundary behaves indicates that originally it formed part of Warrington, of which the Earl had been lord. Within it was a set of three fishponds (H), one with a large island. There was an overflow channel alongside the western side of these ponds, which, given the height at which it had been cut, must have connected with the stream only with considerable difficulty. The ponds could well be medieval and have belonged to the Abbey. To the west again were stone quarries.

In the immediate vicinity of the Grange the most prominent earthwork remains were concerned with

PLATE 2 Lavendon Abbey from the east (copyright reserved Cambridge University Collection of Air Photographs).

the management of water. These fall into two groups. At I, on a patch of Oxford Clay, was a right-angled pond which served as a reservoir, with a substantial bank on its inner side. There was a smaller bank along its western and southern edges. This bank was cut by several openings (one of them blocked at a later date) which took water away by means of short channels to a longer channel, J, which ran northwards; there was at least one rectangular fishpond attached to the eastern side of this – any ponds which might have existed to the west of J had been destroyed by later quarrying for stone (which also cut through a small area of ridge and furrow). There was also a series of small oval islands set within the northern part of the channel J.

The northern end of J has been disturbed by the excavation of the field boundary M, but after that point it is clear that it had turned through ninety degrees to run westwards, then northwards and westwards again to serve a set of three fishponds, K. These ponds cut into the southern edge of three of the four small enclosures at G. The three westernmost of these enclosures and part of the easternmost were amalgamated to form a rabbit warren, with a new boundary at L. There was a circular ditched mound 8m across inside the warren. The earthwork evidence suggests that the northern boundary of this enclosure was also modified, but a clear picture of what had been done could not be obtained in dense vegetation.

The north-south approach way D was abolished by having a boundary bank driven down the middle of it (enclosure map, BRO IR25aR, 1801). This turned through a right angle at its northern end to form the northern side of a new presumably pasture close bounded on the west by the bank of the warren, L. This close replaced the enclosure F.

The low bank at M, with a ditch to the north, formed the boundary of a close known in the nineteenth century as Thoroughfare or the Three-cornered Close, the purpose of which was to afford passage from the farm to its fields (BRO D70/49,

