

# Parham Tracks and Lanes

## Medieval Tracks and Lanes

By Bob Briscoe, Jun 1999

(this article is superseded by "Parham's Medieval Tracks and Lanes" by Bob Briscoe, published online at <http://queenmaryslane.info/qmaryla-evolution.html>).

The following sketch map suggests a possible layout of Parham at some time between 1433 and 1550. There is very little hard evidence of the layout of medieval Parham, but, rather than say nothing because no-one is sure, we offer an educated guess. The map and the words that follow should not, in any way, be quoted as gospel. They represent a *feeling* of how the village may have been laid out based on clues in field names, the history of the houses and the existence of sketchy evidence of old tracks either on the ground today or on old maps. The sketch builds on a similar conjecture map sketched by the late Gwen Dyke [Dyke198x]. In turn, that sketch map was based on the 1433 manorial 'Extent', which describes the Howard estate that stretched from Rendlesham to Framlingham north of the River Deben [1433a].

A main road is thought to have run from Letheringham Old Hall to Colston Hall across Parham bridge and through Northland Green (North Green). The stretches from Easton to Parham (FP.No.2) and north of Cransford are both just footpaths today. The name of one of the fields that lies on this same road between Parham and North Green lends weight to the theory that this was a major road; the field on which today's Field Cottage was built was called Street Piece in 1839 and Road Field in 1836. Both these names imply this was much more than just a country lane. Where this road rose from the valley of the River Ore in its cutting up onto the high ground of North Green, it was called Stark Weather Hill in medieval times. It obviously carried a reputation for meanness into later centuries, the field to the left being called Hungry Hill in 1801.

An old lane probably ran from Silverlace Green directly to northern Great Glemham, giving a direct route from Letheringham to Great Glemham too. This is indeed shown crossing Queen Mary's Lane on a 1761 map of New Park (now Park Farm). The remains of this lane run alongside Rachel's Wood today (FP.No.14).

Wabbe's Lane (Webb's Lane in 1912, part of BW.No.18 today) ran from Northland Green to Wabbe's Land which surrounded the present day location of Kilderbee's Grove. Double ditched Coldhall Lane would have joined Framlingham to Wabbe's Lane. However, the narrow section of the present day bridleway between John's Grove and Webb's Lane (the other part of BW.No.18) is probably not the original route, as it follows a ditch only dug in the early 19th century.

A mill is believed to have stood in the square 'moat' that is visible on the 1840 Tithe map in Mount Field to the north of Park Farm. The present day 'Packway' from Elm Farm to Stone Farm (BW.No.11) may have originally headed towards this 'mill'. Perhaps it only diverted diagonally across fields as a short-cut to Stone Farm when the 'mill' and Queen Mary's Lane disappeared in the 18th century. Today a footpath (FP.No.10) drops down from the top of North Green where the Packway ended before it was diverted through Elm Farm yards. This footpath crosses the Gull stream and joins with Webb's Lane. On early 19th century maps the field boundaries are shown slightly to the south of this path's present route. If the track had followed these boundaries it would have emerged directly in line with the old bridge over the Gull. However, today there is no evidence of a gateway through the old hedge at this point. It is still just possible that the Packway and Coldhall Lane were joined by this track, giving a direct route from the possible moated 'mill' to Framlingham.

The sketch map also shows another major track cutting across the middle of Parham from West to East but below the Packway/Coldhall Lane route. Today this is just a footpath (FP.Nos.6, 7, 13 & 12). However, it was marked as the 'Way to Saxmundham' on a 1747 map of Coles Green (just west of the present day Parham Wood). Also the field names 'Market Hill' and 'Smithy Close' flanking this route north of Parham Wood are sketchy evidence that this might have once been a well-used route to market. A string of footpaths, tracks and minor roads still links southern Framlingham through to Saxmundham along this route via Great Glemham and Benhall church.

Also, the track from Silverlace Green down to Hacheston (FP.No.16) is sketched in as a more major lane, purely because it seems likely this would have been a well-used route. For similar reasons, the track from the Church past Parham Hall and on towards Marlesford (FP.No.17) is given more prominence than it has today.

Potelotte's Croft Mill is mentioned in the manorial records and probably stood where Little Lonely Farm stands today. The sites of other possible mills are shown on the sketch map, based on field name evidence. The way across today's Mill Green was called Mill Way in medieval times despite the green then being called Greshaugh Green, strongly implying that a mill stood for many centuries where Mill House stands today.

## Queen Mary's Lane

By Bob Briscoe, Jan 1999, based on a text originally written by Stephen Podd in conjunction with Miss Gwen Dyke (this article is superseded by "Queen Mary's Lane - its Long History" by Bob Briscoe, published online at <http://queenmaryslane.info/qmaryla-evolution.html>).

Although the name of Queen Mary's Lane is thought to stem from events occurring in 1553, Queen Mary Lane is much older, almost certainly in excess of 1000 years. This is supported by the sunken nature of the remaining length. The lane must have existed at the time when the parish boundaries were first defined (tenth century at least and probably much earlier), as it was the marker of Parham's eastern boundary. It was also a boundary of Parham Half-Hundred<sup>[i]</sup>, one of the 25 early administrative divisions within the county.

