

FROM MONASTIC INLAND TO IRELAND PARISH OF SOUTHILL

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Charters of Henry I (r. 1100-1 December 1135)

Henry I issued various charters concerning the foundation of Wardon Abbey, and while none are thought to have survived, three reconfirmation charters promulgated by Henry II (r. 1154-89) provide some detail. It is evident that Henry I had approved the project by granting his personal protection to the monks of Wardon, their lands and possessions.¹ This mandate pre-dates King Stephen's royal charter confirming the abbey's foundation (early 1136 according to the modern calendar), hence it may relate to those lay brothers from Rievaulx responsible for preparing the site rather than the Cistercian monks themselves.

Two other charters of Henry I concerned endowments to the fledgling monastery. The first established that the monks had been granted ten hides (1,200 fiscal acres), comprising four hides (480 acres) in the parish of Wardon, two hides (240 acres) in Southill, two hides in Chicksands, a hide (120 acres) from Radulf [Ralf] Malclerc (no location given), and a hide in Priestley (the south-east part of the parish of Flitwick) given by an unnamed benefactor. All grants were made free of taxes, scutage (payment in lieu of military service), service at assizes, and other secular obligations.² Later evidence points towards the present-day hamlet of Ireland having originated in Radulf Malclerc's hide, which lay in the parish of Southill.

An entry in Wardon's cartulary (the book containing copies of charters and other key documents) shows Hugh de Beauchamp of Eaton [Socon] transferring Ralf Malclerc and his fee to the abbey. The editor of the cartulary dates the event to 'before 1164/65', although it may have occurred much earlier.³ Hugh reserved the right to allegiance from Ralf and his heirs and the abbot was to pay Hugh 3 shillings annually to cover relief, customs, exactions, and forfeitures. Ralf would not owe service to the abbey and, for that concession, he gave the monks Lowe's Wood,⁴ and the woods and fields belonging to Marcher [of Southill].⁵ Described as being between Greneden and the Southill-Chicksands parish boundary, it is speculated that this area, probably well in excess of 460 acres, formed the basis for the monastic Rowney Warren.⁶

Henry II reconfirms the hide of Radulf Malclerc

In 1160/61 Henry II reconfirmed that the monks held the hide of Radulf Malclerc and all of the land that Radulf and his son [Hugh Malclerc] held of Hugh de Beauchamp of Eaton [Socon].⁷ A memorandum dated to about 1190/1200 shows that Wardon Abbey was liable to pay scutage to the lords of Bedford for various lands, including a hide in Priestley and the hide of Hugh Maclerc [*sic*]. No further details are available, although the simple descriptions suggest these as the grants mentioned in the charter of Henry I.⁸

¹ The charter of Henry I was reconfirmed by Henry II in 1160/61, and by Henry VII on 14 December 1508. See *Cal. Pat. R., Henry VII, 1485-1509*, ed. H.C. Maxwell Lyte *et al*, 2 vols. (London, 1914), vol. 2, p. 613 (7).

² *Cal. Pat. R., Henry VII, 1485-1509*, vol. 2, p. 617 (11).

³ The Cartulary of the Cistercian abbey of Old Wardon, Bedfordshire: from the manuscript (Latin 223) (transcribed and edited, with introduction, abstracts and appendices in English)', ed. G.H. Fowler, *BHRS*, 13 (1930), 51 (64).

⁴ Located at Stanford (parish of Southill), Lowe's Wood was held by free tenant Joan Strynger for 9d yearly in 1538. See 'Court of Augmentations Accounts for Bedfordshire – I', ed. Y. Nicholls, *BHRS*, 63 (1984), 87 (116).

⁵ Marcher had died before 1164/65, when he is mentioned in the past tense in a charter. He had two sons, Richard and William. Richard married Agnes and had two sons, his heir Hugh, and the younger John, who became a lay brother at Wardon Abbey. *BHRS*, 13, 301 (N/30).

⁶ *Greneden* (Old English): a compound of *grêne* and *dūn* meaning Green Hill.

⁷ *Cal. Pat. R., Henry VII, 1485-1509*, vol. 2, p. 615 (9).

⁸ *BHRS*, 13, 15 (11).

