THE “SURREY FENS” CAUSEWAYS: LORDS, CHARTERS AND THE EARLY-MEDIEVAL LANDSCAPE

Robert Briggs

The likelihood of an early medieval date of construction for the two causeways carrying the present-day A 247 and B 367 roads across the River Wey floodplain south of Old Woking and Pyrford Village respectively was first brought to wider attention by Richard Savage in a presentation to the June 2010 meeting of the Surrey Archaeological Society’s Medieval Studies Forum; the term “Surrey Fens” to describe this particular section of the Wey valley is one borrowed from it.¹ He proposed their creation, which may or may not have occurred as part of a single project, must have taken place at some point between the mid-tenth and later-twelth century, but was unable to offer a more exact dating on account of a lack of relevant evidence. It was for this reason that I took up the challenge to find an answer, beginning with a rigorous analysis of two reliable deeds of the second half of the tenth century (a royal diploma and a monastic memorandum) pertaining to the locality. Anyone with even a passing knowledge of Anglo-Saxon written records related to Surrey will be aware that they are relatively few in number, and some of these are of spurious authenticity or outright forgeries, so to have a pair of reliable muniments concerning contiguous Surrey estates-cum-parishes, Pyrford and Send, therefore is a rare thing indeed (even more so since neither is associated with the minster at Chertsey). However, alongside the insights they can give into the area at the time of their writing, this paper will consider a much broader range of historical, archaeological and topographical evidence. I will argue that there are several strong reasons for attributing their construction to the lordship and/or community of the estate-cum-manor of Send, among whose owners was no less a figure than St Dunstan. His candidacy for being the figure who commissioned the construction of the causeways is set out and evaluated at length, but equal weighting is given to the equivalent claims of all other known holders of Send within the period in question.

CAUSEWAYS - THE NATIONAL BACKGROUND

The past decade has seen the publication of several works which make reference to causeways constructed or reconstructed during the Anglo-Saxon period. Perhaps the most notable of these is David Stocker and Paul Everson’s study of ten causeways traversing the valley of the River Witham in Lincolnshire. All have remarkably similar archaeological profiles extending as far back as the Bronze Age, and are characterised by the concentrations of votively-deposited artefacts, of Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age through to medieval date, recovered from their environs. Owing to the frequent occurrence of early monastery sites in the area of their terminals, it is possible that they represent prehistoric river crossings reconstructed under monastic auspices in the mid-Anglo-Saxon period.² Archaeological sampling work on causeways elsewhere in England has produced similar dates for their creation. In Somerset, radiocarbon dating indicates the causeway linking Glastonbury and Street across the floodplain of the River Brue was built sometime between 650 and 780, a little later than The Strood linking Mersea Island with the Essex mainland which dendrochronological analysis indicates may date from the closing years of the seventh century; less certainty surrounds a suggested causeway at St Aldates in Oxford, although a middle Anglo-Saxon date for the feature is again likely.³ Causeways

¹ Savage, ‘The Pyrford and Old Woking Causeways’.
² Stocker & Everson 2004.
³ Brunning et al 2010; Rippon 2010, 49.
continued to be created in the late Anglo-Saxon period. In Sussex, one crosses the River Adur at Bramber and, like another downstream between Botolphs and Old Erringham, it may be coeval with adjacent excavated late-tenth or eleventh-century settlements. Finally, causeways are associated with several of the medieval bridges over the River Wey upstream of the river crossings that are the subject of this paper. Derek Renn has apportioned the erection of the bridges to Waverley Abbey in the early thirteenth century, and it is conceivable that at least some of the causeways may have been constructed de novo with the bridges at this time.

WOKING MINSTER AND VOTIVE DEPOSITION
The archaeological biographies of the Witham valley causeways studied by Stocker and Everson may seem remarkable, exotic even, but this should not serve to dampen the expectation that similar rituals took place elsewhere, the Wey valley included. Of particular note is the apparently active role in such practices played by monasteries fringing the floodplain of the Witham, since Woking is named as the location of a monastery in a papal privilege of 708x15. A grant made a few decades later by King Offa of Mercia (S 144) in effect reiterates this statement, with an endowment of twenty hides of land described as being “in loco in quo illud monasterium situm est” (“in the place in which the monastery is sited”). Although archaeological confirmation remains elusive, it is believed that its site is occupied by the present parish church of Old Woking, whose dedication to St Peter mirrors that of the eighth-century monastery. The monastery was affiliated with the great Mercian foundation at Medeshamstede (Peterborough); the precise nature and strength of this relationship remains the subject of scholarly debate. There is at present no published argument for it being associated with early medieval votive depositional practices in the same way as the Witham valley monasteries in spite of its fenland location and the existence of artefacts from the adjacent River Nene that can be interpreted in this way.

Early medieval metal artefacts from the River Wey capable of interpretation as votive depositions are not nearly so plentiful as for rivers like the Witham or Thames. However, a small iron spearhead of sixth-century date (belonging to the rare Swanton group D3) and an eighth or ninth-century axehead retrieved - along with a number of Bronze Age implements - from the Wey below the crossing at Weybridge have been interpreted as votive deposits, suggesting the existence of a comparable ritual phenomenon. Another iron spearhead, originally ascribed a fifth-century date but since apportioned by Michael Swanton to his group C1 which persisted until the mid-sixth century, was “dug out of the moat round the wood at Woking Park Farm” - identifying its provenance as being in the

4 Gardiner 2003, 157, 158.
5 Renn 1974.
6 Kelly 2009, 361-63; Foot 2006, 274.
8 Blair 1991, 95.
10 The only published example of a metal artefact of early-medieval date from the Nene is a niello-inlaid gold finger-ring, ascribed to the tenth century by Wilson 1964, 158-59; a votive derivation is suggested by Lund 2010, 53.
vicinity of Woking Palace close to the Wey - in 1904.\textsuperscript{12} This is a comparatively short distance downstream from the site of a riverside Romano-British settlement at which sherds of possible fifth-century pottery have been found.\textsuperscript{13} Nevertheless, it seems likely that the spearhead post-dates the apparent fifth-century activity at the settlement. More importantly, given the mid-floodplain situation of its find-spot, the spearhead is most credibly interpreted as a votive deposition.

