

Richmond Park: A case study in documenting an extant medieval deer park

by

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## ABSTRACT

Richmond Park located in outer southwest London was created by King Charles I in the years between 1632-1637, for the purpose of having a large royal deer park within close proximity to London. Today, nearly five centuries later, Richmond Park still exists with its original boundaries enclosing nearly 2500 acres. Given the fact that the development and design of park landscapes for hunting purposes is an overlooked element of landscape architecture, this research set out to explore the different types landscape modifications for hunting. Using Richmond Park as a case study, historical maps of the park were collected from 1632, 1754, 1876 and 1999. The maps were then digitized and geo-referenced to 1992 Ordnance Survey maps giving them a known scale and coordinates. Information from primary and secondary literature sources was used in an attempt to fill voids in map data with that from published sources.

While much information on medieval hunting landscapes was gathered, none pertained specifically to Richmond Park that spoke directly about the design and maintenance of a hunting park. The data contained on the historic maps was inconsistent from year to year and ultimately provided no continuous theme or character that could be analyzed across all four maps. Information from literature also failed to provide additional detail about the landscape characters of Richmond Park above and beyond that which was recorded on the archival maps. Despite these shortcomings, important lessons were learned about the obstacles and limitations imposed by combining centuries old surveying and cartographic methods with a modern geographic information system that will prove useful to landscape historians and future researchers.

## CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

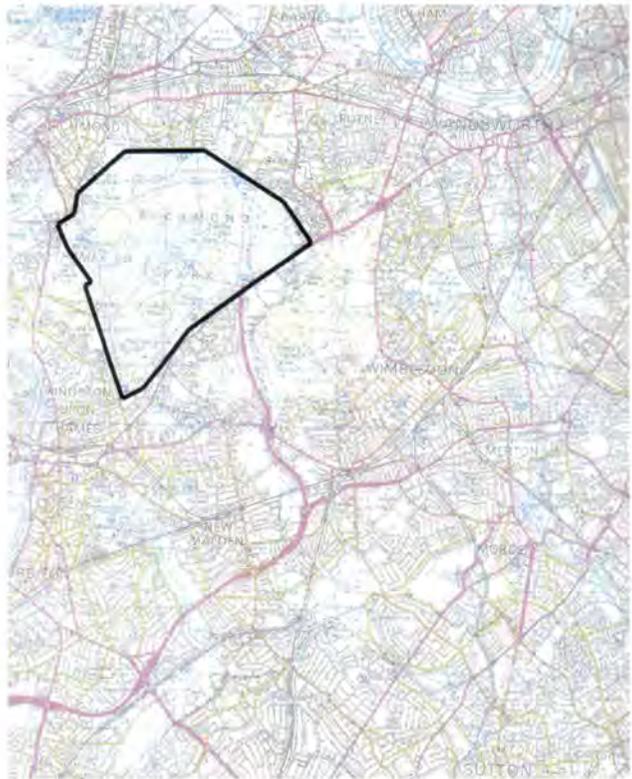
### BACKGROUND OF TOPIC

Richmond Park, located in outer-southwest London (Figure 1), was created by Charles I (1625-1649) in the years 1632-1637 for the purpose of having a large hunting park close to the center of Stuart government. Roughly 2500 acres (955 ha) of Royal lands, commons, wasteland and farmsteads were enclosed by a brick wall during this time—much to the distaste of the local landholders.

The park was promptly stocked with red and fallow deer, and the public denied access, save for ladderstile gates that allowed the poor to collect deadwood from within the park. So begins the history of what has been called “... the embodiment of a medieval deer park,” (Land Use Consultants 1999, p. 9), one that has persevered for nearly five centuries.

The park has often been shrouded in controversy over rights to public access, the eccentricities of royalty and the landed

elite, and the misuse of land in an agriculturally based economy. The enclosure of Richmond Park has provided the modern city of London with an incredible piece of natural and living history within its boundaries. The park’s primary purpose as a hunting ground first and foremost throughout its history while belonging to the Sovereign has prevented intensive



**Figure 1. Location of Richmond Park**

modern agricultural practices from dramatically modifying Richmond's essentially medieval landscape. Thus, many ancient artifacts such as field lines, a Roman road and remains dating to the Bronze Age have been preserved. In contrast, in other regions of England, row crop agriculture has destroyed approximately 22,500 ancient monuments, or roughly one a day since 1945 (Cossons 2000). English Heritage has listed Richmond Park as a Grade I Historic Landscape and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). It has been labeled a symbol of national heritage and identity worthy of the highest levels of protection, management and conservation.

In the arena of landscape architectural history, medieval and early Renaissance Europe is most often discussed in terms of the organization of cities and in later years, for the development of extensive formal gardens. Landscape modifications facilitating the perpetuation and pursuit of game animals for sport and food is a seldom-addressed facet of the landscape history of the period. The pursuit of game played an important role in the development of the English park and forest system, not to mention the cultural, socio-economic and judicial systems of medieval government.

Hunting landscapes have an ancient history. Records of hunting for sport and sustenance are found in the earliest annals of written history, from the Assyrians and Babylonians to the Greeks and Romans (Baillie-Grohman 1913). Hunting was considered by many cultures to be an excellent preparation for war. The love of the chase was said to bring "...health of body and keenness of sight and hearing" (Butler 1930, p. 22). Given the influence of the Romans on the English countryside and its later conquest by the Normans who also had a rich hunting history, it is no wonder that hunting has had an impact on the English landscape. Fortunately, evidence of landscape elements used for hunting still remain

in the physical form of crumbling walls, ancient pales, and from scrutiny of aerial photography; hedgerows, roads, and field patterns (Rackham 1986). We owe much of our current knowledge of landscape modifications for rearing and pursuit of game to medieval written records, with the major primary documents coming from the records of the King's Household Administration, Pipe Rolls, Close, Charter and Patent Rolls and Inquisitories Post Mortem (Cantor and Hatherly 1979). The Domesday Survey, compiled during the reign of William the Conqueror (1066-1087) and completed in 1087 is among the finest examples of these works. What was intended to be an economic valuation of Norman holdings following the conquest of 1066 has provided historians with a surprisingly detailed account of the 11<sup>th</sup> century English landscape. This was a land at the disposal of one individual, the King, and owing his heritage to the Carolingian line of French kings, much of this land was set aside and modified for his hunting. The landscape retained much of its natural integrity during the reign of the Norman kings, but by the early 14<sup>th</sup> century, plague, civil war, famine, agriculture and industrial developments had rapidly changed its character. While the right to hunt had always been limited to royalty, clergy and landed gentry, the aforementioned impacts further thinned the ranks of those in the classes that possessed the resources to maintain their hunting grounds. A switch to an agricultural based economy put much of England (and its hunting landscapes) under the plow well into the 16<sup>th</sup> century, not excluding royal manors. The Tudor line of English kings, beginning with Henry VII (1485-1509), began a trend that elevated (and to some degree restricted) the ownership of hunting grounds and the right to take game (especially deer) to the highest level of western society at the time, royalty. This persisted through Elizabethan and Stuart times, well into the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

The enclosure of Richmond Park in 1637 marked a resurgence in hunting landscapes, of which there were four basic types: forests, chases, parks and warrens. The work in this thesis aims to clearly define the landscape character of these areas based upon primary records, enclosure maps and published literature. Richmond Park provides an excellent case study given that its boundaries, and the landscape contained within, have remained virtually unchanged over its 464 years of existence. Due in part to its controversial creation nearly three centuries after the heyday of medieval deer parks, records of Richmond Park have been dutifully kept in both public and state papers. In addition, owing to its royal heritage, we have the benefits of enclosure maps dating to 1632-7 and 1754. It was uncommon to have mapped information of even royal manors prior to the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. These elements combine to provide the researcher with a solid foundation to begin reconstructing a historic landscape.

### **Issues of Topic**

As previously mentioned, Richmond Park is regarded as an excellent representation of the typical medieval deer park. It has become evident through research that the definition of what constitutes a forest, chase or park are often interchanged or at the least, overlap in the literature. The aim of this research then became generating a definitive landscape description of the makeup of a medieval deer park using primary records to add detail to the information recorded on the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century enclosure maps of Richmond Park. Each of these sources on its own leaves large gaps in the natural conditions present in the park during its history and the modifications (if any) that were made to facilitate the taking of game. In conjunction, however, they could possibly be used to document landscape and land use change.

Given that little has been written in recent years on modifications of the landscape for rearing and hunting game, the majority of information on Richmond Park will come from secondary sources, where facts have been compiled and distilled by previous authors. Several of the authors cited in this text are recognized as experts in their respective fields. Oliver Rackham and W.G. Hoskins have written extensively on English landscape geography and history. Edward Jesse was Surveyor of His Majesty's Parks in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century and recorded many of the early modernizations of the Richmond landscape. Similarly, Michael Baxter Brown was elected Superintendent of Richmond Park in 1971 and lives in one of the old gamekeeper's lodges within the park. Leonard Cantor has been the most visible modern author writing on the subject of hunting landscapes. His writings provide the most current views on the landscape character of forests, chases parks and warrens. Many of these published works contain reproductions of primary records, which bring to light the potential for errors in translation from Old English and Norman French. With that, this research must be approached from a historiographic perspective. Historiography is the imaginative reproduction of the past from data derived by the process of critically examining and analyzing the records and survivals of the past, a subjective verisimilitude rather than experimental certainty (Gottschalk 1969). This mandates that as a researcher, I must go beyond presenting a compilation of dates, peoples and locations. More important to the study of landscape history are the aspects of how forests, chases, parks and warrens came about and the impacts they had on medieval sociology and culture.

## RICHMOND PARK

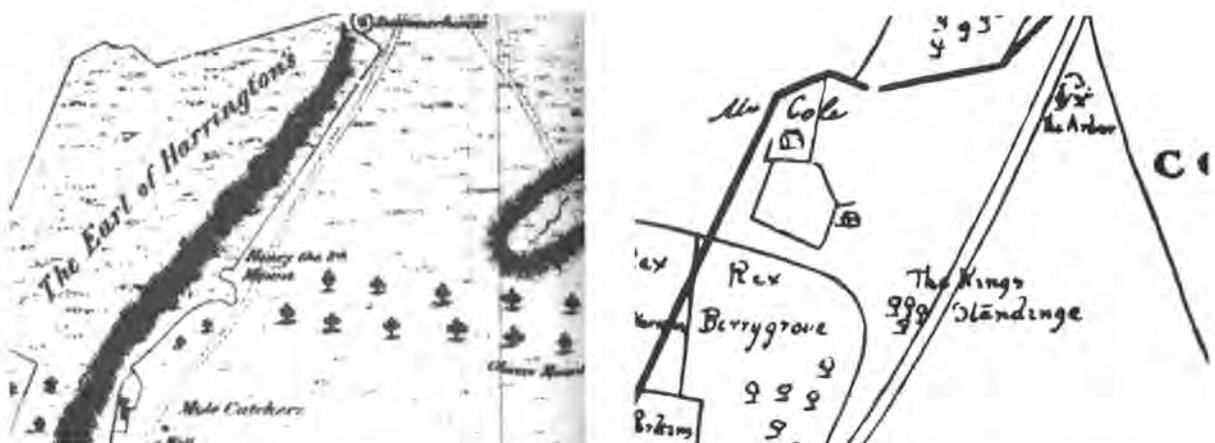
### Pre-Enclosure Richmond

In Saxon times, Richmond was known as the Manor of Shene (Batey et. al. 1994), and through the centuries the spelling varied among Syenes, Schenes, Schene and finally to Sheen (Cundall 1925). In all respects derived from the Saxon word for 'shining'—referring to its location overlooking the Thames River. Recorded as a part of the royal manor of Kingston in the Domesday Survey, Richmond was separated from the royal demesne early in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, but had reverted to the crown by early in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Michael Baxter Brown, author of Richmond Park: The History of a Royal Deer Park, mentions in his text that, "Deer parks associated with royalty were not new to north Surrey. A park in the Manor of Shene is first mentioned in 1293," and "...by 1437 a second park had been created" northwest of Richmond palace—"...stocked with fallow deer" and known as "le Newe Park of Shene Co. Surrey" (Brown 1985, p. 48). This new park was created to accommodate the sporting tastes of the royals who frequented the summer palaces along the Thames River that had existed in and around the borough of Richmond since the reign of Edward I (1271-1307). A new palace was started by Henry V (1413-1422) and finished by his son, Henry VI (1422-1461) that later burned and was rebuilt in 1497 during the reign of Henry VII (1485-1509) (Batey et. al. 1994).

