

Staffordshire Medieval Rural Settlement Survey

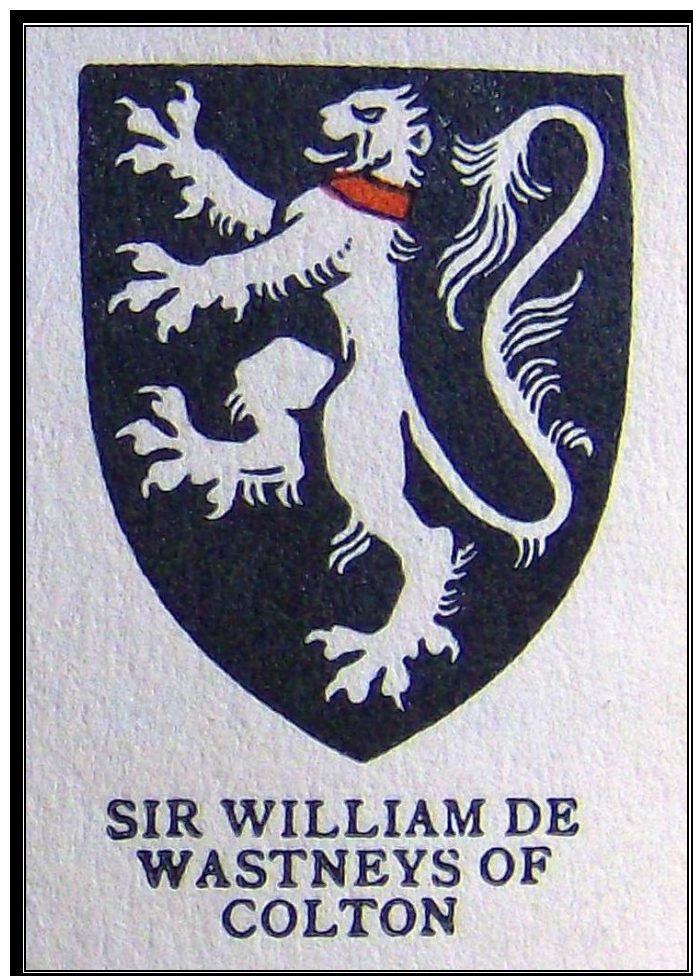
Commissioned by

Colton History Society

V3
Revised October 2009

Colton

SK 048 203



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for

Colton History Society

July 2009.

1. Index information

- Settlement name: **Colton** (or Coltun).
- Parish: Colton Parish. Although the Church of Colton is not recorded in the 'Taxatio Ecclesiastica' of 1291 there is documentary evidence that the church was present by 1277, and early thirteenth century fabric has been suggested within the south aisle.
- Hundred: Pirehill.
- NGR: SK 048 203
- Solid geology: The principal underlying geology is Keuper Marl.
- Drift geology; soil type: The soil types in Colton fall into one of four soil Associations; 813a in the river valley; 541r, on which the main village itself is located; 572f and, 572l in the north of the parish; and 711b and 711m running eastwards in a band from the village of Colton towards Hamstall Ridware. 813a is river alluvium over peat, at risk of groundwater and flooding, but useable for grassland and arable. 541r (Wick 1) produces deep well drained coarse loamy and sandy soils, suitable for cereals and stock raising. The 572 soils are well drained stone-less loamy and sandy soils over soft sandstone, or fine silty soils, but some are prone to acidity in woodland and moorland; they are suitable for grassland and cereals. The 711 soils are slowly permeable seasonally waterlogged reddish fine loamy over clayey soils that lend themselves to winter cereals, short-term grassland and stock-raising.
- Topographical context: Colton is located in the Trent Valley to the north of the river. In the Middle Ages, as now, the settlement lay to the east of Moreton Brook which drained southwards into the Trent and had to be crossed to enter the village. The topography is dominated by a gently undulating landscape, but with a gentle rise in the land northwards, eastwards and westwards, from around 70 metres near Parchfield Farm, to around 90 metres at Colton Hall Farm, Hamley House and Stockwell Heath, and 105 metres at Park Barn Farm and 100 metres near Wilderley Barn in the north west and Newlands in the north east of the parish. The highest point is 112.3 meters. It is in the area known as the

Hillyards Field to the north of the crest of the hill at Bank top on Hollow Lane. The main settlement itself is on terrain that locally rises from the west to the east and the north, such that the church, adjacent to Moreton Brook, is located on lower ground than Littlehay manor house. There are local 'high points' such as Martlin Hill and Finners Hill.

- Terrain Model (SCC): Colton Terrain Type.
- HLC characterisation: The current landscape based on the Historic Landscape Characterisation of the area suggests a fairly complex pattern. The northwest of the parish (and the area around Old Wood Farm in the east of the parish) is dominated by 18th and 19th century planned field systems and post-1880s small re-planned field systems. To the south of this lay pre-1880s drained wetlands, extending to the edge of Colton village. Much of the north and eastern part of the parish comprises recent woodland clearance and post-1880s re-organised fields, the latter also defining much of the area from Lount Farm to the Trent and parkland areas associated with Parchfield House. Colton itself is defined as pre-1880s paddocks and closes. The area around Colton Hall farm is characterised as 18th / 19th century semi-planned field systems.

The late medieval characterisation derived from the above effectively characterises much of the parish as 'lost landscapes', in that no characterisation has been attempted; this includes the area west of Lee Lane, from Upper Moreton through Lount Farm and down to the area bordering the Trent, and the area to the east of Colton village, including Old Wood Farm and the area just north of Colton Hall Farm. The exceptions to this pattern are 'Piecemeal Enclosure' around Hamley House, Stockwell Heath and Newlands; the Deer Park between Stockwell Heath and Newlands; an area of 'irregular enclosure' running eastwards from Finners Hill, and 'Strip Fields' around Colton Hall Farm. The area to the east of Moreton Brook is characterised as 'water/wetland'. The area around Parchfield House is characterised as 'Rectilinear Enclosure'.



Above: Vertical aerial photograph of Colton and its setting.

2. Review of documentary evidence

2.1 **Introduction:** This report does not attempt to present a new or detailed history of medieval Colton; rather, it reflects upon aspects of it, focussing on settlement, landscape and community in the medieval vill, partly with the intention of heightening awareness of the archaeological sensitivities within the modern village. Inevitably however, this can only be done within the context of the medieval history of the place.

Colton has been well served by its former rector, the Reverend Frederick Perrot Parker, who in 1897 published his book, *'Some account of Colton and the De Wasteney's family'*. Inevitably antiquarian in nature, there can be no doubt that the time has come to revisit Colton's history and to re-examine it in the context of the agendas that now inform modern scholarship – a task that reaches beyond the role of this report, but one which this writer hopes subsequently to take up, at least in part. In the meantime, Parker's volume remains the most substantial account of the history of medieval Colton, and it is by no means redundant. Perhaps most importantly, the author collected together all the documents that he could find relating to Colton or to transactions that affected the vill, producing, among other series, what he referred to the 'Colton Cartulary'. As might be expected, this is a mine of material with a variety of themes that this report has only been able in part to take up. In one sense, Parker's account is very much a product of its time, fascinated by issues of genealogy, unravelling descents and working out the family relationships between recorded individuals. This was no mean challenge in the case of Colton given the extensive gentry and freeman network that had emerged here by the late thirteenth century. However, there is another dimension to Parker's scholarship that deserves recognition, not least because it presaged the interests of later generations of local historians. This was Parker's awareness of the local landscape, reinforced, one suspects, by countless opportunities to walk the lanes of Colton and its district. Parker took advantage of the recently produced (1845) tithe map to offer a geographical

perspective on Colton, and more particularly, he sought to locate within the landscape of Colton the locations of fields and other tracts of land referred to within the charters that he had collected. This is invaluable work that will always form the basis for any subsequent similar enquiries, and quite probably will not be surpassed in this particular regard.

- 2.2 **Anglo-Saxon Colton:** Our first impression of Anglo-Saxon Colton is provided by the place-name itself, recorded in the earliest available form in Domesday Book (1086) as COLTONE (DBk 8.15) and COLTVNE (DBk 11.29). Early English place-names, generally categorised as either habitative or topographical in nature, can often give an insight into the nature of the settlement that they were attached to, all the more so if, as it is thought, the early names were given by the neighbours of settlements rather than by the people living in a place – who, after all, knew where they lived!

One of the principal reflections of the Anglo-Saxon settlement phases in Staffordshire is the concentration of habitative place-names in the Penk valley, north and south of Penkridge, which could have been formed over a long period of time, but in addition to which there are topographical place names, many of which may be earlier rather than later in date (Hooke 1983; Gelling 1976, 208). This suggests a focus for settlement along the axis of the valley, thinning out southwards. This was the area of the *Pencersaetan*, running as far south as the Clent Hills, and northwards towards the Trent, and was probably based upon the 'territorium' of Pennocrucium, which itself emerged as a post-Roman territorial unit.

Similarly, the area to the east of the central watershed lay within the territory of the *Tomsaetan*, whose centre was located at Tamworth. They appear to have held an extensive territory whose heartland was the Trent-Tame valley, perhaps extending southwards to take in the valley of the River Blythe. Habitative and topographical type names again may be found distributed along the main river axis. Hooke has suggested that this territory extended into the adjacent parts of Derbyshire and Leicestershire, the eastern parts of the south Staffordshire upland area, and into the Tame-Blythe basin of Warwickshire (Hooke 1983, 19-20). It is in this area that Colton lay, but the place-name itself does not appear to be among the earliest forms.

The place-name follows a familiar type in combining two elements, 'col' and 'tun'. There are three possible derivations of the name, all of them habitative in their nature. The second element, 'tun', is common in Anglo-Saxon England, where it came to mean a homestead, farmstead, estate or vill, this being derived from a primary meaning of enclosed land with buildings on it (Mawer and Stenton 1969, 61). The first element, the prefix however, is less certain. It could be related to the Old English personal name 'Cola' or 'Kola', that is, 'Cola's tun'. However, the name could also be reasonably derived, more descriptively, from 'tun where colts were reared', suggestive of horse-breeding on the estate (Ekwall 1974, 118). Of itself, this is not surprising. Anglo-Saxon aristocratic wills often refer to horses as gifts, along with mention of riding equipment such as saddles. In the 1014 will of Ætheling Æthelstan mention was made of a stud, while more locally, Wulfric Spott's will of c.1004 makes bequests of horses and gear, including to the monastery at Burton 100 wild horses and 16 tame geldings (Whitelock 1979, nos 129, 125).

Horovitz, the most recent student of Staffordshire place-names, prefers a derivation from Old English 'col', meaning charcoal (Horovitz, 2005, 203-4). This

preferred derivation is based on the presence in the area of other place-names comprising the same elements, such as Coley and Colwich, and fourteenth century surnames like Coleman and Colemon. Thus, Horovitz suggests that Colton took its name from early associations with charcoal burning, an activity that occurred more widely across the locality.

It is clear that Anglo-Saxon place-names often captured the specialist activities or associations of a settlement, but at present there is no further evidence to determine whether Colton, in the Anglo-Saxon period (as opposed to the later medieval period) was to be linked with charcoal burning or horse breeding, or indeed was simply drawn from the Old English personal name.

In the absence of any Anglo-Saxon charters the first documentary reference to Colton that we have is actually that in Domesday Book itself, which show that that the township of Colton had already been divided into three if not four manors before 1066. The names of the Anglo-Saxon thegns holding land in Colton before the Conquest are listed in the three entries that comprise the Domesday Book record of Colton (DBk 8.15; 8.16; 11.29).

While it is difficult to recover much detail in the specific context of Colton, there is reason to suppose that some at least of this group were men of considerable standing and regional significance. Historians' thinking on the ways in which the thegns of late Anglo-Saxon held their land has developed significantly in the last twenty years or so, particularly in the sense that the early perception of them as a large number of independent landowners, leading to the view of pre-Conquest land tenure as a very broadly based but short pyramid rising towards the king, has now been revised. This sense of independence was often more illusory than real. It is certain that many thegns held lands by 'dependent tenure', that is, in return for services, of their lord, as may have been the case for some time in nearby Abbots Bromley (cf Hunt 1992, Hunt 1994, Hunt 1997, Hunt 2006). We are sometimes able to directly identify a relationship between a thegn and a magnate because it is referred to in our sources, Domesday Book being one of the most important, but this is not always so.

Domesday Book however continues to present one problem that it is impossible to satisfactorily fully circumvent – the relative anonymity of large numbers of the individuals that it records. So, one of the thegns holding a one hide estate in Colton in 1066 was **Almund**, described as a 'free man'. This personal name appears five times in the Staffordshire folios, and so the question follows, do they represent references to the same man? While this cannot always be assumed, in this case it seems very probable. Studies of land-taking in Staffordshire and elsewhere after the Conquest have shown that it was often the case for Norman lords to take blocks of English estates that had previously belonged to, or were held by, one man (Hunt 1992, Hunt 1997). It is therefore significant that all of the Staffordshire lands associated with Almund, that is Cubbington, Walton Grange, Coton (by Stafford), Tixall, and his manor in Colton all passed to Earl Roger de Montgomery. However, Almund's estates ranged further than Staffordshire. Four manors occur in Warwickshire, three of which passed directly to Earl Roger and the fourth to Thorkell of Warwick. Again, there is good reason to suppose that the Warwickshire Almund was one and the same with the Staffordshire Almund, holding some nine manors.

It is probable that this can be taken further however. In Shropshire, the Norman land taking was dominated and overseen by Earl Roger, who in addition to the lands that he held himself of the king, also had lands held of himself by a number

of his key men in the area; men like Reginald the Sheriff, Roger de Lacy, Picot and Helgot. Between them, these men held fifteen manors previously held by Almund. If this is the same man as in Staffordshire and Warwickshire, as seems quite likely, then the Almund who held in Colton had been a substantial landholder, and was a figure of likely regional importance. Furthermore, although he was no longer to be found holding the majority of his former manors, including that of Colton, like many of his contemporaries he had survived the Conquest and had been permitted to retain the slightest fraction of what he had once held. From the lordship of perhaps 24 manors before the Conquest, in 1086 he was recorded holding Amaston in Shropshire with his son, while the latter (or another son perhaps) now held a second Shropshire manor of Wotherton.

Within the context of the wider estate that Almund held, it is possible that Colton had some particular importance. This cannot be established with certainty, but the hint is in the mention in Domesday Book of a priest in Colton in 1086 associated with the manor that Almund had previously held. While the presence of a priest might be explained in other ways as well, it is widely held that the mention of a priest in Domesday Book is likely to be indicative of an early church. A strict interpretation of this evidence indicates that if so, this simply means that there was a church present by 1086. However, it is also the case that in many instances these churches reflect foundations first made in the Anglo-Saxon period, and there is no reason to reject this possibility in the case of Colton. Clearly, some archaeological confirmation of this would be helpful.

It is possible to suggest the context in which such a church may well have been established. The nature of thegnly piety is readily evidenced through some surviving wills and bequests, but this acquires a presence in the landscape with the emergence of 'tunkirke', or estate churches that served a manor or a vill. On a visit to Rome in 1050 Bishop Herman of Ramsbury is said to have told Pope Leo IX that 'England (was) being filled everywhere with new churches, which daily were being added anew in new places'. He went on to describe 'the distribution of innumerable ornaments and bells in oratories' and 'the most ample liberality of kings and rich men for the inheritance of Christ'. It has long been recognised that the majority of these churches were built by the lords of the estates on which they stood and particular attention has been given to the means by which they were created.

The building of these churches seems often to have been undertaken by men who closely identified with their estates and whose place in society was at least in part mediated through such possessions. Many of these estates are anonymous in the landscape now, at best detected when charter references and Domesday Book prompt the thought, but among them we might recall a close neighbour of Colton, that is Abbots Bromley where the thegn's estate is still 'visible' through its charter boundaries (Hunt 2006). At Abbots Bromley it is possible to suggest that the close association of the thegnly family with their estate, a wish to demonstrate an association that was visible within the landscape, to reflect piety as well as prestige, and to meet a growing demand for more localised worship than that presented through the minster system, all manifested itself in the building of a 'tunkirke'. There is no reason to suppose anything different for Almund at Colton.

What then of the other thegns holding in Colton in 1066? The second Colton manor assessed at one hide in 1086 was held by two Anglo-Saxon thegns. One of these was **Oda**, who also held Aston-by-Stone before the Conquest, but does not appear to have been a landholder of any consequence. The same cannot be

said of his compatriot, **Wulfric**. This is not an uncommon Old English name and therefore some caution is necessary. In Staffordshire some twelve manors were associated with a thegn named Wulfric, at least six of which were held in 1086 by Robert of Stafford, Colton itself being among these. There were five manors held by a Wulfric in Warwickshire of which two were still held by him in 1086, of Thorkell of Warwick; and 22 in Shropshire. It seems probable that many, if not all of these manors were held by the same man in 1066, particularly in Staffordshire and Warwickshire, while links TRE to Almund at Clunton ALSO make some Shropshire possessions seem credible. By 1086 Wulfric had lost his interests in Colton but had manors at Gayton, Amerton and Normacot in Staffordshire and at Marton and Brinklow in Warwickshire.

The third probable component was in the half a hide manor of Colt (DBk 8.16), recorded in 1086 as belonging to Colton and thought to be the manor later known as Littlehay. This manor was held by a thegn named **Aelmer**, also described, like the others, as a 'free man'. He held three manors TRE in Staffordshire which in 1086 had passed to the king and Earl Roger de Montgomery. In Shropshire there were some 15 associated manors, and in Warwickshire, six. While not every manor is certain, there are points of tenure that link manors in Staffordshire and Shropshire with the same Aelmer (cf Condovery, Shropshire, DBk 4.20.1), and the Warwickshire lands seem likely his. Like Wulfric and Almund, Aelmer survived the Conquest but lost his interests in Colton itself. However, while Aelmer can be linked with nine post-Conquest tenures, mostly in Warwickshire, among the three Staffordshire manors he held was Bishton, Colton's neighbouring manor to the west. This manor he had acquired through the dispossession of, or succession to Ernwy

Beyond this reconstruction and some speculation relating to the thegns of Colton, there is nothing in the documentary record that permits a closer consideration of the nature of Anglo-Saxon Colton.

- 2.3 **Tenure and Lordship in Colton:** In Domesday Book the vill of Colton was divided between three manors, two of which passed to the lordship of Earl Roger de Montgomery as tenant-in-chief, and the third to Robert, baron of Stafford.

Earl Roger's holdings comprised a principal manor assessed at one hide and four ploughlands, to which was attached the half-hide estate known as Colt, thought to represent the manor of Littlehay. Domesday Book provides no further information on post-Conquest Colt but the manor to which it was attached was valued at 40 shillings. This may have been the principal manor of the vill, in the sense that it was the most populous, and more importantly, the mention of a priest here among the manorial population suggests that it was to this manor that any church was most probably attached. The earl's tenant here was a man named **Ascelin**, recorded as holding four Staffordshire manors of the earl, including Mavesyn Ridware, Colton's neighbour. The reference to demesne land at Colton and Ridware suggest that these were actual residences, particularly as he does not appear holding any other land of the earl in Shropshire or Warwickshire.

The other Domesday manor held within the honor of Robert of Stafford, assessed at one hide and 6 ploughlands, was held of the baron by **Geoffrey**, who may also have held of William fitz Ansculf and Earl Roger. Geoffrey too had demesne land here and his manor was valued at 50 shillings.

- 2.3.1 Perhaps within about twenty years of Domesday Book events took shape that

had implications for the Montgomery lands in Colton, and elsewhere. In 1094 Earl Roger de Montgomery died, to be succeeded by his eldest son, Robert de Belleme, described by Orderic Vitalis, William of Malmesbury and Henry of Huntingdon as 'monstrously cruel'. In 1098, his younger brother Hugh died, fighting against King Magnus Barefoot of Norway in north Wales. His death brought Hugh's lands to Robert, which included the earldoms of Shrewsbury and Arundel. By 1100, especially following his marriage to Agnes, which brought him the honor of Blyth in Nottinghamshire and south Yorkshire, Robert was an enormously powerful baron. His estates ran from the Somme estuary, through southern and central Normandy, southern and western England, and north Wales. Furthermore, the family as a whole held still more.

Robert enjoyed the favour of William Rufus, but his relationship with Henry I, who succeeded Rufus on his death in August 1100, was not so close. This was exacerbated by competition from the Beaumont family, who enjoyed the new king's patronage. Consequently, the Belleme family gave their support to Robert Curthose in 1101, as indeed, did many of the baronial families that had been close to the Conqueror. Henry defeated the rebellion, and then looked for the means by which he might rid himself of those prominent Normans who had opposed him. Robert was high on the list, and the king's agents gathered evidence on which they might act. The result was an indictment of 45 separate charges that Belleme was summoned to the king's court in 1102 to answer. Robert correctly surmised that the result would be a foregone conclusion, and instead put his castles into a state of readiness. The king took the field in person to oppose the earl. Belleme's campaigning touched Staffordshire, he and his brother, Arnulf, laying waste to part of Staffordshire (Roger of Hoveden, Chron., i, 159). It would seem that Stafford Castle, in the hands of William Pantulf as its castellan, became a base for royal operations against Robert, whose local castles were those at Bridgnorth and Shrewsbury. However, one after the other, Robert's castles surrendered - Arundel, Tickhill, Bridgnorth, and finally Shrewsbury, where Robert himself submitted to the king. In 1102, the king banished him, and he lost his lands in England and Wales. Belleme vented his rage in Normandy, but was eventually captured and imprisoned after the battle of Tinchebrai in 1106. The family, which had such great potential and dominance in 1100, had been broken by 1102. In the train of these momentous events, Belleme's lands fell forfeit into the king's hands, which included large estates in Staffordshire. Some lands Henry retained to supplement the royal demesne, but others were redistributed. This was particularly the case along the Welsh March, where new lordships were fashioned, and families such as the fitz Alans, Corbets, Pantulfs and fitz Warins profited. It was also these events that were to raise the d'Oilli tenure at Shenstone to that of a tenancy in chief.

Thus it was that the fitz Alan family, established as a leading baronial family in Shropshire, with their subtenants, came to be associated with a number of Staffordshire manors, including Sheriff Hales, Colton, Blithfield, Knightley, Moreton, Coton, Mauvesyn Ridware, and Loxley. The Pipe Rolls for 1175-6 refers to the *'villata de Colton de feodo Willielmi filij Alani'* (Eyton 1880a, 80)

Other Marcher families holding in Staffordshire included the Pantulf barons of Wem, who had been tenants of Earl Roger here in 1086. Their manors included Cresswell, Derrington, Alington (including Broomhall Grange and Shifford Grange) and Moddershall, with its satellite manor of Cotwalton. To these, after 1102, were added the royal manors of Hilderstone and Milwich, and in addition, they held Bagnal, Cubblesdon and Stallington as tenants of Robert of Stafford, in each of which they enfeoffed subtenants (Meisel, 1980, 83), and Sheriff Hales as

tenants of the fitz Alans. Similarly, but on a much smaller scale, tenants of the fitz Warin family held in Staffordshire (Ashley upon Tern, and possibly some unidentified lands that were acquired via the Peverels; cf Meisel, 1980, 89-90), as did those of Hugh de Lacy (Norbury, Blithfield and Walton) and Hubert fitz Ralph (Bradley in the Moors and Kingsley).