Aside from an eleventh-century stirrup strap-mount reported from the vicinity of the aforementioned Romano-British settlement, artefacts of prehistoric, Roman or medieval date from this section of the Wey floodplain and its associated watercourses are at a premium.\textsuperscript{14} The gravel terrace marking its southern edge, on the other hand, has yielded a small number of Bronze Age and Anglo-Saxon finds which could be interpreted as being of votive character, but more prosaic explanations are equally admissible.\textsuperscript{15} In all cases (as far as is known) the artefacts came from locations at a remove from the causeways. The Woking Park Farm spearhead, for instance, came from a provenance roughly halfway between the two causeways; what is more, this is distant from a metalled trackway and ford associated with the Romano-British settlement upstream, which persisted in use into recent times.\textsuperscript{16} Such evidence calls into question the function of river/floodplain crossings in such practices. However, this should not necessarily come as much of a surprise, for Stocker and Everson comment that only ‘a minority’ of the votive depositions known from the Witham valley were deposited directly from the causeways; it is possible others were made from boats, which might better suit the circumstances of the Woking Park Farm spearhead.\textsuperscript{17}

Another interesting fact worth acknowledging in this context is the existence of the meeting-place of Woking Hundred in the middle of the floodplain immediately west of the “Old Woking” causeway. Bloxam gives its exact site as ‘between the Send-Old Woking road and the stream and about 150 yards north-east of Woking Mill’, suggesting a location

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{12} Elsley 1912, 140; Swanton 1974, 8-10, 89.
\item \textsuperscript{13} Hawkins 1984.
\item \textsuperscript{14} Dated to 1040x1100, it was found by a metal detectorist in grid square TQ0256, suggesting its find-spot is on the river floodplain: either in the fields between Old Woking and Woking Palace, or in Broad Mead to their south. Williams 2005. The former precinct of Newark Priory, set on a gravel island in the middle of the floodplain, is the provenance of a single sherd of Anglo-Saxon grass-tempered pottery (an enduring ware in Surrey, so unable to be closely dated) as well as Early Iron Age and Romano-British ceramic material: Hicks & English 2010, 4. Two Neolithic axes in the collection of Weybridge Museum are recorded as coming from the River Wey ‘at Pyrford’, but precise details of the location or locations where they were found are not known: ‘HER 478 - Neolithic Axes, from the River Wey at Pyford’, Exploring Surrey’s Past.
\item \textsuperscript{15} An Anglo-Saxon spearhead of Swanton series L and a rare imported ?Late Bronze Age stone axe hammer were found in the mid-twentieth century ‘immediately across Tannery Lane from Papercourt Farmhouse’ at grid reference TQ03705641. It is worth taking note of the comment regarding the collection of four perforated stone implements recovered from the Thames riverbed ‘probably with a similar history’, allowing the possibility of ritual deposition. Clark 1952; Swanton 1974, 75; Longley 1976, 27, 28 Fig. 9, 30. Not far to the west of this, ‘a fine example’ of a Middle Bronze Age looped palstave was found circa 1960 in the garden of a house in Brook Lane. It was said to have come from the rubbish from a purported bomb crater, meaning the nature of its deposition cannot be known. Cotton & Williams 2000, 180-81.
\item \textsuperscript{16} Hawkins 1984, 167.
\item \textsuperscript{17} Stocker & Everson 2004, 281.
\end{itemize}
at approximate grid reference TQ018566.\textsuperscript{18} Audrey Meaney proposed some hundredal meeting-places had earlier incarnations as pre-Christian religious sites, and there are echoes of this attitude in an archaeology-led paper by Sarah Semple which names the early sixth-century cemetery at Guildown as a possible early assembly place for ‘funerary practice and tribal ritual’ (as well as a later incarnation as an execution cemetery).\textsuperscript{19} However, the record of the hundredal meetings of Woking having taken place at the aforementioned location is very late (the Tithe Map for Send and Ripley of 1843); without the testimony of much earlier sources it cannot be used as evidence of Woking Hundred having met there before the nineteenth century, let alone in the Anglo-Saxon period. Similarly, it cannot be used to justify the notion of a symbiosis between the meeting-place and the causeway.

The lack of artefacts befitting interpretation as votive offerings deposited in the river channel may reflect the Wey hereabouts being subject to less dredging and aggregate extraction than other rivers from which greater quantities of votively-deposited objects have been recovered, but this paucity still seems significant. Certainly, whether or not the monastery at Woking was on its suspected site, the Woking Park Farm spearhead is pre-monastic in date and (short of it being curated for well over a century) cannot be connected with ecclesiastically-affiliated depositional rites. (Old) Woking may have enjoyed a pre-monastic status as the titular centre of the postulated ‘
\textit{regio}’ of \textit{Woccingas},\textsuperscript{20} giving it cultic importance as well as making it a local centre of authority and exchange, but there is no evidence that this encompassed votive depositions made from a floodplain crossing, causewayed or otherwise.