Henry VII was not as addicted to hunting as his Norman predecessors had been, but he favored the palace at Sheen. Coincidentally, like its predecessor, the new palace also burned in 1499. In honor of his former title, Earl of Richmond, Henry VII built a new palace, completed in 1501 and named it Richmond (Cundall 1925). The new palace grounds

included a 350-acre parcel now known as the ‘Old Deer Park’, which sits on the grounds of Kew Gardens today and is closed to the public.

His successor in the Tudor Dynasty, Henry VIII (1509-1547) was, in contrast to his father, much addicted to the hunt. During the reign of Henry VIII, Richmond was known as the royal hunting ground Sheen Chase (Jones 1983). To this day, the high point within Richmond Park is known in some circles as ‘Henry the 8<sup>th</sup> Mount’, and is recorded as such on John Eyre’s map of 1754 (Figure 2). Speculation surrounds the origin of this name, some saying that it was the site from which the king waited for a signal from the Tower of London on 19 May 1536 that the execution of his second wife, Anne Boleyn had been completed. More likely, the same spot is labeled as ‘The King’s Standinge’ on Nicholas Lane’s enclosure map of 1637 (see also Figure 2). A *standinge* in medieval hunting terms was a high point from which one could shoot down upon driven game. Regardless, Henry VIII has left his mark on Richmond Park and revived the tradition of deer hunting that in some cases overshadowed the duties of kingship.



**Figure 2.** Henry the 8<sup>th</sup> Mount (left) as recorded on John Eyre’s map of Richmond Park, 1754. The same feature labeled “The King’s Standinge” on Nicholas Lane’s enclosure map, 1632-37.

### **Phase 1, The Enclosure of Richmond Park**

Beginning with its enclosure in 1637, Richmond Park has experienced three phases of existence. From 1637-1761, it was strictly a royal hunting ground used extensively by Charles I (1625-1649), Charles II (1660-1685), George I (1714-1727) and George II (1727-1760). Stag hunting fell from vogue in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century but the demand for meat to fill the Royal Venison Warrants remained high. As a result, park use shifted to deer production and preservation. Hunting within the park was relinquished to pursuit of grouse, pheasant and partridge. Thus from 1761-1901, Richmond was gradually opened to the public and maintained as an aesthetic asset to the city of London, eventually leading to its final and current phase of development. King Edward VII took over Rangership of the park in 1904, and promptly removed the game preserves and opened the park as a public amenity in the fashion we are accustomed to today complete with picnic areas, trails, concessions and restroom facilities.

In the century prior to the enclosure of Richmond Park, the landscape was for the most part pastureland used for grazing, as the soils in the area were poorly drained and did not support row crops well. The country likely supported a fairly open landscape of large oaks, furze (gorse) and bracken interspersed with pasture and commons. Better than half of the land which Charles I desired to create his park upon belonged to private owners and had for generations. In spite of the fact that Charles I would offer in excess of the fair price for the land, enclosure infringed upon a heritage and way of life (Jones 1983). He held fast to his conviction to creating the park and was determined to take away men's estates if necessary, at his own pleasure (Chancellor 1894), a fact which sets the stage for the kind of blatant disregard for public opinion that would later cost Charles I his head.

From nearly the onset of his reign, Charles I had plans for enclosing a new park at Richmond. The Old Deer Park attached to Richmond palace and that at Hampton Court were comparatively small (Nelson 1883). A warrant in 1630 recorded one of the first official acts of creating the park; Charles'



**Figure 3. Nicholas Lane's Enclosure Map of Richmond Park 1632-1637**

signature was needed for payment to Edward Manning for 'railing in coppices, making ponds and cutting lawns in the New Park at Richmond, and bringing a river through the same' (Brown 1985). From this point on, it became known as Richmond Great or New Park to distinguish it from the smaller Old Deer Park at Kew. From Nicholas Lane's enclosure map (Figure 3) surveyed between 1632 and 1637, it becomes evident just how much private land was bought up or forfeited to create the park. The only lands under royal control were located in the upper left corner (northwest) portion of the map in and around Richmond Comon (*sic*). Charles was met with resistance from not only local landholders but from members of his cabinet as well. Sensing a growing revolt among the landholders, the Bishop of London (Treasurer) and Lord Cottington (Chancellor of the Exchequer) strongly cautioned Charles against proceeding with the park based upon the outrageous cost of a brick enclosure wall and his increasing unpopularity as a ruler. It had been centuries since a king had enacted what amounted to eminent domain to garner lands for his own use. Not since the brutal Forest Laws had been abolished in the 14<sup>th</sup> century had such an act been attempted, lending a medieval flavor to Richmond's origins and leading authors of some of the classical

works to draw similarities between Charles I and the originator of Forest Laws himself, William the Conqueror. Seventeenth century chronicler Edward Hyde had this to say about Charles I in his History of the Rebellion,

**The King who was excessively afflicted to hunting and sports of the field, had a great desire to make a great park for red as well as fallow deer between Richmond and Hampton Court, where he had large wastes of his own and great parcels of wood, which made it very fit for the use he designed it to; but as some parishes had common in those wastes, so many gentlemen and farmers had good houses and good farms intermingled in those wastes, of their own inheritance or for lives of years; and without taking in of them into the park, it would not be of the largeness of for the use proposed. His majesty desired to purchase these lands and was very willing to buy them upon higher terms than the people could sell them at to anybody else if they had occasion to part with them, and so he employed his own surveyor and other of his officers to treat with the owners, many whereof were his own tenants whose terms would at least expire. (Cited in Jones, 1983, p. 16)**

Undaunted by the warnings from his council and the growing unrest among landholders, Charles began firing brick and building the 2m. tall enclosure wall on his own lands. The remaining holdouts soon realized they would be cut off from surrounding lands if they did not give in to his desires. From the annals of the History of Surrey, an indenture dated December 22, 1635 shows the last lands relinquished to the King were 265 acres in the manor of Petersham and 438 acres belonging to Ham, sold for £4,000 (Jones 1983). This was more than 10s. per acre at a time when laborers were paid 1s. 2d. a day and bricklayers made 1s. 8d. Oddly enough, the actual date of completion of the park was not recorded, but the Domestic State Papers from February 23, 1637 make note of a payment of £100 to Lodowick Carlile and Humfry Rogers for pease, tares and hay for the red and fallow deer in the great park at Richmond (Jones 1983). From later records of Richmond Park, we find that Carlile and Rogers were in fact the first gamekeepers within the park, and remained so through the years of the Commonwealth (1649-1660). As a piecemeal offering of accommodation to the residents of the villages surrounding Richmond Park, gates were

placed at Richmond Hill, East Sheen, Roehampton, Wimbledon, Coombe and Ham Common and stepladders were placed against the walls of the park to permit villagers to move through the park on foot. Despite the relative insignificance of this token gesture, public foot traffic within the park was faithfully preserved until 1702, when the rangership under Queen Anne ordered the gates locked and the ladders removed.

At the same time he ordered the enclosure of Richmond Park, Charles did in fact reinstitute the medieval forest administration on the whole of England. This made the beasts of the chase (red and fallow deer, wild boar and hares) sole property of the king and inflicted heavy penalties and fines for offenses ranging from poaching to preventing deer from feeding in one's crop fields.

As a result of his apparent inability to rule, Charles I's (Figure 4) enjoyment of Richmond Park was short lived. When civil war broke out in 1640 after Charles refused a public outcry for representation and a voice in government, he was made a prisoner for several years. In spite of his incarceration, the King was allowed to hunt as late as August 1647, when it was recorded in a letter from Colonel Edmund Whalley that he killed a stag and a buck (Collenette 1971). Not long after, on January 30, 1649, Charles I was beheaded in a public execution (Figure 5) for treason, leaving the Commonwealth under Oliver Cromwell to rule England and Richmond Park for the next decade.



**Figure 4. Collection of sporting art by Anthony Van Dyck, from left to right: *Charles I on Horseback with M. de St. Antoine* (1633), *Charles I on Horseback* (1635) and *Charles I 'à la chasse'* (1635).**

### **Commonwealth Richmond**

Following the unfortunate end of Charles I, the Commonwealth government led by Oliver Cromwell wasted no time in allying with the City of London. As a token of allegiance, control of Richmond Park passed to the city on July 17, 1649 (Chancellor 1894). The gamekeepers



**Figure 5. Painting chronicling the trial and beheading of Charles I, the only English Monarch ever to be executed.**

Carlile and Rogers were retained during this time and often called upon to provide venison from the park for city dinners. There is no indication from the records that anyone affiliated with the governing body actually hunted in the park during the years 1649-1660. Parliament had in fact requested that rather than disempark Richmond as was done with all other Royal Parks during the Commonwealth, it be preserved 'without destruction' and remain an

'ornament to the city' (Jones 1983). Records are contradictory on the state of Richmond's landscape and deer herd during this period, and it is quite likely that poachers and those wishing to profit from the timber within the park took their toll, evidence of which appears in records from the reign of Charles II.

England under the Commonwealth functioned relatively well with an adept leader like Cromwell at the helm. With his death on September 3, 1658 however, the interregnum government quickly dissolved.

### **Restoration of the Monarchy**

Heir to the throne, Charles II (1660-1685) took refuge in Breda, Holland during the civil war, and shortly after the death of Oliver Cromwell, he was approached by the City of London to return. Monarchy was officially restored on May 29, 1660 and as a token of their appreciation, the city restored Richmond Park to royal control. In return, determined not to make the same mistakes his father had, Charles II pardoned all members of the Corporation of London for their role in the civil war. One of his first official acts was to order a survey of Richmond to ascertain its integrity as a deer park. Where it had been previously recorded that the park had been looked after 'reasonably well' (Jones 1983), Shirley (1867) notes that as a result of the destruction of deer during the usurpation, State Papers show that stock was brought in from Germany and elsewhere to replenish the herds in nearby Windsor and Sherwood Forests. Also recorded in the State Papers of 30 June 1660, information was provided that the late King's woodmonger, a William Bentley, had made havoc of timber and wood to the value of £20,000 and therefore was to be excluded from the King's general pardon (Collenette 1971). It was common practice to remove and sell large pollarded oaks to defray the cost of repairing the constantly crumbling brick enclosure wall. Expenses for

these repairs seldom exceeded £200 per year, indicating that Bentley's harvest had a significant impact on the Richmond landscape. This claim is substantiated by a further decline in the deer herd from 1660-1669, possibly due to lack of browse or disease. Charles II's first survey of deer in the park in 1660 indicated that 2000 deer were present in the park, a later count showed only 600 in 1669 (Jones 1983). Further investigation of the decline revealed that several of the keepers, local lords and the King himself had significantly over-harvested deer from the park. Illegal grazing of livestock had also reduced the quality of browse available to the deer, worsening their condition.

Conditions apparently did not improve dramatically. In the winter of 1678, the hay that had been cut the previous summer was of poor quality and full of rushes (no doubt due to Richmond's poorly drained soils) and starved all the deer (Brown 1985). In the keeper's records, some 600 fallow deer and 14 red deer were lost in a matter of months.

Deer hunting within Richmond experienced a lapse in popularity following the death of Charles II in 1685. Owing to that fact, when William III and Mary II took the throne in 1689, the first steps were made to further open the park to the public. Ordinary people could not roam at will through the park but if they stayed to the paths were free to travel on foot or by carriage without a special permit. Somewhat ahead of the times, William III preferred shooting (hunting pheasants, partridge and grouse) to hunting deer with hounds, although he did occasionally partake of the chase within Richmond Park.

Richmond reached its apex as a hunting park during the reign of George II (1727-1760). Horace Walpole called the Richmond landscape of the day "a bog and a harbour for deer stealers and vagabonds" (Brown 1985, p. 70). The position of Ranger within the park was a prestigious and much heralded title due in most part to its fringe benefits of venison

allotment, lodging and fair pay. King George II appointed Lord Walpole as Ranger, who let his father, Sir Robert Walpole (the Prime Minister) administer most of the duties, as he was very fond of the chase. The elder Walpole set out almost immediately to remedy the injustices of the preceding decades, with his own best interests in mind. The opening of the park to the public made hunting deer on horseback with hounds a difficult if not dangerous pursuit. Naturalist Edward Jesse (1835) wrote that the days of taking deer were kept as secret as possible to prevent to great a crowd from gathering to watch the spectacular hunts. The Ranger set out to fix the situation by removing the ladderstile gates (essentially stepladders) and placing guards at all the gates that would only let in the privileged few. A special pass was required to enter the park on hunting days (Figure 6). During this period, hunting was organized for Wednesdays and Saturdays, lending, it is said to the Parliamentary recess on Saturdays so Lord Walpole could attend the hunt. Records of the chase in Richmond Park were quite common at this time; Read's Journal dated August 24, 1728 captures one of these hunts (cited in Brown, 1983, p. 73).



