

# Parham Field Names

*By Bob Briscoe, April 1999 (corrections and updates added up to January 2021. Corrections of fact or interpretation are tagged with the date, but editorial corrections are unmarked).*

Nowadays, many people are completely unaware that all fields have had names for many centuries. Over the years, some field names stick, while others change many times. Most field names are completely uninteresting like 'Big Field', 'Eighteen Acres' or 'Low Meadow'. Others like 'Pond Meadow' or 'Glemham Field' are just as uninspiring unless they give clues to a feature like a pond or a boundary that is no longer present. However, maybe a quarter of the four hundred odd fields in Parham's recent history have more interesting names - names that reveal history or simply sound quaint. Our tables and maps record the progress of every name over the last few centuries, from the ordinary to the very strange. The next few paragraphs explain how to understand this concentrated data. The rest of this chapter then muses over the more interesting snippets of history that might flow from Parham's field names. As with all history, we have tried to be careful to state when assumptions are being made, but we have probably got carried away in places. About half a dozen names elude any attempt at explanation. Some might relate to an Old English word, but why that word was used is lost in the mists of time. Among them are the three most strangely named fields, all next to each other: Great and Little Gristle Field and Burying Boy Field, as well as Little Weanals, Bolsters, Sketches, Dorie Oak, Sharman's Piece and the Mandle. If any readers have any leads, we will always be interested to hear further theories.

Although it is very unusual for two fields on the same farm to have the same name, when we look at the village as a whole, there are many duplications. The Ordnance Survey assign every field a number that is unique within the parish, so we use these OS numbers on our maps to be unambiguous. However, each time they re-survey, these numbers bear no relation to the previous ones, so we always make sure we give the relevant date too.

However, even a number and a date don't identify any one patch of land permanently, because over the years fields get divided down or merged together. The best we can do is look for the time when most fields were at their smallest. At such a time their names and OS numbers would have been the most specific. In medieval times fields were typically as large as the largest of today's fields although these 'great fields' were divided into named furlongs, which were further subdivided into strips, each farmed separately. (*Added Dec'15*: Recent research [Martin2008] has found that strip farming within large open fields was not universal across ancient England, and was uncommon in our area. In Essex and south of the River Gipping in Suffolk, right back to earliest recorded history fields had generally always been enclosed with no evidence of open fields. The further North-West from the Gipping one looks, an increasing prevalence of open fields appears in the Medieval records. Once one reaches North-West Norfolk, the prevalence of open fields was similar to that across the Midlands. Martin's research was based on case-studies of selected villages, the closest to Parham being Worlingworth, where only 15% of the parish consisted of open fields in Medieval times, all lying along the parish boundaries.) From the 14th to the 19th century, enclosure by often self-appointed landlords created the smaller fields seen in the 19th and the pre-mechanised 20th century. The only fully comprehensive survey of the fields of Parham was in 1838. In common with the other parishes in Suffolk and the rest of the country, every field was surveyed in order to calculate the tithe rent apportionments [1838a]. The tithe records give us every field's name, state, area, owner and tenant. Fields were typically also at their smallest around this same date. Therefore the OS numbers from the 1840 Ordnance Survey [1840a] are the most useful way to refer to Parham's fields. For brevity, we refer to these as for example 1840/424, which is short for 'OS no. 424 in the year 1840'.

## Source material

This survey of Parham's field names is based on a patchy coverage of maps going back as far as 1671. Before this time there are written manorial records from the 14th and 15th century but no known maps. These records would require expert interpretation beyond the author's resources. However a brief summary of research into these records is given elsewhere in the discussion on Parham's medieval lanes. The sources for the meaning of the more unusual field names are John Field's excellent books [Field1972, Field1993]. The sources for current field names and for various anecdotes are listed in the acknowledgements. The full list of source material is given later.

## How to use the field name table and maps

The table of field names is divided across its width into four main sets of columns:

1. before 1840 - this set of columns is built from a patchy collection of private surveys of individual farms. A double lined border is drawn round each collection with the source reference heading each.
2. the 1840 Tithe survey [1838a, 1840a] - this is the only complete column
3. the early 20th century - a large part of the village changed ownership in 1921 when the Corrance estate was sold in lots [1921a]. Some field names were noted down by the buyers at this time. The two 'owner' columns for 1921 show pre- and post-sale owners. The sale maps are all based on the 1904 Ordnance Survey.

