POINTERS TOWARDS THE STRUCTURE OF AGRICULTURE IN HANDBRIDGE AND CLAVERTON PRIOR TO PARLIAMENTARY ENCLOSURE

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A study has already been made of the motivation behind the parliamentary enclosure of St. Mary's-on-the-Hill parish, Chester, and of the landlord influence exerted to procure it.[1] However, that study concerned itself with the rounding out and emparking of the Grosvenor estates surrounding Eaton Hall after 1802 and the drive access thereto from Chester through Handbridge and Claverton. It did not consider the agricultural background to, or significance of, the enclosure which in 1805–7 sought to dispose of all remnants of open-field farming in St. Mary's parish, whether in Handbridge ward within the liberties of the City of Chester, or in Claverton township beyond.

The agricultural background, over the two centuries preceding the enclosure at least, deserves consideration because the old royal manor of Handbridge (comprising lands in Handbridge, Claverton, and Eccleston), together with some non-royal territory in the same area, represents a rare example of the survival after 1600 of mixed open-field farming in a county which for the most part had abandoned it. An indication of this rarity is the fact that the St. Mary's enclosure is the only parliamentary one in Cheshire dealing with arable open field, the rest being concerned only with common pasture and waste.[2] Moreover, scholars misinterpreting seventeenth-century evidence have sometimes erroneously perceived this rare example as an agricultural unit operating three open fields,

and as one of only some half-dozen possible Cheshire examples of this phenomenon, so that the removal of Handbridge from this category is important to the appraisal of the county as a whole.[3] The same mistake, this time deriving from later shrinkage and fragmentation of the open arable area, seems to have affected in 1805–7 the parliamentary enclosure commissioners, who specified three distinct 'Townfields' in the St. Mary's enclosure Act and award.[4]

The present essay begins with a study of the documentary evidence remaining from the two centuries prior to the enclosure, comprising inquisitions post mortem, surveys of the royal manor, and transcripts of deeds in the Grosvenor collection. This corpus is juxtaposed with the textual and map evidence of the St. Mary's enclosure award itself, so that a more accurate impression of the nature of open-field farming in Handbridge and Claverton can be formed. Such an exploration will also cast light on the accelerating decay of a more or less open-field orientated agricultural nucleus in the last decades before enclosure. This decay, it will be argued in the second part of the essay, was due partly to the loss of associated permanent common pasture through the enclosure of Saltney Marsh by the Glynnes of Hawarden in 1781. The decay of open-field cultivation was also due in part to the expansion of Grosvenor proprietorship in the open arable area, and this is discussed in the third part of the essay, along with the composition of tenant holdings, and the character of agriculture by 1805. Some clarification of the immediate agricultural context and of the significance of the St. Mary's enclosure will, it is hoped, be achieved thereby.

I

To examine, first, the former open field and furlong structure and the extent of its attrition by 1805, a start can be made with the helpful pre-enclosure survey of that date, annexed (in rare fashion) to the award of 1807, together with the abundant textual evidence in the award itself. Of the 126 affected statute acres there are only two sizeable bunches of contiguous strips: what the award calls the 'Near Townfield' in Handbridge (almost 36 acres) and the 'Far Townfield' in Claverton (about

43 acres). Two much smaller areas in Handbridge are accorded a 'townfield' designation: 'Low Hill Townfield' (no more than 7¾ acres,[5] but nevertheless given equal status with 'the nearer and further Townfields' in the schedule annexed to the Act) and the 'Townfield or Butty Land called Hayward's Castle' (2¼ acres). Other, generally more isolated and fragmentary strips of old arable are not given the 'townfield' designation: either they retain the name of an old furlong or set of 'butts' (contiguous ploughstrips), like the fairly complete 'Cross Platts' (more properly 'Flatts'), the more fragmented 'healds', and the lone remnants of 'The Black Butts' and 'Ten Butts'; alternatively, as the sole survivors of some forgotten block, they are simply denoted by the traditional name for ploughstrips, namely 'loonds'. (See figure 3, where the nomenclature of the townfields and other open arable used in the text of the award has been superimposed on the pre-enclosure survey. Appendices A and B record respectively the quantities and lay-out of the 'townfield' and other affected land.)

The two large 'townfield' areas surviving in 1805 are of most irregular outline and contain a most heterogeneous assortment of ploughstrips varying much in length and thickness. The 'Near Townfield' is very roughly shaped like a reversed 'L' with the base of the 'L' occupied for almost its entire width by huge inverted-S strips lying east to west varying between 1½ and 2½ furlongs in length and between about ½ and 1½ chains in breadth. The upright part of the 'L' has a less regular outline, strips differing in length and orientation, and a track cutting diagonally across some of these apparently rendering them unploughable! The surviving 'Far Townfield' in Claverton suffers from no such obstructions and its strips all run on a roughly east-west axis, conforming frequently (if not uniformly) with the classic inverted-S shape, but they vary much in length (from under one to fully two furlongs) and in breadth (¼ to 1¼ chains) and they run end-to-end in twos, threes or even fours. A few more long east–west strips are found in the peripheral area west of Wrexham Road, but elsewhere strips are generally shorter, approximating to a furlong or half-furlong. But even the short strips are most irregular: while two separate survivors from the 'Ten Butts' are six chains long, a solitary remnant of the 'Black Butts' is nearer ten.

This extraordinary irregularity of the open arable area remaining in 1805, with its enormous variety of strips,

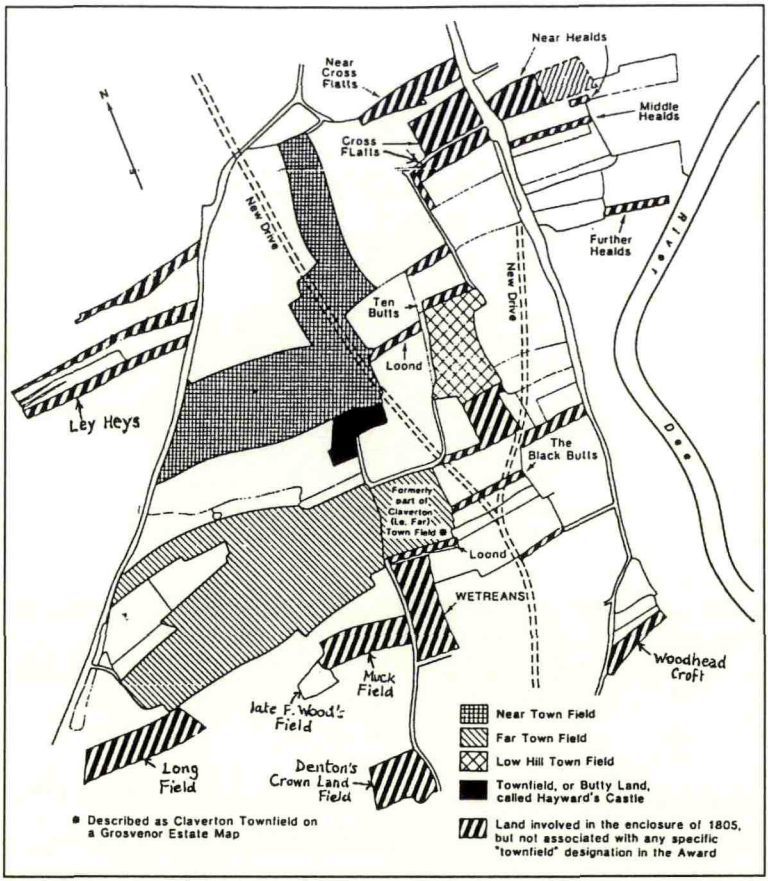

Figure 3 *Identity and extent of remaining townfields prior to enclosure in 1805*

sometimes crossed casually by diagonal tracks, sometimes laid end-to-end, dovetailed or spliced together, and varying immensely in length and breadth, scarcely suggests that Handbridge and Claverton had boasted at all recently the neat furlong pattern of the organized and formal open-field farming associated with the Midlands. Moreover, one soon perceives on the 1805 map — in the cases of the Near Cross Flatts or the Ley Heys in Handbridge, or of the Wetreans and the Woodhead in Claverton — what appear to be open loonds

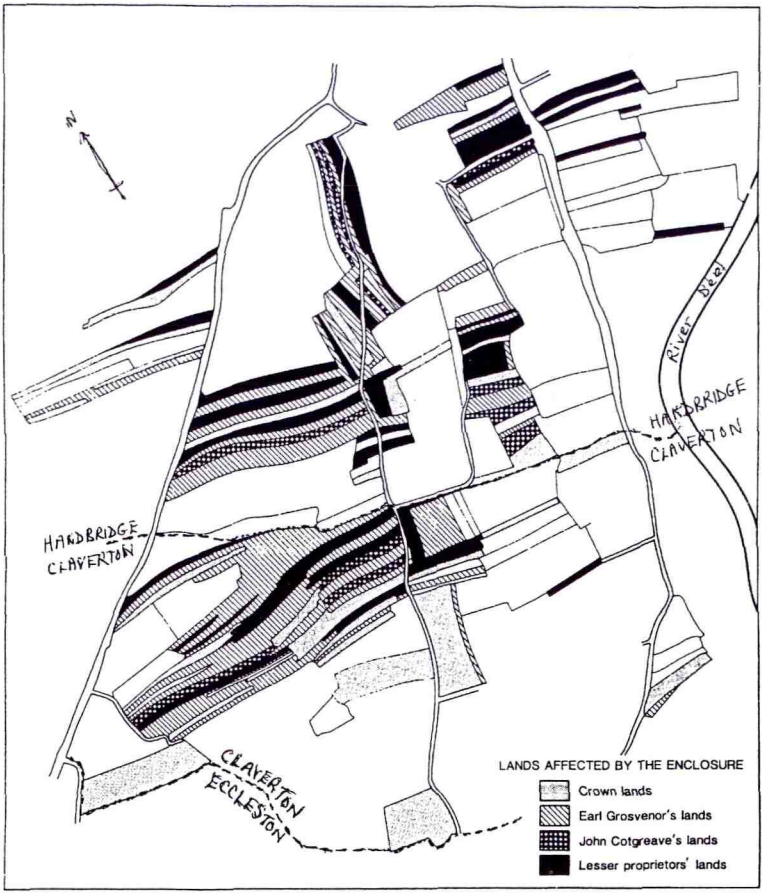

Figure 4 *Proprietorship of affected land prior to the parliamentary enclosure of St. Mary's-on-the-Hill*

within closes. Now, while one must be alert to the possibility of loonds becoming boxed in by surrounding enclosure initiatives, it will be possible with the aid of evidence of earlier date (to be adduced presently) to demonstrate the existence in Handbridge and Claverton of a curious composite arrangement of open loonds within (perhaps recurrently common) closes which presumably reflected, and would probably have promoted, an easy-going system that could accommodate diverse elements and was therefore susceptible to piecemeal enclosure.

Evidence of the attrition of open field in the 1805 survey is abundant. For example, virtually contiguous with the east end of the 'Far Townfield', on the far side of an unfenced track, is a heterogeneous area of some 6¼ open acres including one almost square plot and short strips (one of them a 'loond') following or defying the east-west orientation of the 'Far Townfield', there being in addition four such strips (amounting to about 1½ acres) which were already enclosed and not involved in the award. On a Grosvenor estate map of *circa* 1807 this area is helpfully described as 'Formerly part of *Claverton* Town Field', doubtless an alternative term to 'Far Townfield', and it clearly represents open field attrition still in progress.[6] Moreover, end-to-end with one of its remaining open east–west strips, and reaching still further eastward, is the solitary survivor of the 'Black Butts', with indications in the flanking enclosed field shapes and in a parallel isolated half-strip well to the south, that it was once accompanied by many more. That area clearly represents attrition at an advanced stage, on the verge of obliterating all but the sort of ridge-and-furrow evidence which would have to await the age of aerial photography. When Handbridge and Claverton were photographed from the air in 1947 (see figures 5 and 6, which can usefully be compared with figures 4 and 8), there existed abundant ridging (since largely obliterated), following almost invariably an east–west orientation, and appearing to indicate that the open arable area was formerly both more extensive and more unified than in 1805.

Thus, in Handbridge, ridging west of Wrexham Road, echoing the orientation and dimensions of the three then remaining fragments in the Ley Heys and Five Ashes area, stretches from a chain or so to the north of these down to the border with Claverton. There is some ridging north of the remaining east–west strips of the 'Near Townfield', some linking this with the 'Ten Butts' and 'Low Hill Townfield' to the east, some extending the latter further eastward still. There is more adjoining the remaining 'Near Cross Flatts' to the north, and considerable if faint ridging adjoining the (by 1805 fragmentary) 'Near, Middle, and Further Healds' between Eccleston Lane (now Eaton Road) and the River Dee. Ridging, interestingly, continues without a break south of the remaining 'Near Townfield' as far as Claverton and the 'Far Townfield',

suggesting that the clear geographical and terminological separation of the two by 1805 is somewhat misleading.

In Claverton, east–west ridging covers most of the land enclosed before 1805. In the western half of the township it occupies part of the enclosed indentation into the 'Far Townfield' next to Wrexham Road, and continues in the field southward towards the border with Eccleston, taking in Crown land (Muck Field and Denton's) which Earl Grosvenor acquired by exchange in 1807. On the eastern side of the township it provides the solitary 'loond' of 1805 (which became allotment H1) with ghostly companions, and links these with the 'Black Butts' to the east, whose sole named remnant is connected by continuous ridging to the parallel fragment (B20) to the south. Ridging continues east of the two latter so far as Eccleston Lane and is even detectable still further east between the lane and the river just south of 'Iron Bridge'. East–west ridging virtually surrounds the Wetreans (with its exceptional north–south orientation, brought out by polarization in figure 7) and reaches without a break to the border with Eccleston, taking in the Woodhead to the south-east.

In short, the ridging photographed in 1947 seems to imply a much more continuous arable area, with no clean break between Handbridge and Claverton (or between the 'Near Townfield' and the 'Low Hill Townfield'), and with unified blocks of ploughstrips where only isolated fragments remained in 1805. Indications are of an arable area in Handbridge something like half as large again, and in Claverton fully twice as large, as that still open in 1805. Not all the affected land was in fact visible from the air in 1947, owing to the trees planted to screen the second Earl Grosvenor's new drives after the enclosure of 1805–7, which covered more than 27 acres of Claverton and substantially more of Handbridge (figure 8).[7] In places this canopy of woodland has clearly been thrown over ancient arable, as for example in the case of an impressive cluster of long and elegantly curved east–west ridges reaching between Denton's Crown Land and the Woodhead Croft in southern Claverton. Here the main Grosvenor drive (or 'Chester Approach') intersects, along with some four acres of its flanking trees, what were formerly continuous arable strips (see figure 6). But to judge only from what can be seen, one appears to be contemplating, in all, photographic evidence of an arable

Figure 5 *Aerial photograph of Handbridge, showing ridge-and-furrow in 1947. North on the left.*

Figure 6 *Aerial photograph of Claverton, showing ridge-and-furrow in 1947. North on the left.*

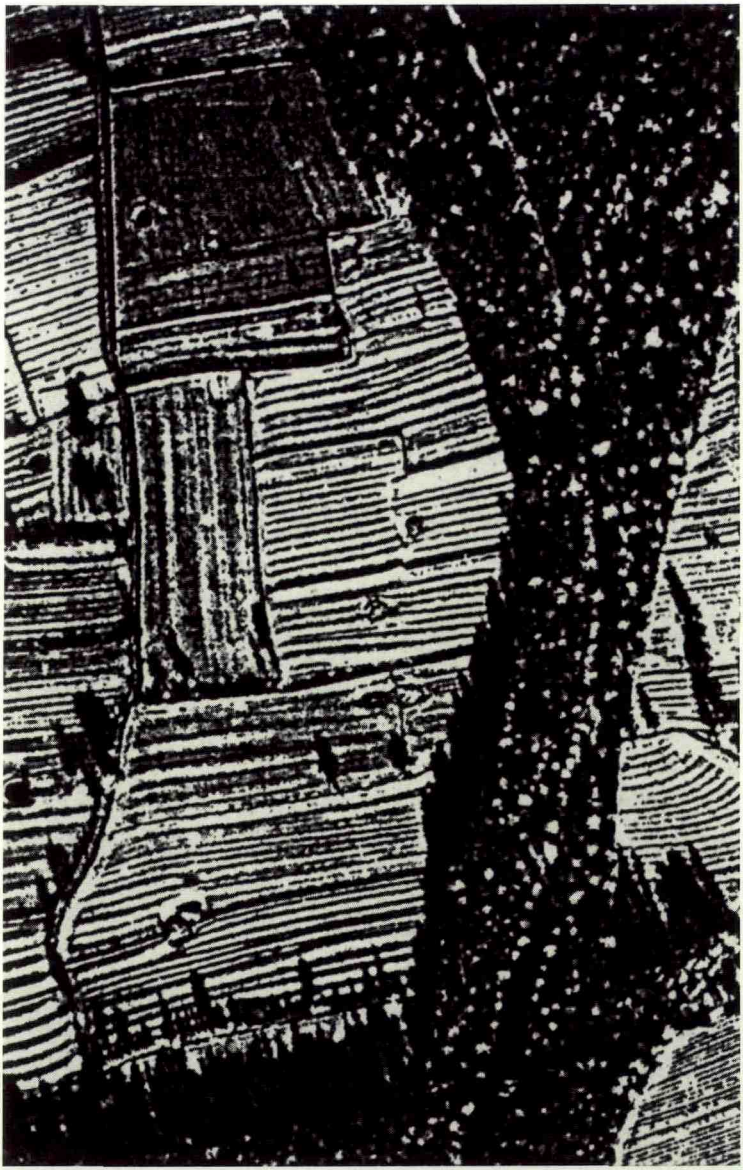

Figure 7 *Polarised enlargement of part of figure 6, showing the Wetreans field, Claverton, 1947. North at top of page.*

area larger by at least 100 acres than that which remained open in 1805.

The questions of when and for how long, or indeed whether at any single time, the entire area of Handbridge and Claverton represented in 1947 by ridge and furrow was cultivated as open field is beyond the scope of this article. Suffice it to say that close examination of the photographs, juxtaposed with the scale plan of the enclosure allotments, enables one to establish fairly accurately the dimensions of the photographed ridges with the result that a perspective reaching back to medieval times is revealed. Occupying what seem to be fairly peripheral positions at the north extremity of the Handbridge lands and in the southerly part of Claverton (beyond such 'Far Townfield' as remained in 1805) one finds huge ridges up to thirty feet broad, well-curved and regular, looking as if they have not been mutilated by further ploughing since the Middle Ages, of which they are entirely typical. The picture in the long-preserved 'townfield' areas, on the other hand (except in a field formed from 'Far Townfield' allotments B17 and B18 where nineteenth-century steam ploughing appears to have obliterated all trace of earlier agriculture), is one of extraordinary irregularity with ridges in one and the same cluster sometimes varying between twenty and thirty feet in breadth. Elsewhere one finds sometimes further irregularity, sometimes regular ridges about twenty feet in breadth, either straight or with a very subtle inverted-S curve to them. Open arable cultivation at slightly later stages may be indicated by the two latter types.

To conclude this appraisal of the excellent, if inevitably incomplete, photographic evidence it may be noted that, although tree-planting hampers the attempt to scrutinize old earthworks from the air, it can have the effect of preserving ridge-and-furrow for inspection on the ground. On the site under consideration, where the open spaces have attracted obliterative playing-fields, a particularly happy example of this preserving power is provided by a small copse adjoining the 'Chester Approach' (now commonly called 'The Duke's Drive') on open land to the east. Fascinatingly, this copse appears to occupy the site of the solitary 'loond' which in 1805 linked the 'Near Townfield' with the 'Low Hill Townfield', and a short sequence of ridges is clearly distinguishable within it (see figure 9). This

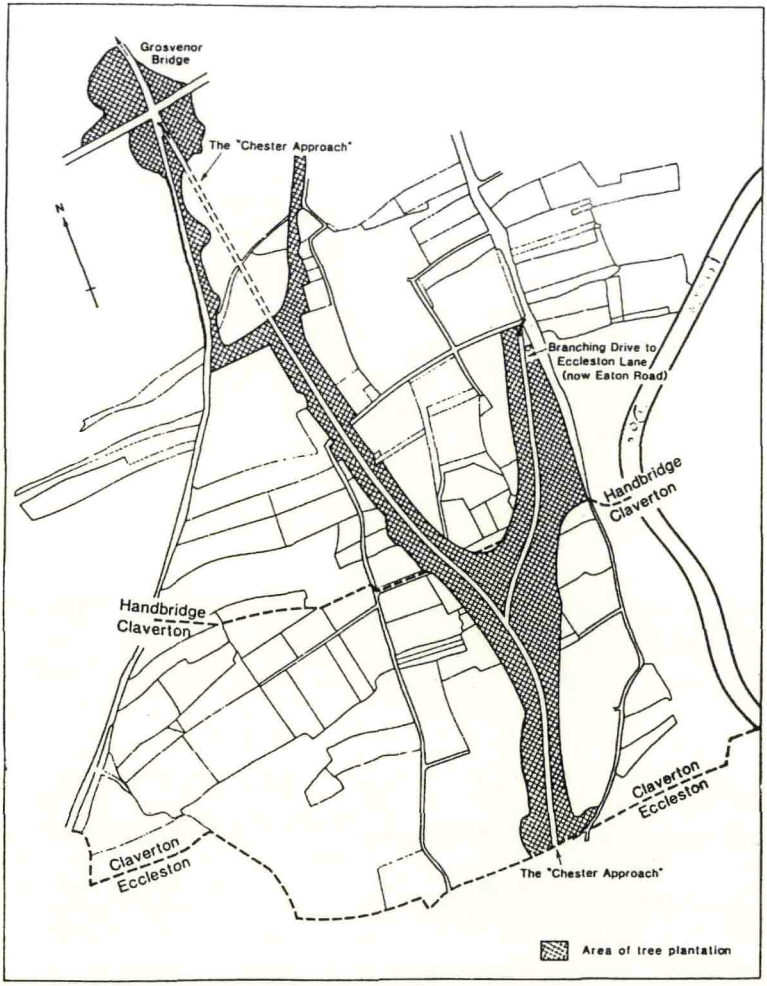

Figure 8 *Driveways and flanking plantations in Handbridge and Claverton* (c. *1840*).

east–west ridging is one of the few lingering vestiges of the old open-field agriculture in Handbridge and Claverton. Obliterated now to the east of the trees, these ridges were still in evidence there in 1947 as the Handbridge photograph demonstrates, particularly when polarized and enlarged.

A glance at pre-1805 documentary evidence rapidly confirms that attrition had earlier occurred and proves, moreover, that

the impression in 1805 of there being three open fields (the 'Near, Far and Low Hill Townfields' listed in the schedule) was an illusion produced by the shrinkage of once fairly continuous arable into isolated islands. Thus the 1747 terrier of the royal manor of Handbridge[8] demonstrates, by alluding to 'one loond of Ground at or in a certain place called Low Hill in Handbridge Townfields', that Low Hill was then not a townfield but a topographical feature within townfields which were of much greater extent. What is more, the document often refers simply to 'the Townfield', in the singular, locating this indiscriminately in Handbridge and in Claverton. Thus one finds not only 'a Loond of Ground lying in or about the Middle of the *Cross Flat*, in the Townfield in Handbridge', but also loonds 'in the *Black Butts* in the Townfield', clearly in Claverton. The writer quite obviously intends to denote, by 'the Townfield', the open arable area of the *manor* of Handbridge, whether in Handbridge ward within the liberties of Chester or in Claverton township beyond.

Reaching back a further century, to the parliamentary survey of the manor carried out in 1650,[9] one finds similar usage with identification of tenants' loonds by reference to some topographical feature within the townfields, or townfield. Again the term is applied to Handbridge and Claverton indiscriminately. Thus, in the 1650 survey, 'half a Lounde of land lyinge at the low hill *in the Townfield*'; 'one Lound of land containing by estimation one Acre of arrable land lyinge at the lower ende of the Bottoms *in the Townfield*'; 'two Lounds of land lyinge *in the Townfeilds* on the head of the Longfeild and by the Bottomes'; 'one Lounde of land lyinge in the Gullet *within the Towne feild*'. There are many more such entries.

If one reaches back still further to the beginning of the seventeenth century, to the printed abstracts of Cheshire inquisitions post mortem, a similar usage is discovered: 'Four Loundes in Handbridge and Claverton in the common fields there' (1603); or '24 loundes of land in the town field of Handbridge' (1610), or '2 selions of land called Lands [lounds?] in Handbridge Fields near Chester, whereof one selion in the Grey Ditch and the other outside the Grey Ditch'.[10]

One should not be misled, incidentally, by an unfortunate mistranslation in that series where '*duabus selion(ibus) terr(a)e . . . in Handbridge . . . unde una . . . iacet in Campo Co(mmun)iter vocat(o) le*

Figure 9 *Ridge-and-furrow in copse adjoining the Duke's Drive, Handbridge (c. 1988). Looking south-east*

Ley Hey . . . et alter selio iacet iuxta le Weeteraynes' is rendered as '2 selions of land in Handbridge, one selion being in the common field [*sic*] called the Ley Hey and the other by the Weeteraynes'.[11] This mistranslation of 'the field commonly called' as 'the common field called' is the more serious since by the seventeenth century '*campus*' was frequently used in Cheshire to denote an enclosed field, while the evidence of local inquisitions demonstrates that the term 'hey' was commonly used there to denote a close. The error is undoubtedly to blame for the extraordinary mis-statement by Dorothy Sylvester that 'At Handbridge there were three fields named in the seventeenth century — Town Field, Weetraynes and Ley Hey'.[12] If a certain Peter Snow's open quillets in 'Ley Hays' (purchased by Earl Grosvenor during the enclosure and marked on the 1805 map) are any guide, then the Ley Hey selion was located in a field peripherally placed in the Five Ashes area west of Wrexham Road.[13] The 1805 map shows Snow's wedge-shaped quillets to have been in a long enclosure containing also two strips of more regular shape, while a little to the north one total and one partial enclosure are each split into two less regular strips. The Wetreans field is actually marked on the 1805 map as an enclosure containing an open strip running down its eastern side which may well be the selion '*iuxta le Weeteraynes*' recorded in 1613. Ley Hey and Wetreans, moreover, were not unique examples of closes containing loonds at Handbridge and Claverton even in 1613, for the same inquisition mentions 'a close or pasture called Stubble Hey, containing four lounds of land, in Handbridge Fields'. There is other evidence of the presence of loonds within closes: in the 1650 survey the land of a tenant of loonds is said to include 'a Croft called the Withrings [the Wetreans again?] by the Bottoms'; and in the 1747 terrier another loond is described as 'in a Croft or Close at the Woodhead', in south-east Claverton, where indeed one finds it still in 1805 on the pre-enclosure map. Similarly the deed recording the sale of Harriet Cowper's Claverton lands to Earl Grosvenor in October. 1805 includes mention of a 'Quillet or parcel of Land in an Inclosed Field near Eccleston Lane'. The quillet was 1 rood in area.[14]

So, in defiance of the impression created by the St. Mary's enclosure documents and by the above mistranslation, every

particle of evidence suggests a loose usage of the term 'townfields' or 'townfield' denoting in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the entire open arable area of Handbridge and Claverton. That Handbridge and Claverton had long formed part of a single agricultural nucleus was indicated by the presence of the royal manor of Handbridge straddling them both, and the open-field agriculture in both Handbridge ward and Claverton township was, it seems, being conducted by occupants of Handbridge village. The Grey Ditch on the border of Handbridge and Claverton, and the separate identities of the city ward and the township, created a sort of distinction between their respective areas of open arable, but this seems to have held little agricultural significance. The loose perception of the arable area as sometimes singular, sometimes plural, may indicate the sort of unstructured and informal approach to agriculture which, it was suggested by Gray and has been reaffirmed by Yelling, facilitated piecemeal enclosure in those counties which, like Cheshire, were 'outside the precincts of the Midland system'.[15]

There appears to be some evidence of a rather flexible approach to land use in Handbridge, with individuals taking it upon themselves to withdraw land out of the common system, such as it was. A deed of 1740 mentions a 'Loond or parcell of Ground formerly Inclosed with some other Lands of William Hughes, Alderman, out of Handbridge Townfields and abutting on the East End thereof to St. Mary's Had Land [Headland] there and on the West end thereof to the Common Townfields in Handbridge aforesaid'.[16] Another example is the reference, in the Crown land terrier of 1747, to John Dicas's occupation of 'A Messuage or Tenement in Handbridge with half a Loond of Ground at Lowhill (now enclosed)'.[17]

It may be significant that those examples are from the eighteenth century, when Elliot (studying glebe terriers) found significant piecemeal enclosure in Cheshire, and it must be conceded that the Crown land survey of 1650 and terrier of 1747, although they record little fall in the number of loonds between those dates, nevertheless show a marked decline in total loond acreage and a comparative shortage by 1747 of the classic one-acre loonds found (if the parliamentary survey is to be believed) in 1650.[18] However, it should be remembered that a significant number of closes are recorded in Handbridge and

Claverton even in inquisitions post mortem of the very early 1600s, so this locality clearly emerged from the pre-1600 period with enclosed units co-existing with, and perhaps complementing and diversifying, the agricultural practice of those who worked the old open arable areas.

It is time now to turn to the pastoral dimension of their system, and to examine the features and fate of this too in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

II

Evidence can be adduced to prove that until 1781 lands in the royal manor of Handbridge, and other freeholds in the area eventually enclosed in 1805–7, had enjoyed common pasture in Saltney Marsh. As a result of the Saltney enclosure of 1781 those lands were left for a quarter-century in an anomalous position as open field bereft of external common pasture, until they were themselves enclosed by the St. Mary's Act.

To begin with evidence of permanent common pasture formerly attached to the royal manor of Handbridge, explicit information is available from the parliamentary survey carried out in August 1650 to assess the value of the manor following its appropriation by the republican government. After listing those tenants who held one or more 'lounds of land' generally described as 'in the Townfield', the survey concluded by noting that 'All the aforesaid Tenements in Handbridge have Common of Pasture in Saltney Marsh by Prescription for all sorts of cloven footed beasts (as sheepe, cowes, and younge beasts without limitation for number) for which they joyntly paid to the Earle of Derby the summe of six shillings eight pence per annum'.[19] The survey also noted that the manor, which included extensive property in Chester and some land in Eccleston, had been leased by King Charles to Gabriel Marsh, Esq., and that the lease still had twenty-four years to run.

The transcript of a deed in the Grosvenor collection provides an example of a lease from a local freeholder, no less than one from the Crown, conferring similar rights of common. On 23 January 1692 William Proby of the city of Chester, goldsmith, leased to John Prestbury of the same city, wheelwright, a close in Handbridge called Cook's Croft, also 'two Loonds of Ground,

one suiteing upon Saint Mary's Hadland and the other in the Further Ley Hey . . . with privilege of turning to the Common or pasture commonly called Saltney'.[20]

To take further Crown land examples, more numerous than those of other freeholders among the Grosvenor deeds at least, on 5 December 1719 Eleanor Hyde of the city of Chester, widow, 'His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales his farmer of the Manor of Handbridge', let to John Rowley a messuage, garden, and small parcel of ground with use of part of a barn, all in Handbridge, also two closes called 'the Higher Hey and the Lower Hey, together with Free Liberty and Priviledge of Common of Pasture upon Saltney to the said Messuage and Premises belonging'. And the same Eleanor Hyde on 29 March 1720 let to the same John Rowley 'a Messuage or dwelling house and tenement with the Garden and backside thereunto belonging' in Handbridge, 'And also one Loond of Ground unto the said Messuage or Tenement belonging lying and being in the Long Field in Handbridge' with 'Free liberty of pasture upon Saltney to the said premises belonging'.[21]

Later in the eighteenth century one finds, similarly, Kyffin Williams, Esq., 'His Majesty's Farmer of the Manor of Handbridge in the County of Chester and County of the City of Chester' in January 1750 leasing to one Matthew Brown, yeoman, a cottage, garden and field near Brown's Lane and a loond of ground at or near Low Hill in Handbridge, together with 'Privileges of Common Pasture upon Saltney to the said Premises belonging or Appertaining'.[22]

A slightly less specific example is preserved from 1753 when 'Common of Pasture for all cattle' is mentioned as attached to 'Two Loonds or Flatts of Ground . . . lying and being at the Low Hill in the Townfield in Handbridge' in a deed relating to property in which the already mentioned Matthew Brown was 'seized of an Absolute Estate of Inheritance in fee simple to him, his heirs and assigns', in other words freehold property quite distinct from the land he leased from the Crown.[23] As the Grosvenor rentals and the land steward Whitby's accounts demonstrate, the practice of leasing both Crown and other land together was by no means uncommon at the time of the St. Mary's enclosure.[24]

The date which terminated all claims to enjoy permanent common pasture on Saltney Marsh through the tenure of

Crown and other land in Handbridge, Claverton and Eccleston was 26 February 1781. That was when the award resulting from an Act passed in 1778 to enclose 'a certain Common or Parcel of Waste Ground, or Marsh, called Saltney Marsh, within the Manor and Parish of Hawarden, in the County of Flint' had, after much contention and litigation, finally taken effect.[25] The main initiator of the Act had been the lord of the manor of Hawarden, the Revd. Sir Stephen Glynne, Baronet, and the challenges he advanced against rival claimants to a share in the apportionment mainly accounted for the resulting litigation.

Among those who, after the passage of the Act, had presented claims to compensation was Richard, first Baron Grosvenor of Eaton, destined to be created Earl Grosvenor and Viscount Belgrave in 1784. It is clear from the internal evidence of the Saltney Marsh enclosure award that he claimed compensation both as lessee of the Crown lands in Handbridge, Claverton and Eccleston long associated with the royal manor of Handbridge, and as an extensive local freeholder in his own right. He was successful in both capacities. As a freeholder he gained four allotments (Nos. 120, 121, 123 and 125) amounting to some 91 acres, and he as a lessee and the Crown as freeholder gained a single allotment (No. 129) of some 37 acres.[26] All the allotments were located to the south of the Chester–Hawarden turnpike, and they conveniently adjoined existing Grosvenor land.[27]

Grosvenor's success had been achieved in the face of opposition from Sir Stephen Glynne's agent, Thomas Boydell, but his claim 'with respect to his Messuages Lands and Premises in Handbridge, Claverton and Eccleston' had been sustained when he brought an action against Glynne at Shrewsbury assizes. Grosvenor had also submitted a claim 'with respect to his Messuages Lands and Premises in Dodleston' but in that case, although he began an action in response to Glynne's challenge, he did not proceed to trial so the claim lapsed.

The list of those whose claims were challenged by Glynne and who also brought actions at Shrewsbury includes interestingly Thomas Cotgreave, Esq., whose successor John Cotgreave would later share in the St. Mary's enclosure apportionment. Thomas's claim 'with respect to Saltney Side

tenement' was upheld, but he did not proceed with an action 'with respect to his lands and premises in Handbridge and Claverton in the County of Chester and also within the liberties of the City of Chester'. He received two allotments totalling almost 39¾ acres. Another figure who successfully repulsed Glynne's challenge, and received an allotment at the Chester extremity of the common, was the Revd. Peter Cowper, then representative of the Cowpers of Overleigh who would also benefit later under the St. Mary's enclosure. In the Saltney share-out he received just over 28¾ acres.[28] Others, less noteworthy here, either beat off the challenge from Glynne and gained allotments, or began but did not pursue actions at Shrewsbury so that their claims lapsed for ever.[29]

It would seem reasonable to suppose that the ancient claim, associated especially but not exclusively with the Crown lands in Handbridge, Claverton and Eccleston, to enjoy permanent pasture on Saltney Common was still being exercised *circa* 1780. After the passage of Sir Stephen Glynne's enclosure Act in 1778, Lord Grosvenor appears to have had little difficulty in demonstrating a long association between the tenure of land within the royal manor of Handbridge and the exercise of rights of common in Saltney. Moreover Grosvenor, Cotgreave, and other local freeholders demonstrated that they also, with their tenants, had such a right, although there was evident uncertainty as to the extent of the land that carried such a right, since Grosvenor (as we have seen) decided on reflection to withdraw his claim in respect of territory in Dodleston and Thomas Cotgreave did likewise in respect of territory in Handbridge and Claverton.

Whatever doubts had existed in 1781, however, regarding the extent of rights of common in Saltney attached to Handbridge and Claverton property, there was no doubt whatever that all rights not successfully asserted and converted into allotments by the Saltney award had been irrevocably forfeited. Thus in the St. Mary's enclosure award, completed in 1807, there is no granting of territorial compensation for the loss of common pasture on Saltney Marsh for the simple reason that the losses had already been compensated in 1781 and there remained no permanent pasture whatever attached to the arable in Handbridge and

Claverton. The expression 'right of common' occurs only once in the St. Mary's Act, in a fairly standard clause about the possible eventuality of dissatisfaction with the commissioners' decisions, and it makes no appearance whatever in the award itself. If any 'right of common' were still exercised in 1805, it would have been in association with some scheme of co-ordinated rotation and/or synchronized sowing and cropping on the arable land itself.[30] Thus the task of the St. Mary's commissioners was basically to reproduce in their allotments, subject to adjustments in respect of the situation and quality of land, the acreages of open field already enjoyed by the local proprietors.

It is appropriate, finally, to attempt a reconstruction of the agricultural practice and attitudes of those who farmed the old open arable strips in Handbridge and Claverton on the eve of parliamentary enclosure.

III

Several factors seem to militate against the likelihood that a system of co-ordinated common field husbandry existed and was still cherished by Handbridge farmers in 1805. Even in their heyday the Handbridge and Claverton open fields had been small, amounting to not much more than 200 acres; and of the 126 acres apportioned in the parliamentary enclosure probably no more than eighty-five, or at most ninety-five, contained sufficient contiguous strips to permit the intermittent pasturing of beasts in common. Attrition of the open arable, plus the loss of all permanant pasture in 1781, is likely to have enfeebled virtually to the point of collapse any tradition of co-operative land use. The already noted change in terminology between 1747 and 1805, apparently signifying the death of the historic conception of the 'townfield' or 'townfields' as a unity embracing all the open arable in Handbridge and Claverton, may reflect a final abandonment of any lingering corporate husbandry following the loss of permanent common. The early creation of closes, and adoption of that curious composite arrangement whereby loonds are found within closes, had doubtless already diluted and modified the emphasis on collective arrangements in the open field.

It is true that the structure of proprietorship shown in the pre-enclosure survey (figure 4) gives an impression (in the case of a number of proprietors at least) of intermixture as between Handbridge and Claverton, and even (in a few cases) as between different parts of these two areas. But of course, in a situation where the proprietors were for the most part not working farmers but nobility, local gentry, professional and tradespeople,[31] the picture of proprietorial intermixture is of only secondary significance. What matters more is the leasing and farming arrangements made by the tenants.

The evidence does not permit one to draw a complete picture of the tenurial pattern,[32] for the written information about their tenants submitted by proprietors to the enclosure commissioners has apparently been lost, and the enclosure award ignores the tenants almost entirely. The Grosvenor rentals give us names and rents of Grosvenor and Crown tenants but rarely specify the location of their holdings. Few land tax assessments for the city of Chester (including Handbridge) apparently survive, none of these mentioning tenants; while in the more abundant and informative Claverton returns virtually no Grosvenor tenants appear as they were too numerous for inclusion.[33] Nevertheless there is sufficient material to indicate that the structure of tenure is likely by 1805 to have diverged considerably from that of proprietorship, for one finds tenants uniting land that is under different proprietorship, and even (by renting from their fellow tenants) uniting strips that were in different immediate tenancy, besides combining open and enclosed units, as they sought to build up compact individual holdings.

They were no doubt aided in their pursuit of this objective by the Grosvenors' rise to a dominant position as both freeholders and lessees of the Crown, which (as the pre-enclosure survey shows) had modified considerably the old open-field picture of numerous and small intermixed units of proprietorship. One respect in which the Grosvenor rentals *are* helpful is that up to and including 1806 they separated leased Crown land from Grosvenor freehold and therefore reveal that in the years preceding the parliamentary enclosure tenant farmers like Joseph Jones, William Kendrick, or Edward Phillips held land that fell into both categories and thus appeared to be making the most of the two dimensions of Grosvenor landlordship.[34] In

Kendrick's case, for example, one can go further and demonstrate that some at least of his Crown and Grosvenor land was actually contiguous, and the same applies to lands which the tenant John George held from Grosvenor (under the Crown) and from the Ackerley family.[35]

The examples just quoted relate to enclosed fields, but two very thorough surveys of Crown land tenancy and sub-tenancy made for the first Earl Grosvenor in 1797 and 1798 provide evidence that tenant farmers were seeking to consolidate their holdings on the open arable too. These surveys, owing to their concern with Crown land only, do not of course represent tenants' attempts to overcome the problem (in so far as it still existed) of fragmented proprietorship, although such attempts were probably made. What they do demonstrate, however, is the use (by Kendrick and Phillips) of another device for expanding one's quota of loonds, namely adjusting the structure of tenure itself by renting these from one's fellow tenants.[36] Another feature which the Crown land surveys reveal is that, as one would expect both on account of the long-standing presence of closes in the area and of the loss of all common pasture in 1781, farmers like Jones, Kendrick and Phillips were by 1797 in the habit of renting both open loonds and enclosed fields.[37]

Moreover, the survey and other evidence combine to demonstrate conclusively that Kendrick's Crown territory on and off the open arable was quite deliberately concentrated in Claverton, where he had also taken steps to increase his clutch of loonds and had, as we have seen, rented Grosvenor freehold land contiguous to his compact block of Crown closes, so that clearly despite the open-field element in his holding he has the look of someone farming an independent, efficiently concentrated unit. The probability is that the few other men with clusters of loonds on the diminutive townfields in Handbridge and Claverton were also by 1805 (in practice if not in theory) cultivators in severalty.

A final consideration is the fact that land use in the area was not confined to farmers but involved a significant number of more specialized men who doubtless preferred to go their own way. When in 1813 Charles Cholmondeley advised Earl Grosvenor to take the lease of some 22 acres that had become available in Handbridge, between Eccleston Lane and the Dee,

he volunteered the illuminating comment that it was 'as prime land as any about Chester, and most desirable for Innkeepers, Butchers or Cowkeepers'.[38] The fact that Handbridge was close to a flourishing city, and regarded as part of its contado, was apparently reflected in pressure from some more specialized and less rustic individuals for the use of its land. The involvement of such diverse social types may have helped to dilute any lingering spirit of co-operative husbandry in the old townfield area.

IV

It has been demonstrated in this essay, first, that the impression of a three-field system in the Handbridge-Claverton area, created by mistranslation of the Gamul inquisition post mortem of 1613 and by misleading references to the depleted open arable in the parliamentary enclosure documents of 1805–7, is entirely erroneous. Until the eve of the loss of all permanent common pasture in 1781, which probably marked the beginning of the end of co-operative farming in the area, the term 'townfield' denoted all the open or common arable in Handbridge and Claverton respectively, and sometimes even together, and the whereabouts of loonds and the like were indicated by reference to topographical features, closes (perhaps intermittently common), clusters of open strips, etc., all in the 'townfield' area. This somewhat *ad hoc* way of distinguishing between different parts of the open arable area suggests that a flexible approach tolerating some diversity in the structure of agriculture had long prevailed in Handbridge and Claverton.

Associated with this, it has been noted that a significant number of closes were in being by the opening of the seventeenth century, and that open loonds within closes were also a characteristic feature (as in the Ley Hey, the Wetreans, or the Stubble Hey). The fact that a number of closes containing loonds (like the Wetreans and the Woodhead) needed, when parliamentary enclosure occurred, to be processed into indubitable separateness and severalty, could indicate that territory which had long before come to be habitually enjoyed by a single tenant was still, legally at least, part of the shared open arable.

In Handbridge one is left with the impression that a flexible approach prevailed which admitted of individual arrangements for local farmers, sometimes involving small enclosures. Evidence of piecemeal enclosure and the attrition of open and common field, often associated with such personal arrangements, is supplied by deeds showing individual appropriations as late as the eighteenth century, by the examples of almost totally obliterated blocks of ploughstrips (like the 'Healds' or 'Black Butts') in the survey map of 1805, and by the extensive ridging, with orientation corresponding to that of the strips still open in 1805, which shows up in the aerial survey of 1947. The latter gives the impression of an arable area considerably less fragmented and more extensive than that of 1805, with the 'townfield' areas of Handbridge and Claverton apparently united without a break.

Although the greater part of the land in Handbridge and Claverton did not belong to the Crown, the fact that a significant portion did may to some extent have bracketed the two areas together, and it certainly affected 'townfield' terminology in the documents relating to the royal manor. It is doubtless significant, moreover, that even in documents relating to non-manorial holdings, one does not hear of appellations like 'Near Townfield', 'Far Townfield' or 'Low Hill Townfield' before about 1800. If the practice of tenants *circa* 1800 is any guide, it may long have been usual for them to rent royal and non-royal land together, which may have contributed to the tendency to perceive Handbridge and Claverton in general as a single agricultural unit.

A considerable amount of proprietorial intermixture persisted in the 'townfield' area of Handbridge and Claverton as late as 1805, although recent Grosvenor acquisitions had clearly begun to obliterate it. Very few of the proprietors were working farmers, however, and only the structure of tenure itself in the area is therefore indicative of agricultural practice on the eve of enclosure. Although the evidence is fragmentary, there is sufficient to indicate that by 1805 the serious working farmers in the area were going their own way, building up compact holdings which straddled the distinctions between different proprietorial units and between open and enclosed land.

It is hard to assess how far the loss of all attached permanent pasture in 1781 affected the attitudes and practice of

Handbridge farmers, as one is unaware of the extent to which they made use of this distant amenity. Were local mixed farmers forced to make individual arrangements to pasture their beasts on alternative land held in severalty? Did the ghost of common pasturing still haunt the old townfield between crops, or did active cultivation retreat in places to accommodate livestock on a more permanent basis? It is best to avoid rash hypotheses and assert only that whatever co-operative practices had survived on the townfield up to or after 1781 were assuredly obliterated by enclosure and the Grosvenor driveways in 1805–7.

Glancing finally again at the total Cheshire scene, the effect of this article must be to strike Handbridge definitively from Sylvester's meagre list (including also Aldford, Iddinshall, Manley, Nether Peover, and Horton by Tilston) of 'what may have been three-field townships' in the county. Sylvester admitted frankly her inability to prove that any of her listed localities actually worked a three-field system, but had she not been misled by another scholar she would surely not have included Handbridge even in a list of rather forlorn possibilities. More applicable to Handbridge and Claverton would appear to be the first of her general conclusions in the article cited above concerning the pattern of arable agriculture in Cheshire: 'that a one- or two-field system was the most typical'.[39] Moreover, a useful caveat against rash assumptions of possible agricultural orthodoxy at Handbridge would have been H. L. Gray's identification, as early as 1915, of arrangements in the Chester area resembling those of 'the Denbighshire hamlets round Wrexham', with few selions per person, 'located without any indication of grouping by fields', and with 'the entire open arable area' often 'undifferentiated'.[40]

NOTES

1 P. J. W. Higson, 'Landlord Control and Motivation in the Parliamentary Enclosure of St. Mary's-on-the-Hill, Chester', *T.H.S.L.C.*, vol. CXXXVII (1988 for 1987), pp. 93–116.

2 See W. E. Tate, *A Domesday of English Enclosure Acts and Awards*, ed. M. E. Turner (Reading, 1978), p. 111. The Frodsham Townfields enclosure of 1784, sometimes said to be parliamentary, in fact originated in private articles of agreement. It was wrongly described as parliamentary by D. Sylvester & G. Nulty, *The Historical Atlas of Cheshire* (Chester, 1958),

p. 28; and by G. Elliot, 'Field Systems of Northern England', in A. R. H. Baker & R. A. Butlin, eds, *Studies of the Field Systems in the British Isles* (London, 1973), p. 90. Slater, in his classic work on enclosure, inadvertently promoted an Essex common pasture enclosure (Wenden and Arkesden) to challenge the uniqueness of St. Mary's as a Cheshire parliamentary arable one: *The English Peasantry and the Enclosure of Common Fields* (London, 1907), pp. 146, 252, 273. He was followed by V. Chapman, 'Open Fields in West Cheshire', *T.H.S.L.C.*, vol. CIV (1953 for 1952), p. 35.

3 R. Stewart-Brown, ed., & Miss L. Drucker, trans., *Cheshire Inquisitions Post Mortem, Stuart Period 1603–1660*, R.S.L.C., vol. LXXXVI (1935), p. 33; D. Sylvester, 'The Open Fields of Cheshire', *T.H.S.L.C.*, vol. CVIII (1955), pp. 17, 24.

4 The schedule of affected lands appended to the Act refers to 'the Townfields called *The Low Hill Townfield, The nearer and further Townfields*, and . . . uninclosed Quillets.' Similarly, much of the land allotted in the text of the award is described as formerly part of one or other of these three fields: Cheshire R.O., QDE 2/13.

5 This figure represents the total area (7a. 2r. 38p.) of the allotments of former 'Low Hill Townfield' land described in the text of the award. The allotment details are the main source of pre-enclosure 'townfield' and other nomenclature, but the strip dimensions given on the pre-enclosure map have generally also been used in calculating areas. In this instance, however, they do not help as the southerly boundary of the Low Hill Townfield allotments corresponds with no earlier one.

6 Grosvenor of Eaton [hereafter G. of E.] MSS., Vol. IV, 26. The term 'Claverton Townfield' also figures in the deed of exchange (dated 14 Apr. 1806), to which the enclosure commissioners were party, whereby Earl Grosvenor gained the land auctioned to cover the expenses of the St. Mary's enclosure Act and award (G. of E. MSS., Box T, Bundle 10).

7 The exact figure for Grosvenor plantation in Claverton, given in the tithe award for the township (which contained only some 250 acres in all) is 27a. 0r. 28p. The St. Mary's tithe award, which includes Handbridge, reports 50 acres of woodland, tallying closely with 49a. 0r. 37p. of tenantless Grosvenor land. However, the St. Mary's figures may conceivably include some land outside the area under consideration (Cheshire R.O., EDT/96, 115).

8 P.R.O., LR 2/257.

9 P.R.O., Parliamentary surveys, E 317/Chester/13A.

10 *Cheshire I.P.Ms., 1603–1660*, R.S.L.C., vols. LXXXIV (1934), p. 76, & LXXXVI (1935), pp. 20, 34.

11 P.R.O., Palatinate of Chester, CHES. 3/90/11: Inq. p.m. of Thomas Gamul, 12 Oct. 1613; *Cheshire I.P.Ms., 1603–1660*, R.S.L.C., vol. LXXXVI (1935), p. 33.

12 D. Sylvester, 'The Open Fields of Cheshire', *T.H.S.L.C.*, vol. CVIII (1955), p. 24.

13 G. of E. MSS., Vol. IV, Box 42/7; Box U, Bundle 12.

14 G. of E. MSS., Box T, Bundle 9.

15 H. L. Gray, *English Field Systems* (Cambridge, Mass., 1915), p. 405; J. A. Yelling, *Common Field and Enclosure in England 1450–1850* (London, 1977), pp. 40–41.

16 G. of E. MSS., Box W/8. An Ald. Wm. Hughes, who was an 'inn holder', was first elected a member of the Chester Assembly in 1708 and died in 1736 (Chester R.O., C/1/18/10; A/B/3/162, 270v.; A/B/4/17v., 20, 72). The appellation 'Alderman Hughes's Loond' lingered far into the 18th century, being still in use in 1770.

17 P.R.O., LR 2/257.

18 The parliamentary survey of 1650 notes altogether 32½ loonds, plus a half-acre butt, and a rood of land in the Low Hill. Five loonds and the butt were, however, associated with the term 'croft'. This may reduce the total unenclosed acreage from 37¼ to 31¾. The terrier of 1747 notes 28½ loonds and 2 butts, but these amount only to some 22 acres – the dimensions of one loond (probably *c.* ½ to 1 acre) being unspecified. (P.R.O., E 317/Chester/13A; LR 2/257, ff. 33–39.) Two surveys of the Handbridge Crown land carried out by Joseph Duke for the 1st Earl Grosvenor in 1797 and 1798 yield contradictory results, with 24 'loonds' amounting to about 20 acres in 1797 and 28 'quillets' (clearly used as an equivalent term here) in 1798 amounting to some 21½ acres – the latter result tallying closely in all respects with that for 1747 (G. of E. MSS., Vol. III, 669, 670).

19 P.R.O., E 317/Chester/13A.

20 G. of E. MSS., Box W, Bundle 8.

21 Ibid. It is noteworthy that the old closes of Higher and Lower Hey, west of the Cross Flatts, exhibit little indication of arable ridging in the aerial photograph of Handbridge taken in 1947.

22 G. of E. MSS., Box V, Bundle 1.

23 Ibid.

24 G. of E. MSS., Vol. III, 87–105; Box 42/7.

25 Clwyd Record Office, Hawarden [hereafter C.R.O.H.], QS/DE/3.

26 Ibid.

27 C.R.O.H., QS/DE/4.

28 An abstract of the Saltney Marsh enclosure award 'as far as respects the Allotment made to the Reverend Peter Cowper Clerk' is in G. of E. MSS., Box F2, bundle 1, internal bundle viii.

29 Those who persisted to the point of success included other local gentry: Ashton Curzon, Esq. (62a. 2r. 26p.), Charles Mainwaring, Esq. (134a. lr. 18p.), and Sarah Snow, who was successful in the person of her surviving sister Isabella (40a. 0r. 1p.). John Bennett (27a. 3r. 24p.), whose name is linked with a William Simpson, and Mary Jones (36a. 0r. 2p.), who was a widow, complete the list of successful litigants. A dozen or so claimants abandoned their actions against Glynne at Shrewsbury and received nothing.

30 That rights of common were still sometimes held theoretically to exist in the area as late as 1805 is demonstrated by the deed recording the sale to Earl Grosvenor of Harriet Cowper's five quillets or parcels of land (four in open townfield, one 'in an Inclosed Field near Eccleston Lane') which were to be described, for purposes of defence against any legal challenge, as 'three Acres of Land, two Acres of Meadow, two Acres of pasture, and Common of Pasture for all manner of Cattle' (G. of E. MSS., Box T, bundle 9. Separate conveyance for Claverton lands, 21 & 22 Oct. 1805).

31 See my article cited in note 1, above.

32 This statement is also true of 1650 and 1747, for the Crown tenants

recorded in those years form but a meagre sample of tenure in the arable area, with 17 out of the 20 holding no more than one or two loonds. It can be observed, however, that although most tenants with two or more Crown loonds have strips in different parts of the area giving an impression of tenant intermixture, some of them have concentrations in one place: in 1650, Mrs. Crosse, George Smith and (in part) Richard Haselowe; in 1747, Mr. Comberbach, Ald. Cotgreave, Ann Dewsbury (P.R.O., E 317/Chester/13A; LR 2/257, ff. 33–39.)

33 Chester R.O., Shelf 3.50 Cas. 2: bound vol. containing St. Mary's assessments for 1767, 1789, 1796, 1797; Cheshire R.O., QDV2/116: Claverton assessments, 1800–1831, with certain missing years.

34 This is demonstrated by study of the rentals for the period 1797–1806 inclusive (G. of E. MSS., Vol. III, 87–105). In that period Jones and Phillips are found holding not only Crown land (paying rents respectively of £24 and £9–15–0, raised in 1798 to £29 and £11) but also each with part of the Grosvenor freehold rented (until his death in Dec. 1796) to Alexander Denton, M.D. (paying rents respectively of £25 and £6–5–0, raised in 1803 to £26–12–0 and £6–16–0). Kendrick was farming the Grosvenor freehold fields in Claverton which he had rented by 1780 as well as the neighbouring Crown fields and loonds which he held by the time of Duke's surveys of 1797 and 1798.

35 At the time of the parliamentary enclosure Wm. Kendrick rented in Claverton both the Muck Field, which was leased Crown land, and the adjoining Swan's Nest Field which was Grosvenor freehold. Similarly John George rented there the Iron Bridge Croft (leased Crown land) and the adjoining Doe's Hey owned by the Ackerleys (Cheshire R.O., QDE 2/13 (award typescript, p. 19), QDV 2/16 (land tax returns); G. of E. MSS., Vol. III, 102 & 103; IV, 26). It is also noteworthy that the Grosvenor freehold taken by Kendrick before he acquired Crown land formed a compact unit in itself, described in the rental for 1780 as 'West Swan's Nest, Middle: d^{o} & d^{o} the Lane, and field adjoining', and in subsequent rentals up to 1806 as 'Swan's Nest, Middle do., & field adjoining' (G. of E. MSS., Vol. III, 71–105).

36 Wm. Kendrick, already a tenant of three Crown loonds in Claverton, rented a fourth there from another tenant, Eliz. Sadler; while Edw. Phillips, who held two 'in the Townfields', rented a third from Richd. Dewsbury (G. of E. MSS., Vol. III, 669, 670).

37 Joseph Jones, in addition to three loonds, rented 'a field in Claverton called the Wetreans' and 'a Croft at the upper Mile Stone, Wrexham Lane'; Wm. Kendrick, in addition to his four Claverton loonds, also rented in that township the Muck Field and the Long Field; Edward Phillips, in addition to his three loonds 'in the Townfields', rented 'also a field in Claverton'. Phillips figures in the award itself as tenant of the Claverton field called Denton's Crown Land.

38 G. of E. MSS., Vol. V (Personal Papers): Corresp. of 1st Marquis of Westminster.

39 D. Sylvester, 'The Open Fields of Cheshire', *T.H.S.L.C.*, vol. CVIII (1955), p. 20.

40 Gray, *English Field Systems*, p. 253.

APPENDIX A:

Quantities of 'Townfield' and other Units of Affected Land in 1805 (in Acres, roods, and perches, A r p)

1. HANDBRIDGE	A r p		A r p
Near Townfield	35–3–33	Ley Heys, etc.	6–1–01
Townfield or Butty Land called Hayward's Castle	2–1–02	Land near Low Hill Townfield	4–2–14
Low Hill Townfield	7–2–38	Cross Flatts	9–2–06
		Healds	3–0–10
Called Townfield:	45–3–33	Not called Townfield:	23–1–31

Total in Handbridge: 69–1–24

2. CLAVERTON			
Far Townfield	*c.*43–0–09*	Wetreans with strip	4–3–28
Unenclosed former Claverton Townfield (including 'loond' to south)	6–0–28**	Woodhead with strip	1–0–27
		'Black Butts' strip & parallel strip	1–1–10

Called Townfield:	Called former Townfield:	Not called Townfield:
c. 43–0–09	6–0–28	7–1–25

Total in Claverton: *c.* 56–2–22

*Two strips lacking dimensions or owners' names on the Far Townfield in the 1805 survey have been estimated conservatively at 0–1–0 and 0–1–18, and are included in the above figure which is consequently an approximation. The total area given in the text of the award for the allotments and access track created from the old Far Townfield (42–0–38) is probably at least ½ acre below the total area of

the Far Townfield strips in 1805, since the lane at the eastern extremity of the field was straightened and shifted westward before the allotments were made.

**In addition, approximately 1½ acres of already enclosed strips not involved in the award were also included in the 'former townfield' designation.

Total altogether: *c.* 126–0–06

APPENDIX B:

Lay-Out of 'Townfield' and Other Affected Land in 1805

	A r p
1. LAND DESCRIBED IN THE AWARD AS 'TOWNFIELD' OF SOME KIND	
Near Townfield (Handbridge) – mostly long open curved strips	35–3–33
Townfield or Butty Land called Hayward's Castle (Handbridge) – short but fairly regular strips	2–1–02
Low Hill Townfield (Handbridge) – some short regular strips, but also some oblong and irregular plots which do not look as if they were worked as arable	7–2–38
Far Townfield (Claverton) – mostly long open curved strips	*c.*43–0–09
	*c.*89–0–02
2. THE STILL OPEN LAND DESCRIBED AS FORMERLY 'TOWNFIELD'	
Formerly part of Claverton (i.e. Far) Townfield (Claverton) – mostly in short strips, but ranged on all sides of a large almost square plot. Includes a 'loond' on the south side.	6–0–28
	6–0–28
3. OTHER LAND, PREDOMINANTLY IN STRIP FORM	
The Cross Flatts, except for 'Near' ditto (Handbridge)	6–1–11

Loond and 'Ten Butts' fragments adjoining northern end of Low Hill Townfield (Handbridge)	1–2–24
'Black Butts' strip and shorter strip to east of Wetreans (Claverton)	1–1–10
Remaining unenclosed Healds and Near Healds (Handbridge)	3–0–10
	12–1–15

4. LAND OFFERING A 'STRIPS WITHIN CLOSES' ASPECT*

Ley Heys, etc. (Handbridge)	6–1–01
Near Cross Flatts (Handbridge)	3–0–35
Wetreans (Claverton)	4–3–28
Woodhead (Claverton)	1–0–27
	15–2–11

*The 'Near Healds' exhibit strips requiring enclosure located within a large enclosed area, but the latter was mainly an independent possession of Earl Grosvenor and did not require enclosure by the award – hence it is discounted here.

5. LAND IN IRREGULAR FOUR-SIDED PLOTS NOT SUGGESTING ARABLE

Land between the Low Hill Townfield and the Claverton border (Handbridge)	2–3–30
(See also Low Hill Townfield, and Former Townfield, above.)	
	2–3–30

Total: *c.* 126–0–06

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