The opaqueness of the archaeological evidence in terms of what it reveals about the origins of the two causeways fortunately is not mirrored by the testimony provided by local settlement and administrative geographies. For the communities to the north of the Wey, the causeways may have facilitated road-borne movement to and from the late-Saxon burghal town at Guildford (which first appears as an estate centre in the ownership of King Alfred),\textsuperscript{21} but on balance there were more reasons for their counterparts on the southern, Send side to cross to the opposite side of the floodplain - access to the Hundred centre and locally-important minster church at Woking and the major monastic centre at Chertsey.

\begin{footnotes}
\item[18] Bloxam 1963, 62.
\item[20] Blair 1989, 100; this is accepted by Susan Kelly (Kelly 2009, 73, 199). In a presentation made to the SyAS Medieval Studies Forum on 6th December 2011, I questioned some of the details of Blair’s hypothesis, for while the existence in the sixth and seventh centuries of a territory named \textit{Woccingas} seems credible, there is no proof that it was coextensive with the Hundreds of Woking and Godley, and there are reasons to question the suitability of the Latin term \textit{regio} to the period before the Augustinian Conversion had taken effect.
\end{footnotes}
being the most obvious\textsuperscript{22} - and hence to provide the necessary infrastructure. This is confirmed by an examination of the parish boundaries between Send on the south side of the floodplain and Woking and Pyrford on the north. They still follow the old course of the River Wey, implying a land division of some antiquity (the grounds for believing that a short stretch of it may be coincident with a boundary recorded in the mid-tenth century are set out in the next section), and it can be no accident that both of the causeways are found at points where these boundaries comes within metres of the northern edge of the floodplain, placing them almost entirely within Send parish. In view of this, it is hard to believe that the holders and/or communities of the places on the northern edge of the floodplain should have chosen these points to construct the two causeways, and thus they should be attributed to the lordship or community (or both working in concert) of the estate/manor of Send.

**A TERMINUS POST QUEM? SAWYER 621 AND THE BOUNDS OF PYRFORD**

Before appraising the matter of which of the known figures connected to the lordship of Send may have commissioned the construction of the causeways, it is necessary to draw attention to a piece of evidence which (although there can be no absolute certainty in the matter) strongly suggests the eastern, “Pyrford” causeway was not in existence in 956. In that year, King Eadwig (reigned 955-959) granted 16 hides of land at *Pyrianoferda*, i.e. Pyrford, to his *carus* Eadric by means of a diploma numbered 621 by Peter Sawyer. The text is preserved in the cartulary of Abingdon Abbey, the subject of a superlative two-volume edition by Susan Kelly, who is the latest in a line of scholars to have adjudged the deed to be authentic.\textsuperscript{23} The Pyrford diploma is one of a sizable number of tenth-century bookland grants by Eadwig (following the lead of his predecessors Eadmund and Eadred) preserved in the Abingdon cartulary; among them is another (S 622) by means of which Eadwig bestowed a 22-hide estate at Welford in Berkshire upon his same *carus* Eadric. As is typical for a royal diploma, the body of the charter is written in Latin, but it incorporates a description of the boundary of the estate in question written in Old English. This begins and ends at the "pear-tree ford" (variously spelled *Pyrianoferda* and *Pyrianoferd*, from Old English *pirige + ford*) from which the estate derived its name, and which at first seems capable of equation with the river crossing below Pyrford church at the northern end of the causeway. However, further consideration of the evidence suggests something else.

The northern end of the “Pyrford” causeway was at one time adjacent to the confluence of the Wey with the smaller watercourse nowadays known as the Hoe Stream. Yet the estate boundary is said to have run "from the pear-tree ford along the Wey to the fish’s stream". The last name (*fisces burnan*) can be taken to represent the Hoe Stream, which reappears

\textsuperscript{22} Pyrford originally may have formed part of a 95-hide foundation endowment made by King Ecgberht of Kent in the mid-660s. This can be suggested from a careful reading of S 1165 (the well-known endowment charter of the first half of the 670s in the name of Frithuwald, presumed Mercian *subregulus* of Surrey) and the various Domesday Book entries for Godley Hundred. Of a stated total landholding of 300 hides, 200 + 5 hides (at Thorpe) for the "strengthening" of the monastery were given by Frithuwald. The Domesday hidages are as follows: 8 hides (Byfleet) + 5 hides (Chertsey) + 10 hides (Chobham) + 40 hides (Egham) + 10 hides (Thorpe, less the five hides mentioned above) = 68 hides. The discrepancy is resolved by the addition of the 27 hides Pyrford was assessed for prior to it coming into the possession of Harold Godwineson. He reduced this to 16, apparently without royal sanction, although he may well have sought to justify his action by making reference to S 621 (see below), which gives the same hidage for the estate.

\textsuperscript{23} Kelly 2001, 267-68 no. 63; ‘S 621’, *The Electronic Sawyer*. 

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in a fashion in two charters of the early thirteenth century pertaining to Old Woking.\textsuperscript{24} Fluvial action may have shifted the location of its meeting-point with the Wey over the centuries, but nonetheless the statement that the boundary ran "along the Wey" before diverting up \textit{fisces burnan} would remain a rather superfluous one in this context. As a consequence it seems permissible to contemplate whether the eponymous ford was in fact located somewhere downstream of this point in 956.

\begin{center}
Detail from John Senex's county map published in 1729 showing the two causeways and their environs.\textsuperscript{25} The route across the "Old Woking" causeway is clearly and consistently depicted (albeit without the dogleg a little to the north of its midpoint), whereas the line of its "Pyrford" counterpart can be traced only through the (incomplete) series of bridges running north from Newark Mills. Note the second bridge across to the 'Newark Abby' (\textit{sic}) island to the east, perhaps a relict trace of an earlier (pre-causeway?) floodplain crossing accessed via the "pear-tree ford".
\end{center}

To the east of Pyrford Village the slopes at the northern edge of the floodplain are less steep, but more importantly the floodplain itself narrows to around 250 metres across, pinched by a "promontory" of Bagshot Sand on which Pyrford Village stands on the north and a gravel terrace on the southern side.\textsuperscript{26} This surely would represent a more convenient crossing place than any site to the east or west. So could the "pear-tree ford" have been here, in the vicinity of what is known locally as Irish Hole? It would have been more commodious for any contemporary settlement at or near Pyrford Place, later a

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{24} As '\textit{la Burne}' (1202x1230) and ‘\textit{Hoburne}’ (1200x1230): Reedy (1995), nos. 213 & 214 respectively. I am indebted to Richard Savage for these references. Confusingly, the old course of the River Wey either side of the “Pyrford” causeway nowadays is known as The Bourne.
\item \textsuperscript{25} From Ravenhill, sheet 6.
\item \textsuperscript{26} British Geological Survey 2001, \textit{Guildford}.
\end{itemize}
possession of the Prior of Newark,\(^{27}\) for which a secondary river crossing could have given access to the gravel island (with its tantalizing earlier identity as the “old burh”)\(^{28}\) on which the Priory stood. Such a hypothesis may go some way towards explaining the curious vestiges of earlier routes hereabouts: a pair of bridges on a route east of and parallel to the present Pyrford causeway shown on a seventeenth-century estate map,\(^{29}\) one of which reappears on Senex's county map produced in the later 1720s (see below). At the same time, it requires there to have been unrecorded major alterations to the road networks on both sides of the river. Certainly a great deal more detailed research is needed before the idea can be accepted, but the degree of change seemingly involved should not be held against it.

**SEND - PARISH BOUNDARIES AND SAWYER 1447**
The hypothesis that the “pear-tree ford” was succeeded at some point after the year 956 by the present raised causeway between the foot of the slope below Pyrford church and the vicinity of The Seven Stars pub at the junction of Newark Lane and Papercourt Lane (and by analogy its shorter, higher counterpart between Old Woking and Cartbridge) allows for the introduction to the analysis of a second document of later tenth-century date. Sawyer number 1447 is not a diploma like the Pyrford grant, rather ‘a record of a dispute involving estates at Send and Sunbury, and a note of their purchase by Dunstan, archbishop’ (according to the updated version of The Electronic Sawyer website, which cites scholarly references to the document that identify it as original).\(^{30}\) It is written entirely in Old English, and arguably reads more like a historical annal than any normal kind of property deed.

The details of the two estates’ descents given in the document are little short of extraordinary (or at least that is how it seems today - no doubt other landholdings in Surrey could have experienced equally dramatic changes in ownership in this period, the evidence for which has since been lost). The first half of the document gives a huge amount of background detail on the circumstances of the tenure of Sunbury by "Ecgferd" (recte Ecgfrîd) an obscure figure who had pledged that estate - but apparently not his larger landholding at Send - to Dunstan in order that the ecclesiastic might act as guardian to his wife and child. But when Ecgfrîd died (by drowning, possibly as a judicially-sanctioned punishment), the royal councillors declared all of his property should be forfeited to King Edgar (reigned 959-975), who then bestowed the estates upon Ælfheah, an ealdorman (apparently that of Hampshire).\(^{31}\) Dunstan went to the trouble of riding to the king to remind him in person that Sunbury had been pledged to him, but the king would not be persuaded, even when Dunstan offered him his wergeld. Indeed it was six years before Dunstan was able to take possession of Ecgfrîd's former estates, and he only achieved this by paying Ælfheah 90 pounds and 200 marks of gold for Send and Sunbury respectively.

Despite both being bought by the same man at the same time (so far as is known), Send and Sunbury look as if they did not continue in the same ownership for long. Sunbury

\(^{27}\) Information from Richard Savage.

\(^{28}\) The site of the new monastery appears as ‘in loco qui dicitur Aldebury’ in 1191x98: Blair 1991, 95.

\(^{29}\) Savage, ‘The Pyrford and Old Woking Causeways’.

\(^{30}\) ‘S 1447’, The Electronic Sawyer.

\(^{31}\) Sullivan 1994, 165 n. 4.
became an estate of Westminster Abbey, where it remained at the time of Domesday and thereon after up until 1222. This is probably the reason for the preservation of S 1447 among the early muniments of Westminster Abbey, which coincidentally was given Pyrford after 1066 but has no subsequent recorded connection to Send. A second deed in the Westminster archive, S 702 (purportedly of 962 but in its received form more likely a copy made a few years later at the behest of Dunstan himself), documents the grant of Sunbury to Ælffæah. This recommends Dunstan’s acquisition of both estates to have taken place in 968. Other charters in the archive contain references to his purchase of estates at Westminster, Hendon, Lothyræs leage and Codanhlaw which he then gave to the monastery. However, the money for achieving this - a vast sum of just over £200 in total - apparently did not come from Dunstan, rather from the bequest of a noblewoman close to him named Æthelflæd. Because Send and the other above-mentioned estates were bought outright (thereby identifying them as bocland - “bookland” - properties), they could not have reverted back into the hands of the king or other grantors after death, as happened with lænlands, estates leased for life.

What became of the estate in the years immediately after the writing of S 1447 is not on surviving record. Given the frequency with which Sunbury occurs in Westminster charters, and the high levels of fabrication detectable in that monastery’s archive, the absence of Send’s name is reason enough to believe that Dunstan sought to make alternative arrangements for the other estate he finally purchased circa 968. His pursuit over several years of the ownership of Send can be understood to indicate that the choice of which church and community to give it to would not have been a decision he made lightly, and much the same could be said of the circumstances surrounding the construction of the two causeways.

OPTION ONE - ARCHIEPISCOPAL OWNERSHIP?
For reasons I will detail at length in a separate essay, the strongest likelihood is that Dunstan vested Send either among the landed endowment of Canterbury Cathedral. If his purchase of Send did occur in 968, then it was almost a decade after he assumed the archiepiscopate, and he continued in the role for twenty years after. But what evidence is there for him seeing the practical value in undertaking “capital” investment in the estates

32 ‘Sunbury: Manors’.
33 ‘S 702’, The Electronic Sawyer.
34 See S 894, 1293, 1295, 1450; none is anywhere near to being authentic in their surviving form. Dunstan is said to have been responsible for assisting King Edgar in the installation of monks at Westminster in the 960s or early 970s, and the aforementioned endowments may act as evidence of his role in this; see Sullivan 1994, 60, 65-66, 79 (cf. 58).
35 She was the niece of King Æthelstan, according to ‘Æthelflæd 10 (Female)’, Prosopography of Anglo-Saxon England; also Sullivan 1994, 65, including n. 5 - by his calculation, Dunstan spent 390 mancuses (marks) of gold and 152 pounds of silver on endowing Westminster with lands.
36 The bequest of ten hides of bocland at (West) Horsley by Ealdorman Ælfred in his will of 871x99 (S 1508) proves it existed within Woking Hundred several decades earlier than in other parts of southern England; there is no equivalent evidence for lænland in the Hundred before the Domesday Survey. See Briggs 2011.
37 Aside from S 1447 and S 702, Sunbury appears in S 1293, 894, 1039, 1040 & 1043, all of which are considered to be spurious and/or forged. For a discussion of the monastery’s notoriety as a ‘factory’ of fabricated charters, see Sullivan 1994, 60-63.
38 Briggs in prep.
he purchased or otherwise acquired in this time? Specific support for the idea that Dunstan himself oversaw “infrastructural” improvements to Canterbury estates during his pontificate is hinted at by a passage in his Vita, written by Eadmer at Canterbury in the early twelfth century. In it the Archbishop is credited with the erection of a timber church at Mayfield in Sussex, as well as at an unspecified number of other sites of his so-called hospitii, "hospices" or residences.\(^{39}\) However, Mayfield is not on record as an archiepiscopal estate even in the late eleventh century, so either Eadmer was drawing upon lost material relating to its late-tenth-century ownership by Canterbury, or it was an attempt on his part to associate a recent acquisition with the See in Dunstan’s time (as suggested by the recent editors of his Vita and Miracula).\(^{40}\) On the other hand, Eadmer’s claim that Dunstan built churches elsewhere may have more veracity, and Pamela Taylor has theorised that it was he who developed Mortlake (first recorded as Canterbury demesne in Domesday Book) as a new Thames-side ‘residence’ in support of his peripatetic political and religious duties as archbishop.\(^{41}\) Both points could act indirectly as support for the notion that the Send causeways may have come into being under the auspices of Dunstan.

The above paragraph bears out Taylor’s observation that ‘Dunstan’s biographers were not interested in his skills in estate management’.\(^{42}\) The other side of the coin is their promotion of his reputation as a holy man of great piety - one that was already formidable in his lifetime, to judge from the sometimes ‘fulsome’ praise he received from contemporaries.\(^{43}\) Dunstan has been considered to be a linchpin of the monastic reform movement in England in the tenth century, spearheading its importation from the Continent through his re-foundation of Glastonbury as a minster community observant of the Benedictine monastic rule.\(^{44}\) Glastonbury had been among the wealthiest of the pre-Viking houses, with vast landholdings in Somerset and beyond, some of which it retained through the depredations of the first period of Viking attacks and to which other parts were restored or added anew subsequently.\(^{45}\) The heartland of its holdings, the Somerset Levels, have seen a number of important fieldwork projects in recent times, most famously the Shapwick Project, which have identified the tenth century as a period when the agricultural and settlement landscape of certain estates was subject to wholesale reorganization. Because some can be positively identified as Glastonbury estates, inevitably it has led to Dunstan’s name entering the frame as the initiator of the process.\(^{46}\)


\(^{40}\) Muir & Turner 2006, lxviii, 124 note 107.

\(^{41}\) Taylor 2009, 208, 229.

\(^{42}\) Taylor 2009, 209.

\(^{43}\) Cubitt 2008, 146.

\(^{44}\) Blair 2005, 350.

\(^{45}\) Costen 1992.

\(^{46}\) Aston & Gerrard 1999, 29; he is similarly put forward as a possible candidate for being the ‘creator’ of the nucleated village and associated open fields of Meare, another Glastonbury property, in Rippon 2004, 110-11.
The late Anglo-Saxon period was a time in which large-scale hydrological projects were being effected in England. Dunstan and his immediate successors have been identified as the probable patrons of a canal linking Glastonbury Abbey with the River Brue. However, the recent account of the adjacent Glastonbury-Street causeway draws attention to the existence of another two canals in the vicinity, and that the evidence may accommodate an earlier dating closer to that of the causeway. Boundary clauses of charters relating to estates in the Somerset Levels area certainly show that there were already drainage ditches present in the eighth century. The two trans-floodplain causeways at Send do not look to be associated with a drainage scheme (the surrounding land remains very wet) but the evidence may simply be hidden; trenching on the Wey floodplain north-west of Wisley revealed several timbers, one of which subsequently was dated by radiocarbon analysis to the late Anglo-Saxon period, and they have been interpreted as belonging to a ‘water management device’ for the water meadows there.

Other recent research has called into question the extent and efficacy of Dunstan’s personal involvement in the monastic revival and reform movement of the mid- to late-tenth century. While accepting Dunstan’s status as a scholar and statesman, Nicola Robertson has pointed to the lack of contemporary testimony for his role in the reform process at both Glastonbury and Canterbury; in the case of the latter it seems very likely that the (re)introduction of formal monastic rule to the cathedral community did not occur until some time after his death. Suspicions over the centrality of Dunstan to the reform process at Glastonbury have been mirrored by revisions to thinking on the level of his involvement in the internal reorganisation of its estates. Costen noted that Somerset estates both within and without the Glastonbury demesne underwent ‘replanning’ around the time of Dunstan’s abbacy, implying the phenomenon was a wider one that may neither have been instituted by the re-founded monastery nor have been especially synonymous with it. Latterly, Stephen Rippon has sought to temper the degree to which Dunstan was responsible for stimulating such restructuring still further by highlighting the heterogeneity of settlement morphologies within Glastonbury-owned estates, and how those responsible may more often than not have been ‘subtenants and even the local communities’.

Whatever Dunstan’s level of interest or involvement in the process in Somerset, there is scant evidence for planned rural settlement nucleation anywhere in Surrey before the

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47 Gardiner 2006, 37 - consider too John Blair’s comment in his presentation at the June 2010 Medieval Studies Forum meeting that medieval canal digging was a phenomenon which commenced in the tenth century.

48 Hollinrake & Hollinrake 2007, 238.


50 Gardiner 2006, 37.

51 Williams 2001.

52 Robertson 2005. In this regard it is notable that a number of the medieval churches dedicated to St Dunstan in south-east England (including Cheam in Surrey) show signs of having been built in the early eleventh century (the church at Mayfield seemingly attests to the fashion having continued into the twelfth century): Tatton-Brown 1992, 80-81.


twelfth century. One exception to this may be Putney, within the Mortlake estate Dunstan transferred to the archiepiscopal demesne *circa* 960. Keith Bailey has observed the regular morphology of the historic village, and a scatter of former field and furlong-names implicit of deserted settlement sites may point to a deliberate concentration of habitation in a single centre, as has been postulated to have taken place at Shapwick and Meare around the years of Dunstan's abbacy. However, he dates this development to the period of the Domesday Survey, in which Putney makes a single, oblique appearance. Whatever the date of the institution of the nucleated village at Putney, it would be ridiculous to assert that no physical interventions were made in the landscape of late Anglo-Saxon Surrey, a period in which many of its manors and parish churches came into existence. Moreover, given the inhabitants of the Send estate are almost certain to have played an active part in both the conception and construction of the two causeways whenever this might have been, it is worth bearing in mind their role as well as that of the person or persons at whose behest it was.

To be clear, S 1447 records the purchase of the twenty-hide estate at Send by Dunstan when he was Archbishop of Canterbury, most likely in or around the year 968; it does not specify in whose possession he placed it afterwards (though the charter testimony of Westminster permits the conclusion that Send did not follow Sunbury in becoming one of its estates). In spite of being such a prominent figure in tenth-century England, remarkably little is known about the attitudes of Dunstan as a landlord, aside from his obvious territorial acquisitiveness on behalf of ecclesiastical institutions with which he was directly or indirectly associated. So for all that can be cautiously proffered in support of the notion that it was Dunstan who caused the causeways to be constructed, the evidence to the contrary is more voluminous and more credible. Nevertheless, the documented connection between Send and Dunstan is enough for it to be retained as a possibility.

**OPTION TWO - PRE-DOMESDAY SEIGNEURIAL DEVELOPMENTS**

Send may have been valued by Dunstan and subsequent archbishops as a useful stop-off on the way between London and Winchester, the major regional centres of power at the time. But it was not deemed sufficiently essential for it to be retained when other pressures came to bear upon the cathedral community and its lands. The most likely impetus for its passage out of Canterbury demesne is the emergency raising of money with which to pay off Viking raiders. According to S 882, in 994 a thirty-hide estate at Monks Risborough in Buckinghamshire was sold by Archbishop Sigeric (990-94) in return for gold and silver with which to pay off Sweyn Forkbeard, leader of the Danes who were threatening to burn his cathedral. Like Send, Monks Risborough does not seem to have been a long-standing Canterbury estate - S 367 reveals how less than a century previously, in 903, King Edward had renewed the charter by which one Athulf granted it to his daughter Æthelgyth. Nicholas Brooks conjectured that Canterbury ceded other estates for a similar reason, the documentary record of which does not survive, and I will argue in my forthcoming paper that Send probably constitutes a previously-unheralded example of such a property. On the other hand, Send may have left Canterbury hands during the pontificate of Eadsige (1038-50), who is said to have leased, granted or sold considerable amounts of the lands of the archbishopric, a position that was confirmed rather than reversed by Stigand, the

56 Bailey 1986; *Domesday Book*, 73.
58 Brooks 1996, 283.
last Anglo-Saxon to hold the office (between the years 1052 and 1070).\textsuperscript{59} Whoever bought Send, whether an ecclesiastical lord or a lay one, may have recognised the good communications the estate boasted - and moreover sought to improve them further.

Send is not heard of again until Domesday, but its entry does contain important information concerning its ownership in the years either side of the Norman Conquest.\textsuperscript{60} Up until 1066 it had been in the hands of a certain Karl (other authors have chosen to render his name as Carl/Carlo/Karli). As a common moniker of Anglo-Scandinavian origin, which appears in Domesday Book in connection with no less than 55 separate holdings, it would be hard to distinguish how many different men so-called held the various estates and other properties were it not for the fact that many of them - including Send - were in the hands of Alvred (or Alfred) of Marlborough by 1086 (including 14 of the 24 such properties in Wiltshire). This suggests these of Karl’s estates were deliberately settled upon Alvred after 1066.\textsuperscript{61} The name Karl occurs just the once in Surrey, at Send, and no more than a handful of times in surrounding counties.\textsuperscript{62} If there was one man of this name holding a dispersed group of estates in south-east England, then at the regional level he was a comparatively minor landholder. Moreover, none of these estates had a hidage or valuation as large as that of Send, and it could be inferred that Karl consequently would have been more inclined to invest in improvements to its infrastructure, such as the construction of the two causeways.

Alvred of Marlborough’s landed interests in England spanned the Conquest period, having held the Herefordshire manor of Pencombe in the time of King Edward the Confessor. He profited greatly from the advent of Norman rule, rising rapidly to become ‘a great tenant-in-chief’ of William I, notably in Herefordshire, where he was given the castle at Ewyas circa 1070.\textsuperscript{63} It is understandable that Alvred seems to have chosen to focus the bulk of his energies on his manors in Herefordshire and Wiltshire, and was willing to pass the running of some of his more easterly manors to tenants. In the case of the two most valuable manors, Send and Shipton Bellinger in Hampshire, the mesne-tenant was Rainald fitz Erchenbald, possibly Alvred’s nephew.\textsuperscript{64} Alvred is known to have died around the time of the Domesday Survey, maybe two years after circa 1088, but possibly while Domesday Book was still being put together - it is Rainald and not Alvred whose name appears as holder of Send in an index appended to the collated rewritten returns.\textsuperscript{65} The manor did not revert to Alvred’s daughter and sole heir Agnes after his death because her husband had taken part in a rebellion against the King in 1075, and instead was retained by Rainald until his own death circa 1120.

\textsuperscript{59} Smith 1994, 212.

\textsuperscript{60} Domesday Book, 87.

\textsuperscript{61} Skidmore 2010, 11.

\textsuperscript{62} Berkshire: 10 hides in Speen - Hampshire: 3 hides in Eastrop, 10.5 hides in Shipton Bellinger - Sussex: 0.5 hides in Barkham, 1 hide in Hartfield, 6 hides in Wappingthorne. Information taken from ‘Karl 2 (male)’, Prosopography of Anglo-Saxon England.

\textsuperscript{63} Skidmore 2010, 8-9.

\textsuperscript{64} An idea first put forward by Bruce Coplestone-Crow: Skidmore (2010), 16, 20.

\textsuperscript{65} Skidmore 2010, 11.
Both Alvred and Rainald are, for slightly different reasons, candidates for instigating the construction of the Send causeways: one being a wealthy tenant-in-chief, the other a lesser-ranking relation with fewer estates and consequently more reason to oversee improvements to those he did possess. Their claims also have to be appraised in the context of the Wey itself. Just like the modern parish of Send, the Domesday estate bordered a lengthy stretch of the river and, far from being peripheral to the activities of both the lordship and its tenants, it was heavily exploited. Domesday Book records two watermills (of which the one in demesne paid a considerable 21 shillings and sixpence) and five fisheries (together rendering 54 pence). But the most remarkable attribute of the estate at the time was its extraordinarily large acreage of meadow, measured at “100 acres less 16”, by far and away the biggest such area in Woking Hundred. A resource like this - which Molineux concludes gave Send a ‘higher value in proportion to its ploughland than [the royal manors of] Woking and Stoke’ - can be expected to have been carefully managed in order to maximize hay production. The two causeways could have played a role in this by facilitating access to and from the meadows, and possibly by retaining floodwaters for longer thereby increasing the time for alluvial enrichment, but there can be no certainty about such hypotheses at the present time.

However, the story of the lordship of Send at the time of the Domesday Survey is more complicated than has been admitted in the paragraphs above. In 1086, 10.5 of the 20 hides were held by men named Herbert and Walter; what is more, these lands unusually were said to be ‘de terra villanorum’, “of the villans’ land”, apparently a reference to the 15 peasants of this status recorded in Send. If the Domesday Book entry is to be believed as read, neither had pre-Conquest precedent, but the reference to a brace of demesne plough teams infers they were individually or collectively constituted as a manor. It has been suggested that these two holdings became the sub-manors of Dedswell and Papworth (later Papercourt). The former, in the south-western corner of the parish, is of no relevance here, but the same cannot be said of Papworth-cum-Papercourt. Lying close to the southern end of the “Pyrford causeway”, it would have been a disproportionate beneficiary of the advantages the floodplain crossing brought. From this it could be argued that the causeway either was built before its excision from the main demesne, or that it was not associated with the lordship of Send. Although no attempt has been made as part of this study to obtain a detailed knowledge of the medieval extents of the lands of Papworth and the manor of Send, the fact that Ruald de Calne and Beatrice de Send (who held the lordship of Send, and about whom more will be said shortly) were able to endow the recently-founded Newark Priory with the ‘hamma de Pappeworth’ in 1191x98 casts

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66 John Blair (pers comm) favours Alvred as the most likely progenitor of the causeways, identifying him as a member of the ‘same generation of entrepreneurial post-Conquest survivors’ as Ælfsige of Faringdon, whom he considers to be the probable patron of the causeway across the Thames at Radcot in Oxfordshire.

67 Molineux, ‘Woking’.

68 There are 14 villans enumerated in the part of the entry pertaining to Alfred/Rainald’s manor; a further one is recorded as residing on either Herbert or Walter’s holding. If the villan holdings were more or less the same size as one another, it implies each consisted of not so far shy of a hide of land - a considerable area.

69 The presence of seven slaves is also suggestive of manorial status.

70 VCH, 3, 368.

71 See, for example, Blair 1991, 95.
serious doubt upon the thesis that the sub-manor had a Domesday-era origin, and hence cannot serve to work against any of the three options presented in this paper.\textsuperscript{72}

**OPTION THREE - LORDSHIP IN “THE LONG TWELFTH CENTURY”**

The existence of a very large meadow resource (or of the five fisheries or two watermills) within the Send estate in 1086 is not proof in itself of the existence of the two causeways, let alone that they were functionally interrelated. It might be argued that the scale of the estate’s river-related resources was such that it could not have arisen in the two decades between the Norman Conquest and Domesday Survey, but this is an argument based on probability rather than certainty. In treating 1086 as the *terminus ante quem* for the construction of the causeways, it also discriminates against the possibility that they came into existence at a point subsequent to the compilation of Domesday Book. The author’s own ongoing research into the development of the medieval landscape of Puttenham parish has highlighted the period between the very late eleventh century and the early years of the thirteenth century (when documentary sources start to become more numerous and more enlightening) as the seminal time for the development of its enduring institutional, settlement and land-use geographies. Are there affinities to be found in the post-Domesday history of Send?

The concept of a “long twelfth century” can, in the context of this particular analysis, be pared down slightly, insofar as the relationship of the Newark Priory precinct boundary to the Pyrford causeway to its west intimates the latter must already have been in existence before its line was established towards the end of the twelfth century. This gives an ample, approximately century-long window - *circa* 1090-1190 - in which the two causeways might have been constructed. Furthermore, it dovetails with Dennis Turner’s recent postulation that the ambitious design of the chancel of Ripley church (previously a chapel of Send, but with an obscure original function), dateable to around the 1150s or 1160s, may be of a piece with the plantation of the adjacent roadside settlement nucleus.\textsuperscript{73} Although the day-to-day advantages of such a project would have most benefitted the tenantry of the estate, it is hard to believe that there was not considerable seigniorial involvement from its inception, especially in view of the exceptional architectural quality of the chapel.