Tithes and the Cistercian Order

When the Order was established, the Cistercians refused to accept tithes as a source of income and as a *quid pro quo*, Pope Innocent II (1130-1143) had granted the Order exemption from paying tithes before Wardon Abbey was founded. The policy was designed to help the relatively small number of new monasteries that were being set up on land where tithes had never been paid before. The land benefited from being brought into cultivation and the lack of financial gain to the Church was more than offset by the value of the monks' prayers and the prestige that they brought to the diocese. However, problems arose with the rapid expansion of the Order and particularly where land was granted to the monasteries on which tithes had previously been paid. In 1154 Pope Adrian IV (1154-1159) addressed the issue by limiting the exemption to lands brought under cultivation by the monks for the first time, thereby differentiating between lands previously 'tithed' and newly cleared lands. Pope Alexander III (1159-1181) reversed his predecessor's decision and the privilege of freedom from paying tithes was re-endorsed by Lucius III (1181-1185) and Urban III (1185-1187).⁹

In 1180 the Cistercian General Chapter ruled that, despite their privileges, the monks were to pay tithes on lands where tithes had previously been due unless the tithes had also been donated to the monastery or alternative arrangements made. In 1215 the fourth Lateran Council abolished the Order's exemption from paying tithes altogether and thereafter, the Cistercians had to pay tithes on all of the lands acquired from then on, whether cultivated by the monks themselves or by hired workers, but lands held *before* 1215 and brought into cultivation *after* the Council's decision, were still to remain free of tithes.¹⁰

Tithes due from Wardon Abbey to Newnham Priory

It was agreed in 1199 that Wardon Abbey would pay 4 marks (£2 13s 4d) to Newnham Priory for tithes on certain lands, and that tithes would be payable on any future acquisitions in Newnham's parishes *unless* the Cistercians assented them in accordance with the General Chapter's ruling of 1180. The list of lands on which tithes were due to Newnham included all of the lands of Richard, son of Marcher of Southill, which had come to the monks after Richard was exiled, and also on all of the land which Richard and his son John had given to the monks.¹¹ Tithes were not payable on hide of Hugh Malclerc, from which it is inferred that it was cultivated by the monks themselves in accordance with Cistercian policy of that period.

In 1225 Abbot William of Wardon agreed to pay Newnham 5s for tithes on the land once held by Hugh Malclerc '*in campo de Southzivel*' (in the field of Southill), which the monks had recently enclosed with a ditch. This latest feature, together with a requirement to pay tithes, indicates that the land had been newly let to secular tenants. The charter was witnessed by Henry the prior of Wardon, Robert the cellarer, William of Wilbraham, and others.¹² Following arbitration in 1234/35, it was reiterated that since the monks were no longer cultivating the land themselves, they were to pay the 5s per annum and make good the arrears.¹³ The *status quo* continued and in 1262, it was agreed that the two tenants, Robert Trewelove and Walter Godman, should pay tithes to Southill church, but that tithe would not be due if the land ever reverted to direct cultivation by the monks.¹⁴

⁹ For information on tithe exemptions, see D.H. Williams, *The Cistercians in the Early Middle Ages* (Gracewing, 1998), pp. 268-69.

¹⁰ *Twelfth-Century Statutes from the Cistercian General Chapter*, ed. C. Waddell, Cîteaux: Studia et Documenta 12 (Brecht, 2002), p. 86 (1180: 1).

¹¹ 'The Cartulary of Newnham Priory', ed. J. Godber, *BHRS*, 43, 2 vols. (1963, 1964), vol. 1, 75-76 (126).

¹² *BHRS*, 43, vol. 1, 79 (129).

¹³ *BHRS*, 43, vol. 1, 78-79 (128) and 79-80 (130).

¹⁴ *BHRS*, 43, vol. 1, 80 (131).

***Taxatio Ecclesiastica* (1291)**

In 1291 the pope granted Edward I one tenth of all the revenues of the churches in his kingdom to fund an expedition to the Holy Land. A single entry encompasses taxable income of £35 15s 2d from [the parish of] Wardon, Rowney Grange, and other unspecified arable lands.¹⁵ There are no references to profits from Southill, from which it is inferred that these were wrapped up in the entry for Wardon.

‘Maleclerkes Inland’ (1364/65)

The great famine (1315-1317) and the great plague (1348-1350) had an enormous impact on population levels across Europe, and with less manpower available in the countryside, there was a shift from labour-intensive agriculture to pastoral farming. There is insufficient evidence to confirm whether or not the monks of Wardon repurposed Malclerc land for grazing livestock, but had they done so, they would no longer have been liable for tithes. While the circumstances remain a mystery, arbitration was called for in 1364/65 to clarify tithe arrangements for Southill and it was agreed that the monks would make certain payments to Newnham to cover all liability from themselves and their secular tenants. Included were ‘... *sink soultz pur les dismes des terres en Southgifle qe sount appelez Maleclerkes Inland*’ ...’ meaning 5 shillings for the tithe on the lands in Southill called Malclerc’s Inland.¹⁶ The full value would therefore have been £2 10s 0d, enough to buy 3 horses (about £1,245 in today’s money), and the clause is the earliest known reference to an inland in the parish.

What was an inland?