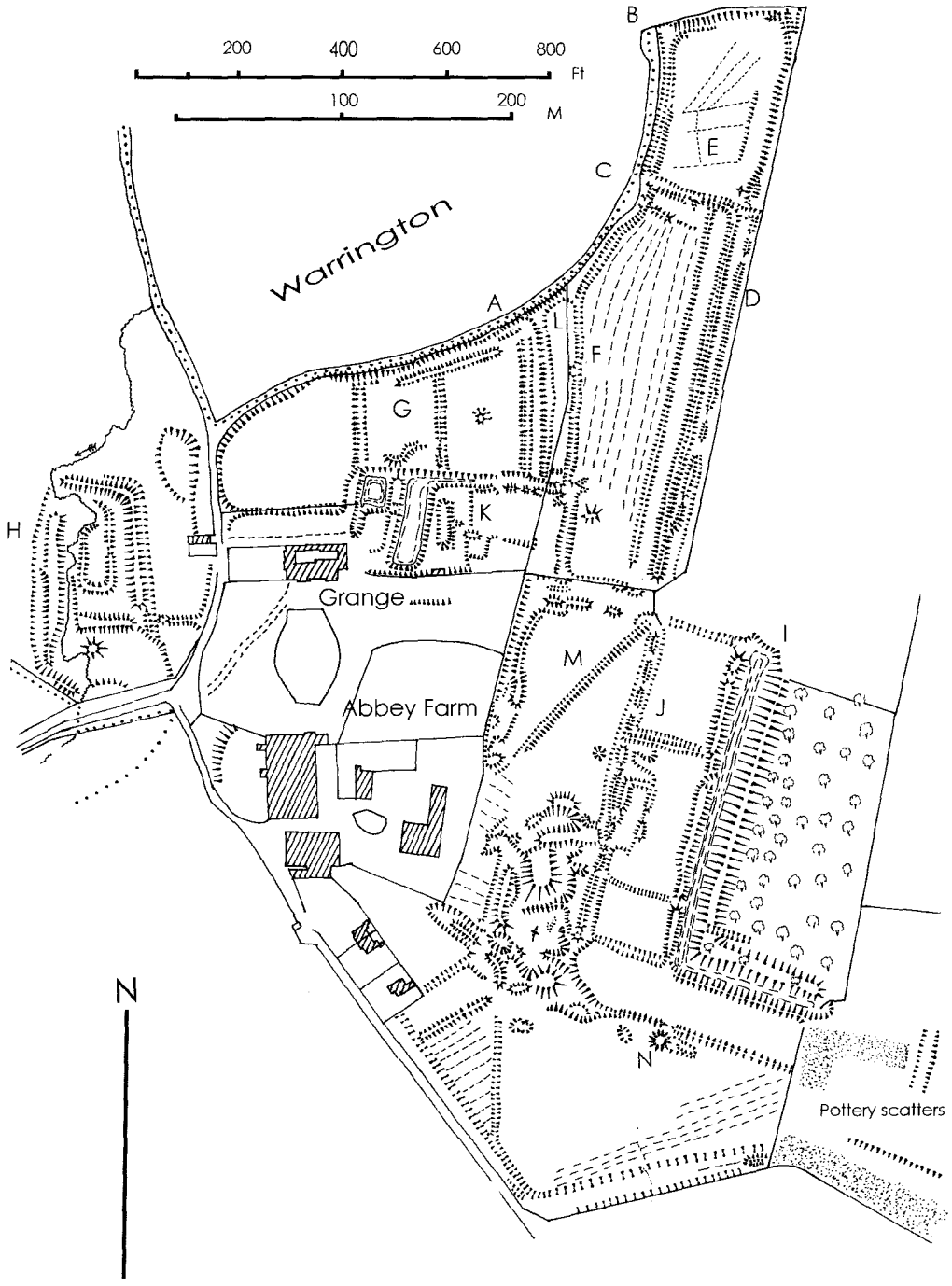

FIGURE 3 Lavendon Abbey earthworks.

50, 1817; D242/46, 1851). The circular earthwork N, 10m in diameter, could have been a post-medieval dovehouse, for which there is documentary evidence (BRO D70/18, 1755).

Most of these earthworks belong to a formally laid-out garden of a type that can be dated stylistically to the early seventeenth century (Whittle and Taylor 1994). More specifically, the heavy emphasis on water and on getting it into and out of ponds place the Lavendon remains into the class defined by one of us as 'fishing' gardens, to be associated in particular with people attracted by the concept of quietism, in which a garden, and in particular the pursuit of angling within it, was seen as an ideal setting for contemplation and renewal, particularly after a period of activity and engagement with the world (Everson and Williamson 1998, 147–50). In general such notions were linked with Puritanism, which means that the Lavendon garden could have been laid out by either of the early seventheenth century owners of the estate; but since the Newtons were not there for any length of time perhaps Robert Eccleston could be considered as the most likely author of them. This would fit in with what we know about him; a requirement for a garden like this would suit someone who had been a London businessman and was now a country gentleman. The inscription placed on a sundial above the door of the Grange - *Pereunt et imputantur,* 'they perish and are brought to reckoning' (Shehan 1862, 554) – might be taken as an expression of the personal preoccupations of someone deeply and properly concerned with the fate of his own soul or, more assertively, as a reflection on the fate of the former, monastic, occupants of the site. Or both. In any case the standpoint seems clear. The prominent bank which clearly puts out of use the approach track D looks like a positive act of erasure not strictly required since there was a bank already in place which, suitably modified, could have been used. By the nineteenth century these gardens were out of use, as the Thoroughfare Close, which cuts across them, indicates.

Uphoe

The estate which became known as the manor of Uphoe appears in Domesday Book as a one hide holding held by Ralf under the Countess Judith, with land for 1½ ploughs and a recorded population of 1 villein and 3 bordars; before the Conquest it had been held by Turbot, a man of the Countess Gytha. In common with the rest of Judith's lands it belonged to the Honor of Huntingdon in the Middle Ages. In the late twelfth century it passed to Hugh of St Medard (VCH 1927, 382–3); it was he and not a member of the Bidun family who gave the church of Lavendon (which contains work of the period 950 –1100, notably the tower, Taylor and Taylor 1965, 376–7), to the Abbey. In 1234 Roger de Uphoe and his son Robert de Uphoe sold land to the Abbey and also to Simon de Norwich, the use of the name Uphoe (the upper spur of land, Mawer and Stenton 1925, 10) in this way implying that the manorial site had by now been brought into existence. Simon de Norwich was a king's clerk who served Henry III for twenty-two years – he acted as a receiver of the temporalities of religious houses and bishoprics during vacancies, and was a provisioner of the royal army in 1245. He had the same acquisitive instincts as Paulin Peyvre and was helped by the king to fulfill them, receiving gifts from ecclesiatics and in 1241 a prebend at Lichfield. At Lavendon he bought more land and a mill in 1249; his kinsman Henry de Norwich, likewise in the king's service, bought still more (VCH 1927, 383). In 1279 the estate was said to consist of a capital messuage and a tiny demesne of 10 acres as well as 39 tenanted acres, as with all the Hundred Rolls figures a clear understatement (*Rotuli Hundredorum* 1812, 349). In 1265 Henry also bought 25 acres of what must have been assarted land 'in Lavendon between the road to Yardley Hastings (Yerdeweye) and land which William de Olneye once held in Le Fladehey, in length from Easton (Maudit) wold (*Waldis de Estona*) to the wood of Waldey' (Travers 1989, no 94). This will have been part of the detached portion of Lavendon parish which survived north of the road to Northampton late enough to be marked, as New Pastures, on Jeffery's county map of 1770 (Fig 5).