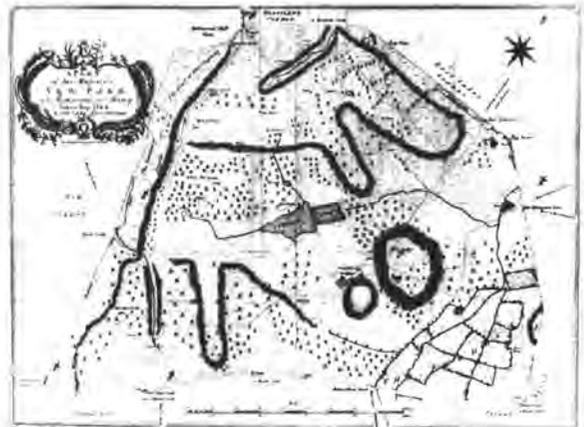
**Figure 6. Gate keys and passes to Richmond Park**

**His Majesty, the Duke and the Princess Royal hunted on horseback. Her Majesty and the Princess Amelia hunted in a four-wheeled chaise, and the Princess Caroline in a two-wheel chaise; and the Princess Mary and Louisa were in a coach. Sir Robert Walpole attended as Ranger, dressed in green.**

As you will see in the next chapter, and is evident from this passage, these hunts were bathed in pomp and circumstance. What a spectacle it must have been to see the entire Royal Family racing across the countryside behind a pack of hounds in deft pursuit of the hart. The Royal Buckhounds (the King's personal pack of hounds and hunting cronies) met at Richmond no less than 13 times in 1732, opening the season on July 22 and closing on November 15 (Brown 1985). Hunting had once again been lifted to a near duty of kingship.

Sir Robert Walpole invested immense sums of his own money into improving the conditions at Richmond. He remodeled what was known as the Old Lodge and took his retirement there and initiated a drainage program that enhanced pasturage within the lowlands of the park. Sir Robert passed away in 1745 followed by his son six years later in 1751, and along with them by consensus, so did deer hunting in Richmond Park (Brown 1985, McDowall 1996).

Shortly after the passing of the Walpoles, surveyor John Eyre completed a map of Richmond Park in September 1754 (Figure 7). From Eyre's map we see the first evidence of the many ponds that had been created by the drainage practices implemented since Lane's Enclosure map. Also evident are the paddocks in the eastern



**Figure 7. John Eyre's map of 1754**

ranges of the park, which in the next phase of the park's existence will be used to confine and feed deer for slaughter. Several lodges have been added in the 100+ years since enclosure,

and consistent with the times, a hint of formality in plantings shows up in the Queen's Ride and the avenue connecting Henry the 8<sup>th</sup> Mount and Oliver's Mount.

### **Phase 2, Venison Production 1761-1901**

By about 1750, across the English countryside it became evident that deer hunting was not a sustainable activity if it was to continue as it had during Tudor and Stuart times. For starters, a general scarcity of stags made stag hunting increasingly difficult. Deer parks had never fully recovered after the interregnum, and those that had rapidly fell to the plow for economic reasons. As it had been in the early Middle Ages, parks were still very expensive to maintain. Poaching and the threat of disease made ownership a risky business. The Enclosure Acts which had turned the English landscape into a matrix of fields and hedges created a habitat that was not favorable to deer, but created a population boom in fox, rabbits and hares. Dog breeders developed new foxhounds capable of keeping up with their quarry over many miles and hedgerows proved a stout challenge for even the most seasoned horseman (Deuchar 1988). Thus foxhunting came into vogue and was accessible to a much greater portion of the populace, as it didn't require an enclosure on private land to partake of the sport.

Richmond's deer hunting heritage was not completely forgotten, however. King George III (Figure 8) popularized what was known as hunting 'carted deer'. The appeal of this form of hunting was in the thrill of the chase, not the kill. It had all the elements of a traditional deer hunt, with hunters on horseback pursuing hounds in the chase, save for the fact that the day's quarry was brought to the hunting ground in, and released from, a cart. The animal once released had a certain amount of 'law' (5 to 15 minutes head start) before the hounds were allowed to give chase. The hunt continued until the stag was brought to bay



**Figure 8. George Stubbs, *The Grosvenor Hunt* (1762) showing King George III arriving at the scene as the hounds bring a red deer stag to bay.**

by the hounds, who were trained to leave the quarry unmolested and ended with the stag being placed back in the cart and returned to a paddock. In this fashion, a deer that gave good sport could be hunted several times over many seasons (Brown 1985).

The decline in popularity of traditional deer hunting in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century did not quell the monarchy's taste for venison. The Royal Venison Warrants provided from one-half deer for minor positions, to as many as 12 deer per year to those high in government favor or standing. As was noted earlier, the number of paddocks in the park doubled in the time between Lane's Enclosure map and Eyre's survey. Despite the fact that the number of deer within the park had not been recorded since 1669, an 1834 assessment of the park by Edward Jesse reported 1600 fallow and 40-50 red deer present (Jones 1983). Fallow deer reached their peak population levels within the park during this period, numbering four deer for every



### **Phase 3, A Public Amenity**

When King Edward VII took over Rangership of the park in 1904, Richmond was fully opened to the public. Game conservation and recreation became the focus for the next century (Land Use Consultants 1999). The number of deer within the park varied from as few as 120 immediately following WWI and WWII, to 900 in 1909 (Jones 1983). In spite of the overall decrease in the deer herd, enough remained that Richmond kept the appearance of a medieval deer park with its characteristic browse line a full two meters above the ground. Little remained of the original enclosure wall, save for a slight rise in the earth and an interior hedge marking the original outline.

During World War I, Richmond was used as an Army training ground, and, given rationing conditions; many a deer was taken to supplement meals. With the advent of World War II and the Battle of Britain, several changes were made to the Richmond landscape. The Pen Ponds were drained so that German bombers would not have a landmark to guide them to and from London. An anti-aircraft installation was placed inside Sheen Gate and a bomb-sterilizing pit was located between Ham Cross and the Isabella Plantation (Brown 1985). Brown also notes that Petersham Park on the western edge of Richmond Park was the only area left untouched by the war. The 100 to 150 deer remaining in the park at the time were to be driven there to prevent their grazing on crops which had been planted on 140 hectares of the park. This task was not completed and the deer population reached an all time low of 68 fallow and 13 red deer in 1943. The deer were forced to compete with 340 sheep for what little browse was available for grazing and supplemental feeding had stopped altogether. Understandably, tree planting and normal maintenance of the park was totally abandoned during the war, leaving it in a considerably degraded state by the war's end in 1945. Not

only the landscape was affected during this time, Sheen Lodge (called the Dog Kennel on Eyre's survey) was destroyed during an air raid and never rebuilt.

In the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the impacts of both vehicular and pedestrian traffic brought about by Richmond's own popularity with locals and tourists alike has been the largest threat to landscape preservation. Car parks have become a necessity (Figure 10), as have concession and restroom facilities. With three to four million



**Figure 10. Royal Parks Map of Richmond, 1993**

visitors per year, the sense of place (that of a medieval landscape) is at the very least compromised. It is difficult to appreciate an open view across the park when it is flooded with vehicles and tourists.

Given the number and extent of landscape alterations that Richmond has experienced over its five centuries of existence, the current condition of the land gives but little insight into how a medieval hunting park looked. As an exercise in landscape documentation, it leaves many gaps in the data that must be interpreted with care as to not arrive at false conclusions. What follows is the solution to that problem, and the guiding measures for deciphering medieval hunting landscapes.

### **PURPOSE OF STUDY**

As a means of organizing the components necessary to evaluate the landscape character of medieval hunting enclosures, and that of Richmond Park in particular, the following five goals were set:

1. Evaluate Richmond Park as a prime example of a medieval hunting park based upon definitions in literature on the subject.
2. Evaluate the efficacy of using primary documentation, historic maps and a geographic information system to reconstruct ancient landscapes.
3. Determine the validity of Richmond's definition as a 'park', and to decipher in what ways, if any, it differs from a medieval forest or chase.
4. Explore how Richmond's heritage as a medieval deer park has carried through to the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and over its 4+ centuries of existence.

### **SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY**

When dealing with historic landscapes, the researcher has only a small pool of documentation on a given site from which to draw conclusions. Primary records of state provide the most accurate account of events. Historic maps give us a good indication of how a landscape may have looked at a given point in time. Secondary published literature produces an author's distilled interpretation of both. Using Richmond Park as a case study, this research aims to shed light on the limitations and shortcomings inherent to these sources of information. At the same time, as little has been written about landscape modifications facilitating the pursuit and production of game, this work will add to the knowledge of landscape architectural history in the Middle Ages.

### **HYPOTHESIS**

Richmond Park is the embodiment of a medieval deer park and exhibits landscape characteristics that clearly differentiate it from the forest, chase and warren. It is the intent of this research to differentiate between these four basic hunting landscapes of the Middle Ages, and to use Richmond Park as a case study in the use of historic records and maps to document and better understand the landscape character of a medieval deer park.

### **ASSUMPTIONS**

- English hunting parks exhibited specific landscape designs (i.e. rides, alleys) that would be visible in the landscape and that documentation would have been made on the particulars of their construction
- No better survey records exist from the time of enclosure of Richmond Park than what was recorded in Pipe and Close Rolls, State Papers and Inquisitories Post Mortem.
- Historic documents reproduced and cited in secondary sources were quoted and translated correctly.
- The survey maps of Nicholas Lane, John Eyre and the anonymous cartographer of 1876 show accurate locations of park features.

### **LIMITATIONS**

- The four maps used for analysis were reproduced from literature, not original copies.
- Given that the site is located in England, one site visit was the only actual on the ground experience with the Richmond Park landscape, as it exists today.

## CHAPTER 2. TOPICS FOR REVIEW

### INTRODUCTION

With the understanding that the research for this work would entail a painstaking exercise in literature review, a diverse search strategy was employed. The majority of primary information on Richmond Park came from the Records of the Corporation of London, as it held ownership of the park from 1649-1660. Secondary sources of information contained citations and direct quotes from primary sources, mainly public records in the form of Pipe, Close and Charter Rolls, State Papers and Inquisitories Post Mortem. In an effort to better understand not only the landscape character of medieval deer parks, but also the social, cultural and economic factors that contributed to their demise, a broad range of related topics were reviewed. The most useful probes into the literature came from investigations of hunting, park and forest development, landscape gardens, deer management and sporting art. Such a wide-ranging search criteria proved to be advantageous in that it laid a solid foundation of background information. It was also detrimental, as it proved difficult to narrow the many interesting topics relative to hunting parks to only those that yielded information pertinent to Richmond Park.

When dealing with historic landscapes, in this case one that is over 400 years old, we are restricted in our investigation by the lack of surviving written documentation. Detailed records of the Middle Ages in England don't begin until the early 17<sup>th</sup> century. Prior to this time, sporting art provides the best insight into hunting park configuration and function, with one exception. Going further back to the origin of the Royal Parks and Forests following the Norman Conquest of 1066, the Domesday Survey provides a detailed glimpse into the 11<sup>th</sup>

century English landscape; unfortunately another such survey of the English countryside was not completed until the Ordnance Surveys were begun in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century.

The literature specific to Richmond Park was rather lean in its content. The documentation of events at the park was repeated, often word for word, in several ‘definitive’ works on the topic. Given the fact that such works provide the lion’s share of information on the Richmond Park landscape, such redundancy did little to further the goals of this research.

Similarly perplexing, where it had been hoped that the primary literature sources would provide insight into how hunting parks were designed and maintained, the vast majority of records reported only those events of *economic* importance (i.e. venison and timber sales and grazing rights). Even in the records of the Rangers and Game Keepers who had the most intimate association with the landscape was there seldom a mention of the character or design of Richmond that made it the finest example of a medieval deer park.

