

1991

# PRISTON FARM SURVEY

BY

AVON COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT

funded by ENGLISH HERITAGE

undertaken by

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*Bulford Bridge*

## BACKGROUND REPORT

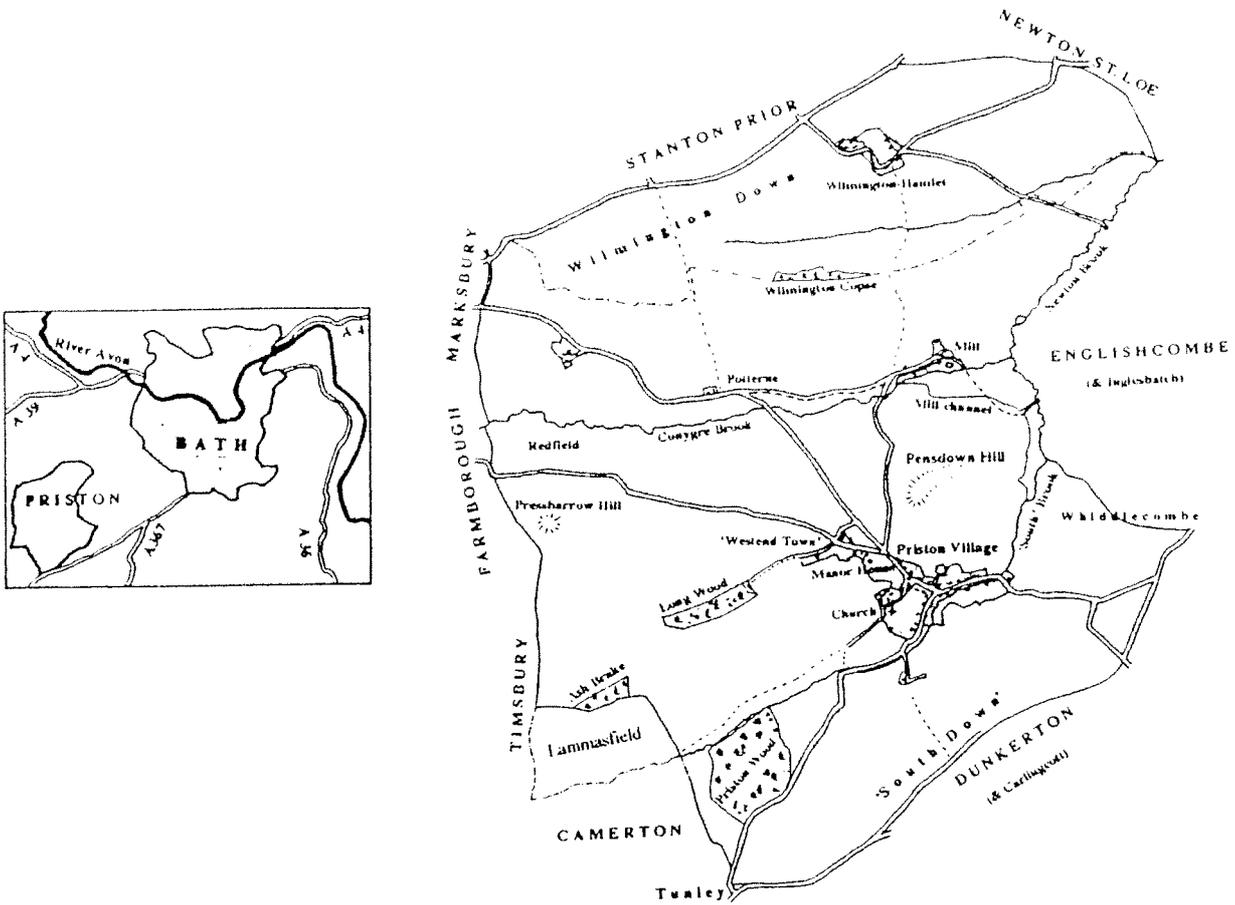
### The Physical Landscape

The parish of Priston forms a compact area of about 1800 acres occupying a relatively open and isolated situation among the combes (minimum height 35m) and downs (maximum height 165m) to the south-west of Bath. Its main geological component is Liassic limestone and clay, except for the downs at Wilmington to the north and Tunley to the south which are capped by the more permeable Inferior Oolitic limestone and Midford Sand. Springs are therefore plentiful along the spring-line formed by the junction of these strata, and the parish is intercut by four principal streams which flow towards its north-east extremity where they join before continuing onward into the Avon. Although geological landslips have occurred around the perimeter of Wilmington Down, erosion is not severe. The soil is often brashy, and drainage is relatively good, particularly on the upper slopes, although extensive under-drainage appears to have been introduced on the lower slopes at Wilmington and Pensdown, probably from the early 19th century onward. A different situation prevails along the central flat ridge which rises only gradually towards the western boundary. Here there are only a few isolated 'outliers' of Oolite such as Pensdown Hill, Pressbarrow and Farmborough Common, and the underlying clay is poorly drained, being mainly used in the past as upland meadows or woodland, but efforts continue to be made to drain and improve this ground. A curious feature of this area is the number of sumps and sink-holes where water has penetrated the intermittent bands of limestone by chemical action. Keuper Marl begins to outcrop along the upper reaches of the streams towards the west which, traditionally known as the 'Red Ground', was always an indicator of the underlying Carboniferous coal-bearing strata. Further downstream the outcropping of Lias limestone is more prominent, and it is on this common geological foundation that both Priston village and the Mill are located beside their separate streams. Wilmington Hamlet however stands high on a ledge of Oolite just above its spring which issues between the limestone and Midford Sand, but both village and hamlet lie more or less centrally within their respective manorial territories.

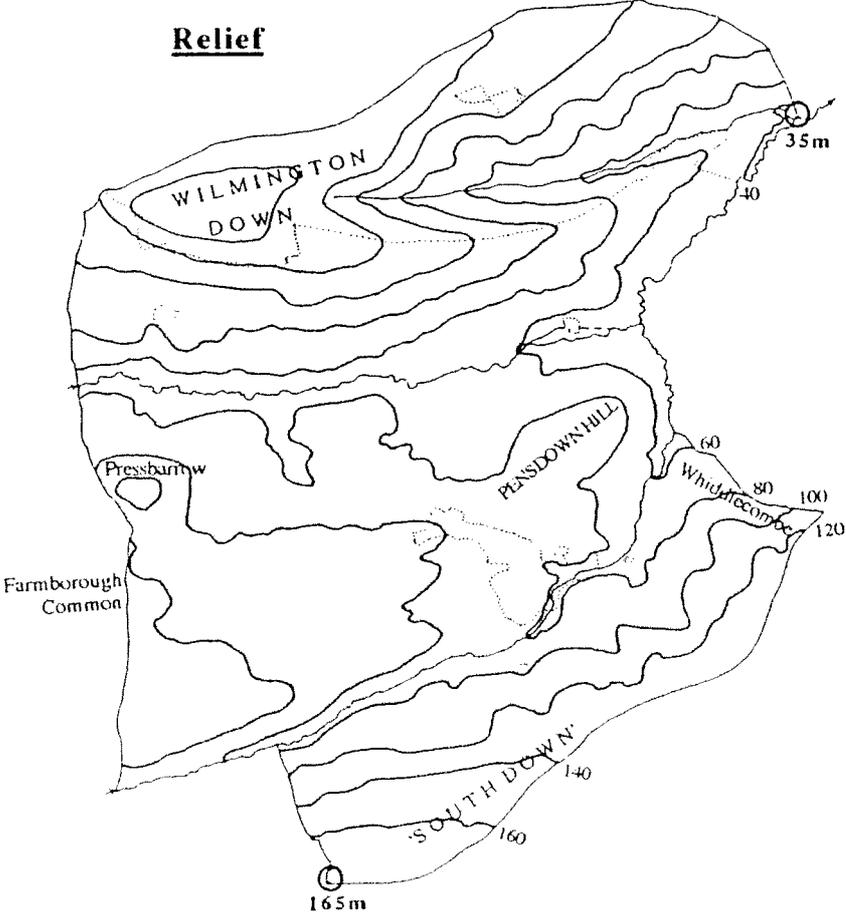
### Building Materials.

Laid in more or less roughly coursed random rubble or blocks, the predominant building material in Priston is the Liassic limestone which outcrops over most of this and the neighbouring parishes, the white lias being the most common, with the blue lias tending to be used as a dressing. The buildings at Wilmington however largely consist of the Inferior Oolitic Limestone which forms a large geological component of the down on which they stand. Only a few blocks of Pennant Sandstone were found (also at Wilmington) which begins to outcrop several miles to the west, but high-quality Great Oolite freestone was extensively used in Priston and elsewhere in this region for arches, quoins and dressings, presumably from sources to the east near Bath. Red brick is not common until the early 20th century, and appears to have been preceded for a short period at the turn of the century by the widespread adoption of blue brick as a dressing.

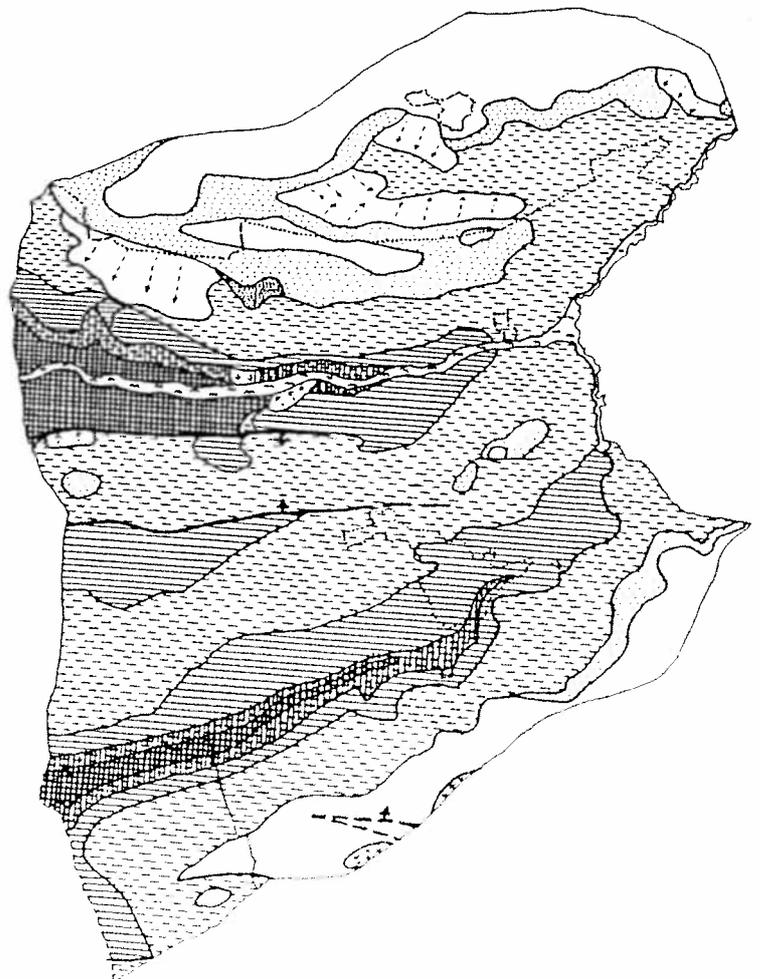
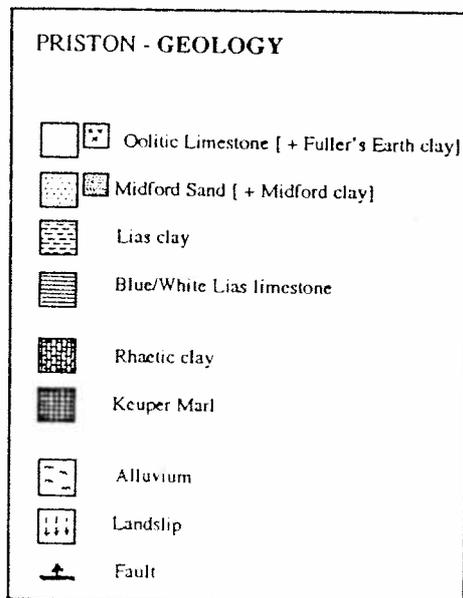
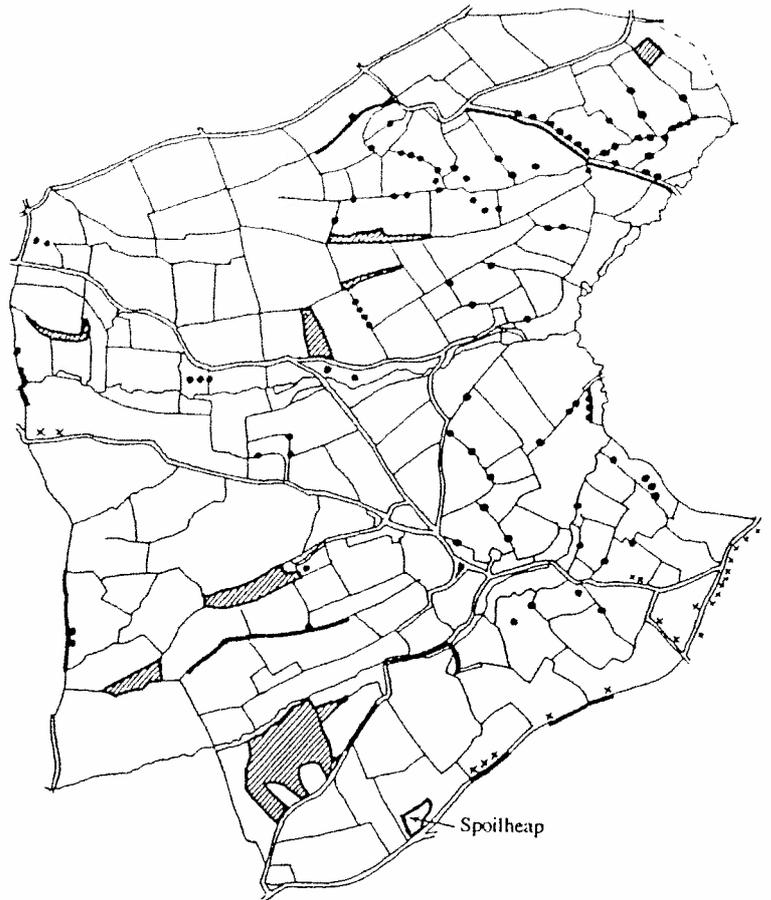
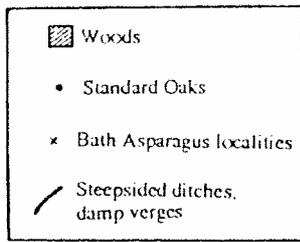
Various forms of pantiles, probably from Bridgwater, provide the predominant roofing material, but there is also some use of Welsh or Devonshire slate, generally on domestic buildings. It is noticeable that only zigzag and S-pantiles are featured at Wilmington, while the rest of the parish is almost entirely furnished with double-Roman pantiles except for a few examples of S-type. Most of the roofs at Wilmington are hipped, whereas gables predominate everywhere else. Presumably these peculiarities are necessary precautions in buildings erected on exposed high ground.



**Location and Topography** of the Parish of Priston and Wilmington.



## Features of Ecological Interest



Although thatch was widely used in this region before these materials became available, with references still appearing in the 19th century, no examples were noted here of roof pitches sufficiently steep to imply a former use of normal thatch. The survival of a single course of heavy slabs of inferior Oolite at the base of the rear slope of the stable roof at Village Farm suggests one possible alternative.

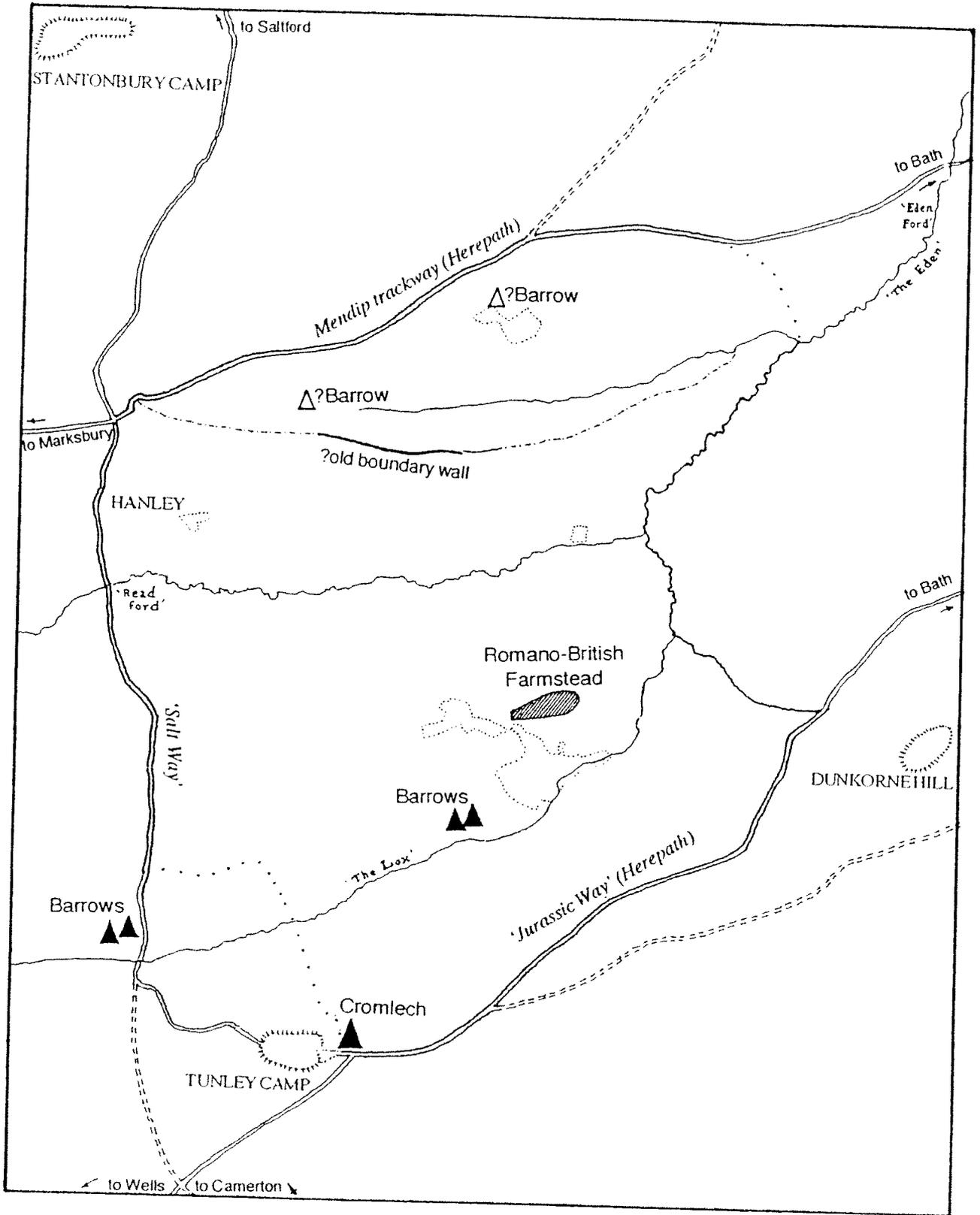
## Historical Outline

**THE ANCIENT BOUNDARIES** Anglo-Saxon charters show that the boundaries of Priston remain today much as they were a thousand years ago, and that they were largely established along a series of ancient upland roadways associated with various neighbouring hilltop camps. Although no signs of prehistoric occupation have yet been found in Priston, during Roman times a fair sized farmstead already existed within a hundred yards of the northern perimeter of the later Saxon village, perhaps succeeding an earlier Iron-Age settlement.

**THE SAXON ESTATE** These charters also show that Priston was granted by King Athelstan in about 934 AD to the abbey (later priory) at Bath, together with the neighbouring manors of Stanton Prior and Corston, in accordance with its rising status in the new jurisdiction of Wessex. These three (with Marksbury) may have been part of a group that previously belonged to an earlier prehistoric estate centred on Stantonbury Camp. Domesday book shows that by 1086 Priston (then pronounced 'Priston') was already a well-established manor with its own sufficiency of cultivated land, but its name, meaning 'Coppice village', together with evidence from later periods, suggests that it was also an area noted for large tracts of woodland consisting of scrub and rough pasture, besides the seven acres of timber wood mentioned in the Domesday survey. Some of this 'woodland' may once have been held in common with the neighbouring manors to the west. Another charter suggests that the south-west sector of Priston included an area containing a wood called 'Leomannes Graf' (Leoman's Grove) which, by the middle ages, had become a separate property called 'Lemonsfeld' now known 'Lammasfield Farm' in Camerton parish.

Although the boundaries in the charter largely coincide with those of the present parish, the Domesday Survey shows that about a third of this, centred on the hamlet of Wilmington, had already become a separate manor, and to this day there is no direct road linking Wilmington to Priston village. Wilmington manor was held from the Priory by military tenure, which is thought to have occurred as a result of its inclusion in the 'Burghal Hidage' that provided for the defences of the city of Bath, and may account for the medieval association between Wilmington and properties near the North gate in the city. Although there are signs of joint cultivation along the boundary between the two manors, the megalithic stone wall above Wilmington copse may suggest an even earlier division in prehistoric times.

**THE MEDIEVAL MANORS** At the time of the Domesday Survey both manors had a water corn-mill which, according to their valuation, appear to have been of average capacity for this part of the country. Wilmington mill seems to have disappeared at an early stage and its location is unknown, but there is no reason to doubt that at Priston a mill has occupied the same site for the last thousand years. Unusually, this mill was not a part of the lord's own personal 'demesne' property, but belonged to one of the customary tenements or 'ancient hearths'. The rest of the tenements, about 20 in all, were located in the village, each with a holding of about 30 acres ('one virgate') of arable land in the fields, while at Wilmington there was a further six, presumably of the same size. The village also contained a Norman church (which probably replaced an earlier structure), a rectory, and a cross where people were used to assemble, possibly in the village street. Because the manor was administered by the bailiff from an office called the 'Prior's Chamber', there was no manor house, but at Wilmington there was certainly some form of manorial residence, probably by the late 12th century when the ownership was passed, under the Bishop of Bath and Wells, to the Champeney family who were to remain lords of that manor for the next 600 years. This house later became



Suggested Prehistoric Topography

Wilmington Manor Farm, which still retained part of its medieval fabric when demolished in 1970.

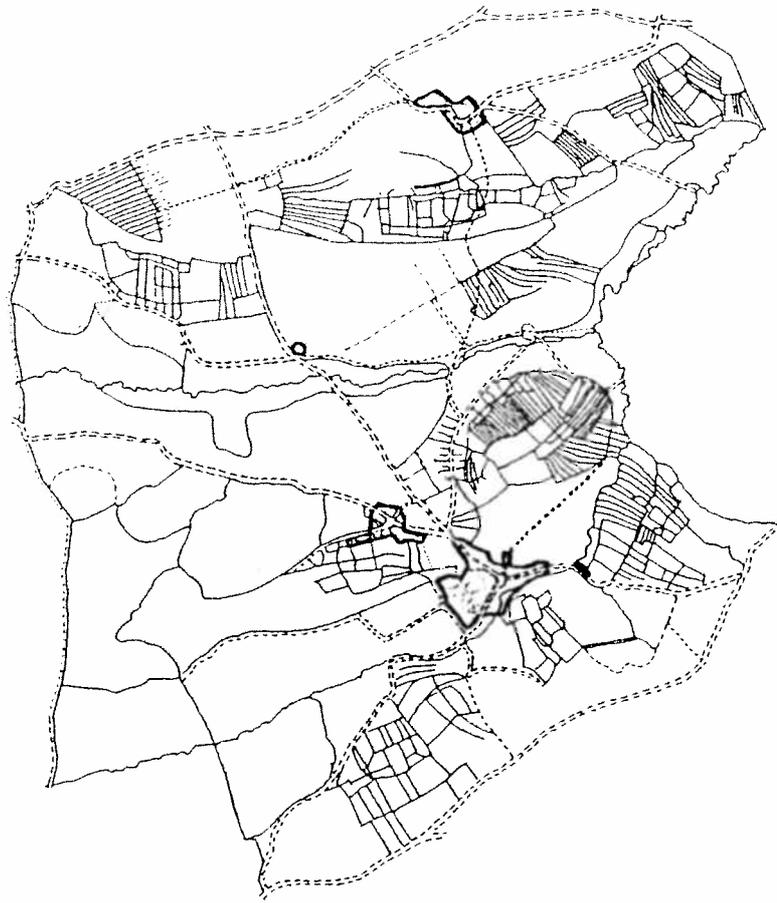
The stream which runs along the village street, known by the Saxons as 'the Lox' (a British name), was merely called 'Southbrook' during the middle ages, and although the main bridge at the east end of the street which carries the parish road to Bath over this stream is difficult to date, it no doubt occupies a very ancient site. Strangely, no mention of this bridge has yet been found, although there is evidence that the villagers were responsible for the maintenance of the bridge at Bulford as early as 1395.

The group of houses on the west side of the village, around Pressbarrow Farm, is shown on early maps as a separate hamlet more densely populated than today. The name 'Westend Town' is retained in the adjoining fields, and there are many other signs which suggest that this site had a greater significance in the past and may therefore hold an important clue to the origins of the village.

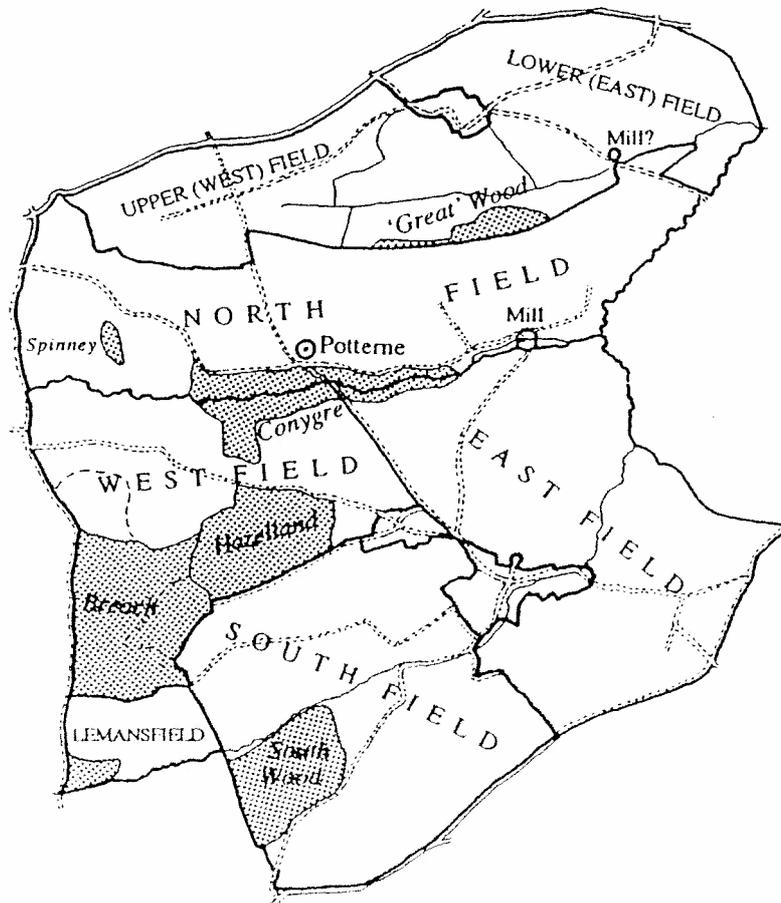
The variable nature of the terrain in Priston seems to have produced a widely dispersed pattern of common arable fields without any clear Open Field System, and a mixed economy has always prevailed. The manor was, nevertheless, divided into four 'Fields' or districts, North, South, East and West, a practice which appears to have been common in this neighbourhood, and there are frequent documentary references to the boundary hedges, several of which can still be identified. Wilmington had its own 'Fields'; an Upper (West) Field and a Lower (East) Field. This parish is particularly well endowed with a great variety of early fieldworks, some of which have disappeared in the last thirty years because of extensive ploughing, but were recorded on old aerial photographs. They vary from the rectangular enclosures at Cheesmoore and below Wilmington Copse, to the elongated strips above Whiddlecombe and behind Mill Farm. Ridge-and-furrow can be made out on Pensdown Hill and Wilmington Down, with field-terraces or 'lynchets' on the steeper slopes at Pensdown Hill and at 'Further Moor' near Wilmington. The latter are a particularly spectacular and well preserved series which once belonged to the Common Field of Wilmington. The suggestion that they were used for the cultivation of vines now seems unlikely, although the men of medieval Priston did owe work-service to the Prior in his vineyards (commuted to 12d each quarter), probably on one of his estates near Bath. By the middle ages 'Lemonsfield', owned by the St.Loe family of Newton St.Loe, was also included among the common fields of Priston, although it is not clear how it came to be held by the Priory. The pathway to Lammasfield still survives.