The history of the lordship during this period is traceable through intermittent documentary references. Skidmore conjectures Rainald either made Send the *caput* of his holdings or inherited it as such from his father Erchenbald fitz Erchenbald - in the opinion of this author the former scenario is the more credible.\textsuperscript{74} He lived until around the year 1120. After his death the lordship of Send passed to his son Erchenbald (recorded as Erchenbald fitz Rainald in the Pipe Roll for Surrey in 1130), about whom little is known. More survives regarding his daughter Beatrice de Send who, being his sole heiress, was a wealthy woman. As a consequence of this, she married a knight, Ruald de Calne. He is on record holding two “old” fees at Send of Robert de Ewyas in 1166, and together with his wife gave lands there (the ‘*hamma de Pappeworth*’ referred to earlier) and in Shipton Bellinger to Newark Priory in the 1190s.\textsuperscript{75} Their specified association with the manor and patronage of

\textsuperscript{72} Undated crops marks in the forms of linear ditches and one or more rectangular enclosure have been noted in the vicinity of the southern terminal of the “Pyrford” causeway: Longley 1976, 27.

\textsuperscript{73} Turner 2011.

\textsuperscript{74} Skidmore 2010, 16.

\textsuperscript{75} Skidmore 2010, 16-18
a religious house within the bounds of the parish make Ruald and Beatrice the prime post-
Domesday candidates for being the causeways’ patrons.

One final point may be made in regard to the mid-twelfth century and the easterly of the
causeways. It is clear that both it and its western counterpart were sited where they are
because the river which formed the boundary of the estate flows close to the northern
edge of the floodplain. At the same time, however, it is not unrealistic to suppose that there
was already something of a settlement nucleus at Pyrford Village above its northern end.
The present church has no fabric earlier than the mid-twelfth century, and it is nigh-on
impossible to elucidate any earlier origins. No church is mentioned at Pyrford in Domesday
Book, and the postulation that the knoll upon which it stands was a place of pre-Christian
ritual significance is entirely conjectural, however unusual its situation might be for a
church in the Wey valley.76 Modest non-ecclesiastical settlement is probable, and if so, the
causeway could have been an improvement of an existing secondary route across the
floodplain via the Newark Priory “island” - hence its partial alignment on Pyrford church.
Such present ambiguities serve to show how any future archaeological investigation must
take a holistic approach, looking not just at the causeways themselves but around their
extremities as well for evidence of contemporary settlement and other activity.

View looking east from “Pyrford” causeway to Newark Priory ruins. To the left of centre-frame
are the remains of the conventual church. The masonry in the foreground represents the monastic
precinct wall, probably late-twelfth century in date; it is set back from but parallel to the line of the
causeway, implying the latter was in existence by that date (photograph by author, August 2010).

76 The idea was floated by Savage, ‘The Pyrford and Old Woking Causeways’.
CONCLUSIONS
The foregoing discussion has dealt with a number of overlapping issues: changes in ownership of the Pyrford and Send estates in the second half of the tenth century, the prolonged phenomenon of the reorganization of landscapes within such estates to ameliorate production and movement, and the attitudes of different types of estate owners or holders towards their property and their abilities to bring about improvements like the creation of causewayed floodplain crossings. When all is said and done, however, one cannot hope to give a definitive answer to the question of the origin - or origins - of the “Pyrford” and “Old Woking” causeways on the strength of the evidence presently available. Close dating of the causeways, and proof or otherwise that the two are coeval, will only become possible through careful archaeological and palaeoenvironmental analysis. However, although much remains unclear for now, the following can be stated with a good level of conviction:

(1) Both causeways superseded earlier (?non-causewayed) floodplain crossings, the evidence for which is fragmentary.
(2) There is no firm evidence that either causeway (nor any antecedent floodplain crossing) was associated with votive depositional practices at any time in the medieval period or before.
(3) The boundary clause of S 621 gives reason to believe that the eastern causeway did not exist in 956, implying it is later than the mid-Anglo-Saxon causeways which dominate the relevant academic literature published to date.
(4) The two causeways may be marked by the proximity of their northern terminations with the medieval settlements of Old Woking and Pyrford Village, but their relationships with the lines of the parish/Hundred boundaries hereabouts following the old course of the River Wey are such that it is both logical and likely that their origins (which presumably, though not necessarily, are common to one another) lie in the post-956 lordship of the estate-cum-manor of Send.

The likelihood that the eastern causeway did not come into being until after Pyrford had been gifted to Eadric in 956 (although one can never be absolutely certain that the boundary clause was contemporary with the rest of the document), when viewed alongside the other evidence, allows the supposition that the first possible initiator of their construction was Ecgfrīð. As a estate quantified at twenty hides in the 960s, 1060s and 1080s, Send constituted a sizable landholding of the sort that would be expected to be owned by relatively important people. There are several names of persons fitting this bill to conjure with in addition to Ecgfrīð: Ælfheah the ealdorman, Dunstan or one of his successors as Archbishop of Canterbury, Karl, Alvred of Marlborough, Rainald fitz Erchenbald, his son Erchenbald, or Ruald de Calne and Beatrice de Send. Ultimately, just as individuals like Dunstan should not necessarily be apportioned almost "superhuman" inclinations and capacities to make important practical improvements to the landscape, so the claims of lesser-known men or women to have brought about such changes should not be underestimated. At the very least this study has shown Savage’s dating of the causeways to be credible, and moreover should furnish those interested in taking up the challenge with the aim of finally answering the question of when precisely the “Surrey Fens” causeways came into existence with most of the relevant historical and archaeological background details.
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