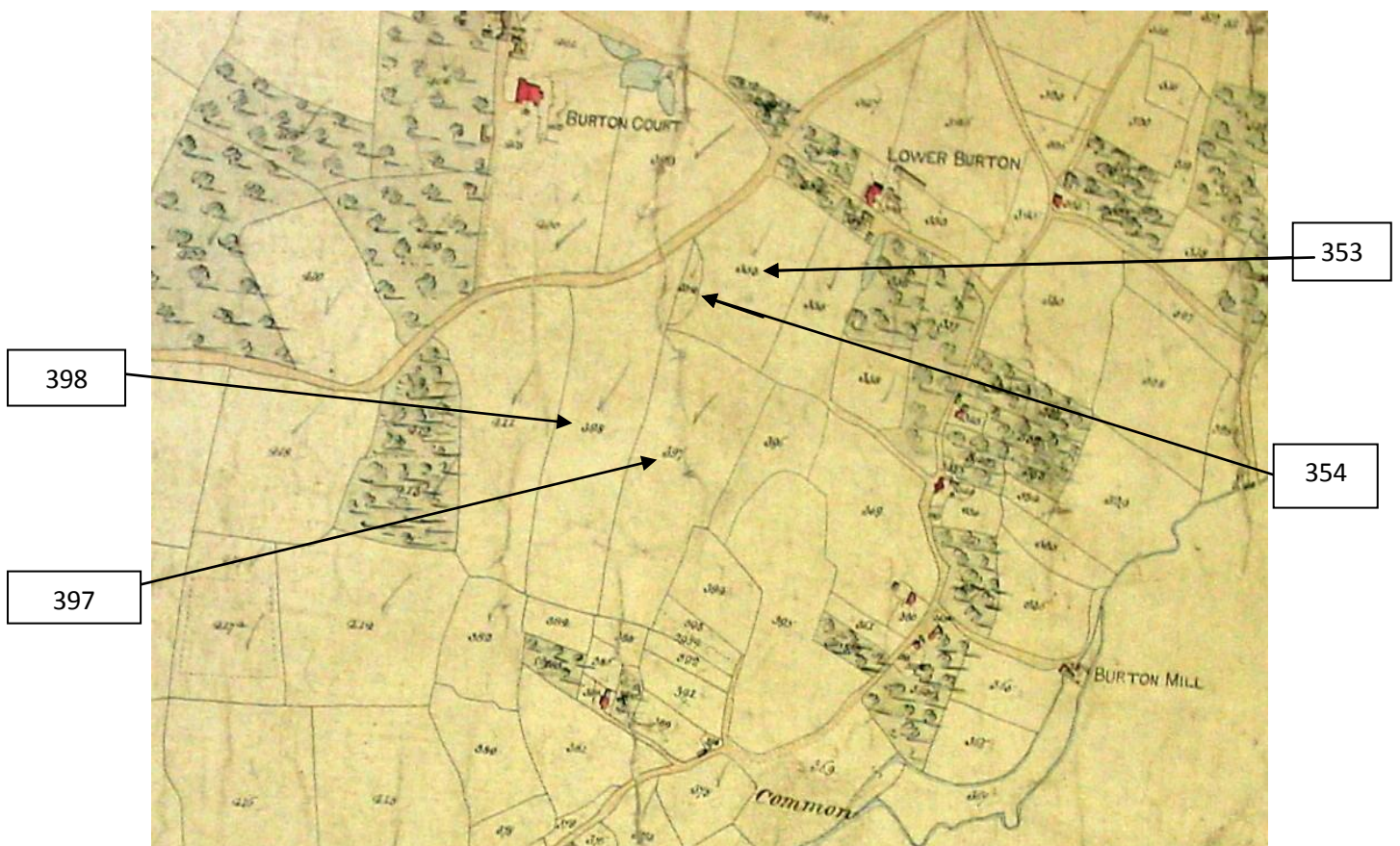


WINDMILL at BURTON

In northwestern Europe, the horizontal-axis or verticle windmill (so called due to the plane of the movement of its sails) is believed to date from the last quarter of the 12th century in the triangle of northern France, eastern England and Flanders. The earliest certain reference to a windmill in Europe (assumed to have been of vertical type) dates from 1185, in Weedley, Yorkshire, although a number of earlier but less certainly dated twelfth century European sources referring to windmills have also been found. These earliest mills were used to grind cereals.¹

This is rather earlier than the date of the first mention included in the Oxford English Dictionary, which is 1297.²