The estate remained in the Norwich family until 1623, when it was sold to John Parker of Duston; in 1711 it passed to William Carter of Snelson, who sold it in 1719 to Denis Farrer of Cold Brayfield, to become part of the very extensive lands held by that family in both that parish and Lavendon (VCH 1927, 384).

The Site (NGR SP 9228 5362; Fig 4)

The moated site of Uphoe stands on the top of a spur of land which overlooks both the River Ouse and the

village of Lavendon, at a height of 80m (the same as that of Lavendon Castle). Three hundred metres to the east is Snip Wood, the boundaries of which suggest that it once formed a block of woodland shared between Uphoe and Snelson and cut into from both sides; however, surveys of eighteenth century date show that by then it was attributed entirely to the latter place (eg BRO D/C/4/1, 1703). There are several documents which list the closes in which the site sits, with their names, but the total acreage given in them does not agree with that derived from the Ordnance Survey (44 acres as against 66:BRO D/GA 27). The farmhouse, which is of stone, has never been subjected to an architectural survey.

The site was approached from the west by a track, D, 22m wide, defined on the south by a ditch and on the north by a scarp. The moat, A,10m wide, was originally sub-rectangular; the eastern side has been encroached upon by farm buildings and the southern side is now represented by a pond. Attached to the moat's eastern, southern and western sides are irregular enclosures B of relatively slight dimensions, which could be later in date than the moat. There is a small rectangular fishpond C marked by a dam and a scarp alongside the northern side of the approach track, commented on by J Sheahan in 1862 (553) and shown on Ordnance maps of the 1880s.The outflow from the fishpond ran north- westwards, alongside the entrance track There was also a dovecot, marked on the Enclosure Map of 1801 and on the six-inch Ordnance map surveyed in 1881–2 (published in 1891). It had gone by the second edition of the same map, revised in 1899 and published in 1900 (Bucks Sheet 11 SE).

Concluding Remarks

The picture Domesday Book gives of Lavendon is a complicated one, with no less than ten entries attributed to it. Of these, one related to Snelson, a hamlet in Lavendon which had its own field system in the Middle Ages, and three to the adjacent but separate parish of Cold Brayfield; one of these

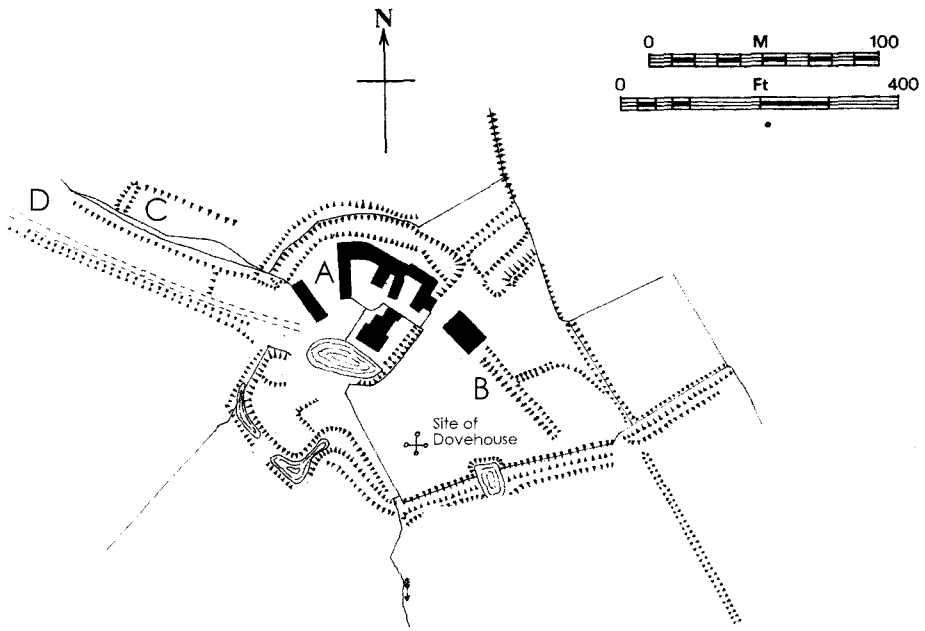

Figure 4 Uphoe.

belonged to Abingdon, a hamlet similarly with its own territory.