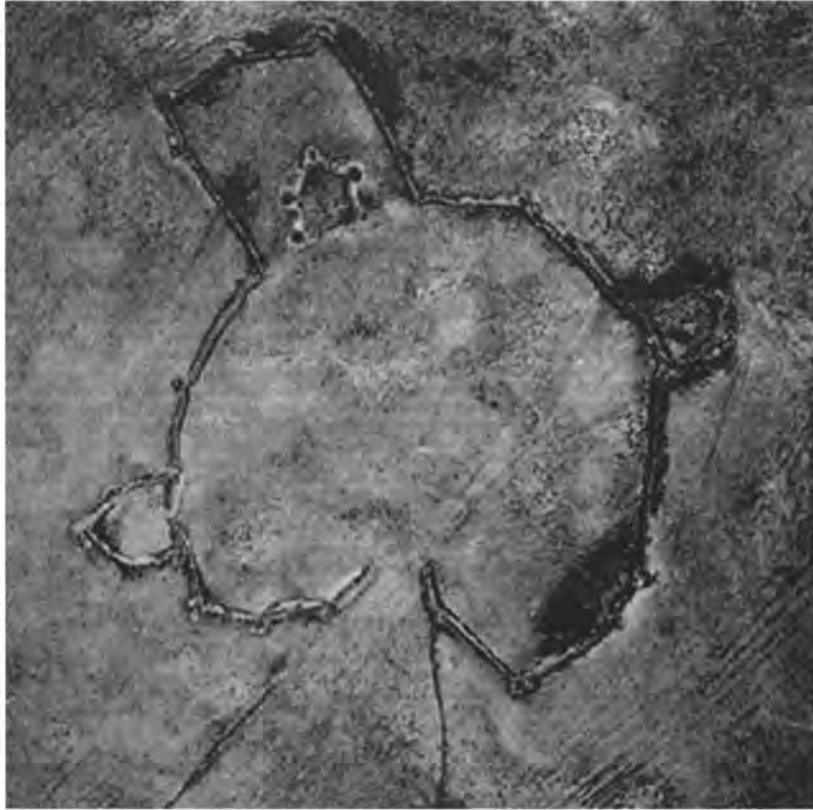
On a larger scale, the literature did provide an insightful look into medieval hunting practices and the variety of hunting enclosures common to England. While little has been written recently on landscape modifications for hunting, throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, English cultural geographers and landscape historians like Oliver Rackham and W.G. Hoskins have made a Herculean effort to document the remaining elements of these unique landscapes before they completely disappear under the weight of modern agriculture and urban sprawl. What follows is a look into how hunting landscapes, the game they perpetuated and the sport they encouraged, came to become a prominent—though often overlooked facet of the English landscape and culture.

## HISTORY OF HUNTING IN ENGLAND

### From Ancient Hunters to the Norman Conquest

From the very earliest annals of time, man has hunted wild game be it for sustenance or sport. Cave paintings give us a glimpse of Neanderthal man taking giant pre-Ice Age beasts like woolly mammoth, and massive ancient relatives of our modern day elk and bison. But these early hunts were as much a life and death struggle for *Homo erectus* as they were for the game involved. Primitive spears and clubs were crude hunting weapons at best. When these were combined with a limited capacity to reason, it is highly unlikely that early man ever truly enjoyed the luxury of the pursuit of game for sport.

Quite to the contrast, not long after *Homo sapiens* comes on the scene, armaments and critical thinking skills allowed man to become the most efficient predator on the face of the earth. As cattle, goats, sheep and swine had been domesticated, we begin to see the first evidence of confinement of wild game in 'hunting parks'. From the remnants of the ancient kingdoms of Assyria and Babylon, evidence remains on the landscape today of built structures which facilitated the taking of game animals (Figure 11). While Assyrian kings were known to enjoy hunting game (Baillie-Grohman 1913), no specific information survives today of their pursuit of the sport in written form. However, Columella, the Roman writer on agriculture in the first century A.D., describes keeping red and roe deer, wild pigs, fallow deer or gazelles in wooded enclosures within walls or wooden pales (Rackham 1976, Lasdun 1991). These were likely adopted from the lands of their conquests, which in later times proved to be a common method for transference of both different species of game and hunting tactics. In Greek and Roman times, hunting was considered an excellent preparation for war and thus was encouraged as a pursuit for all young virile men. Love of the chase,



**Figure 11. Aerial photo taken by airmail pilot L.W.B. Rees 30 km northeast of Damascus, Syria in 1929 of stone structure used for capturing entire herds of gazelle for slaughter. Other such structures are found in Jordan and Saudi Arabia along the Sinai Peninsula. Historians consider these to be inspiration for Norman haia into which deer were driven from forests for stocking into hunting parks.**

it was said, brought 'health of body and keenness of sight and hearing'. It was said to prolong youth but above all it was 'good training for war' (Butler, p. 22, 1930). As can be gathered from the previous quote, the Greeks and Romans pursued game primarily for sport, their most common quarry being the wild boar, stag, aurochs (an ancient bison) and lions. As agricultural advances began to remove forests from the Mediterranean landscape, hare hunting became popular. These cultures also developed hunting with hounds almost to an art form, which we will later see continues on to the hunts of modern day.

Following the fall of the Roman Empire, the Anglo-Saxons ruled England from the fifth century into the early Middle Ages. Noted English landscape historian Oliver Rackham has speculated that the Anglo-Saxons perpetuated an agrarian landscape at the expense of woodland. It is well known however, that the Anglo-Saxon kings were fond of hunting and evidence of this activity can be found in charter *perambulations* dating from AD700 through 1080. These were legal conveyances of land created by walking the boundaries of a parcel of land and noting landscape features point by point (Rackham 1997). These recordings were surprisingly detailed, naming small woods, rivers, trees and roads, some of which are still visible today. In contrast to their Norman conquerors, Anglo-Saxon kings apparently lacked the right to hunt beyond the boundaries of the royal demesne. However, under the rule of Canute (1016-1035), we find the inspiration for the Forest Laws imposed by the future Norman king, William the Conqueror. Canute granted noblemen the right to hunt in their own preserves but not to interfere with his royal hunt. He was known to have said "...let everyone abstain from my hunting on pain of full fine, take heed where I will have no trespassing on my hunting," (Neville-Havins, p. 19, 1976).

Enclosures for keeping deer were evident on the landscape during the reign of the last of the Anglo-Saxon kings, Edward the Confessor (1042-1066). A will dated 1045, makes mention of a *deerhay* (Anglo-Saxon meaning enclosure for deer) which by its description was found to be the Great Park of Ongar in Essex, described in the Domesday Book of 1086. The fact that parish boundaries today adhere to the outline of the park lends credibility to this connection. In the decades prior to the Norman Conquest, motions had been made by the Anglo-Saxon monarchy to bring the forests of southern England under royal control. This was never completed due to the untimely death of Edward the Confessor, which sparked the

conquest of England by the Norman French under William the Conqueror 1066. Under his rule, large-scale afforestation (conversion of land to royal forest) and the perpetuation of hunting became a monarchical priority.

### **Hunting Under the Norman and Plantagenet Kings, 1066-1350**

William I of England (1066-1087), better known as William the Conqueror, defeated the Saxons at the Battle of Hastings in 1066 and took control of the English throne. His reign would begin a lineage of kings who would rule England well into the 14<sup>th</sup> century, and establish hunting as a necessary part of the ritual of kingship. Hunting also solidified social standings within the feudal system. After all, those who did not own land could not hunt. Thus this privilege was limited to royalty, landed nobles and select members of the clergy. During the early 11<sup>th</sup> century, life revolved around an essentially rural economy, the contribution of cities and industry had yet to be realized. As a result, the pursuit of hunting as a kingly diversion strengthened the people's view of kings as lords who felt more at home in the countryside. In fact, the Norman kings' courts were very mobile, moving from manor to manor, hunting lodge to hunting lodge, rural retreat to town and back again (James 1990). Compton Reeves in his book Pleasures and Pastimes in Medieval England, echoed the role of hunting in medieval society as had the Greeks and Romans centuries before:

**Hunting was a physical activity that brought delight as well as sustenance to participants, and it had many shades of aristocratic and virile association. Among the leading pastimes employed as preparation and rehearsal for war, if there were no immediate opportunities for war, hunting served as an identifying marker for the society's military elite. (p. 68)**

The Norman victory at the Battle of Hastings stemmed directly from the strength of their cavalry, and to no surprise they preferred to hunt on horseback as well. Hunting provided opportunities to gain courage, endurance, honor and of course, horsemanship.

Pursuit of deer, especially red deer stags (Figure 12), was elevated almost to religious status in William's court. The preferred beast of the chase was a stag whose antlers sported at least five points on each side, at that point he was known as a *hart*. The hart achieved an almost royal status, and the Norman hunters

for the most part showed great respect to their quarry. An unwritten code of honor existed among purists in the hunting crowd; stags were to be coursed with dogs over relatively open ground such that visual contact with the quarry could be maintained. The chase could take place over several hours, or even days should the hounds lose track of an animal. A stag that provided good sport during the chase was often venerated in the hunting records of gamekeepers. After some time, the stag would turn and fight the pursuing dogs (be *brought to bay*). The deer was then dispatched with a long sword by the highest-ranking member of the party, a difficult and often dangerous undertaking. William the Conqueror was so devoted to the chase that in his obituary an anonymous chronicler stated, "...he preserved the harts and boars and loved the stags as if he had been their father" (cited in Havins, 1976, p. 22).

Shortly before his death, William had ordered the completion of the Domesday Survey in 1086, as a means of assessing the economic wealth and gains of his land since the Conquest of 1066. The Domesday books survive to this day and provide a very detailed recording of the size of land holdings, the type of land cover on them, land uses and ownership of the 11<sup>th</sup> century English countryside. While most 'hunters' of the time

## Red deer

*Cervus elaphus*

Britain's largest native wild mammal. Mature stags have well-developed branching antlers, becoming larger each year. Females are smaller than males. In summer coat is rich reddish-brown, but in winter it is grey-brown. In autumn males defend harems by roaring and fighting.

**SIZE** Shoulder height 115–120cm

**BREEDING** Single fawn (rarely twins) is produced in May–June

**FOOD** Grasses, sedges and rushes, low-growing shrubs and trees

**HABITAT** Moorland, open woodland, farmland with copses

**VOICE** Males make deep roaring in October; females and young can make short bleats

**DISTRIBUTION** Widespread and common in Scotland, and present in many other areas of Britain and Ireland in more isolated populations



**Figure 12. Red deer (*Cervus elaphus*) stag, hind and calf.**

preferred to pursue their game in the vast tracts which had been deemed royal forest, we know from Domesday that 35 'parks for wild beasts' existed at the time of the survey, most located in southern England. To the native English, the Norman deer parks and the pursuit of game for sport were perverse eccentricities. To a great extent, the Anglo-Saxon agrarian lifestyle and landscape suffered under the Norman kings. Under Forest Law, a peasant farmer could neither exclude nor chase deer or wild boar from his crops without risk of severe fines or even death. All dogs that were privately owned within a royal forest were to be 'lawed', that is two toes were removed from the front foot with a wide chisel to discourage them from chasing deer. In addition, he who dared remove anything other than deadwood from the forest incurred stringent penalties. In spite of their obvious unpopularity with the common man, revenue from Forest Law violations filled the royal coffers well into the 14<sup>th</sup> century.

A few game animals were exempted from Forest Law and could be taken by all freemen and most of the peasant class. The Right of Free Warren allowed for the hunting of rabbits, pheasant, grouse, partridge and hares. Several methods were used to capture these animals. The most common tactic involved constructing a series of nets, which funneled the game to a central location where they could easily be clubbed or dispatched with arrows. As the landed classes and royalty began to see stag hunting less in terms of honor and the spirit of the chase and more as an opportunity for pageantry, pomp and circumstance in the latter 14<sup>th</sup> thru 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, these tactics were adopted to produce the massive kills recorded at what could be called carnivals as much as hunts.

## **Hunting from 1350-1500**

Stag hunting remained very popular with royalty throughout the 14<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, but following the Black Death of 1348, many landed nobles found themselves with insufficient labor to maintain their deer parks and as a consequence many were converted to agricultural use. Forest Law was repealed for the final time during this period, allowing many royal lands to pass into private hands. However, several of the best tracts of hunting ground were preserved for monarchical use. With a more limited amount of area on which to hunt, those who could afford them shifted to hunting enclosures for increased convenience and success. Weaponry had also improved dramatically by this period. Crossbows provided medium range and fair accuracy, followed shortly thereafter by early muzzle loading firearms, to which many historians attribute the break down of hunting etiquette and respect for game (Bluchel 1997). In the book Sport in Art, Baillie-Grohman bemoans these shortcomings. He remarks that no one that considered himself a true veneur would delegate the killing of a stag to a gamekeeper, and that gunpowder removed many of the risks of the chase until finally the sport was degraded to mere slaughter. He finishes by adding that most of the 'hunting' during this time was done by men who had 'become soft' and were safely hidden in danger proof stands to which they had been driven to in chariots or carried in litters.