There is no specific documentary reference to a windmill in the Manor of Burton.³ However there are references to a 'Windmill field' in Burton, ranging in date from 1371 to modern times. There is no problem with the location of this field. It is on the Tithe Map (1844); field numbers 397 and 398. The Tithe Map also has Windmill Bank (353) and Windmill Coppice (354) :

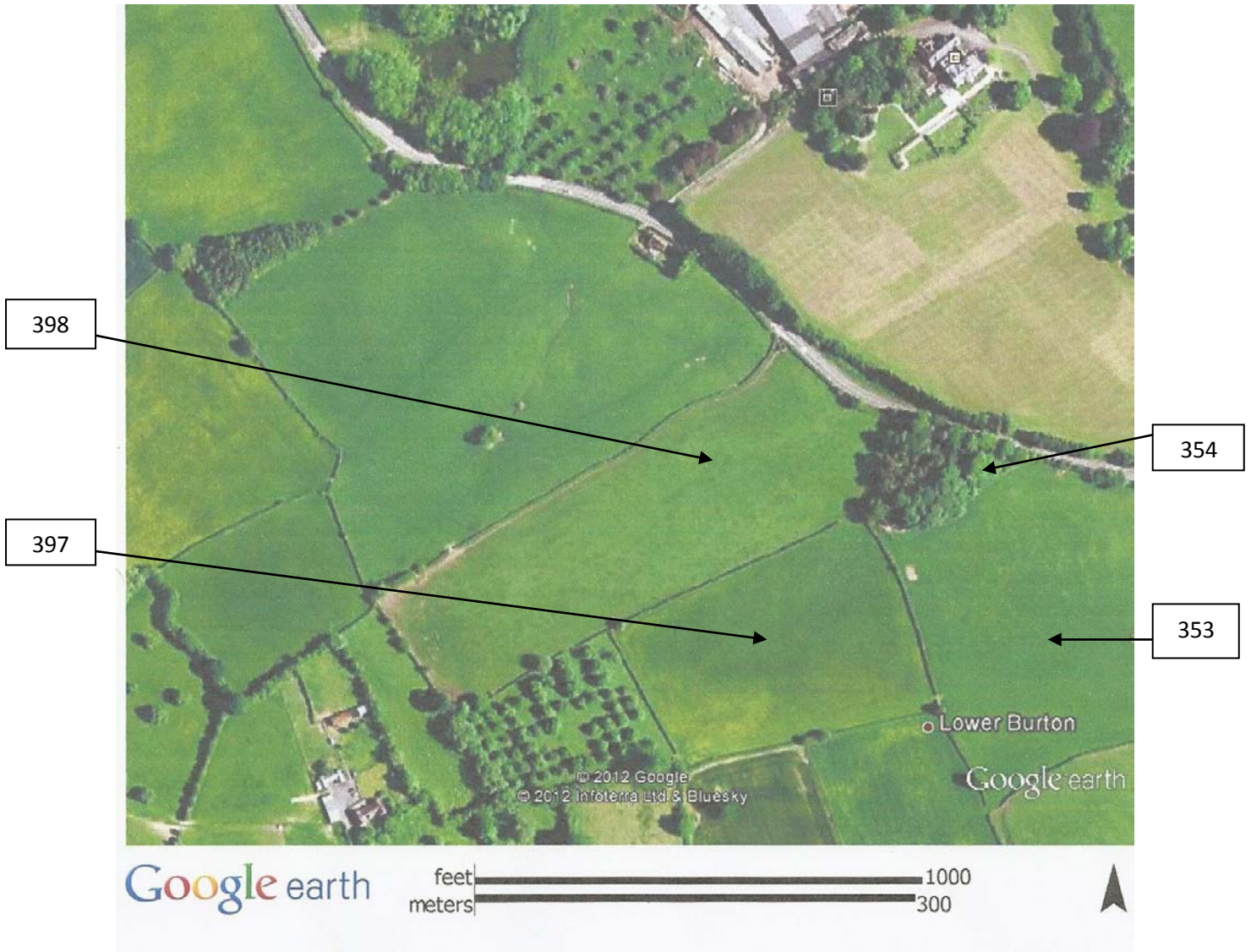


¹ Internet site *Wikipedia*.

² OED 2nd Edition. Clarendon Press Oxford, 1989.

³ But there is specific reference to one at Weobley, approximately five miles to the south-west, dating to 1699: *...burgage (3a.) in Weobley adjoining a Windmill belonging to...* [HRO L57/66].