The large area of fields on the west side of the parish with 'Breach' field-names, denoting woodland or waste ground newly broken for agricultural use, have shapes which suggest a deliberate policy of medieval clearance (rather than by piecemeal 'assart'), possibly producing a completely new Common Field. However, at Potterne, meaning 'potter's house', there are indications that wood could still be obtained there for industrial fuel during the 13-14th centuries. A licence for 'right of free warren' in the demesne lands of Priston and Stanton Prior was granted to the Prior of Bath by king Edward I in 1275, but it is unlikely that rabbits were actually kept at 'Conygre', the Middle English word for 'Rabbit warren'. As there are no signs here conforming to the usual pattern of medieval rabbit warrens, it probably remained an area of wooded land in which the Prior could hunt small game. A similar licence was granted in 1280 to Geoffrey Champeneys in his manor of Wilmington, with the condition that the bishop of Bath and Wells could 'hunt and fowl in the said warren' at his pleasure. Again, no sign of a rabbit warren has been found in Wilmington, but there is evidence that a wood once existed there which may have provided a suitable hunting ground.

This terrain would have been ideal grazing-land for the pigs and sheep which were such a prominent feature of the medieval economy of Priston. Sheep-pasture became particularly important in area where the manufacture of cloth brought increasing prosperity in the late middle ages. In the late 15th or early 16th century the demesne land of the manors belonging to



**Early Fieldworks**, visible on air photographs.



Suggested **Common Field** divisions during the Middle Ages, showing woodland.

the Priory were beginning to be let to farmers, often including the livestock on a stock-and-land lease, such as the Ewe-flock of Lansdown on the north side of Bath which was provided with winter grazing and accommodation in the sheephouses and pasture-grounds of Priston, Corston and Compton Dando. Sheep were kept on the 'Sleights' (meaning 'sheep pastures') on the south-west corner of the parish, and it is not surprising to find that the adjoining Tunley Farm became noted for sheep raising and butchery in succeeding centuries. Priston Lane has all the signs of an upland drove-way, although it is not clear how the flock was driven across the river Avon, perhaps by the ford at Newbridge in Weston. The close link between the Priory manors is indicated by a lease of the farm of Southstoke where the annual rent included 'the cost of carriage to the Priory of Bath of four loads of wood or fuel from [the convent's] wood at Priston or any other of their woods and demesnes'. Similarly, the rent of the farm of Priston included the cost of the carriage of ten cartloads of wood to Bath.

**TUDOR AND STUART OWNERSHIP** For nearly twenty years after the dissolution of the monastery in 1539, the manor of Priston remained under the administration of the Crown whilst being let to farm in the meantime. Wilmington was unaffected by these events, but the demesne land there was probably also being farmed out. Although the details are not clear, Priston was eventually sold in the 1550s to Christopher Bayly, a wealthy clothier of Trowbridge, whose estate was inherited in wardship by his granddaughter Rebecca in 1568. In about 1588 Rebecca married Henry Long of Whaddon near Salisbury, after whose death she remarried in about 1615 to Henry Sherfield, MP for Salisbury and Southampton and whom she also outlived. It is thanks to the determination of Rebecca Long to establish her right to these estates that Priston has such a well preserved series of courtrolls of the late 16th and early 17th centuries (mostly in English after 1615), from which much can be learned of the changes taking place in the landscape of those times. Through her, the manor of Priston remained with the Long family and their descendants for nearly 200 years.

Nevertheless, the manor had been granted in free socage and not 'in chief' as part of the original barony, and the 'overlordship' was acquired at the end of the 16th century by the Reverend William Owsley, to whom the lord of Priston paid a 'chief rent' of £28.14.8 annually on St. Luke's day (patron of Priston church). Owsley donated this rent to his old school at Crewkerne for the exhibition of four scholars at Oxford, and the same sum was still being paid for the 'Old Ousely rent' in the 19th century, presumably up until the reforms of the Charity Commissioners in 1877. Another curious property change involved a one-acre strip in the common fields of Priston, worth 2s per annum, which had been donated at the end of the middle ages for a chantry light in the parish church of Priston by a certain Roger Francis. At the Dissolution, this was confiscated and leased along with a number of other chantries by the Augmentation Office, first to Hugh Sexey, founder of Bruton hospital, followed in 1584 by a member of the Bilby family. Nothing further is known about this property, although it may be identical with the one-acre freehold plot called 'Lamp Close' (later becoming "Lamb Close") mentioned during the 18th century.

However, the new lords of manor were not resident in Priston, and only stayed at the Manor Farm on occasional visits. The estates of the Long family were then managed from Southwick near Trowbridge in Wiltshire, with the day to day business of their other manors being carried out by a bailiff and hayward selected from among the tenants. There was a court-house somewhere in the village where their Steward presided over the Court Baron. Here the tenants settled the administrative affairs of the manor, while any criminal proceedings were dealt with elsewhere in the County or Hundred, perhaps at the top of Tunley Hill (near the junction of the three Hundreds of Wellow, Keynsham and Chew) where a Priston man was hanged in 1593 for poisoning his wife.

No doubt all these changes served as a stimulus to the enclosure of the common fields which appears to have been gradually taking place at this time, apparently by agreement rather than design. There were regular exchanges of land, but there are more frequent references to the readjustments and disputes that seem to have resulted from enclosure. Besides the usual

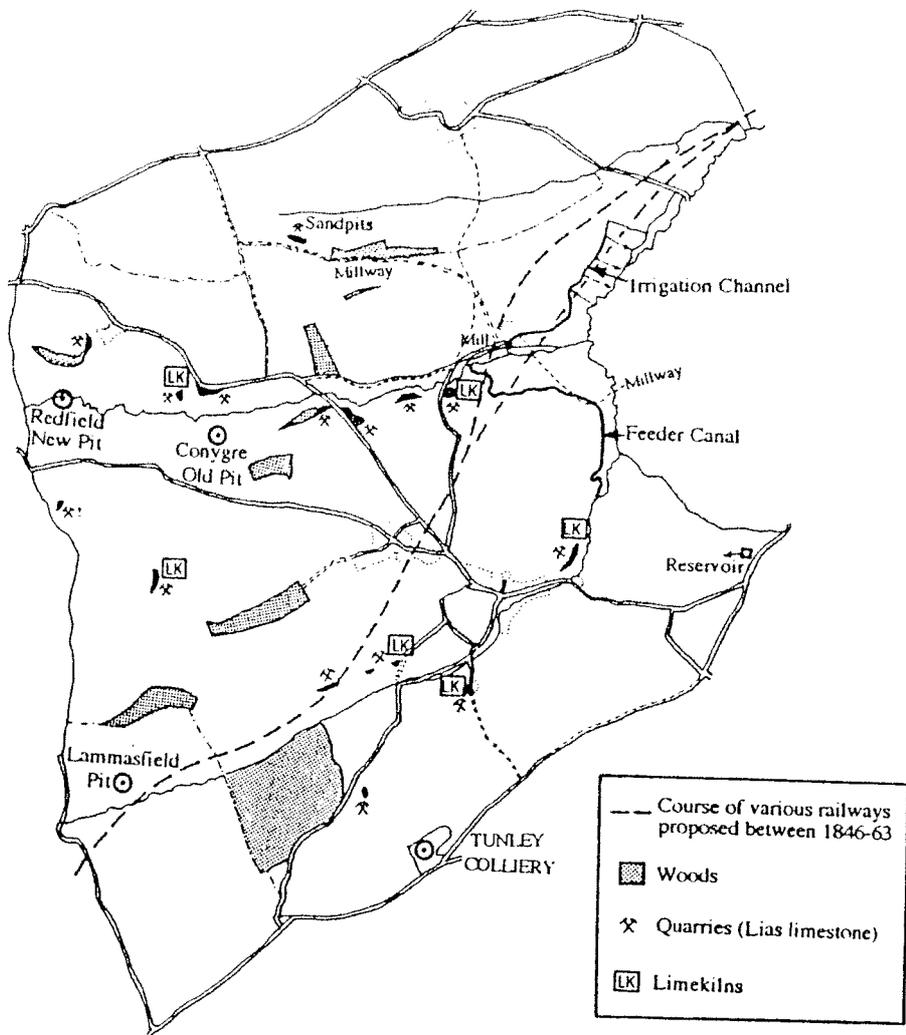
orders for the repair of the manorial hedges (especially Southdown Hedge along the boundary with Dunkerton), there are others relating to the responsibility for hedges between neighbouring tenants. Particularly noticeable are the number of orders for pigs to wear rings and yokes to prevent them breaking through the hedges, and common grazing seems to have been greatly restricted. Incidents of overgrazing ('oppressing') and encroachment on common land had always been a regular occurrence, but complaints of trespass between neighbours seem to have become more frequent. Access between the enclosed strips appears to have become a particular problem, partly solved by the laying out of a number of new accommodation ways which often met stubborn resistance from the owners of the land they crossed. A further complication was brought about by the individual responsibility of tenants for the ditches, gripes and other watercourses passing through their land. By the late 17th century this process of enclosure appears to have been more or less complete.

Much court business is concerned with the illegal cropping of hedges or shrouding of trees by the tenants who were termed 'common woodcarriers or hedgebreakers' and often dealt with severely. The problem was partly resolved later in the 17th century by the removal of much of the remaining woodland, particularly 'Hazelland Wood' which once grew on the north side of Longwood which itself originated as a strip of scrub growing in the Lugfall of the older wood. The ancient wood at Wilmington, now only surviving as a field name and a curious array of banks and ditches, similarly seems to have been replaced in the late 17th century by the existing Wilmington Copse.

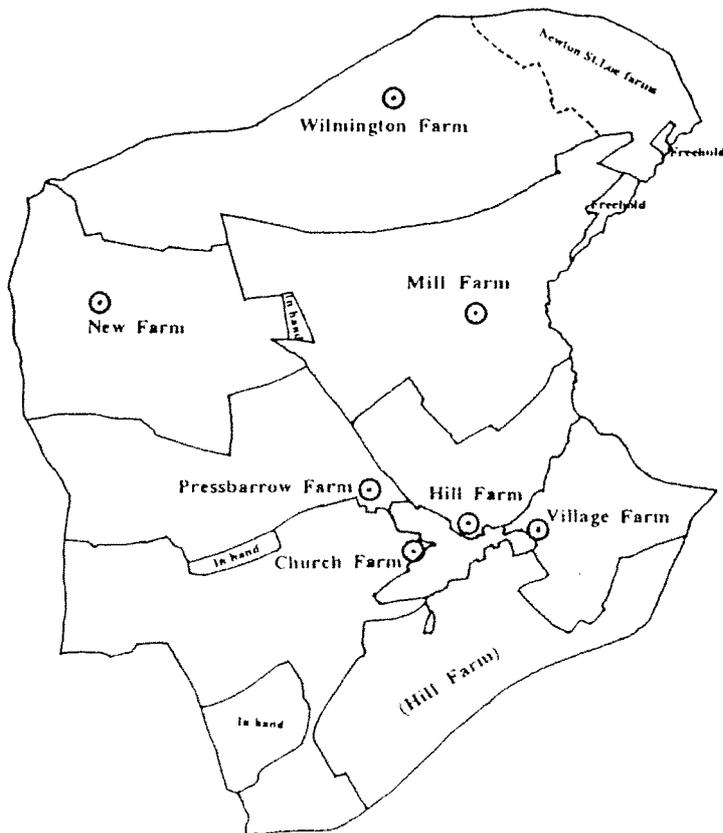
**THE GEORGIAN IMPROVERS** It was in the early years of the 18th century, soon after the intermarriage between the Long and Parker families, that Priston became, by inheritance, one of the many properties throughout the country belonging to the wealthy Lord Percival, Earl of Egmont. Several surveys were taken during this period, perhaps with a view to its sale as part of the consolidation of the Egmont properties in Ireland. In 1727 the mill seems to have been at least partially used for fulling, and in 1731 is mentioned as being 'newly re-built', possibly marking a new generation of large grist-mills in the area. The title 'Mill Farm' first appears soon after this date. Apart from an interest in the exploration for coal (Priston lies on the north-eastern edge of the North Somerset Coalfield), no significant agricultural changes seem to have occurred during this period.

In 1757 Priston was eventually sold to William Jenkins of London, a commissioner of HM Victualling Office, who appears to have continued to follow a policy of improvement. A new survey was made and there was a further exploration for coal in 1764 which met with some success when a shaft was sunk at the western end of Conygre. This however was not followed up, possibly as a result of his death in 1774 when the manor passed to his daughter Elizabeth and her husband William Davies, Agent Victualler of Gibraltar. It was during the time of William Davies that many radical changes took place in Priston, particularly following his retirement from office in 1783 to his newly acquired residence at Combe Grove outside Bath. In the early 1790s an estate map of Priston was commissioned from C. Harcourt Masters (better known for his architectural work at Bath, but also responsible for surveys at Dyrham Park and for the Bath Turnpike Trust) which has survived to show the extent of these changes. There is no longer any sign here of the scattered holdings of the old tenements, but the whole manor is more or less divided into consolidated blocks of land, each centred on a farmstead which contemporary deeds show were already being leased to farmers during the closing years of the 18th century. Most of these farms can still be identified today, and although the land at Lammasfield appears to have been sold off soon after William Jenkins' death, there have been few changes since then in the general pattern of the fields. Despite many later alterations, a preliminary assessment of the existing farm buildings indicates that a great deal of rebuilding was carried out at this time, analogous perhaps with the Georgian building development of Bath.

Some woodland replanting seems to have been carried out, but of particular interest is the appearance of a coal-pits in Redfield and Conygre, both being part of a new coal venture



**18th/19th century developments**



Location of the **farmsteads** and the **extent** of their lands by the end of the 19th century

initiated by William Davies in 1792. This work was carried out under the management of his nephew George Vaughan, whose family were also Victualling Agents and naval men, and who may have been responsible for many technical innovations elsewhere in the manor. He had leased Mill Farm from his uncle, where he kept a train of a dozen mules for haulage, and it may have been he who installed the iron mill-wheel and gearing (mentioned in 1792) and enlarged the wheel-pit in order to gain motive power. The coal-pit accounts show that the colliers located several seams of coal during 1793 and proceeded to re-open William Jenkins' old pit, but for some unstated reason the work was suddenly wound up early in the following year, possibly as a result of Vaughan or other members of his family being recalled for active service following the outbreak of the war with France. In any event, William Davies himself died in 1798, and the project was postponed indefinitely. All the abovementioned changes characterise the new 'owner-improver' who appears in this area towards the end of the 18th century, stimulated by the expanding tourist and export markets of Bath and Bristol, and encouraged by John Billingsley and the Bath and West Society.

Similar changes also took place in Wilmington after 1792 when the manor was sold by Sir Thomas Champeneys to William Gore-Langton of Newton Park. A survey was carried out a few years later, and during the early years of the 19th century the estate was completely reorganised with most of the land consolidated around Manor Farm. The remaining fields, on the eastern side of the manor, being then incorporated into the neighbouring lands of Park Farm and Pennsylvania Farm belonging to the Gore-Langtons in Newton St.Loe.

**NINETEENTH CENTURY DEVELOPMENTS** At about this time certain other projects were initiated, either by William Davies or by succeeding members of the Vaughan-Jenkins' family who inherited the manor from him in the early 19th century, such as the 1 Km feeder canal to supplement the mill, and the rebuilding of Bulford bridge. There was also an increase in quarrying for lime-burning in Priston, and the sites of at least six limekilns have been identified, each with its adjoining quarry. Initially lime was only produced for mortar, whitewash or caustic, but the availability of coal made it increasingly useful as a mineral fertiliser during the 19th century, probably limited in this instance to local consumption.

In the early decades of the century a designed farmstead was laid out at New Farm based on a regular, if small scale, 'model farm' plan, being the only instance of a 'rationalised' farmstead in Priston, and having more in common with the 'high' farming methods found in the neighbouring manor of Englishcombe. In the 1830s the fine 'Manor House' was built in the village, but it appears to have been mainly let out and was only occasionally occupied by the Vaughan-Jenkins' who continued to reside at Combe Grove. John Hammond, the Rector of Priston, built a new Rectory House in 1821 (now 'Priston Place') which involved the replacement of part of the old lane to Lammasfield from Priston Lane with a new access through the churchyard from the poorhouse which he converted to a school-room in 1838. This lane is now a parish road which occasionally produces human remains during pipelaying, while the school-room continues to serve as the village hall. The old rectory was demolished and replaced with a range of farmbuildings, now converted to dwellings, while the adjoining paddock, known as 'the Greenhayes' in the 17th century (now 'Grinneys'), became a 'pleasure ground'. The house at Rockhill was also built about this time on the site of an old limekiln and quarry, replacing an earlier house which the estate map shows on the opposite side of Horsepool lane.

Various proposals were made in the 1840s by the Great Western Railway to link the North Somerset Coalfield with Bath by a line from Radstock. This would have passed through Priston via Lammasfield, Priston village and the Mill before continuing on to Newton St.Loe and Twerton, but nothing came of these schemes. The irrigation system which connected the Mill pound to 'Wide Wear' meadow was installed at about this time. Although based on an ancient technique, its appearance in Avon is unusual, the only other contemporary example known so far being at Marshfield. The name Wide Wear may indicate some earlier form of water control in the brook below, perhaps a fish weir, in the middle ages. The lords of the

manor always maintained the rights to the fishery of Priston, and good fishing could still be had here within living memory. Hunting was also reserved to the lordship during the 19th century and was written into the leases of some of the farms, but between 1840-84 Longwood (originally a long brake) was also enlarged for this purpose, and the keeper's lodge erected at the eastern entrance.

It was between 1840-84 also that the last extensive programme was carried out of renewal and modernisation of farmbuildings (including the recent appearance of labourers cottages) using traditional materials and techniques. Associated with this was the provision of a piped springwater supply to most of the farms and houses from a reservoir near Nailwell, much of which still survives. The introduction of steam-powered agricultural machinery towards the close of the century has left its mark on the buildings at Wilmington, where a boiler of a stationary engine (now used as a horse-trough) and two mid-19th century 'egg-ended' wrought-iron boilers salvaged from the local collieries (now a water reservoir) can still be seen.

Coal-mining was revived in Priston when a new shaft was sunk in 1906 on the southern boundary at Tunley. This pit proved to be more successful, and new plans were proposed by the GWR for a railway link to both the pit and to Priston village from their new line being built along the course of the old Somerset Coal Canal. This also came to nothing, but the pit remained moderately productive until its closure in the early 1930s.

**MODERN POSTSCRIPT** The Vaughan-Jenkins estate at Priston was broken up and sold at the end of WWI, although the family has continued to maintain contact with the village to this day. After WWII the estates belonging to Earl Temple (successor of the Gore-Langtons) were also sold under similar circumstances, Wilmington being acquired by the Duchy of Cornwall, followed subsequently by the Mill Farm, Pressbarrow Farm and New Farm in Priston. The acceleration in production during the past thirty years has seen the remaining farms of Priston broken up and incorporated with farms outside the parish, the farmsteads themselves being converted to residential dwellings. The work of the existing farms tends to be sited in larger units, detached from the original farmsteads, and many of the fields have been enlarged or returned to the plough. This has removed many of the older features, although some set-aside has recently been adopted, and unimproved pasture still exists on the steeper slopes of the combes. Nevertheless, it is still predominantly an agricultural landscape, though with a growing recreational role, and the village itself retains its ancient outline despite an increase in new residential housing.

### **Overall Character**

Although much of Priston is characterised by its Saxon or even prehistoric origins (boundaries, roads and settlement patterns), it remains essentially an 18th century landscape. In this respect it would appear to be typical of the Avon area which has always been able to produce a varied response to changing economic conditions, but was particularly influenced by the growth of the urban and international markets of Bath and Bristol during that era. The unique local character of Priston, as dictated by its physical situation, therefore became less marked after the middle ages, and was instead more influenced by management patterns reflecting individual ownership and its 'closed' manorial status.

## BACKGROUND TO THE SURVEY

### Method

The historic landscape of Priston and Wilmington was examined from three different aspects;

a. Archaeological. Most of the archaeological information obtained for this survey was derived from the files of the County Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) under the supervision of the County SMR Officer and, in turn, all new information obtained during the survey will provide a supplement to these files. The following collections of aerial photographs were also examined;

Vertical: Flights of 1971, 1976 and 1991, in the County collection.

Oblique: All flights in the collections of the County and the Royal Commission for Historical Monuments (Swindon).

Valuable topographical details were also received from inhabitants with long experience of the landscape, particularly Mr.Fry of Priston.

Relevant documentary material was consulted at the Reference Libraries at Bath and Bristol, the British Manuscript Library, the Public Record Office, and the Record Offices of Somerset, Wiltshire and Hampshire. Access to the Vaughan-Jenkins papers was provided by Mr.T.Hughes of Priston.

The following maps were of particular use;

Priston manorial estate map of William Davies c.1793 (Vaughan Jenkins papers) and contemporary estate maps of Englishcombe and Newton St.Loe.

Priston tithe map of 1840 (Somerset RO) and contemporary tithe maps of the neighbouring parishes.

County first edition OS maps at one inch (1810-17) and at 25 inch (1884).

Various county maps of the 18th and 19th centuries at large scale by Donne,

Day and Masters, and Greenwood, including James Thorpe's map of Bath and district of 1742.

All the sites identified by these means were visited, and their details plotted onto current 1:2500 basemaps. Wherever possible a photographic record of each site was made in black and white. In only one instance was a measured survey necessary. As the whole survey took place at intervals between June 1991 and February 1992, it was possible to fieldwalk several sites when ploughing allowed in order to quickly ascertain their location and extent. Although the occupation area of Priston village has high archaeological potential, particularly in the old Rectorial grounds to the south-east of the church, no detailed examination in the immediate vicinity of the houses was possible. As with the rest of the survey, the archaeological aspect must be regarded as open-ended and in no way definitive, particularly with respect to prehistory. It is based on the best knowledge of the day, in which the techniques and understanding of the subject are continually being improved.

b. Ecological. The historical ecology was surveyed between June and August 1991. Selected hedgerow sections were studied, 132 in all, and the numbers of shrubs, standard trees and selected ground flora within each section were counted and recorded on standard forms. For ease of reference, a geographical feature was taken as a starting point for each hedge, eg. the corner of a road, the junction of two hedges, etc. To avoid high species counts at hedge junctions, the length of hedge to be studied was always measured starting 10m away from the initial point of reference. A profile of each studied hedge and bank was sketched on the form. Survey work on the age of the hedgerows was based on Hooper's 'Dating Hedges, 1970'. Using the number of shrub species as a guide - that is, one species per hundred years - the approximate age of hedge sections was estimated. It should be noted however, that in this

particular area local conditions and practices tend to produce a higher count than elsewhere, and Hooper's rule is therefore a useful approximation which needs to be readjusted according to context.

All sections of woodland within the area were also surveyed, and note taken of sections of ecological value. Any woods appearing on maps produced before 1840 were studied in more depth, and their species composition recorded. The results of this survey indicate that from earliest times Priston may have had a widespread importance as a source of underwood, i.e. scrub and low sized trees rotationally cut for faggots, poles, etc., as opposed to timber for large structures obtained from full-grown trees. Its very name 'Coppice Village' (Welsh, prysg + OE, tun) is suggestive, but except for Priston Wood, there are few remains of ancient woodland in the parish, most of the present woods being of more recent origin.

Throughout the survey a record was also made of Land Use in all the fields, the distribution of standard Oaks as an indication of the history of tree-planting by various farms, the location of badger setts, areas of High Ecological Interest, and the location of Bath Asparagus (peculiar to this district).

All the above data was plotted onto 1:10000 maps, and an analysis made of the relative frequency of recorded shrub and tree species, together with their relation to the underlying geological strata. A photographic record of each hedge section was made in black and white.

With one notable exception at Wilmington (discussed below), no fieldwalls were encountered other than in the immediate vicinity of habitation.

c. Farm Buildings. Between September and November 1991 a survey of all agricultural buildings existing before 1900 was made in the seven farmstead sites of Priston. Wherever possible, basic measured drawings in plan and elevation were made of each non-domestic building, supported with a photographic record in black and white. In this way a framework could be provided for more detailed future research, there being little comparative material on this subject in this area. Although it was not always possible to interpret the original date and function of certain buildings, in general the following preliminary assessment could be made;

i) No medieval farm buildings have survived, although most of the farms appear to occupy medieval sites. They otherwise contain good examples of standard post-medieval buildings associated with the small mixed farms that once characterised this area.

ii) There appear to be several periods of significant investment in new farm buildings, particularly in the second half of the 18th and 19th centuries. There is perhaps an analogy here with the Georgian and Victorian building developments in Bath, which would explain the absence of medieval structures or evidence of thatched roofs in the parish.

iii) All the farms were mixed farms in the past, and this is reflected in the range of crop storage buildings and livestock housing recorded.

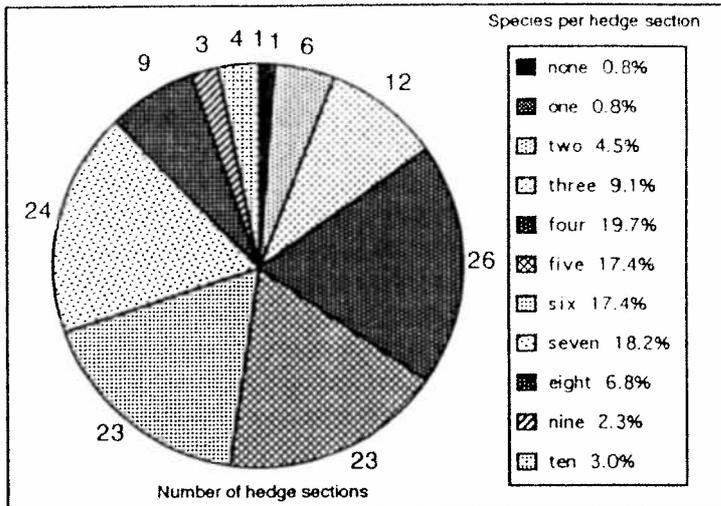
iv) The survival of three substantial barns would provide a useful comparison of their storage capacity with the arable acreage of their respective farms in the eighteenth century.

v) Despite a number of medieval references, the provision of granaries is much less evident, although staddle stones were widely distributed throughout the village. These however are sometimes imported as ornamental features and cannot be taken as reliable evidence for the former presence of a granary.

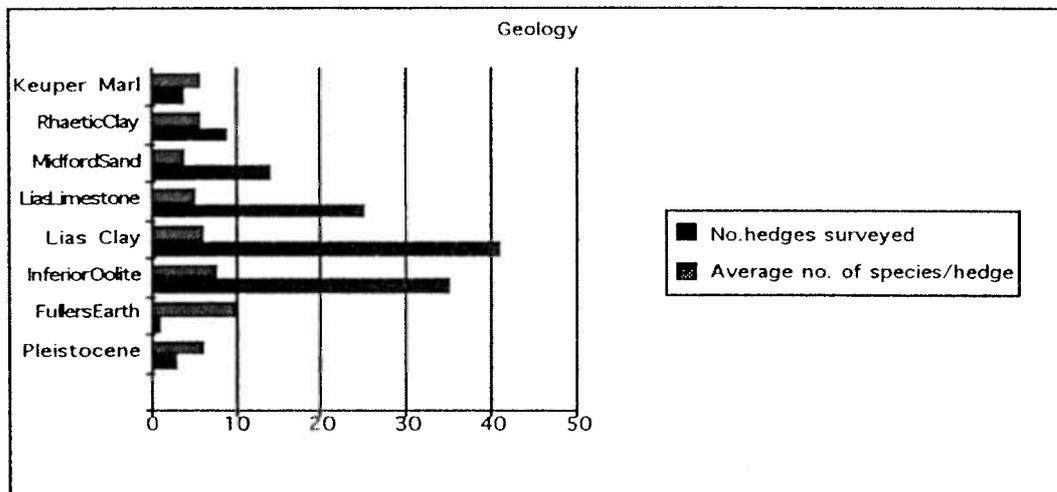
vi) Arcade-fronted shelter sheds facing a small fold-yard are a characteristic feature of the Priston farms, frequently with voussoirs and sometimes jambs made up of high-quality Bath stone.

vii) The common type of open-fronted cart shed approached from the side is conspicuously absent in Priston. Where cart sheds are provisionally identified, they are of the less conventional gable-end entry form, and are of unusual depth (6mx15m at Wilmington, being close to the maximum of 3.35mx15.5m recorded by Peters). Most of them face north or east, as recommended, to avoid the direct sun.