Queen Elizabeth I (1558-1603) was known as a fanatical huntress, so much so that the quality of the chase suffered at the expense of turning in a large kill at the end of the day. Hunt days became incredible productions complete with feasts serving hundreds of people, a crew of beaters and handlers to guide the deer to strategically placed shooters, and a staff of gamekeepers who insured that the enclosure had been stocked with a large amount of game.

Battues, or large cloth enclosures tethered between trees, were used during this era to funnel game to a central arena where the slaughter would begin (Sabretache 1948). Shooters were safely enclosed in blinds or on carts from which they fired at leisure at the crazed and panicked herds while their spectators cheered on the action from the periphery. It was not uncommon for several hundred deer and other assorted game animals to be taken in a single day.

### **Hunting in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Century**

The excessive slaughters of the previous century severely depleted the stock of red deer stags throughout England. As a result stag hunting was again elevated to a point of reverence among true champions of the sport. James I (1603-1625), successor to the throne of Elizabeth I, set about righting the wrongs of his predecessors and to restore respect to the sport of hunting. One of his first official acts as monarch was to beg Henry IV of France to send him his most skilled huntsman so that he could learn the proper rules of the chase in the open forests of his realm, rather than in parks and enclosures (Baillie-Grohman 1913). He wished to hunt his quarry from horseback with hounds rather than kill the disoriented animals with a crossbow from an enclosed pavilion. So once again, as had been with the Norman conquerors, the chase became both the only proper manner in which to take a red deer stag and a status symbol among those with wealth. Stephen Deuchar in Sporting Art of 18<sup>th</sup> Century England (1988) points out that in the highest social levels of society where the need to hunt was the least, the sport functioned as a badge of affluence, a show of leisure and a very powerful symbol of power and property. He goes on to state that where hunting began as an expression of an individual's power to provide for his dependents, sport hunting proclaimed his ownership of land, the freedom and time to exploit it and an economic status

derived from a dependent class. There was no game after all without land, and the English monarchy could far more easily afford and somehow justify hunting grounds than the wealthiest of common men. Hunting was again privy to that highest level of western society, royalty and those in the good graces thereof.

Again facing the pressures of a rapidly developing agricultural economy late in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, large royal hunting preserves came under constant public scrutiny and were increasingly difficult to justify in a country with limited land area and an exponentially growing population. These were the twilight hours of stag hunting in England. Poaching and over-hunting, as well as conversion of land to agricultural use had never allowed herds to recover to their previous numbers, even when carefully managed. The chase became more of a game of tag than hunting, with the object being to get a good stag that would run the dogs for hours and provide the hunters an opportunity to exhibit their horsemanship before being brought to bay. The animal was then transferred to a cart rather than killed, and later returned to a paddock where the stag grazed alongside cattle until the next hunt. In this fashion, the same animal could be hunted several times, guaranteeing easily accessible sport. This became known as hunting carted deer and was popular during the reign of King George III (1760-1820).

Agriculture and sheep grazing eventually signaled the end of deer hunting as had existed in England for over six centuries, but those who appreciated riding to hounds soon found themselves with a new diversion, fox hunting. Following the Enclosure Acts, the English countryside was parceled into a mosaic of crop fields, pasture and hedgerows and as a result, wild deer populations declined further but small game flourished. Rabbits, hares, pheasant, and to a lesser degree, partridge, proliferated throughout southern England. With

such abundant prey, fox populations steadily rose as well. Considered vermin in the eyes of the gamekeepers, they soon became the new beast of the chase. Fox hunting differed dramatically from stag hunting in that one no longer needed to own land to have access to the hunt, and fox carried no sort of royal status or restriction on harvest. While an organized foxhunt still carried an air of distinction, far more of the population was able to take part in it than had been able to stag hunt. Much to the hunter's delight, fox provided an excellent chase and often confounded even the most seasoned pack of hounds. So as agriculture replaced the medieval hunting parks, so did the fox replace the stag as favored quarry of the hunter.

### **Hunting in Modern England, 19<sup>th</sup> Century to Present**

Parks which had formerly been set aside for deer hunting commonly would later be converted to private estates which were managed for the perpetuation of small game. Wingshooting became increasingly popular among those who could afford it, as land ownership and a good staff of gamekeepers and beaters were required to provide the numbers of birds required for a good shoot. Hunting pheasants, grouse, partridge, rabbit and hare remains popular today, though is under close scrutiny by animal rights organizations. Such groups have already sounded the death knell on fox hunting with hounds; a scented rag is now used to simulate the fox trail sparing a live animal at the conclusion of the hunt.

Deer are a common sight throughout the English countryside but are no longer hunted in England. Herds within royal forests and parks, however, are still used to fill the royal venison warrants and for state dinners. Those seen in parks are an aesthetic ornament and at the same time, a testament to the rich hunting heritage that threatened but also ensured their existence.

### MEDIEVAL HUNTING LANDSCAPES

Pre-dating medieval hunters, as I have recently shown, the Assyrians used stone enclosures throughout the Sinai Peninsula to capture and slaughter vast herds of desert gazelle (see Figure 11). By confining several animals in close quarters, the limited range of early weaponry became less of a liability. Rackham (1997) indicates that these desert structures and the Arabs that built them were likely encountered by the Normans in their conquest of Sicily in 1060. These modifications to the landscape that facilitated the taking of game were readily adopted into Norman culture. However, owing to their veneration of the sport of the chase, Norman *haias*, *hagas* or *hayas* (Anglo-Saxon terms for areas in which game was kept or hunted) were used to capture deer from large forest tracts for stocking into hunting parks.

Over time, as convenience and the guarantee of success became the driving factor behind the perpetuation of stag hunting, medieval cultures borrowed from their ancestors and used stratagem to bring game within reach of their crossbow bolts and arrows. Shirley (1867) notes that a labyrinth of alleys was often carved out of a woodlot onto which game was driven from the surrounding lands and into easy range of the waiting archers. Thus hunting landscapes began to have a design component geared toward the calculated demise of a large number of game animals. Four types of hunting landscapes developed during the Middle Ages, each with its own unique siting, enclosure style, and size specific to ownership or the type of game contained within. These four categories are the forest, park, chase and warren.

### **Earliest Origins: The Royal Forest**

Today, we associate the term 'forest' with a large tract of wooded land. In medieval England however, forest was as much a legal term as it was a landscape element. In fact, the overall woodland cover in England at the time of the Domesday Survey of 1086 was roughly only 15%, most of which was regarded as waste land by a largely agrarian rural population. Forest was derived from the Anglo-Saxon *foris* meaning outside or external to prevailing laws (Short 2000). The definition of what constituted a forest seems straightforward from most authorities on the subject. Cantor (1982) refers to forest as 'a large tract of country belonging to the crown and subject to forest law'. He adds in an article of the April 1979 issue of the journal Geography that this tract was not necessarily wooded, hunting rights belonged exclusively to the crown, and each area with its own forest laws under the jurisdiction of forest officials. Short (2000) concurs, calling them areas of deer ranching and hunting, reserved to the crown and its lessees. Forest game included fallow, red and roe deer and wild boar. One needed the king's permission to hunt these animals, without it to even cause an animal to be distressed or pant was a punishable Forest Law violation.

Not only did the king own the game contained within the forest, but also the timber rights, mineral rights, rights of passage—all of which licenses could be sold for, generating a tremendous amount of revenue for the crown. In addition to these rights, royal forests provided the king with two exclusive commodities that few others could provide, venison and timber. Only three groups were to be recipients of these forest products. Monastic houses received timber for building churches and occasional venison for the table, but nobles in royal favor and forest officials normally only received venison and the right to collect deadwood for charcoal. Later in the Middle Ages, these large parcels of land would play a

substantial role in English politics and economics, due in large part to the unpopularity of Forest Law.

### **Forest Landscape Character**

Forests were often very large, evidenced by the afforestation (annexation of land into royal forest) of 30-40 villages for one tract, enclosing from 45-85 square miles. Forest edges were defined by a ditch and a great bank (Figure 13) 20-40' wide and as tall as 12' which prevented encroachment by neighbors and livestock (Rackham 1997).



**Figure 13. The woodbank surrounding King's Wood, Gomshall, Surrey. The ditch lies to the right where the trees at the time of construction would have been much smaller, or more likely, removed. The original wood lies to the left.**

Forests may have also contained established hunting stations or *tristera* where a group of relay hounds were held under cover until their designated moment of release during the chase. There were also *standings* or high points, sometimes enclosed with rails from

which the king or queen might view the hunt and from which they might safely shoot at the deer which were driven past (Short 2000) (see Figure 2).

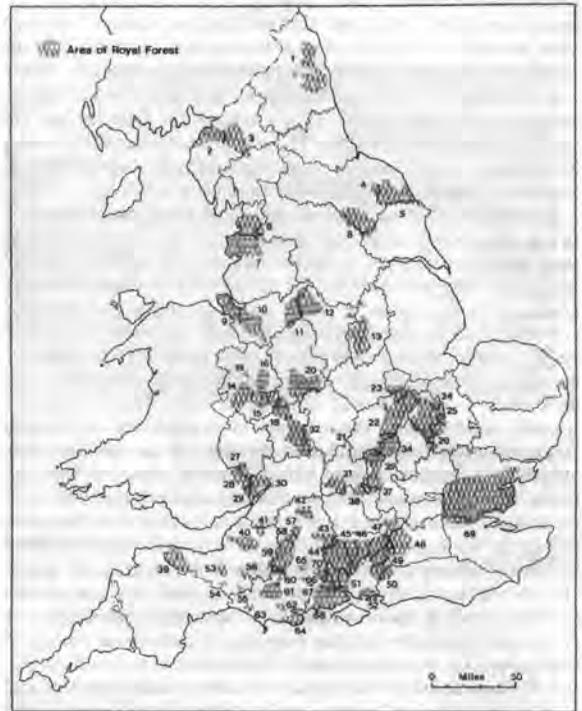
Royal forests reached their heyday early in the 13<sup>th</sup> century when they consumed nearly 3% of the English countryside (Figure 14). Throughout the progression of the Middle

Ages, forests were the first of the hunting landscapes to be pared into smaller parcels of privatized land for crop production or grazing. During the Tudor Dynasty of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, forests were valued more for their timber reserves to supply the navy than they were for venison. When Charles I set out to enclose Richmond Park and reinstate Forest Law in 1635 as a means of generating income for the crown, it was short lived and in

its aftermath under the Corporation of the City of London, woodland cover was increasingly destroyed (Cantor 1982). Only a handful of royal forests remained, and those suffered from diminished acreage and landscape integrity.

### **Privatized Forests: The Chase**

Chases were essentially private forests, owned not by the crown but by a few great nobles, landed magnates and ecclesiastical lords who created them on their estates. They were hunted on horseback with the help of hounds, and ownership (granted or gifted by the king) carried the right to pursue and protect deer, wolf and boar, which in the past had been



**Figure 14. Royal forest holdings in 13<sup>th</sup> century England.**

reserved for only royalty. Within these private forests, alleyways or hunting rides were cut allowing hunters on horseback to pursue game quickly and easily. To facilitate the hunt on these rides, gamekeepers would use tracking hounds to locate deer in the forest and then drive them into the alleys with greyhounds, the preferred dog for the chase.

Because chases were private land, they fell under common law and not Forest Law. However, being the resource and status symbol that they were, access to the chase was quite limited. It has been said that most barons ruled over their chase with the same ferocity as the king in his forests (Lasdun 1991). No one could hunt or take game from a chase without the landowner's permission. For that matter, landowners fortunate enough to have the wealth to purchase a chase were well rewarded with the revenue it generated. Like the king in the royal forest, landowners were allowed to market timber, restrict access, and require licenses to hunt game, not to mention having the benefit of buying favors with venison. Chase owners also appointed personal officials to oversee the internal workings of their forests. These included a master forester, a forest receiver in charge of finances, three under foresters and various other employees.

### **Landscape Character of the Chase**

Chases covered as much as 8000 acres of land, lending to a hunt that could cover as much as 20-30 miles in a single day, necessitating multiple changes of mounts (horses). So large was the percentage of land either contained in forests or chases that the common man had little choice but to live in one or the other, and be subject to its specific laws (Cantor 1979). Chases were commonly created from smaller parcels of former royal forest as was the case with Cannock and Sutton Chase (Cantor 1982). At their peak during the Middle Ages, 26 chases were said to have existed in England (Figure 15).

It is on the issue of enclosure that we begin to see contradiction among those who have written on the subject of hunting landscapes. Where 17<sup>th</sup> century hunting and forest authority John Manwood had written in 1665 that the only thing that distinguished a chase from a park was that the chase was always open and not enclosed, Shirley (1867) states that the forest of Skipton was enclosed with a pale and that the chases of Blackburnshire were



**Figure 15. Medieval chases of England**

fenced in the same manner. Furthermore, Short (2000) writes that some chases bore fences only when distinguishing topography was lacking to differentiate it from the surrounding countryside. Such varying accounts and opinions gray the definition between the types of hunting landscapes and mandate the further investigation of them as this research suggests.