Local legend has it that the name of both the lane and of Queen Mary's Wood date from when the Queen led her army on London to claim the crown from Lady Jane Grey. Queen Mary Wood sits to the Great Glemham side of Queen Mary Lane. The Queen had moved from Norfolk down to Framlingham Castle where she collected her forces. It is supposed that the route from here took her and her army down the lane, passing the wood on the way. If true, such an occasion in the lives of the local peasants would certainly have warranted a few commemorative name changes.

Quite how far the lane originally ran is not entirely clear. Short lengths survived north and south of Queen Mary Wood well into the twentieth century. Eighteenth and early nineteenth century maps confirm that it extended south along the parish boundary to a point east of present day Crabb's Farm, under the aerodrome [1747b]. From there, its course is uncertain, but it may well have linked with surviving lengths of 'green lane' north and east of 'The Willows' at Marlesford (in part the boundary between Plomesgate and Loes Hundreds), crossing present day 'Keeper's Lane' to follow 'Hollow Lane' to Marlesford, meeting the London Road near Marlesford 'Bell'.

At the northern end there is some evidence that the lane continued to follow the parish boundary to Boundary Farm. The 'Z' bend in the present day Saxmundham Road could well imply that this was once a staggered junction across a more important route. Also the name of a field that straddles the parish boundary here is called 'Cross Path Field'. Continuing further north, it seems more than co-incidence that a number of straight portions of footpath and track seem to continue in the same straight line as Queen Mary's Lane right up to Framlingham Hall in Dennington the other side of the Roman Road to the north of Framlingham.

Perhaps because of its sunken (and therefore presumably miry) nature, the lane had declined in use and importance by the 1790s. By 1761, Queen Mary's Lane is shown having a southern ending on the lane from Silverlace Green to Great Glemham, there being a 'T' junction [1761a] where just fourteen years earlier there had been a cross-roads [1747b]. A map of what is now Oak Farm, Parham, surveyed in 1794, shows Queen Mary Lane as the most likely route to reach the farm from the Saxmundham Road. The present track to the farm from the Cransford Road wasn't shown on the finished map [1794a] although it appears on the survey sketches [1802a] for modifications to the original. These later additions to the 1794 map (drawn before 1819) state that the surviving length of Queen Mary Lane from the Saxmundham Road, through the edge of Queen Mary Wood and beyond was planted with trees in 1795. By 1840 much of the lane further south had been encroached by farmers and ploughed out.

Today double ditches one lane's width apart run within the western edge of Queen Mary Wood. The strip of covert covering the next section south of this (since 1795) was ploughed out in the late 1970s. Nonetheless, the lane survives as a track to the south of this, then along the eastern edge of Queen Mary Firwood. Sadly (scandalously, shamefully!) the route is not even a right of way today, except for the 'Z' bend in the Framlingham to Saxmundham road where it staggers across this ancient green lane.

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[Note i]: Great Glemham, on the other side of Queen Mary Lane, was in Plomesgate Hundred. Parham Half-Hundred included the parishes of Blaxall, Dunningworth, Tunstall and Wantisden in 1086 despite Parham parish not being connected to them. Both parts of Parham Half-Hundred were incorporated into Plomesgate Hundred by 1240.

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## References

- [1433a] "Extent," (covering Framlingham-Rendlesham), Held Privately (1433)
- [1671a] "The Manor of Blomsvile in the parish of Parramhason," (covering Blomesville Hall estate), SRO:X6/6 (1671). Identifies groups of fields, not individual ones. The shape and poor scaling of the field groups makes their identification very difficult.
- [1747a] "Map of Blomeville Hall Farm belonging to William Folkes, Esq," (covering Blomesville Hall estate), W Brasier, surv'r, SRO:HD54:454 (Jul 1747)
- [1747b] Right-hand side of "Map of Coles-Green and Broad-water Farms in the Parish of Framlingham and of North-Glemham Farm in the Parish of No Glemham," SRO:HD54:454 (1747)
- [1747c] Left-hand side of "Map of Coles-Green and Broad-water Farms in the Parish of Framlingham and of North-Glemham Farm in the Parish of No Glemham," SRO:HD54:454 (1747)
- [1761a] "Parham New Park," (covering Park Fm), Ja's Crow, surv'r, SRO:HD11:475/327 (1761)
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- [1783a] "Map of Suffolk," (covering Parham Old Hall), J Hodskinson (1783)

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[1835a] "Pasture Lands called Wilkinsons," (covering pt Park Fm), SRO:HD11:475/2239 (1835)

[1836a] "Small Estate in Parham belonging to Mr John Hunt," (covering N.Green Fm), SRO:HD11:475/2234 (28 May 1836)

[1836b] "Premises in Parham of Mr John Hunt dcd," (covering Overbett's), Isaac Johnson, surv'r, SRO:HD11:475/2236 (1836)

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[1840a] "Parish of Parham in the County of Suffolk," signed Henry B Gunning, First Tithe Commissioner, SRO:P461/192 (1840)

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[1855a] "Survey of Pattles Fm, Parham," (covering Willoughby Inn & land), SRO:HD11:475/2238 (watermark 1855)

[1862a] "Conveyance; Mr William Chandler and others to William G Mantle Esq," (covering Park Farm), held by Ruth Kindred (22 Sep 1862). All field names identical to [1850a] except Six Acre Meadow & Stackyard Meadow merged into arable and called Six Acre Meadow together(!) and Squirrells spelled Squerrells.

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[1921a] "Parham Hall Estate, Suffolk," Mellor & Co. Solicitors (1921) Sale in lots by H C Corrance

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