- the late 20th century - here we record the field names as they stand today in 1999. Also an attempt is made to record the size of fields in 1975 at the time of the last major Ordnance Survey. Although the 1975 data is far from complete, it will be seen that a good deal of the larger fields have been created in the last 25 years.

The order in which fields are listed is generally from North to South and within that from West to East. This is approximately the same as the order of the Tithe OS numbers from 1840. We've also tried to bunch fields together that have always been part of the same farm, although there are many fields on the edge of farms that have swapped around. However, we've also had to list fields immediately after each other where they have been merged together later in their lives. This sometimes makes it difficult to find a field as the order is difficult to predict, but it is the best compromise we could reach. To help, the rows containing each of the twenty-one farmhouses are highlighted by thick dashed edges. Usually the fields surrounding the house will be fairly close by in the list.

Acreages are not recorded, but can be found from the source material.

Abbreviations have had to be used liberally in order to fit the large amount of information across the page. Where possible the state of the land is recorded with an abbreviation (whether it is arable, pasture, woodland etc. - about thirty odd descriptions are used). The owners and tenants are also recorded by using numerous abbreviations. All abbreviations are listed after the table.

Every care has been taken to transcribe names as they were written in the source - there is no correction of even poor punctuation. Where a clerical error is certain it is surrounded by braces. For example the 1840 entry for Fitches Meadow is listed as {Hitches Meadow}. This notation is reserved for errors in the records that didn't result in a permanent change to the name in common use. We haven't highlighted our own clerical errors - these are left hidden to confuse future researchers! Nonetheless, people mis-hearing or mis-spelling or guessing an incorrect meaning of an unfamiliar sounding name is one of the commonest causes of name changes. For instance Brick Kilns has become Brickles or even Brittles. In these cases we put '(sic)' after the name to make it clear it isn't our typing error.

## Common terms that appear in field names

A few terms that regularly crop up in field names might be unfamiliar to people who haven't grown up in a farming community. A 'Lay' or 'Ley' is a non-permanent meadow. The term 'Gull' is used for a small river in a gully. A 'Pightle' is just a small field, although most seem to cluster around the farm buildings. A 'Close' is simply evidence of the process of enclosure. Finally, the word 'Neat' is for oxen or cattle. 'Neathouse' appears a great deal. I grew up thinking this was spelt 'Nettuce' like 'lettuce' because it is pronounced "Net'us".

## Interesting Parham field names

**Wabbs & Great/Little/Long Wabbs** (1840/14,24,25): These fields are now all merged together but John Larter still calls the merged field Great Wabbs. The bridleway from North Green (1840/30a,78,78a) was called Webb's Lane. It used to continue up towards these fields called 'Wabbs' rather than turning left towards Framlingham as it does today. Both the 1824 map of what is now Home Farm [1824a] and the 1840 Tithe map show this original route. The late Gwen Dyke has this area called Wabb's land in 1433/1550 on unknown evidence. Even within the Tithe record one of these fields (1840/25) is spelled as Webb's Field while the others were spelled Wabbs. The 1819 map [1802a] has them all spelled Wabbs, but it seems fairly certain that Wabbs and Webb's are the same words spelled differently, with Wabb's having the greater antiquity.

**Kilderbee's Grove** (1840/13): The Tithe apportionment entry of 'Hilderber's Grove' is definitely a clerical error as Samuel Kilderbee clearly owned the surrounding land in the late 18th century [1794a, 1802a].

**Lonely Farm** (1840/10): Obvious meaning given its remoteness from the rest of the village.

**St. John's Grove** (1840/29): This covert is on the boundary with Framlingham. Its name might derive from midsummer's day bonfires traditionally set on St John's day (24 Jun).

**Great/Little/Upper/Lower High Row** (1840/37,38); **High Row** (1840/110); **Long Rows** (1840/435); **High Row** (1840/426): These four separate names probably all come from the Old English word for 'rough' [*ruh*]. They are all on high ground. Respectively beside the Cransford Road, behind Shaftos, on the boundary with Easton and behind Parham Old Hall. Alternatively some might be from the short form for hedgerow.

**The Spong** (1904/470): This name doesn't appear on any map - Alfred Whymark told me this was the name used for the strip of wooded land with a pond that used to run along Queen Mary's Wood, a track's width away, but is now ploughed out. It is believed to be the Old English word for a long narrow strip. One explanation is that the word came to be used where a single spang or leap could clear the width of the strip.

**Queen Mary's Wood/Lane** (1840/40a): See Tracks and Lanes.

**Oak Farm** (1840/43): As with most farm houses, names didn't seem to be given, instead the name of the occupier was used (Chilcott's Farm in 1794). Queen Mary's wood was planted with oaks in 1788, but evidence has been gathered that this was an

ancient pig wood long before. Queen Mary's Lane in the vicinity of this farm was planted over with oaks in 1795. The name Oak Farm is unlikely to have been applied until at least these dates or later.

**Fitches Meadow** (1840/35): This is now the plantation opposite Oak Farm drive. It could be someone's name, but it might also imply the fodder crop vetch was grown there. As a result of this survey, this plantation will revert to this name rather than the current 'Plantation Opposite Oak Farm Drive', which is descriptive but a bit of a mouthful.

Long/Lower/Upper **Whin** Field (1840/32,33); Whin Covert, Whin Field/Cover, **Whinny** Plantation, The Great **Winnis**, Middle/Further **Whinns** (1904/148, 1840/430, 429, 431): These probably comes from the Old Norse word for gorse [*hvin*] and if so would imply gorse was once prevalent here. The former set are behind the plantation opposite Oak Farm drive. The latter collection are all in or around the wood now called Sally's Grove on the boundary with Easton. Incidentally, the former set of fields is all part of the 'Big Field', which has now been renamed to The 'Big Whin Field' (as a result of this survey). This is to distinguish it from the other 'Big Field' the Grays already farmed before they took over the running of the JC Larter land.

North/South **Allands** (1840/28,30): These were next to St John's Grove on the boundary with Framlingham. They might come from the Middle English for a remote or lonely field near a parish boundary [Middle English *alange* or *alenge*]. Alternatively, it could be a corruption of 'Old Lands'. This was a common name given when land that had been heath or old pasture was ploughed.

**Market Hill** (1840/58); **Market Hill** (1840/113): Only a couple of fields and the stream called the Gull separate these two intriguingly named fields. However, there are two likely explanations for such field names, neither of which imply there was a market here. The former can probably be explained as a corruption of 'Mark Oak Hill' from the Old English for a mark [*maerc*]. It is on the boundary with Framlingham, on which still stand three great boundary or marker oaks. The latter field is on the northern edge of Parham Wood, divided in two by the track between Framlingham and Saxmundham. This fits the other common use of this name; land next to the way to the market.

First/Second **Friars** (1840/133,134): This name doesn't necessarily imply a friary stood here between Brick Lane and Parham Wood; it may simply have been land owned or in trust to friars.

**Furpits Meadow** (1840/130): This is beside the River Ore, below Parham Wood, which lends weight to an interpretation related to deep furrows cut for drainage.

Upper/Lower **Smith** Close (1840/111,112): These fields seem too isolated nowadays to have once housed a smithy. However, they are near the track from Framlingham to Saxmundham, north of Parham Wood (see Tracks and Lanes). The track rises steeply from the valley here. So it is not outside the bounds of possibility that there was a smithy where horses would be more likely to lose their shoes (nowadays a smith who specializes in shoeing horses would be called a farrier, but in the past the words were used interchangeably; the word farrier being from Middle French *ferrier*, meaning blacksmith). However, these fields are not directly beside the track, so an alternative but less interesting derivation would be from a person's name.

**Sallow Grove** (1840/114); **Sallow Grove** (1840/432); **Sally's Grove** (1904/148b): The first of these is probably across the track from the North-West corner of Parham Wood, although the tithe map has a chunk missing here. Sallow is another word for pussy willow (*salix atrocinerea*) from the Old English [*salh*]. The very wet strip of woodland across the parish boundary running along the footpath from Easton to Parham was also called Sallow Grove in 1840, but now it is called Stud Farm Wood. However, the wood next to it was then called Whin Field Cover and is now called Sally's Grove, which sounds suspiciously like a corruption of Sallow Grove.

**Gall's Meadow** (1840/216): This land is on the opposite side of the River Ore from Parham Wood. It may be derived from the Old English word meaning wet, barren land [*galla*].

**Rush Close** (1840/60); **Rush Field/Piece** (1904/19, 1840/399); **Rush Close** (1840/350): This name seems to imply the obvious - that rushes grew on this land. All three of these fields are not particularly low, but may have been badly drained. The first is right up by the marker oaks on the Framlingham boundary, the second two are to the west of the entrance to the Moat Hall farm yard and the third is in the middle of the large field to the west of Bridge Farm and still has a pond in the middle.

**Mill Meadow/Field** (1777/9,2, 1840/145,141); A **Mill** (1840/201); **Mill Mount** (1840/377): It is fairly safe to assume each of these field names implies the existence of a mill, probably all windmills. The first set of fields is between Sunset Cottage and Shaftos with another opposite Green Farm Cottages on North Green. This may imply one or two mills in these slightly separated spots. The second reference is to the well documented mill on Mill Green, where Mill House now stands. The third is on the approach into Parham from Hacheston, just before Blyth Row on the left. See also Mount Field below.

Further/First **Church** Field (1840/50,51): These were close to Oak Farm off North Green and appear to imply fields that might then have been glebe lands, although this has not been supported by any other evidence. By the early 20th century, these fields had become called **Corrances**. Along with Further Bottoms and Further Pit Hill, Samuel Kilderbee gave these to Mrs White (née Corrance) in 1802 for unknown reasons. As the only child of Richard Corrance, the name would have died, were it not for her son Frederick White reverting to Corrance on her death. Hence the field name Corrances.

Great/Little **Gristle** Field (1840/93,95): These fields are up on the boundary with Glemham, behind Overbetts. There may be some connection with grist, the grain prepared for milling; from the Old English *gristel*, which might somehow lend weight to the theory that there was a windmill on Mount meadow (1840/159) two fields away (see later).

**Overbetts** (1975/3884): Also the name of the cottage at the bottom of the field. Unknown origin, other than the obvious "above Bett's".

The **Town House** Field (1840/164): This is north of Tree Cottage off Mill Green. A town-house was a house owned by the parish in which poor families were merely housed, as opposed to a work-house [Dymond1988]. This implies it was named some time between the 1601 Poor Law setting up the Town Houses and the 1834 Poor Law, which instituted the more austere workhouses. Often fields with names like this had been willed to the parish, with the rent often directed to be used for the poor. There is no evidence of a building on this land, so this is the most likely explanation.

Little **Weanals** (1801/3): Origin unknown - could it relate to weaners? It is between Shaftos and Parham Wood.

**Hungry Hill** (1801/9); **Hungry Hill** (1840/171); **Hungerhills/Hungerins** (1840/189): All these names are very probably created out of the frustration of working poor land. The first is opposite where Hollow Lane appears, north of Whitehouse Farm. The second is south of Tree Cottage on Mill Green. The third is now under the main runway of the aerodrome.

**Cuttings Meadow/Green/Field, Cutlers Green, Cuttles Green** (1840/199,200,200a): This was the earlier name of Mill Green. Origin unknown. The dictionary of Field Names [Field1972] suggests 'land from which whetstones were obtained' for fields with 'Cutting Knife' in their name, but this seems unlikely here. It could be after someone's name, given that in 1840 the name Cutting was more prevalent in Suffolk than anywhere else. In 1433/1550 this area was called Greshaugh [1433a]. Haugh could derive from the Middle English word *haw* [from Old English *haga*] meaning an enclosure. Gres could be the Middle English word for grass, which would make Greshaugh mean grass enclosure.

The **Maeddle** (1975/3639): This is another name that doesn't appear on any maps or records but is the generally used name for the large pond on Mill Green. It almost certainly comes from the Suffolk word 'mardle' used for a village pond where groups would meet and mardle (chat).

Upper/Lower **Bolsters** (1840/204,206): Behind Mill Green. Origin unknown.

**Gorey Hill** (1840/236): Triangular field between Mill Green and the valley to the south. This appears to derive from the Old English for the triangular remnant left after a rectangular pattern of furlongs had been drawn up [*gara*].

**Burying Boy** Field (1840/94): This is an intriguing name. The field is on the boundary with Glemham, to the north of Park Farm. The Dictionary of Field Names [Field1972] points out that the word 'Bury' may imply a burial, but it may also come from the Old English word for a fortified manor house or general fortification [*burh*]. However, the name appears to have been new in 1840, being a divided off part of the larger field called Aspins (presumably from Aspen trees) in 1761. An extreme stretch of the imagination could link the possible reference to a fortification with the moat-like artefact in the neighbouring Mount Field (see next entry).

**Mount Field/Meadow/Yard** (1840/161,159, 1761/1): This field is close to the boundary with Glemham, also to the north of Park Farm. In this field on the 1840 Tithe map there is a strange, small, square-shaped island with what appears to be a square moat around it. Nowadays, it is in the middle of nowhere, but then it would have been alongside Queen Mary's Lane on the high ground of the watershed. The bridleway (Packway) from Elm Farm also runs past nearby, and may have once led to this spot, although it currently crosses fields diagonally to the North-West on its route to join up with another bridleway leading from Stone Farm in Glemham towards this spot. Herman Kindred can remember his father filling a pond in this field and the general shape of this 'moat' is visible on an aerial photo of Elm Farm's lands. Mount Yard is the name given to the farm yards we know today as Park Farm, which are a couple of fields away. It was relatively common for windmills to stand within a small moat, so given the name of the field, this is the most likely explanation for this feature.

Upper/Lower **Hobbs** (1840/180,181): These fields to the north-west of the aerodrome were called **Hovells** in 1761 (1761/14). It is possible that the name changed due to an error, but it might be a distinct name given for another reason such as a person's name. The original name Hovells might point to the presence of an implement shed or stack framework here.

**Rachel's Covert/Wood, Lendeep's Grove** (1840/238,239): Presumably Lendeep is a person's name. Some time between 1840 and 1904, this wood was renamed Rachel's Wood. The story goes that smugglers put about that a witch called Rachel lived in the wood to frighten people from investigating their comings and goings. This seems rather a late date for smuggling, but is not impossible.

The **Deal** Meadow (1840/297): Presumably named after the type of tree. Located in the far east corner of the parish.

**Squirrells, Skirrells** (1840/190): Origin appears obvious. This field was where the north-west corner of the aerodrome is now.

**Sketches** (1840/289): Origin unknown. Just beyond Crabbe's Farm.

**Rooked Meadow** (1840/306) Origin appears obvious.

**Dore Oak** First/Second Piece (1840/319,320): Despite the name being spelled Dore in 1840, John Gray pronounces this and his father spelled it Dorie. These fields lie to either side of Stewponds Wood. Origin unknown. May relate to the French doré meaning gilded, which is a feasible explanation for its 1840 and 1921 spellings as well as its current pronunciation. However, there are no known coats of arms sporting gilded oaks.

**Huntsmer** (1840/264): Probably from Huntsman. Located in the grounds of Parham Hall.

**Silverlace Green** (1840/273a): This (and Silverlace Green in nearby Benhall) might stem from 'silver leahs' with 'leahs' meaning grassland (as in ley) and 'silver' possibly alluding to flowers growing on it such as silverweed or silverwort. [Ekwall1960] considers this to be the most likely derivation of the similarly named lost village of Silverley between Newmarket and Bury St Edmunds.

**Botany Farm** (1975/8040): This sits on Silverlace Green and was in the furthest corner of the Marlesford Hall Estate, before it was recently sold off. The name implies it is as far flung as Botany Bay, Australia.

**Hatches Field** (1840/302) behind Pye's Wood could be after a person's name, but might be after the Old English for a half or wicket gate [*hæcc*] or for a field taken out of rotation [*hitch*]. It seems too far from Hacheston to be connected.

The **Workhouse Field** (1840/316): Origin obvious. This was where the new recycling plant is today. There was also a workhouse on the parish land where North Green Bungalows are today.

**Stewponds Wood** (1840/391): Next to Moat Hall, fish were kept in the ponds in these woods until needed for the table in ancient times.

**Sharmans Piece** (1840/400): On the boundary with Hacheston to the east of Moat Hall. The origin is unknown but if it is related to the word shaman (priest) it seems more likely to be through someone's name than directly.

The **Ozier Ground** (1840/405): At the southernmost extreme of the parish, behind Hacheston village hall, an ozier is a type of willow (*salix viminalis*).

**Island Cottage** (1975/9802): The River Ore split into two around this island to the north of Hacheston Post Office until the course nearer the road was filled in earlier this century.

**Lodge Hill** (1840/410): This field sits against the north of the old path up from the bridge in Hacheston to Moat Hall. It seems rather far from the site of what was called Parham Lodge (where Parham Hall stands today), so may indicate the existence of a lodge house at the entrance to the estate, now disappeared.

**Headland Meadow** (1840/127): Beside High House Farm, this could come from 'headland' [Middle English *hedelond*, strip of land at the head of a furlong for turning the plough]. However, given these fields are beside the farmyard, it may simply mean land for the herd of cattle or sheep.

Great **Cangles**, Hither/Further **Kangles** (1840/425): This name means a fenced enclosure [Middle English *cangel*]. It had this name on the 1671 map of the Blomeville Hall estate, the edge of which crossed into Parham. The fields sizes on this map were considerably larger than they were in 1840. The 'Home Fields in Cangles' of 1671 had been split into at least three fields by 1840, only one of which kept the name. This seems to imply the process of enclosure was only half way to completion in 1671.

**Hickling Hall** (1840/419): This hall was the centre of the sub-manor of Hickling, which was named after Hickling Priory in Norfolk. Now called Parham Old Hall.

**Writing Pit Meadow** (1840/384): Opposite the Willoughby Arms, this is most likely a corruption of 'Retting Pit Meadow' - retting pits and ponds were common to soften hemp and flax [Middle English *reten* or Old Norse *reyta*, to mellow or soften; related to Old English *rotian*, to rot]. It became **Blacksmith's Meadow** by 1921, which fits with the existence of the smithy opposite, beside the Inn on the 1883 Ordnance Survey.

**Duel Piece** (1840/323a): Behind Willoughby House in a loop in the river, one can imagine a misty morning with the Church forming a backdrop to a dramatic duel.

**White Meadow** (1840/417): This sits the other side of the road from Parham Old Hall against the Hacheston boundary. 'White' usually described poor or light land [Old English *hwita*].

**Brakey Place** (1840/348): This lies against the south of the path from Parham bridge to Easton, a fair way behind Bridge Farm. It might imply soil newly broken up for cultivation [Old English *braec*]. An alternative derivation would be from bracken [Old English *bracu*].

The **Mandle** (1840/370): A large field that was in the middle of what is now Parham's largest field - Brown's behind Blyth Row. Origin unknown but it might relate to the farming of mangle-wurzels, also called mangolds, which were a popular beet-like crop in the eighteenth century.

Many names seem to be after known local farmers or land-owners. For example: **Chilcott's** (1840/43) - Samuel Chilcott; **Corrance's** (1904/447,454) - Frederick Corrance, Esq; **William's Farm** (1840/74) - Benjamin Williams; **Kemp's Meadow** (1840/243) - Kemp back as far as early hearth tax returns; **Shafto's** (1840/143) - Capt. John Shafto; **Jolly's** (1840/146); **Jolly's** (1840/305) - these fields are very far apart, one being opposite Field Cottage on the way to North Green, while the other is beyond Crabbe's Farm Bungalow off Silverlace Green (see The Farming Tradition in the chapter on the History of Parham's Houses for traces of the Jollys). **Coles Bottom/Hill** (1840/294,299) - the Rev Denny Cole who owned land in Parham in 1777 - both these fields were owned by the Revs Crabbe in 1840; **Chandler's Close** (1840/237) - William Chandler occupied neighbouring Park Farm in 1838 (the field is now called **Arch Hill**, which is a mystery); **Nichol's** (1904/332,333) - Reggie Nichol lived in one of the cottages on Silverlace Green; **Crabbe's Farm** (1840/278,278a) - Revs George & John Crabbe; **Joe's** (1904/33,34,340,341) - Joe Eastoe who owned Upper Common Farm, Gt. Glemham, demolished to make way for the aerodrome; **Frost Barn** (1975/7700,5353,1076,0085,0070), **Frost's Meadow** (1840/328), **Frost's Piece** (1840/342), **Frost Marsh** (1840/215a) - which must all relate to the very old Parham family.