### **Hunting Parks**

Parks, as spoken of here, were deer parks, private land surrounded by a deer proof fence or park *pale* and were specifically for rearing and hunting deer. This is in contrast to the parks of the 18<sup>th</sup> century which were actually landscaped ornamental grounds designed to improve the aesthetics of great country estates (Cantor 1982). The word park comes from the Anglo-Saxon *pearroc* meaning fenced area. The Domesday Survey of 1086 lists 35 *parchi* or *parci* for wild beasts. These belonged to William the Conqueror, the Bishops of Bayeux and Winchester, powerful clerics and William's personal supporters (Cantor 1982). Deer

farming was started by the Normans who learned from the Arabs in Sicily, and was made possible by the introduction of fallow deer to England around 1100. Fallow deer (Figure 16) thrived in captivity, and were much easier to contain than their native cousins the red and roe deer. They were considered the game animal *par excellence* in the Middle Ages.

### Fallow deer

*Dama dama*

Adult males have palmate antlers. Coat color variable, ranging from black with pink spots through browns and tuffs to very pale buff with darker spots. Conspicuous white rump has inverted dark horseshoe pattern. Males make belching sounds in the mating season.

**SIZE** Shoulder height 65–105cm

**BREEDING** Produces 1 (rarely 2) fawns in June–July

**FOOD** Wide range of plant material, especially grasses, but will nibble shoots on trees

**HABITAT** Parkland, open woodland, farmland, shelter belts



**VOICE** Gruff alarm 'bark' from females and roaring calls from male  
**DISTRIBUTION** Introduced into Britain and widespread in the south with isolated populations in Scotland and Ireland

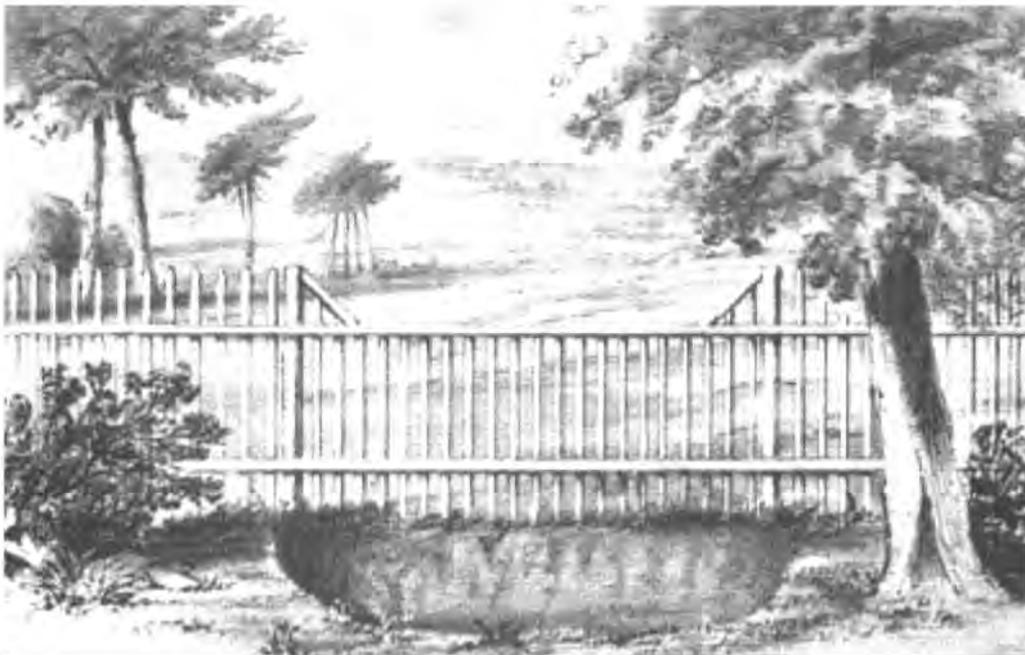
**Figure 16. Fallow deer (*Dama dama*) buck, doe and fawn.**

Emparking (the process of legally creating a park) required permission of the king. Beginning in the 13<sup>th</sup> century this required licensure by the king. This was a risky and expensive venture, and thus was limited to the landed and wealthy barons, members of the clergy and upper class. The king would often gift landowners deer from his own personal parks to solidify allegiance. Owning a park was a status symbol one step higher than having a moat, but not as prestigious as having one's own gallows. Venison provided park owners with a commodity whose value was beyond monetary worth. For that reason it was reserved for feasts, special occasions ranging from weddings to pregnancy, or to garner favors from other landowners. Parks provided better opportunity for a successful hunt than did the forest or chase, as deer were more readily available within its confines. Instant hunting became available, a useful asset when important entertainment was required (Brown 1985).

### Landscape Character of Hunting Parks

Medieval hunting parks were often oblong in shape with rounded corners to minimize the amount of area that needed to be fenced. Despite the controversy mentioned earlier over the defining elements of what constitutes the label of park or chase on a landscape, the

consensus among sources seems to be that parks were typically enclosed with cleft oak pales, or in some cases stone walls or thorn hedges to cut down on cost (Rackham 1976). Inside the park wall a *rod, pole* or *perch* was often constructed. This was essentially 16.5 feet of freeboard obstructed by bracken or bushes on soft ground to prevent deer from escaping during the hunt (Collenette 1971). Fencing was extremely costly to the owner, both in terms of labor and money. At intervals in the fencing, *saltatories* or ‘deer leaps’ were established which allowed deer from outside the park to jump in, but a steep upslope inside the park made it very difficult for them to get out (Figure 17). These deer leaps had to be



**Figure 17. Illustration of a deer leap or *saltatory* used to allow deer to enter a park but making it difficult for them to escape.**

approved by the king and could not be located anywhere near his landholdings, as his deer could escape and enter the neighboring park. In spite of this stipulation, saltatories provided park owners with fresh wild stock to add new blood to their confined herds (Cantor 1982).

Early parks, such as Ongar Great Park in Essex, dating to Anglo-Saxon times,

enclosed some 1200 acres. Modern authors state that most medieval parks ranged from 100-200 acres (Short 2000, Cantor 1979, 1982), while others claim they were smaller, in the 40 to 80 acre range (Brown 1985). Royal parks, on the other hand, were much larger as in the case of Woodstock (seven miles in circumference) and Richmond (2500 acres).

Parks were often created on what was often deemed 'unimproved land', but in order to sustain a herd, the deer needed a pasture component for grazing and woodland for cover. They were commonly located on the periphery of a manor, away from the open agricultural fields (Cantor 1979, 1982). Brown (1985) mentions that accommodations for hunters and gamekeepers gave rise to the country place movement of the latter 18<sup>th</sup> century. Parks also proved to be a very versatile fixture of medieval rural society. In addition to deer, parks often contained fish ponds (Brown 1985, Lasdun 1991), which provided an important source of protein in the diet of park owners. Warrens, or constructed cover for small game were also found within parks, providing sport and meat from pheasants, partridge, grouse and rabbits. Cantor (1982) also cites that a park's economic value to a landowner far outweighed its value as a hunting ground by late in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. On top of the extra meat supplied by small game and fish, extra revenue was provided by peat, pasturage, and stone mining.

Parks could be of two types, compartmented and uncompartmented. Compartmented parks were divided into *coppices* or underwood trees which are cut to near ground level every few years and then grow again from the remaining stump or 'stool' (Figure 18). These were fenced to prevent deer from browsing new growth. The remaining portions of compartmented parks were called *launds* and were accessible to deer at all times. Organized in this manner, compartmented parks provided a multi-use and more economically beneficial venture for the landowner.

Uncompartmented parks allowed deer to roam the entire property freely. In order to prevent deer from completely browsing off all lower branches and new shoots, timber in uncompartmented parks was *pollarded*. Pollarding is the practice of cutting off all lower branches to a height of 6-8 ft. and then using the remaining trunk or *bolting* like a coppice. The trunk would sprout new growth, but at a height out of reach from browsing deer.



**Figure 18. Coppicing (left) and pollarding (right). New shoots can grow as much as 2" per day, even slow growing oaks can reach 1" diameter and 7' tall in one year's growth.**

From 1200-1350, the number of parks on the English landscape rapidly increased as magnates and knights demonstrated their wealth by owning multiple parks. In their heyday, prior to the Black Death in 1348, as many as 3200 parks existed, covering the equivalent of 2% of England. A feudal lord relied heavily on his subjects for upkeep of park pales. When the plague halved the English population, the lords found themselves shorthanded, and peasants were able to demand wages for their services. As a result, much ruin of parks ensued. Disenparkment accelerated rapidly after 1500, when the population of England began to rise and the demand for arable land increased. While hunting remained popular with royalty, the only way a private owner could preserve his hunting park was to develop it

as a landscape garden that began appearing under the guidance of noted designers like Andre Le Notré. Le Notré was the personal landscape designer of Louis XIV of France and was responsible for the design of the palace at Versailles. The confining qualities of enclosed hunting parks frustrated him, as did the immense acreages they covered. In Le Notré's designs, hunting parks became part of a holistic landscape unit, with both the grounds and residence being planned together (Dutton 1937). A new generation of park design was being ushered in; amenity parks soon replaced hunting landscapes in rural England.

### **Landscapes for Small Game: Warrens**

The final hunting landscape discussed here was used primarily for the rearing of small game as opposed to deer. *Warrens* were mounds of earth located where soils were too poor for crops, but sufficiently sound to grow gorse, juniper and bramble which provided game with both food and shelter. Rabbits, pheasants, grouse and woodcock were commonly raised or found cover in these constructions (Lasdun 1991). Small game was not held in the same esteem as deer, and with the exception of hares, could be taken by the common man—again permission or some sort of licensure was probably needed to do so. In the 13<sup>th</sup> century, many monastic houses raised rabbits in warrens as a commercial enterprise, often building breeding hutches called *clappers*. This was a profitable venture. Rabbit meat was sold as venison for top dollar at markets and rabbit fur clothing and hats were a status symbol among the nobility (Cantor 1982). As was earlier noted, many hunting parks contained warrens or *pillow mounds* that were man-made burrows, which provided wild rabbits and hares with breeding and resting areas. As populations of red deer and fallow deer dwindled and access to deer hunting became out of reach of all but royalty, hares became an important element of the sport of the chase, often referred to as 'mini-deer'.

## **Final Thoughts on Hunting Landscapes**

It is important to acknowledge not only the landscape design components of hunting parks, forests, chases and warrens but also the role they played in the economic, judicial and cultural elements of medieval England. The popularity of deer hunting and the land use practices it perpetuated seems to follow a cyclical pattern, reaching its climax during the 14<sup>th</sup> century, declining through the 16<sup>th</sup> century and resurging in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, only to all but disappear during the by the end of the 1700's.

The combined effects of a decline in population resulting from the Black Death and an increasingly agriculturally reliant economy spelled the end of hunting landscapes long before Richmond Park came on the scene. But then again, Richmond was really the impetus behind the resurgence in popularity of stag hunting, short lived as it was. As demonstrated, the landscape qualities that define a medieval forest, park or chase is a point of contention. In the case of Richmond Park, its labeling is made more complex by the fact that it has origins as a chase during the time of Henry VIII (1509-1547). The definition of what makes a warren unique is cut and dried and will be removed from discussion from this point on. The following chapter delves deeper into this discussion, attempting to use a geographic information system to help reveal the character of these hunting landscapes.

## CHAPTER 3. CASE STUDY

### USING A GIS TO EVALUATE THE RICHMOND PARK LANDSCAPE

#### Process and Methodology

Given that Richmond Park has been described as the best surviving example of a royal deer park, it was necessary to better define the landscape features that merit this status. In an initial investigation into this topic, maps of the park dating from 1632-1637, 1754, 1876 and 1999 were collected (see Figures 3, 7, 9 and 10). While they provided insight into how Richmond looked from a surveyor's perspective, they lacked information about the physical character of the vegetation and lay of the land. It was my hope that through primary and secondary sources of literature written on Richmond Park that the voids in the landscape description from the maps would be filled. ArcView GIS would provide the vehicle by which this could be accomplished.