The Old English word *inland* (Middle English *inlōnd*) refers to a detached parcel of demesne, which was usually cultivated by the manorial lord or his steward rather than being let to tenants. The modern equivalent is ‘in hand’. An example dated to c. 1200/20 occurs in the cartulary, when Wardon Abbey received a gift from Nicholas Passelewe of Biddenham, comprising 6 acres of meadow in Biddenham called *Inlondmade* (Inland meadow).¹⁷ An astute businessman, 16th-century abbot of Wardon, Augustine London, adopted a policy of leasing as many assets as possible to generate a steady cash income for the monastery, and in 1535 his successor accounted for 12s derived from Biddenham. Listed in the Court of Augmentations accounts as ‘Ibons mead cont. 6 acs’ in 1538, it was held freehold from the Crown by merchant William Butler of London for 12s annually.¹⁸

‘Inlond next Rowney Warren’ (1526)

On 8 April 1526 Abbot Augustine London leased ‘le oldewaren’ (Wardon Warren) to Edward Peke for 31 years. Terms included the warrener’s lodge and the right to take rabbits from the ‘Barton, Busshy Barton, and Claypyttes’ in the Abbot’s Garden, as well as from Secottes, a nearby parcel of monastic demesne in Southill. The lease also included ‘Inlond next Rowney Warren’ with rights to the lops (smaller branches or twigs with no commercial value), brash (low value branches trimmed up to head height), broom, underwood, and rabbits.¹⁹

¹⁵ *Taxatio Ecclesiastica Angliae Et Walliae Auctoritate P. Nicolai IV, Circa A.D. 1291*, ed. T. Astle, S. Ayscough and J. Caley (London, 1802); W. Dugdale, ‘Wardon Abbey, in Bedfordshire’, in *Monasticon Anglicanum*, ed. J. Caley, H. Ellis and B. Bandinel, 8 vols. (London, 1846), vol. 5, pt. 052, pp. 369-70.

¹⁶ Middle English *dīme* from the Old French *disme*, *diesme*, *dime* meaning a tenth part of the income or produce, a church tithe; *BHRS*, 43, vol. 1, 76-78 (p. 77) (127).

¹⁷ *BHRS*, 13, 271-74 (p. 274) (340m).

¹⁸ *Monasticon*, p. 373 [*Valor Ecclesiasticus*]; *BHRS*, 63, 93 (123).

¹⁹ *BHRS*, 63, 81 (108).

***Valor Ecclesiasticus* (1535)**

The inland was evidently used for grazing by 1535, when Wardon Warren was valued at £4 for tax purposes and '*Indelonds pasture*' at £1; a moveable rent of '40 couples of rabbits' was also payable to the abbot.²⁰ Allowable expenses included £4 9s 5d payable to the prior and convent of Newnham to cover tithes on lands throughout parishes held by the priory, not just in Southill.

The suppression of Wardon Abbey and beyond

After the closure of Wardon Abbey on 4 December 1537, Edward Peke retained the lease for Wardon Warren and Inland, paying £5 annually to the Crown, plus 13s 4d in lieu of 80 rabbits at 2d apiece.²¹

On 21 February 1564 a 21-year lease (effective 29 September 1563) was issued to Richard Wistowe for 'a coney warren in Warden and Southill called Le Olde Warren, the lodge there, herbage and pasture thereof, the conies in Wardon and Southill and in Barton Busshey, Barton Claypyttes and Secotes, a close called Inlonde lying next to Rowney Warren and "lez lopes, bushes, bromes" and conies in the same close, now or late in the tenure of Edward Peke'. The lessee was to 'leave sufficient stock of conies at the end of term'. The annual rent of £5 13s 4d remained unchanged.²²



Probable location of the inland (adjacent to the east side of the monastic Rowney Warren)

Survey of the manor of Wardon (1605)

When the survey was undertaken on 24 July 1605, John Fish, gentleman, was paying £4 13s 4d annually, under the terms of an old lease, for 'One Coney Warren called Warden Warren with all the Rabbits in the same Warren & in Warden & Southill containing by Estimation 100 acres.' A curious note in the margin shows 'A parcel of Land called Inlands by Estimation 80 acres' to have been included,²³ but since the rent was £1 less than the amount charged 41 years earlier, this hints at either confusion over the status of Inlands or an uncharacteristic clerical error.

²⁰ *Monasticon*, p. 373.

²¹ *BHRS*, 63, 81 (108).

²² *Cal. Pat. R., Elizabeth I*, vol. 3, p. 186 (938).

²³ Survey of the Manor of Wardon dated 24 July 1605 [BARS, W2593/2], p. 9.

Uncertainty notwithstanding, the asset is described as a 'parcel', which points towards an 80-acre block of pasture rather than dispersed holdings. A second note in the margin confirms that the old lease had been sworn into the hands of James I (r. 1603-25) and a new one granted under terms set by the Crown commissioners; the 'Annual value to be let' is given as £20.