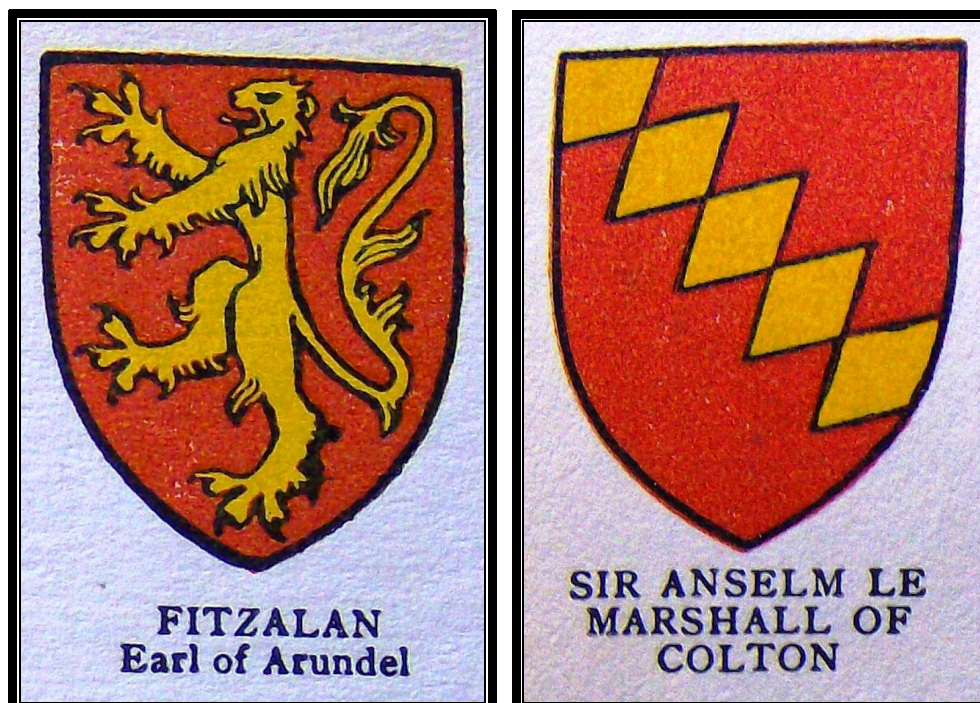
The precise date at which the fitz Alans acquired their two manors in Colton is not clear but it seems likely that this would have been during the reign of Henry I, and therefore we might suppose that the fitz Alans were established as tenants in chief by 1135 although there is no reason to suppose that this necessarily prompted a change regarding the sub-tenants who held the manors directly, presumed in both cases (ie Colton and Littlehay) to be Ascelin. The return that William fitz Alan made in 1166 to the enquiries of Henry II (known as the *Cartae Baronum*) included the names of several men who held tenancies in Staffordshire; among them, of the 'old enfeoffment' (ie enfeoffed by 1135) Hugh de Ridware holding one knight's fee; Henry Mauveisin, holding one 'muntator' or mounted soldier; Nicholas Maucovenant, 'j. muntatoris'; and, of the 'new enfeoffment' (ie. 1135-1166), **Walter Hosatus**, that is, Walter Hussey, holding one knight's fee (Hall 1896, 272-3, Eyton 1880b, 219).

Eyton suggested that Hussey received lands in Shropshire and Staffordshire to make up his new knight's fee and that lands in Colton formed a part of this arrangement (ibid, 219), into which he was effectively 'inserted' as the 'mesne tenant' with a sub-tenant now holding of him. It was conjectured that Nicholas Mauveisin (or Maucovenant), as a descendant of the Domesday tenant, Ascelin, was thus left in place as Walter's sub-tenant (ibid. 219; Wrottesley 1882, 195). Walter died c.1172 to be followed by his son, Ralph who himself died in 1204 (Eyton 1880b, 220). Support for Eyton's thesis is forthcoming from an assize of 1203, held to hear if **Nicholas Mauveysin** had unjustly dissiesed Ralph Hose of his free tenure in Colton after the coronation of the King at Canterbury. In the proceedings it was stated that Nicholas held in Colton by the service of ½ 'ascensoris' (ie 'muntatoris') towards the keeping of the castle of 'de Albo Monasterio', or Oswestry, confirming the association of both Hussey and Mauveisin with the manor; the case arose because Ralph also claimed, as his due from his tenant, a silver mark (ibid 220; Wrottesley 1882, 108). The same Nicholas also found himself at law in the same year in a plea disputing his claims of advowson on the church of Colton (ibid., 113).

The Mauveysin family were established, through two lines, as sub-tenants in both of the former Montgomery manors. Hugh Mauveysin I de Ridware (fl.c.1140), head of the 'senior' cadet line and holding the larger manor, was lord of Blithbury and, perhaps using his wife's lands, the founder of Blithbury Priory during the episcopate of Roger de Clinton (1129-48) (VCH III, 220; Faulkner 1998, 52); he subsequently took Mauveysin Ridware as his main residence. By 1166 Nicholas de Cotes (uncle of the Nicholas noted above) and Henry Mauveysin held in Cotes and Colton, and by 1242-3 these manors were held by Serlo, son of Alan Mauveysin; however, the links between the Ridware and Colton branches of the Mauveysin family are not entirely clear beyond their common ancestor in the Domesday Book tenant (Faulkner 1998, 52). Their position in this manor was gradually overshadowed by the de Colton and the Griffyn families who had appeared by the late twelfth century (eg the Pipe Rolls of 1176 refer to Thomas de Colton). The smaller of the Montgomery manors, Little Hey, was held by a cadet branch of the family, its lords tending, by the thirteenth century, to style themselves as 'de Litelhay' (eg. Gresley Chartulary; Jeayes 1895, No 130). In 1322 Robert 'the younger lord of Littlehay' sold his

manor to Richard de Blithfield while retaining for himself a lifelong interest in the manor and continuing to live there. The subsequent marriage of Elizabeth, the daughter and heir of Richard de Blithfield, to Ralph Bagot of Bagots Bromley in 1361, brought the Mauveysin lands in Colton into the hands of the Bagot family.

The tenurial arrangements of these manors also saw further changes in the thirteenth century, revealed when in 1221 an entry on the *Memoranda Roll of the Exchequer* ordered the Sheriff of Staffordshire to distrain **John le Mareschall** for a payment of three marks scutage on a knight's fee in Colton (Wrottesley 1903, 31). Hugh the Marshall appears in 1166 holding $\frac{2}{3}$ of a knight's fee of Robert de Stafford which at this time was probably in Ingestre and Gratwich, although this fee subsequently passed to the Mytton family (Hall 1896, 266; Wrottesley 1880, 175). The Mareschal family subsequently appear as lords of Colton in the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. In 1277 the *Inquisition post mortem* of William le Marshall shows him holding lands and tenements of John Hussey by the service of 20 shillings annually, together with advowson of the church, although the latter appears to be a rather more complex matter in the 1283 inquisition of John le Marshall (Wedgwood, 1911, 169, 182). It has been suggested that the Marshall family replaced the fitz Alans as the tenants in chief (Sykes, Carter and Bradbury 2008, 53), but this seems improbable. The 1277 reference to Marshall holding of Hussey weakens such an argument, while in 1235-6 there is a cancelled record of half a knight's fee in Colton held of John Fitz Alan, cancelled because the principal response was to be through Shropshire (Book of Fees, i, 544). Curiously, this fee was not picked up again in the fitz Alan return of 1242-3 (Book of Fees, ii, 974-5) but the circumstances suggest that the Marshall came to hold in Colton through a process of subinfeudation by either fitz Alan or Hussey.



In 1316, the *Nomina Villorum* recorded 'Anselinus le Mareschal', together with William de Wasteneys, as lords of the vill, representing the two principal manors that made up the vill (Feudal Aids, V, 12). The Mareschal lordship in Colton continued until it passed to the Morley family by marriage in the early fourteenth

century, who later transferred their holdings to the Gresley family (Gross, 1989, 243; citing 1382).

- 2.3.2 The second principal manor in Colton was that which Robert de Stafford held as tenant-in-chief in 1086, Geoffrey holding of him as his tenant. By 1166 it is possible, on the basis of thirteenth century evidence, to associate **William de Wasineis** (Wasteney; Gasteney), holding two knight's fees of Robert de Stafford, with the lordship of Colton (Hall, 1896, 266); it is notable that the Wasteney succeeded to the wider estate that Geoffrey held at the time of Domesday, so it possible that not only were they heirs by tenure, they may also have been heirs by blood. Another branch of the family held Tixall of the barons of Stafford and the family also had lands in Lincolnshire.

In 1235 Colton was recorded as half a knight's fee, but by 1242, when William de Wasteney is recorded as the tenant of Robert IV de Stafford, the assessment was again placed at one knight's fee (Book of Fees, i, 543; ii, 966). This remained the case when in 1284-5 John de Wasteney was recorded as holding a knight's fee in Colton of Nicholas, the baron of Stafford, while in the *Nomina Villorum* of 1316 William de Wasteney appears alongside Anselm le Mareschal as the lords of Colton (Feudal Aids, v, 3, 12). Much of the development of Colton and its landscape in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries may be associated with the de Wasteney, as they established a market and borough, a warren and parkland in their manor.



Above: the 'Olde Parke' pale.

However, the position of the Wasteney family in Colton was to change dramatically in the mid-fourteenth century, victim like so many families to the fortunes of births, deaths and marriages. William de Wasteney was an active warrior, serving in Scotland, and in 1325 crossing to Gascony where he became ill, and later died on his return to England. He left as his heir his eldest son, Thomas, who at this point was still a minor, allowing the baron of Stafford to claim his wardship and marriage. The interest of the lords of Stafford was unwanted and Parker suggests that Thomas sought support from his father's

former patron, Lord Wake (Parker, 1882, 161-2). By 1339 Thomas de Wasteneys was married to Joanna, the daughter of Sir John Toly of Wymondham, and like his father, he too had a distinguished career in the service of the King, including a probable presence at the Battle of Crecy; he was actively involved with law suits as late as 1364 (*ibid.*, 162). The Colton estate of the Wasteneys was entailed on Sir Thomas and his wife for life with remainder to his sons (William, John and Thomas) and their issue, but when they all died childless the manor reverted to Joan, the widow of Sir Thomas (despite the survival at this point of Sir Thomas' two brothers). Before 1352 Joan had married John de Gresley (c.1327-1396), having obtained a papal mandate to release from the vow of chastity she had made following the death of her previous husband (*ibid.*, 162; Madan 1898, 49). The links between the de Wasteneys and the Gresleys were further strengthened when before May 1364 Joan's daughter, Thomasine de Wasteneys, was married to Nicholas de Gresley (c.1345- c.1380). Thomasine was the sole heiress to the Wasteneys lands in Colton and elsewhere, and so as a consequence of these two marriages the Wasteneys manor of Colton came into Gresley hands (Madan 1898, 51). Thomasine's son, Thomas de Gresley, was the first beneficiary of these developments (Sykes, Carter and Bradbury 2008, 72).



Above: section of the park boundary.

When Sir Thomas Morley granted his Colton lands to the Gresleys the principal manors of Colton were effectively united under one family. By 1428 John Gresley was described as holding three knights fees in Colton (*Feudal Aids*, v, 21). A century later Leland observed that Sir George Gresley dwelt 'at the mannor place of Coleton and hath a greate parke there', but around half a century later, on June 2nd, 1609, Sir Thomas Gresley, with the consent of his son George, sold the manor of Colton to Sir Walter Aston for £13,000 (Madan 1898, 66, 71) £16,000 (Parker 1879)

- 2.4. **The Seigneurial Families:** Colton is a complex vill, not least because of the network of gentry families that established themselves there as landowners, several of whom were linked into more widely dispersed family networks. The

worlds of the Wasteney, Mareschal, Hussey, Gresley and Morley were not contained within Colton, whereas those of Mauveysin, Gryffin and de Colton seem not to have extended far beyond it; and there were yet others whose activities were largely confined to the vill. This cross section of society is visible to us in the charters that they left behind, mostly dealing with the transfer of small parcels of land or a tenement and tenant; and in the records of the litigation in which they engaged. This material is deserving of a fuller modern study than is appropriate to this report, but it is possible to convey something of the flavour of this society, particularly from the perspective of the legal records, the majority of which relate to disputes over land.

- 2.4.1 A competitive society: Tensions and ambition in the locality nearly always come to a head during periods of rebellion or warfare when families see opportunities arising whereby they might profit locally; in an age of competition for the resources that were available, such opportunities could not be missed, and in this regard Colton was no different to most other places. Such an occasion was the rebellion against King John at the end of his reign which attracted the participation of a number of 'middling' tenants of the honor of Stafford. Thus a case came before the courts in 1227 which reflected such opportunism, as William de Wasteney, the son of the rebel Philip de Wasteney, complained that he had been dispossessed of his lands by John Mareschal. He explained that his father had been taken prisoner at the siege of Mountsorrel (spring 1217) and was imprisoned at Nottingham, where he was forced by John to give up the land at Colton that he had previously conceded to his son, William. William won his case (Wrottesley 1883, 56). Parker suggests that it was this episode that accounted for le Mareschal interests in Colton (Parker 1882, 159).

In the mid-thirteenth century there was again rebellion in England, now against Henry III, and the Wasteney and Mareschal families played their part, although the role played by the Colton lines (if any) lies beyond the scope of this report.

It was not only in periods of rebellion that tension was apparent in local society. The Plea Rolls of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries are replete with examples of neighbours seeking advantage over each other, usually by challenging for the possession of land, some of which prompted violence. One of the most common of disputes arose on the death of a tenant, at which point the rights of a presumed heir might be challenged (eg. *mort d'ancestor*) or a party might claim that their rights had been usurped by the actions of another (eg *novel disseisin*, where one party had taken possession unjustly). In 1199, for example, the sisters Lesceline and Alice successfully brought an assize of mort d'ancestor against Nicholas son of Ralph in respect of six acres of land and three acres of pasture in Colton (Wrottesley 1882, 56; Parker 1897, 14). In 1203-4 there was another assize, to determine if Ralph, the father of Juliana, was in possession of 7½ acres of land and 1½ acres of pasture when he died, which Nicholas son of Ralph now held. This Nicholas was Nicholas Mauveysin, and once again the case went against him (Wrottesley 1882, 115). It is difficult to escape the impression that he was exploiting any sensitive position that came along, seeking to assert any rights that he could defend or win in building up his own position within Colton. If so, he was not unique. However, it did sometimes run the other way, in that Juliana also made claims that the jury was unable to support, but when found against, she was declared a pauper (ibid, 127). As a final example, in 1300 William son of John Griffin of Colton, John son of John Griffin and Robert son of John Griffin were called to answer if they had unjustly disseised John son of William Gilbert of Colton of a messuage, ten acres of land and an acre of meadow in Colton. These cases could deal with claims of all

sizes; in 1293 John Griffin of Colton and William de Neuton of Colton were charged with unjustly disseising Henry son of Hugh de Colton of two pieces of land in Colton, one 54' x 4', and the other 12' x 8'. Henry won his case and damages of 40d (Wrottesley 1885, 300).

Related to these was the frequency of disputes around rights of dower. In 1212 Agnes de Wasteneys was seeking to defend her rights against several 'predators', making claims against William Griffin and his wife Alice, Hugh son of Matilda and William son of Nicholas (ibid, 153). In 1279 David son of Griffin and Elizabeth his wife may be found suing John le Mareschal for a third of the manor of Colton as dower (Wrottesley 1885, 100) and more modestly, in 1276-8, Agnes the widow of Hugh Bonel may be found suing John Bonel for a third of a messuage and eight acres of land in Colton as her dower (ibid, 85). Similarly, in 1307 Alice, the widow of John Griffyn of Colton was at law to secure her dower. She sued Richard de Bishton for the third part of a messuage and the acres; Juliana de Barton for a third of a messuage; Robert Wymer for the third part of a messuage; and William son of John Griffin for a third of a messuage, 60 acres of wood, 20 acres of meadow and 40 acres of moor (Wrottesley 1886b, 182). Alice was successful but such cases illustrate the tortuous process that claimants might have to embark upon, the small amounts of land that were often in dispute, and the opportunism that characterised local society. This is far from the idyllic 'commune' that some Marxist historians perhaps once imagined!

There was another fundamental aspect to aspects of the stream of litigation that we have from Colton and elsewhere. In 1316 William Griffyn sued William de Wasteneys to permit him to grind his corn, quit of 'multura', in Wasteneys's mill at Colton, as he used to. A case such as this was about rights, and about relationships between men. The outcome is not recorded but it is likely that a case such as this would have been intense pursued. Such things were vital, but so too were the 2½ acres of land and acre of meadow that two years later he sued Roger Hobet for (Wrottesley 1888, 59, 72).

Within such disputes, there was always the potential for violence to erupt, often embracing bands of men, and indeed, as we have seen, some local disputes were prosecuted behind the veil of warfare, as if to lend the acts some legitimacy. In 1320 a group of men were charged by Thomas le Rowe of Blithbury, who included his own brother and Reginald le Wasteneys of Colton, for insulting, wounding and ill-treating him at Colton two years before, and for coming armed to reap and carry away his corn and rye (Wrottesley 1889b, 33). In 1326 Adam de Rugeley made a complaint against William Griffin of Colton and several other Colton men, that they had come to Rugeley with swords, bows and arrows, beaten and wounded his servants and tenants, taken his goods and chattels, and had also taken from him nets 'and other machines for taking fish' to the value of 100 shillings (ibid., 112). In 1333 William Griffin was at law complaining of a beating that he had received in Colton in 1332, and the theft of his goods and chattels, namely linen and woollen clothes and money to the value of £100 (Wrottesley 1893, 32). Incidents such as this are familiar outbursts of gentry violence, particularly at market centres, which characterise Staffordshire and other counties in the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Penkridge is an example of a market place that regularly suffered such problems.

In 1343 Thomas de Wasteneys was at law regarding an attack on him in 1341 by William son of Adam le Smyth of Colton and others who had come forcibly and taken away his marl, clay and sand at Colton, valued at 100 shillings (Wrottesley

1891, 23). In 1359-60 William Pype was complaining about John Wymer of Colton for forcibly taking at Colton four cows and two oxen, worth 50 shillings (ibid., 172). As a final example, there is also the case of 1395 in which Hugh de Gresbrook sued John Bailly and John Nichol, both of Admaston, for forcibly breaking into his close at Colton and trading down and consuming his grass with their cattle to the value of 100 shillings (Wrottesley 1894, 72). Such cases remind us that a medieval vill had within it enclosures, or 'closes', that 'protected' or defined areas of grazing, storage and buildings, areas that were to some extent set apart and which could be broken into. Colton clearly had a number of these during the medieval period.

Seigneurial families at all levels faced challenges to maintain their lordship. With lordship came a style of life that was expensive to maintain, and families had to adapt in order to find the resources that might support it. Not all were successful in doing so and for a variety of reasons they might start to fall into difficulties, some ultimately falling out of lordship. Those without sufficiently broad resources, or unable to exercise effective lordship and obtain their rights, were particularly vulnerable. It was often the case that such families may be detected in the records through a trail of debts and demise of the lands that they did have. Something not dissimilar to this may well have affected the lords of the manor of Littlehay; indeed, the family may always have been hard pressed. In the mid-twelfth century Nicholas Mauveysin had sold Stallington to the canons of Stone rather than gifted it to them, although he was not alone in such an approach to monastic endowments and this may simply have been regarded as an opportunity not to be missed (Wrottesley 1882b, 195). However, hints of serious problems emerge when we take together some points together. In 1325 the Sheriff was instructed to arrest William de Colton, described as the lord of Littlehay, for his failure to pay a debt of £20 (Wrottesley 1888, 109), but the Sheriff reported that he was dead. More significant is the fact that in 1322 Richard II de Blithfield bought the manor of Littlehay, being 'a fourth part of the manor of Colton' (Murray 1919, 10) but in 1324 agreed to a life interest in the manor for its former lord, Robert de Littlehay at a nominal rent of one rose yearly and the services due to the overlord. This was the kind of agreement that shows the latter to have been in trouble, an impression that is strengthened when we find, albeit after a period of time, in 1338 Richard suing Robert for causing 'waste and destruction' in his houses and woods in Colton which had been demised to him for the period of his life. The precise context of this complaint is unclear, and it may reflect the break down of a previously harmonious relationship. However, what it may also reveal is a case of asset stripping by Robert, or reflect his inability to effectively run the manorial estate. Whichever applies, it implies financial weakness on the part of Robert (Wrottesley 1890, 81; Parker 1897, 155-7).

- 2.4.2 Knights and the Church: for many aristocratic families, at all levels, their relationship with the church was an important one, that might touch not only on personal spiritual welfare, but also on the way in which the family itself was perceived, both by their contemporaries and their descendants. This relationship was often a complex one, and not all families directly engaged with it (cf Hunt 1997, Chapters Ten & Eleven). However, the offer of support to a church was an expression of personal piety that might also be intended to signal the standing of the family, and of their prestige, by the fact that they felt able to offer such support. Many families sought to develop special relationships with particular churches, sometimes a monastic foundation, but often with the local parish church and particularly, of course, those located within their demesne lordship. By the thirteenth century the social range of the families engaging in this activity

had grown and increasingly local churches became the mausolea of local seigneurial families – the burial places of the knights of the shire. Through burial within their walls, enhanced by recumbent effigies, heraldic tiles and glass, commemorative wall paintings and decorative sculpture (and sometimes through association in a status landscape), these churches served to record the achievement and prestige of the family concerned and mark their association through time and place with the manor and land concerned (cf Mauveysin Ridware).

The mechanism for the transfer of such support took two principal forms, both of which might offer tangible as well as spiritual benefits to the benefactor. Patronage was often expressed through the grants of lands or rights to the church in question, often monastic churches. For knights and the local gentry, these grants were often on a small scale. But in addition to the prayers that they brought from the monastic community (for example, in 1292 a charter records the arrangements made with the prior of St Thomas juxta Stafford for the saying of a requiem for the soul of Rohesia de Standon and for her son, Robert; Parker 1887, 188), the benefactors also became part of a circle of patrons, some of whom were generally of considerable importance in the locality. By joining this 'club', the patrons gained additional access to the world of local power politics, influence, and possibilities for family advancement; they might benefit through the reflected associations.

Many manorial lords held as a part of their lordship certain rights over the church located within their manor, one of the principal ones being advowson. Some seigneurs granted these away in the twelfth century, but not all did, and some who did subsequently litigated to regain them. Advowson, or the right of presentation to benefices, were important rights capable of attracting much litigation in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. They were often important not so much for any monetary valuation that was placed upon them, as for the opportunities that they offered for preferment, or as a means of consolidating influence within a locality. This was the right that allowed a lord to place a relative in a living, or to reward local supporters in the same way. As they represented a means of exercising influence within the local community, and of reflecting personal status, these rights could easily become points of dispute in a competitive society.

Both of these forms of relationship with the church are evident in Colton. Much of the patronage activity was directed towards the support of the Priory of St Thomas juxta Stafford, an Augustinian house founded around 1174 by Gerald fitz Brian, a burgess of Stafford (VCH Staffs III, 260). As a reforming Order, the Augustinians were particularly popular among patrons, and attracted considerable support within the midlands; like the Cistercians, they were also attractive to a broad spectrum of patrons because, given their perceived commitment to poverty, they were regarded as willing to accept relatively modest endowments. By the mid-thirteenth century the priory had been the recipient of several small grants, including lands in Colton, many of which were recorded in the cartulary of the Priory (Parker 1887). These grants gave rise to the estate subsequently associated with Boughey Hall, and which the Prior of St Thomas regarded as demesne land as in 1284 King Edward I granted him free warren in Colton, a right that he subsequently defended at *Quo Warranto* in 1292-3 (Parker 1887, 136; Wrottesley 1885, 276). Warin Griffin de Colton is recorded granting land and assarts at 'Lund sub Colewelle' (Lound, or Lount Farm) during the episcopacy of Geoffrey de Muschamp (Bishop of Coventry, 1198-1208; Parker 1887, 155-6), while another charter, of 1240-50, lists some of the grants made by

William de Wasteneys and others of various messuages, lands and tenements (ibid., 154-5). Most of the local lords seem to have supported the Priory, as reflected in a charter of 1257 recording that William de Wasteneys, William, 'called the young lord', Hugh son of Thomas and William Griffin de Colton had given 11½ acres of waste land in Colton (ibid., 156). Most of the grants received during the thirteenth century were similarly modest; William de Stiventon (Stivington) gave an acre in Colton situated next to the land of Robert son of John, while Ralph de James (*Radulphus de Jacobus*) and Hugh de Breheusa gave an acre with a house and tenant (ibid., 158). In making such grants in this way, not only did they reflect a sense in which a locality had chosen to associate itself with a religious house, they might also be associating with their relatives who held land elsewhere, such as Pagan de Wasteneys, lord of Tixall, who may also be found endowing St Thomas' in the 1240s (ibid., 192, 193). There was another monastic foundation nearby, the Priory of Blithbury, established early in the twelfth century by Hugh de Ridware (VCH III, 220), but there is no indication that it became a popular focus for endowment from the men of Colton. This distinction seems to have been reserved to St Thomas', but it is difficult to determine without further research whether this was the result of the donors following the examples of their more powerful neighbours, in Colton and further afield, or whether it genuinely represented some form of 'community sentiment'.