The process began by digitizing the historic maps that were then geo-referenced to a 1992 Ordnance Survey. This was accomplished by using the Blue Marble Geographics program GeoTransformer. During the transformation process, the centuries old maps are both scaled and registered with a known coordinate system (in this case British National Grid) to match that of the modern map (Figures 19, 20). This allowed for direct comparisons to be made across the board for all maps during the analysis process in ArcView. Once the maps had been registered and scaled, the process began of digitizing identifiable polygon features as specific land uses (pasture, field, deer pen, paddock). Point themes were used for gate, lodge and standing (high point from which the hunt could be observed) locations, and line themes were used to delineate roads, waterways, and *rides*, or horse paths.

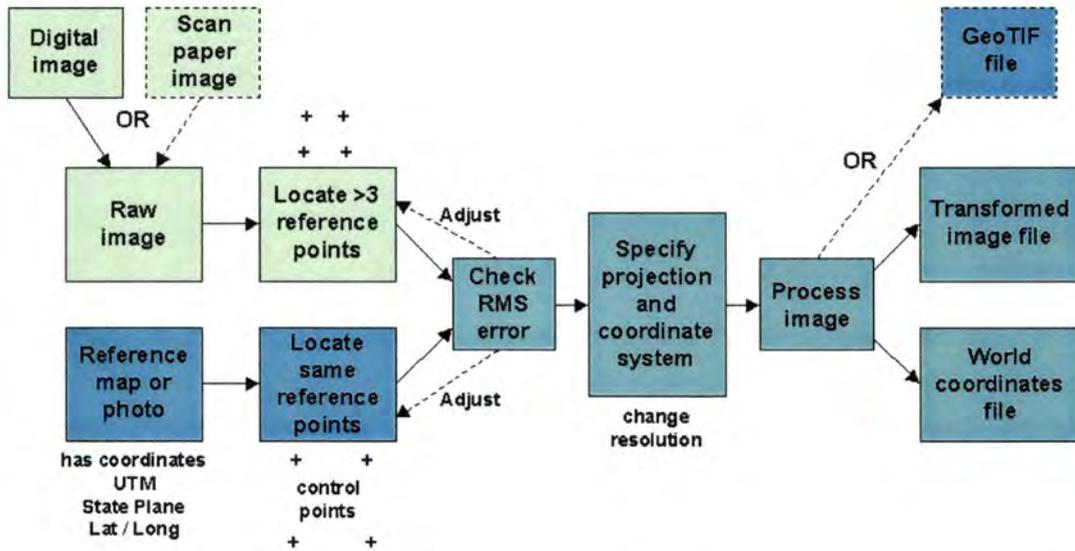
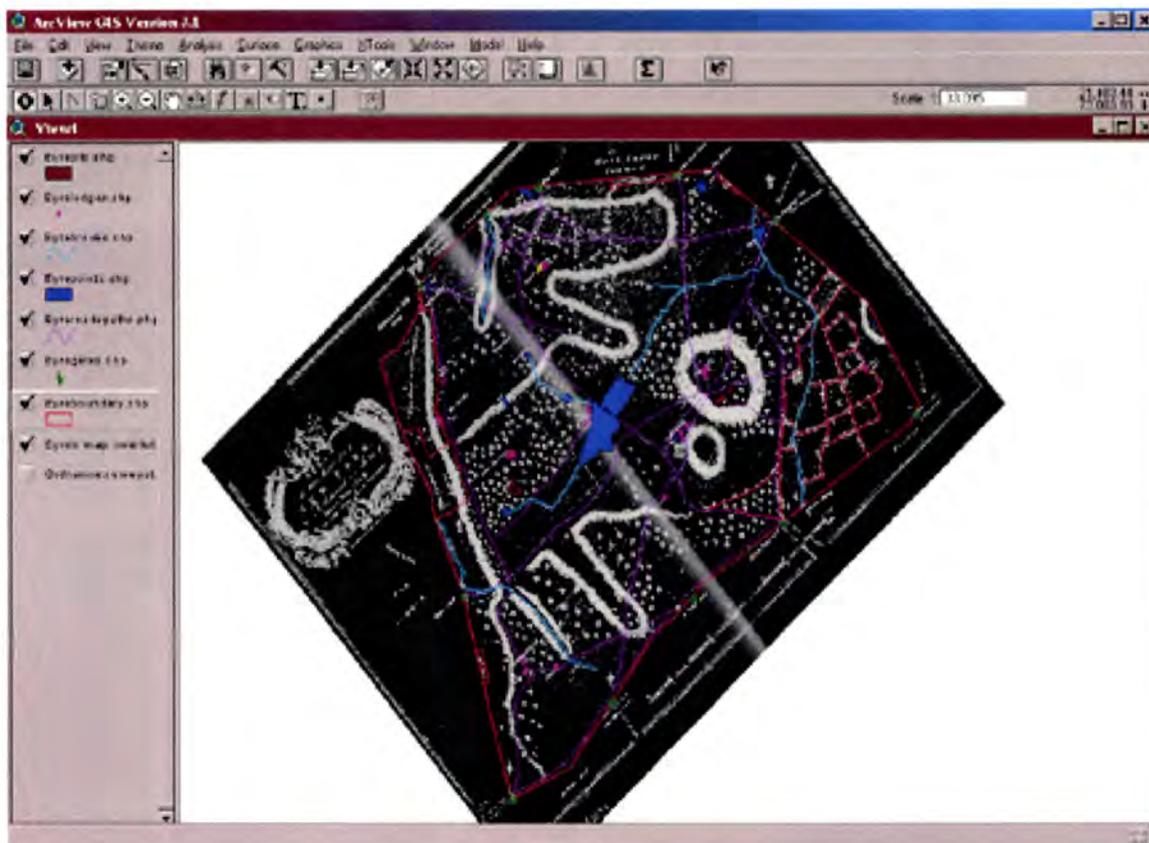


Figure 19. The geo-referencing process which allows a map of unknown scale and coordinate system to be registered to a map with a defined scale and location. (Courtesy of Patrick Brown, ISU GIS facility)



Figure 20. The point selection process within Geographic Transformer where like points are located on both the historic map and Ordnance Survey. Point locations and discrepancies in location are recorded in the spreadsheet below for easy correction.

After all readily identifiable features had been digitized for each map (Figure 21) the task began of searching the literature to find much needed additional landscape descriptors.



**Figure 21. John Eyre's map of 1754 with digitizing of identifiable features complete. Using inverted (negative) images of the historic maps facilitated the digitizing process.**

### **Evaluation of Richmond...**

Using the characters that I could gather from those who had written on the topic of medieval hunting parks, I set out on a threefold process of evaluating the integrity of Richmond Park. The first two steps simply involved looking at the Richmond landscape from the maps drawn by Lane, Eyre and others to determine to what extent it did or did not fit the mold of a medieval hunting park, using the landscape characters gathered from

literature as the guide. The third step was to evaluate the effectiveness of combining landscape information obtained from literary sources with the previously digitized data contained on the historic maps to better bring to light some of the designed elements of hunting landscapes. All three evaluations yielded useful information, but the disparity between types of data available in the literature and that contained on the maps made it nearly impossible to validate why Richmond is the prime example of a medieval hunting park other than the fact that its boundaries and some of its remaining landscape elements date to the early 17<sup>th</sup> century.

### **From Literary Sources**

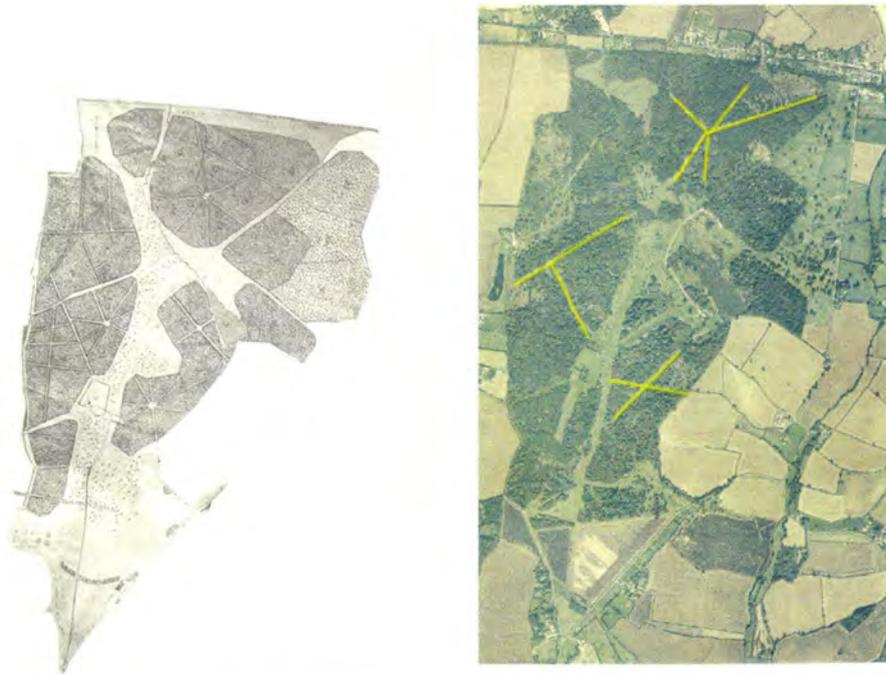
Richmond fits the typical description of a medieval hunting park in four basic areas: 1) enclosure by a wall (McDowall 1996), 2) no manor houses connected with gardens (at the time of enclosure) (Cantor 1982), 3) typical shape (Rackham 1976), and 4) limited public access (Brown 1985).

Concurrent with most literary definitions, the brick wall erected under order by Charles I to speed forfeiture of private landholdings within the proposed park boundaries fills the most important requirement for classification as a hunting park. Likewise, at the time of enclosure in 1637, no manor houses or ornamental landscape gardens existed within the park boundaries. This was to change in the later half of the 17<sup>th</sup> and early 18<sup>th</sup> centuries when former estates within its boundaries like the White, Ash and Pembroke Lodges were transformed into lavish cottages for royalty and the prime minister by such famous designers as Humphrey Repton and Lancelot 'Capability' Brown. The area defined by the boundaries of Richmond Park is a somewhat oblong shape which is typical of medieval parks, but at the same time we learn from the literature that Charles I simply wished to create the largest

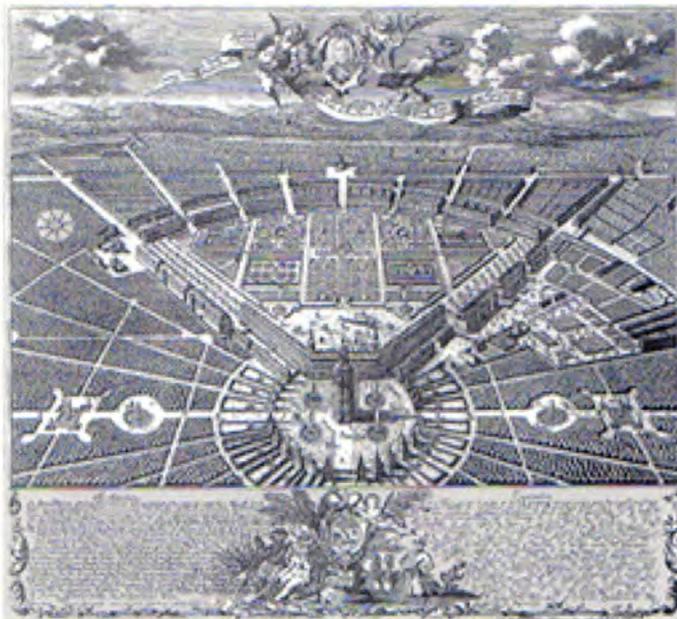
hunting preserve possible. It is highly unlikely that the expense associated with fencing in an area covering nearly 2500 acres crossed his mind. Finally, for a good portion of its history, public access to Richmond was severely limited. The hunt in Richmond was exclusive to royalty and heads of state, similar to the status enjoyed by landed magnates, nobles and knights in prior centuries.

Unfortunately, nearly as many arguments could be made why Richmond doesn't fit the mold of other medieval hunting parks as can be made in its favor. Three particular characteristics are lacking within Richmond: 1) it contains no designed alleyways or rides (Shirley 1867), 2) literary sources report that some forests and chases were enclosed (Shirley 1867, Short 2000), and 3) Charles I's Richmond Park was formerly part of Sheen Chase (Jones 1983), dating to the Tudor Dynasty.

On several occasions in the literature (Rackham 1997, Shirley 1867) there is not only mention, but also geographic evidence, that alleyways and rides that facilitated the pursuit and taking of game were common in medieval hunting landscapes (Figure 22). A radial pattern of rides characteristically extended out from a hunting lodge and into the surrounding timber (Figure 23), providing an easy way for hunters to find their way home. This was common in 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century French and German designs (Bluchel 1997). No such pattern exists, nor is there any mention of rides in the writings on Richmond Park. All of the literary accounts of the hunt within Richmond were more consistent with the type of hunting common to chases, that being and all out free-for-all where stag and hunter alike galloped at random across the landscape. Henrietta, Countess of Suffolk wrote on 31 July 1730; "We hunt here with great noise and violence, and have everyday a tolerable chance to have a neck broke." (Cited in Brown, 1985, p. 73).