The manor of Warden in the 17th century

Old werden [*sic*], Southill, Shefford, and Chiksand [*sic*] occur on John Speed's map of Bedfordshire (1611), but with nothing in the vicinity of Inlands, it undoubtedly remained as farmland.

In 1628 trustees for the City of London were given charge of the manor of Warden, including 'The Warren called Ouldwarden Warren, and the lodge there, in Warden and Southill; and all conies in Warden and Southill, and in Barton Bushye, Barton Claypitts and Seacotts; in the tenure of John Fish, gent.'²⁴ 'Inlands' was not mentioned, nor did it occur in documents concerning the sale of the manor to Robert Palmer of Hill, enrolled 4 July 1629. It is therefore speculated that it had ceased to be part of the manor of Warden by that point.²⁵

From inland to Ireland: evolution of a name

On 14 March 1650/51 Owen Brett mortgaged the 'manor or grange of Rowney' for £1,800, possibly with a view to raising sufficient funds to recover his lands in Bedfordshire forfeit to the parliamentarians during the English Civil War (1642-51). The document notes that 'Rowney Warren extends from Lords hill to Inland'.²⁶

Based on the location first documented in 1526, it is concluded that the present-day hamlet of Ireland (parish of Southill) lies in the vicinity of the inland / Indelonds pasture / Inlands / Inland. The name must have evolved after 1651 but before 1765, when Thomas Jefferys mapped 'Ireland' as a collection of structures on the west side of the road leading southwards from Southill Warren (now Keepers Warren), to join the highway running via Shefford Hardwick into Shefford.²⁷ According to a 1767 agreement concerning a right of way in the parish of Southill, the route was a recent addition, maintaining that 'the new road from Shefford to Ireland' had rendered 'the way next Stanford Bury Hedge, from Southill to Shefford' useless.²⁸ Cartographer and engraver, John Cary (c. 1754-1835) produced a map of Bedfordshire for his *New and Correct English Atlas* (published 1787), and, like Cary, showed 'Ireland' as a tiny hamlet on the west side of the aforementioned 'new road'.

Ireland and the Whitbread family

Having procured Warden manor from Charles Palmer in 1773, brewer and MP, Samuel Whitbread of Cardington (1720-96)²⁹ extended his holdings in 1786 by purchasing the site of the late Warden Abbey, its demesne lands, and Park Grange from John Wasse junior.³⁰ To his portfolio, Mr Whitbread added the Southill Estate, including Ireland, in 1795 and when the Enclosure Act for

²⁴ Documents concerning Old Warden and Southill transcribed by F. Emmison for Mrs Shuttleworth [BARS, CRT100/5], p. 147.

²⁵ Bargain & Sale enrolled on 4 July 1629 [BARS, W2223].

²⁶ Mortgage (Covenant to levy fine): £1800 dated 14 March 1650, 14 March 1651 [BARS, W2009].

²⁷ Map of Bedfordshire by Thomas Jefferys, 1765 - facsimile reprint in eight sections [BARS, X 354/5/2].

²⁸ Agreement relating to right of way in Southill dated 6 October 1767 [BARS, W2345].

²⁹ S.H.A. Hervey, *Ladbroke and its owners* (Bury St Edmunds, 1914), pp. 160-61; Conveyance. (Lease & Release), 4, 5 October 1773 [BARS, W2235-2236].

³⁰ Covenant to produce Title Deeds, 7 July 1786 [Cambs Archives, R53/22/62]; Conveyance of the equity of redemption: (lease & release) dated 6, 7 July 1786 [BARS, W2350-W2351]; Conveyance in trust to sell (lease & release) dated 27, 28 July 1785 [BARS, W2346-W2347].

Southill was passed in 1797, the settlement was annotated 'IRELANDS' on the accompanying map.³¹ Minimal changes to the layout have taken place over the intervening years, and LiDAR, in combination with evidence from the Ordnance Survey map (1st edition), indicates that the overall footprint of the little settlement has remained unaltered.³²

The Whitbread family and the Black Horse public house

Perhaps established to capture customers using 'the new road from Shefford to Ireland', the Black Horse public house was first licensed in 1820,³³ while the earliest reference found in Bedfordshire Archives dates to 1822 when the hostelry appeared in a register of alehouse licences.³⁴ This debunks the local myth that the pub was built to quench the thirst of navvies building the railway line through Southill in the mid-1850s.

³¹ Southill Enclosure map 1797 [CRO SL/9].

³² Six-inch 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of Bedfordshire XII.NW, Surveyed: 1882, Published 1884.

³³ 'BLACK HORSE PUBLIC HOUSE, Ireland. HER No. 5943, <3>'. Heritage Gateway, <https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/Results_Single.aspx?uid=MBD5943&resourceID=1014>.

³⁴ Register of alehouse licenses recording inn, licensee, surety etc. between 1822 and 1828 [BARS, CL/P13].