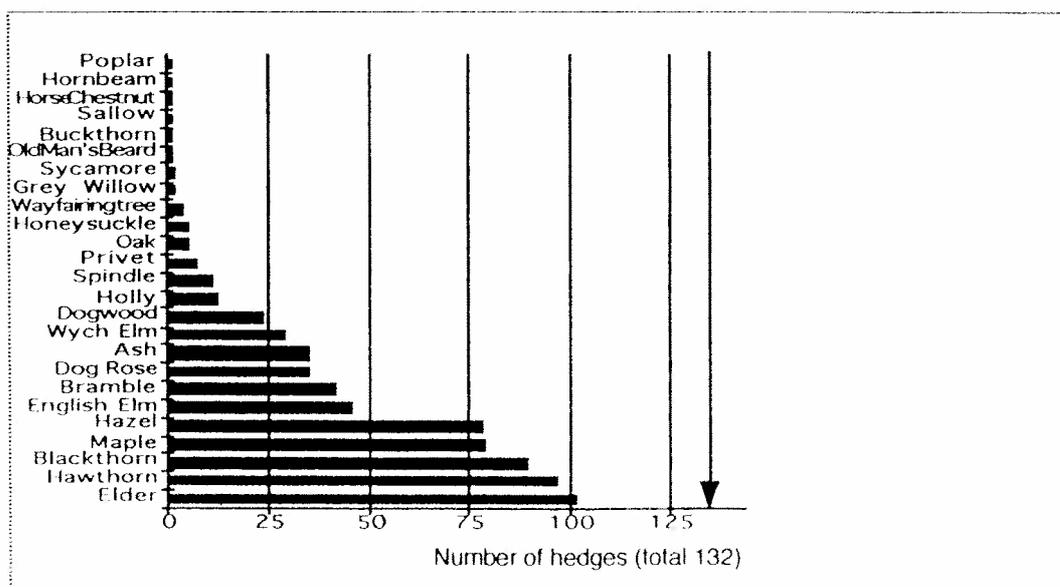
viii) Certain types of building known elsewhere in the region are also absent. No cider-mill



Relative number of recorded shrub and tree species in surveyed hedge sections.



Frequency of hedges on geological strata.



Relative frequency of recorded shrub and tree species in the 132 surveyed hedge sections.

houses were noted, although orchards were a common feature here until recent times. Nor were there any dovecotes, with the only documentary example coming from Wilmington in the early 18th century. More surprisingly, no examples of the standard box pigsty with attached yard were found, although there are a few features on the 1884 map which might be interpreted as such.

ix) Certain architectural details and fittings were repeated from farm to farm with small variations, including the use of four-gabled finials, ovolo-moulded cushions to gable copings (Mill Farm being particularly well endowed with roof fittings), and bead-moulded window mullions and surrounds (particularly on domestic buildings). Windows with hit-and-miss ventilators were also common.

## **Grading**

As an assistance to management, all features of interest have been graded according to their individual historical significance. The hedges chosen for this survey were selected on the basis of their known historical interest, and for this reason their overall ecological and historical grading is potentially high. Although the unsurveyed hedges could have shown a lower grading, they are by no means insignificant from either aspect and it cannot be recommended that any of them should be removed.

Hedges. The following criteria were employed for hedge grading;

Ecological: Grade A - very rich association of tree and ground flora, including animal habitats, eg. animal corridors, badger setts, etc.  
Grade B - more limited plant association, but still with valuable animal habitats and corridors.

Archaeological: Grade 1 - important pre-medieval features.  
Grade 2 - roads or tracks of early but unknown date.

Instances where improvements might be made have been also included in the resulting grade tables, ie. L = hedge needs laying. NSP = hedge not stockproof.

Overall. The hedge grades are designed to conform to a four-tier grading system adopted for all the historic landscape features assessed in this survey, ie.

Grade I - sites of national importance which should be preserved and protected.  
Grade II - sites of regional importance which should be preserved.  
Grade III - sites of county importance which should be preserved, or in some cases, watched.  
Grade IV - sites of local importance which should be watched.

## **Fieldnames.**

A list of fieldnames relating to each farm in the survey has also been included. These have been identified as being in use at the end of the 18th century, although they do not necessarily coincide exactly with the present field boundaries, and many have disappeared. An interpretation of their most likely meaning is included, but it is impossible to be precise without evidence of their earliest forms. For this reason the earliest form found during the survey has been added, together with its date. Where appropriate, Anglo-Saxon (OE), Middle English (ME) or other word-roots are also shown.

## THE FARMS

### Church Farm

Origin. Unlike the other farms in the parish, mostly created in the late 18th century, Church Farm already existed as the successor to the 'Manor or Great Farm' of the manor of Priston. The manorial records suggest that the lord's own demesne land was managed by a bailiff up to the end of the 15th century, but a lease of 1522 by the Prior of Bath shows that it was already being farmed out by that time and included the provision of winter pasture for the sheepflock of Lansdown by the farmers of Priston, Corston and Compton Dando;

'..allwayes reserved from the Farmers thereof ...to the sayd flocke, w<sup>th</sup>. good, able, sufficient and of the best hay, to be yearlie mowen and made...and also carried into the sheebehouses by the Farmers...with sufficient strawe for Litter and bedding...to be deliv<sup>r</sup>ed by the sayd Farmers for keeping, feeding, sustayning of the sayd sheepe and Ewflocke of Lansdown...' (the farmer of Priston was to provide for 50 of these sheep).

The manor farm was not affected by the dissolution of the Priory, and retained its high status through to the manorial reorganisation of the 18th century. The last use of the name 'Great Farm' occurs in 1772 when it was leased to John Young of Priston, yeoman, but by the 1820s was already known as 'Church Farm', owned by a Mr. Moses Lye. He was succeeded by James Edgell who, in 1840, was also running the Mill Farm.

Extent. Following the dissolution of the Priory, the demesne lands continued to be farmed through to the late 18th century when the whole of Priston was reorganised into consolidated farm units, although a survey of the manor farm in 1741 shows that its fields already consisted of those which later belonged to Church Farm. This land covered the northern part of the area known in the middle ages as the 'South Field' of Priston, and probably also a small part of 'West Field'. The acreage of the old farm was apparently larger then, but its territory was more scattered throughout the manor, and included any areas of woodland which would later have been kept 'in hand'. The farm lands are now either set-aside or worked from Tunley Farm in the neighbouring parish of Camerton.

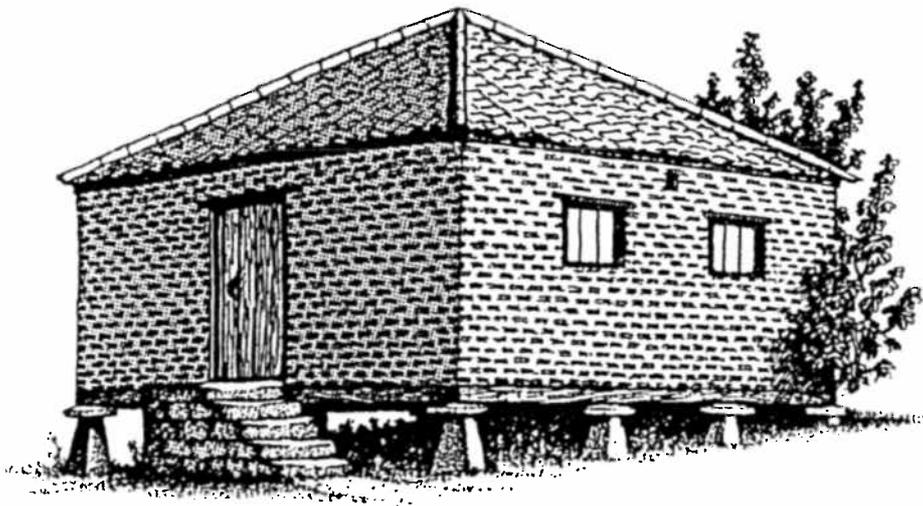
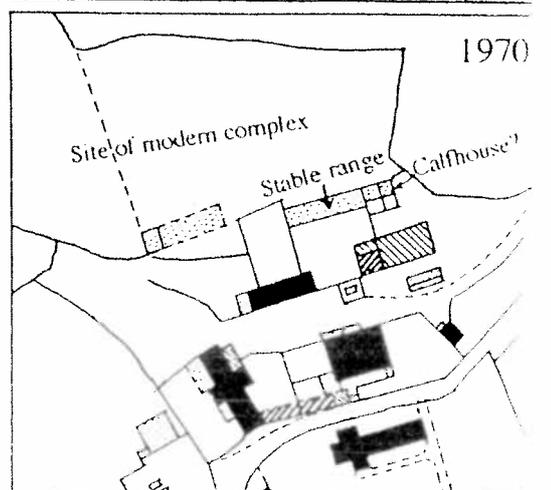
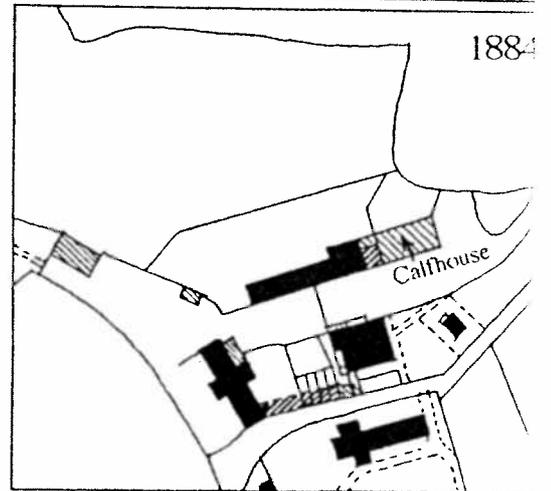
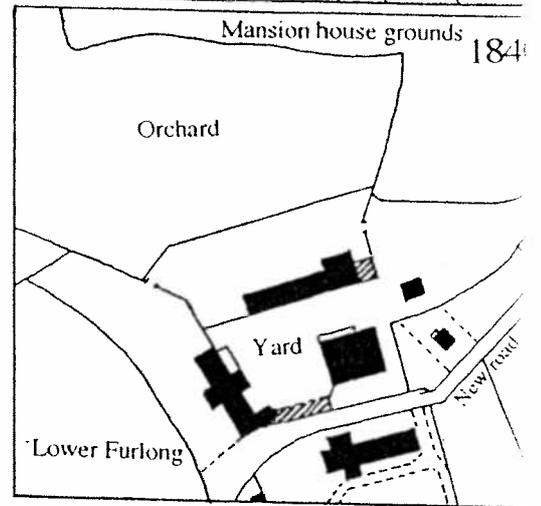
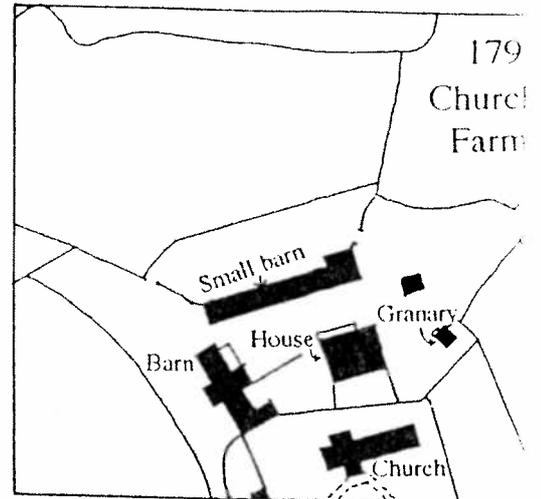
Buildings. The buildings belonging to this farm were not examined in great detail, having been converted to residential use, but the farmstead evidently occupies an ancient site next to the churchyard, and may have originated as the 'Prior's chamber' which is mentioned in a medieval deed. The present double-pile farmhouse, probably mid-17th century in date, is still one of the oldest surviving houses in the parish and is Listed as Grade II. The house backs onto the churchyard (now separated by a lane opened up in the early 19th century), and stands on the south-eastern corner of the main farmyard which gave access into the fields. The building aligned north-south on the west side of the yard was once a large barn with opposed projecting porches midway along its main axis, while another building on the north side was once a small barn aligned east-west. The latter belonged to a range of buildings which extended further eastward according to the 1793 estate map, and there are anomalies in the stonework which indicate past changes of use. A pair of stable boxes still remain at the eastern end. In the early 19th century a line of small structures was built along the southern wall of the yard, possibly box pigsties, but this area has been completely demolished.

On the eastern side of the house is the entrance yard from the village, on the south side of which, close to the house, is an unusual red brick granary which has been dated to the late 17th or early 18th century and is Grade II Listed. The use of brick at this early period is rare in this region; here they are about 9 x 4 1/2 x 2 1/2 inches in size, and laid in a slightly irregular Flemish bond on a timber-framed base supported on 4 x 3 staddles. The pyramid roof has a covering of red S-pantiles, but the timbering is a replacement, probably of mid-19th century origin. There



Sequence of farm developments as shown on:

- |   |                          |
|---|--------------------------|
| 1. Priston Estate map of William Jenkins, 1793.   | ■ 18th century buildings |
| 2. Tithe map of Priston and Wilmington, 1840.   | ▨ 1793-1840 ..           |
| 3. First edition OS map at 25" to the mile, 1884.   | ▩ 1840-1884 ..           |
| 4. Current OS 1:2500 map, 1970-91, showing the working farm layouts before conversion to dwellings. | □ 1884-1970 ..           |



*Late 17th cent. granary, Church Farm.*

is a door on the north side approached by five irregular stone steps rising from the west, with two wooden-framed glazed windows with shutter fittings on both east and west sides, and a similar single window set centrally on the south. Internally the lower part of the wall is clad in horizontal planking up to 1.27m from the floor, and there is grain-bin with posts for two others. A wooden floor has been installed at tie-beam level, with access to the roof through a trap door. The 1793 estate map shows another building with similar outline a few yards to the north of the granary, but this had been removed by the late 19th century when a calf house was built on the north side of the yard. The latter is a long building aligned east-west and shows signs of many changes in the door and window openings, but apparently without any interior divisions. Behind it, on the north side in parallel alignment, is a single storey stable and storage range built somewhat later. The door and window openings here are dressed with blue engineering bricks (unlike the rest of the buildings which are of freestone), and fitted with hit-and-miss slatted vents. It is internally divided by two inserted cross-walls, and had access into a small range added onto the eastern end, possibly a calf-house, which is divided into two compartments by a partial cross-wall.

On the north side of the recorded buildings a new complex of steel sheds, a grain store and slurry tank was installed in recent times, but are now either redundant or demolished.

### Hedge Survey grades.

Hedge number	Ecological Grade	Species Count	Archaeological grade	Overall Grade
10	A (I., NSP)	3	1	I
11	B (I., NSP)	6	1	I
12	B (I., NSP)	7	1	I
13	B (I., NSP)	4	1	I
14	B (I., NSP)	3	1	I
15	B (I., NSP)	6	1	I
26	B	7	2	II
28	B	5	2	II
29	B	4	2	II
97	A	6	2	I
100	B (NSP)	4	2	II
101	B (I.)	4	2	II
102	B	6	2	II
103	B	2	2	II
104	Grubbed out	0	2	II
105	B (incomplete)	5	2	II

Woodland Survey. Although it is probable that the western side of the Church Farm lands was once part of the ancient woodland of Priston, the existing woods are of later origin. They are nevertheless of some interest and have been graded accordingly;

LONGWOOD (Grade I, 13 indicator species) Appears to have originated as a strip of scrub growing in the 'Lugfall' outside the southern bank of an older wood called 'Hazelland' which disappeared in the 17th century. This term refers to the practice of setting the hedge-bank of a wood or park back from the boundary line, leaving a gap of about one perch between them. This gap, sometimes known as a woodland lugg or 'Lugfall', left room for carts during maintenance of the boundary hedge or fence without trespassing on another's land. The bank and inner ditch of the old wood can still be seen running through the length of Longwood today. The name 'Longwood' occurs as early as 1500, which suggests that it was derived from the phrase 'Along the Wood' (ie. along the side of Hazelland Wood). At that time it was only 4 acres in extent (half its present size), but by 1730 it had grown to the full 8 acres and was described as a pasture ground. The 1793 map shows that the wood merely consisted of a

narrow brake running along the north side of this strip which was otherwise occasionally ploughed. By 1840 however, this ground appears to have been completely converted to a woodland hunting-area, presumably by new plantation, with a game-keeper's lodge being provided at its eastern end. It was subsequently kept 'in hand' by the lords of manor, but is now in private ownership.

**ASH BRAKE** (Grade II, 7 indicator species) This name first occurs in the 1730s and 1770s as a large pasture ground, occasionally ploughed, which suggests that it may have received its name from some earlier woodland feature. The present wood appears on the 1793 estate map in the south-east corner of this ground. It was then several acres larger than today and extended eastward into Upper Hare Mead (also known as Wood Croft), but by 1840 it had been reduced to its present size.

**BRAKE BESIDE PRISTON WOOD** (Grade IV) This brake which runs along the northern edge of 'Hewes' appeared some time between 1840-84. It is therefore not a part of Priston Wood, whose woodbank can still be clearly traced between them.

### Archaeological Sites and Features

**WESTERN PARISH BOUNDARY** (Grade I). As the hedge survey shows, the highest grade hedges, numbers 10-15, lie along this boundary which is mentioned in an Anglo-Saxon charter of 936 AD. In the charter it is said to have followed an old ditch (ealdan dic), which can still be clearly seen, particularly between hedges 10 and 11. The boundary between Priston and Lammasfield (in Camerton), hedges 12-15, is not mentioned in the charter, as Lammasfield was then included within the Priston estate. Although this separation occurred some time before the Domesday survey, they continued to be closely associated until the late 18th century. It has been deduced that the old ditch was the remains of a prehistoric trackway along which the boundary had been later established. This trackway has been traced from Tunley to Saltford and is thought to have been used by the Romans as a salt or iron-ore supply route to Camerton, which had mostly fallen out of use by Saxon times.

**ROADS AND PATHWAYS** (Grade II). Most of the roads and paths in Priston are of early origin, and it is significant that the roadside hedges often contain the highest number of species. Of particular interest is the pathway to Lammasfield from Church Farm which is mentioned as early as 1446, when an agreement was made between the Prior of Bath and his tenants that 'with respect to a yearly licence claimed from the lord, the Rector of Priston should have each year a way through the field of the lord and his tenants called Southfield, as far as his enclosure called Lemansfield which he holds of William, Lord of Botreaux, provided that it is agreeable to the lord's tenants, since the lands [in Southfield] are sown under the direction of John Lewis and John More who own the said lands...' Again in 1599, '..we do present that there is a lawfull way to Haremeades hedge up to Lemonsfield for John Collins and for so manie of the tenantes as have ground uppon that side of the field, w<sup>ch</sup>-way is denied by Mr. Rouswell and is planted and hedged overthwarte...' [Rosewell was the farmer of the Great Farm]. Access to this path was always difficult, and the only route (other than from the Farm) was by a track through the Rectory grounds (now under the present house) from Priston Lane. This situation was improved in the early 19th century by the opening of the present lane along the north side of the churchyard. Another track connected Lammasfield path with Priston Lane across the brook in Stowborough which still exists as a 'holloway', a good indication of its age.

**BARROWS** (Grade II). At the top of the abovementioned 'holloway' is the site of two Round Barrows, first noted in 1821 by John Skinner, Antiquarian and Rector of Camerton. One of them appears to have been destroyed six years later during quarrying operations for

road-stone and a limekiln which stood next to it, during which a stone cist containing burnt bones was found. Their exact location is now unclear owing to the backfilling of the quarry and general dumping which has occurred in recent years. These are the only confirmed barrows in Priston, but occupy a similar situation to another group a short distance further upstream at Wallmead in Timsbury.

**SITES OF HIGH POTENTIAL.** The brookside areas are now regarded as an important source of future discoveries, particularly at Stowborough where remains have already been found as well as being an area of unimproved grassland. Traces of other earthworks are still faintly visible there, such as the old ditch running down to the stream from Hewes which appears on the 1793 estate map. The outcrop of rock on the north side of the stream has from earliest times been a useful source of limestone, giving rise quarrying and related activities such as the lime-burning mentioned above.

In the area of Great Mead and Grove many enclosure banks and ditches of early origin can still be made out with the aid of aerial photographs. These appear to have been associated with the area of Pressbarrow Farm known as Westend Town which may have had a greater significance in the past, and an important bearing on the origins of the village.

#### Fieldnames.

ASH BRAKE (Ash Brake, 1730) 'land adjoining or containing Ash trees' (OE aesc-braec).

BREACH (Breach Field, 1620) 'woodland newly broken for agricultural use' (ME breche).

CALF MEAD (?= Calvlandes, c.1500) 'where calves were kept' (OE cealf).

CLEVE (les Cleeves, 1591) 'land on a steep slope' (OE clif).

DRY GROUND (Dry Close, 1730) 'dry area enclosed from surrounding wet land'.

The FIELD (the Fild, 1620) 'open area in woodland', probably common land (OE feld).

Upper/Lower FURLONG (ditto, 1730) 'an enclosure, once one of the divisions of the common fields' (OE furlang).

GREAT MEAD (?= Grovemead, 1730) 'meadow adjoining the GROVE' (below).

The GROVE (?= le Litle Grove, 1534) 'small ground adjoining or containing a grove' (OE lytel-graf).

HARE MEAD (Haremedehegge, 1395) 'meadow frequented by hares' -hedge (OE hara-maed).

HEWES (ditto, 1730) possibly 'lands on a steep ridge or spur' (OE hoh/heugh).

INNOCKES (Innocke, 1606) 'part of the common field enclosed for cultivation while the remainder is fallow', usually near the village (ME Inhokes).

LONG WOOD (Longewode, c.1500) possibly 'woody strip of ground along the side of (Hazelland) wood' (OE andlang-wudu).

PRECIOUS MEAD (ditto, 1730) probably a 'fertile' meadow.

STOWBOROW (ditto, 1730) possibly 'stony hill or mound' (OE stan-beorg), or 'stony wood' (OE stan-bearwe).

WOOD MEAD (Wodemedede, c.1500) 'meadow adjoining (Hazelland) wood' (OE wudu-maed).

## **Priston Wood Area**

Origin and Extent. The fields and grounds in this area are now largely broken up into individual properties, often under external ownership, and were therefore treated separately during the survey from the main farmlands in Priston. The land here constituted much of the medieval 'Southfield' of the manor, although Priston Wood, together with other woods which have since disappeared, was always part of the lord's own demesne land and provided materials to defray the running costs of the estate. This, with the Sleights, was managed by the Prior of Bath's bailiff, but from the 16th century onward became the concern of the Manor Farm, succeeded in the late 18th century by Church Farm. The wood remained 'in hand' right up to the breakup of the estate in 1919. Highwell, Cheesemoor and the Down were all part of the open common fields which became part of the newly created 'Hill Farm' when the old copyhold tenures were reorganised at the end of the 18th century.

Buildings Although this area contains no agricultural buildings, there are extensive remains of Priston Colliery still to be seen at Tunley. These are discussed more fully below.

### Hedge Survey Grades

Hedge Number	Ecological Grade	Species Count	Archaeological Grade	Overall Grade
16	B (I., NSP)	6	1	I
17	A (I., NSP)	10	1	I
18	B (I., NSP)	7	1	I
19	B (I., NSP)	5	1	I
20	B (I., NSP)	4	1	I
21	B (I., NSP)	8	1	I
95	B	3	2	II
96	B	6	2	II
98	A	6	2	I
99	A	4	2	I

### Woodland Survey

**PRISTON WOOD** (Grade I, 21 indicator species) The very high indicator species count found during the survey tends to confirm the ancient origin of Priston Wood, although there is no description of it in the Saxon boundary charter for Priston of 936 AD, and only seven acres of woodland are mentioned in the Domesday survey. In 1258 it was known as 'Southwood', a name it retained until the 17th century, and there is reference in the manorial court-roll of 1395 to wood being sold there. As demesne land it may also have been used for sport and hunting, but in 1677 there is a reference, in the Steward's account-book, of payment of one pound 'for wattering ye wood bease', and in more recent times it is said that blackberries were planted there for the benefit of the villagers. In the 1677 account there is also a payment 'for mending ye wood hedge', a precaution against grazing animals as well as illegal cropping (a constant feature in the court-rolls of the time), and much of the surrounding woodbank can still be traced today. The early maps show that the wood extended up to the parish boundary and was only set back sometime between 1840 and 1884, but the southern bank, which can be traced further westward across open fields, appears to cross over the boundary into Tunley Ground, suggesting that it may once have been part of an even larger area of woodland in antiquity. As noted below, it has a high archaeological potential.

### Archaeological Sites and Features.

**SOUTH-WESTERN PARISH BOUNDARY** (Grade I) The highest grade hedges, numbers 16-21, lie along this boundary, confirming its ancient origin. Its course is described



in the Saxon charter of 936 AD, most of which can still be identified today. It then followed a main highway called a 'herepath' which is now thought to have previously existed as an ancient track known as the 'Jurassic Way' running down from the Cotswolds into Somerset. The Bath Road (hedge 20) and Blind Lane (hedge 21) are visible remains of this highway, but some of the smaller features have since disappeared. Somewhere along this part the boundary the charter mentions a stone marker called a 'hara-stan' (hoar stone), which may have marked the junction at Tunley colliery but could also refer to the remains of a neolithic cromlech, mentioned below, which once stood above Tunley Farm. In the middle ages a field in this area was still called Horestone. Not far from this stone the charter mentions an old hall (ealdan sele), where the boundary turned northward away from the road, which may have been a predecessor of Tunley Farm. The boundary then continued, much as it does now, 'straight into the Lox', the 'Lox' being the ancient name for Priston brook.

This corner of the boundary, which stands practically on the edge of Tunley Iron-age hillfort, may once have had greater importance in earlier times. In 1593 it was the site of a gallows where, in 1593, Richard Clements of Priston was hanged for killing his wife Margery with poison. As this area then also stood at the junction of the three Hundreds of Wellow, Keynsham and Chew, Tunley Hill may have had some administrative significance, perhaps as the site of a hundred court or Sheriff's Tourn as an early spelling of 'Tornley' (ie. 'Tournlegh') might suggest.

**ROADS AND PATHS (Grade II)** Most of the roads in Priston are of ancient origin, and it is likely that Priston Lane originated as an early droveway. During the middle ages the Prior of Bath authorised 50 sheep to be sent to Priston from Lansdown for winter pasture, probably on the sheep pastures called the Sleights. Before the enclosure of the lane in the last century, it passed through a 'funnel' between Priston Wood and the Down, a typical feature of upland drove-ways.

**PRISTON WOOD (Grade I)** As mentioned above, Priston wood was an important feature of the ancient landscape. Much of the woodbank has survived, particularly on the eastern side, and although no obvious internal earthworks have been found, the interior floor is very uneven, and crossed by a series of old trackways which are presently difficult to date. It has seen a diversity of activity throughout the ages, and remains an area of high archaeological potential.