In Lavendon itself the most prominent landowner was the Bishop of Coutances, as we have seen with four holdings attributable to him. It was here and at Lathbury and Weston Underwood that the demesne estates of what became the Honour of Lavendon were to be found. The question to be asked is why Lavendon in particular was chosen as the *caput* of the barony, given that the other estates were quite sizeable – that at Lathbury was assessed at five hides and was worth £4, that at Weston Underwood at 7½ hides and a valuation of £5. In Lavendon the only Coutances lands which can definitely be traced forward to the Honour are the 4⅔ hides valued at £3 tenanted by his steward William. But the descent of the other Coutances land is obscure and it may well have been the case that the attraction was the possibility of combining this with the other three to produce an estate of 9 1/3 hides valued at £8..10, well in excess of the other two places. To this could have been added a 2½ hide estate worth £2 attributed in 1086 to the Count of Mortain, the descent of which is similarly unclear and which was assigned by the *Victoria County History* (1927, 384) to the Abbey, a foundation of the Bidun family. All this is consistent with what is known about the manorial structure of Lavendon later on, when it appears as greatly simplified. In the Hundred Rolls (1818, 349), excluding land in Cold Brayfield still labelled as Lavendon, there are four main groups, Snelson, the castle estate which had belonged to Paulin Peyvre, Abbey land and Uphoe; Browne Willis's account reflects this, with four manors again, Snelson, the Priory or Grange, the Castle and Town manors.

At Domesday, Lavendon contained much woodland – the holdings attributable to it had altogether wood for 295 pigs. Today there are still 114.5 acres (46.3 hectares) of woodland in the parish and in the early nineteenth century when enclosure took place there had been 85 acres more; Causeley Wood was cut down sometime between 1801 and 1881. Lavendon thus takes its place as one of the many wooded localities which stretched on relatively high ground along the borders of Buckinghamshire and Northamptonshire for 32km from the forests of Salcey and Whittlewood to the River Ouse; to the east of the Ouse the general line was continued into Bedfordshire as the area of woodland known as Bruneswald (Fig 5).

This woodland was a major attraction, not only as a valuable resource in its own right, but also, and especially since these Buckinghamshire woods were outside the royal forests of Salcey and Whittlewood (Bazeley 1921), as a locale for hunting. At Lavendon a park was established at an early date close to the castle, making a classic park/castle combination of the kind well known from other major royal or baronial establishments. The position of the park at Lavendon is fixed by a charter in the *Cartulary* of Harrold Priory in Bedfordshire, which describes the bounds of a wood in Harrold given by Robert fitz Payn de Braose to the nuns in *c* 1155–60 – 'up to the fields of Bosiete, up to the king's wood, up to the park of John Bedun, and up to the boundary of Senellestuna'. This would place the park in the area of the present Three Shires and Lavendon Woods (Fig 1). This identification is supported by a charter of Ralf fitz John and his wife Isabel of *c*1248–54 in the same collection, in which they grant to the nuns their share in a dyke 'which (was) outside the wood of the nuns, (extending) in length from the park of Miles de Beauchamp to the high road of Olney' (Fowler 1935, 16–7, 30). Although its eastern boundary is vague, the continuous hedge line of an oval enclosure along the northern boundary of the parish probably indicates its area (205 acres, 82.9 hectares); a bank has been reported at SP 917554 (Hall and Nickerson 1966, 3–5). John Leland mentions the Castle Park at Lavendon, and there are many references in documents of sixteenth to eighteenth century date to field names and woods which perpetuated its memory - an arable field of 94 to 100 acres was known as Castle Park; there was a Castle Park Wood (36¾ acres in 1703) and the furlong name Castle Park Corner in Tinnock Field (BRO D/C/1/209, 4/1; documents in BAS collection). Park Farm on the southern edge of the park seems to have been a lodge; there is a reference to a moat around it in1862 (Sheahan, 554) and a moat on its western side was shown on the older Ordnance Survey maps but no longer appears on the more recent editions (Fig 1).