**Figure 22. Hatfield Forest as drawn in 1757 showing patterns of hunting rides cut through the timber (left) and in an aerial photo from 1986.**



**Figure 23. Engraving of Polish hunting park illustrating radial pattern of hunting rides originating from a central lodge.**

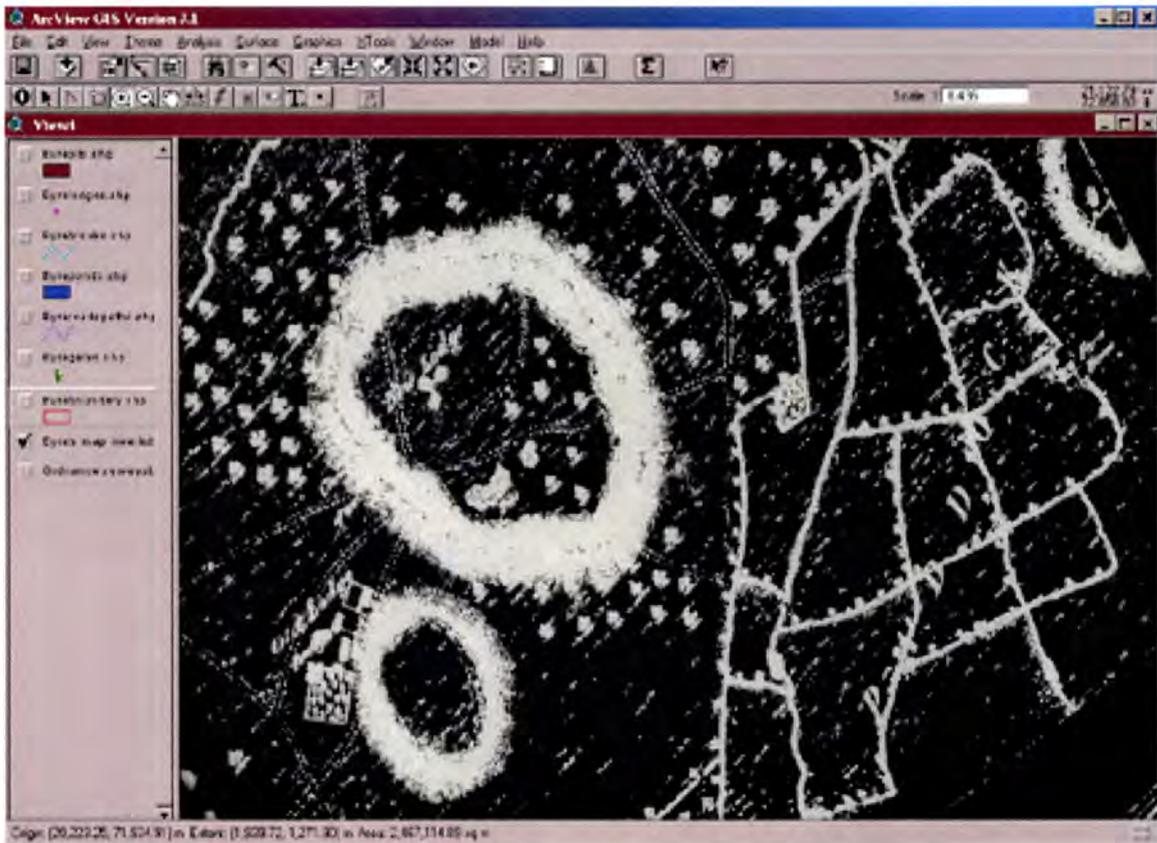
As was discussed earlier, there seems to be some discrepancy as to whether or not the park was the only hunting landscape that was enclosed. To reiterate that fact, Short (2000) stated that chases were fenced in areas where topography didn't provide a natural border. Shirley in his 1867 treatise Some Accounts of English Deer Parks with Notes on the Management of Deer noted that a pale in the same fashion enclosed some forests. Thus, there is no definitive evidence that deems enclosure to be the determining factor in an area being classified as a park.

To further complicate things, Richmond Park was sited on what had been known as Sheen Chase during the reign of Henry VIII (Jones 1983). Richmond to this day exudes all the elements of a chase in the absence of its ancient enclosure wall, consisting of an essentially 'natural' landscape with no rigid designed elements. As was previously noted, accounts of the hunt from Henrietta, Countess of Suffolk and Sir Robert Walpole were more typical of the chase, not the orchestrated slaughter common to parks.

### **Evaluation using GIS**

Preliminary assumptions speculated that primary sources in the literature would contain enough detail to give clear insight into how deer parks were managed, designed and who was responsible for these tasks. Using a geographic information system had held promise as a tool by which land use and land cover change could be chronicled within Richmond Park. Unfortunately, this exercise proved inconclusive. The overall lack of specific landscape information from the literature review effectively made any future analysis beyond that information contained on each particular period map impossible.

Several valuable lessons were learned with regards to creating digital data from historic maps. Distinguishing between roads, streams and contours was a laborious task (see Figure 21). Similarly, the line weights used by cartographers on the historic maps presented a digitizing problem. Everything from solid, to stippled and shaded lines was present on the maps. Some being decipherable, others almost invisible (Figure 24). Some seemed placed at



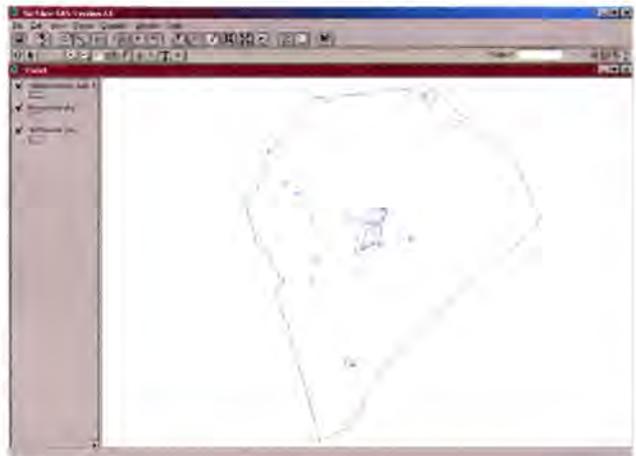
**Figure 24. ArcView project view for Eyre's 1754 map showing the variety of line types, styles and weights that complicated the digitizing process.**

random, with path and road systems meshed into a confusing tangle on the 1637 and 1754 maps. Instances like this prompted the questioning of the accuracy of the survey and cartographic techniques of the time. The accuracy of these maps was further handicapped by

the fact that they had been taken from books, as the originals are either in private or state collections.

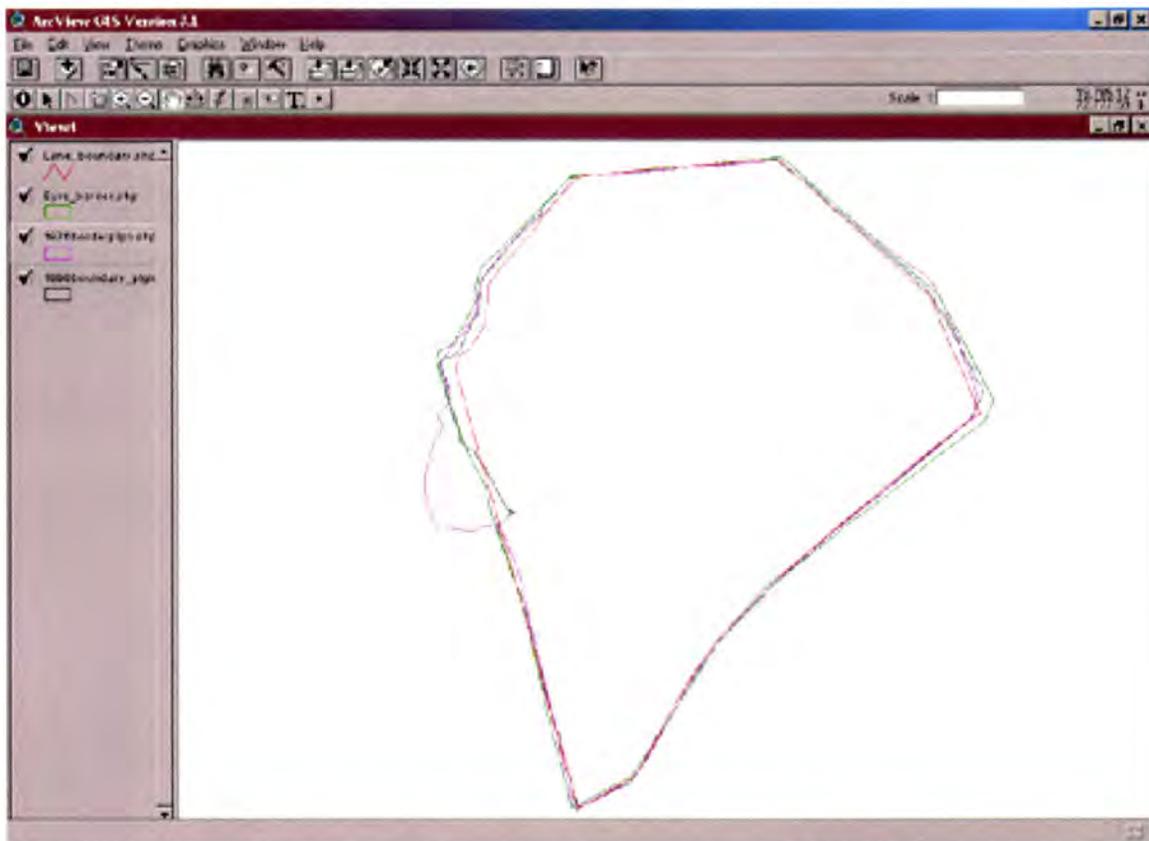
The most limiting factor on the comparison of land use change and character over time in Richmond Park was the lack of a continuous data set. The four Richmond Park maps contained information unique to the reason for compilation. The 1632-7 and 1754 maps were official surveys of royal land holdings where the 1876 and 1999 maps appear to show the park for tourism purposes. Nicholas Lane's 1632-7 map gives specific information about land ownership as Charles I was in the process of buying out or annexing large parcels of private land. Eyre's 1754 map shows some vague land cover information and the location of landscape elements such as the pen ponds. The 1876 and 1999 surveys give no indication of landscape characteristics, save for naming locations of various plantations and lodges. Without distinctive land cover information, there was no continuum on which to analyze the development of a medieval deer park. In fact water bodies were the only polygon features which could be traced across Richmond's 500-year history (Figure 25). This provided little use to a study of hunting landscapes.

On a more positive note, the georeferencing process provided a means by which all the maps could be registered to a coordinate system and set scale. One interesting piece of information was gathered from this procedure, when all four maps were overlaid on one another, only a minor difference in



**Figure 25. ArcView project overlay of ponds within Richmond Park from 1754 (purple) and 1876 (blue) maps.**

the areas contained within the park boundaries was apparent (Figure 26). Some of this can be attributed to the poor quality of the source maps and digitizer error, but it must also be noted that no two surveys will overlay perfectly due to individual methods used by different cartographers. In addition, should a source for historic survey data be found in the future, a geo-relational database for all of the maps has already been created. In effect, the foundation has been laid for the type of analysis this research was originally set up to accomplish.



**Figure 26. Comparison of Richmond Park boundaries digitized from nearly five centuries of historic surveys. Lane's 1632 enclosure is in red, Eyre's 1754 survey, green, 1876 boundary, magenta, and 1999, black.**

## CHAPTER 4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### FINAL THOUGHTS ON RICHMOND PARK

#### **Richmond as a Park**

While the four types of medieval hunting landscapes seem to have fairly clear definitions, Richmond crosses the line between park and chase. It has landscape characters and traditions consistent with both types of land use. A thorough evaluation of the literature on every related topic from sporting art to landscape gardening has yet to reveal a finite distinction between the two, and to continue to pursue the issue in the case of Richmond would be futile. For the most part, it can be safely assumed that most parks were enclosed completely by a fence or park *pale*, where chases and forests were open save for earthen or vegetative barriers.

The true value of the Richmond Park landscape has much to do with the fact that it has remained largely intact for nearly 400 years. After the end of plague, civil wars and agricultural land grabs, very few of England's historic hunting landscapes remain. