

**Hyde Farm**  
**Hyde Lane, Churt, Surrey**



**Archaeological Watching Brief  
(with a note on documentary sources)**

**By**

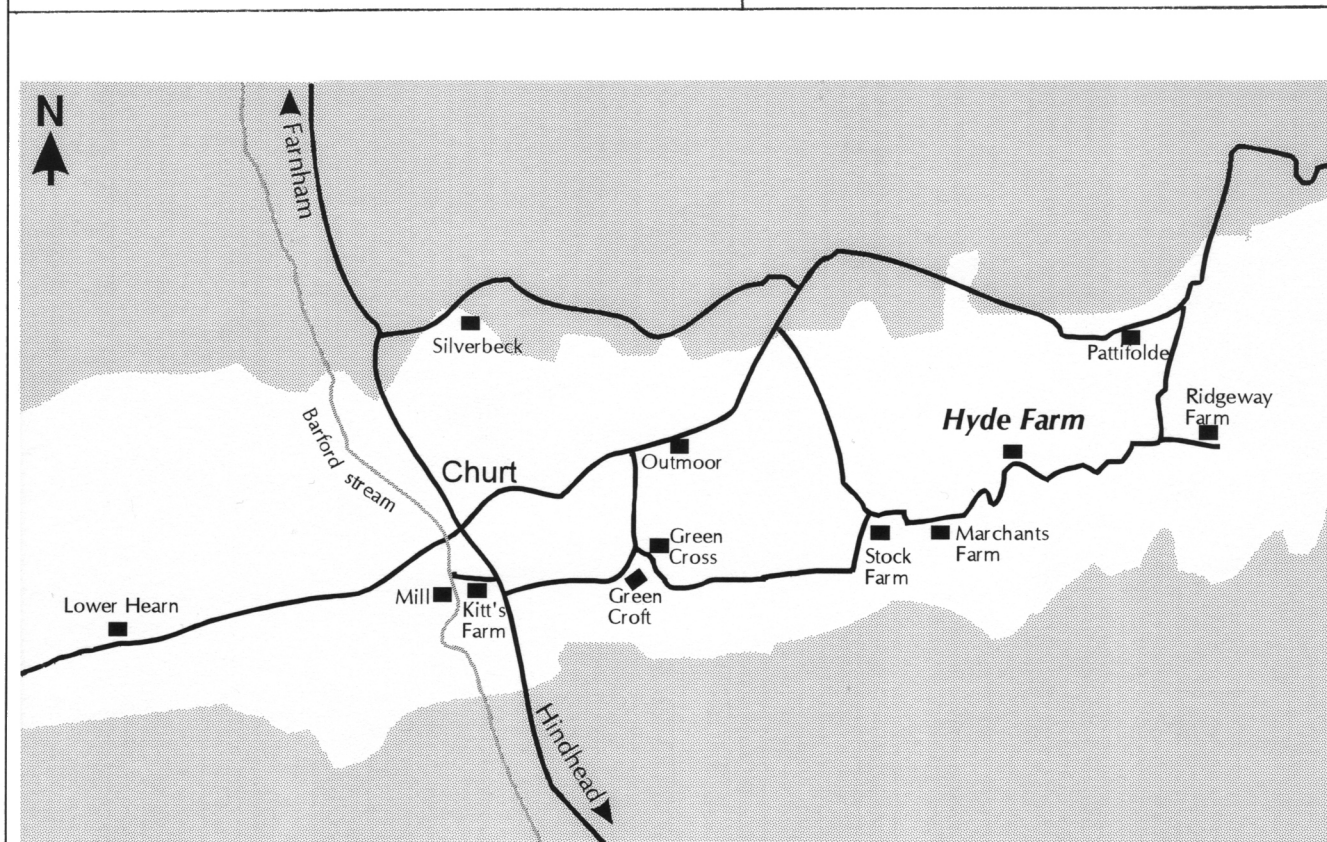
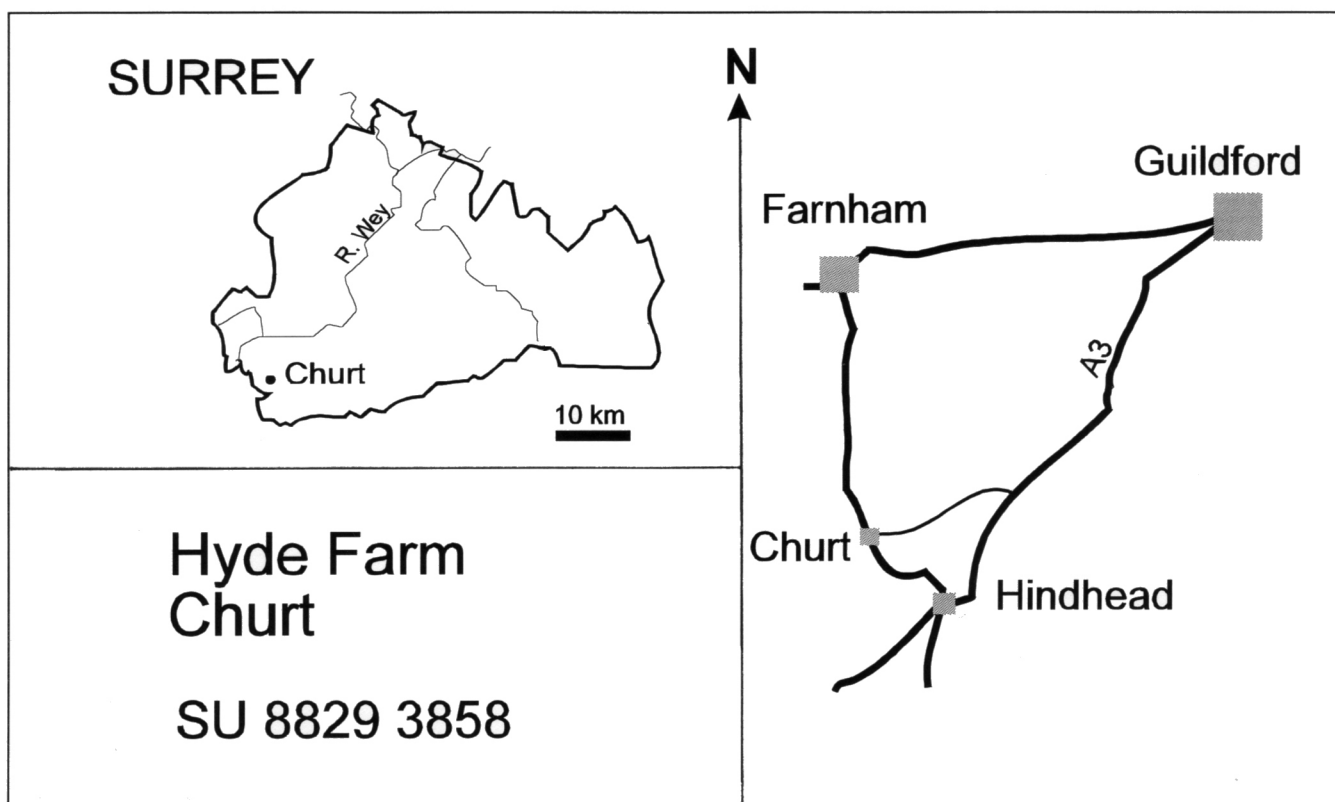
**David and Audrey Graham**

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Outline map of Churt showing location of Hyde and other medieval farms referred to in the Winchester Pipe Rolls. These lie on the strip of better agricultural land, bordered by heathland.

**Fig 1**

## **Introduction**

Hyde Farm (SU 8829 3858) lies within the tything of Churt in the Hundred of Farnham - an area of land which formed part of the Winchester Bishopric Estates from the middle Saxon period until early this century. Hyde Farm itself is one of a number of farms which lie along the strip of better agricultural land - geologically the Bargate beds - which is bounded by poorer heathland both to the north and south (Fig 1). This strip was traditionally known as 'High Churt' and, ignoring recent developments, essentially retains the land pattern laid down in the medieval and Tudor periods.

## **The House**

The existing building appears to consist of two main phases of construction with an earlier smoke bay house forming the stem of the 'T' while the 'head' is likely to date to the late 16th century. The two structures were likely to have been initially separate, but, from the evidence of the roof and wall framing, were soon connected to each other to form the building more or less as it stands today.

The earliest phase of the house still retains soot blackened rafters and a wattle and daub infilling of a truss which indicates the existence of a smoke bay in use prior to the insertion of the existing brick built chimney.

The building is of a high standard of construction, particularly the later addition which even has an, apparently original, two storey bay window designed for glass panes. The house itself was recorded by the DBRG (Rep: no 1328c) and this report contains details of the framing, decorative mouldings, the central chimney etc.

## **The Watching Brief**

Building works were carried out during 1994/1995, the main element of which was to add an extension to the west end of the house and to lay a new floor in the 'Well room' (see Figs 2 and 3). Since the latter operation involved lifting the existing concrete floor and removing 50 - 60 cm of underlying deposits, the authors were asked by Waverley Borough Council and Surrey County Council to undertake an archaeological watching brief on the works. The site was visited on three occasions in January 1995 and on the last visit - a Saturday - it was possible to carry out a small controlled excavation of the lower deposits (Fig 4, (2)) and to record the back of the chimney brickwork which had been exposed by the removal of the plaster rendering. On the earlier visits, it was possible to monitor the work of the builders as they removed the upper soil levels from within the 'Well room'. The authors, however, did not have the opportunity to examine the footings of the extension itself. Fortunately, the owner had collected samples of the pottery from the trenches, all of which was of Victorian date and certainly represented relatively recent domestic rubbish.

The room is described as 'The Wellhouse' in an inventory of John Luffe dated 18th July 1700, at which time it contained 'eight tubbs, four kivers, two cheese presses, one milk churn, two little buckets and some other lumber'. It was therefore not a total surprise that the first feature to be revealed on the removal of the modern concrete floor, was the top of a finely constructed stone lined well shaft. The well itself was c 34m deep to the water level and showed no sign of having been infilled. It must, therefore, either predate the inventory of 1700 - because of the name of the room - or be a later recut of an earlier well.

Underlying the concrete and level with the head of the well, was a 28cm thick layer of soil which produced a mix of tile, ash and pottery (Fig 4, (1)). The pottery indicates a date range from the late 14th to late 17th centuries as the sparse assemblage contained sherds of green glazed to Bellarmine and Delftware. However, there was no visible stratigraphy within the deposit and the pottery

appeared to lie at random within the deposit. It therefore seems likely that the layer represents a deliberate infill to level the floor, perhaps at the period when the well was inserted. No doubt the room would have had some form of flooring, such as flagstones, which may have been removed when the concrete was laid.

Below this layer, and roughly level with the exposed padstones underlying the existing standing timbers, was a sloping 9 cm thick layer of soil interspersed with specks of ash and containing sherds of 13th century coarse and whitewares. There were no signs of any structural features, but it was interesting that several small fragments of ashlar masonry were also recovered from the layer. It would therefore seem likely that the site is close to, but not within, a medieval building which must have been the precursor to the Tudor farm. Given the slight slope, it is possible that this building would have been under the east end of the existing house, but in any event it must have been located somewhere in the close vicinity. The medieval layer was in turn, underlain by natural Bargate sands which showed no signs of disturbance.

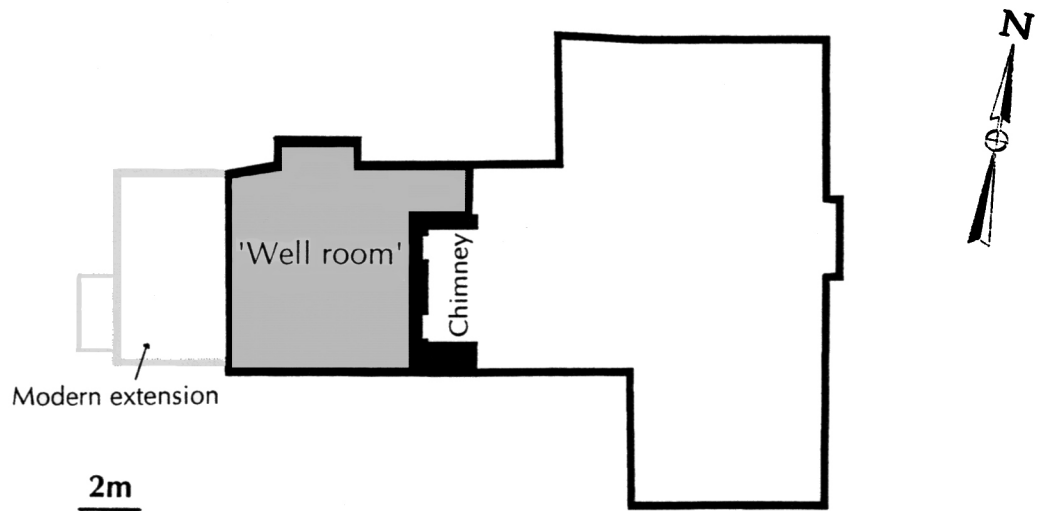
The opportunity was taken to record the brickwork to the rear of the chimney, as a number of features had been exposed by the removal of much of the wall plaster. The first and most obvious of these was the insertion of a metal door opening into a sloping brick ashpit (Fig 3). Since the pit was completely filled with ash, there is no doubt that it was built to enable the fire in the adjacent room to be cleaned out from the 'wellhead' room itself - a feature perhaps designed to avoid the problems of dust within the fireplace (and kitchen).

The brickwork itself showed signs of having been patched on a number of occasions and to have been subject to two major infillings. The first of these was very recent and consisted of a breeze block filling to the south side of the chimney. This appeared, from the 'Well room' at least, to have been a closing of one of the side passages to an original 'central' chimney. The second infilling appeared to be much older and consisted of a Tudor brick blocking of an incurving daub lined niche (Fig 4). One small section of this lining was clearly visible at the 'domed' top of the feature and the original line of one of the sides of the 'niche' was also discernible as it ran down towards the floor level parallel to the north face of the chimney. The function of this recess is uncertain but it may well have been an original part of the design of the chimney and have functioned as an inglenook, which would originally have contained a seat to take advantage of the warmth from the chimney.

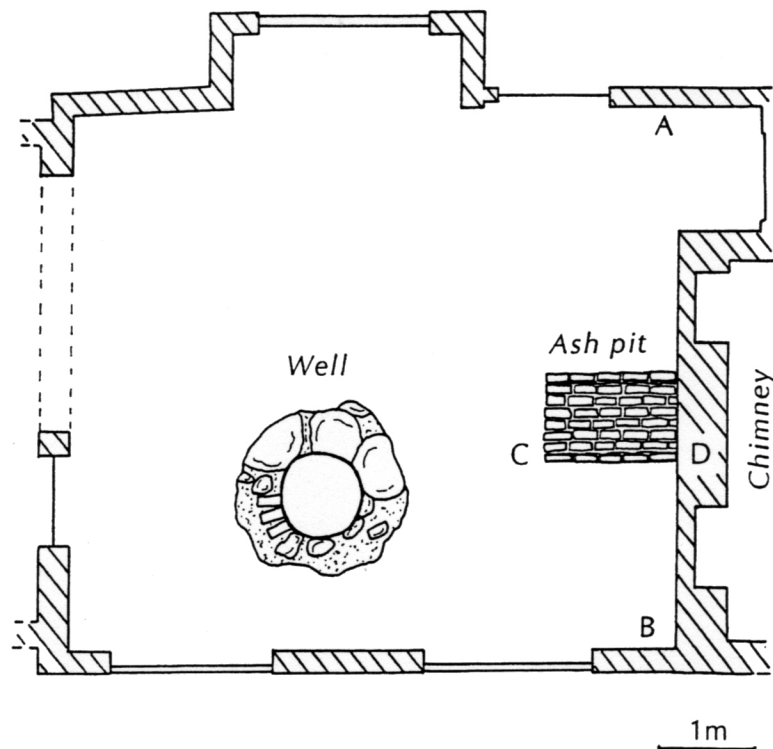
## **Acknowledgements**

Thanks are due to the owners of the house - who retain the pottery, to the architects and builders, all of whom were helpful and interested in the history of the site. The translations of the Winchester Pipe Rolls are the work of Philip Brooks without whose help and comments it would not have been possible to write the documentary section of this report. Any errors are, however, the responsibility of the authors and not of Mr Brooks.

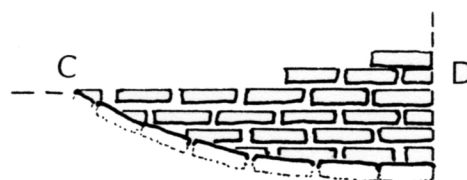
**David and Audrey Graham**  
**24 February 1995**



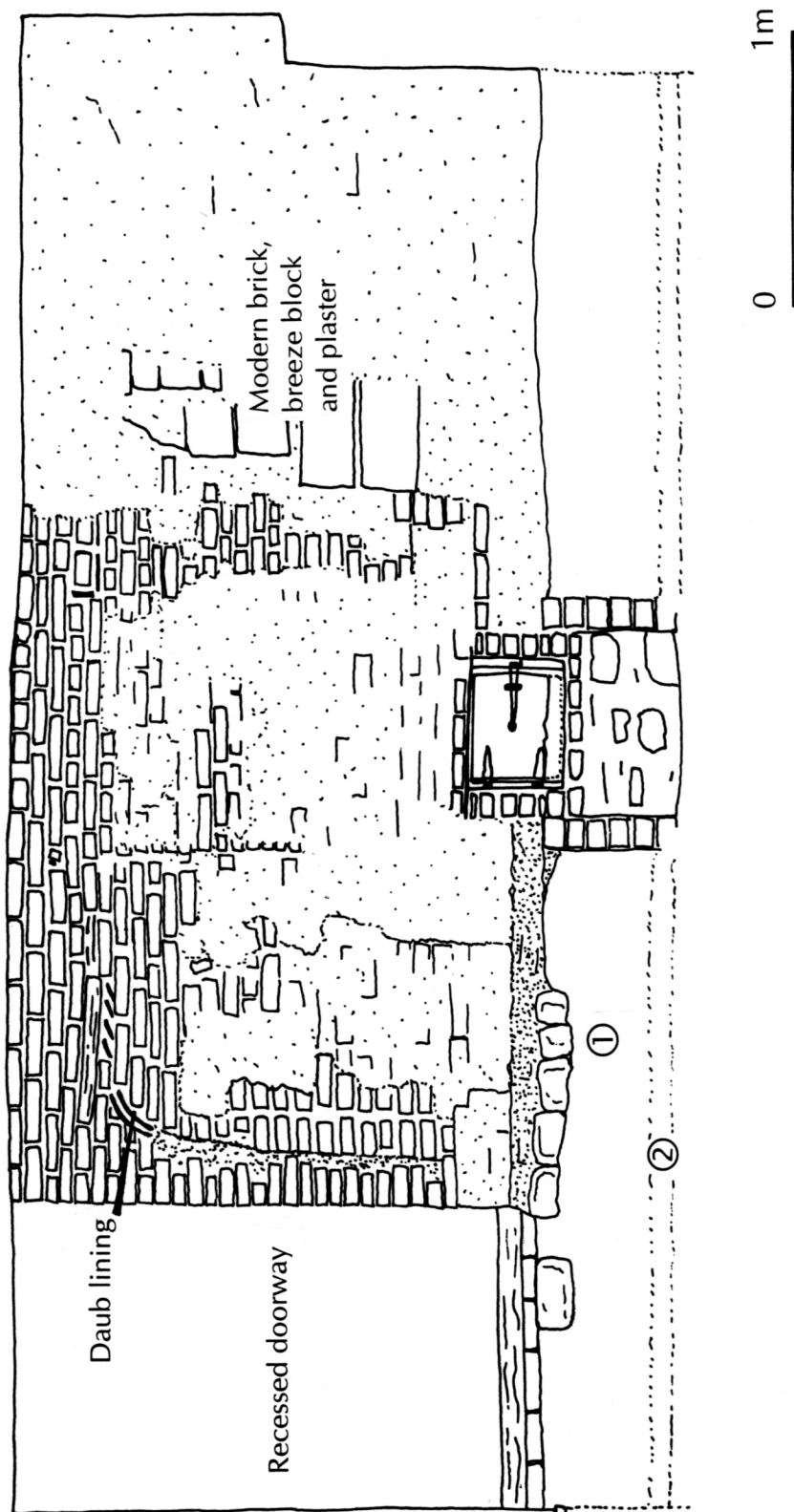
**Fig 2** Hyde Farm: outline plan of ground floor showing 'Well room', brick chimney and area of modern extension



**Fig 3** Hyde Farm: plan of 'Well room' showing location of well and ash pit



**Section C - D** showing side wall and curving base of ash pit



- ① Layer of soil with a mixed deposit of late 14th - late 17thC pottery
  - ② Soil/ash layer with 13thC pottery, daub and small fragments of (clunch) masonry
- Below ② = natural sand (Bargate sand)

**Fig 4** Hyde Farm: East elevation of 'Well room' (back of chimney)

## Documentary Sources

One of the factors which makes this group of farms of particular interest is the unusual quantity of surviving documentary material which can be related to the individual holdings. The written evidence comes from a number of different sources - Royal and Episcopal Charters, taxation lists, wills and inventories to mention but a few, but principally from the Winchester 'Pipe Rolls'. These are the medieval bishopric estate accounts produced annually which cover the period from 1210 until 1679. This range of almost continuous documentary history gives a remarkable view of life in Churt (and indeed in the rest of Farnham Hundred) during that span of time.

As an example of this richness of documentary evidence, the principal, but by no means comprehensive, references to Hide Farm are listed below from the earliest period until Tudor times.

688 AD A Saxon Charter (BM. Add. 15,350.f.57b) issued by King Cenwal (Caedwalla) of Wessex gave 60 hides of land at 'FERNHAM' to the church. The charter goes on to list the location of the hides, two of which are mentioned as being in 'Cert'. It seems possible that Hide Farm represents the site of one of these hides, especially in view of the next reference which, as will be seen specifically mentions the site as being once of 'Eadwine of Ceart'

c.1160 Charter of Henry de Blois, Bishop of Winchester to Robert de Clere (Bodleian M.S. D.D. Queens 252): Henry Bishop of Winchester to all his men and loyal servants of Hampshire and of Surrey both French and English and others. Know that I have given and conceded to Robert de Clere a Hide of land once of Eadwine of Ceart with all things pertaining to that land in exchange for the land of Levington to hold by hereditary right quit of all services ... except that he shall go once a year to London and once a year to Winchester from Farnham unless I myself excuse him.

### The Winchester Pipe Rolls (H.R.O.)

1211	Richard of Hide, a penalty
1224 3/0	Robert de Clere for land
1244 12d	William of Hide for ½ virgate - increase of rent
1252 15d	Robert of Clere for 5 acres - increase of rent
1254 13d	Robert of Clere for 4 ½ acres new purprestre at Churt - ½d increase
1256 12d	Robert of Hide for 1 acre
1257 4/0	from John Hale, Robert of Clere, Walter Allayn and David of Hale for 13 ½ acres in Churt
1257 3/0	Richard of Hide for his wife's land
1257 2/0	Matilde daughter of Richard of Churt for her father's land. Geoffrey of Hide, heriot one ox
1268 21d	Richard, son of John of Hide for 2 acres of moor and 4 acres of heath
1270 4/0	Richard son of Seman for Helota daughter of Robert of Clere for 4 acres purprestre
1272 10d	Robert of Clere for 2 ½ acres of heath
1272 2/0	Richard son of John of Hide for 6 acres of heath
1276 6/8	Robert de Clere for purprestre which Robert de la Holeweye and Ida his daughter conceded
1283 2/0	Gunilda widow of William de la Hide for her husband's land
1283 5/0	Julia daughter of above William for ½ virgate of her father's land, which her mother resigned
1286 6d	Gunhilda of Hide for marriage of her daughter Christina
1287 3/0	Henry of Hide for ½ acre and 1 rod from Gunhilda of Hide
1288 6/8	Alice atte Hyde for a virgate and 6 acres of ppre. from her husband
1291 2/0	John of Clere for half messuage and 2 acres demised by Agnes Philip (Churt?)



1298	6/8	Richard of Hide for a messuage, virgate and a furlong and 8 acres purprestre from his father
1300	2/0	John le Turnyr for 3 acres purprestre surrendered by Richard atte Hide
1305	18d	John and Robert le Grover for 11 acres ppre. in Churte which Florence of Clere used to hold and which fell into the Lord's hands and was escheated because of default of rent
1306	6/8	John of Hide for the principal house and the other houses and lands in Churt of Richard of Hide his father
1310		Two oak beams from the woods of John de Clere taken to Weybridge and down the river to Southwark for the Bishop's boat
1311	10/0	John son of Richard atte Hide for a messuage, 1/2 virgate and half furlong containing four acres and 6 acres purprestre
1320	12/0	Roger atte Hide son of Henry for a messuage, 1/2 virgate, 1/4 virgate and 3 acres purprestre from his father
1328	8/0	Cristina atte Hide for a messuage, virgate and 3 acres ppre. from Robert Rickman her father
1328	8/-	Richard le Reve for Cristina and her land
1349		Roger atte Hide, messuage and 2 perches, virgate, 6 acres 1 rod purprestre. No rent paid.
1350		Roger atte Hide as above, rent due 6/10. Nil paid
1350		John atte Hide, messuage, virgate, furlong and 18 acres purprestre. owed 14/0 1/2, paid 12d
1351		Roger atte Hide, as above. owed 6/6, paid 4d. Failed to carry wood.
1352		ditto Roger
1352		John atte Hide as above gave up at Hockday through poverty
1352	6/8	William le Wayte for a messuage, virgate, furlong and 18 1/2 acres of purprestre once of (quondam) of John atte Hide
1355	3/0	William Rykeman, messuage, furlong, 2 acres purprestre formerly of Roger atte Hide. Escheated as no heir presented at Court
1362	3/0	William le Wayte for Agnes, widow of Osbert Toumer and her cottage, etc.
1376	6/8	Osbert atte Hegge for Agnes Wayte and a messuage, virgate, furlong and 5 (?) acres ppre.
1387	3/4	Hugh Letice for messuage, virgate, furlong and 18 acres purprestre formerly of Osbert and Agnes (above)
1416	2/0	Thomas Houdon for messuage, virgate, furlong and 18 acres purprestre from Hugh Letice
1438		Hideland, which should yield 40/1d let to Thomas Morton for 20d.
1447		Default of Rent. 2 tofts, a messuage, virgate; toft and 1 acre called Tarpeners, and 18 1/2 acres of purprestre formerly of William Wayte called Hidland which should yield 15/1 1/2d. - nil paid
1503	2/0	Thomas Luffe for 2 crofts, a messuage and virgate, 1 acre of purprestre called Tarpeners, 17 acres purprestre formerly of John Waite called Hidland, a croft containing 3 acres of bondland and 6 acres purprestre, a toft and virgate and 3 acres purprestre formerly of William Rykeman, a toft and virgate formerly of John Quedhelpe with appurtenances called Hidemed in Tilford by surrender of John atte Rede

As a final example of the type of information available in the later period, the following inventory is that of William Luffe of Hide, dated Spring 1582.

### The Invitorye of the goodes and cattell of William Luffe deceased

Item his Aparell	prised	40s		
" 3 beddes and all that belongeth ther unto		46s	8d	
" 4 Tabell clothes		4s		
" the putter (pewter)		13s	4d	
" 3 brase potes one catherne 3 kittelles		40s		
" 3 candelstikes 3 salters a				
bottell a doesene of spoundes		3s		
" 4 stone cupes		6d		
" one doesene and a haufe of trine dishes and				
a ladell and to doesen trenshers		6d		
" the trowes toubes chespres		10s		
" one chiste 3 covers		3s		
" 2 coberdes		6s	8d	
" the Tabell furmes and stoules			20d	
" one pothannger potharges augers a				
girdere broges		10s		
" the axes billes shouvelles		2s		
" the nagers wages and all the old iergere		5s		
" one wagon one weane one ploughe and				
all that belongeth ther unto it	£3			
" 4 oxene one stere	£6	6s	8d	
" one gililinge 3 mares one coulte	£3	13s	8d	
" 6 kine a boule	£7	3s	4d	
" 6 boullokes	£3		20d	
" 3 waned caves		10s		
" 8 score and 8 shepe		28/-		
" 26 lames		52s		
" for swine		20s		
" for bakene		5s		
" the come in the baren		18s		
" the corene in the feelde		46s	8d	
" for the lente tilige	£5	5s		
" to quarters of dreaged maulte		20s	2d	
" the sithis		4s		
" 4 bees		2s	6d	
" one while and one paer of spinnige cardes			12d	
" one rode sadell one bridell one old pannell		14s		
" one water carte one dounge pote			12d	
! one coke hinnes and doukes		2s		
The hole Sume commeth To	£75	28		

prised by martine mannte john boxsoulle (Boxall) and william prisowe (Bristow)

The above information makes it possible to trace the ownership and even some of the family connections of the medieval tenants who held once land at Hide (see table) and indeed the transition from the, presumably, Saxon Tadwine' to the Norman de Clere family. Within a couple of generations, the de Clere fortunes had declined and by the 13th century, the farm appears to have been divided into more than one holding, only to be amalgamated again in the 16th century. It is also possible to see the effect of the Black Death and the severe agricultural recession which appears to have led to the land being largely abandoned during the second half of the 15th century. The coming of the Luffe family in 1503 marks a considerable change. The more prosperous economy of the time allowed the Luffes to become substantial yeomen and it is highly likely that this family is responsible for constructing the existing house. Indeed, though the male line died out in the 18th century their later family connections, can be traced via the female line directly to a Miss Wheeler in 1920.

Tenants at Hide

Date				Detail	Comment
Uncertain	Eadwine of Ceart				Saxon tenant ?
c.1160	Robert de Clere				possibly a minor branch of the great Norman
1211		Richard of Hide			de Clere family
1224	Robert de Clere				
1244		William of Hide			
<del>1252</del>	de Clere				
1254	Robert de Clere				may be same person as Robert of Hide
1256		Robert of Hide			name de 'Clere' may be interchangeable
1257	Robert de Clere				with 'of Hide'
1257		Geoffrey of Hide			
1268		Richard of Hide		son of John of Hide	
1270	Helota de Clere			Daughter of Robert marries Richard son of Seman	
1272	Robert of Clere				
1272		Richard of Hide		son of John of Hide	
1283		Gunilda		Widow of William of Hide	
1283		Julia		daughter of William & Gunilda	
1286		Christina		daughter of William & Gunilda	
1287		Henry of Hide		land from Gunilda (mother?)	
1288		Alice atte Hyde		land from her husband	
1298		Richard of Hide		land from father	
1300			John le Turnyr	land surrendered by Richard atte Hide	
1305			John .. le Grover	land eschaeted from Florence de Clere	
1306		John of Hide		principal house' from Richard his father	
1310	John de Clere				
1311		John atte Hide			
1320		Roger atte Hide		son of Henry	
1349		Roger atte Hide		messuage	
1350		John atte Hide			
1350		Roger atte Hide			
1352		John atte Hide		gives up through 'poverty'	entries show effect of the Black Death
1352			William le Wayte	for land once of 'John of Hide'	and subsequent economic decline
1355			William Rykeman	for land once of ' Roger atte Hide	unstable tenancies culminating in land
1376			Osbert atte Hegge	for Agnes widow of William le Wayte & land	virtually disappearing from the records for 50 years.
1387			Hugh Letice	for messuage & land formerly of Osbert..	
1416			Thomas Houdon	for messuage etc from Hugh Lettice	
1438			Thomas Morton	rents land worth 40/1d pays 20d	
1447			no name	default of rent on land ...called hidland	
1503			Thomas Luffe	for land etc formerly of William le Wayte	The coming of the Luffes reflects changed
					circumstances and leads to the building of the
					existing house