Above: St Mary's Church, Colton.

The advowson of St Mary's Church lay with the seigneurial families of Colton but its possession was at times disputed between them. Although it is nowhere explicitly stated, it seems probable that in 1086, if a church was present in Colton, the presentation to it lay with the lord of the manor on which it was situated; that is, with Earl Roger de Montgomery or his tenant, Ascelin. The first point at which this presumption may be tested occurs in 1203 when William Griffin with Alice his wife and Warin de Colton were at law disputing the claims of Nicholas Mauveysin to make the next presentation following the death of Richard the Priest. (Wrottesley 1882, 113). The jurors found against Nicholas, upholding the claims

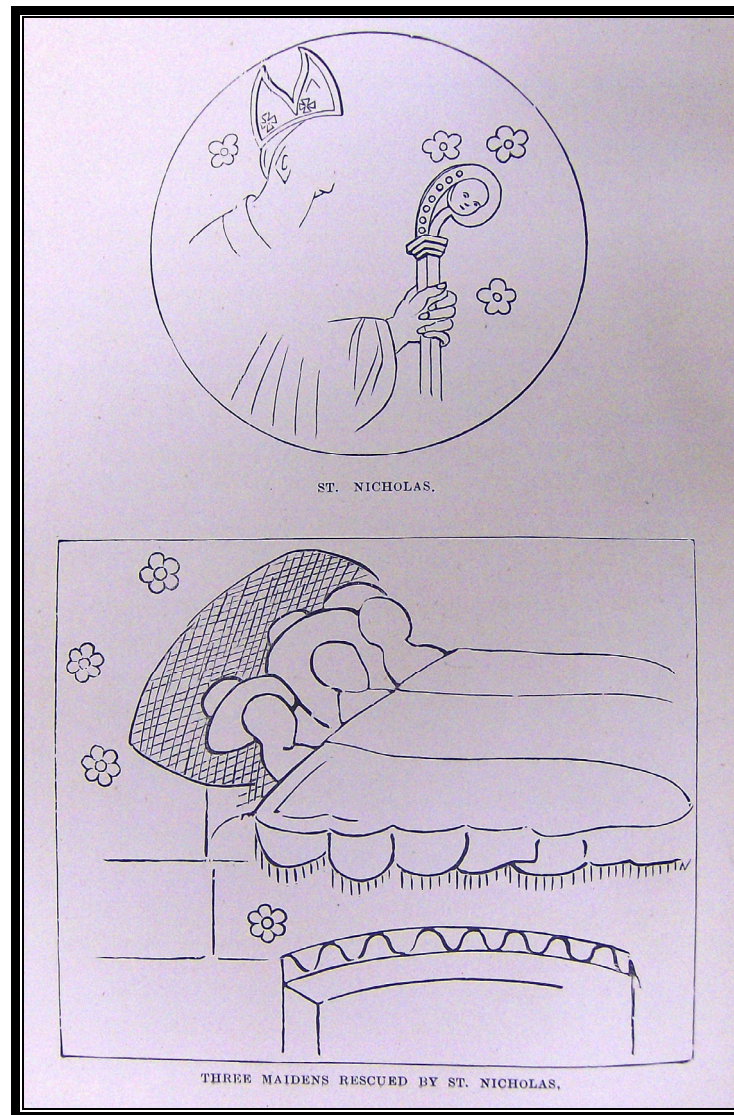
of William Griffin in the right of his wife Alice, daughter of Gerald, and for Warin Griffin, in the right of his ward, Hugh de Colton, the son of Matilda and nephew of Gerald on the mothers side (Parker 1897, 14). Gerald had made the last presentation. The Bishop was therefore asked to admit to the church the priest nominated by William and Warin Griffin. As Parker observes, we might suppose that Gerald had been lord of Colton in about 1175, but little is known about him.

It seems probable that Gerald was another subinfeudated tenant of the Husseys, with whom the rights of advowson had been placed. Parker presumes him to be an early member of the de Colton family (Parker 1897, opposite 64). If Gerald died without a male heir it would explain how this right passed to the Griffins (by marriage) and perhaps why Nicholas de Mauveysin thought this an opportune time to try and seize it in the right of his manor. In the late thirteenth century, the inquisitions of William le Mareschal (1277) and of John le Mareschal (1283) make it clear that at this point these rights still lay within the manor of their origin. In 1277 William le Marshall had the advowson of St Mary's, said to be worth 20 marks yearly whereas in 1283 it was recorded that John le Mareschal held the advowson but that he did so *of* Henry de Colton and John Griffin (Wedgwood 1911, 169, 182), without any further explanation of how this came to be so. However, the right was clearly still attached to the former Montgomery manor. If this record is accurate it would suggest that by 1283 the advowson had passed to the two subtenant families who had come to some agreement as to how this might be managed. Typically, where interests were shared, this might be done via joint presentations, or more typically, alternate presentations between the families concerned. In this case they may have reached an understanding that effectively 'leased back' to the John le Mareschal, their mesne lord, the right of presentation. This may have been a short-term arrangement of some kind as members of the Mareschal family continue to present to Colton Church into the early fourteenth century, with Lady Avice le Mareschal making preferments in 1303 and 1307 (Parker 1897, 196).

In the early fourteenth century the Mareschal interests in Colton were transferred, through marriage, to the Morley family, in the shape of Sir Robert de Morley, Marshal of Ireland and consequently the rights of advowson passed to them. Robert de Morley made presentations between 1338 and 1350, and his son, William, had the right in 1361 (Parker 1897, 196-7). The rights of advowson had remained with the original Montgomery manor since the Conquest. The apparent change in this position in the late fourteenth century is more apparent than real, arising from a merger or consolidation of properties. In the mid-fourteenth century the marriage of John de Gresley to Joan de Wasteneys brought Colton into the hands of the Gresley family, this being further secured by the marriage of Nicholas de Gresley to Thomasine de Wasteneys (Madan, 1898, 49). When the Morleys too transferred their holdings to the Gresley family, then the advowson came into their possession together with most of Colton. From 1382 until the mid-sixteenth century, the Gresleys now exercised the rights of presentation.

As patrons of the parish church, it might be expected that those families who exercised rights of advowson in the church might also take some interest in physical upkeep and decoration, not least if the local church provided a stage upon which family interests might be displayed. It was commonly the arrangement that the patron and rector looked to the needs of the Chancel, and the congregation to the needs of the nave. While many churches may be seen around the country that reflect these points, the nineteenth restoration of St Mary's makes it difficult to determine the extent to which this might also have been true in Colton. The fact that the Mareschals held lands elsewhere may have

made the church at Colton less important to them from a family point of view, but it is interesting to observe that the only known embellishment of the church dates to the mid-fourteenth century. This takes the form of a cycle of wall paintings found in the Chancel and which survived there until 1851. The scheme was apparently fairly extensive and included an element thought by Parker to represent the life of St Nicholas.



Above: sketches (from Parker 1897) of wall paintings in St Mary's.

The date of these frescoes is potentially telling. Although the Morley's still held the right of presentation in 1361, it was actually exercised, by arrangement, by Sir John Gresley, thereby initiating what would become a long running association of the family with the church. Parker has suggested that the wall painting cycle should be associated with Thomasine Wasteneys in memory of her husband, Nicholas de Gresley, a suggestion based on the Vitae content of the cycle. It is possible. However, it is not impossible that the work is a little earlier than this and intended to celebrate the Gresley's acquisition of the manor, itself a celebration of the achievements of their family. It would be interesting to know whom the family adopted as their patron saint? (the Bassets of Drayton for instance adopted St John the Baptist in this role) Was it Saint Nicholas, and might this be a celebration of the support he had given them? Further research is clearly needed

here. Although we are told that the plaster was chipped away in the mid-nineteenth century restoration of the church (and if so, this could only be regarded as vandalism of the highest order), it is important to remain vigilant in the church for the possibility that traces may still be revealed at some point in the future.

2.5 Manors and Resources: Inevitably, Domesday Book provides a starting point for reconstructing the resources and landscape of Colton. Earl Roger's manor, in addition to the arable, recorded the possession of both meadowland and woodland. Application of Rackham's formula indicates that the 19 acres of meadow might have represented anything up to 22.8 acres of meadow in reality, while the woodland, one league long by half a league wide, amounts to some 504 acres. To this may be added the resources held within Robert of Stafford's manor, whose 16 acres of meadow might represent anything up to 19.2 acres, while the woodland, one league by three leagues, represented 3,024 acres. Therefore, the vill of Colton had associated with it between 35 and 42 acres of meadow, and 3,528 acres of woodland.

The other resources of the manors, between them, included five slaves, individuals treated as chattels in Domesday Book, and not assumed to necessarily represent heads of families in the way assumed for other population references. In effect, Domesday records slaves as a resource rather than as part of the population of the vill. To this may be added, on the manor that Geoffrey held of Robert of Stafford, a mill (ie watermill) valued at 12d.

To this initial picture may be added large numbers of references that are accumulated through the Plea Rolls and charters that significantly enhance our impression of the vill of Colton and its constituent manors. While all of the seigneurial families played their part in the development of Colton and its landscape, a particularly important part was played by the de Wasteneys in developing the potential of their manor and its landscape. The part played by the family in developing the manor may be traced through a series of grants, and through developments in the landscape.

The thirteenth century was an important time in Staffordshire for the growth of commercial activity, and in many cases, for the initial urbanisation of many places of various sizes. The motivations were various. For lords, the establishment of a borough offered additional revenues and a boost in status, and perhaps a convenient source of goods, although we know that the pattern of consumption among many aristocratic families led them away to the greater centres such as Lichfield, Coventry and London. Similarly, lords were generally keen to see markets develop, partly for the market tolls that they might gain, but also because they favoured access to markets for their peasant tenants so that they could convert any agricultural surplus into cash, and thereby be in a position to pay cash rents. Peasants were also keen on both of these developments. They generally welcomed opportunities to generate cash, and also access to markets for their own consumption. But for some in the community, particularly the entrepreneurial, the market and the borough offered them opportunities to prosper and to advance their family interests. It has often been assumed that the lord led the development of boroughs in all cases, but the benefits to all concerned make real the possibility that the tenants of a vill may themselves be the driving force behind such proposals. Such appears to have been the case in Walsall for instance, and may also have been the inspiration in Birmingham.

We don't know the details in the case of Colton, but certainly the vill was not to be left behind in this regard. On May 1st, 1241, King Henry III granted William de Wasteneys the right to hold a market in his manor on Fridays (Cal. Ch Rolls 1226-57, 259). By 1275, on the Wasteneys manor, this initiative had been taken further with the creation of a borough; in this year Alice the daughter of William Belunone transferred to Robert son of John son of Walter de Colton her rights in a burgage in the vill of Colton (Parker 1897, 314). Clearly by this date burgages had been established within Colton but the charter creating it (if there was one) appears to have been lost. Borough status does not appear to have outlasted the Middle Ages, but it was still present in the manor in 1362-3 as in this year the roll of John de Caldewell, the steward of the de Wasteneys in Colton, recorded the receipt of 16s.7d. rent from the burgesses for the half-year ending at Michaelmas (Parker 1897, 79). There are no indications of how large the borough in Colton was, but noting that one shilling annual rentals were common in the area during the thirteenth century (and 6d per six months) it is possible that the borough could have been something in the order of 33 burgages, perhaps representing a population of around 160 people, and thus representing what might be regarded as medieval urbanisation (cf. Hunt 1997, 124).

The de Wasteneys were also successful in developing other manorial assets. In 1292-3, as a part of the Quo Warranto proceedings, John de Wasteneys was called upon to explain his claims to free warren in Colton. He did so appearing in court with two charters, granted by Henry III to William de Wasteneys, his father, by which permission had been given to establish a weekly market in one charter, and in the other (dating to 1254; Parker 1897, 22), the right to establish free warren in his demesne lands (Wrottesley 1885, 276, 277). The warren was referred to again in 1389 when John de Gresley accused William Clerk, parson of the Church of Colton, of forcibly (*'vi et armis'*) breaking into his free warren at Colton, with others, and from which he took 60 hares, 100 rabbits, 100 pheasants and 200 partridges (suspiciously large and 'rounded' numbers), a trespass which he repeated on several occasions (Wrottesley 1894, 210). There had been a similar instance in 1379 when John de Gresley accused Thomas de Hampton and his party for breaking, *'vi et armis'*, into his free warren of Colton and taking his fish (pike, perch, roach, bream and eels) to the value of £10, together with 20 hares, 40 rabbits, 40 pheasants and 1000 partridges, for which he claimed £200 in damages (Wrottesley 1893, 152).

In addition, by the mid-fourteenth century there were two parks in Colton, at least one of which was likely established a century or so earlier (cf Parker 1897, 164). The Old Park is presumably that referred to in John de Caldewell's 1362-3 account roll where John Godhale was paid 7s.6d. for fencing around the Park (ibid., 82). Following Parker, it is generally presumed that the Old Park is that located beyond Stockwell Heath and if so we must presume that the other park, present by 1359, is that which later maps suggests was focussed on Colton Old Hall; it is possible that this park came into existence with the transfer of the manor into the hands of the Gresleys, but this could also have originated rather earlier. These points will be discussed further below, but it would seem that the two parks both relate to the same manor.

The parkland in Colton, when in the possession of the Gresleys, was subject to occasional raids. In 1359 Walter de Rideware, Thomas de Rideware and several others were accused of breaking *'vi et armis'* into John de Gresley's park at Colton, chasing and taking his game. Such activity, regularly undertaken by bands of the gentry and their followers, was commonplace in thirteenth, and more particularly fourteenth century society. A further attack was recorded in

1379, this time involving Stephen son of Ralph de Hampton and his associates who chased and took game, which, when the case came back to the court in 1380, John de Gresley claimed had led to the taking of 40 bucks and 100 does, for which he claimed £200 in damages (Wrottesley 1893, 101, 146, 151).

The seigneurial resources also included an aerie; in 1362-3 Caldewell's account roll reveals that the de Wasteney manor had received 5s.6d. for the sale of a swan and had allocated rations of oats to Robert le Bailley for feeding the swans (Parker 1897, 80, 84). In 1383 John de Gresley was at law against Richard, the vicar of Rugeley, for forcefully taking three swans, worth 100 shillings, from John's aerie at Colton (Wrottesley 1893, 183).

Mills were a part of the manorial economy from the outset. The watermill noted in 1086 was a part of the de Wasteney's manor and by 1362-3 the Caldewell accounts also referred to land in 'Wyndmillfield' (Parker 1897, 81). A mill in 1352 and a windmill in 1363 both appear in the Gresley Cartulary (Jeayes 1895, nos 284, 299) but it seems probable that by this date there were several more mills within the parish. By c.1290 the existence of Hamley Mill is inferred in references to the mill ditch (Parker 1897, 6) while the Colton records contain numerous references to millers and mills. The management of the watercourses concerned was of particular concern as the interests of one party or another could be easily compromised if not regulated. Such concerns are well illustrated in a charter of c.1229-60, detailing a grant of Thomas de Barre to the Abbot and convent of Burton who held the neighbouring manor of Abbots Bromley (Jeayes 1937, 63). Thomas paid 18d for a course of water descending from the mill in Bromley (Holegrave) for the convenience of his mill in Colton and in Ridwarelee and in order to ensure that none may put up a mill that might damage the abbot's mill through the re-flow of the water. Thomas quitclaimed to the Abbot his rights in the water of the Blithe above the mill, to the length of the fee of Colton and Blithefield, which the may dam and deal with as suited them. It was also agreed that if Thomas should fail to make the payments as agreed, the abbot would be entitled to enter his mill and carry off the iron, or turn back the water to its former course. In another charter of similar date (*ibid.*, 64) Peter son of Grece de Colton granted all his part of the water of the Blithe between the abbot's land and Peter's land in Colton, so that the abbot may make all the easements to his mill on the Blythe, but on condition that he did no harm to Peter's land and meadow. Yet another of the same period (Wrottesley 1884, 65) shows a grant by Richard the Miller of the water-bed with its course running down through the middle of Richard's land in Colton, running between the holm of John de Ayshurst and the grove of James de Blithefield, to be dammed or opened at the will and convenience of the Abbot's mill. The implications of these rights were as vital more than a century later. In 1395 William Wymer was in dispute with the Abbot regarding the latter's claim to turn the watercourse of the Blithe between his meadow and his mill in the fee of Colton, above the abbot's mill called 'Richardsmilne', for the watering of his cattle, and the implications that this might have on the fishery. With significant watercourses running through the parish rights of fishery were bound to arise; at the same time, this reminds of another important resource available within medieval Colton.

Mills were clearly a vital resource; they might be regarded as a status possession, but more important they were an assured source of income for the lord concerned, and like any right, if left unclaimed, they would be lost. Thus, for a variety of reasons, they might prompt disputes. In 1316 William Griffyn was suing William de Wasteney's to permit him to grind his demesne corn in William's mill in Colton quit of 'multura' (the grinding fee) as was formerly the case, an

example of how one lord was seeking to exploit his position, apparently at the expense of the other. It may well mean that Griffyn did not have his own mill, but even if he did, he could not have let such a challenge go by (Wrottesley 1888, 59). On another occasion, in 1351-2, John de Gresley and his wife Joan sued Henry de Rugeley for a mill in Colton claiming that the service due on it had not been rendered for two years (Wrottesley 1891, 110).

The parish of Colton, and the three manors within it had access to a diverse resource of land types, an important feature in well resourced manors, with the different assets that they offered, such as meadowland, pasture, heathland and woodland. The charters and the records of litigation relating to the manor can make this fairly explicit. For instance, in 1364 William de Wasteney was suing John Styvinton for causing waste and destruction in houses and gardens in Colton and Admaston. Such charges may be compared with modern-day asset stripping, and often arose in periods of custody of an estate, as in a period of minority. In this case it was claimed that William had demised to John for a term of 20 years two messuages and four gardens in the two vills, and John had pulled down a hall (*aulam*) worth 10 marks, a grange worth 5 marks, a bakehouse worth 40 shillings and an ox stall worth 20 shillings. In addition, he had cut down and sold 20 apple trees (3 shillings each) and 12 pear trees (2 shillings each) (Wrottesley 1892, 46). When in 1338 Richard de Blithefield was complaining about Robert de Littlehay causing waste and destruction in his houses and woods in Colton, specific reference was made to his pulling down a sheep fold (*bercarium*) worth 20 shillings and a piggery worth 20 shillings; for cutting down and selling 100 oak trees each worth 2 shillings, 60 'arabes' ('arablas', or 'white wood' trees) each worth 18d and 18 apple trees, each worth 2 shillings. The sheriff was ordered to make an inquisition in person, who reported back to the court with an amended list. It was found that Robert had destroyed an ox stall (*bovarium*) worth ½ mark, and of selling 61 oak trees each worth 15d., 4 'arabes' worth 4d. each, and 18 pear trees at 4d each (Wrottesley 1890, 81). This example well illustrates the familiar temptation to inflate the damages caused when going to law, but more importantly the pleas highlight the kinds of asset and resource that could readily be found within the manors of Colton. As a result of the inquisition, Richard received triple damages, that is, £13.16s.2d.

In 1301 John de Wasteney summoned John Griffyn in a plea that he should permit him to have common of pasture in Colton, de Wasteney claiming that William Griffyn had disseised his grandfather of common of pasture in 60 acres of wood in the vill for all manner of cattle (except at the time of pannage). This one entry reveals much about the local community; a dispute that clearly ran back generations and still unresolved, between prominent members of the community. Common pasture was a vital resource for all with livestock, but clearly there was a danger that it might be absorbed by landowners into their own possessions, but the overall competition for such resources both prompted individuals to 'acquire' it, and others to protect long-held rights of access to it. Implicit in the details of this plea is the presence of cattle and pigs within the local economy, supporting the observations already made in the 'waste and destruction' cases (Wrottesley 1886, 78). The case obviously reflected wider rights in Colton. In 1279-80 William son of Mathilda of Uttoxeter and his wife Juliana complained that Henry son of Hugh de Colton and John Griffyn had unjustly disseised them of common of pasture in 40 acres of wood in Colton where they used to common with all kinds of cattle after the time of mast, that is pannage. Henry and John responded to the accusation arguing that William had never had common of pasture in the wood, which they added had been enclosed

since the time of King John. On this occasion, the jury found in favour of Henry and John, although we don't know if this was justifiably so; however, the trends in local society are again evident (Wrottesley 1885, 147). In 1315 Anselm le Mareschal granted land out of his 'waste' for which he received 'common of pasture' in the Wilderley lands (Parker 1897, 321).

There are many charters and plea roll entries that make reference to the variety of land types and usage that the community of the vill used. In 1379-80, Henry Puys (Puiz) and Richard de Hampton accused John de Gresley and others of unjustly disseising them of a messuage, 60 acres of land (ie. arable), 10 acres of meadow, 8 acres of wood, a weir, and a ½ acre of land covered with water in Colton (presumably boggy or marshy ground) (Wrottesley 1892, 162). When Alice, the widow of John Griffyn, was at law in 1307 attempting to secure her dower, she sued four people each for a third part of a messuage, and in addition, 3 acres of land, 60 acres of wood, 20 acres of meadow and 40 acres of moor, reflecting the diversity of the vill's resources (Wrottesley 1886, 182). A similar case the year before saw Juliana, the widow of Henry of Colton, seeking (in Colton and elsewhere) 38 acres of land, 5 acres of meadow, 20 acres of wood, 3s.4d in rent and the third part of a messuage and a mill (ibid., 145). Fields are referred to around the parish, the 1402 rental referring, for instance, to 'le Merefeld', 'Gryffinesfeld' and 'Colettesfeld' (Wrottesley 1908, 210), and elsewhere to such as Fernhurst (Parker 1897, 305), Trentfield and Sewentoft around 1260 (ibid., 305, 309), land in the field of Homeley c.1300 (ibid., 311); in the early fourteenth century selions were mentioned in the field of Hertewalle and in Millfield (ibid., 318-19) and by 1252 Perichfeld (Parchfield) was in existence (ibid., 303). The pattern is one of scattered fields around the parish, no doubt of varying sizes, very different from the traditional image of three large open fields ranged around a central village. The fields were dispersed across the landscape just as the settlement was. And, to judge by names such as Haselhurst, Morhay, Ashhurst and Ashleyhay (ibid., 305, 312), and references to such as 'a piece of land and pasture in Colton called Le Brechheye' and a moor called 'Griffinsmor' (Jeayes 1895, No.320), these fields were interspersed between areas of moor and heath, woodland and pasture and various enclosures or 'hays'. This was clearly a woodland landscape.

This woodland perspective is further reinforced when it is noted that in addition, the lands of the manors were significantly increased through the ongoing process of assarting around the parish. In 1198-1208 assarts were noted near 'Colewelle' next to 'Burneboc' (Parker 1887, 155) and reference to assarting may be traced throughout the twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Although pursued across the parish (eg. 1252, mention of Warin de Colton's assart in Wirdeshay, or Wilderley; Parker 1897, 303), the area known as 'Newlands' particularly captures and reflects the process, even to the extent of the name by which the area was, and still is, known. Many transactions may be traced relating to this area and by c. 1230-40, William son of William de la Puiz was noted holding a half acre for 1d of Roger de Styvinton in 'le Newlond' (Parker 1897, 298). In 1315 Roger Denys of Blithbury gave to Richard the Shepherd selions of land in the open field called the 'over-rudyng' at the Newlands, situated alongside the road from Newlands to Blithfield; the very name 'over-rudyng' betrays this field's origins as an assart, while in 1324 William son of Ralph of Newland was giving land lying in the open field called the 'Newelonde' (ibid., 323, 329).