The Hundred Rolls (1812, 38; 1818, 350) say that both Henry of Norwich and Reginald de Grey had parks, the latter at Snelson. All this fits in well with the heavy concentration of these landscape features in this wooded part of Buckinghamshire (Cantor and Hatherly 1975–8, 438–9). The same source tells us that John Peyvre also had a park

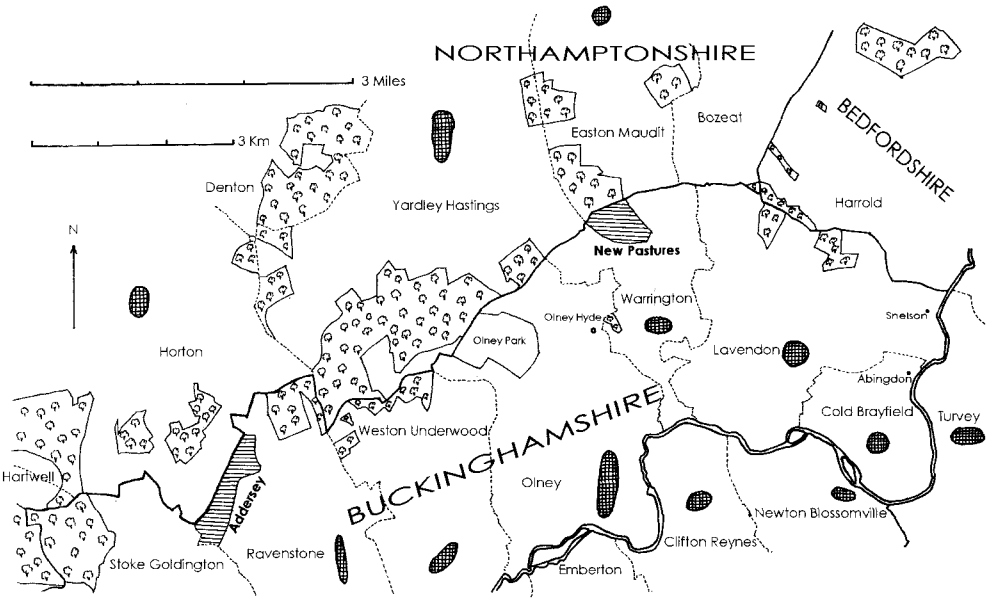

FIGURE 5 Lavendon and the parishes nearby, showing woodland in existence now. The shaded areas are the detached parts of the parish of Lavendon.

here. The suggestion can be made that this was in fact a reference to the enclosed area around the castle, as shown on the early nineteenth century Enclosure Map (Fig 1). This hedged zone, conspicuously distinct from the common fields, comes into view as one proceeds northwards from the village along Castle Lane, with the Castle gradually revealing itself, all part of the emphasis on display and opulence to be expected from its earlier thirteenth century owner. The immediate environs of Lavendon Castle had become a conspicuous amenity feature of the kind Paulin Peyvre had created at Toddington and which was commented on with such perspicacity by Matthew Paris.

Most of the documentary evidence for Lavendon is of post-medieval date, but nevertheless it is possible to suggest that the existence of the medieval lordly sites described here did have a direct bearing on the way in which the village of Lavendon developed (Fig 6). An analysis of the Enclosure and nineteenth century Ordnance Survey maps suggests that the principal axis along which the village developed was the road which ran from the direction of Olney towards the zone of woodland in the north of the parish. The road from Northampton to Bedford makes a dog-leg junction with this. The north-eastern quadrant so formed contains at least one substantial property and, running northwards and in part cut out of this, many smaller, regularly set out tenements. The south-eastern quadrant has a number of larger properties – one of them called Manor Farm (but of unknown affiliation in the tenurial structure of Lavendon) and smaller properties of shallow depth which look like additions to this formal layout. The south-western quadrant has the church and rectory, and alongside the Northampton road a series of village properties basically regular in form. The quadrant on the north-west has a large farm with the suggestive name of The Bury; it has been claimed that a ringwork existed immediately to the north of this, but the site has not been universally accepted and is now in part covered with modern housing (Mynard 1968, 12; King 1983, 29). Further peasant tenements have been set out alongside the western side of Castle Lane, some of them some of them apparently cut out of the large land unit represented by The Bury farm.