Apart from Windmill Bank, which I think now extends further south than in 1844, and the southern part of field 397 which has been converted to orchard at some date, the field boundaries look unaltered when seen today via Google Earth:



I leave it to the reader to decide whether or not this cluster of ‘windmill’ fields is evidence of a windmill here. If there was one, I suggest that it was on the site of Windmill Coppice (354) which is the highest point in the immediate vicinity:



From 'Portrait of a Village' page 12.

And so to the documentary record, all, apart from the Schedule to the Tithe Map as already cited, is from the Court Rolls of the Manor of Burton.⁴

A Court was held at Burton on:

*Friday next after the Nativity of B.M. 45. Edw. III*⁵

This works out as the first Friday after 8th September 1371.

At this Court it was:

Presented that Hankyn Hogges cleans that ditch in Wymmiffeld by Annemarsh...

A Court was also held at Burton on:

---Thursday next---49 Edw. III

[Unless before 25th January, this was 1375] from which Court it is recorded:

...A pathway made through the middle of the Domain of the Lady with corn (carrying) by Wydnillehall⁶ in default Richd: de la More for not enclosing same.

To me this suggests that a pathway from Windmill Hill which was used for carrying corn to or from the windmill had not been closed off from the surrounding field as it should have been. Almost specific evidence of a windmill, else why would the corn have been carried?

It is also of potential importance that this entry makes mention of the Domain of the Lady. This probably refers to the Demesne lands of the Lord of the Manor [and/or his Lady depending on circumstances], and is specific enough as to position to justify a separate Paper on this further topic.

And so to the Court Rolls transcripts, page 115:

Borton Court held Tuesday next before the Feast of St Katherine the Virgin. 2 Hen. V.

This works out as the Tuesday before 25th November 1414. The entry itself is very convoluted:

At this Court comes Roger le Reve and surrenders into the Lord's hands a loft⁷ and 2 acres of land and 2 parts 8 acres land Wymmiffeld arable land in the field of Wordimors together with a third part of them.

I suggest that this land was various strips of 'ridge and furrow', some of which was in Windmill Field and some in Wordimors. Wordimors was, roughly, between Downway(s) and Martins Croft, well away from Windmill Field, being Tithe Map 1011(et al) and 988, 989 respectively.

Later in the same Court there is reference to another *one acre of arable land.....lying in Wymelfeld aforesaid...* further suggesting strip cultivation of Windmill Field.

And lastly to Court Rolls transcripts, page 127, which is part of the record of:

Borton Court with view [of Frankpledge] held 10 Oct. 9 HEN. V

which was 10th October 1421. Within the records of that Court is:

The same takes up 7 acres of and from the Lord besides 6 acres together lying in Wymbelfeld in the lower end of Annemerscheforlong and.....

Annemerscheforlong almost certainly being 'Admarsh' of later years, this is a further reference to Windmill Field and that it may have been part of the Demesne lands of the Lord

⁴ HRO CF58/1, where they are partly available in transcript. It is thought that these manuscripts are copies, made in the Tudor period, of the 14th century originals which are no longer extant.

⁵ Court Rolls transcripts, page 51.

⁶ This may be an error of transcription, *hall* for *hule*, a hule being a hill at such, and later, dates.

⁷ "Toft" ?

of the Manor. In the context of this Paper, however, it is further ‘suggestive’ evidence of a Windmill on the site of the 1844 “Windmill Coppice”.

If there was indeed a windmill at Burton, then, assuming that it was under the control of the lord of the manor as would almost certainly have been the case, it was (impliedly) gone, or at least no longer operational, by 1513 when, it is recorded:

*...manor of Burton with its Mill*⁸ and with more certainty by 1527 *...manor of Burton, and of one water mill*⁹ and 1626 *...the manor of Burton in Co. Hereford, with one water-mill...*¹⁰

Had the windmill somehow not been under the control of the lord of the manor, which seems to me very unlikely bearing in mind how close it would have been to Burton Court itself, then it could just about be maintained that the wording is as specific as it is for the very reason of differentiating between the Mill of the manor of Burton and the (wind) mill under the control of somebody else¹¹; and then in the other two instances between a watermill and a windmill.

.....Finis.....

⁸ Duncumb Manuscripts.Circa 1804.

⁹ IPM John Cotes via HRO CF58/-.

¹⁰ Ibid. But a different John Cotes.

¹¹ There is one remote possibility as to the identity of this other person or persons, but research into that is far from being sufficiently far advanced for me to put anything into writing.