- 2.6 **Population:** Of the three manors recorded in 1086, two of them gave some account of the population living on them. The manor held by Ascelin had 14 villeins holding land as tenants of their lord, which given that these may generally

be taken to represent the heads of households requires the application of a multiplier, 5.0. This therefore indicates a population in the order of 70 people, which when added to the 50 people represented by the 10 villeins on Geoffrey's manor brings us to an estimated population in the order of 120 people. However, given the absence of information relating to Colt, and the additional allowances that are needed for the lord's household, the priest and the slaves, this is likely an under-estimation to some degree.

It is interesting to note that the population are all described as villeins, with no reference to bordarii or cottars. These latter categories of peasant were often to be found in association with woodland landscapes, and there is no doubt that Colton represented just such a landscape. It may be that at the time of the Domesday survey the opening up of the woodland and the heathland, closely associated with groups such as the bordarii, had not yet commenced in earnest on these manors and so had not prompted the emergence of this group of peasant within the local community. Certainly bordarii were present on neighbouring manors in 1086, such as Bishton, Admaston, Coley, Blithfield, Abbots Bromley and Moreton, albeit often as the 'minority' group within the vill. Domesday Book, like any estate survey, is essentially a 'snapshot in time', and so in this particular regard the community of the vill has been captured in the early stages of its development. However, within a matter of decades, the colonisation of the woodland and heath around the parish was fundamental to its development, and the nature of peasant tenures developed accordingly.

Although caution is called for, later taxation records may be used to gauge something of the growth of the settlement at Colton, typically producing data that represents the vill rather than individual manors. The main opportunity comes with the Subsidy Rolls of the fourteenth century. In 1327 some 27 taxpayers are listed, rendering 64 shillings, a significant sum (Wrottesley 1886, 198). Taking account of evasion and exemption, it would generally be suggested that this represents a population in the order of 340 people, around a three-fold increase (for the methodology, see Hunt 1997, 132, 141, n12); this is reflective of the pattern of significant population growth in England between the late eleventh and mid-fourteenth centuries. Between c.1086 and 1300, the population of England increased from somewhere around two million to perhaps as many as six million. At a local level the increases were clearly significant, although they varied from place to place. For example, in Warwickshire, in the Forest of Arden, it has been suggested that in the two centuries following 1086, the population growth ran at some 375%, while in most parts of England population increase has been estimated in the region of around 250% (Hallam 1981, 151). Hilton's comparison of the Bishop of Worcester's estate in 1182 and 1299 suggested at least a 65% increase in the tenant population, although he recognised that this was likely to be a significant underestimate (Hilton 1983, 75), while Halesowen between 1086 and 1315 saw a population increase of around 200%, and in Staffordshire, the population in the woodland parish of Wombourne increased between 1086 and 1327 by around 294% (Hunt 1997, 132); more generally, population growth in Staffordshire has been calculated as running at some 933% between 1086 and c.1290 (Hallam 1981, 151). The problems related to using the taxation rolls are well known and while it would be unwise to place too much reliance on precise figures, the basic trends of population growth in individual manors is of evident from such sources. For example, in the Warwickshire manor of Wishaw this population growth was arguably in excess of 500% by the fourteenth century. The Staffordshire manor of Wombourne saw a three fold increase in its population, that of Sedgley approximately doubled, and Halesowen increased by around 200%. In Totmonslow Hundred in the north of the county the evidence

seems even more emphatic. The population of Caverswall seems to have grown by over 400%, and that of Cheadle by a staggering 800%. Therefore, Colton sits comfortably within this wider picture.

The slightly later subsidy of 1332-3 lists only 16 taxpayers, representing a population of around 200 (Wrottesley 1889, 88), but it seems unlikely that the differences between these two subsidy lists reflects the downturn in population numbers that they might appear. It is to be expected that taxation lists would vary in number. The numbers 'captured' on them could be affected by a variety of factors, among them death, rising or falling prosperity, the parameters set for the subsidy, and the ability to evade. However, the variance here is quite substantial for a gap of only six years, so Parker's suggestion that the later subsidy actually reflected only one manor rather than the whole vill has some merit. Parker argues that the 1332-3 roll listed the Mareschal manor, including Littlehey, and that the additional 11 names included on the earlier list indicate the leading members of the community of de Wasteney's manor (Parker 1897, 210-13).

During the reign of Henry VIII, in 1543, a further subsidy was levied which in Colton saw 121 people making payments that amounted to 70 shillings (Parker 1897, 213-15). Professor Christopher Dyer has observed that when dealing with the data of this date for population trends, it is most appropriate to apply a multiplier of 7.0 (Dyer, pers com). On this basis the population of Colton would seem to be in the order of 850 people, more than double that which it was in the first half of the fourteenth century. It is unfortunate that we do not have anything substantial from the intervening run of some two hundred years in order to assess the prevailing demographic trends in Colton during that period, but it is difficult to escape the observation that if Colton had been significantly and adversely affected by the impact of the Black Death between about 1340 and 1450, then it had made a remarkable recovery. A similar phenomenon running against the expected trend has been found in Birmingham (Dyer, pers com; the Eric Hopkins Memorial Lecture, 'Growing at the edge; Birmingham's formative years', Birmingham University, June 11th, 2006), while this writer's work on Wishaw and Shenstone found it difficult to evidence significant downturns in the populations of these communities in the mid-fourteenth century (Hunt 2008, 547), echoing observations made by Hallam on the west midlands between 1280 and 1350 (Hallam 1981, 151). It is possible that Colton came through the threat posed by the Black Death relatively well, leaving a higher population base from which the community might grow than was the case elsewhere. Indeed, it has been observed in Warwickshire that woodland communities seem to have been more successful in surviving these years than their contemporaries in the large, nucleated village settlements, generally with a less diverse economy.

The 1666 Hearth Tax (SHC 1921, 30-1) shows 52 people taxed for 93 hearths, with a further 14 exceptions exempt under the Act, which might suggest a settlement of some 66 households, three of which had 4 hearths. However, again, caution is necessary. The hearth tax records the owners of hearths, but it does not follow that all the hearths allocated to an individual were all within one property. Thus, the assessments given for Colton suggest a minimum of 66 households.

What of the people who are named in these various lists? In the case of the fourteenth century subsidy rolls, this was still a time when personal names might say something about the individuals concerned. So, in addition to discovering who the leading men in a community were (based, through their assessment,

upon their prosperity), there might also be information about occupation, migration, and the local topography. In 1327 the subsidy list was headed by Ralph de Stafford, not because he was a resident lord in Colton, but because as the Wasteney's overlord he stepped in as 'custos' during periods of minority. This apart, both the lists are headed by the Mareschal, Griffyn and Mauveysin (Littlehay) families, the leading men of the vill. Among the occupational names are such as Adam le Smyth and Robert le Smyth, both linked to smithying or metalworking; and Henry Colmon, perhaps to be associated with charcoal production. Listed also were John le Baxter (Bacstere), a baker; Richard le Tornour, a wood turner and John le Countour (Cunter); this latter name is an interesting and unusual one of Norman origin and is an occupational name for 'one who counts, reckons' (ie treasurer, accountant), derived from Anglo-French 'countour' and Old French 'conteor'. It is difficult to know if John was still making a living according to the meaning of his surname. He appeared, alongside William le Cunter in litigation in 1301, in a complaint that with others they had unjustly disseised Margaret, the widow of John son of Hugh, of a piece of land in Colton 60' in length and 6' wide (Wrottesley 1885, 85; Wrottesley 1886b, 85). William was subsequently killed (1305-6) feloniously by Ralph Gryffyn (Wrottesley 1886b, 158). Clearly the family had tenurial interests in Colton, but it is not impossible that one of their line had served in a lord's household, in Colton or elsewhere.

Names that had more to do with location included Geoffrey Atteasshe (at the Ash), Holihurst. and perhaps de Morhay, both relating to moor or heathland. William de Handsacre suggests a case of migration into the village. Such names appear repeatedly. William atten Ashe occurs in 1288 (Wrottesley 1885, 190) and in 1306 Henry atte Asch appeared (Wrottesley 1886, 158), accused of killing Adam son of John son of Walter de Colton in Colton. As another example, Agnes of the Cnolle of Colton appeared in a plea 1347, presumably with her homestead set on a small hill or knoll (Wrottesley 1891, 66).

Most of Colton's population derived their living, whether lord or peasant, directly from working the land, growing crops and raising livestock. However, for further insights into the nature of the population we may turn to the surviving charters and Plea Roll entries that relate to Colton.

For example, in a charter of Walter Griffyn de Colton of 1198-1208 regarding land granted to St Thomas' (Parker 1897, 293), mention was made to land at 'Lund sub Colewelle', the latter name perhaps giving rise to de Caldewalle; and to an assart held by Robert the carpenter, although he appears to have held it of the manor of Haywood.

Metal working or smithying is evidenced on several occasions, as with reference in the 1230s or 1240s to William son of Roger, 'fabri de Colton', perhaps the same as William the Smith noted in c.1270. By 1292 it is difficult to be certain if the name 'William son of William the Smith' still, in this case, reflected his actual trade; he was killed in 1292 but is still referred to in a charter of 1322, but 'Adam the Smith' in 1324 most probably does (Parker 1879, 298, 306, 326, 329; Wrottesley 1885, 274; Wrottesley 1888, 74). We also find mention of Thomas le Smyth, 1362-3 (Parker 1879, 81) and of William, son of Adam le Smyth of Colton (Wrottesley 1890, 117; Wrottesley 1891, 21), so taken overall there is an impression that there were several men whose occupation lay in smithying but that some of their descendants may have inherited the name without the trade.

Colton had at least two mills and the presence of millers as an occupation appears in the thirteenth and fourteenth century. One Richard Molendinarius fil Reginald de Cruce (Richard the Miller; Wrottesley 1884, 65) in the thirteenth century granted to Laurence, abbot of Burton (1229-1260), the water-bed with its course running down through the middle of Richard's land in Colton, the water running between the holm of John de Ayshurst and the grove of James de Blithefeld. Similarly, in the fourteenth century a William son of Ralph the Miller of the Newlands occurs (1326, Parker 1879, 330), clearly referring back to a man who had made his living as a miller, most probably in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries.

There are men whose occupation on the land is implicit. For instance, by the late Middle Ages the description of husbandman is widely used, as in the case of John Clerk of Colton in 1422 (Wrottesley 1896, 83) and Thomas Newland of Newland in 1459, the latter sued, with Alice his wife, to surrender chattels to the value of £10 which Hugh Davynport accused them of detaining (Wrottesley 1901, 115). Sheep rearing also appears as a specific activity, as might be expected given the landscape of the parish. William, called the Shepherd of Newland, appears in 1341 (Parker 1879, 334) while in 1350 reference is made to Henry the Shepherd (Parker 1879, 345).

There were also men whose names suggested associations with local gentry households. Some have already been discussed in other contexts, but there were others whose occupations appear to have been connected with the care of horses. John Palfreyman appears in 1362-3 (Parker 1879, 81) while later, in 1407, Thomas Page of Colton occurs, described as a groom (Wrottesley 1896, 127).

A rental of 1402 provides another 'snapshot' of the late medieval population in Colton, this document relating to the manor of Littlehey, by this time a possession of Sir John Bagot (Wrottesley 1908, 209). It accounted for £3.17s.9½d. rent, primarily drawn from freeholders, who generally owed a rent and 'suit of court' to their lord. John Klerkeson held the capital messuage, that is, the manor house, paying £2.6s.8d a year (at two terms, the Feast of the Annunciation to Blessed Mary; and the Feast of St Michael) and owing suit of court every three weeks. There was land, meadow, pasture and wood adjoining, together with several messuages.

Thomas de Gresley held a messuage, paying 6d a year together with suit of court and accounted for two other messuages with adjoining land and meadow, held freely in fee and paying, respectively, 5d and 1d a year. In addition he held various parcels of land that included 'certain lands' in 'le Merefeld', an acre in 'Gryffinesfeld', and two selions next to 'Emedwe (cf. Hay Meadow, Eye Meadow; Parker 1879, 345).

There then follows a series of freeholders with less substantial holdings. For instance, Ranulph de Cruwe with one messuage and 7 acres of land and meadow, paying 3d a year and suit of court. William atte Yate had land in 'Colettesfeld', some previously held by Alicia Wymer for a term of 20 years, and in 'le Mulneholme'. Richard Normon and John de Forde (apparently jointly), Richard Gryffyn, John Sedale, Margery de Wolseley, Thomas de Ardynton (there is an Ardynton in Berkshire, but this seems unlikely here), Roger de Priores, William de Newland and Joanna Elnore are all listed as holding one messuage, most with adjoining land and meadow, paying a variety of rents but all owing suit of court. It will be clear that women might be tenants in their own right, and

Margery in fact appears twice in this rental, holding another separate messuage. Her name suggests that she may have 'migrated' into Colton, perhaps via marriage, or she could have inherited these lands. It is clear that the patterns of land ownership were very complicated and it was the normal situation that freeholders on neighbouring manors or in other parishes might hold land in Colton.

John Stekebok held one acre of land for 3d a year, and William Stekebok is listed holding $\frac{1}{2}$ an acre by the annual payment of $\frac{1}{2}$ d. John atte Brook, whose name suggests a homestead near a brook or stream, was noted holding a parcel of meadowland paying 1d a year while Nicholas Hancokson held 'a certain meadow' for the same amount. John Gefferey also paid 1d a year, in his case for one acre of land, that is, arable. Ralph Mulward is listed paying 3d a year for one croft, while a David Mulward appears holding a cottage with adjoining land for which he was paying the comparatively large rent of 3s. 6d, and a further 2 shillings a year for 3 acres of land in Horneley. It seems probable that the name 'Mulward' has associations with raising sheep, related to the Latin 'multo', meaning sheep or wether. However, one John Clerk was paying rather more at 11s.8d for one messuage with adjoining land and meadow. This may be the same John Clerk of Colton, husbandman, who appears in a suit of 1422, sued by John Chetwynd and Rose his wife, for a sum of 11 shillings which was in arrears of an annual rent of 22 shillings that he owed them (Wrottesley 1896, 83).

Finally, a John Taylor and one Simon Parker both appear on the rental. The latter's name implies that either he or an ancestor had worked as a park keeper, and there clearly must have been such people in Colton. Similarly, either John Taylor or an ancestor likely made their living as a tailor, an occupation that was widely found, but which would have been particularly appropriate in a small borough. A defining characteristic of settlements seen as boroughs, as they strived towards an urban way of life, was the diversity of occupation present within the community, and the large proportions of which whom did not rely on agricultural activity in order to make a living. Metalworkers, merchants, glassworkers, various artisans and victuallers all reflect such diverse communities, and the appearance of a tailor is entirely consistent with the presence of such a small urban community. Another similar instance may be John le Harpour of Colton, who appears c.1270 and was again referred to in litigation of 1289-90, when his daughter Amice in a dispute regarding her 'maritagium' referred to her father John giving a tenement to Roger son of William atte Ashe (Parker 1879, 306, 310; Wrottesley 1885, 192). So, although a member of the Colton community with landed interests, either he or his father may also have been reputed as a musician. This diversity of occupations, while not necessarily associated with the presence of a borough but certainly reflecting commercial activity in society, is the occurrence of men like Henry le Carter (Henry called the Carter) in 1341 (Parker 1879, 334).

In his seminal study, 'Lord and Peasant in Staffordshire in the Middle Ages' (Hilton 1970), Rodney Hilton drew attention to the prominence of free tenures among the peasantry in Staffordshire, perhaps amounting to more than half of the peasant families as tenants of free holdings (ibid, 9). Personal status did not necessarily coincide with the status of the holding although Hilton observes that there was a strong trend through the thirteenth century for the establishment of an identity between the two. And, of course, it was certainly possible for freeholders to also hold customary tenures. This profile to the population has much to do with the general absence of old (ie pre-Conquest), highly organised estates, but even more so to the woodland character of the region, presenting

opportunities for the colonisation of large tracts of land on relatively attractive terms of tenure, including freehold. This was precisely the kind of environment that could cope with the rapidly increasing population of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. These freeholdings could often be relatively small, and generally had a minimum of service obligations attached to them, such as suit of court. The rents paid were also generally quite modest by comparison with customary rents.

Unfortunately, there is no general estate survey, like those that Hilton could draw on, to determine in detail the tenurial status of the peasant population of Colton. However, the combination of documents that do survive leave an impression that freehold tenure was important in Colton. Royal courts were only open to freemen, and so the extensive records of litigation relating to Colton, particularly from the thirteenth century and later, and involving a myriad of families of widely varying status, from the gentry down, imply fairly extensive free status. Two inquisitions post mortem also survive, relating to William le Marshall in 1277 and to John le Marshall in 1283 (Wedgwood 1911, 169, 182). The 1277 inquisition refers to 17s 11d of yearly rent in Colton, and names William Le Jovene and Nicholas le Messenger as tenants, evidently freeholders; William rendered 1 mark yearly, while Nicholas was noted holding four plots of meadow, a certain moor, and herbage from his portion of a wood called 'Wylderdelegh' (Wyldesdele; Wildersley). Henry son of Hugh de Colton and John Griffyn also held of William le Marshall. Similarly, the inquisition of John le Marshall refers to the rent of assize of free tenants yearly, together with the rent of one acre of meadow demised at will, together amounting to 11s. 5¼d. The rental of 1402 also records primarily freeholders, although it is the situation by the early fourteenth century that is really more generally acceptable as a diagnostic; society had developed somewhat by the early fifteenth century. However, overall it seems probable that freeholders formed the prominent category within the population of Colton by the fourteenth century. That said, they were not a homogeneous class, nor the only category. The 1402 rental demonstrates the presence of cottagers alongside more substantial freehold tenants, while the account roll of 1362-3 for the de Wasteney's manor refers not only to freemen, but also to burgesses (who would also have been freemen) and to 'nativi' (*navitorum*) or serfs; this latter group representing the customary tenants who, although now rendering their rents and dues in cash (23s.3d) had traditionally owed labour obligations to their lord as a part of their tenancy (Parker 1897, 79). Unfortunately, it is not possible to judge any varying proportions in these categories between the manors that constituted the vill.

In conclusion, one relatively unusual 'specialist' role appears to have been fulfilled in 1225 by a freeman from Colton named Gerard. William son of John was at law suing William son of William de Admaston for half a virgate of land in Admaston during the course of which the latter resorted to right of trial by combat, calling for a duel and naming as his champion one Gerard de Colton. Although the challenge was accepted, in the event the other party and his champion, Roger de Frankvile, failed to appear (Wrottesley 1885, 33).

Therefore, the impression of the population of medieval Colton is largely what one might expect of a predominantly agrarian community, but within which there were clearly some specialist trades, some of which, such as metal working, building and victualling (cf Slater 1985, Table 6) were likely a reflection of Colton's growing commercialisation and moves in the direction of urbanisation.

3. Archaeological context

3.1 **Prehistoric Sites.** All of the recorded sites to date lie in the western half of the area under review, mostly located within Colwich Parish rather than Colton Parish.

A cave site (PRN 04055) thought to represent an occupation site, has been excavated on the southern side of a sandstone outcrop to the north of Bower Farm in **Colwich Parish**. Excavations in the cave in 1986 revealed a hearth and associated Mesolithic flint assemblage, sealed by a rock fall. Fragments of two human skulls of unknown date were also recovered from the cave.

The scheduled remains of a ring ditch and an associated linear feature interpreted as the probable remains of a solitary round barrow, of Late Neolithic to Late Bronze Age date (3,000 BC to 701 BC) in **Colwich Parish** (PRN 00205) just to the north of Taft Farm. Another ring ditch, of Bronze Age date, is visible as a crop mark on aerial photographs of Bishton (PRN 04604) in **Colwich Parish**.

Two pit alignments have been identified from cropmarks in Colwich (PRN 04607), to the north of the Sewage Works in **Colwich Parish**. No evidence of features relating to these pit alignments were identified in excavation, which are thought to date between the Late Bronze Age and the Roman period.



Above: Prehistoric sites in the area around Colton (HER, Staffordshire CC).

Four possible Bronze Age burnt mounds were identified in 1995 and subsequently confirmed by geophysics at Lount Farm (PRN 05007, 05008, 05009, 05010) in Colton Parish.

Below: Romano-British sites in the area around Colton (HER, Staffordshire CC).



- 3.2 **Romano-British activity**; the only site which might reflect Romano-British activity in the area are the two pit alignments (PRN 04607) already discussed and situated within **Colwich Parish**.
- 3.3 **Anglo-Saxon activity**. A watching brief in 1999 on the laying of the Audley to Alrewas Gas Pipeline reported three Anglo-Saxon body sherds, found in the fill of a furrow to the south-east of the village of Colton (PRN 05071). No further information is recorded with regard to dating, but in fact three sherds of pottery does little other than confirm Anglo-Saxon activity in the area.
- 3.4 **The Medieval Period**. The HER listing for the Church of St Mary at Colton (PRN 02047) presumes the church and its cemetery to be of 11th century foundation, serving the Domesday settlement (PRN02347), but is unable to cite any evidence to support the contention.

The sandstone ashlar church (a listed building, grade II*) contains 13th century fabric, comprising an early 13th century west tower, and a late 13th century south chapel that are now incorporated into a building remodelled by G.E. Street in 1850-2. The tower is of two stages with diagonal buttresses dying into a second stage off-set, with a 19th century crenellated parapet above. The first stage has a single lancet window in each outer face while the belfry has paired lancets. The 19th century south aisle retains a late 13th century west wall with a lancet window. In the south chapel there is a 13th century piscine with pointed trefoil head and sunken spandrels, and a sedilia with pointed arches and segment moulded surrounds.



Above: Medieval Sites in the area around Colton (HER, Staffordshire CC).

Domesday Book indicates the presence of a Water Mill in Colton in the late 11th century (PRN 00874) which the HER suggests was located to the south-west of Hamley House in the north-west of the parish. This location is entirely speculative. In reality the actual location of the Domesday Mill is not certain and there is at least one other site that might be considered. There was a mill on the Trent at the crossing of the Colton / Rugeley road by the 14th century and it is not impossible that this site was the Domesday site, particularly as it is mapped with the Colton Hall Estate, the apparent successor to the Domesday Manor that made reference to the mill.

During excavations in front of Bellamour Lodge, on the site now occupied by tennis courts, the stone foundations were found of a small rectangular building together with a stone corbel carved as a grotesque human face and fragments of stone tracery, all interpreted as the possible remains of a 13th century chapel (PRN 00875).

Colton has a medieval deer park adjoining Cannock Chase (PRN 00876), to the north-east of Stockwell Heath, and for which a substantial park pale still survives in good condition in places, up to 5.5 metres wide and 1.5 metres high, with an outside ditch 3.0 metres wide and 1.0 metre deep (SK 0645 2185). The deer park may be seen as a continuous line of field boundaries, while to the west there are several fields whose name preserves the element 'park'.

The 1999 watching brief on the laying of the Audley to Alrewas Gas Pipeline also reported a buried ditch feature to the south of the village of Colton, between Martlin Hill and Parchfield House (PRN 05073 at SK 0532 1992) that contained

medieval pottery. This feature could have been formed as a result of many circumstances and cannot be interpreted further.

Bouhey Hall (PRN 09515), situated to the north of the parish church (SK 0475 2067), is the site of a medieval monastic grange, subsequently occupied by an 18th century farm (*documentary evidence is claimed but not cited*) and now modern residential buildings. This is held to represent the Colton estate of St Thomas' Priory, formed out of a part of each of the two Colton manors, or their waste. After the Dissolution the estate (which included Lount Farm) passed to Bishop Rowland Lee who settled it upon his nephew; in c.1579 the property passed to Sampson Boghay, or Bouhey (Cockin, 77).