**SITE OF CROMLECH (Grade III)** In 1821 John Skinner, Antiquarian and Rector of Camerton, noted the remains of a cromlech consisting of two upright stones and a cap-stone, part of a Neolithic chambered tomb. These megaliths lay 'a little to the left of the road that leads from the gate at the back of Tunley Farm to the road leading to Timsbury, about 20yds from the gate'. The capstone and one of the supporters had been broken up to mend the road, with the remaining supporter, measuring 6ft by 2ft, being kept 'to defend the corner of the wall surrounding the court in front of Tunley Farm house'. A little later he records that this also 'will soon share the fate of its companions as I see they have made preparations for breaking it up for the roads'.

**EARLY FIELD SYSTEM (Grade III)** The array of earthworks at the bottom of Cheesemoor are the remains of an old field system, first noted by Skinner, which aerial photographs show extending to the top of the field. Cheesemoor, Southdown and Highwell were once part of a single open field divided into strips, signs of which are preserved by various kinks in the hedges on Southdown as well as by older field boundaries shown on the 1793 estate map. The hedges around this field are often mentioned in the manorial courtrolls, such as in 1617, when the tenants 'that have hedge at Sowth Doun' had 'suffered the same to be in decaye for wante of dickinge & settinge in sundry ptes thereof. Lett ev'ry one amend his own pte before Candlemas next upon the paine of ten shillings a peace...and upon sufficient warning by the hayward that anye one of there hedge is faty (faulty), that w<sup>h</sup>in one week if they doe not amend it farfit (forfeit) 3s 4d apeace'.

TUNLEY COLLIERY (Grade III) The earliest attempts to find coal in Priston took place on the north side of the manor as early as 1725 but, although coal was eventually discovered in 1793, no opportunity arose to exploit it. Despite continued interest throughout the 19th century, it was not until 1906 that coal was successfully mined at Tunley on the southern boundary of Priston. This ran successfully for many years, and a railway link with the Camerton Branch of the GWR was even proposed, but it was eventually forced to close in the unfavourable economic climate of the early 1930s. Although the headgear was removed in 1940, being thought an attraction to enemy bombers, this is one of the few remaining colliery sites in the area where the ruins of the pit-head buildings still exist. The offices have been converted to a dwelling, and the spoil-heap, or batch, has become an area of high ecological interest.

#### Fieldnames

CHEESEMOOR (Cheesemore, 1606) 'wet ground, good for dairy pasture' (OE ciese-mor).

HIGHWELL (Hiewell, 1590) 'high spring or stream' (OE heah-wella).

PRISTON WOOD, previously SOUTHWOOD (Southwode, 1258) 'wood on the south side of the manor' (OE suth-wudu). Changed to 'Priston Wood' in the 17th century.

THE SLEIGHTS (Great Sleight and Nine-acre Sleight, 1730) 'sheep pastures' (OE slaeket).

THE (SOUTH) DOWN (le Southdowne, 1590) 'the down on the south side of the manor' (OE suth-dun).

## **Priston Mill Farm**

Origin. At the time of the Domesday Survey both Priston and Wilmington had a water corn-mill which, according to their valuation, appear to have been of average capacity for this part of the country. Wilmington mill seems to have disappeared at an early stage, and its location is unknown, but there is no reason to doubt that at Priston a mill has occupied the same site for the last thousand years. Unusually, this mill was not a part of the lord's own personal 'demesne' property, and a court-roll of 1395 shows that it was classed as an 'ancient hearth' (the local term being 'Old Auster' from the Latin '*Antiqua Astra*'), which meant that it belonged to one of the copyhold tenements. In the early years of the 18th century when Priston belonged to the Percival family the mill seems to have become the focus of special attention, the mill itself being described as 'newly built' in 1731, and the lands being run jointly with another tenement. After 1741 this enlarged estate was known as 'Mill Farm' and frequently kept 'in hand'. By the 1770s, after the manor had been sold to William Jenkins, it was occupied by his relation, George Vaughan, during whose time it had the peculiar distinction of being the home of a team of mules employed for haulage in the coal adventure of the 1790s. With the reorganisation of the copyhold tenures that created the other farms in Priston, the Mill Farm was finally leased as a consolidated farm in 1796 with virtually the same lands that it contains today.

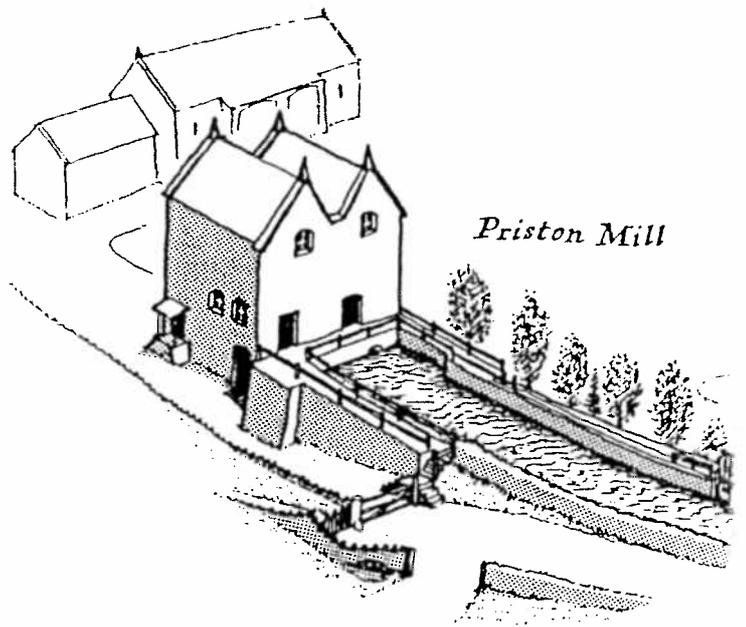
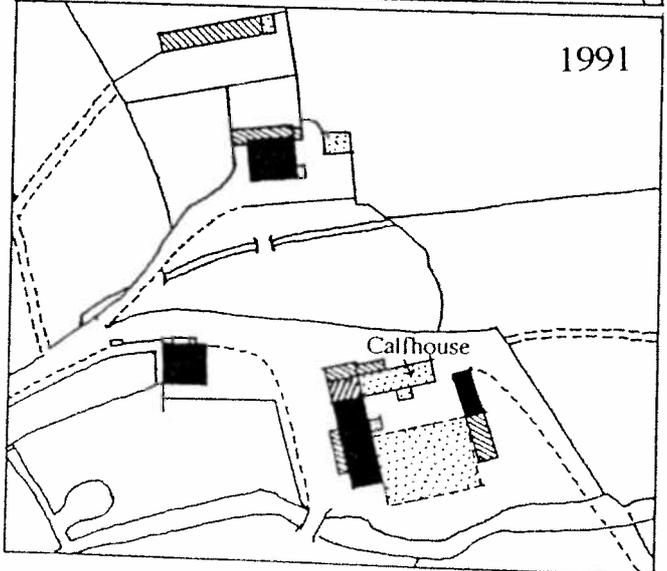
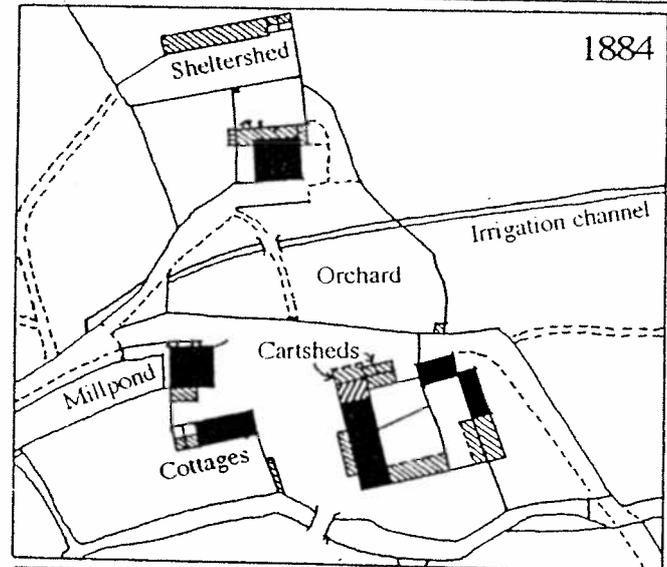
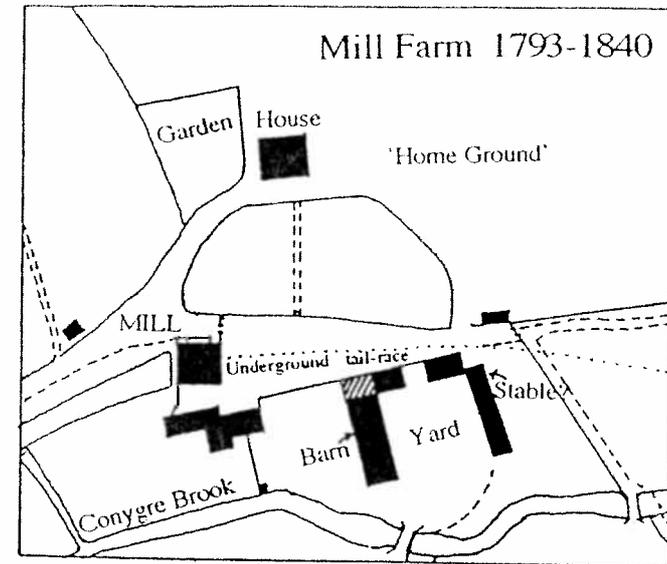
Extent. Although the present farm lands roughly cover the eastern sector of the medieval 'Northfield' and, south of the brook, the northern edge of the 'Eastfield' of Priston, the original tenements were typically dispersed throughout the manor. James Snook of Kingsdon, Som., yeoman, who was the first leaseholder in 1796, was succeeded some time after 1808 by a Mr. Bevan, but from the 1820s up to at least 1840 the farm was owned by James Edgell who also ran Church Farm.

Buildings. The 1793 estate map of William Davies shows a layout still recognisable today. The present double-pile farmhouse, Grade II Listed, stands to the north overlooking the farmstead, separated by an old orchard. This was not surveyed, but its facade suggests a late 18th or early 19th century date, although earlier evidence may be concealed within.

The mill, which is occasionally still worked when water supply allows, is also Grade II Listed. It is a large four storied building, roughly square, and has a double-pile roof on an east-west axis, with obelisk finials at the top of each gable. The millpond lies immediately against the west wall and there is a complicated series of sluice gates and spillweirs at intervals along the headrace. Inside, the large transverse pitchback wheel, 6.4m in diameter, sits on bearings set at ground level and drives two sets of stones on the first floor above, the tailrace consisting of a subterranean channel which runs for some 0.4km before issuing into Conygre Brook. The existing wheel replaced an earlier, smaller wheel in order to gain power, and projects up into the first floor level. The level of the millpond was also raised, and several blocked up windows can still be seen in the wall of the pond dam. The windows and doors are generally segmental-headed with keystones. On the north side only three stories are visible above the entrance-way down to the farmyard, with steps up to a door on the second floor and another flight down to the wheel-pit, the two upper floors having two windows each. On the east side there are two windows on each of the upper three storeys, with two ground floor doors and a window. The south wall has three windows on each of the second and third floors, but none on the top floor, and at ground floor level, two windows and an opening into the wheel-pit at the western end. At each end of the western wall there are two doors at third floor level, with access from a walkway around the edge of the millpond, but only one window below each of the gables. Internally the lower three floors are divided by a partition wall, the southern partition being the larger. This division is repeated on the top floor by three square pillars carrying the principal rafters. There are remains of two segmental-headed fireplaces on the northern ground floor and southern first floor, the latter relating to some earlier arrangement before the raising of the millpond.

Immediately on the south-east side of the mill stood a rank of cottages (recently





Sequence of farm developments as shown on:

- |   |                          |
|---|--------------------------|
| 1. Priston Estate map of William Jenkins, 1793.   | ■ 18th century buildings |
| 2. Tithe map of Priston and Wilmington, 1840.   | ▨ 1793-1840 ..           |
| 3. First edition OS map at 25" to the mile, 1884.   | ▩ 1840-1884 ..           |
| 4. Current OS 1:2500 map, 1970-91, showing the working farm layouts before conversion to dwellings. | □ 1884-1970 ..           |

demolished) aligned east-west and flanked on the east by the large barn which forms the western side of the farmyard. The barn was already in existence by the late 18th century and is Grade II Listed. It is aligned north-south and consists of 10 bays with plain gabled roof decorated with bell finials at each end. An annexe with lean-to roof has been added midway along the western side, probably in the late 19th century, in which there are two massive waggon-entries with segmental wooden lintels. Roughly opposite to these are two others in the original east wall, both segmental-arched with keystones, the southern example later blocked with a smaller door and high-level window. The annexe, which also has a pedestrian door in its northern wall, may be interpreted as a double cart porch, but it is not clear why the waggon doorways are so close together. It is possible that there was an internal partition between them for separate storage, but this needs re-examination. The east wall also contains two internally splayed slit vents at the southern end, and two smaller segmental-arch doorways with keystones to the north. There is a similar pattern on the west side, with one of the vents replaced between the waggon doors, but with only one door at the northern end. At the southern end there are signs of a high level opening extending up to the eaves. The southern gable end has a single vent and a segmental-headed window with keystone higher up in the wall. Joined directly onto the northern end of the barn is a simple gabled annexe aligned north-south, added in the late 19th century. This building appears to have been originally open at the north end next to the farmyard track, and perhaps served as a large cart shed, but is now infilled by modern timber conversion. However, two rows of ventilation or putlog holes at the southern half of the otherwise featureless west wall imply an earlier use for grain storage. There is access through the east wall into a smaller building, added later, which may also have been a cart shed aligned east-west. Here there is a single door in the north wall, with one of the jambs having a quarter-round chamfer in blue bricks, but the eastern side has been boarded up. The south side abuts against a calf house aligned east-west which forms the northern side of the farmyard. This range seems to have been built not long before the latter building, apparently replacing an earlier structure of similar outline. It has a simple gable roof with vents at the ridge and a four-gabled finial at the east end. The south side facing the farmyard has three doorways with blue brick quarter-round jambs and sliding doors, interspersed between three windows, two of which have projecting blue brick sills. There is only a single sliding door with blue brick jambs in the north wall, blocked off when the small cart shed was added. In the eastern gable end next to the farmyard entrance there is a wide vehicle entry on the south side, and a pedestrian door to the north, both being timber-lintelled. The western wall abuts directly onto east wall of the northern barn-annexe, to which it is connected by an interior door. There are no internal fittings of special interest, although it has not yet been converted like the rest of the buildings in this group which now serve as an entertainment hall and tea-room with toilets.

At the entrance to the farmyard and ranging along its eastern side is a redundant building aligned north-south which may have been a stable. It has a gabled roof without finials, but the copings here have ovolo-moulded cushions. In the north wall there is a window opening, and above it, a loft entry with segmental head and keystone. The western wall facing the farmyard has a plain central doorway, but is otherwise featureless. On the east side there is a doorway at the north end, in the centre a blocked window with flattened segmental-headed arch and keystone, and at the south end a shallow rectangular opening. In the south wall of the loft there is a window with segmental head and keystone. The interior is much altered and no original fittings of interest survive. Although this is the only building which might qualify as a stable, the lack of windows suggests some other use such as a cowhouse. Abutting the south wall is a four bay shelter shed on the same alignment closing off the eastern side of the farmyard. The roof ridge is L-shaped in plan, with the gable spanning the southern pair of bays facing the west front. It is open on the south and west sides, but two blocked windows in the east wall may relate to an earlier phase when there were walls on both sides. Buildings are shown on both sites in the late 18th century, but the shelter shed is a post-1884 replacement, perhaps reusing the back wall of the earlier structure. At the same time the south side of the farmyard was closed off by the erection of two small buildings. These were recently demolished to make way for the modern overall roof which now covers the whole of southern half of the farmyard. Between 1840-84 an arcaded shelter shed was built facing south across a new yard on the

north side of the house. This has been converted to offices and was not examined in detail. The old farmyard area is now little used, and most of the farm work has been removed to a new complex erected a few hundred yards to the west of the old farm entrance.

### Hedge Survey Grades

Hedge Number	Ecological Grade	Species Count	Archaeological Grade	Overall Grade
41	A (L., NSP)	7	2	I
43	A	5	2	I
45	B	5	1	I
46	B (NSP)	6	1	I
47	B	6	1	I
48	B (L., NSP)	6	1	I
49	B (L., NSP)	5	1	I
50	B (L., NSP)	3	2	II
71	B	5	2	II
71a	B	8	2	II
72	B	7	2	II
73	B	5	2	II
74	B (NSP)	2	2	II
75	B	5	2	II
77	A	10	2	I
85	B	6	2	II
87	B	5	2	II
88	B (L., NSP)	4	2	II
107	A (L., NSP)	4	2	I

Woodland. Although there are no woods presently belonging to the farm, this has not always been the so, as in the case of;

**POTTERNE BRAKE** (Grade II, 7 indicator species) Although there is an entry in the manorial courtroll of 1395 which records a receipt of 20d from the bailiff for 'wood sold at Potermeland', Potterne Brake seems to have come into existence at the end of the 18th century and was initially allocated to Mill Farm. After only a few years it was transferred, with Pottern Mead, to the newly created New Farm. It was then half its present size, being enlarged in more recent times by the addition of a strip taken out of the field on the east which belonged to the Mill, called New Tining. The brake (Grade IV) standing above Rook was not surveyed, but was in existence in the late 18th century and may be of earlier origin. There is mention in 1595 of an half acre plot called 'Thirty Acres Asshe' which could have received such a name from its position next to this brake.

### Archaeological Sites and Features

**WILMINGTON/PRISTON BOUNDARY** (Grade I) The boundary between these two manors was presumably established when the two were separated not long before Domesday, although the line of megalithic stones along the top of Wilmington Copse may suggest some earlier partition. The names 'Rudge' and 'Bulford' are found on both sides of the boundary which suggests that they may have been separated at a later stage, and that the boundary originally extended to the junction of the Wilmington and Priston brooks.

**EASTERN PARISH BOUNDARY** (Grade I) The parish boundary along Priston brook is described in a Saxon charter of 936 AD as being between 'the old Eden ford' and 'Hwitda cumb'. The latter can be identified today as 'Whiddlecombe', but the exact site of the ford is unclear. The Eden was then the name of Newton brook, and it is possible that the original boundary reached further downstream to the ancient crossing at Park Bridge towards

Englishcombe. Priston brook was then known as 'Lox' brook.

**ROADS AND PATHWAYS (Grade II)** It is significant that roadside hedges often have a high species count as testimony to their ancient origin, particularly near the Mill, where a network of routes such as Inglesbatch lane would have been necessary to supply a wide catchment area, although its extent is yet to be determined. A 'Millway' is shown on the 1742 map of the district running along the scarp inside Wilmington Copse, connecting the Mill to the Priston to Stanton Prior pathway. This strip is also marked on the 1840 tithe map as the property of Mill Farm, although it may no longer have then served as a trackway, and can still be traced today alongside the line of megaliths inside the copse. Until the 1790s the lane from Priston divided at Pye Mead, with an alternative route leading along the southern hedge of the Mead, probably crossing the brook by the stone-arch bridge behind the Great Barn. The 1793 estate map shows the track to Wide Wear as well as the footpath stile at Prest Stile. A contemporary map of Englishcombe manor shows the small footbridge to Inglesbatch in Poolemead, where it is still called 'Brown's Pye Bridge' after the 17th century family who owned the Mill.

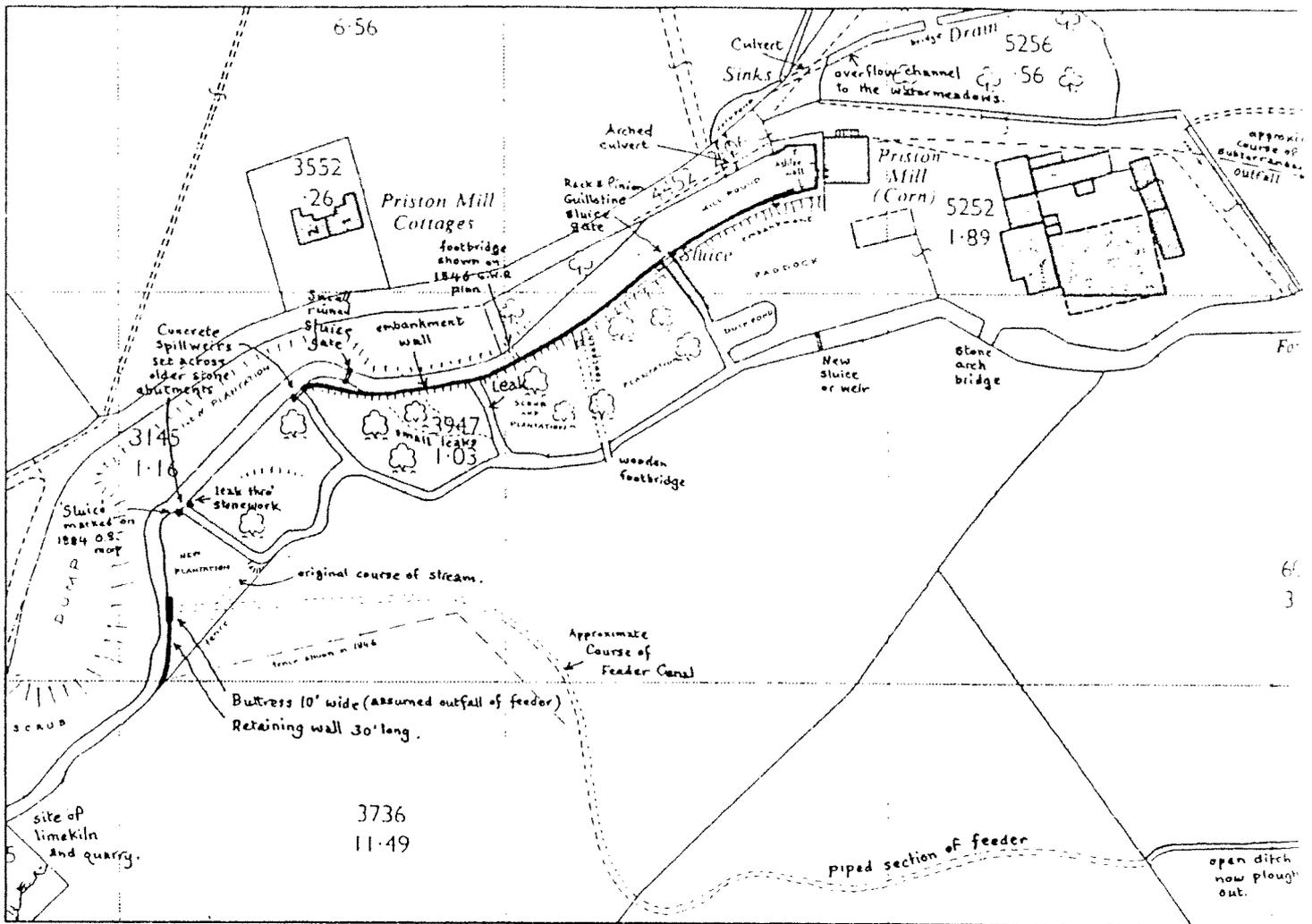
**BULFORD BRIDGE (Grade II)** Although it is not clear which manor was responsible for the repair of Wilmington lane, the 1395 courtroll for Priston shows that the villagers maintained Bulford bridge. The present structure appears to have been built in the late 18th or early 19th century, apparently at some expense. Although the parapets are constructed of lias rubble, the whole arch and abutments are neatly faced in Bath stone ashlar, and great care was taken in providing a paved watering slip and weir on the east side, complete with tethering-post.

**MILL HEAD-RACE (Grade III)** The water supply to the mill pound from Conygre brook has evidently been modified over the ages, resulting in an elaborate control system. The remains of sluices, spillweirs and other structures can be found in the undergrowth upstream as far as Mill Lane bridge, as shown in the accompanying diagram. The subterranean tail-race, over 200yds in length, was apparently deepened when the enlarged wheel was installed in order to gain more power. The open tailrace is only shown on the 1742 map which may support the idea that someone with technical expertise such as George Vaughan was responsible for this innovation in the late 18th century.

**FEEDER CANAL (Grade III)** The origin of the feeder channel which ran from the brook below the village as a supplement to the headrace of the mill is still not clear. It is shown about 1810-17 on the first edition OS 1" map of the county, but does not appear on any larger scale map until 1884, near the end of its useful existence. Although such hydraulic engineering was frequently employed in this area in the late 18th century, principally as a source of power for the coalworks, it may in this case have been associated with the introduction under-draining in the fields which seems to have been common elsewhere in the neighbourhood at that time. Most of it has since been ploughed out, although a 100m section has survived beside an old trackway on the south side of the mill-way to Inglesbatch. It is stone-lined at the southern end, and the culvert under the mill-way is still in fair condition. Another culvert existed a little further to the north where the lane once recrossed the canal in Floxham, and traces of masonry are still thrown up by the plough. A few remains of masonry are still visible at the inlet in Lower Gaston, and the outfall into Conygre Brook in Pye Mead is indicated by a masonry wall projecting from the bank about 75yds below Mill Lane bridge. The last section through Pye Mead is said to have been buried in ceramic pipes.

**WATER MEADOWS (Grade III)** Until about a century ago, the meadow called Wide Wear was irrigated by an unusual system supplied by an overflow channel which ran from the Mill pound along the boundary hedges of Pool Mead and Wide Wear. These hedges were removed uphill so that the channel could be maintained at optimum level, and their original banks are still visible today. A GWR deposited plan shows that these changes occurred between 1840-46. It has been reported that a series of sluices and culverts were distributed along the top of Wide





**Head-race system to Priston Mill**

BATH, October 1792.

PRISTON MILLS, five Miles from BATH,  
**T**O BE LET, and entered upon immediately, all in per-  
 fect and good Repair, with two Dressing Mills, and  
 three pair of Stones of the best quality, all the wheels and  
 machinery made of iron, working in the most easy and com-  
 plete manner, and a sufficient Stream of Water for the pur-  
 pose. This Mill is built on a most excellent plan, and room  
 enough to hold a stock of 3500 sacks of wheat and flour.—  
 For Particulars apply to Mr. George Vaughan, at Priston.

Advertisement from the Bath Herald, 13th October 1792

Wear which still remain below the turf. Their purpose was to allow the water to drain back across the field into the brook, as indicated on aerial photographs which show a series of striations across its length, and giving its surface at ground level a 'made-up' appearance. It may also explain the massive ditch along the tail strip of Bulford Mead which would have protected it from flooding. This form of irrigation is an ancient technique, but only one other example, at Marshfield, has so far been found in Avon. Remains of the channel can still be seen in the garden of Mill Farm house, but although traces of embankment wall have been reported in the neighbouring field, the rest of the ditch has been levelled under the hooves of generations of cattle.

It is not clear whether the series of embankments running the length of Bulford Mead are also some form of water-meadow system, but they appear to be much older than the works at Wide Wear, and were traditionally a freehold property (rare in Priston). The name Wide Wear may indicate some earlier form of water control in the brook below, perhaps a fish weir, as suggested in the 1487 the courtrolls which record a fishing infringement involving 'Wm. Champeneis... a common fisher in several of the lord's waters at Milbroke, with nets and stopping up of the said water, to such an extent that it has become an expense to the lord...' The lords of the manor always maintained the rights to the fishery of Priston, and good fishing could still be had in the parish within living memory. The brook in Wide Wear has certainly been straightened in the past, the pond there being evidently a meander in the stream which was cut off at an early stage and remains a part of Englishcombe parish. Something similar may have occurred with the deep hollow on the other side of the hedge in Pool Mead, being also shown as a meander on the 1793 estate map.

**EARLY FIELD SYSTEMS (Grade IV)** Although several old field systems can be identified near the Mill from early air photographs, ploughing has removed most of their remains. Pensdown was probably cultivated in earliest times from the adjoining Romano-British settlement, and appears to have become a major medieval open field, particularly in East Pensdown, with meadow enclosures lower down in Cribbs. Another open field lay behind the mill consisting of terraces (lynchets or 'lanchards') which are still visible in Back Ground and turn up the odd flint implement. The lower baulk of this field appears to have been the bank which runs across Sawpit Ground. 'Back Ground' is shown as 'Rack Ground' on the 1840 tithe map, which may refer to the use of the terraces as a suitable site for rack-frames when fulling was introduced briefly at the Mill.

**CONEYGAR (Grade IV)** A licence for 'right of warren' in his demesne lands of Priston was granted to the Prior of Bath by king Edward I in 1275, presumably at 'Coneygar', the Middle English word for 'rabbit warren'. However, no 'pillow mounds' or other remains of a warren have been found there, and it is more likely that it was an area of wooded ground beside the stream in which the Prior could hunt fowl and other small game. Although other fields called Coneygar still exist further upstream, several more are mentioned in an 18th century survey, which suggests that this territory was originally of considerable extent. The stream in Coneygar has been straightened within the last 60 years, and the original bed of the watercourse can still be seen on the opposite side in Cleaves.

**SITES OF HIGH POTENTIAL** The outcrop of rock which provided such a suitable site for the Mill has also been a source of limestone over the centuries, giving rise to many other activities such as the limekiln which appeared in the early 1840s by Mill Lane bridge. Nearby, between the Lane and the road to Marksbury, there is a large earth platform which may once have been the site of a house. Thorpe's 1742 map shows a building in this area.

### Fieldnames

**BROAD HILL** (ditto, 1730) 'large, roughly square field on the hill'.

**BULFORD MEAD** (Boleford, 1395) 'meadow by Bullock Ford' (OE bula-ford-maed).

- CLEAVE (le Cliffe, 1591) 'land on a steep slope' (OE *clif*).
- CONEYGAR (Conyger, 1395) 'rabbit warren' (ME *coniger*).
- CRIBBS (Cribes, 1622) 'containing cribs or stalls' (OE *cribb*).
- FLOXHAM (Bloxechamp, 1486) possibly 'meadow by Lox brook' (OE *bi-Lox-hamm*). Also Bloxehale, 1395, 'nook of land by Lox brook' (OE *bi-Lox-halh*).
- HOME GROUND (only from 1840) 'ground next to the farm house'.
- LURCOMBE (Lurcom, 1590) possibilities; 'bull-rush valley' (OE *laefer-cumb*), 'lark valley' (OE *laewerc-cumb*), 'lair valley' (OE *leger-cumb*).
- MIDDLE GROUND (ditto, 1730) 'small ground between larger fields'.
- MILLMEDE (1601-1730) and MILLFORD MEAD (1730) unidentified plots by the mill.
- NEW TINING (New Tineing, 1730) 'new enclosure', presumably a late enclosure from the common field.
- PENSDOWN (ditto, 1730) possibilities; 'summit hill' (Brit. *pen* + OE *dun*), 'hill with pens on the top' (OE *pennes-dun*), 'hill belonging to Pefen (OE)'
- PINKNEY (Pinckney, 1604) 'an "island" (of dry ground) abounding in finches' (OE *pincan-ei*), or perhaps Puckney, 1590, 'an "island" frequented by a goblin' (OE *pucan-ei*).
- PITTS (Overpyttes/Netherpyttes, 1566) 'upper/lower ground containing pits or quarries' (OE *pytt*).
- POOL MEAD (Poole/Pull Meade, 1590) 'meadow next to or containing a pond' (OE *pol-maed*).
- PREST STILE (Prestyle, 1606) 'land containing a stile belonging to the priest' (OE *preost-stigel*).
- PYE MEAD (Brown's Pye, 17th C.) possibilities; 'abounding in gnats' (OE *peo-maed*), 'abounding in magpies' (OE *pio-maed*), 'next to or containing a pye' (a half-buried structure, such as a kiln or salt-house).
- RACK GROUND (only 1840) now 'Back Ground', originally part of Lurcombe, may have been the site of rack frames used in drying cloth after fulling.
- ROOK (ditto, 1730) possibly 'rough' (OE *ruh*), or related to 'ruck' and 'rick' (OE *hrycce*).
- Great/Little RUDGE (Rudges & le Ley, 1590) 'consisting of 'ruges' or strips of ground (OE *hrycg*), with 'untilled land' (OE *laege*).
- SAWPIT GROUND (only 1840) 'ground containing a saw-pit'.
- THIRTY ACRES (le Thirtie Acres, 1590) Probably formed by the enclosure of a part of the common field containing 30 one-acre strips.
- WASHLANE (Wash Lane, 1730) 'next to the lane leading to the cattle or sheep dipping pool'
- WIDE WEAR (le Weare, 1590) 'wide field next to the weir or dam' (OE *wer*).
- WILMINGTON HEDGE (ditto, 1730) 'next to the boundary hedge of Wilmington Manor'.

Fragments - from the court papers and other documents of Priston.

- 1395 'April 19th; Thomas Mulle who held of the lord 1 messuage and 1 virgate of land and one water-mill as an 'ancient hearth' is deceased, whereof there falls to the lord for a herriot 1 cow worth 13s4d, duly paid. And the said tenure remains in the hand of Robert Atmill, that he held in common with the said Thomas. He is accepted as tenant and has made fealty to the lord'.

*The lords of Priston during the middle ages were the Priors of Bath Monastery. Unusually, the mill was not run by them as part of their own demesne lands, but allocated to a customary tenant as an 'ancient hearth' (Antiqua astra). A messuage was a dwelling, and a virgate or yardland was roughly 30 acres. For this a form of death-duty known as a herriot was due. The surnames of both tenants appear to derive from their connection with the mill.*

- 1500 'John Hill holds 1 messuage & 1 virgate of land with pertinences; also 1 grain-mill. Rent 13s4d per annum' (from a priory rental).

*John Hill was still alive in 1540, but by 1541 the mill was owned by William Brown who is listed as a billman in the militia in the 1569 certificate of musters.*

- 1592 Sept.27; 'William Browne and his sons John and Onesiphorus are admitted tenants of 1 messuage, 1 virgate of land and 1 water corn-mill (molendino granali aquatico) in Priston for 3 lives. Rent; customary. Fine; 40 marks.

*The new lords of manor following the dissolution of the monastery were the Longs of Whaddon in Wiltshire. A fine was the admission fee.*

- 1616 May 25; 'William Browne and his son Clement Browne are admitted tenants of two parcels of land, Brodwell & Sheetwell (1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> acres), a close adjoining called Overcomeclose (1 acre <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> verge) and 1 pasture close called Homebushe Close (3 acres) for 3 lives. Rent; 6s8d. Heriott; 6s8d. Fine; £10.

*Within a year Clement and his sons Henry and William had built a new house on one of these plots (not yet identified).*

- 1621 Oct.2; 'William Browne excused suit of court owing to illness.

- 1622 Apr.2; 'We present that Wilyam Broun is desesed sinc the last Curt, and that there was tacken a Cowe for a heryat wch was delevered to the us of the lord and sent to Sowthwike. And that Johan his wife ought to have her widows estate accordinge to the custom.

*Southwick was the chief manor of the Long's estate. In Priston it was the custom that a widow should retain her husband's property for the rest of her life (provided she did not remarry), and many of these ladies ran their affairs with great vigour. Many years earlier Joan Brown and her daughter were listed as catholic recusants.*

- 1625 Mar.29; 'Johan Broun, widow, do Entertan her Sonn Joseph Browne an underTenant. He to be removed, or security given before Easter next under customary penalty'.

*Keeping an under-tenant was illegal - even a member of one's own family.*

- 1626 Apr.3; '...my leter to yore worship did consern the mill at Priston, that is, the Tenant in Reversion of his mother latly died. Now he is also deed and now there is but his widoe, her widoes Estat wch is above 50 yers old. Her hosbond died a power man, and

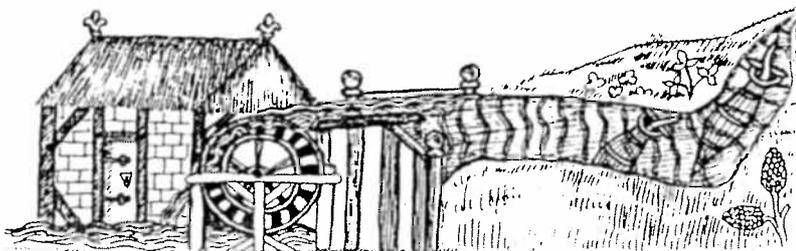
did not leve in the parish, and he had no goods Exsept a pot or such lyke wch if we can find no beter we must tack that. There was granted to a sonn of old Broun for fower accars of land and thy have bilt a hows upon that fowar accars for thre lyves. In that the Rest there is but the widoes Estat, wch is worth £20 or som what mor, ther is on that do deser to buy two lyves in Reversion of the widoe. He have beed [bid] for it £150 good payment in hand, but it wil eld [yield] mor, so I think the other syd'.

*Extract from a letter by Robert Burges, then tenant and bailiff of Priston, to the lord of manor Henry Sherfield, husband of Rebecca Long of Whaddon.*

- 1626 May 5; John Wiatt is granted the reversion of the mill estate, in the tenure of Susanne Browne, widow, for the lives of him and his son Benjamin Wyatt. Fine; £170 and fealty postponed.
- 1628 Sept.21; 'John Wyatt, who has bought the copyhold reversion of the mill at Priston, wishes to pay in person, either at the 'gret Cort at Pensford' on the 2nd November, or later at the Priston court' (from another letter).
- c.1630 'Priston; ..Grist Mill and 50 acres of land belonging, yearly value £26 (from an estate valuation for Sir Walter Long of Whaddon).
- 1693 Jan.31; Robert Wyatt granted the copyhold of 1 messuage, 1 yard of lands and 1 water corn-mill in Priston, on the surrender of the life of Eleanor Wyatt, widow. Rent; 13s10d. Fine; £25.
- c.1730 'Robert Wyatt Senior holds 1 messuage, Orchard & Garden, the Grist Mill and Stock, and 25½ acres of land. Value; £39.5.6½ . Reserved rent; 13s10d. He also holds a house and garden and 3 lacres of land in divers parcels. Value; £26.4.7¼. Reserved rent; 9s8½d' (from a manorial survey).

*The Stock probably refers to the sacks of flour kept in the mill, but may alternatively be a temporary fulling-stock for cleaning cloth. In 1731 the mill was rebuilt and by 1741 Robert Wyatt had died, for which a herriot of £3.3.0 was paid. Other surveys by Lord Percival ,who inherited the estate from the Longs, show that the mill was then held 'in hand', and from hereon it was always referred to as the 'Farm' in the bailiff's accounts, as below;*

- 1743 '...paid for 4 dozen of helm [thatching] for the Mill Farm, 8s5½d'.
- 1744 '...paid William Biggs for Mason's work at the Mill Farm and for Short's [tenement], 5s'.



Medieval watermill, early 14th century, with overshot wheel and millpond set with fish-traps.

## Pressbarrow Farm

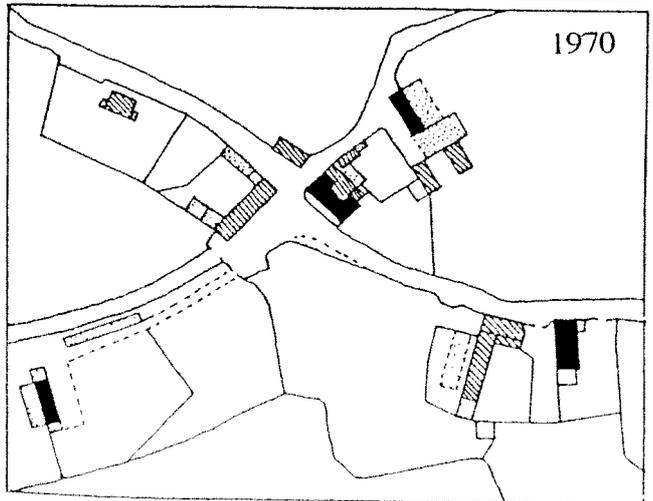
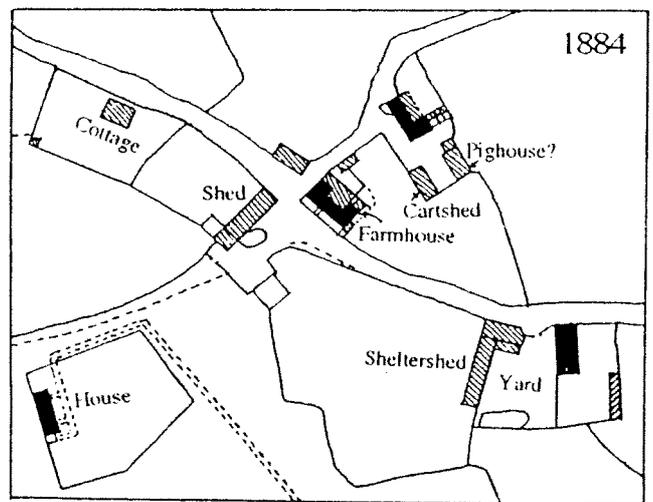
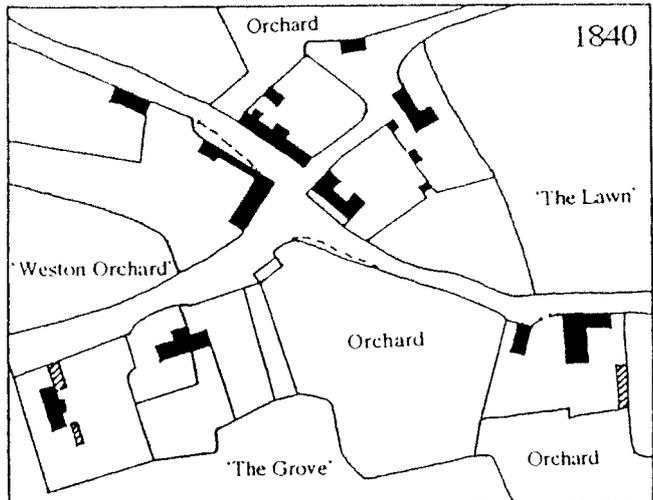
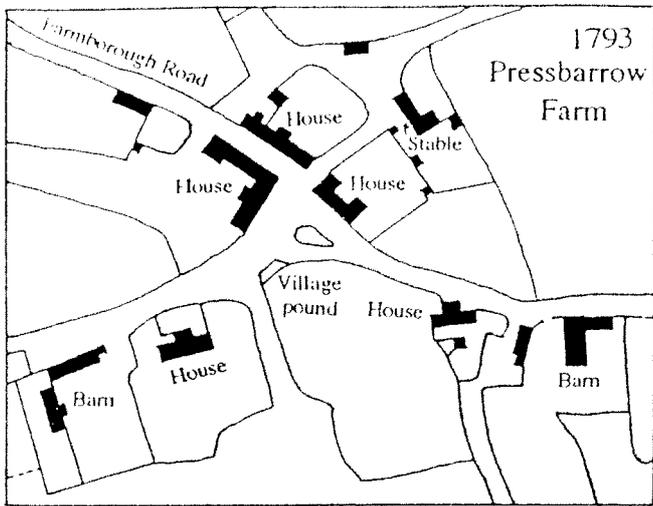
Origin This farm was created during the manorial reorganisation of Priston in the late 18th century, the name being derived from the distinctive hillock on the western parish boundary which lay within its territory. The detached hamlet of houses at the western end of the village in which it stood was apparently once known as 'Westend Town', although only a few cottages now remain. The double-pile farmhouse is of 19th century appearance, but has a complex structure which could not be examined in any detail. It is said to have been built originally as several cottages, and anomalies in the external stonework support this. It is now known, however, that the original farmstead consisted of a group of other buildings nearby, one of which stood on the opposite side of the road a few yards to the west, and the other immediately to the west next to the present farm entrance, the present site not being adopted until after their demolition sometime between 1840-84. Before then it seems to have been a separate property, sometimes kept in hand, which included the walled garden and a few small buildings at the back of the house, together with the adjoining paddock on the east side known as 'The Lawn'. It may also have had some connection with the village pound directly opposite on the south side of the road. A second group of buildings belonging to the farm stands about 100m further back towards the village on the opposite side of road. In the late 18th century this site was a small separate property belonging to an adjoining house on the east side of the village pound. This house was demolished before 1840 and the property transferred, first to Church Farm, and then to Pressbarrow Farm, apparently by 1884 as an extension to the reorganised farmstead.

Extent The present farm land covers a large part of the medieval 'Westfield' of Priston, but initially the farm only owned the land to the south of the Farmborough road. At that time it was run jointly with Whiddlecombe Farm which was centred in the village and owned an area of land around the SE boundary at Whiddlecombe. Between 1820-40 both properties were owned by James Wyatt, although the Whiddlecombe farm house may have been demolished by the latter date, and the separation of the two estates seems to have occurred soon after. It was presumably at this point when much of the land on the south side of the Farmborough road was acquired from Village Farm in exchange for the Whiddlecombe lands.

Buildings Behind the farmhouse is a building which stands on the far side of a small yard behind the garden wall, facing the entrance track from the road, and lying roughly north-south. It has a flat asbestos roof, but there are signs that there was once an upper floor, perhaps a hayloft. Internally it is divided by a wall into two rooms, each served by a large cart door on the west side which extends up to the wall-plate. On the south side of each door is a small internally splayed rectangular window, the northern example being original and internally arched, the other inserted and somewhat taller. There is a similar blocked window visible in the external east wall of the southern room. A butt joint can also be seen a little south of the midpoint of the east wall, indicating that the southern room is an addition. Both rooms have a stone floor, with remains of a stone drain in the southern room. In the northern room there are traces in the plaster on the rear internal wall of four vertical stall divisions which, despite the limited lighting, clearly indicate that this building was once used as a stable, the northern room for working horses, the southern for a hackney or riding-horse. The large entries reflect a later change of use requiring vehicular access.

At the other end of the yard is a gabled cart shed on the same alignment. It is completely open at the north end facing the yard, the remaining walls being featureless except for a door at the south end of the east wall. A few yards to the east on a parallel alignment is a smaller building said to have been used as a pighouse. It is gabled with copings resting on ovolo-moulded cushions, and at intervals the ridge tiles have been raised to provide vents. There is a small flat-lintelled doorway in the north end, but the south wall is featureless. The east and west walls each have a long shallow rectangular window, roughly opposed, with four panes and projecting freestone surround. Outside the east wall are two upturned staddle-bases set in the ground, probably to support a water-trough, now removed. Both of these buildings were





Sequence of farm developments as shown on:

1. Priston Estate map of William Jenkins, 1793.
2. Tithe map of Priston and Wilmington, 1840.
3. First edition OS map at 25" to the mile, 1884.
4. Current OS 1:2500 map, 1970-91, showing the working farm layouts before conversion to dwellings.

- 18th century buildings
- ▨ 1793-1840 ..
- ▧ 1840-1884 ..
- ▩ 1884-1970 ..

built between 1840-84, presumably when the site of the farmstead was changed. There have since been added various modern tin sheds around the pighouse and stable, but the site is now more or less redundant thanks to the recent erection of a new complex of buildings about a half-mile along the road to the west.

A second group of buildings belonging to the farm stands about 100m further back towards the village on the opposite side of road. In the late 18th century this site was a small separate property belonging to an adjoining house on the east side of the village pound. This house was demolished before 1840 and the property transferred, first to Church Farm, and then to Pressbarrow Farm, apparently by 1884 as an extension to the reorganised farmstead. The main building of this group is a large free-standing barn of four bays with the northern gable-end against the road. On the west it faces onto a concrete farmyard, but to the east there is a drop of well over a metre below floor level into a small overgrown yard bounded on the far side by the Manor House grounds. The gables are capped with four-gabled finials, and the copings rest on ovolo-moulded cushions, but much of the internal roof timbering has been replaced. There are two opposed cart entries in the east and west walls, with shallow segmental arches of radial stones. The line of the west wall is partly continued as a threshold at ground level across the cart entry with a break midway, but it is not certain whether this represents the opening up of an earlier narrow entrance. There are remains of two opposed slit vents, splayed internally, in the second bay from the north, and another in the southern gable end. In the southern part of the east wall is a broad low opening, now blocked up, with an external concreted ramp leading up to it. Opposite, there is a similar blocked opening in the lower part of the west wall, above which, slightly staggered, is a large segmental-arched opening at the level of an inserted floor, now removed, at the south end of the building. The northern gable end has a metal framed ten-paned horizontal rectangular window with a normal segmental-headed window above it. There are owl-holes towards the top of both gables. In the northern half of the east wall is a blocked pedestrian doorway with a flat wooden lintel, inserted to give access to a former adjoining building on the north-east end of the barn. Joist and rafter sockets visible high up on the exterior face of the barn, together with traces of limewash and differential weathering and lichen growth, show that it was a lean-to building, part of which still survives as a roadside wall. Both buildings are shown on the 18th century map, but the lean-to disappears between 1840-84.

Opposite the barn on the west side of the farmyard is a shelter shed which similarly replaced an earlier structure between 1840-84. This building, also aligned north-south, has a gabled roof supported on plain A-frame trusses, with ridge-tiles raised at intervals to provide ventilation. Facing the yard it has a series of five segmental-arched openings, partly blocked, with a further entrance at the north end which is larger and has a flat wooden lintel. The west wall however is featureless except for a single flat-headed doorway in the middle, and there are no interior divisions or fittings. The south wall also has a single doorway, and there is a similar access through to a further building which abuts the north wall. This adjoining building is aligned east-west and projects along the north side of the farmyard towards the yard entrance, with its north side facing the road. It appears on the 1884 map, but seems to have been much altered or even rebuilt in more recent times, and its function is unclear. The roof is hipped and there is an extra 45 degree wall facet which cuts across the north-east corner of the building. Internally there are various rooms and cubicles separated by breeze-block partitions, but no fittings of note. The north wall has four rectangular metal-framed windows with concrete lintels, one being set in the north-east angle. Outside this corner is a loading platform adjoining the road. In the east wall, close to the angle, is the main entry which consists of a plain flat-lintelled doorway, with a smaller inserted door immediately on its south side into one of the cubicles. There is a similar door in the west wall, and a doorway in the south wall leads through to a small lean-to building fitted into the corner between the two other buildings which appears to have served as an office.

All the buildings in this group are now redundant, and the barn is being sold for residential conversion.

## Hedge Survey Grades

Hedge number	Ecological Grade	Species Count	Archaeological grade	Overall Grade
1	B	7	2	II
2	B	7	2	II
3	B	6	2	II
5	B	8	2	II
7	B	5	2	II
8	B	7	1	I
9	A (L., NSP)	3	1	I
81	B	6	2	II
84	B	6	2	II
86	A	6	2	II

Woodland Although the land now belonging to the farm was covered by an extensive area of wood and scrubland until the 17th century, as indicated by such fieldnames as 'Wood', 'Hazelland' and 'Breach', today there is only one piece of woodland of interest;

WITHYBED (Grade IV, no indicator species) Appears between 1840-84, covering the southern half of Little Field. It has gradually been reduced from its original 3 acre extent, and was block-felled in the 1970s.

### Archaeological Sites and Features

**WESTERN PARISH BOUNDARY** (Grade I) As the hedge survey shows, the highest grade hedges, numbers 8 and 9, lie along this boundary which is mentioned in an Anglo-Saxon charter of 936 AD, where it is said to have followed an old ditch (ealdan dic), which can still be traced in many places. It has been deduced that the old ditch was the remains of a prehistoric trackway along which the boundary had been later established. This trackway has been traced from Tunley to Saltford, and is thought to have been used by the Romans as a salt or iron-ore supply route to Camerton which had mostly fallen out of use by Saxon times.

**ROADS AND PATHWAYS** (Grade II) Most of the roads and paths in Priston are of early origin, and it is significant that the roadside hedges often contain the highest number of species. Of particular interest is the track towards Longwood which exists as a 'holloway' of some depth at places, whilst elsewhere appears as an embankment, a good indication of its antiquity.

**WESTEND TOWN** (Grade III) The immediate area of Pressbarrow Farm is shown on early maps as a detached hamlet more densely populated than today. The name 'Westend Town' is retained in the adjoining fields to the west, where extensive crop-marks are visible on air photographs. It is possible that an independent settlement once existed here as early as Saxon times, and it may be significant that it occupies the same ridge of high ground as the Roman site towards Pensdown Hill. Medieval remains have certainly been found in the back gardens of the remaining houses, and the whole hamlet is of high archaeological potential. The presence of the village pound opposite the farm, now only indicated by the stone stile in the enclosure wall, also suggests that this site had a greater significance in the past as part of the lord's 'demesne' and may therefore hold an important clue to the origins of the village.

**EARLY FIELD SYSTEMS** (Grade IV) As most of the area now belonging to the farm has always served as pasture ground, it contains few remains associated with arable field systems. An exception may be the double bank running down the length of Hay Close Mead and the traces of early enclosures nearby which are visible on aerial photographs. Although the area south of the road was mostly woodland and scrub until the 17th century, it may yet reveal signs of early activity. In 'Limekiln Breach' for example, are the remains of a limestone quarry

which was possibly used throughout the ages, and evidently supplied a limekiln nearby in the late 18th century. Pressbarrow Hill is now considered to be a natural feature, rather than a 'barrow', and the substantial bank on its western side may also be natural, although it could also be the remains of a woodbank associated with the ditch of the parish boundary. It is also possible that the Hill may have been rough common pasture in the past, similar to Farmborough Common.

### Fieldnames

- Press-BARROW (Barrow, 1597) 'hill or mound' (OE beorg). No record yet found of the prefix 'Press-' before the late 18th century, although probably of early origin, but 'coppice-' (Welsh, prysg) more likely than 'priest's-' (OE preost).
- BREACH (Breach Field, 1620) 'woodland newly broken for agricultural use' (ME breche).
- BULLMEAD (ditto, 1730) 'meadow in which bulls were kept' (OE bula-maed).
- HAY CLOSE (ditto, 1730) 'enclosed pasture ground or meadow' (OE haeg).
- HAZELLAND (Hasilland, c.1500) 'pasture-glade of hazel' (OE haesel + ME launde).
- HILLOCK MEAD (ditto, 1730) 'meadow on or near a hillock'.
- LAYES (ditto, 1730) 'land enclosed and laid down to pasture' (OE laes).
- LAWN (possibly Land, 1730) 'a grassy ground or glade' (ME launde).
- LITTLE FIELD (ditto, 1730) 'the smallest of the common fields' (OE lytel-feld).
- WESTENDTOWN (Westetowne, 1590) '(place) west of the village' (OE bi-westan-tun).
- WOOD (Wood & Yonder Wood, c.1730) 'land formerly covered by woodland pasture' (OE wudu). Longwood and Hazelland were also part of this area.

## **Inglesbatch Farm**

The lands in Priston now owned by Inglesbatch farm (Englishcombe) were previously part of Hill Farm in Priston and, in the middle ages, belonged to the 'Eastfield' of the manor. As with most of the other farms in Priston, Hill Farm was created from the reorganisation and consolidation of the old copyhold tenures in the late 18th century, when the present pattern of fields first appeared. The earliest lease seems to have occurred in 1808, to Samuel Fowler of Priston, yeoman, succeeded in the 1820s by a Mr. Young. He seems to have been quickly followed by Mr. Green Veale, the owner listed on the 1840 tithe map. Following the breakup of Hill Farm in the 1970s, its other lands, mostly south of the village, are now incorporated with North Hill Farm in Dunkerton. Although the farmstead was sold separately, a note on its building are included here;

[Buildings] The buildings belonging to this farm have all been converted to domestic accommodation with considerable alteration to their character, and were not regarded as a recording priority. At the end of the 18th century, most of the existing structures were already then in existence, arranged around a farmyard overlooking the village at the top of a steep track leading off from the north side of the village street. The original farmhouse is the southernmost of the group standing at the entrance to the farmyard, and on the northern side of the yard is a former barn with opposed cart porches, but the other four or five buildings are less easy to identify.

### Hedge Survey Grades

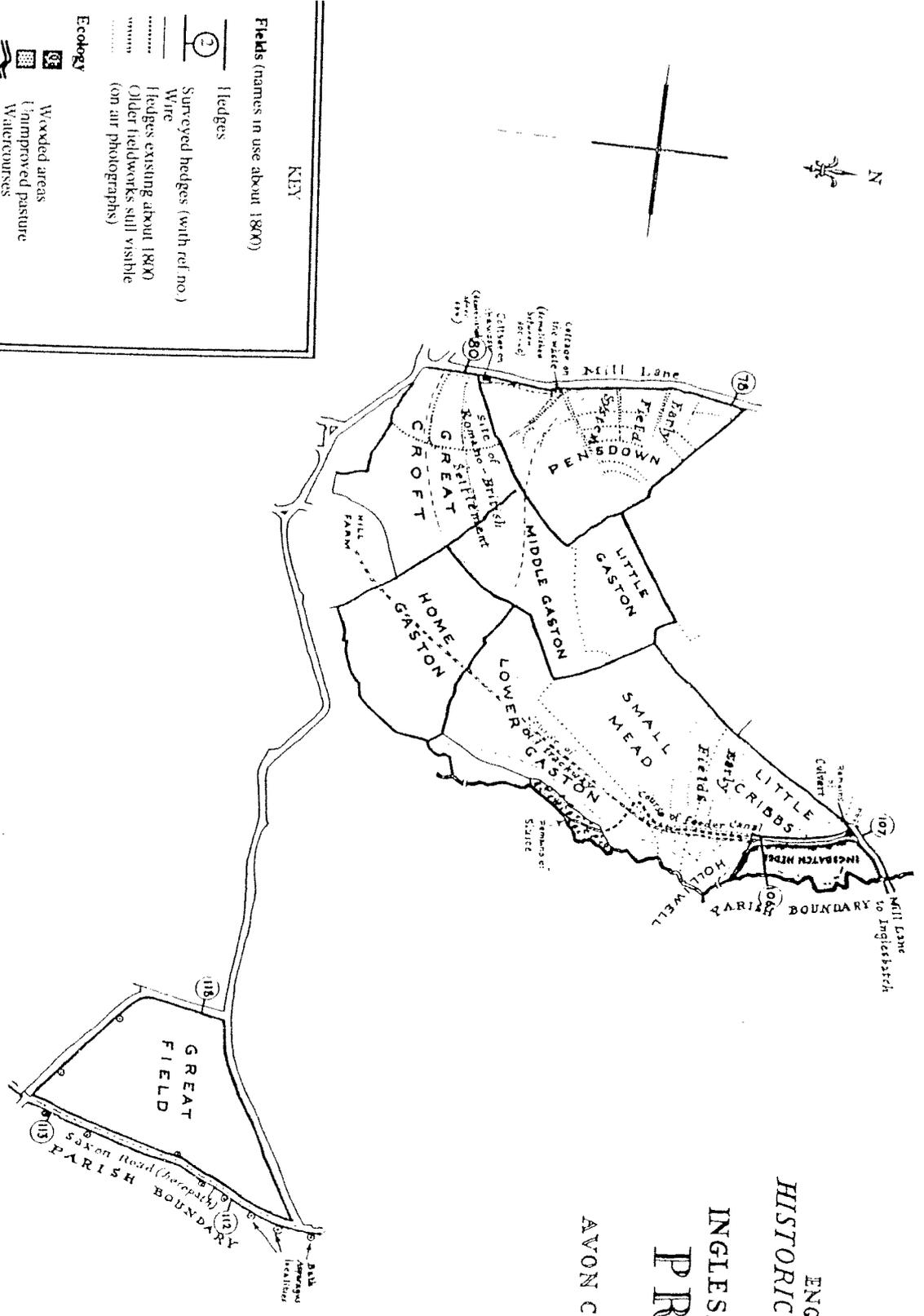
Hedge number	Ecological Grade	Species Count	Archaeological grade	Overall Grade
78	A (L, NSP)	10	2	I
80	B	4	2	II
106	A (NSP)	6	2	I
107	A (L, NSP)	4	2	I
112	B (L)	6	1	I
113	B	9	1	I
118	B	4	2	I

### Archaeological Sites and Features

**EASTERN PARISH BOUNDARY (Grade I)** The parish boundary along Priston brook is described in a Saxon charter of 936 AD as being between 'the old Eden ford' and 'Hwitda cumb'. The latter can be identified today as 'Whiddlecombe', and 'Eden' was then the name of Newton brook, although the exact site of the ford is unclear. The charter also shows that Priston brook was then known as 'Lox' brook.

**SOUTH-EASTERN PARISH BOUNDARY (Grade I)** This section of the boundary, which is described in the same charter as following a 'herepath', or main road, still serves as a public highway, although only converted from a rough track in recent times. It is thought to have existed even before the Saxons as an ancient track known as the 'Jurassic Way' running down from the Cotswolds into Somerset, but had become little more than a footpath by the middle ages. The boundary was still marked by a hedge (numbers 112 and 113) which is mentioned in the manorial court-rolls of 1436 in an order that 'all the customary tenants of the lord in Priston together make and enclose the hedges between the fields of Priston, Dunkerton and Carlingcott, where they lie open, before the feast of the Invention of the Holy Cross next coming, on pain to each of them of 40d'. The charter also mentions several stone markers along this route, a 'thyrta stan' (stone with a hole in it), and a 'hara stan' (hoar stone). Both seem to have disappeared, and their exact location and significance is unknown.

ENGLISH HERITAGE  
 HISTORIC LANDSCAPE SURVEY  
 OF  
 INGLESBATCH FARM IN  
 PRISTON  
 BY  
 AVON COUNTY PLANNING DEPT.  
 1991



Fields (names in use about 1800)

Hedges

Surveyed hedges (with ref. no.)

Wire

Hedges existing about 1800

Older fieldworks still visible (on air photographs)

Ecology

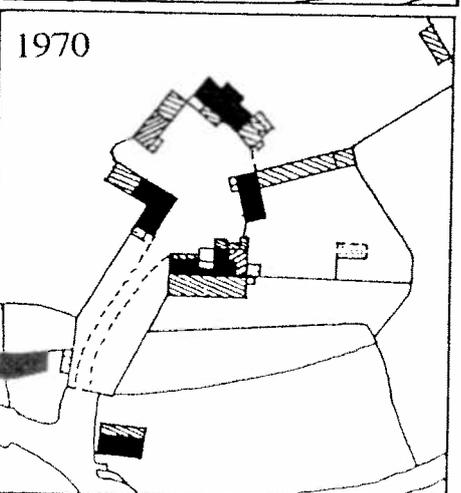
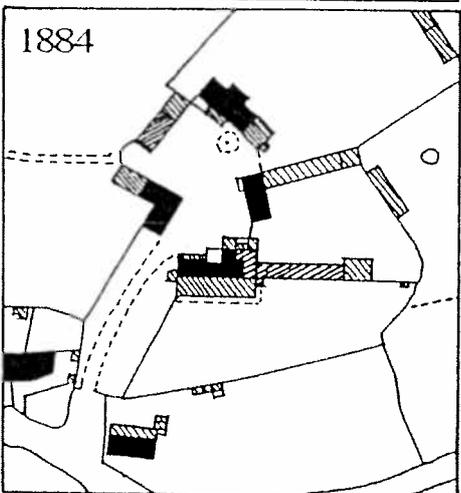
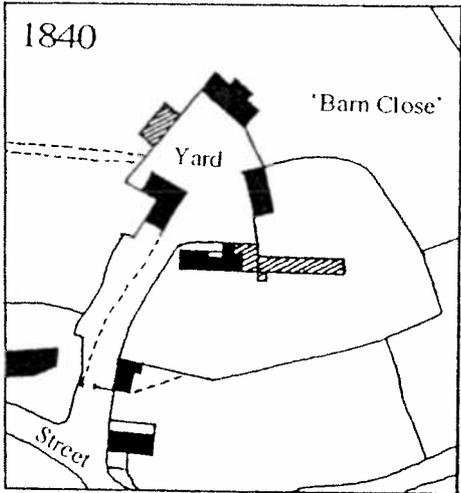
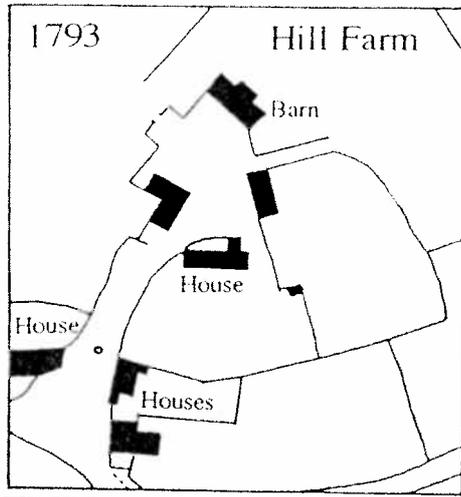
- Wooded areas
- Unimproved pasture
- Watercourses

Archaeology

Old roads and paths

Areas of high potential

Scale 0 100 metres



Sequence of farm developments as shown on:

1. Priston Estate map of William Jenkins, 1793.
2. Tithe map of Priston and Wilmington, 1840.
3. First edition OS map at 25" to the mile, 1884.
4. Current OS 1:2500 map, 1970-91, showing the working farm layouts before conversion to dwellings.

- 18th century buildings
- ▨ 1793-1840 ..
- ▩ 1840-1884 ..
- ▧ 1884-1970 ..

**ROADS AND PATHWAYS (Grade II)** Most of the roads and paths in Priston are of early origin, the road between Priston and Englishcombe, for example, evidently being a connection to the 'herepath'. Similarly, Mill Lane may also have existed by Domesday, when the mill is first mentioned. Another route to the mill existed in the 18th century which is shown on Thorpe's map of the district in 1742. It appears to have run from Hill Farm above the village along the ridge in the Lower Gastons to Holliwell, and from there through Cribbs to join the old mill way to Inglesbatch. This latter part still exists beside the old ditch of the feeder canal for about 150yds, parallel with hedge 106, while the former can only be traced on aerial photographs. These paths appear to have been laid out in 1622 when the manor court ordered that 'a tillage way has been set out from John Collins' house down to Hollywell and Cribbs...upon land in Gaston, to Smalmede and onto the mill'. The following year we learn that 'John Templar have tacken away the Still at Small Mede that leds to the mill, owt of the plase w<sup>ch</sup> was appoynted, w<sup>ch</sup> is to be set ther again on pain of 20s. He is in mercy 6s8d'.

**ROMAN OCCUPATION (Grade II)** The earliest evidence of occupation in Priston occurs from Roman times. In 1917 a Roman stone coffin (now kept in the church) was found in Great Croft Close where there are also a number of low banks suggesting a variety of small enclosures. This site had already attracted the attention of John Skinner and in 1953 Mr. William Wedlake with members of the Camerton Excavation Club began a trial exploration by making a number of cuttings across these banks. Much collapsed stonework was found, suggesting boundary walls, together with quantities of 1st to 3rd century pottery and several bronze objects including a small coin and part of a fibula. Returning later to the site, he was able to conclude that the banks were walled enclosures centred around a small Romano-British farmstead with a north-south axial street which flourished in the 1st and 2nd centuries, perhaps succeeding an Early Iron-Age settlement of some kind. The Roman walls had been apparently robbed for building-stone sometime after the 16th century, perhaps to build the cottages which stood beside Mill Lane on the north-west side of the site until a hundred years ago. During the survey, a brief field-walk was carried out here when ploughing allowed, and not only were large quantities of early Roman pottery found covering the whole of the northern half of the field, but also for a considerable distance eastward into the adjoining field called 'Middle Gaston'. Although it is unlikely that the site extended much further northward onto Pensdown Hill, the prominent field terraces and other earthworks that can be seen there may well be of similar origin. It is even possible that the site extended beyond the road junction on the west side towards Pressbarrow Farm. In any event this early settlement may in future provide important information on the origins of the village.

**EARLY FIELD SYSTEM (Grade II)** The abovementioned series of field terraces ('lynchets' or 'lanchards') are still prominent along the contours of Pensdown Hill. They are intersected at intervals by ditches, brought about by drainage or erosion, which in places appear to cross Mill Lane into the lower fields. This suggests that they predate the road, itself probably of Saxon origin, and may therefore be associated with the above Romano-British site. One of the embankments in Great Croft Close, of later origin, can be seen continuing into Pensdown as a holloway or ditch which drops down to join Mill Lane.

**FEEDER CANAL (Grade III)** The origin of the feeder channel which ran from the brook below the village as a supplement to the headrace of the mill is still not clear. It ran from Lower Gaston through Cribbs and, following the hill, joined Conygre brook at Mill Lane bridge. It is shown about 1810-17 on the first edition OS 1" map of the county, but does not appear on any larger scale map until 1884, near the end of its useful existence. Although such hydraulic engineering was frequently employed in this area in the late 18th century, principally as a source of power for the coalworks, it may in this case have been associated with the introduction under-draining in the fields which seems to have been common elsewhere in the neighbourhood at that time. Most of it has since been ploughed out in Lower Gaston, although a 100m section has survived beside the old trackway by hedge 106 on the south side of the mill-way to Inglesbatch. It is stone-lined for about 10m at the southern end, and the stone-arch culvert under the mill-way is still in fair condition. Another culvert existed a little further to the

north where the lane once recrossed the canal in Floxham, and traces of masonry are still thrown up by the plough. Hidden among bushes, a few masonry remains of the inlet sluice are still visible in the stream in Lower Gaston, together with the shallow outline of about 25m of the ditch.

EARLY FIELD SYSTEM (Grade IV) Aerial photographs have revealed a large area of ridge-and-furrow arable field strips extending across Small Mead northward into Cribbs. These strips formed part of a large medieval field system which once covered almost the whole of Pensdown Hill.

#### Fieldnames

Little CRIBBS (Cribes, 1622) '(part of) a ground containing cribs or stalls' (OE cribb).

Great CROFT (Barn) CLOSE (originally Great Croft, Little Croft, and Barn Close, 1730)  
'small enclosed grounds near the houses, one containing a barn,  
thrown together' (OE croft).

Great FIELD (probably 'Bupplesfield', 1730) 'a former common field owned by the Buphill family'.

The GASTONS (le Gaston, 1590) 'hedged grass enclosures' (OE gaers-tun).

HOLLIWELL (Hollywell, 1590) possibilities; 'healing spring' (OE halig-wella), or 'spring or stream in a hollow' (OE holh-wella).

INGSBATCH (Ingbach hedge, 1590) 'adjacent to the boundary hedge of Inglesbatch'.

SMALL MEAD (Smallmede, 1601) 'narrow meadow' (OE smael-maed).

PENSDOWN (ditto, 1730) possibilities; 'summit hill' (Brit. pen + OE dun), 'hill with pens on the top' (OE pennes-dun), 'hill belonging to Pefen (OE)'.

## North Hill Farm

The lands in Priston now owned by North Hill farm (Dunkerton) were previously part of Hill Farm in Priston which, in the middle ages, belonged in the 'Eastfield' and 'Southfield' of the manor. As with most of the other farms in Priston, Hill Farm was created from the reorganisation and consolidation of the old copyhold tenures in the late 18th century, when the present pattern of fields first appeared. The earliest lease seems to have occurred in 1808, to Samuel Fowler of Priston, yeoman, succeeded in the 1820s by a Mr. Young. He seems to have been quickly followed by Mr. Green Veale, the owner listed on the 1840 tithe map. The map also shows that certain fields belonging to Hill Farm were then glebe land still belonging to the rectory. Following the breakup of Hill Farm in the 1970s, its other lands to the north of the village are now incorporated with Inglesbatch Farm (Englishcombe). The farmstead was sold separately, and the buildings all converted to domestic accommodation.

### Hedge Survey Grades

Hedge number	Ecological Grade	Species Count	Archaeological grade	Overall Grade
22	A	10	I	I
23	B	8	I	I
24	B (NSP)	7	2	II
27	B	7	2	II
114	B (L, NSP)	7	I	I
115	B	5	I	I
116	B	4	2	II

### Archaeological Sites and Features

**SOUTHERN PARISH BOUNDARY (Grade I)** The highest grade hedges lie along this boundary, confirming its ancient origin. Its course is described in the Saxon charter of 936 AD, most of which can still be identified today, consisting of Blind Lane (hedges 22 and 23) and the footpath between Tunley and Nailwell (along hedges 114 and 115). It then followed a main highway called a 'herepath' which is now thought to have previously existed as an ancient track known as the 'Jurassic Way' running down from the Cotswolds into Somerset. Somewhere along this part of the boundary the charter mentions several stone markers called a 'thyrla-stan' (stone with a hole in it), and a 'hara-stan' (hoar stone). Both seem to have disappeared, and their exact location and significance is unknown. The road appears to have fallen out of use by the middle ages, but the boundary hedges are frequently mentioned in the manorial court-rolls, as in the order of 1436 that 'all the customary tenants of the lord in Priston together make and enclose the hedges between the fields of Priston, Dunkerton and Carlingcott, where they lie open, before the feast of the Invention of the Holy Cross next coming, on pain to each of them of 40d'.

**ROADS AND PATHWAYS (Grade II)** Most of the roads and paths in Priston are of early origin, the roads from Priston to Tunley and Englishcombe, for example, evidently being connections to the Saxon 'herepath'. The footpath past Rockhill was in use in the 16th century when the 'bridge at Horsepool' is mentioned, and was presumably an old route to Carlingcott and Wityditch before the development of Tunley. There are also remains nearby of an old 'fieldway', leading off eastward from Rockhill, which only went out of use in recent times.

**SITES OF HIGH POTENTIAL** Although the brookside areas in the valleys are the most likely source of future discoveries, the top of the downs have been in human use since ancient times, as shown recently when early enclosures were revealed by aerial photographs during dry weather on the Dunkerton side of the parish boundary. Included in this category are the areas surrounding present habitations. The 1793 estate map of Priston shows that the house at



Rockhill occupies the site of a quarry and limekiln, and that originally a house stood on the opposite side of the lane in Whippy's Mead. Aerial photos have also revealed a series of early field terraces to the west above Long Mead (now a plantation), and an area to the south in Horsepool containing old enclosure banks.

#### Fieldnames

BAGNALLS TINING (Bagnells Tineing, 1730) 'a fenced enclosure from the common field belonging to Bagnall' (OE tyning).

BERLEDGE (ditto, 1590) possibly 'hillside or ledge where barley is grown' (OE bere-hlinc).

BROAD CROFT (Brodecrofte, 1500) 'large close near a dwelling' (OE brad-croft).

HORSE LEAZE (from 1840) 'pasture ground for horses'.

HORSEPOOL (le Horsepoole, 1591) 'pasture containing a pond for horses' (OE hors-pol).

LONGMEAD (Longemeade, 1590) 'narrow meadow' (OE lang-maed).

POOR GROUND (from 1840) probably 'poor quality soil', sometimes 'a charitable endowment'.

## Village Farm

Origin As with most of the farms in Priston, Village Farm was created from the reorganisation of the old copyhold tenures that took place at the end of the 18th century. Although the earliest mention of this name found during the survey occurs in 1820, the farm is likely to have already been in existence by 1810. Village Farm has just recently been sold, with the land acquired by farms outside the parish and the farmhouse being sold separately, apparently for use as a stables.

Extent The land presently belonging to the farm covers the southern part of the area which once constituted the medieval 'Eastfield' of Priston. This property started in the late 18th century as a relatively small farm (perhaps belonging to a free tenant) owning the fields immediately surrounding the house. Further land was acquired during the following century, principally by amalgamation with a similar property nearby owning land on the south-east side of the parish known as Whiddlecombe Farm.

Buildings The present double-pile farmhouse stands at the extreme east end of the village street, and is aligned roughly north-south facing west across the brook. It was not examined in detail but contains a dairy room on the north-east side and a cider-cellar entry at the north end, and is linked by a modern corridor-range to a small detached store-house at the back. The original house was sited closer to the brook (now the garden) and was demolished before 1840, but it is not clear whether it was immediately replaced by the present house, which was certainly in existence by 1884.

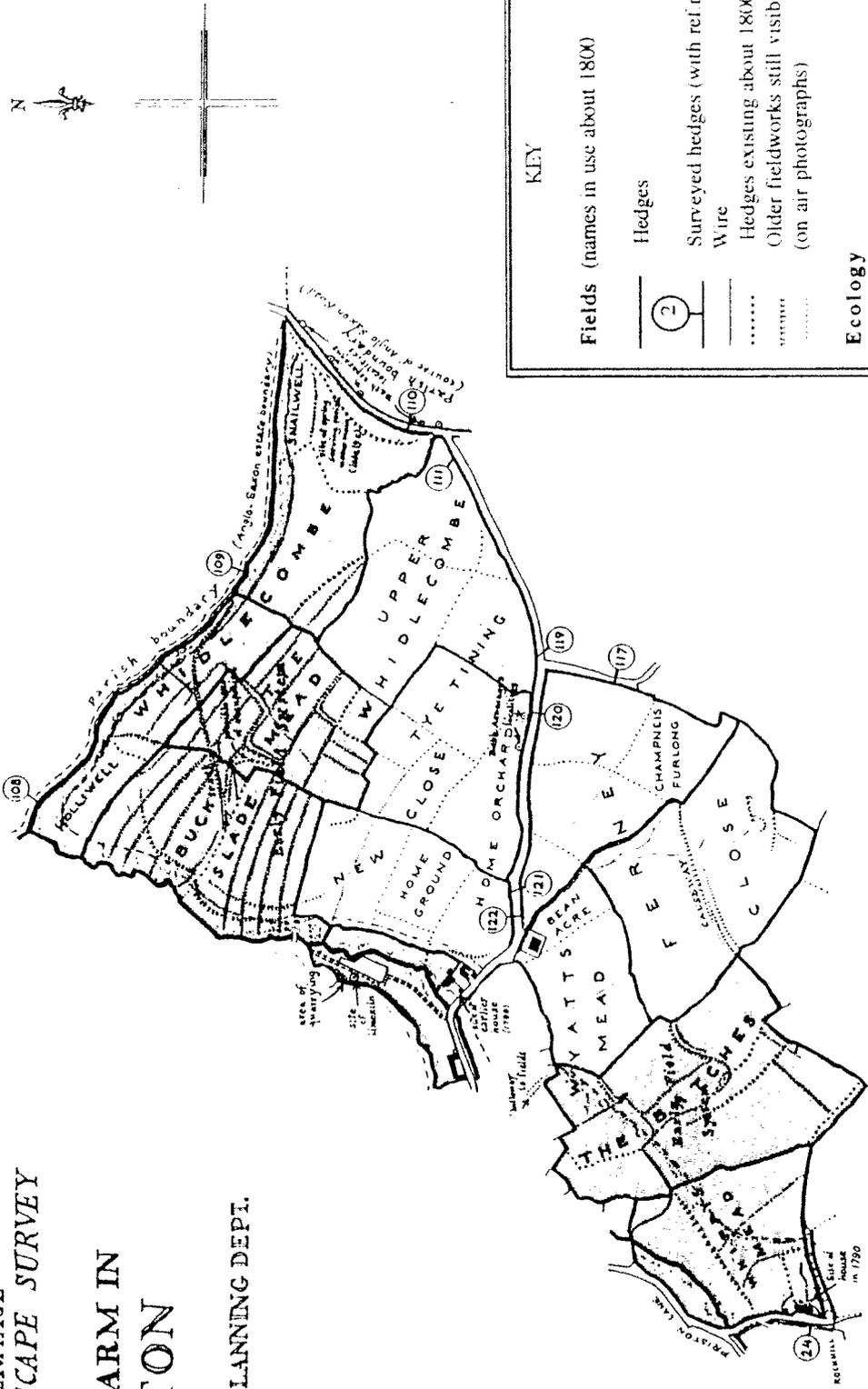
The new site already contained several small buildings in the late 18th century, one of which may have been the stable which stands on the south end of the house abutting the road and facing along the approach to the village. On the same alignment as the house, it has a simple gabled roof with copings resting on ovolo-moulded cushions, and a two-stage stone stack at the peak of the northern gable. At the back, the Welsh slate roof has a row of large edge-halved Bath stone slabs as its lowest course which are probably survivals from the original covering. The main west elevation is a symmetrical facade designed to be seen from the road. Built in the 'cottage-ornée' style, popular in this region in the early 19th century, it has a central pointed-arched doorway with chamfered freestone surround flanked by two pointed-arched windows with freestone jambs and projecting sill, the lower part of each window being fitted with a vertically-slatted sliding vent. The east wall is embedded in the steep bank of the back paddock, so that only the top part containing a loft entry is exposed. The south gable end against the road is featureless, but in the north end, facing the rear garden courtyard of the house, there are two features side by side low down in the wall consisting of large freestone blocks above three smaller upright blocks. The significance of these is not yet clear. Set against the east end of this wall are four stone steps giving access to the back paddock. Inside, some original wooden posts and partitions survive which formerly accommodated three horses, and there is a stone drain parallel with the front wall. There was possibly a fireplace on the first floor (perhaps for the convenience of a groom), but access could not be gained to verify this. At the north end of the house and on the same alignment is another detached building at the edge of a large paddock. In recent times it served as a pigstye block, but the only doorway, in the north gable end facing away from the house, was once a large cart entry set asymmetrically in line with the eastern wall which has been divided into a stable-type door on the left, and a breeze-block wall with metal-framed window on the right. Midway along the east wall there is a single rectangular window, splayed internally, set high up with lintel level with the eaves. At the top are four panes in line, with a vertically-slatted sliding vent below. The south wall has a single splayed window, but the west wall is featureless.

Also formerly belonging to this farm is a group of buildings sited around a yard along the north side of the village street 100m or so to the west of the house. According to the maps, these were built between 1840-84, probably when the Whiddlecombe property was acquired.

ENGLISH HERITAGE  
 HISTORIC LANDSCAPE SURVEY

OF  
 VILLAGE FARM IN  
 PRISTON

BY  
 AVON COUNTY PLANNING DEPT.  
 1991



**KEY**

**Fields** (names in use about 1800)

**Hedges**

- Surveyed hedges (with ref. no.)
- Wire
- Hedges existing about 1800
- Older fieldworks still visible (on air photographs)

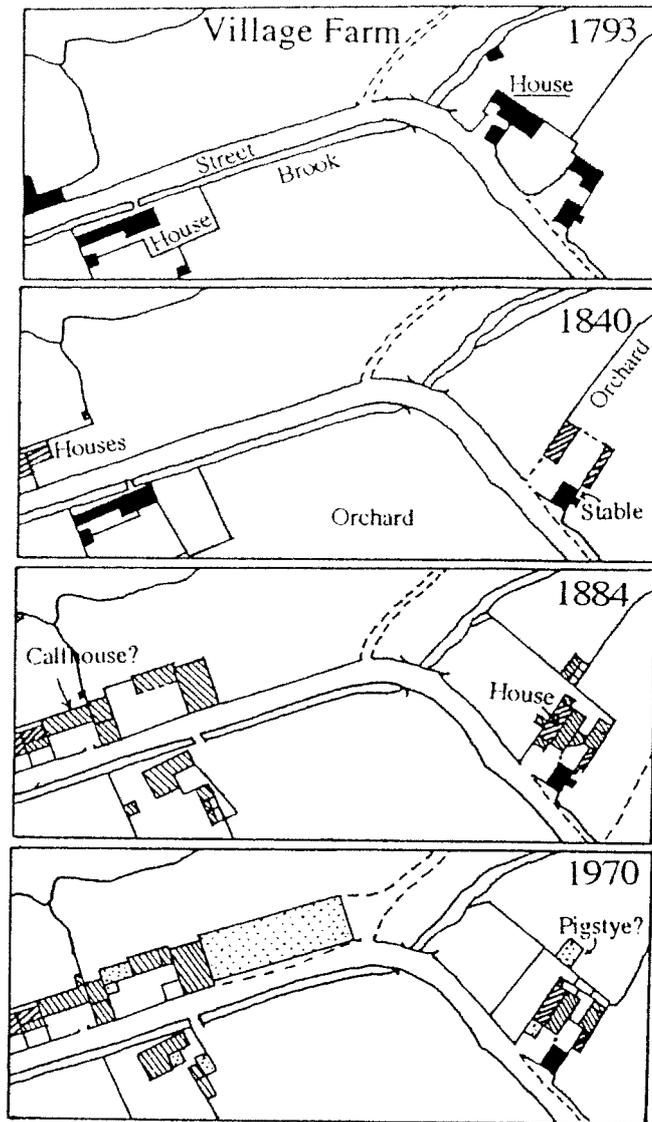
**Ecology**

- Wooded areas
- Unimproved pasture
- Watercourses

**Archaeology**

- Old roads and paths
- Areas of high potential

**Scale** 0 100 metres



Sequence of farm developments as shown on:

- |   |                          |
|---|--------------------------|
| 1. Priston Estate map of William Jenkins, 1793.   | ■ 18th century buildings |
| 2. Tithe map of Priston and Wilmington, 1840.   | ▨ 1793-1840 ..           |
| 3. First edition OS map at 25" to the mile, 1884.   | ▩ 1840-1884 ..           |
| 4. Current OS 1:2500 map, 1970-91, showing the working farm layouts before conversion to dwellings. | ▤ 1884-1970 ..           |

Most of them have already been converted to domestic accommodation and are so changed in character that they were not recorded in detail. Some modern temporary structures on their east side have been demolished, but a brief examination was possible of a building to the west, possibly a calhouse, which had not yet been converted. This consists of an L-shaped block enclosing a small concrete yard behind the roadside wall, with the short arm abutting the street at the south end. The roof at the west end of the main block abuts directly onto a house (to which it may once have belonged) and has raised ridge-tiles to provide vents. The short arm is hipped at the south end, but its construction at the north is unclear. The main front has three regularly spaced openings with very flattened segmental arches framed, as with the jambs, in high quality Bath freestone. The short arm is divided into two rooms with an interconnecting opening, the south room having two flat-lintelled entries in both side walls, the one facing the yard having a sliding door. The northern room has an entry from the east and two internal doors into the main block.