Other names sound related to people's names, but the person hasn't been traced. For example: **Roy's** (1840/148) (may originally have been rye?); **Alice's Orchard** (1840/137); **Roses Piece** (1840/317) (may be the flower?); **Bloss's Farm** (1904/48); **Pye's Field/Wood** (1975/???? [was 1840/302-304]); **Pitt's Meadow** (1904/92,92a); **Kentons** (1840/121); **Brown's** (1975/0040,3881). **Tansy Croft** (1840/144) might relate to the flower, but it sounds suspiciously like a corruption of its name in 1761: **Stan's Croft**, which is yet another field falling into the 'unknown person's name' category.

Even in recent times, fields have continued to be named after people. **Katarski** (1975/???? [previously 1904/386]) belonged to Jannek Katarski who was in the Free Polish Air Force and settled in Parham after the 2nd World War, farming Whitehouse Farm for a time. Even in the last few years **William's Wood** (1999/9672) has been named after the young William Gray. Two newly named fields are after the owner's pets: **Pip's meadow** (the dog) and **Dougal's Meadow** (the pony).

## Change

Apart from the long term economic processes already discussed, such as enclosure and recent mechanisation, other more parochial factors have made their mark on Parham's fields. In the early nineteenth century two major drainage schemes cut through many existing fields. At the northern end of the parish a long new ditch was cut down from Queen Mary's Wood into the upper reaches of the Gull. At the southern end, a similar new ditch was cut from the Barn Yard down under the road and into the River Ore. Unlike the previous enclosure, these were the first signs of new field boundaries that didn't seem to follow the contours of the land. The ditches were deliberately cut straight across the middles of soggy fields.

The next major disruption after the ditching was the construction of the new vicarage on the hill opposite the church in the mid 19th century. The landscaping of its grounds cut into a number of old fields. Very soon afterwards the railway came to Parham, again cutting an uncompromising path; this time through the low meadows and even requiring the course of the river to be moved in places.

The 1920s saw the start of infill building development along the western side of the road south of the school house, which by the 1950s had cut off the ends of all the fields that dropped down to the road here. The other major infill was between the station and Brick Lane. Of course, the 2nd World War had also seen the aerodrome cut up the shape of fields on the eastern boundary, followed later by the many new farm buildings around Crabbe's Farm that have cut the ends off many fields here.

Regardless of these changes, the parish boundary has remained completely unchanged over the period covered by available maps (1647 onward) with just one exception. What is now Blackthorn and was the Whinny plantation (1840/429) is now mostly in Hacheston, whereas in 1747 it was entirely in Parham. Where the boundary continues across what was the Whin Field (1840/430) towards the corner of Easton, it also cuts more of this field into Hacheston than it did in 1747.

All the changes described so far have cut across the grain of the natural contours of the land. In contrast, the recent moves towards 'prairie farming' have worked within the major field boundaries formed by deep ditches, tracks and roads. Ironically, it is possible that these far-reaching changes are reverting the landscape to its shape before enclosure of the great fields (*Added Dec'15*: if there were ever open fields in this area, which would be more likely along the parish boundaries [Martin2008]). Many people are surprised to find that their romantic notions of little hedged fields and plentiful trees in the historic landscape might be complete fallacies. Below is a quotation from the Deben Valley Place-Name Survey, which summarises an impression of the landscape in 1433:

"What does strike us forcibly is:

- The vast predominance of arable land, rarely hedged, over this wide expanse of open, rather arid heathy land...
- The almost total lack of woodland in the fifteenth century landscape..." [DVPNS-GH1981]

The source of this impression is a rare 'Extent' which describes the Howard estate from Framlingham to Tunstall north of the Deben including Parham [1433a].

It is equally ironic that a certain amount of tree planting has changed the face of the landscape during the 20th century, while preserving the old boundaries. Much of this has been for cover to support game shooting, but some, for example around Oak Farm, has been for environmental reasons as well as long term timber production.

This leads into a rather quaint story to end this chapter. One hundred and nine years ago, in 1890, the owner of most of Parham's land, Frederick Corrance, arranged for all the children from Parham School to bring acorns up to Great Horse Close on the Glemham boundary between Oak and Elm Farms, which was then arable. Over the ensuing century, the acorns have grown into a great wood of straight oaks, all now approaching maturity. Two rides cross each other, dividing the wood into equal quarters. Presumably firs were also planted at some time, perhaps for early cover, as the wood is now called Queen Mary Firwood, despite there being no firs today.

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