Aerial photography has enabled the identification of ridge and furrow earthwork remains at several locations in the parishes of Colwich and Colton, in the former case to the west of Lount Farm and near to Bishton (PRN 20094, 20095) and in the case of the latter immediately north of Bellamour in association with field boundaries that also indicate the presence of ploughed fields (PRN 20097 at SK 0418 2125) and to the north-west of the Littlehay Manor House (PRN 20102 at SK 0518 2107). It should be remembered that ridge and furrow cultivation continued into the late 18th century.

A linear feature (PRN 52176) was also identified on historic mapping and during archaeological excavations in 2000 on land near to Colton Mill, Rugeley. Situated to the north-west of Colton Mill the feature is thought to represent a feeder or drain associated with a water meadow; if so, this might as readily be of 17th century date as a medieval feature.

A fishpond of unknown date has been recorded in Colton, based on Ordnance Survey mapping (PRN 02048; SK 0423 2032). Such features are usually of medieval or post-medieval date.

The possible site of a glassworks has been identified at Lount Farm, Colton (PRN 20746), based upon the recovery of a crucible and a glazed stone in the area in 1993. The lack of brick is taken as a possible indicator that this site is of medieval rather than post-medieval date. A geophysical survey in 1998 subsequently identified the probable location of the furnace.

- 3.5 **Post-Medieval Sites**. Post-medieval sites represent the most numerous corpus of HER recorded sites, widely dispersed across the parishes of both Colwich and Colton.

- 3.5.1. **Transport and Communication** – these features are principally sites associated with the Trent and Mersey Canal. The Trent and Mersey Canal (PRN 05230, Stowe) was designed by engineers James Brindley and Hugh Henshall; authorised in 1766, the canal opened in 1771. The Taft Bridge (PRN 02879; Colwich) spans the Canal at Colwich and dates to the late 18th or 19th centuries, and there is another accommodation bridge of possible late 18th or 19th century date spanning the Trent and Mersey Canal at Colwich (PRN 02881). Bridge 68 known as the Turnover Bridge is in Colton Parish and is a Brindley bridge. Of similar date is the aqueduct (PRN 02882) carrying the Trent and Mersey Canal over the River Trent at Colton.

To the west of Rugeley (SK 031 199, Colwich) there is a cast iron milepost of hollow triangular section, dating to the late 18th or the 19th century (PRN 51307). It is located on the A51 between Wolseley Bridge and Rugeley.

3.5.2. Industrial – Brindley Bank Pumping Station (PRN 03278) in Rugeley Parish is a listed early 20th century brick built water pumping station by William Vaudrey, engineer with the South Staffordshire Water Company. The building, in Jacobean Revival style, is of two storeys, T-shaped in plan with an engine house and a projecting rear boiler house. This Edwardian pumping station houses a horizontal engine of rare surviving type in excellent condition.



Above: post-medieval sites in the area around Colton (HER, Staffordshire CC).

3.5.3. Farmhouses, farm buildings and farm complexes – in the area of the main Colton settlement, an important survival is Malt House Farmhouse, in Bellamour Way, Colton (PRN 09522); it is a listed early 18th century farmhouse with a later rear wing, built of red brick, with a sandstone plinth and dressings and a tiled roof. Its survival is helpful in illustrating the kind of settlement pattern that characterised Colton throughout the medieval and post-medieval periods, that of scattered farmsteads dispersed randomly along the principal routeways of the parish.



Above: the Malt House Farmhouse.

Also in the main settlement is Littlehay Manor Farm (PRN 09521), a farmhouse with a listed 16th century red brick (English bond) chimney stack, with sandstone quoins and a chamfered plinth. The chimney stack has two star shaped shafts which served two stone fireplaces, the first floor fireplace having a Tudor arch and moulded surround.

Further afield in the parish, Hamley House, Colton (PRN 09518; SK 0503 2056) is a listed 17th century farmhouse built on a T-shaped plan and refenestrated in the mid-19th century. The red-brick farmhouse (English bond) has a plain tile roof with stone coped verges, shaped kneelers and ball finials. Just to the west of Colton, across Moreton Brook, is Bellamour Lodge Farm (PRN 52637), situated just north of the derelict Bellamour Old Hall. The farm has a regular 'L' shaped courtyard plan, including additional detached elements such as the hall to the south. The associated farmhouse is of 17th century date and the complex was probably extant by this date. Local knowledge conflicts with this statement and asserts that there was never a farmhouse here.

3.5.4. Religious and Educational Buildings – St Mary's Primary School (PRN 51896) in Ballamour Way, Colton, is a single storey brick built school dating to the mid-19th century, altered and extended in the 1950s and later. The original block was built in 1862.



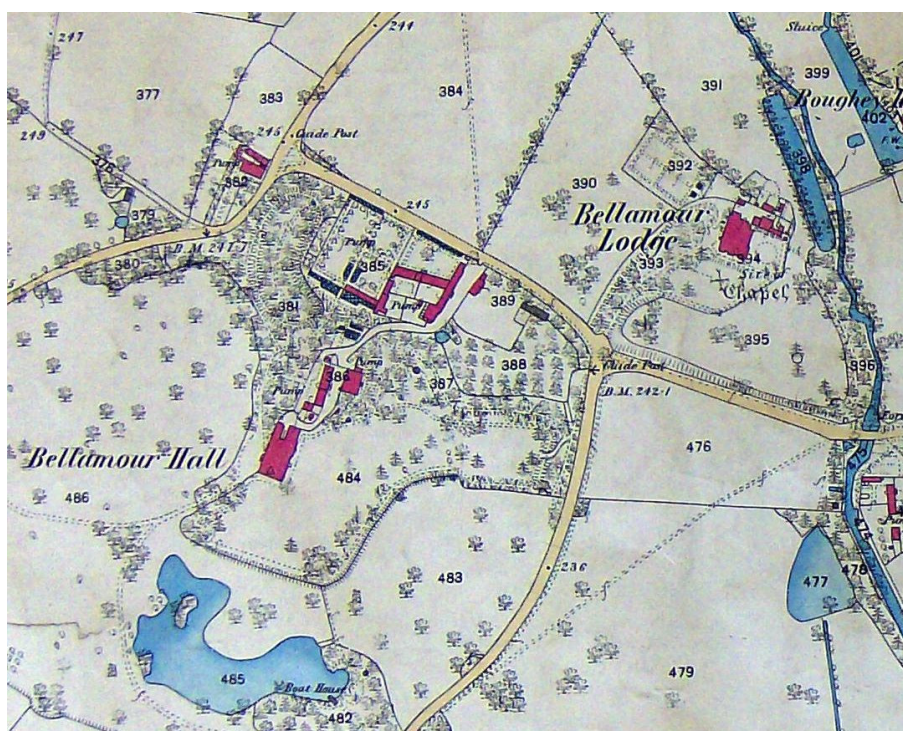
Above: Colton House.

3.5.5. Residential housing – prominent in Colton itself is Colton House in Ballamour Way (PRN 09513), a listed house of c.1730. This two storey house is of red brick (Flemish bond) and painted plaster dressings, with hipped plain tile roofs and brick ridge stacks. The main block is of two storeys and an attic, with slightly lower two storey flanking wings. Attached to each side of the house is a stone coped brick wall which sweeps forward to terminate in a square pier with ball finial.

Earlier in date is Bellamour Old Hall (PRN 09524) in Colton Road, Colton, a house of the early 17th century, but now represented only by its ruins. It was altered in the mid-19th century, and was partially demolished during the 1960s. The house, with a chamfered plinth, was built of sandstone ashlar with ashlar stacks. Features of the house included a Tudor arch doorway within a later two storey central porch, and fireplaces with a Tudor arch and ovolo-moulded surround.

Otherwise, the examples noted on the HER are few and relatively modest. They include Wharf Cottage, (in Colwich parish) a possible canal workers cottage (PRN 02880; Colwich), situated adjacent to the Trent and Mersey Canal at Colwich and dating to the late 18th or 19th century. Immediately to the south west of Hamley House in Colton are listed 18th century gate piers and garden wall (PRN 09519), while in the south east of the parish Parchfield House (PRN 14203) is a listed mid-19th century house, apparently of two builds, constructed in red brick with a tiled roof.

- 3.5.6. **Planned landscapes and associated buildings** – a landscaped park was laid out around Bellamour Hall in Colton (PRN 40288); the HER does not date this feature.



Above: Bellamour Hall.

- 3.5.7. **Other** – An area of water meadow, of possible 19th century date, has been identified to the north-west of Colton Mill from aerial photographs and historic mapping (PRN 52202; SK 0437 1923). It appears that only the basic elements of the water meadow (such as the head and the main drains) now survive. Carriers may survive as earthworks, but over less than 10% of the total area of the meadow. The probable remains of the head main and of a probable brick-built sluice associated with this water meadow system were identified during an archaeological watching brief in 2008. The water meadow system may have been

fed from an overflow on the adjacent Trent and Mersey Canal, as well as having a channel linking it to the River Trent. Further to the west, there is also the well preserved earthwork remains of another post-medieval water meadow system located on the River Trent to the south-east of Bishton (Colwich; PRN52672).

A probable 19th century domestic rubbish dump (in Rugeley parish) was identified adjacent to the River Trent at Brindley Bank during an archaeological watching brief in 2008 (PRN 52203). The deposit comprised of an area of charcoal, ceramic and glass spread over an area of approximately three metres, and to a depth of three to four metres.

A linear feature identified during an archaeological watching brief on land to the east of Wolseley (Colwich, SK 0301 2013) in 2008 (PRN 52204) has been interpreted as the remains of a probable field drain of 19th century date.

3.5.8. Sites of Unknown Date. A linear cropmark feature (PRN 01428) of unknown date or purpose has been identified in the area north of Colwich Lodge, at Bellamour Hall Park, Colton. To the south east of the parish, aerial photographs taken in 1963 have also been used to identify a group of linear and rectangular cropmarks (right-angled or L-shaped) (PRN 01662; SK 0610 1930). They do not appear to be on previous road or field boundary alignments and may possibly be associated with the former Colton Hall manor.



Above: sites of unknown date (HER, Staffordshire CC).

4. Pictorial Sources

The following pictures of Colton may be found in the 'Staffordshire Views' series in the William Salt Library, Stafford:

- **SV III.137** Colton Church: sepia drawing 1837
'Colton Church.' View from the village street, showing chiefly the west tower rising above thatched roofs.
'T. P. W.,' [Thomas Peplow Wood.] 7 inches x 6 inches.

- **SV III.138a** Colton Church: sepia drawing 1842
'South East View of Colton Church, Staffordshire.' Showing the nave, the large chancel (with low side windows), the east window of the north aisle, the chancel door, the clerestory, the tower, and the south porch.
'J. Buckler.' 12 inches x 9 inches.
- **SV III.138b** Font in Colton Church: sepia drawing 1842
'Font in Colton Church, Staffordshire.' Showing a plain half-globe font on round base.
'J. B.,' [John Buckler.] 6 inches x 5 inches.
- **SV III.139a** Colton - Bellamore House: water colour painting
nd (c.1800)
North west view showing a large Georgian white house with a portico of four pillars. It is of three stories with a low roof, and appears to be on a hill in a park. Behind, to the left, is a gabled house with a lantern.
Anonymous, [in the style of Donaldson]. 15 inches x 9 inches.

NB: Compare the gabled house with the lantern to Old Bellamore, in 'Some Account of Colton and of the De Wasteney's Family,' (The Rector of Colton, F. P. Parker, 1897) view facing p.151.
- **SV III.140** Colton - Bellamore House: water colour painting
nd (c.1820)
East south east view showing the wing at the back of the house. There is a many-gabled house to the right in the distance, with a lantern on the roof.
Anonymous, [in the style of Donaldson]. 16 inches x 9 inches.

NB: Compare the gabled house with the lantern to Old Bellamore, in 'Some Account of Colton and of the De Wasteney's Family,' (The Rector of Colton, F. P. Parker, 1897) view facing p.151.
- **SV III.139b** Colton - Bellamore House: steel engraving
nd. (c.1830).
'Bellamour House, the Seat of J. Oldham Esq., 'showing the house situated in a park among wooded hills.
'Drawn by F. Calvert; Engraved by T. Radclyffe; Published by W. Emans, Bromsgrove Street, Birmingham.' 6 inches x 4 inches.
- **SV III.139c** Colton Bridge: steel engraving nd (c.1828)
'Colton Bridge over the Trent, Rudgely, Staffs,' showing a single arched bridge with cows in the river. (Taken from a Calendar.)
Anonymous. 2.5 inches x 1.25 inches.
- **SV I.166b** Colton - Bellamour House: engraving nd. (c.1830)
'Bellamour House, the Seat of J. Oldham Esq., 'showing the house situated in a park among wooded hills.
'Drawn by F. Calvert; Engraved by T. Radclyffe; Published by W. Emans, Bromsgrove Street, Birmingham.' 6.25 inches x 4 inches.

5. Cartographic review

5.1 The earliest map evidence for Colton comes in the form of eighteenth century estate maps which by their nature depict parts of the parish and are relatively uninformative on settlement morphology, but are none the less very important in helping to identify and reconstruct elements of the probable medieval landscape.

The earliest of these are two maps of 1724 in the 'Bagot Atlas' which show parcels of land dispersed across the northern half of the parish. There are two focal points whose locations may be confirmed by cross-referencing the map and field boundaries with the later Tithe Map. In the north-western corner of the parish there is a significant block of land, to the east and the west of Lee Lane, but with a particular concentration in the corner adjacent to Blithfield parish. This area is referred to as Marshall Flats on the map, a name that does not survive in use a century later. The name naturally raises the possibility that land in this area was once held by the Mareschal or Marshall family, one of Colton's seigneurial families in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. By 1844 this land, or at least part of it, was known as Marshy Flats (Tithe Map, fields 727, 728) which could be a corruption of the earlier name. The field boundaries shown on the map are suggestive of former open field use.

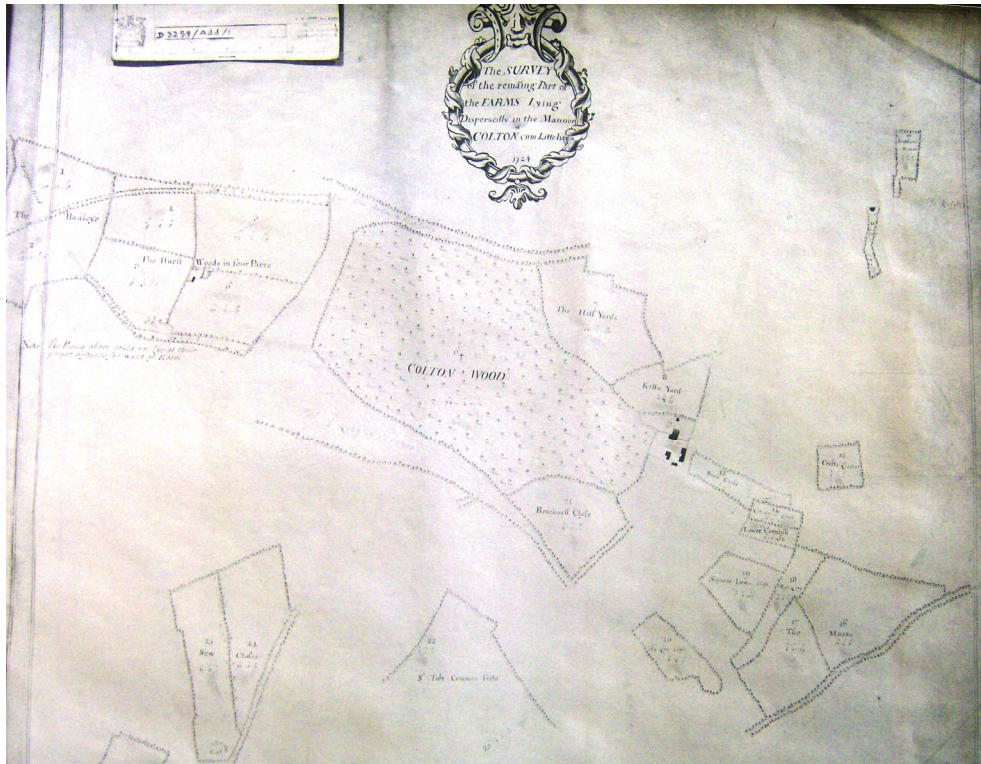


Above: Marshall Flats in the Bagot Atlas, 1724.

The second map in the 'Bagot Atlas' records parcels of land in the vicinity of Park Lane and Mere Lane, at the parish boundary, and another closer to the heart of the parish, adjacent to Hollow Lane. The first of these parcels, at the northern edge of the parish, is described as 'The Old Parke Lands', lying north of Stockwell Heath. The association of this area with former parkland is reinforced in the later Tithe Map through the field names used here (Tithe Map, fields 449,

450, 480, 485) and is entirely consistent with the documentary record which shows that there was an area known as the 'Old Park' by 1349, a name which suggests that it was not the only such park in the parish by this date (Cantor, 1962, 76). Furthermore, stretches of the park pale have been recorded (above, 3.4); the location of this park, at the edge of the parish, is 'text book' in nature. The soil association here is 572f, Whimble 3, a reddish fine loamy or silty over clayey sol with slowly permeable subsoils and slight seasonal water-logging, suitable for winter cereals, stock raising and short term grassland (Soils of England and Wales, 13).





Above: the Old Park and Colton Wood, Bagot's Atlas, 1724.

The second parcel of land is dominated by 'Colton Wood', situated to the north of Hollow Lane. Even in 1724 this represents a fairly extensive area of woodland and is suggestive of the heavily wooded nature of the medieval landscape, in this case running up to Little Hey. The boundary of the Colton Wood, with 'Killn Yard' at its south-western corner (Tithe Map, field 394), comes right to the heart of the settlement focussed on Little Hey manor. There is no reason to think that this was a lone instance in the medieval period.

5.2 The 'Estate Map of Lady Raymond', dating to 1750, deals with an estate that occupied the south-eastern corner of Colton parish, focussed in particular on Colton Hall Farm. These lands run from the south of Hollow Lane and west of Sheep Close Lane south-eastwards to the parish boundary with Mavesyn Ridware and the course of the River Trent. Apart from the farm, there is little on this map that relates to the settlement, but once again there is important information relating to the medieval landscape.



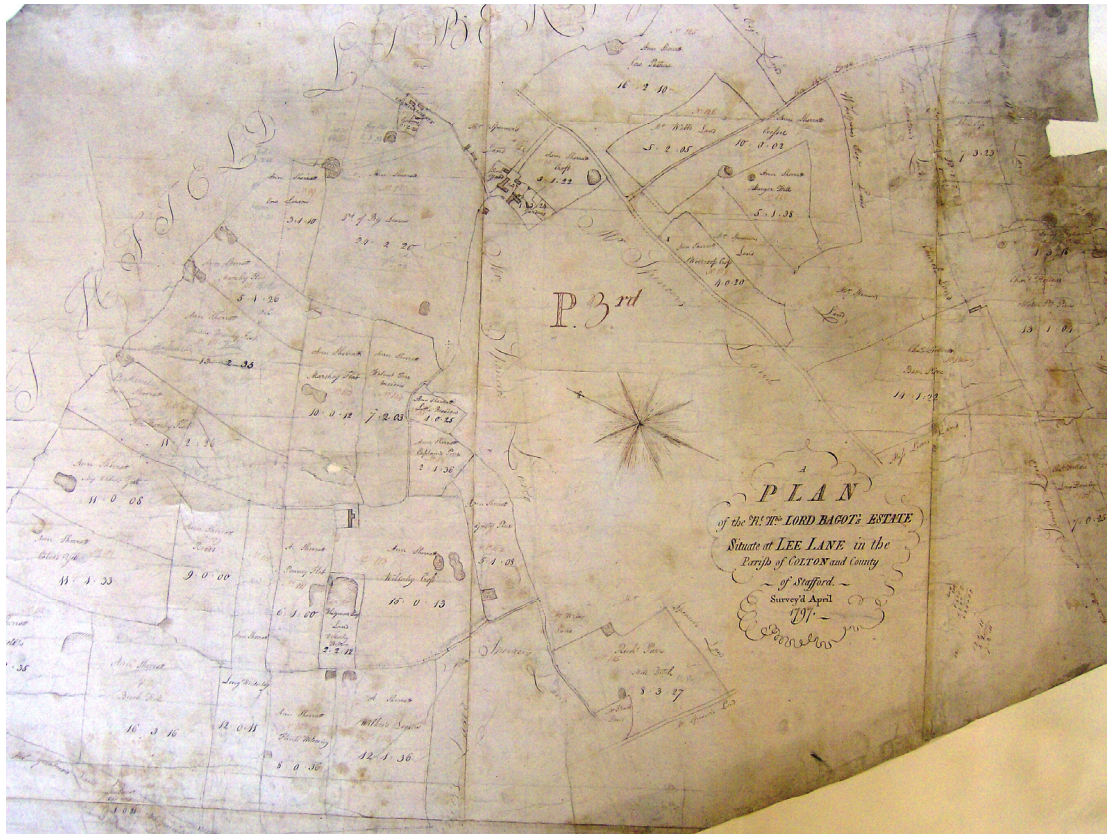
Above: Estate Map of Lade Raymond, 1750.

The principal observation to be made is the frequency of field names that may be associated with parkland, most obviously some eight fields referred to as 'Coulton Park', together with others such as 'The Parks in four parts' in the south-east, and 'Little parks in 3 parts' in the north, and 'More Park' to the west. This presumably represents the location of 'Colton Park', first mentioned in 1359 (Cantor 1962, 76) but undoubtedly established before 1349, given that the other park at this date was referred to as the 'Old Park'. In common with the latter, this park is again located at the fringes of the parish although this cannot be disassociated from the location of Colton Hall itself.

One further observation may be made by comparison with the Tithe Map of one hundred years later. On the latter map the Coulton Hall estate is bisected by New Road, while Sheep Close Lane enters the north-western corner of the estate. The latter is also to be seen on the 1750 map, but New Road did not exist in its later form; rather, there was simply a road that served Colton Hall Farm. The creation of a through-route between 1750 and 1845 is reflected in the name 'New Road',

although that part of the road lying to the north of the farm was mapped in c.1775 while the section shown on the 1750 map did not appear.

5.3 Returning to the north-western corner of the parish, a plan of April 1797 shows Lord Bagot's Estate, 'Situate at Lee Lane'. This map essentially repeats the area shown in the 1724 map of Marshall Flats in the 'Bagot Atlas' and apart from picking out individual details, such as 'Walnut Tree Meadow' (also on the Tithe Map, field 717), does not add greatly to the information on the earlier map. However, the 1797 map does highlight 'Lee Lane Farm', reminding us of a medieval landscape that was 'populated' by scattered farmsteads, in this case situated just west of Lee Lane, the road that ran towards Uttoxeter.