### Hedge Survey Grades

Hedge number	Ecological Grade	Species Count	Archaeological grade	Overall Grade
24	B (NSP)	7	2	II
108	A	10	1	I
109	B (I.,NSP)	4	1	I
110	B	7	1	I
111	B	8	1	I
117	B	4	2	II
119	B	5	2	II
120	B	5	2	II
121	B	7	2	II
122	B	7	2	II

### Archaeological Sites and Features

**SOUTH-EASTERN PARISH BOUNDARY (Grade I)** The highest grade hedges lie along this boundary, confirming its ancient origin. Its course is described in the Saxon charter of 936 AD as following the 'Eden' (Newton brook) to Whiddlecombe, continuing up the combe against the stream to the 'herepath' (main road), and then westward along the road towards a 'thyrla-stan' (stone with a hole in it). Although the stone seems to have disappeared, its exact location and significance being unknown, the rest of the boundary can easily be identified today, and the 'herepath' leading to Englishcombe is now thought to have previously existed as an ancient track known as the 'Jurassic Way' running down from the Cotswolds into Somerset. It should be noted that the hedge which runs along the boundary stream at Whiddlecombe was already in existence during the Middle Ages, as shown by an agreement recorded in the 1447 manorial courtroll indicating that 'all the lord's tenants must come to the laying of the hedges around Whytelcombeditch who were regularly summoned to this, on pain to each of them who did not come to the laying of 12d'.

**ROADS AND PATHWAYS (Grade II)** Most of the roads and paths in Priston are of early origin, the road from Priston to Nailwell for example being evidently a connection to the Saxon 'herepath'.

**EARLY FIELD SYSTEMS (Grade II)** There is a fine complex of earthworks centred around the area of Tye Mead and Buckslade which are the remains of early arable field-strips and, despite ploughing in recent times, easily traced on aerial photographs. The fieldways between the headland baulks can be distinguished, and some of the old divisions are preserved in the kinks in the existing hedge boundaries. Some earthworks overlie others, being of later origin, such as a trackway cutting across Buckslade and Whiddlecombe towards the stream which may be 'the way to Buckslade' mentioned in a 17th century courtroll. It is also possible

that this area may include an early site of occupation. Equally striking is another group of earth banks in The Batches which appear to have been meadow pasture enclosures. Possibly associated with these works is the massive bank which runs across the neighbouring Ferney Close. It is not clear whether this merely served as a field boundary, or perhaps as a causeway giving access to the stream at its eastern end. At the western end the bank changes shape and appears to take the form of a 'holloway'. It is worth noting that all these earthworks lie in unimproved or semi-improved pasture which has not only contributed to their survival, but also provides important ecological information about their past.

**LIMEKILN** (Grade III) Immediately behind the west side of the sewage works are the remains of a small lime-kiln which was presumably fed from the quarry face above it, and possibly fuelled with coal from Tunley colliery. It is not shown on any large-scale maps, but appears to be of relatively recent origin and is constructed of brick. Being only about 2m in diameter, it was probably only built for local consumption. The superstructure has collapsed, but the drawing arch is intact at the bottom.

**SITES OF HIGH POTENTIAL** As well as the brookside areas in the valleys, the most likely source of future discoveries includes the areas surrounding present habitations. The 1793 estate map of Priston, for example, shows that the house at Rockhill occupies the site of a quarry and limekiln, and that an earlier house then stood on the opposite side of the lane in Whippy's Mead.

#### Fieldnames

The **BATCHES** ('a Toft called the Batch', 1500) possibilities; 'belonging to a dwelling on a back or ridge (OE baec), or beside a stream (ME bache)'.

**BATHEWAY** (FIELD) (only 1634-1730) 'next to the road to Bath' (unidentified - probably above Buckslade).

**BEAN ACRE** (probably Beneclose, 1597) 'small enclosure where beans were grown'

**BUCKSLADE** (ditto, 1590) possibilities; 'dell frequented by male deer' (OE bucc-slaed), or 'dell where beech trees grow' (OE bucc-slaed).

**CHAMPNEIS FURLONG** (Champnes forland, 1622) 'a division of a former common field belonging to Champneys'.

**FERNEY CLOSE** (Vernye lease/close, 1606) 'pasture enclosure covered in fern' (OE fearnig -laes).

**HOLLIWELL** (Hollywell, 1590) possibilities; 'healing spring' (OE halig-wella), or 'spring or stream in a hollow' (OE holh-wella).

**HOME GROUND** (before 1840) 'ground next to the farmhouse'.

**NEW CLOSE** (ditto, 1730) 'recently enclosed out of the common field'.

**SNAILWELL** (ditto, 1730; now 'Nailwell') 'spring where snails abound' (OE snaegl-wella).

**TYE MEAD/TINING** (before 1840) 'pasture meadow/fenced enclosure (OE teag-maed/tyning).

**WHIDLECOMBE** (Hwitda cumb, c.936) 'white combe'.

**WHIPPYS/WYATTS MEAD** (ditto, 1730s/1750s) 'meadow belonging to Whippy/Wyatt'.

## **Priston New Farm**

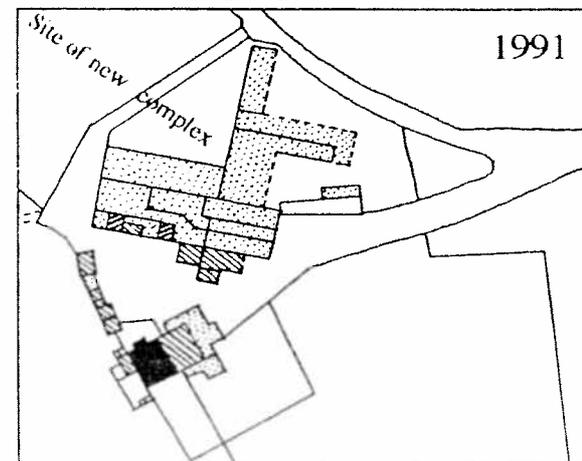
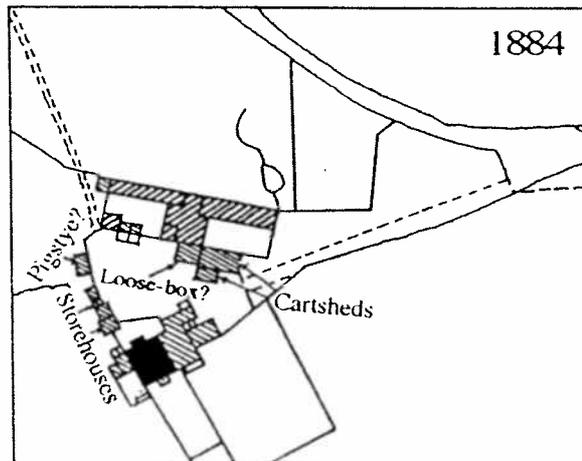
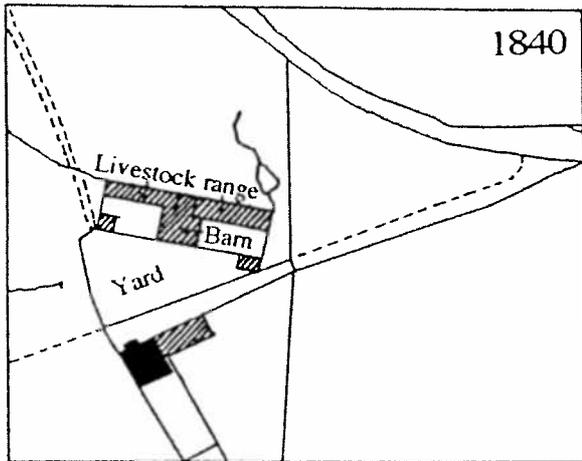
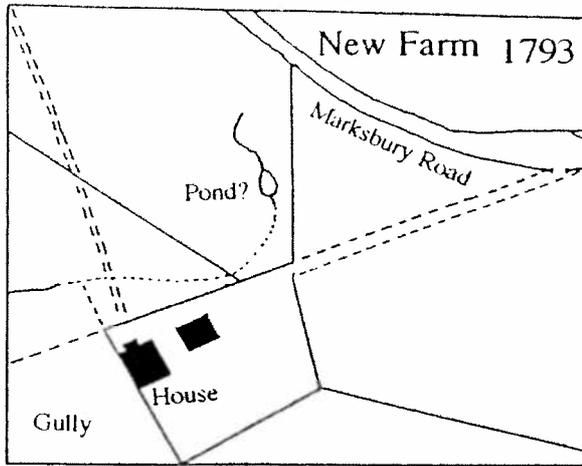
Origin As with most of the farms in Priston, New Farm was created from the reorganisation of the old copyhold tenures that took place at the end of the 18th century. It would therefore seem that the adjective 'new' at that time refers only to the adoption of a completely new site for the erection of the present farmhouse. This would not exclude the possibility that it replaced some earlier structure needing a flat site next to the road with a source of water. Initially the farm consisted only of the farmhouse and a few small backbuildings, with lands of modest extent. In the mid-19th century the area of land was effectively doubled by amalgamating with a similar property centred in the village known as Redfield Farm. It was probably at this time that the farmstead was enlarged, the 1840 tithe map indicating a regular, if small-scale, 'model farm' plan, with a symmetrical arrangement of buildings on the north side of the farmyard. The main block seems to have consisted of a barn projecting southward from the centre of a long narrow range for livestock aligned east-west, together forming a flat 'T' shape in plan. This was squared off by rectangular foldyards on each side, with further small buildings occupying the outer corners of the yards. By the 1880s several new buildings had encroached southwards over the farmyard, with a further range of small buildings closing off its western edge. This layout seems to have been drastically altered in the first half of this century, particularly after the barn was burned down in the 1930s, and only fragments now remain incorporated into the present complex of modern unit buildings which now extends as far north as the road.

Extent The land initially allocated to this farm (tenant; James Neville) once constituted the western sector of the medieval 'Northfield' of Priston, while the additional land belonging to Redfield Farm (tenant; George Laurence), south of the brook, lay in the northern sector of 'Westfield'. By 1808 both farms were being leased by William Rodbard who is cited in a bond then made with Elizabeth Davies, having '...lately cropped and sowed part of the said lands with flax or hemp contrary to the meaning of the lease...which system of cropping being considered injurious to the land and contrary to the custom of the country and also to the rules of good husbandry...', which he promised to discontinue. In 1811 the farms were leased to Charles Beak of Priston, yeoman, and his brother John Beak of Bathwick, followed by a Mr. Brittain. He was succeeded in 1829 John Perry during whose time the two farms were reorganised, so that by 1840 he held New Farm and much of the lands of Redfield Farm. The farm land has recently been further extended with several fields near the village following the breakup of Hill Farm in 1970, but other grounds acquired in Marksbury parish were not studied as part of this brief.

Buildings At the northern end of the range of small store-houses closing the western side of the farmyard is a simple gabled building built between 1840-84. It has two stable-type doors at each end of the east front facing the yard, between which at low level is a curious feature which appears to be a pair of blocked up square openings set in blue lias stonework below a wooden lintel. The rear west wall has a door at the north end but is otherwise featureless. There is a square window splayed internally in the north wall, on the east side of which at ground level is a blocked opening with blue lias dressing below a wooden lintel. The south wall, which abuts against another small store-house, has a similar window and ground-level opening. The interior is divided into two compartments by a boarded partition, but of particular interest is a surviving wooden guillotine gate closing off the ground-level opening in the north wall. This appears to be an original fitting, with the assumption that the opening in the south wall had a similar gate. Although the general character of this building suggests a two-horse stable, these low-level openings imply an original function as a pighouse. This type of gate is occasionally found in pigsties to allow egress to piglets while containing the sow. The blocked opening in the east wall may therefore have been some form of pigswill chute through which the trough could be filled from the yard outside.

The wall ranging along the north side of the yard contains a complex series of openings and structures surviving from various periods which require a more detailed analysis than is





Sequence of farm developments as shown on:

1. Priston Estate map of William Jenkins, 1793.
2. Tithe map of Priston and Wilmington, 1840.
3. First edition OS map at 25" to the mile, 1884.
4. Current OS 1:2500 map, 1970-91, showing the working farm layouts before conversion to dwellings.

- 18th century buildings
- ▨ 1793-1840 ..
- ▩ 1840-1884 ..
- ▤ 1884-1970 ..



possible here, but appear largely to relate to housing for cattle or horses. Built against the eastern end of this wall are the two buildings that encroach into the yard near the entrance. The western building has a lean-to roof against the wall, and on the south side drops 0.8m from floor level into the yard, the south wall having two plain rectangular windows and plain flat-lintelled door at the extreme east end approached by a concrete ramp from the west. The west wall has two plain doors, and there are three more in the north wall, two being blocked up. Now used for storage, this building may have originated as a loose-box. Abutting the east wall is the second building, aligned east-west, with the north side of its gabled roof raised to a shallower pitch to accommodate an adjoining modern roof. It appears to be a large cartshed, the east end being completely open to the top of the wall, with weatherboarding above in which there is a central door giving entry into some form of loft. There is a doorway in the north wall, and a partition at the west end forms a separate room with doors in its east and west walls. The south wall is featureless, and supports a small lean-to cartshed open at the east end with two large wooden gates, its walls being also featureless.

### Hedge Survey Grades

Hedge number	Ecological Grade	Species Count	Archaeological grade	Overall Grade
4	B	4	2	II
6	B	4	2	II
50	B (L, NSP)	3	2	II
51	B	4	2	II
57	A	5	1	I
58	B	7	2	II
59	B	9	2	II
60	B	6	1	I
61	B	4	1	I
62	B	4	1	I
63	B	5	1	I
64	B	9	2	II
65	B	6	2	II
66	B	6	2	II
67	B (NSP)	4	2	II
68	B	8	2	II
69	B	7	2	II
70	B	4	2	II
76	B (NSP)	7	2	II
79	B	6	2	II
82	B	6	2	II
83	B	7	2	II
86	B	6	2	II
88	B (L, NSP)	4	2	II
89	B (NSP)	5	2	II
90	A (NSP)	4	1	I
91	A (L)	7	1	I
92	B	4	1	I
93	B	4	1	I
94	B	7	1	I

### Woodland

POTTERNE BRAKE (Grade II, 7 indicator species) already existed, probably as an area of scrub, in the 1790s when Potterne Mead was transferred to New Farm from Mill Farm. It was then half its present size, being enlarged in the early part of this century by the addition of a strip taken out of New Tining, the field adjoining the east side side belonging to the Mill. An entry in the 1395 manorial courtroll recording a receipt of 20d from the Bailiff for 'wood sold

in Poterneland' suggests that Potterne Brake may have been the successor of an earlier area of woodland.

HANLEY BRAKE (Grade IV, no indicators) came into existence in the early 19th century. At that time there was another brake or area of scrub nearby on the east side of the gully, about 1½ acres in size, which disappeared between 1840-84. This was described in 1591 as 'two pieces of spinney containing 1½ acres of land lying in the Common Field, called Gulleys'. There was also a brake beside the road in Upper Hanley throughout the 18th century, with an orchard was planted on the opposite side behind the farmstead, but both seem to have disappeared by 1884.

CONYGRE BRAKE (Grade IV, no species) appeared between 1840-84 along with several other strips nearby which have not survived. In the 13th century this area seems to have been used as a warren or hunting ground and was probably always a source of wood or frith. In 1395 the court roll mentions a receipt of 17s6d from 'wood sold at Conyger', and in about 1500 there is a further record in an eschaet roll of a two acre wood 'in Conygro'.

### Archaeological Sites and Features

WESTERN PARISH BOUNDARY (Grade I). As the hedge survey shows, the highest grade hedges, numbers 57 and 90-94, lie along this boundary which is mentioned in two Anglo-Saxon charters of about 936 AD for Priston and Marksbury. In the charter it is said to have followed an old ditch (ealdan dic) which can still be clearly seen on the western side of hedges 90-92, and is also of high ecological interest. It has been deduced that the old ditch was the remains of a prehistoric trackway along which the boundary had been later established. This trackway has been traced from Tunley to Saltford and is thought to have been used by the Romans as a salt or iron-ore supply route to Camerton. Most of it appears to have fallen out of use by Saxon times, although the point where the boundary crossed Conygre Brook at Redfield was still then called 'Redford', with the stoned lane which still runs along the west side of Horlock being described as a 'straet' or metalled road.

WILMINGTON-PRISTON MANOR BOUNDARY (Grade I) The hedges next to Wilmington are also highest grade. The boundary between the two manors was presumably established when they were separated not long before Domesday, although the line of megalithic stones along the top of Wilmington Copse may suggest some earlier partition. The kinks in the hedgerows between Withey Mead and Nettle Hill, together with traces of old banks detected on air photos, suggest that the boundary divided an area of cultivation previously shared. In the 18th century the name 'Nettle Hill' occurs on both sides of the boundary.

ROADS AND PATHWAYS (Grade II). Most of the roads and paths in Priston are of early origin, and it is significant that the roadside hedges often contain the highest number of species. The footpath to Stanton Prior through Potterne Mead was probably of greater significance in the past, and is clearly shown on Thorpe's 1742 map of the Bath district.

POTTERNE MEAD (Grade III) The interpretation of this fieldname, 'potter's house', prompted an examination of its surface after ploughing, and an area of medieval pottery scatter was discovered near the road junction to the Mill. The dating of the pottery suggests an occupation site of the 13th-14th century, although there are no indications of pottery manufacture there. A neat flint scraper was also found at the top of the field.

COALPITS (Grade III) There are remains of a coal shaft beside the brook in Redfield, and traces of another in a similar situation about 650m to the east in Conygre. Priston lies on the north-east edge of the North Somerset Coalfield, and exploration for coal had already started in the 1720s under the Percival/Parker family, but the shaft at Conygre appears to have been

sunk, apparently with some success, by William Jenkins in the 1760s, and is shown on Donne's map of the Bristol area. This was reopened and the shaft sunk in Redfield as part of a new coal adventure initiated by William Davies in 1792. It is fortunate that the accounts of this sinking has survived to give a detailed picture of the work which was carried out under the management of George Vaughan, nephew of William Davies, who had leased the Mill and may have been responsible for other technical innovations elsewhere in the manor. Throughout 1793 the colliers located several seams of coal and proceeded to re-open William Jenkins' old pit, but for some unstated reason the work was suddenly wound up early in the following year, possibly as a result of Vaughan or other members of his family being recalled for active service following the outbreak of the war with France. In any event, the project was postponed indefinitely, and despite continued interest throughout the 19th century, no coal was mined in Priston until the opening of Tunley pit in 1906. The 1793 estate map shows various structures at each site, including two circular buildings housing the horse-gins which operated the pumps. All that remains of these workings today at Conygre are fragments of the horse-gin wall in a hedge, but at Redfield the shaft-opening and other traces of masonry are still visible on the top of a low heapstead. Thanks to subsidence, the stone-lined shaft is open to a depth of 20ft or so and is in very good condition.

**GOOSEMEAD AND TOWN HILL (Grade III)** The earthworks on the western slope of Pensdown Hill are the remains of an early field system, perhaps linked with the Romano-British settlement on the southern side of the hill. Air photographs show these earthworks extending beyond Mill Lane into Goosemead and Town Hill, thereby predating the Lane. Here they are difficult to trace, but are quite extensive in Town Hill and include what appear to be circular enclosures.

**CONYGRE AND SPRING CONYGRE (Grade IV)** A licence for 'right of warren' in his demesne lands of Priston was granted to the Prior of Bath by king Edward I in 1275, presumably at 'Coneygar', the Middle English word for 'rabbit warren'. However, no 'pillow mounds' or other remains of a warren have been found there, and it is more likely that it was an area of wooded ground beside the stream in which the Prior could hunt fowl and other small game. Although other grounds called Coneygar still exist further downstream almost to the Mill, several more are mentioned in an 18th century survey, which suggests that this territory was originally of considerable extent. Nevertheless, various small fauna as well as rabbits still find Conygre an agreeable habitat.

**LIMEKILN COOMBS (Grade IV)** As well as an area of ecological interest, the eastern end of the Coombs also contains the site of an 18th century limekiln. Although there are no surface remains of the kiln itself, the adjoining quarry from which it was supplied can still be seen below the road.

**SITE OF COTTAGES (Grade IV)** The disused piggery at Potterne is built on the site of some form of grange which stood there in the 18th century. Described as a 'barn and barton', it was replaced between 1840-84 by a rank of cottages. These were partially demolished in recent times, the lower part of their walls being incorporated into the piggery. Their gardens thrown into the adjoining field, where a plentiful supply of Victorian debris is still turned up by the plough.

#### Fieldnames

**CONEYGAR** (Conyger, 1395) 'rabbit warren' (ME coniger).

**GIBBS HAMS** (Gibbes Hams, 1590) 'Gibbs' waterside meadow' (OE hamm).

**GOOSE MEAD** (Gosemeade, 1591) 'meadow where geese are kept' (OE gos-maed).

**GULLY** (Gullyes, 1591) '(beside) the drainage ditch or gully' (ME goule).

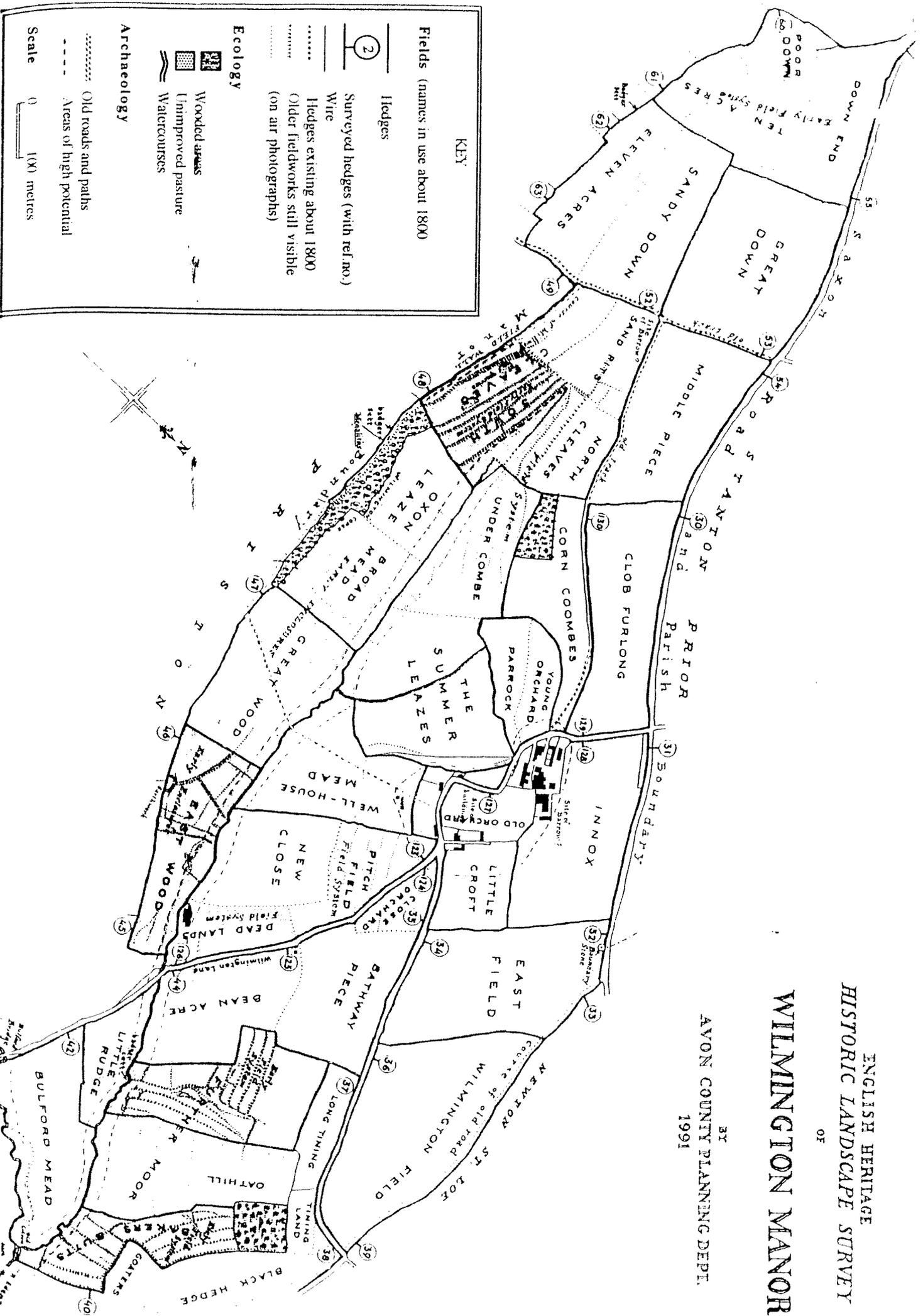
- HANLEY (Hanley Field, 1595) 'high clearing or open land' (OE hean-leah).
- HOOKLANDS (ditto, c.1730) '(field-strips) on a spur of land' (OE hoc-land).
- HORLOCK (Harlock, 1602) possibilities; 'horn-shaped enclosure' (OE horn-loc); 'muddy enclosure' (OE horh-loc); 'old sheepfold' (OE har-loc); 'compound on a stony ridge' (OE haer-loc).
- LIMEKILN COOMBES (ditto, 1730) 'land in a narrow valley with a limekiln' (OE cumb).
- NETTLE HILL (ditto, c.1730) 'hill where nettles grow', sometimes allowed to grow for dyeing or medicinal use, (OE netel-hyll).
- POTTERNE MEAD (Potermeland, 1395) 'glade where a potter's house stands' (OE pottera-aern + ME launde).
- RED FIELD (ditto, 1595) possibilities; 'open-field near the crossing', ie the ford in the Saxon boundary charter, (OE rade-feld); 'open-field with red soil' (OE read-feld); 'open-field where reeds grow' (OE hread-feld).
- SMOKELANDS (Smokelaundes Foord, 1603) 'land on which the tithe of firewood was commuted to money' (OE smoc-land); - in 1603 a foot-bridge was requested here.
- TININGS (Lower Tining, c.1730) 'fenced enclosures' (probably from the common field), (OE tyning).
- TOWN HILL (le Townell, 1593) possibilities; 'hill near the village'; 'hill where there was a previous settlement'; (OE tun-hyll).
- TRUZZWAY/DRESSWAY (Tresway, 1602) '(beside) brushwood way' (OE trus-weg).
- WITHEY MEAD (Wythimede, 1590) 'willow meadow' (OE withig-maed).
- YEW STILES (c.1800) 'lands marked by a stile (or steep climb) and a Yew tree'.

ENGLISH HERITAGE  
 HISTORIC LANDSCAPE SURVEY

OF

WILMINGTON MANOR

3X  
 AVON COUNTY PLANNING DEPT.  
 1991



KEY

Fields (names in use about 1800)

Hedges

2 Surveyed hedges (with ref.no.)

Wire

Hedges existing about 1800

Older fieldworks still visible

(on air photographs)

Ecology

Wooded areas

Unimproved pasture

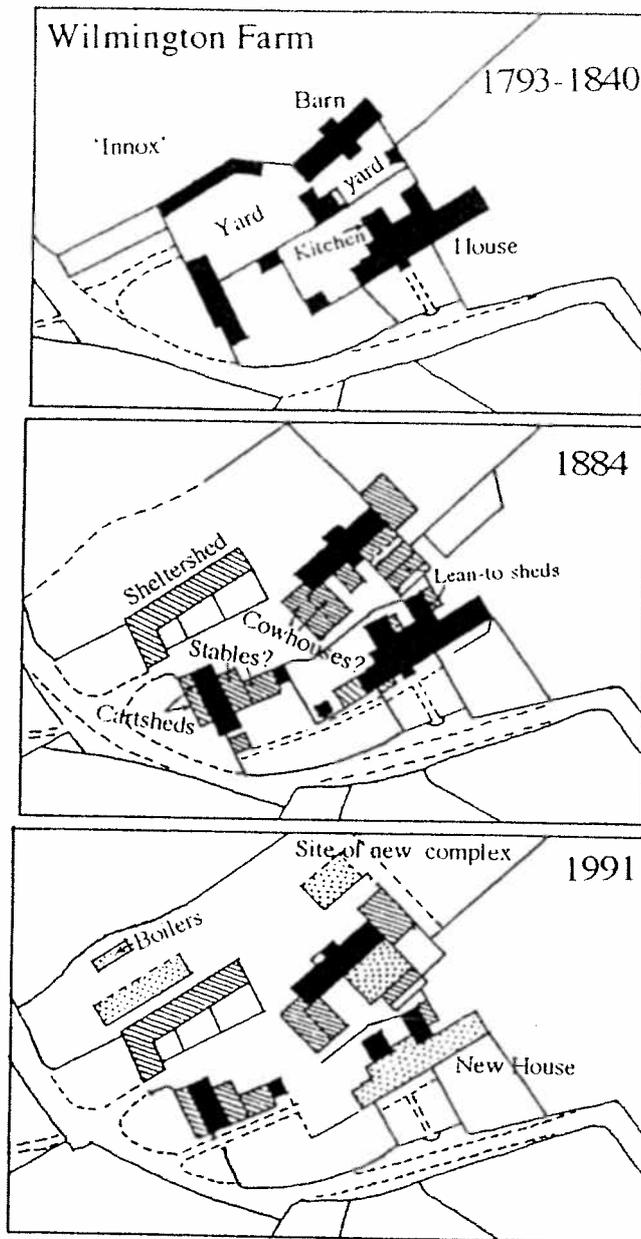
Watercourses

Archaeology

Old roads and paths

Areas of high potential

Scale 0 100 metres



18th century boundary stone

Sequence of farm developments as shown on:

- |   |                              |
|---|------------------------------|
| 1. Priston Estate map of William Jenkins, 1793.   | [ ■ 18th century buildings ] |
| 2. Tithe map of Priston and Wilmington, 1840.   | [ ▨ 1793-1840 .. ]           |
| 3. First edition OS map at 25" to the mile, 1884.   | [ ▩ 1840-1884 .. ]           |
| 4. Current OS 1:2500 map, 1970-91, showing the working farm layouts before conversion to dwellings. | [ □ 1884-1970 .. ]           |

## Wilmington Manor Farm

Origin In the hamlet of Wilmington there was certainly some form of manorial residence, probably by the late 12th century when the ownership was passed, under the Bishop of Bath and Wells, from the Bath monastery to the Champeneys family who were to remain lords of the manor for the next 600 years. Initially the demesne lands of Wilmington were managed by a bailiff, but it is probable that they had already been farmed out for many years before the earliest mention of the name 'Wilmington Manor Farm' is encountered in 1608. In 1792 the manor was purchased by William Gore-Langton of Newton Park from Sir Thomas Champeneys for £10,000, and a survey of the land was undertaken eight years later. There immediately followed a complete reorganisation of the old tenures and the enlargement of the Farm territory into a consolidated block. The few remaining fields on the eastern side of the manor were then incorporated into the neighbouring Park Farm and Pennsylvania Farm belonging to Gore-Langton in Newton St. Loe. By 1840 this process was complete.

Extent The medieval manor was divided into an 'Eastfield' and 'Westfield', so that the grounds now belonging to Park Farm and Pennsylvania Farm were once part of the latter, sometimes known as the 'Lower Field'. At that time the lands of the Manor Farm would have been scattered throughout the manor. In 1792 it was occupied by Thomas Richmond Hill, but by 1800 he had been succeeded by James Wiltshire. In 1840 it was being run by Benjamin Wolley who also owned Tunley Farm. Park Farm then belonged to George Taylor, and Pennsylvania Farm to Jacob Wallis.

Buildings The farmstead apparently occupies a Saxon site and part of the former farmhouse was certainly medieval. By 1970 this building seems to have reached an advanced state of decay and, despite some effort to preserve it, was totally rebuilt in hacienda style. Although a few medieval items were recovered, it does not appear to have been surveyed or recorded before demolition. There are however two peripheral structures of some importance which still remain, including a former detached kitchen at the rear of the house which retains some Tudor features and, at the front, a pair of substantial gatepiers of mid-18th century character forming a stepped entrance from the parish road on the south.

The farmbuildings surround two yards, a small one lying immediately on the north side of the house, and the other to the north-west giving access back onto the road. This arrangement can be made out on 18th and 19th century maps, although the small yard is now somewhat reduced in size and much of the farmwork now takes place in a large new complex which extends from the north-east side of the farmstead. On the north side of the small yard is a large barn, probably of 18th century date, aligned roughly east-west with gable copings resting on ovolo-moulded cushions and a single surviving four-gable finial. The roof, consisting of modern A-frame trusses, is said to have been destroyed by a gale in recent times, and no indications of the original timbering could be observed. There is a shallow cart porch with a massive timber lintel and hipped roof projecting from the north side, and three of the four original slit vents can be seen blocked up in the north wall. There are two inserted windows, also blocked, at the east end of the wall, and a broad low entry with a sliding door inserted at the western end. A timber lintel in the wall above may indicate an earlier, taller entry before the insertion of the loft. Much of the south wall and the old yard is obscured by a large concrete shed bearing a concrete armorial shield of the Duchy of Cornwall and the date 1951 high on its western gable end. This has resulted in the blocking up of the original opposed central cart porch as well as two of the slit vents and a pedestrian door at the eastern end. Near the western end of the south wall there is an inserted entry with sliding doors directly opposite and similar to the one on the north side. Between this doorway and the end wall of the shed is a tall narrow opening, lined in brick, which extends from about a metre above ground to the same distance below the wallplate. This appears to be an inserted feature that would permit belt-driven machinery to be worked by a portable steam engine stationed outside the barn. The east wall abuts with a modern building and was not accessible from the outside. The only external feature visible in the west wall is a blocked timber-lintelled rectangular window at first floor

level which presumably served as a loft-opening. Internally the whole of the western end beyond the cart entries has an inserted loft supported on three pairs of brick piers set against the side-walls, below which parts of the barn have been partitioned off with breeze-block walls. A door in the south corner gives access into a calf-house abutting the west end of the south wall which is aligned at right angles to the barn, forming a small yard facing the concrete shed. This building is hipped at the southern end and has two segmental arched openings of roughly-shaped voussoirs in the east front. There may have been a third arch at the south end, now occupied by a new entry extending up to the eaves. Inside, a breeze-block partition between the openings may perpetuate an earlier stall division, suggesting an original function as a cow-house, perhaps with a feeding passage at the back accessed by the doorway, now blocked, in the south wall. The west wall backs directly against the east wall of an adjoining pighouse which shares the same alignment but faces west onto the main yard. The roof here is hipped at both ends, and there are three evenly spaced segmental-arched openings with high quality freestone voussoirs in the west front. The north wall is featureless, but there is a blocked door in the south wall which suggests that this building, like its neighbour, was originally designed as a cow-house with rear feed-passage. Both buildings appear on maps between 1840-84.

The south side of the yard is made up of five buildings all abutting onto each other, the most easterly being a small square building aligned east-west with a roof hipped at the east end. It faces east, where there is a door to eaves height to the left, and a window to the right, with another window splayed internally in the south wall. The north wall is featureless and there are no internal fittings to suggest its original purpose. The adjoining building to the west has the same alignment and faces north onto the yard, its roof being hipped at both ends. The north elevation is symmetrical, with a central square-headed doorway flanked by two square two-light ovolo-moulded stone mullioned windows, all framed in high quality freestone block dressing. Immediately above the door is an entry into a hayloft which suggests that, although this building is now used to house pigs, it may have originated as a stable for hackneys or riding-horses. In front of the building is a curious iron water-trough said to be part of the boiler of a stationary farm steam engine. There is a central doorway in the south wall and a blocked interconnecting door through the west wall into the southern part of the adjoining building. The latter is aligned north-south and projects northward into the yard with its front facing east. The roof is hipped at the south end and gabled at the north, and there is a loft-opening in the north wall which is otherwise featureless except for a concrete ramp which climbs from the east but does not reach the level of the opening. The east front has a flat-headed doorway on the right framed in plain-chamfered freestone blocks, and on the left a rectangular chamfered two-light window with a missing central mullion. There is a window in the middle of the south wall, but no internal fittings except for a small recess in the north wall. The building is now used as a calf-house, but may have originated as a stable for working horses. The adjoining building has the same alignment and projects even further into the farmyard, its roof being hipped at both ends. It appears to have been originally built as an extremely deep (c.15m) cartshed, the north end consisting almost entirely of a large timber-lintelled cart entry which extends up to the wall-plate level, with the remaining walls being featureless except for a doorway at the south end of the west wall into the adjoining building. The latter, aligned alongside the cartshed at the western extremity of this range of buildings, also appears to have been built as a cart or implement shed. It has a lean-to roof continuing the western slope of the roof of its neighbour, and is completely open at the north end. The south wall is featureless, but there is a wide cart entry at the south end of the west wall reaching up to full wall height. This wall appears to have previously been the original boundary of the farmstead, and projects forward at the north end, curving westward to the site of a gate which gave access to the road. The oldest building in this range is the long cartshed which, with the small building at the eastern end, can be identified on the 1840 tithe map. Although the architectural details on the two stable-type buildings could be of 17th or 18th century date, the buildings themselves, together with the lean-to shed, do not appear on maps until 1884.

Extending from the western entrance is a range of shelter sheds in L-shaped plan which occupies the whole of the north-western side of the main farmyard. The longer arm is aligned

east-west with a shorter arm projecting from the western end at a somewhat obtuse angle back towards the entrance. Both ranges are hipped at both ends on A-frame trusses, and the whole faces onto two or three small concreted foldyards. The south front of the long arm has four segmental arched openings into the yards, inside of which are the remains of wooden sliding doors, with a further two arches in the east front of the short arm. In the east end of the long arm there is a pedestrian entry on the right side and a vehicular entry on the left, with a further narrow door midway in the north wall. The remaining walls of the short arm are featureless, and there is little of interest in the interior. A building of similar shape is shown on the 1840 tithe map, but the present building was certainly in existence by 1884. On the north side of this building is a Dutch barn behind which are two egg-ended wrought-iron boilers which serve as water reservoirs. This type of boiler is a product of the mid-19th century, commonly used in the local collieries from which these were no doubt salvaged, apparently at the turn of this century.

### Hedge Survey Grades

Hedge number	Ecological Grade	Species Count	Archaeological grade	Overall Grade
30	B	7	1	I
31	B	6	1	I
32	B	6	1	I
33	B	6	1	I
34	B	5	2	II
35	B	5	2	II
36	B	3	2	II
37	B	6	2	II
38	B	5	2	II
39	B (NSP)	5	1	I
40	B (NSP)	5	1	I
42	A (L., NSP)	8	1	I
44	A	3	2	I
45	B	5	1	I
46	B (NSP)	6	1	I
47	B	6	1	I
48	B (L., NSP)	6	1	I
49	B (L., NSP)	5	1	I
52	B	2	2	II
53	B	5	2	II
54	B	1	1	I
55	B	2	1	I
56	A	6	1	I
60	B	6	1	I
61	B	4	1	I
62	B	4	1	I
63	B	5	1	I
123	A	4	2	I
124	A	3	2	I
125	A	8	2	I
126	A	6	2	I
127	B (L.)	3	2	II
128	B	2	2	II
129	B	3	2	II
130	B	2	2	II

Woodland In common with the rest of the parish, Wilmington may have retained some areas of ancient woodland until a relatively late stage, as indicated by such fieldnames a 'Great Wood' and 'East Wood'. There are now few signs of this, and the existing woodland does not contain a high number of indicator species. They are nevertheless not without interest, as in;

**WILMINGTON WOOD or COPSE** (Grade IV, 4 indicator species) Has been much replanted in recent times with conifer and sycamore, but is clearly shown on Thorpe's 1742 map of the district. The map also shows a 'Millway' running along the ledge inside the southern edge of the wood which can still be traced today. It joined Priston Mill with the Stanton Prior footpath and is still shown on the 1840 tithe map as the property of Mill Farm, although it but may have become redundant by that time. In 1792 the wood is listed as 'in hand' and about 4½ acres in extent, much the same as now, but the early maps suggest that its eastern 'tail' was then a recent addition.

**STANDARD OAKS.** The number of standard oaks in Wilmington is higher than anywhere else in the parish. They are mainly distributed in the lower reaches of the valleys to the north-east, and appear to be the result of deliberate plantation by past owners, although there is no obvious indication of any decorative or landscaping purpose.

### Archaeological Sites and Features

**NORTHERN PARISH BOUNDARY** (Grade I) The boundary along the Bath to Marksbury road is described in several Saxon charters for Priston and Stanton Prior between 934-65 AD as beginning 'at the west end of Wynma dune [Wilmington Down] to the 'herepath' [main road], then eastward along the road, straight to Aelfsige's stone. Then from the stone down to the old Eden ford'. This road is thought to have already existed as an old trackway in prehistoric times and John Strachey, a local 18th century antiquarian, was able to trace its course from the Mendip hills to Bath, which he saw as a route for the transportation of lead. The species count in the roadside hedges is relatively low, which suggests that it was not enclosed until quite recent times. 'Aelfsige's stone' seems to have disappeared, but possibly stood where the boundary now leaves the road to Newton St.Loe at East Field. Various 18th century maps confirm that the original road ran from this point along the boundary hedge of East Field and Wilmington Field to continue on down the present road past Pennsylvania Farm, crossing the brook at Park Bridge on its way to Bath. Park Bridge may have been the site of the 'old Eden ford' (Eden then being the name of Newton brook), but the present boundary leaves the road at Black Hedge to drop down to the junction of Newton brook and Wilmington brook, perhaps as a result of some later alteration to the original boundary.

**WILMINGTON-PRISTON MANOR BOUNDARY** (Grade I) The boundary between the two manors was presumably established when they were separated not long before Domesday, although the line of megalithic stones (mentioned below) along the top of Wilmington Copse may suggest some earlier partition. The kinks in the hedgerows below 'Eleven Acres, together with traces of old banks detected on air photos, suggest that this boundary divided an area of cultivation previously shared. In the 18th century the names 'Nettle Hill', 'Rudge' and 'Bulford Mead' occur on both sides of the boundary, perhaps indicating a similar separation.

**MEGALITHS** (Grade I) There is a rough 'field wall' or stone bank running from the Stanton Prior footpath along the top of South Cleaves, continuing along the southern edge of Wilmington Copse. This in itself is an unusual feature in this area, there being no fieldwalls in the whole parish outside the immediate vicinity of habitation. Within the Copse however, this 'wall' is interspersed with a considerable number of large flat stones or megaliths, set upright in the ground, the largest measuring 5ft in height and 7ft in width. Although there is some association between this wall and the abovementioned 18th century Millway, the situation of these stones along an ancient estate boundary raises the strong possibility that the stones may be markers of prehistoric origin, and have therefore been graded accordingly.

**ROADS AND PATHWAYS** (Grade II). Most of the roads and paths in Priston and Wilmington are of early origin, and it is significant that the roadside hedges often contain the highest number of species. Thorpe's 1742 map of the Bath district clearly shows the footpath to Stanton Prior across Sandy Down, apparently of greater significance in the past, and even includes the field-way which joins it from Wilmington Farm. The lane from Wilmington to

Inglesbatch was evidently of some importance in 1395 when an order was made at the manor court of Priston for the repair of Bulford bridge. The footpath from Wilmington to Priston presumably accounts for the fieldname 'Prest Stile' above the Mill which is mentioned as early as the 17th century.

**EARLY FIELD SYSTEMS (Grade II)** The spectacular earthworks in Further Moor and Baker's Butts are medieval field-terraces ('lynchets' or 'lanchards'). It has been suggested that they were used for the cultivation of vines, but though vines were then frequently grown in the neighbourhood, these terraces were a part of the common fields of Wilmington and probably belonged to the copyholders. They have been given a high grading on account of their excellent state of preservation, as well as being an area of outstanding ecological interest.

Included in this category are the many old banks and ditches which remain in 'East Wood'. Together with others in 'Great Wood', now mainly ploughed out, these earthworks may have been features associated with a warren or hunting ground granted in 1280 by the bishop of Bath and Wells to Geoffrey Champeneys in his manor of Wilmington, with the condition that the bishop could 'hunt and fowl in the said warren' at his pleasure. Of particular interest is a prominent bank and ditch which once enclosed a roughly semicircular area covering the two fields, and may be the remains of a woodbank. At the top end of the bank is a small earthwork enclosure or house-platform projecting from the southern boundary hedge and overlapping a hedge-junction on the Priston side. Rectangular in shape, it is about 32m in length along the hedge and 13m in width, surrounded by a ditch about 1.5m wide which joins the larger bank at its western end. More information is required to identify its purpose, but some form of hunting lodge or cabin is a possibility.

**BARROWS (Grade III)** Several barrows have been reported in Wilmington, but none of them confirmed. One was identified by Mr. Wedlake as a mound in the NW corner of Sandpits, but its exact location is uncertain. The other was recorded in 1821 by John Skinner, who noted that there was 'the appearance of a small tumulus, 30ft round, near the farm-house'. This too has not been located.

**EARLY FIELD SYSTEM (Grade III)** There is a fine series of field terraces running across South Cleaves which are less spectacular than those in Grade II above, but no less interesting and lie in unimproved grassland. Further field works can also be seen extending into North Cleaves.

**BOUNDARY STONE (Grade III)** The old road mentioned above which ran along the top of 'East Field' and 'Wilmington Field' on the opposite side of the parish boundary was stopped up some time between 1742-95. Its junction with the upper road was then apparently marked with a boundary stone where they merged about 70yds to the west of the present hedge junction. This point also marked the beginning of the boundary line (also thought to be a pathway of some kind) on the opposite side of the road between Stanton Prior and Newton St.Loe. Although the stone is somewhat damaged, the letters 'N' and (possibly) 'L' in Roman Capitals can be made out, presumably the representing the parish of Newton St.Loe which was evidently responsible for the closure of the road.

**EARLY FIELD SYSTEM (Grade IV)** There are several field systems in Wilmington which have disappeared under the plough in recent times, but can still be made out on aerial photographs. There are faint traces of ridge-and-furrow covering the western end of the Down, and the remains of field terraces are can still be seen in Pitch Field and Deadlands. Until recently an extensive network of old enclosures was visible covering all the grounds below Wilmington Copse.

**SITES OF HIGH POTENTIAL** Although the brookside grounds are the most likely source of future discoveries, the area of habitation at Wilmington also has high potential, particularly 'Old Orchard' where several houses may once have existed, as shown on Thorpe's 1742 map.

## Fieldnames

- Ten/Eleven ACRES (c.1800) areas enclosed from the common field on Wilmington Down.
- BAKER'S BUTTS (c.1800) 'irregular end-pieces of the common field belonging to Baker (ME butte).
- BATHWAY PIECE (c.1800) 'part of the common field next to the road to Bath'.
- BEAN ACRE (c.1800) 'a field-strip where beans were grown' (OE bean).
- BLACK HEDGE (c.1800) possibilities; 'blackthorn boundary hedge' (OE blaec-haeg); 'bleak scarp' (OE blac-ecg).
- BROAD MEAD (c.1800) 'large square meadow' (OE brad-maed).
- BULFORD (MEAD) (Boleford, 1395) '(meadow) by Bullock Ford' (OE bula-ford-maed).
- CLEAVES (Cleeve, 1715) 'land on a steep slope' (OE clif).
- CLOB FURLONG (c.1800) possibly 'division of the common field on a hillock or lump (OE clob-furlang). Later became 'Cup Furlong'.
- COOMBES (Combes, 1518) 'land in a narrow valley' (OE cumb).
- New CLOSE (c.1800) 'recently enclosed from the common field'
- Little CROFT (Cornecroft, 1518) 'small close, often attached to dwellings' (OE croft).
- DEAD LANDS (Deadlands, 1701) 'disused or worn-out arable strips' (OE dead-land).
- Great DOWN, DOWN End, etc. (related to WynlmaeDUN, c936, later corrupted to 'Wilmington') possibilities; 'spring-in-the-meadow down' (OE will-maed-dun); 'Winela's mead down' (OE Winela-maed-dun).
- DUSTY BED (c.1800) 'dry piece of ground' [not identified].
- EAST FIELD (Este Feld, 1518) 'enclosed from the common East Field'
- FURTHER MOOR (the Moor, 1707) 'marshy pasture ground' (OE mor).
- GOATERS (Goathurst, 1715) 'wooded slope where goats are kept' (OE got-hyrst).
- HARRIE TAYLOR'S BOTTLE (1715 only) 'Henry Taylor's land containing, or near, a dwelling' (OE botl) [not identified].
- HUNDRED ACRES (c.1800) 'very small piece of land' (in this case, 1 rood) [not identified].
- INNOX (Innok furlong, 1518) 'part of the common field enclosed for cultivation while the remainder is fallow (ME inhoke).
- The LEGGS (1701 only) possibly 'land containing a stack-frame' [not identified].
- LONG IRON (1701 only) possibly 'long corner-strip' (OE lang-hyrne) [unidentified].

MIDDLE PIECE (c.1800) probably 'enclosed from the middle of the common field'

OATHILL (ditto, 1715) 'hill on which oats were grown' (OE ate-hyll).

OXON LEAZE (c.1800) 'pasture ground for the oxen' (OE oxan-laes).

PITCH FIELD (Pitchfeilde, 1715) 'pointed part of the common field' (OE piced-feld).

SANDPITS (Sandpiles, 1750) 'containing sand-pits or quarries' (OE sand-pytt).

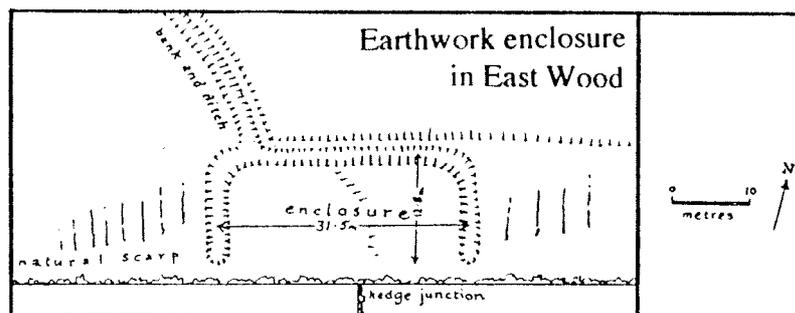
SUMMER LEAZE (c.1800) 'the summer pasture ground' (OE sumor-laes).

TILWELL (1701 only) possibly 'near a good spring' (OE til-welle) [not identified].

TINING (Tyneings land, 1707) 'newly fenced enclosure from the common field' (OE tyning).

WELL HOUSE MEAD (Wellus Mead, 1795) 'meadow containing a covered spring-head'  
(perhaps the 'spring-in-the-meadow' mentioned above).

WILMINGTON FIELD (c.1840) 'formerly part of the common (east) field of Wilmington'



## Appendix

Some unidentified and redundant fieldnames in Priston; showing the dates of their occurrence found during the survey.

- Le BOTTOM LAND (1593) 'land in the valley bottom' or, 'lower end of a furlong'.
- BRESSLANDS HILL (1590-1634) possibly 'hill with newly broken ground' (ME breche).
- BRODWELL (1616) 'large square ground next to a spring' (OE brad-wella).
- CHAPMAN'S MEAD (1590-1730) 'meadow belonging to Mr.Chapman'.
- DUNKERTONS HEDGE (1590) 'by the boundary hedge of Dunkerton'.
- ELM HAY (1606-34) 'common pasture enclosure in which elms were grown'
- EWESTRELLES (1590-1730) 'sheepfolds' (OE eowestre); also appears as 'Awstrelles'.
- FORTHEYS (1500) possibly; 'headland or "island" projecting into a marsh' (OE forth-eg).
- FULLMEDE/FOLLEMEDE (1500-1624) possibilities; 'meadow frequented by birds' (OE fugol-maed); 'meadow where foals were kept' (OE fola-maed); 'foul meadow' (OE ful-maed).
- GAYES (1730) 'belonging to Mr.Gaye'
- GREENEHAYE (1606-1730) 'grass enclosure' in the Rectory grounds, (now called 'Grinneys').
- GRENEMERE (1500) 'grassy marshland'
- HALL CLOSE (1593-1622) 'enclosure adjacent to a hall'
- HAWLLAND (1720) 'land in a nook' (OE halh-land).
- HENCROFT (1601-34) possibilities; 'croft where hemp was grown' (OE haenep-croft); 'croft where hens were kept' (OE henn-croft). Possibly the same as 'Hemmcrosse' (1500).
- HERRIOT (1624-1730) 'land on which manorial death-duty was paid'
- HIGHMEERE (1730) 'high marshy ground'
- HITCHENS/HUTCHENS (1500) 'part of the common field under plough while the rest is fallow' (OE heccing).
- HOMEBUSHE CLOSE (1616) 'enclosure containing holly (holm) thickets for winter feed' (OE holegn-busc).
- LAMP CLOSE (1530-1730) an acre of land granted to support a chantry-light in Priston church under the supervision of the parishioners, but surrendered during the Reformation and sold to Hugh Sexey in 1568. Later corrupted to 'Lamb Close'.
- LYMEPITTES (1599) 'land on which lime or marl was dug' (OE lam-pytt).

NEWMEDE (1500-1606) 'recently enclosed meadow' (towards Redfield).  
 ONORTHFIELD (1602) [near the Rectory grounds].  
 OAT GROUND (1730) 'where oats were grown'  
 OVERCORNECLOSE (1616) 'upper part of an enclosure where corn was grown'  
 PONTERS (1500-1730) 'part of a toft belonging to Ponter'  
 PRESHWOOD/PRISHWOOD (1566-1624) 'coppice wood' (Welsh prysg + OE wudu).  
 PRICKMEDE (1596-1730) possibly 'meadow containing a Spindle or Prick-wood tree (Dog-wood)' (OE pric-maed).  
 QUARRLAND (1730) 'land containing a quarry'  
 On RODNEY (1590) possibly 'reedy "island"' (OE hreodan-eg).  
 SHEETWELL (1616) 'corner of ground containing a spring' (OE sceat-wella).  
 SHEPHERDS (1730) 'belonging to Shepherd'  
 SMALL GAINS (1730) 'unproductive land'  
 SMARHILL (1590-1606) 'butter hill, or fat (-land) hill' (OE smeoru-hyll).  
 SOMER LEASE (1730) 'summer pasture ground'  
 SOUTH BROOK (1590-1730) 'ground next to South brook' (presumably Priston brook).  
 SPADE ACRE (1730) 'ground shaped like a spade' or, 'tilled with a spade'.  
 STONYACRE (1590) 'a field-strip with stony soil'  
 TOWNEHED (1621) 'unploughed headland near the village' (OE tun-heafod).  
 WATERMANS (1597-1622) 'belonging to Waterman' (near the Gastons).  
 WHEAT LEAZE (1731) 'pasture ground where wheat was formerly grown'  
 WITHIE LAND (1590-1621) 'arable ground where willows grow' (OE withig-land).  
 WOODWAYE (1617) 'adjoining the way towards the wood'