The way in which the present main road cuts the

axial north – south road is awkward and was originally more so given the manner in which it threaded its way around the northern side of the churchyard. The reason for this state of affairs is that this road is not the original road to Northampton. After negotiating the zone of woodland on the watershed between the Nene and Ouse valleys, the original route might have first proceeded to Warrington, then passed close to the main gate of the Abbey, run through Windmill Field, and, after a turn to the south to follow the edge of an open field furlong, met another track which came up from the south-west from the direction of the Abbey. Both routes are still marked by footpaths today (Figs.1 and 6). The alignment then passed to the south of the church along what is now the rear of the peasant properties to join conformably the present road to Bedford. All this can be put forward because the old maps show the present main road cutting through hedge lines immediately to the west of the village which seem to define enclosures derived from former open field furlongs. Once these furlongs had been taken out of the common field system, then whoever owned the land they had contained could have laid out a new road alignment and attached village tenements to the southern side of it. If this is accepted, then originally the church and The Bury formed one settlement unit, separated tenurially when the rectory was made over to the Abbey by Hugh de St Medard in the late twelfth century (VCH 1927, 386). This block of land would have belonged to the holding at Domesday attributed to the Countess Judith and held by Ralph, which in due course became the manor of Uphoe; the creation of the moated site of that name would have had the effect of removing the manorial attributes which The Bury might until then have had.

The making of the moated manor at Uphoe could have had other effects. There are deeds of eighteenth and nineteenth century date which show that the group of houses set alongside the road to Harrold was known as Uphoe End; a handful of eighteenth century documents show that some cot-

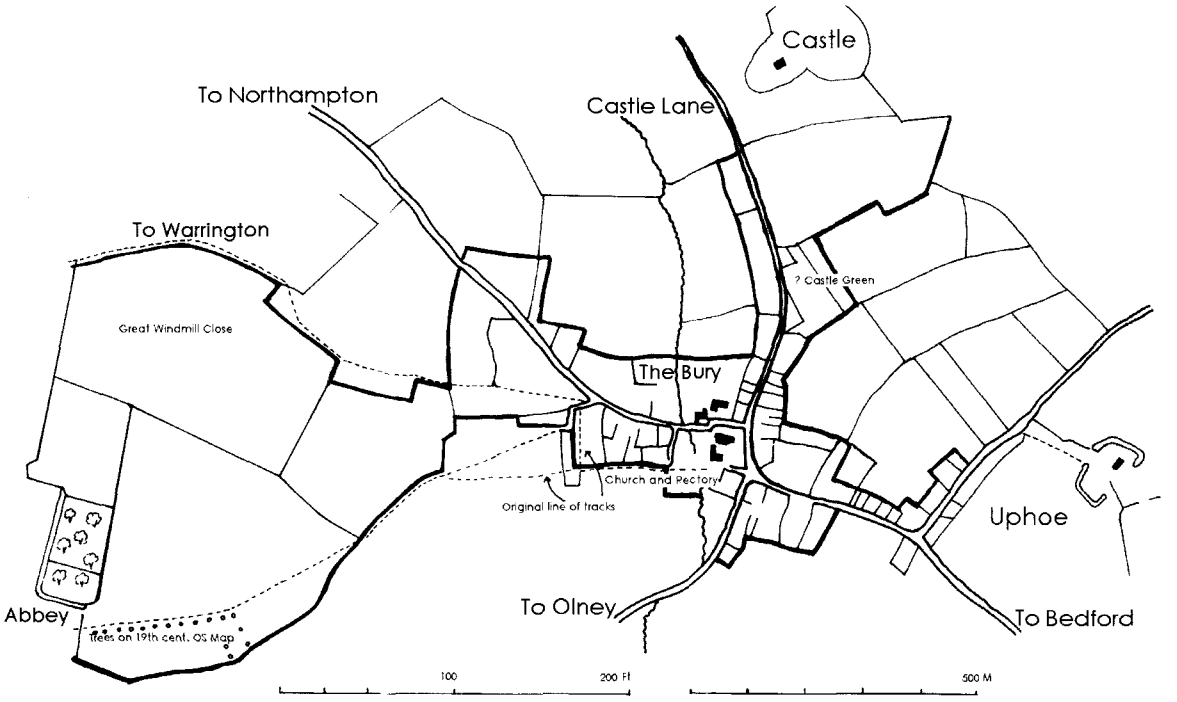

FIGURE 6 The topography of Lavendon village. The heavy line is the boundary of land already enclosed at the time of Parliamentary Enclosure.

tages here did in fact belong to the Uphoe estate; one in 1703 was referred to as 'being in Uphoe' (BRO DGA 27; BAS deeds). There is no proof that Uphoe End was the result of a concentration of tenants belonging to this particular manor in the Middle Ages, but the existence of houses with this name is suggestive. Also, the Jefferys map of Buckinghamshire of 1770 shows some houses called Upper Lavendon at the northern end of Castle Lane; there are seventeenth century deeds relating to Over Lavendon which could well be the same place. This could have been another 'end'; spreads of stone and medieval pottery suggest the former presence of buildings opposite the Castle along its western side of the lane (air photograph CUP AMX 48) (Fig 1). The presence of the Castle might have attracted settlement, or alternatively early Lavendon could have consisted of rather scattered settlement foci of which Upper Lavendon could have been one and the grouping around The Bury another.

There is no documentary evidence for the location of the market and fair. Topographically the area of old enclosure immediately to the south of the zone around the Castle stands out as sitting unconformably with the run of village tenements along Castle Lane (Fig.6). Perhaps the market had been here and this was the Castle Green to which references are made in depositions before the Enclosure Commissioners in 1801. This would be consistent with the statement in the grant that the market was to be held 'at the manor', on the edge of the emparked area which surrounded the castle.

The Bidun barony did not last long as a unified concern and was always small. Nevertheless its owners felt it necessary to follow the custom of their class and to found a monastery. Genuine religious enthusiasm was no doubt important – Halnath de Bidun became a monk at St Andrews, Northampton, and his sons, including John, were witnesses to the charter by which he gave rents to the Abbey. They were admitted to the Abbey's confraternity (Farrer1923, 1). But John de Bidun wanted his own abbey close to his castle, no doubt to reinforce his status as a tenant-in-chief. It has recently been pointed out how many religious houses there were in this northern, wooded and marginal part of Buckinghamshire and how this concentration could be interpreted as an instance of founders getting the spiritual benefits of a monastic foundation at a relatively low cost (Mynard and Ivens 2002, 96), but in the case of Lavendon the founder's resources were small to begin with and the outcome a poorly endowed and not particularly successful establishment.

However, the foundation of the Abbey did have significant consequences for the landscape of Lavendon. The confirmation charter named John de Bidun as founder; he gave *locum abbatiae...situs iuxta Wardintun in campis de Lavindene cum culturis adiacentibus.* A trace of this land might still exist as the ridge and furrow within the precinct to the west of the L-shaped reservoir I. There was also the *sartum de Hiltebeya* (unlocated), an enclosed wood *(parcum nemoris)* next to Tinnock Wood (now Three Shire Wood) and two gifts of land measured in acres, twenty-nine in all. From other donors came a total of 58 acres, two sets of plough ridges (selions) amounting to 36, acreages unstated, 7½ acres of woodland and 3½ roods of meadow, all in Lavendon (plus a few gifts elsewhere). A portion of this territory, as we have seen, was enclosed demesne land. On part of this, immediately to the east of the Abbey precinct, a settlement was set up, noticed during the field survey as patches of dark earth with thirteenth-fourteenth century pottery (the western portion of this is shown on Fig 3; some banks forming rectangular patterns appear faintly on air photographs taken before ploughing, CPE UK 1926, 5001, 16.1.47). Now one of the pieces of land recorded in the confirmation charter and given by Ralf de Bray was ' the whole of the wood of Hatheresay with its appurtenances, so that if they wished it could be turned into arable land, together with the adjacent meadow and pasture.' This is clearly the same place as the great field of pasture of 80 acres called Addersey, which appears in all the surveys of the demesne lands made in the sixteenth century. The assumption has been made that this was the name of the settlement (eg Ratcliff 1900, 7; Rendell nd, 3), but this is not so. Addersey, as is made clear by remarks by Browne Willis, a deed of 1742, a marginal drawing on the Enclosure Map of 1801 and a sale particular with map of 1837 was in fact an area within the boundaries of the parish of Ravenstone 10km away to the west (Bodleian MS Willis 2, 24; BRO D117/57; Lavendon SC 253/2; Fig 5). A place of that name appears on Jefferys map of 1770 and Bryant's map of 1825, but has vanished from the Ordnance Survey maps. It was clearly another piece of assart land regarded as a detached portion

of Lavendon, this time because of its possession by the Abbey. The unnamed settlement near the Abbey, unless another early 'end', could have been a medieval addition to the landscape, and so a rather more convincing instance of the way in which these lordly sites affected the overall pattern of settlement. No documents provide a name for it, but its siting suggests what its function had been. The various surveys produced after the Dissolution show how the Abbey had succeeded in concentrating its common field land in the two open fields closest to itself. There was also the set of enclosed fields around the Abbey originating in all probability in the land granted at the time of its foundation. The settlement sits in the middle of this block of land and can be interpreted as the place from which the Abbey worked its demesne land. Again, there is a parallel with Sulby, where there is a set of village earthworks to the east of the Abbey gate.

The confirmation charter for the Abbey gives a general indication of agrarian conditions at Lavendon in the twelfth century. One of the smaller grants to the Abbey, by Simon fitz Hamo, consisted of seventeen selions of arable, three and a half acres of meadow and the whole of his assart in Lavendon; assarting was therefore under way. A general idea of where this assarted land was might be provided by the patches of iron slag and charcoal noted around the western and northern margins of the parish during archaeological field survey (for a map, Hall and Nickerson 1966, 4). These are undated but might well be early medieval and indicate the location of iron smelting and charcoal burning industries dependant on woodland. It is presumably the accident of survival which means that the only furlong name evidence for clearance is restricted to Causley Field. There are three such names, Ridding, Stocking and Rowley, which on the evidence of seventeenth and eighteenth century terriers can be said to be located here; a precise set of abuttals enables Rowley to be placed somewhere between the castle and the road to Snelson and Harrold (BRO, BAS series; minutes of proceedings, Lavendon and Brayfield Enclosure, kept by Messrs Garrard and Allen). The confirmation charter suggests a two-field system set within this belt of wooded land; another grantor, William le Franceis, gave ten acres in Lavendon and *alibi* thirteen more; the same division into two parts might underlie the gift of Simon fitz Guido of nineteen selions and fifteen acres of land in Lavendon along with a messuage and a croft. Again, no documents permit firm conclusions about the location of these two fields. But it is possible that the Windmill Field (formerly Town or Down Field) and the Lower Field (also known as Nether or Page Mill Fields, all in BRO BAS collection) of the Enclosure Award, both on lighter Cornbrash and Great Oolite soils, could have formed the kernel of the original common field system.

Most of the assarted land ended up incorporated into the common fields. In the sixteenth-eighteenth centuries deeds incorporating terriers and the Enclosure Award of 1801 (BRO Q RX 7; IR 25a R; BAS deeds) show that by then Lavendon had four fields (Causley, Windmill, Nether and Tinnock, Fig 1) which, together with land in Cold Brayfield were operated on a rotational system based on 'seasons' (Tinnock; Windmill and Nether; Causeley and Brayfield). In a complicated system such as this the ownership of a block of consolidated demesne derived from assarting or amalgamation and kept in severalty would enable a manorial lord to concentrate his common field land in places most convenient to himself, as happened in the case of the Abbey. There is some evidence to suggest that the same kind of approach had been taken by the owner of the manor of Uphoe. A terrier of 1734 of demesne land, albeit with quite a small acreage (14), shows how a relatively small proportion of the land lay in Tinnock Field, whereas roughly equal amounts were in the other two seasons. On the other hand, a long undated terrier (of 54 acres) of a farm with only modest enclosures around it shows that the acreages in the three seasons were more or less the same (BRO DGA 28; BAS deeds).

The common theme which links the three sites considered here is lordship and its visible expression. Most of what has been said relates to the topographical significance of the sites. It might be appropriate to end with some remarks about their political significance. The garden at the Grange can be read as the physical expression of a philosophical attitude embodying the notion of withdrawal from the world at a time of political uncertainty. By way of contrast, both the Castle and Uphoe were very visible demonstrations of the power and wealth which active engagement in the business of government could bestow. There could have been messages here internal to Lavendon itself. There are similarities in the siting of Uphoe which suggest that it could almost have been a copy of the

Castle. Its topographical position on a spur, with a clearly defined approach track setting the manor house against the backdrop of woodland and quite possibly within land regarded as a park and with a fishpond clearly visible (there is a stream on the southern side away from the road which would have done equally well for it) suggest a concern with appearance on the part of lesser but ambitious families, measuring themselves against the minor barons and their successors who lived in the Castle only 900m away to the north-west. But there could have been wider and unintended messages also. People such as Paulin Peyvre and Simon de Norwich had always existed and would continue to do so, but it was becoming more possible to criticize them. The Great Charter had contained a clause which asked for an enquiry by juries of local knights into the evil customs of sheriffs and their kind. The Provisions of Oxford of 1258 contained another such; sheriffs were now to be local men – Paulin Peyvre would have met that requirement; but they were to accept no bribes or fees and to account for all proceeds. The splendour of his work at Toddington and Lavendon and the source of the wealth which made this possible would have been well understood, and he and his activities and those of people like him would surely have been in the minds of the Buckinghamshire knights summoned to Parliament by Simon de Montfort in 1264.

Abbreviations

BAS Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society
BL British Library
BRO Buckinghamshire Record Office
CUP Cambridge University Committee for Aerial Photography
DNB Dictionary of National Biography
GL Guildhall Library, London
RCHME Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England
VCH Victoria County History
WRO Warwickshire County Record Office

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