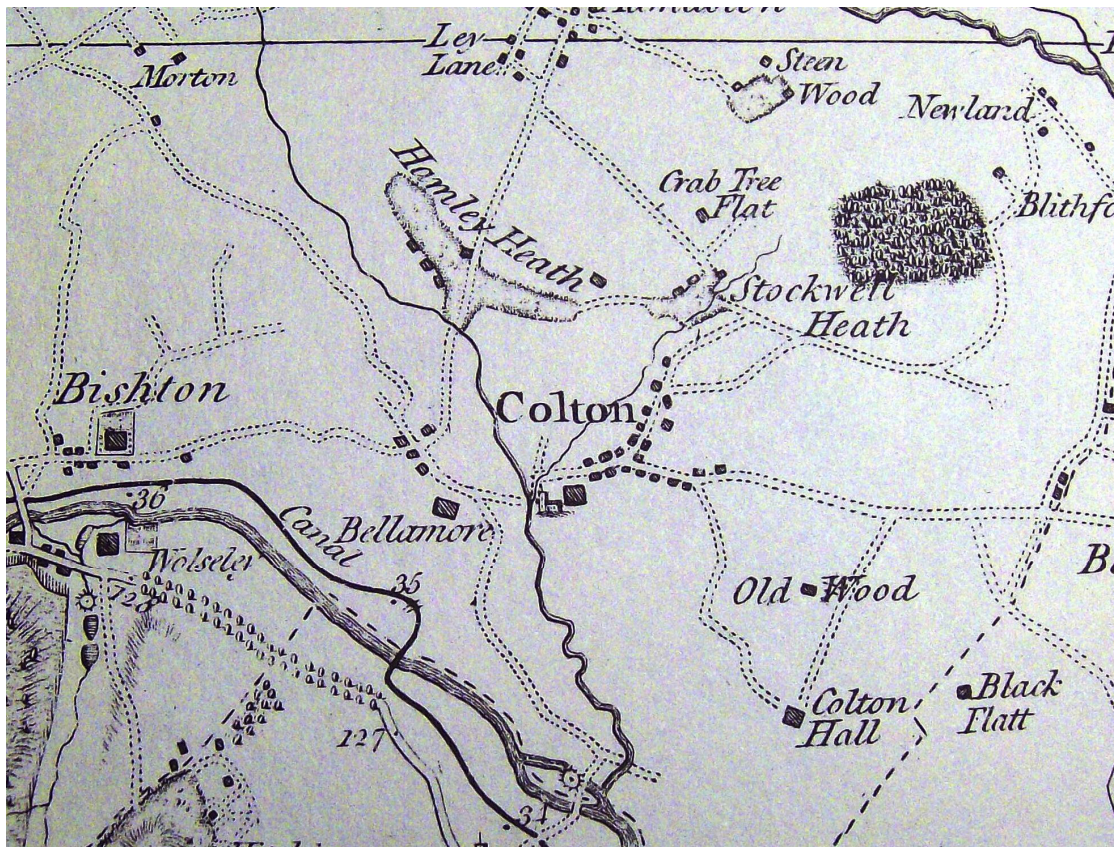


Above: the Lee Lane estate, 1797.

5.4 It is Yates' Map of c.1775 that offers the first wider cartographic perspective on the Colton area although clearly this was not intended to present a comprehensive mapping of the area. Colton is situated in an area primarily of dispersed or scattered settlement. With the exception of Rugeley to the south, clearly an urban centre by 1775 (as indeed it was by the fourteenth century), the settlement pattern of the area was mainly one of hamlet and farmstead. To the west of Colton, beyond the Trent, lay Wolseley Hall and Park, both of which are marked on Yates' map.

Apart from Rugeley, the other principal concentration of settlement was Hill Ridware; otherwise, settlements such as Blithbury, Admaston, Bishton and Colwich, like Colton itself, conform more to a pattern of dispersed hamlets. Within this group, Colton is portrayed as the more nucleated and larger of the settlements. Scattered across the parish were smaller points of settlement, generally little more than a farmstead or collection of them. To the north of Colton

lay Ley Lane, Hamley Heath, Newlands and Stockwell Heath; to the south-east of Colton itself there was Old Wood and Colton Hall, while to the west of Colton, across the Moreton and beyond Bellamoure, there was another settlement focus at the crossroads with Moreton Lane, now represented by Bellamoure Hall Farm.



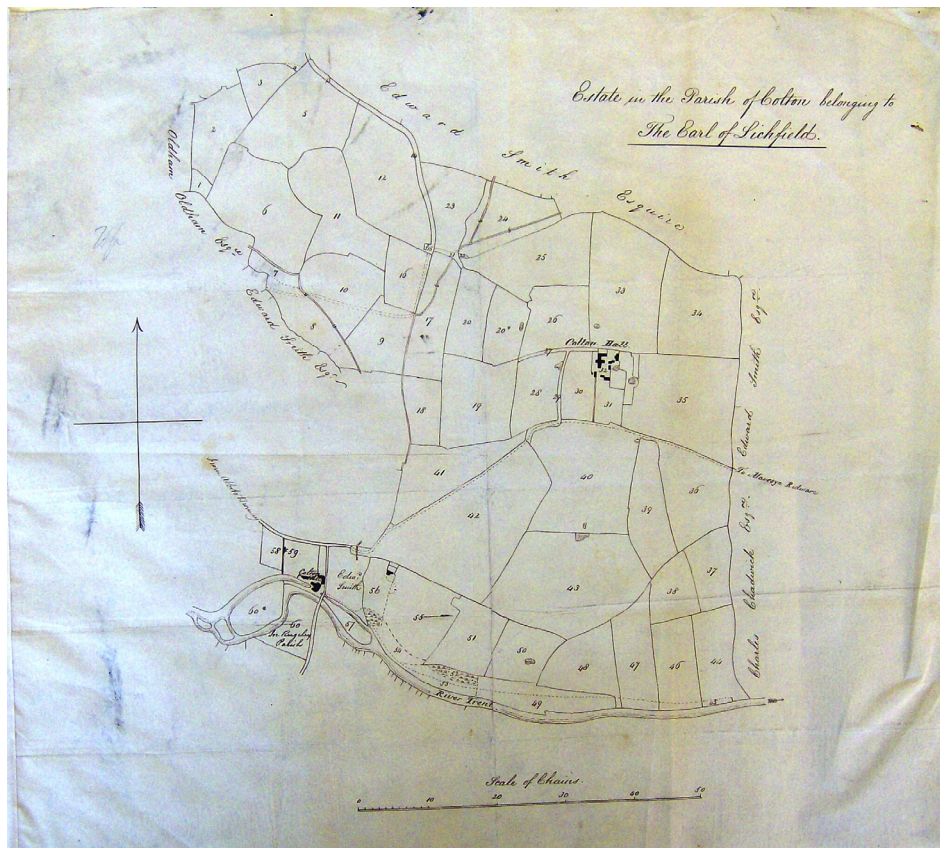
Above: detail of Colton on Yates' Map, c.1775.

Colton itself is shown laid out along two roadways to the east of the Moreton Brook, a tributary of the River Trent which it joins at the southern edge of the parish. East of the church (now Bellamoure Way) the road forks, one running north-eastwards (now High Street) towards Stockwell Heath, while the other leads off towards Blithbury (Hollow Lane), running from which are two roads serving Colton Hall. Buildings are shown lining both sides of the road, particularly along Bellamoure Way and on the High Street towards Stockwell Heath, while on Hollow Lane the majority of the buildings are laid out to the south of the road.

Thus, the clear impression is of the main settlement laid out along the two principal roads that formed through-routes. Within this pattern it is possible to distinguish a number of buildings, most obviously the church on Bellamoure Way. Immediately to the east of the church a prominent building is marked, which might represent the Rectory site but more probably is Colton House, a two-storey house of c.1730. Within Colton itself there is also a slightly larger building represented as set back from the High Street, most probably the Littlehay Manor House. Beyond this core settlement, Colton Hall is clearly marked and named to the south-east, while to the west of bridging point over the Moreton, Bellamoure Old Hall is also prominent. Finally, at the southern edge of the parish where the boundary is formed by the River Trent, Yates' Map records the presence of a mill adjacent to the main route crossing the river and running on into Rugeley.

Finally, the recoding on the map of place names such as Hamley Heath, Stockwell Heath, Crab Tree Flat, Old Wood and Newland convey the impression of a landscape that was largely made up, previously if not in 1775, of woodland and heathland, and had been subjected to assarting activity.

- 5.5 The undated elegant pen and ink sketch map showing the 'Estate of the Earl of Lichfield in the Parish of Colton' (SRO D 615/M/5/2) likely dates to the first half of the nineteenth century and is concerned with the Colton Hall estate, discussed in 5.2 above. The map adds nothing to what has been noted above, except that Colton Mill is clearly shown on the north bank of the Trent and to the west of the Trent. Colton Hall is clearly shown and marked as such, rather than as 'Colton Hall Farm'.



Most probably of a similar date is the 1828 map of Rugeley and Colton (SRO D 615/M/5/7) which shows only the Colton Hall Farm estate in relation to the parish. It is effectively a coloured and annotated version of the estate sketch map giving land use information, indicating for instance that Field 43 is 'not to be sown with wheat', that Field 20 was 'just grazed', or that Field 35 was 'barley seeded'. Colton Mill is also shown. It would also seem that there was now clearly a through-route bisecting the estate, although not precisely following the line that was later taken by New Road.



Above: Rugeley and Colton, 1828.

5.6 The 1845 Colton Tithe Map survives in two versions, one in the Stafford County Record Office and the other in the Lichfield Joint Record Office. The former of these is in a very poor state of preservation, and, to judge by the labelling on the map, it appears to have been some kind of working copy. The map was coloured to show the holdings of about five major landowners across the parish, such as H W Holland whose lands, which included the Old Park and parts of the Lee Lane estate, were coloured green. However, a significant amount of the parish is omitted and for those areas that can be read, there is little information of the infrastructure of the parish. Therefore, it is necessary to turn to the Lichfield copy and what follows is based on this version of the map. However, nor is this map without its problems. A significant proportion of the Colton area was not mapped, being not titheable, or described as either 'In Colwich Parish', or 'Not within the District'. This includes some land at the heart of Colton village. One example is Boughey Farm, the residence also known as Boughey Hall, to the north of the Church (adjacent to properties 598, 600, 602), but whose buildings are shown only in outline. While this map confirms the presence of these buildings in 1845, unfortunately the absence of information on other parcels of land cannot be simply assumed to reflect an absence of buildings. Consequently, it was also necessary to consult the Tithe Map for the neighbouring parish of Colwich, this map dating to 1839.



Above: the site of Boughey Hall.

With regard to the settlement pattern in the parish, the Tithe Map tends to reinforce, in more detail, the impressions gained from Yates' Map some seventy years earlier. Colton itself remains the main settlement with the three roads (Bellamour Way, High Street and Hollow Lane) providing the focus for it. The Church still stands apart somewhat from the village, at the head of what would have been the main road as it led to the bridge across Moreton Brook. Attention has been drawn to the adjacent property (318) known as 'Castle Croft', querying the possible location here of a seigneurial residence, but there is nothing on the Tithe Map to either support or deny this contention. The buildings that make up the village are ranged along the road as previously described, but the detail of the Tithe Map makes it clear that this was not as consistent or as coherent as the Yates' Map suggested. The differences that emerge are more likely due to differences between the scale and precision of these maps, rather than real changes between 1775 and 1845. Between the church and the fork in the road there are only three buildings to the north of the road and five or six to the south, one of which (327) was the Bell Public House. To the north of the road a large part of land was described as a grove and pools. The land opposite the Bell Public House, described as within Colwich Parish comprised three properties set well back from the main road, with four principal buildings; while diagonally opposite another parcel of Colwich land had a building associated with it. Within the context of the village as a whole, this is an area of relative density for buildings, but it could not be described as intensive settlement. There is no continuous ribbon of building along this road; rather, an 'interrupted row' of residences on the south side of the road, originating no doubt in farmsteads, with associated land; and a slightly more concentrated settlement pattern on the north side, but occurring in the area of the Bell Public House rather than the church.



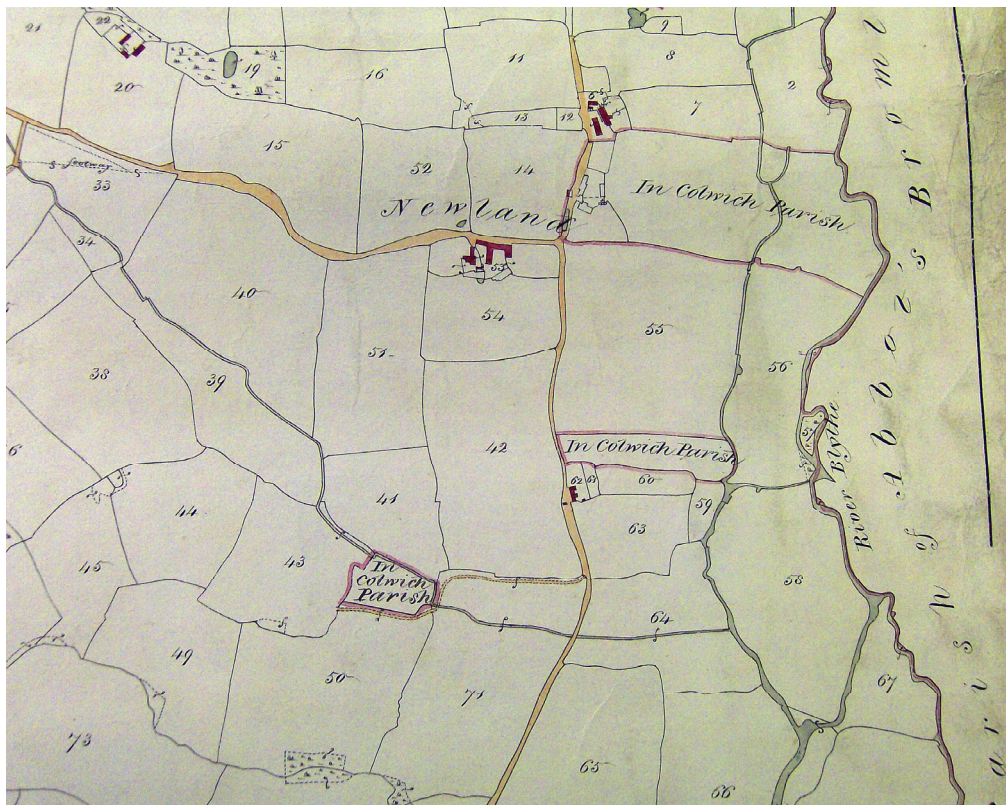
Above: detail from the Colton Tithe Map.

A similar pattern of 'interrupted rows' is repeated on the other two roads, apart from a greater concentration of buildings clustered around the fork itself. High Street is flanked by properties described as crofts although not all show buildings on them. Littlehay Manor House is described as a homestead, opposite to which are two more parcels of land described as in Colwich Parish. Both had buildings on them, surrounded by open land, but the impression is again consistent with scattered homesteads dispersed along the road, surrounded by land. This settlement pattern is still more emphatic along High Street than along Bellamour Way.

There is another minor cluster of buildings at the north end of High Street, where it forms a junction with Heathway/Narrow Lane, but otherwise between these points there is a building on the east side of the road, and about seven to the west, three or four of them about half way along; more characteristic of this road are the large amounts of space between and around the buildings. This is particularly so on the eastern side of the road but it was noted above (5.1) that this was an area where Colton Wood impinged on the village area. These same observations may be made of the settlement along Hollow Lane, where woodland had perhaps tended to direct the main establishment of tofts to the south of the lane.

Otherwise, the settlement remained a scattered one in 1845, capturing a sense of the late medieval landscape. In the north-eastern quadrant of the parish there is little settlement to be seen; the main location is 'Newland', essentially in origin a medieval farmstead whose name suggests that it was created as a result of assarting. A couple of similar but smaller residences sit nearby. The presence of the 'Old Park', representing a 'protected landscape', served to deflect settlement

away from the enclosed area, particularly, one suspects, if the lord was normally in residence in the manor.



Above: detail from Colton tithe map, 1845, showing Newland.

The south-eastern quadrant of the parish is not recorded on the 1845 Tithe Map, although it is known from maps as recent as 1828 (5.2 and 5.5 above) that this was the area dominated by the Colton Hall Farm estate, with a similar lack of any major settlement. Old Wood seems to be the only settlement other than Colton Hall itself.

The parish to the north and north-west seems to have offered more scope for homesteading. Small settlement foci had developed at Stockwell Heath and Hamley House, both likely to be the result of medieval assarting. Similarly, other homestead sites include Crabtree House, Hamley Heath (Property 772), Lee Lane Farm and Wilderley Hall (Property 724), the latter again a name that perhaps recalls assarting (cf Wilderness Farm, a moated site in Northfield Parish, Worcestershire; Hunt 1997, 136).

The area to the west and south of Colton is again consistent with what has been observed elsewhere in the parish. Bellamour is located to the west of the bridge over Moreton Brook (Property 297) with Marstons Croft (Property 781) and Hamley Cottage (Property 767) to the north; travelling westwards along Moreton Lane we come to 'The Lount' (Property 756), another farmstead that appears to have been present since the medieval period.

Through field and property names, and the shape of the fields, the Tithe Map and Award also give some indications of the make-up of the landscape, and of the elements that were found within it. For example, there are a number of areas which appear at some point to have supported open field farming; these include

the area north of Mill Lane, along Moreton Lane to the north-west of Bellamour; in the north-western corner of the parish, and running eastwards on both sides of Sherra Cop Lane and north of Crabtree House; there are hints in the area adjoining to the south of the 'Old Park', and an extensive area of such activity to the south of the Newlands as far as Hurst Wood. These areas of agriculture can be set alongside the evidence of woodland and heath that have already been noted, much of which is again reiterated through the field names, to create an impression of the landscape and the settlement scattered across it.

Names that reflect woodland are particularly evident in the vicinity of Colton Wood and the Old Park, suggestive of a band running from east of Little Hey northwards towards Newlands. 'Hay' names suggest former woodland at the south-western corner of the parish as well. Meadowland was distributed around the parish but was particularly noticeable in the south of the parish, towards the River Trent, in the north-west of the parish, and to the south of Newlands. Moorland is also widely distributed but was particularly a feature of the western half of the parish, running right up to the heart of Colton village. A number of intakes are noted north of Moreton Lane, near to the junction with Lee Lane, and south of Moreton Brook. The nature of the boundaries here suggests land that has been taken into cultivation, probably out of rough land and moor. Pasture land (the term 'leasow' is widely used in Colton) is scattered across the parish but is notable in the area between Colton and Hamley House, and to a lesser extent in the north-western corner of the parish and in the area between Hurst Wood and Newlands in the north-eastern corner of the parish.

Colton Mills is shown situated on the River Trent, on the southern boundary of the parish, but there are also several field names that reflect association with mills. These fields (677, 678, 679, 682, 689) are concentrated to the west of Lee Lane and might represent the site of a windmill in this area.

5.7 The Ordnance Survey 6 inch and 25 inch maps of the late nineteenth century illustrate further developments in the landscape while also confirming the field pattern of the parish. A number of individual farms and associated buildings appear that add to the dispersed nature of the settlement pattern. Between Colton and Rugeley may be found Parchfield House and Parchfield Farm, names which might have their origin in the park fields of the Colton Hall estate lying beyond Moreton Brook, although in a charter of 1252 a reference to 'Perichfeld' has been tentatively linked with Parchfield by Parker (Parker 1879, 303). New Barn and Hurstwood Barn also appear on the map, and Old Wood is now Oldwood Farm.

In the case of the main village of Colton, infilling appears to have taken place, particularly on the road between Colton House and the fork to the east. While this might be expected some caution is necessary. Opposite the Bell Inn a series of residences are shown, set back from the road, with a smithy at one end and Colton Lodge at the other. Apart from the smithy, these buildings are not shown on the Colton Tithe Map, but this area is one that, like several others, simply was not mapped or surveyed, being recorded as within Colwich Parish, and it was noted above that the Colwich map does record buildings here, set back from the road, as on the Ordnance Survey sheet. However, the impression is now one of a more intensive development of this space than was the case in 1839.

building towards the junction with Heathway/Narrow Lane were not recorded on the Tithe Map, again because this land was noted as being in Colwich Parish (they were recorded on the Colwich Tithe Map). However, these additions do not significantly alter the interpretation of the settlement pattern in this area.

At the western end of the village, to the north of the Church, Boughey Hall is marked, said to represent the Colton estate of St Thomas' priory, together with Lount Farm. This association gains credence from the post-dissolution descent of these lands, both being received by Bishop Rowland Lee who settled it on his nephew Rowland Fowler (Cockin 2000, 77). To the west of the hall lay Bellamour Lodge (built in 1851) reputedly associated with a former Chapel site, and beyond that Bellamour Hall. The land on which Bellamour Lodge stands was recorded as 'Not within the District' on the Colton Tithe Map, while Bellamour Hall was recorded on the Tithe Map. On the Ordnance Survey, 1:25,000 map of 1961, this site is shown as 'Bellamour Hall Farm'. The 1882, 1887 and 1961 maps also record 'Eva's Cottages' associated with parcels of land that in 1845 were recorded as intakes, perhaps reflecting the end stages of the 'colonisation' of this land.

6. Site visit

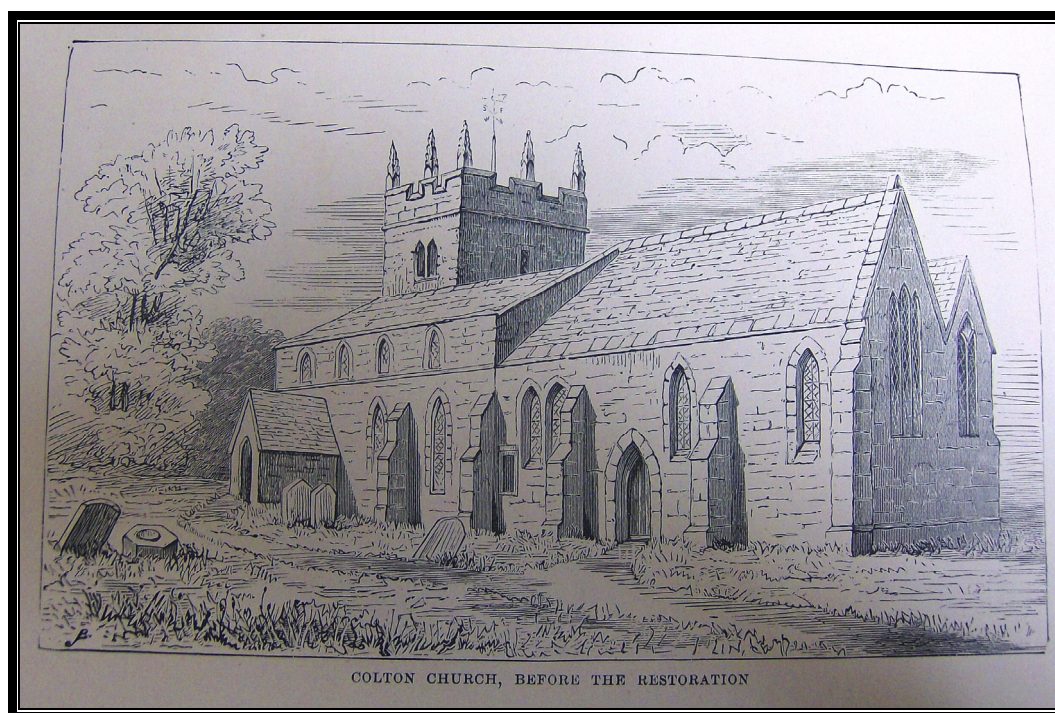
6.1 The site was visited on July 18th, 2009 at which time weather conditions were fair to good. The visit examined the principal areas of the core settlement, together with Newlands and the surviving section of the park pale associated with the Old Park. Cartographic analysis conveys an overall impression of a dispersed nature to the settlement in Colton, an impression which was confirmed by the site visit; the site is reviewed along the three principal roads at the heart of the main settlement area, a layout that has medieval origins, with farmsteads and homesteads laid out along the roads, often with some distance in between them.



Above: Colton, junction of Bellamour Way and High Street.

6.1.2 **Bellamour Way:** Moreton Brook is crossed by a bridge set alongside a fording point, very probably reflecting an arrangement of medieval origin. Immediately upon crossing the brook the church of St Mary is visible to the south of the road, but set back from it by some distance. Apart from the former Rectory to the south-east of the church (and its predecessor to the west of the church), the church stands in relative isolation from the rest of the settlement itself. However, its location within the parish as a whole is perhaps more central than is suggested by its relationship to the present settlement.

The interior of the church was not accessible for examination, although the local population believe that the 'restoration' by Street has removed the buildings medieval features. However, it should be recalled that in the nineteenth century the chancel was found to have been decorated with fourteenth century frescoes, itself of interest, but also said to have had an iconography associated with St Nicholas – unusual itself, and all the more so given the dedication of the church; this has been explained in antiquarian times as the patron, Lady Thomasine, recalling through this cycle her husband Nicholas. A visit to examine the interior of the church confirmed that all traces of these wall paintings have now been lost and there are no indications that any further evidence might be forthcoming from elsewhere in the church.



Above: St Mary's before the restoration (Parker 1897).

The church is set amid extensive open spaces, particularly to the north and the south of the building; that which was visible showed little evidence of any extensive disturbance, and therefore no reason to suppose that the archaeological integrity of these areas had been compromised.

To the north of the church site lay the site of Boughey Hall, now redeveloped as a modern residential site. This site is located on lands held by the Augustinian house of St Thomas juxta Stafford and is traditionally described as a grange of the Priory. It seems probable that the redevelopment of this site will have compromised the archaeology that is recoverable; there is open land between the

development and the road, but apart from an apparent differentiation in the grass colour at the north-west corner of the field, there were no features evident within the field. However, 'predictive' archaeology within a dispersed settlement area is not a certain process.

The fishpond recorded by the HER is not located in this area; although not seen on this visit, it is said to be situated some distance away, southwest of Boathouse Spinney. This instance alone, there is a surprising absence of fishponds recorded or observed in the Colton area, given the presence of three principal manors and the priory lands.

Beyond the church site, Bellamour Way now has residential buildings ranged along both sides, although none are obviously earlier in date than the early eighteenth century. Colton House, of c.1730, is a fine building occupying a long frontage on the main road. While the frontage area is now archaeologically compromised, it is reported by local residents that there are extensive gardens to the rear, but this private area was not seen during the site visit. The Plantation opposite Colton House is an area of modern housing, set back from the road to some extent and therefore fronted by lawns and access roads. It is unknown to what extent this area was disturbed when these houses were first built, and it seems improbable that this is an area that might in the future be subject to any development proposals, but there may be some slight opportunities here along the road frontage.

Hereafter, the majority of the buildings are situated on or near the road frontage, offering little archaeological potential. Colton Lodge is set back with gardens to the front, but is likely of limited archaeological potential. Malt House Farm is an instructive building in that, although only dating to the early eighteenth century, it reflects what must have been a familiar feature for centuries, that is a pattern of farmsteads dispersed along the main roads from which the local landscape was worked.

The late nineteenth century alms houses which occupy the site of a former Inn (Three Wheels Inn renamed the Bell Inn) stand opposite an area of particular interest, an area that was situated within Colwich parish and now known as Williscroft Place. There are a series of residences here, set back some distance from the road, and served by two parallel trackways at each end which likewise ran back from the main road. It seems highly probable that this area accommodated the small thirteenth century borough that was promoted in Colton, and while the long garden areas fronting the present buildings, and the car park of the Greyhound Inn, are unlikely to be threatened by development, the archaeological potential of this area should be noted. A series of test pits might be considered to better assess the archaeological potential of this area.

Bellamour Way was also viewed with a particular question on the location of a market place in the medieval settlement. In terms of the impact that such a feature might have on the morphology of a village, one might commonly expect to find a broadening of the road along a short length to accommodate the market, or a clearly defined triangular area, as in the case of Abbots Bromley. Neither of these features is particularly evident in Colton. However, it seems reasonable to suppose that the market place was likely associated with the area developed as a borough, and it is interesting to note that the main road fronting this area and running up to the location of the War Memorial is slightly wider at this point.

Below: the site of the medieval borough?



Another possibility is that the area adjacent to Martlin Lane, itself almost opposite the putative borough site, and where early nineteenth century housing was built. Today, there are hints here of a small triangular lying to the south-east of the main road, served also by a trackway leading down to Rugeley via the former mill site on the River Trent. While this 'space' is evident on the ground now, it is not clear how long established it is feature in the morphology of the village. This space is better articulated in the 1882 Ordnance Survey sheet than it is on the 1845 Tithe Map. Test pitting would again be required to better profile this area, but the opportunities to do so are severely limited in this area; the biggest surface area is perhaps that covered by the road itself, but it is unclear to what extent any archaeology might have been compromised.

- 6.1.3 **Hollow Lane**: the archaeological potential here is limited, not so much because of any development on the site, but because there is little evidence to suggest that this was a focus for medieval settlement activity. The road climbs sharply to the east and consequently several of the modern houses have effectively been built on terraces or platforms, perhaps created for the most part by marl extraction. Those places which could have accommodated medieval homesteads are likely the same locations for modern houses.
- 6.1.4 **High Street**: this road is now heavily dominated by modern residential buildings, interspersed with some a handful of nineteenth century cottages; the road climbs uphill towards the north-east, while the land also rises sharply on both sides of the road. Although some of the modern houses have replaced earlier buildings, the mixture of old and new reflects the earlier dispersed settlement pattern with the modern buildings often infilling previous open spaces. Indeed, 'infilling' best characterises the development of the High Street. As on the nineteenth century maps, the majority of the residences lined the western side of the road, mostly now with associated garden areas. The site of Littlehay Manor House was noted, but as a private residence was not accessible for inspection. However, it was clear that there remained land around the site that had not been

developed, and in view of the history of the site it should be regarded as of the highest archaeological sensitivity.



Above: High Street; typical modern residential infilling.

It has already been noted that predictive archaeology in an area of dispersed settlement is challenging, a kind of 'Russian Roulette'. The opportunities for archaeological interventions are limited in High Street. Apart from the manor house site, the area immediately to the south of it is open and undeveloped. However, its actual archaeological potential seems limited in that this was a known area of woodland that ran up to the edge of the settlement. On the western side of the road the main area of potential is the car park attached to the 'Dun Cow' Inn although it is not improbable that the Inn sits on top of any medieval predecessor; certainly the Inn's position correlates with a building on the 1845 Tithe Map.

At the junction with Heathway there is another building known as 'The Cottage' which appears to be of nineteenth century date, but if there is truth in the local understanding that the building contains a cruck, then it is possible that it represents the remodelling of an earlier building, situated at the edge of the main settlement area.

6.2 The Newlands site was visited, today comprising about four farms or houses, but there is reason to suppose that during the medieval period there was a more significant amount of settlement here than is now the case. The Newlands is characterised by open farmland that presumably is not in danger of development, but which should be monitored. Hedges limited what could be seen from the road, but it would be worthwhile surveying the fields in this area, by APs and on the ground, to check for any house platforms. The site known as 'Croft Cottage' captures the nature of the scattered farmsteads that characterised settlement in this area.



Above: Newlands and 'Croft Cottage'; the result of assarting.

The area given over to the 'Old Park' was also visited and the boundary viewed, the line of the external ditch at one point preserved as the roadway, giving some indication of the substantial nature of the original park pale.

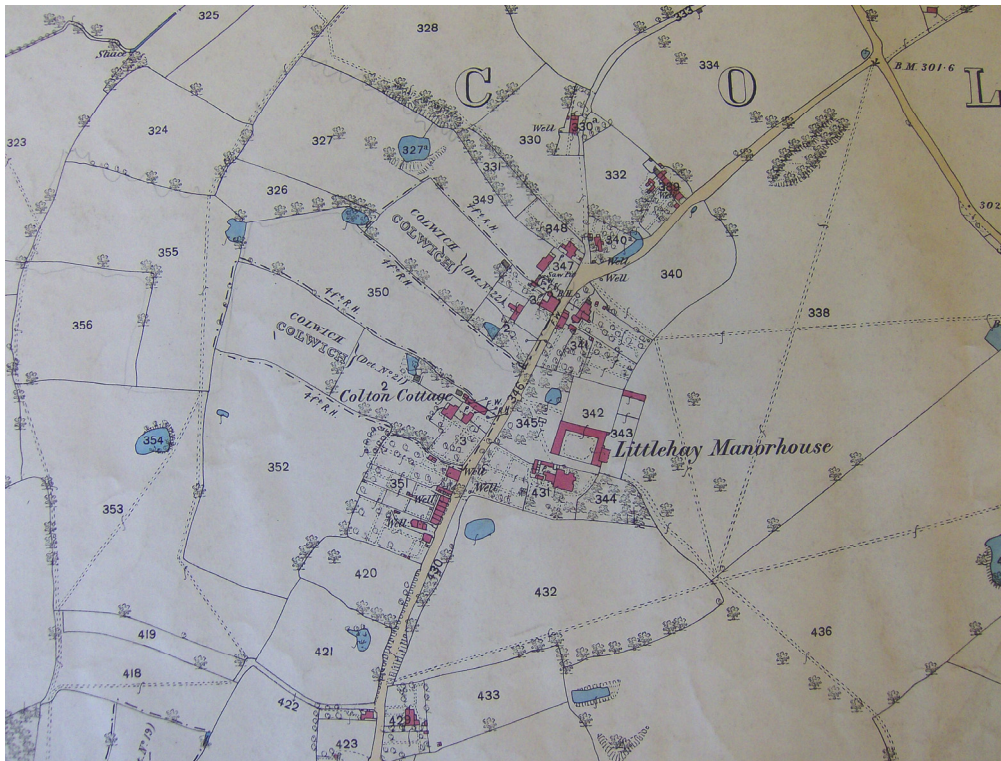
7. Site description

7.1 The development and make-up of the medieval vill of Colton was influenced by two principal factors – the presence here of three major manors, and the physical environment that was host to them and their communities. Both factors, of course, had been influential since before the Norman Conquest. Parker has suggested that it is possible to distinguish the Domesday manor held of Robert de Stafford from the others as the 'untitheable' land as mapped in 1845 (Parker 1897, 5).

7.2 A manor might be expected to have a 'capital messuage' associated with it and so it seems probable that there were at least three manor houses for with each of the principal medieval manors of Colton. One of them appears to be mentioned in a plea of 1293-3 recalling a quarrel between Thomas son of Reyner and William son of William the smith '*outside the gate of John le Wasteney's in the vill of Colton*' in which Thomas killed William (Wrottesley 1885, 274); the implication of this description is the probability of an enclosed and gated compound. Another of the manor houses was referred to in the 1402 rental for the manor of Littlehay, at which time the 'capital messuage' was held by John Klerkeson (Wrottesley 1908, 209).

Where were these residences located? Only one is known with certainty, that of the Littlehay Manor House, situated to the east of High Street and appropriately marked as such on the 1882 Ordnance Survey sheets. There is no reason to suppose that this had not been the location of the lord's residence since the

Conquest, making it a site of some archaeological importance. However, the other sites are more problematic.



It is generally supposed that Colton Hall (Colton Hall Farm) represents another of the manor houses and following Parker's supposition, it is associated with Geoffrey in 1086 and the series of lords who succeeded him, that is, the de Wasteneys. Colton Hall was built around 1730 but it is believed to occupy the site of the Old Hall, which passed from the de Wasteneys to the Gresleys, for whom this house was their principal Staffordshire residence (Cockin 2000, 153). While none of these suppositions are inherently improbable there are some questions that arise. The Colton site stands at some distance from the core of the township and those plans that show this site give no indications of any significant settlement in association with it. While not always certainly so, it is none the less more usually the case that the manor house stands in closer relation to the settlement areas, rather, than as seems the case here, in isolation. It may be that given the dispersed character of the settlement the location of the manor house here was not regarded as problematic, but another possibility must be considered.

During the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries there was, on some manors, a trend of re-siting manor houses at the edges of manors, sometimes with the additional prompting of divided inheritances, as in West Bromwich; the process may also be seen at Elford, where as in Colton the 'isolated' hall was located within a park. It is possible that the de Wasteneys established Colton Hall either in this way, or as a hunting lodge within the new Colton Park which the Gresleys subsequently took up as their residence; alternatively, the Gresleys may themselves have done this to mark their acquisition of the manor.

If this sequence of events is correct, then it implies that there are at least two more manor house sites to be identified, which one supposes were likely closer to the heart of the parish and their tenants in the earlier medieval period.

However, offering locations is essentially a matter of speculation. Even so, one local supposition that has merit is the belief that there was a seigneurial residence as neighbour to the church. The fact that this field was known as 'Castlecroft' is not persuasive, but the fact that one of the Anglo-Saxon manors in all likelihood had a church, and that there is a strong tradition of the juxtaposition of church and hall within the landscape, this possibility cannot be ignored; however, it needs to be tested archaeologically. If so, in 1086, there would have been manor houses at each end of the principal axis around which the core settlement of Colton grew, both within the lordship of Earl Roger de Montgomery.

The matter of locating Geoffrey's manor house is unresolved. If Colton Hall is accepted as the original site, then this matter is neatly settled! However, this writer has doubts about this supposition. An alternative site is not immediately evident, but one site worth considering is that of Bellamour Lodge.

- 7.3 Bellamour Lodge dates to 1851, built by James Oldham of Bellamour Hall for his daughter, Ellen, who subsequently enlarged it. The HER records excavations in front of the Lodge, where there was recorded the foundations of a small rectangular building, and a find of a stone corbel carved as a grotesque human face, together with fragments of stone tracery. This has been interpreted as the remains of a thirteenth century chapel, and indeed the late nineteenth century Ordnance Survey Sheet shows 'Site of Chapel' here. However, the documentary review, to date, has not offered any context or even reference to the presumed chapel, and it is certainly difficult to explain as a free-standing institution given the presence of a church nearby.

However, thirteenth century fabric was clearly present on this site and a reasonable context might be provided if suggest that this was the site of a medieval manor house, perhaps that of the de Wasteneys, that could well have included a stone built chapel among its buildings. A similar arrangement may be found on the mid-thirteenth century de Somery manor house at Weoley, known as Weoley Castle, where a stone built chapel was set alongside timber buildings, and interpreted on the basis of evidence comparable with that found at Colton.

- 7.4 It is locally presumed that St Thomas' Priory had a grange in Colton, associated with Boughey Hall, a presumption that is repeated in the records of the HER. The patronage offered by local families to the Priory certainly enabled the amassing of a local estate, and one might reasonably suppose that there would have been buildings scattered around their lands to support their working, but there is nothing to suggest that this was regarded as a grange. Indeed, quite the contrary. In the *Valor Ecclesiasticus* compiled by Henry VIII's officers to record the possessions of the monastic church as a part of the Dissolution process, the entry for St Thomas' Priory recorded their possessions. They had only one grange, at 'Arberton', a number of manors, and then a list of parcels of lands that they possessed, among which was listed Admaston, Bishton and Colton, the latter valued at 100s.8d. (Caley 1817, 110). Therefore, no grange in Colton but fact that the Prior had rights of free warren here does add weight to the assumption that there would have been some buildings associated with the Priory lands, and one of these may have been a residence. To this extent, the association of the Priory estate with Boughey Hall may stand.

- 7.5 The Church is clearly a site of importance in the medieval settlement pattern, perhaps (with a hall; see 7.2) representing a 'terminal' point on the axis of settlement. It appears to stand apart from what is now the settled area, but when established before the Conquest it served a manor, and subsequently, it may be

regarded as standing relatively centrally within the parish as a whole. There is an assumption in the above that needs to be tested; that is, that this church is indeed on the site of its early medieval predecessor.

The importance of the Church itself has been discussed above (2.2; 2.4.2; 3.4). The building contains 13th century fabric, that is, an early 13th century west tower, and a late 13th century south chapel that are now incorporated into the remodelled building. Some details survive in the south chapel where there is a 13th century piscine with pointed trefoil head and sunken spandrels, and a sedilia with pointed arches and segment moulded surrounds. Otherwise little of the medieval building appears to survive.

However, the importance of the church in the development of Colton is such that the site of the church, its immediate environs, and the building itself should be regarded as of high archaeological sensitivity.

- 7.6 The dominant characteristic in the settlement pattern is its dispersed nature, across the parish as a whole, but clearly the core settlement in Colton itself developed along the two principal roads, now known as Bellamour Way and High Street and running from a bridging point across the Moreton Brook. This crossing point was undoubtedly as important in the medieval period as it is now. The settlement is laid out in linear fashion along the roads, but even so is generally dispersed in relationship to them. The principal exception to this would have been the small borough established in the thirteenth century whose location has been suggested in the vicinity of what is now Williscroft Place, with a possible market place nearby (see 2.5; 2.6; 6.1.2). There are no medieval or early post-medieval buildings within the fabric of the village, although 'The Cottage' on Heathway is deserving of further examination, perhaps marking the margins of the late medieval settlement.



Above: the imprint of a medieval road serving the borough at Williscroft Place?

However, it should be emphasised that not all settlement was concentrated in this 'core area'. Scattered farmsteads and homesteads were found across the parish, but with some focal points developing with the progress of assarting, as at Newlands (see 2.5).

7.7 Mills were clearly an important element in the manorial economy but their precise location is generally elusive. Watermills prompted a number of agreements regarding the management of watercourses and clearly the monitoring of these watercourses might produce evidence. If a substantial building like that recently excavated in Stafford, then the chances of identification are high, but we have no reason to suppose that all mills were as substantial as this site, or that the archaeological traces of them will be as readily evident.

7.8 The wider landscape of the vill was a diverse one set within a woodland context, woodland running right up to the heart of the settlement itself (cf. 5.6). Fields were found scattered throughout the parish in association with hamlets (eg. Newlands) and farmsteads, together with waste, heath land and moor, common pasture and assarts. Areas of ridge and furrow have been noted at several locations in Colton and Colwich parishes.

The economy of the vill was overwhelmingly agrarian in character, encompassing arable production (corn and rye are noted) and stock rearing; cattle raising, sheep raising and pigs, the latter ubiquitous in medieval communities, are all noted; assarting activity supported the expansion of all of these activities.

Although not unique, Colton is none the less distinguished by the possession of two medieval parks, both apparently in the de Wasteney's lordship, unless the second was added by their Gresley successors. While parkland was certainly a status conferring possession, and the consumption or gifting of venison a symbol of status, the presence of the two parks may reflect the economic potential of parks. This arose from the additional protection that parkland received as an enclosed and controlled area. The de Somery barons of Dudley, in response to the poor quality of large tracts of their demesne land, turned to the creation of large areas of Chase and deer parks which were utilised not only for hunting, but also for timber supplies, pasturage, fishponds, and for industrial activities (Hunt 1997). It is possible that there were similar motivations in the thinking of the lords of Colton. It might be suggested that the creation of Colton Park found its context in the establishment on this site of Colton Hall. That may be so, but for the medieval mind there was no incongruity in developing something that both conveyed status and presented opportunities for profit.

Industrial activity in the vill is not directly evidenced although it is implied through some occupational surnames, and references are made to the extraction of marl, although this need not have 'industrial' associations. It is now well-known that glass-making was present in the area by the late thirteenth century, and the discovery of a glassworks site of possible medieval date at Lount Farm is an indication of medieval entrepreneurial activity, although the context of this particular site is unclear. Its location may suggest that it was associated with the Priory estate, although as Chris Welch has shown, it was most probably the case that appropriate tracts of land were leased to freeman artisans, so that landlords were receiving cash payments rather than the products.

There were at least two areas of warren within the parish, most probably associated with areas of woodland and heath, but their precise locations have yet to be established. Similarly, there is a surprising absence of references to

fishponds in the surviving documents, and only one site has been suggested on the basis of Ordnance Survey mapping, some distance from the core settlement and not necessarily of medieval date. It may be the case that there are sites awaiting discovery, but it seems more probable that the several watercourses running through the parish offered fisheries instead. Here, perhaps on the Trent, the de Wasteneyes also had an aerie raising swans.

7.9 Settlement Form: as has been noted on several occasions, Colton was a woodland parish characterised by dispersed settlement. This comprised, away from the core area, isolated single farmstead units and small hamlets. In the case of the core area, the picture is a little more complex, but none the less characterised by a pattern of dispersal. The predominant pattern for the linear settlement that forms the axis of Colton is the form of an 'attenuated row', but within this, at one point, there was clearly the very opposite of these arrangements, with the establishment of a borough. Such settlements were the very opposite of dispersed, using the laying out of streets to carefully allocate tenements, or burgages. This particular area would have looked very different to wider settlement pattern in which it sat.

Finally, the settlement form was also 'polyfocal', in two senses. Firstly, at the core settlement area, it was polyfocal in the formal sense, in that 'hubs' of settlement were found in the shape of the Littlehay manor house; the Church and possible hall focus; and the borough itself. Secondly, it was also polyfocal in another sense, in that the impact of assarting was to create focal points of settlement around the parish as a whole; consequently, the settlement in parish itself may be regarded as polyfocal.

8. Interpretative summary

The parish of Colton presents the medievalist with an interesting combination of sources and problems in a landscape not only of diversity, but which also touches on many of the key themes in medieval settlement development and rural social history. Furthermore, it offers the potential for the kind of study that Dyer has undertaken at Pendock and Hanbury in Worcestershire, that is, the growth (and decline) of medieval settlement within a woodland parish.

Colton is a township that has its origins in Anglo-Saxon England and is therefore potentially able to inform on aspects of the transition to Anglo-Norman England, particularly with regard to the development of ecclesiastical parishes. The question of possible Anglo-Saxon origins for Colton church, as a 'tunkirke', is an important one to resolve, and related to this is the question of whether the Anglo-Saxon church was there to serve a manor or the wider parish (as now defined). It is encouraging that the church and its environs are relatively undeveloped, although it is unfortunate that St Mary's suffered a Victorian restoration project. It would be helpful if it were possible to build up a picture of the church prior to Street's work, beyond that which the writings of the Reverend Parker afford us.

Linked with the question of the church is the fact that the three Domesday manors each had pre-Conquest antecedents, each with a 'chief place' or manor house. To what extent were the presumed Anglo-Saxon halls simply succeeded by their Norman counter-parts; was there any shift in the settlement pattern? Certainly there is nothing evident on this theme, so that only archaeology can provide a clear response. However, the location of these manor houses has to be established with certainty, both TRE and TRW. The most secure location is Littlehay Manor House, but nothing is known about any pre-Conquest phases.

It is suggested that by the twelfth and thirteenth century at least there were manor houses at Littlehay, near the Church, and at Bellamour Church. It is also suggested that Colton Hall may not have been established as a manor house until the fourteenth century, possibly at the same time as the associated park was emparked. All of these proposals have the possibility of being tested archaeologically.

It seems probable that these places subsequently provided 'hubs' from which settlement grew, but only in a general sense. Settlement was scattered across the parish as a whole, a pattern which centuries of assarting strongly reinforced, but unsurprisingly, these settlements, of whatever size, stood in relation to the pattern of roads and tracks that spread through the parish. The relationship of settlement to roads is nowhere more emphatic than in the core settlement of Colton itself. Whatever the location of the lords in their manor houses, their tenants were spread out in linear patterns along the main roads. There is very little evidence of any medieval infilling along these main roads, presumably because there was ample opportunity to take up land around the parish via assarting, all the more attractive as it most probably came with freehold tenure. The predominant pattern of an attenuated row was quite probably well established by the late thirteenth or fourteenth centuries, but once again the opportunity for archaeological scrutiny of this suggestion would be welcomed.

Several manorial and honorial studies have examined the ways in which medieval landscapes develop, and the patterns of investment by seigneurial families that might be related to these trends. Colton sits comfortably within this historiographical tradition, although the evidence appears to be heavily weighted towards the de Wasteney family. Is this a result of bias within the surviving sources, or was it the case that this was the more entrepreneurial of the manorial families? The appearance in the landscape of parkland and fisheries may all be seen as a reflection of this process, but the development that marked out the de Wasteney was the decision firstly to secure a market grant, and to subsequently follow this with the creation of a borough. These developments coincide with the phenomenon of steady urbanisation within Staffordshire and the wider region, but our archaeological evidence for this significant transformation is limited, especially for 'rural boroughs'.

The borough of Colton ultimately failed, perhaps because neighbouring Rugeley was larger and economically stronger, but it none the less has the potential to inform on a vital process in the social and economic development of the Middle Ages. The questions to answer are fairly fundamental. Where was the borough and how large was it? What was the material culture of its inhabitants like? Boroughs were generally regarded as 'looking different' from other forms of settlement; to what extent was that the case in Colton? What impact did the borough and the market have on the morphology of the settlement and on the material culture of the inhabitants of the vill? These are key questions to be taken up, not only on behalf of Colton and Staffordshire, but on behalf of medieval archaeology more broadly.

This important agenda extends to the development and exploitation of the wider landscape and, as in Dyer's study of Pendock, the possibility of recovering the principal phases of human settlement and activity within the parish.

One final consideration. How accurate is the reconstruction provided by the Historic Landscape Characterisation project? It may be recalled that the HLC effectively characterises much of the parish as 'lost landscapes', in that no characterisation has been attempted; this includes the area west of Lee Lane, from Upper Moreton through Lount Farm and down to the area bordering the Trent, and the area to the east of Colton village, including Old Wood Farm and the area just north of Colton Hall



Above: the HLC characterisation of the medieval landscape of Colton.

Farm. The exceptions to this pattern are 'Piecemeal Enclosure' around Hamley House, Stockwell Heath and Newlands; the Deer Park between Stockwell Heath and Newlands; an area of 'irregular enclosure' running eastwards from Finners Hill, and 'Strip Fields' around Colton Hall Farm. The area to the east of Moreton Brook is characterised as 'water/wetland' while the area around Parchfield House is characterised as 'Rectilinear Enclosure'. While there is nothing factually incorrect in this description, it presents only a pale reflection of the diverse landscape of medieval Colton. It effectively acknowledges the process of piecemeal and gradual enclosures through assarting and the interspersed arable land, but as a means of characterising a medieval landscape it lacks fine detail, and suggests some distinctions that are of questionable value in understanding what was happening in the medieval landscape. Colton offers a potentially useful 'test bed' for examining more closely the rigour and value of the HLC process when applied as an academic rather than as a planning tool. A key question in such a study should be to determine to what extent the characterisations used may actually be regarded as indicative of 'real' medieval landscapes?

9. Recommendations

The archaeological potential of Colton is hindered by two factors. Firstly, with the exception of the borough, the medieval settlement pattern is of a dispersed nature, a fact which makes the prediction of likely sites very difficult. The fact that much of the settlement may be characterised as attenuated in form means that it is not possible to determine where the next 'scattered homestead' might be. Consequently, we have to be alert to the possibility that a site might occur almost anywhere, especially near the frontages with the main roads. The second factor is the amount of nineteenth century and later building, much of it impacting on the frontage area, and very likely

disturbing any archaeology that had survived in these areas. However, the nature of the issues that need to be examined suggests that these hindrances cannot be allowed to detract from the important possibility that material relevant to the development of the settlement might yet be recovered. Indeed, taking into account the approaches that were employed with effect in the Whittlewood project, **it is recommended** that a programme of test-pitting be designed and implemented throughout Colton.

More specifically, the following archaeological sensitivities are recommended to be monitored within the modern settlement and parish –

- The importance of the church in the development of Colton is such that the site of the church, its immediate environs, and the building itself should be regarded as of high archaeological sensitivity. The origins of the parish church forms an important theme in the Regional Research Framework (Hunt, 2009 forthcoming) and Colton, with its Anglo-Saxon origins, has the potential to contribute to this. This potential is enhanced further by the possibility that there was also a manor house situated in the vicinity of the church, a hall which itself could well be of pre-Conquest origin. The area around the church is still largely open, so the high sensitivity of this site is obvious.
- The question of the Colton manor houses has been discussed above. In addition to the Church site, the location and environs of the Littlehay manor house, and of Colton Hall should be regarded as of high archaeological sensitivity. It has also been suggested that the site of Bellamour Lodge may also reflect a medieval manor house site, one that included a number of buildings, one of them a chapel.
- It has been pointed out that there is no evidence for a grange in Colton but it is clear that St Thomas' Priory certainly had lands in the parish and there were undoubtedly buildings associated with these lands. Two areas recommend themselves for monitoring in this regard – the area around Boughey Hall, and Lount Farm. The latter may also be the site of industrial activity in the medieval period. These places are therefore regarded as sites of high archaeological potential.
- Within the core settlement, Williscroft Place, despite the nineteenth century residential development, is regarded as of high archaeological sensitivity as the possible location of the medieval borough; the archaeology of small rural boroughs in Staffordshire is not well represented in the record and therefore any opportunity should be seized. Apart from the physical layout of this area, it would be interesting to know if the material culture differed significantly from other parts of the vill. It is not improbable that the identified borough site may have run back further than the shaded area on the map, given 'hints' of a relevant boundary line. Linked to the borough is the question of a possible market place nearby. With two options to consider (see 6.1.2), the area diagonally opposite has also been categorised as of high archaeological sensitivity, although the actual chances of obtaining any extensive high quality results in this area are limited. The nature of rural market places is a theme identified for work in the Regional Research Framework.
- All isolated farmsteads and hamlets, and particularly Lee Farm and the Newlands, should be regarded initially as places of high archaeological sensitivity. Since these mirror the nature of medieval settlement, almost any of them could have medieval or early post-medieval origins and should be treated

accordingly, until the possibility can be certainly discounted on the basis of recovered evidence.

- The boundaries of the two parks, particularly where the park pale survives, should be regarded as features of high archaeological sensitivity, on the basis of what they represent rather than from any expectation that they might be archaeologically informative.
- Much of the village has been classed as of medium archaeological sensitivity, an inevitable response to the uncertainties of the archaeology within a woodland and dispersed context. Expectations are not high. In most cases the frontages have been disturbed although in some locations, such as the Plantation, the large front garden areas may have offered some protection, whereas the modern build behind them would have been destructive. Otherwise, there is the possibility that these areas might reveal some backyard activity; but it should be remembered that we cannot think in terms of long thin properties running back from the road; rather, buildings were in plots of irregular shape, and might have frontage locations or be situated further back into their respective plots.
- There are four areas that have been characterised as of low archaeological sensitivity. The land running along Hollow Lane seems not to have been a focus for medieval settlement, which is not surprising given its nature. It was likely more useful for such as marl extraction. The other areas are places where modern residential development is thought likely to have compromised any archaeological deposits that they encountered.
- One exception to this pattern in the Cottage in Heath Lane. Given the local belief that this is a cruck-built structure, until shown otherwise, its location has to be regarded as an area of high archaeological sensitivity.
- On several occasions attention has been drawn to the importance of mill sites in the local economy. Unfortunately, it is not possible to pinpoint with precision where these sites may have been, nor is it entirely certain how many there were. Windmill sites are best sought after as field sites by identifying the low mounds in the landscape that they sat on. Otherwise, it is recommended that all significant watercourses are monitored for evidence that might appear in the bank sides. In fact, in a parish where watercourses were clearly so important, they should also be monitored for indications of such as fisheries and weirs, such evidence possibly appearing from the waterbed.
- Finally, as noted above, Colton offers a potential 'test bed' for examining more closely the value of the HLC process when applied as an academic rather than as a planning tool. A key question in such a study must be to determine to what extent the characterisations used may actually be regarded as indicative of 'real' medieval landscapes?

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Appendices: Colton: Maps.

Map 1: William Yates' map, c.1775. Colton and area.

Map1a: William Yates' map, c.1775. Detail of Colton.

Map 2: Rugeley and Colton, 1828.

Map 3: Colton Tithe Map (Stafford Record Office) 1845; detail of Colton main settlement

Map 4: Colton Tithe Map (LJRO) 1845; detail of Colton main settlement.

Map 4a: Colton, fields of the parish (Parker 1897).

Map 5: Colton, Ordnance Survey, 6 inch map, 1887.

Map 6: Colton, Ordnance Survey, 25 inch map, 1882

Map 7: Ordnance Survey, 1:25,000 map, Sheet SK 02, Abbots Bromley, 1961.

Map 8: Colton, Ordnance Survey, archaeological sensitivity.

Key:

Areas of high archaeological sensitivity



That is, where there is a strong probability of recovering archaeological information; where the nature of the settlement or issues raised within it are considered of high importance, either in terms of understanding the development of the place itself, or because there is potential to contribute to regional or local research agendas; where the village concerned may be regarded overall, or to a significant degree, to represent an important historic environment or heritage resource.

Areas of medium archaeological sensitivity



That is, where there is a possibility of recovering archaeological information, although generally not within the context of prime sites or locations; where archaeological information recovered has potential to inform on the development of the settlement, or on a part of it.

Areas of low archaeological sensitivity



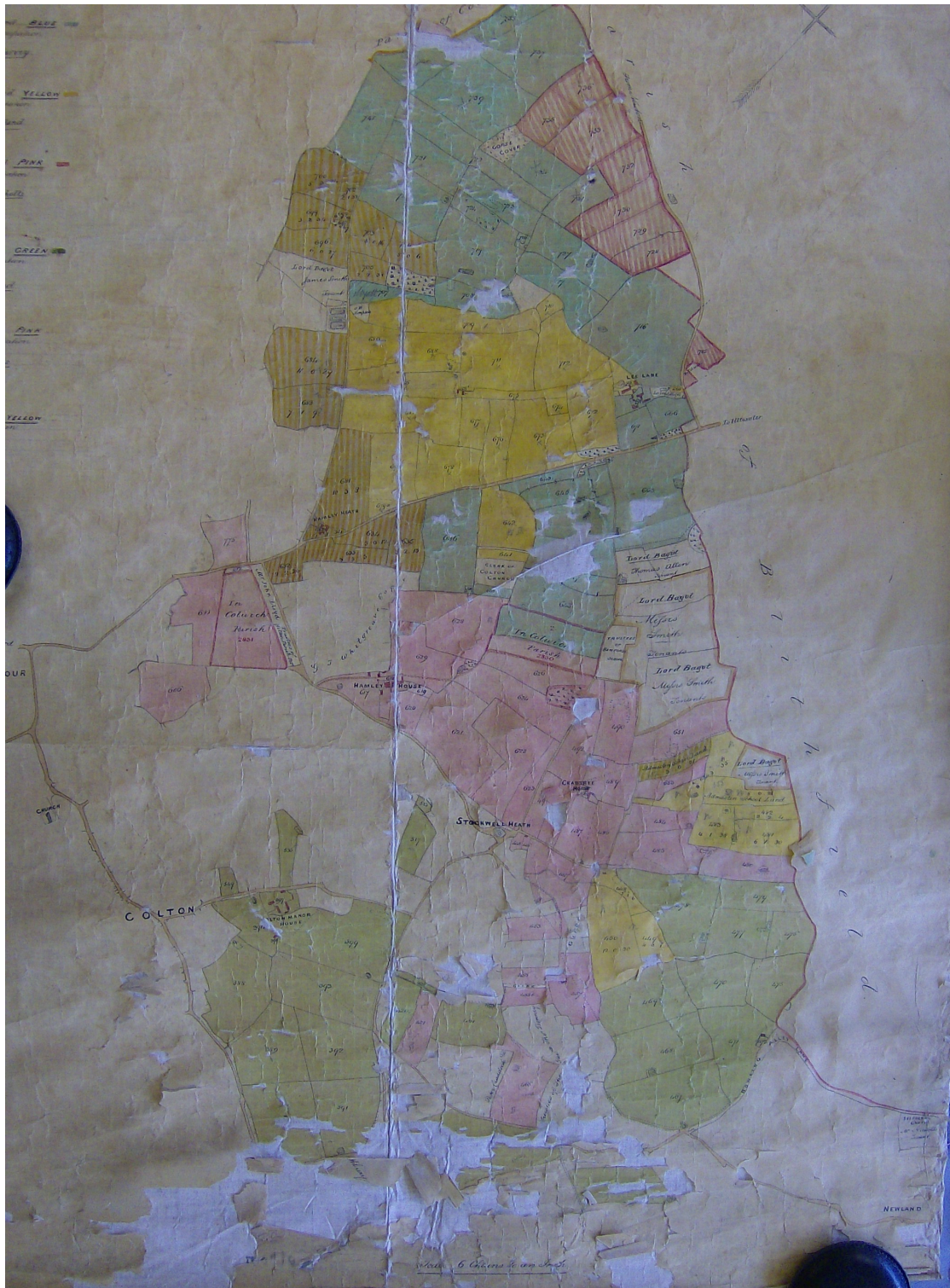
That is, where the probability of recovering meaningful archaeological information appears remote, either because post-medieval development is likely to have removed stratigraphy, or where settlement development has largely 'avoided' or 'neglected' the site in question.



Above: Map 1: William Yates Map of Colton and area.



Above: Map 2, Rugeley and Colton, 1828.



Above: Map 3, Colton Tithe Map (Stafford Record Office) 1845.



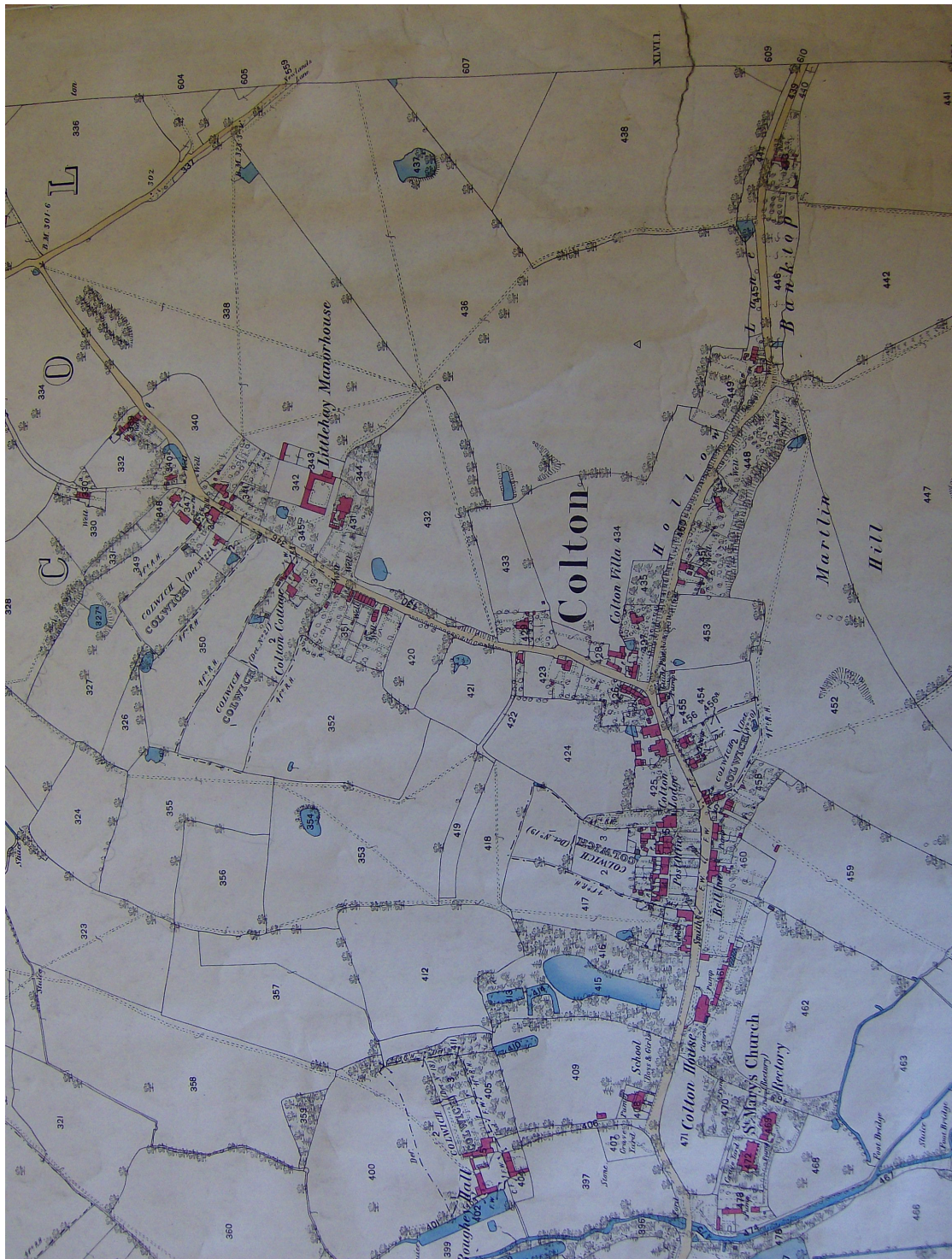
Above: Map 4, Colton Tithe Map (LJRO) 1845



Above: Map 4a, fields of the parish (Parker 1897).



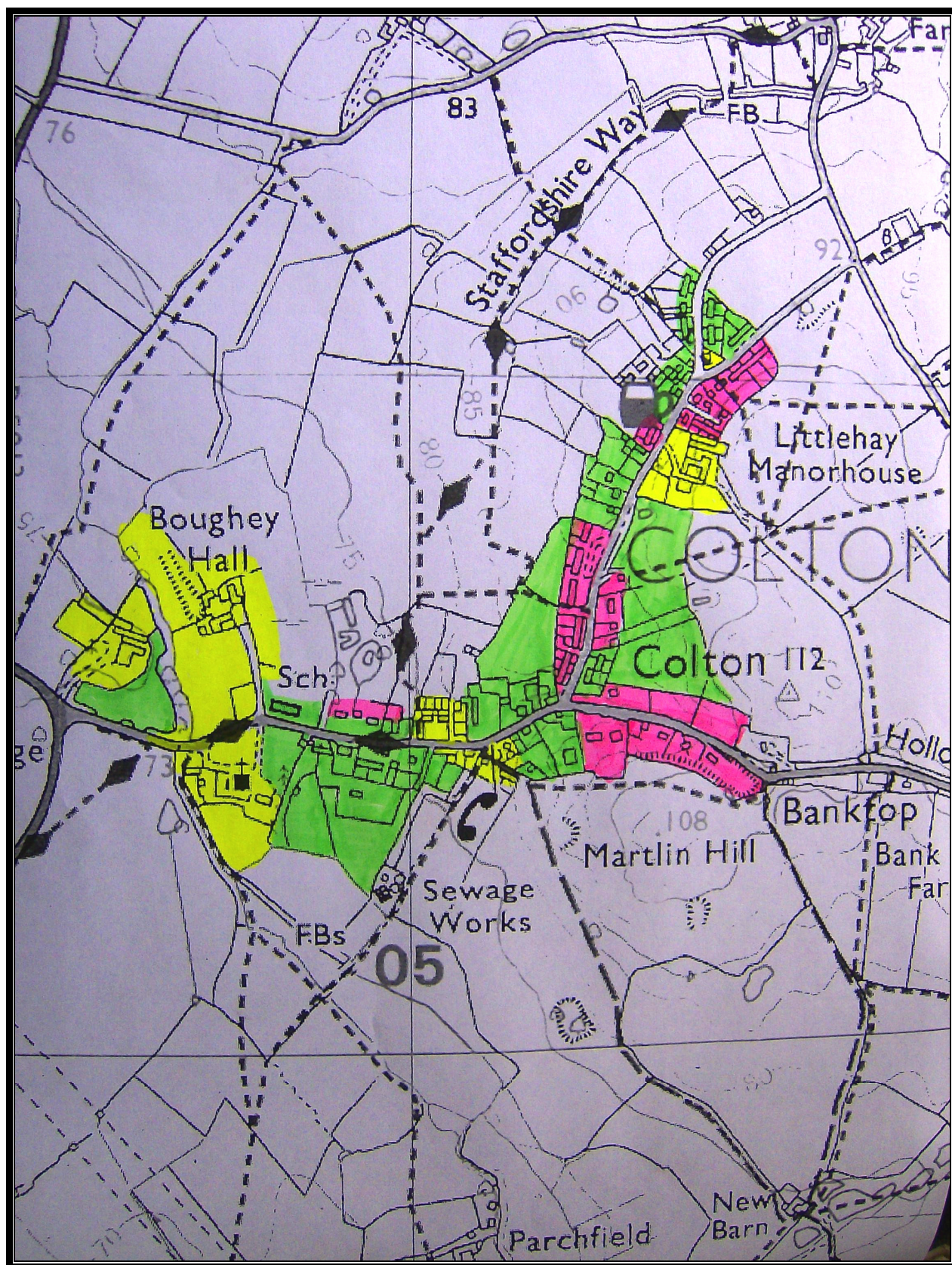
Above: Map 5, Colton, Ordnance Survey, 6 inch map, 1887.



Above: Map 6, Colton, Ordnance Survey, 25 inch map, 1882

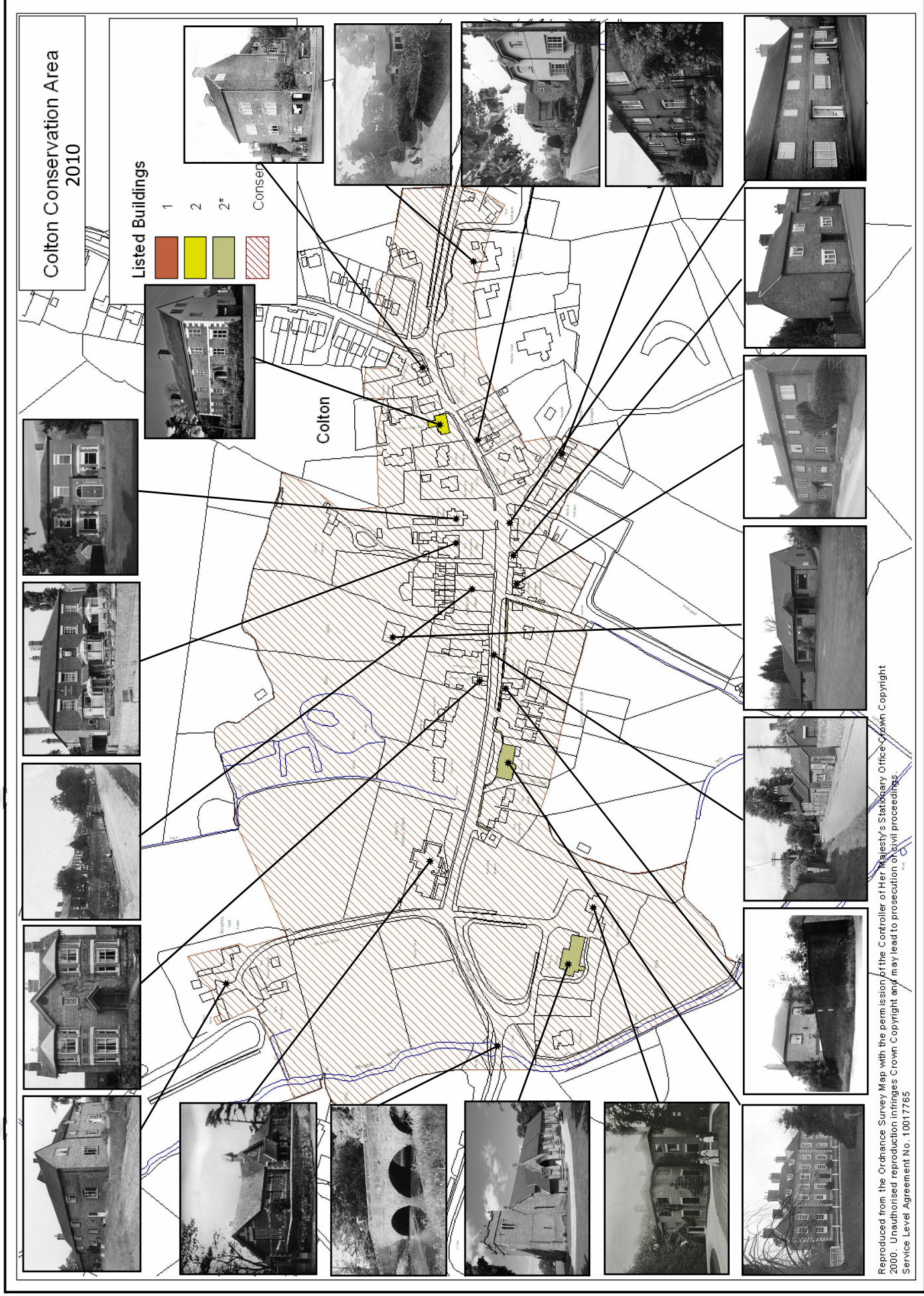


Above: Map 7, Ordnance Survey, 1:25,000 map, Sheet SK 02



Above: Map 8, Colton, Ordnance Survey, archaeological sensitivity

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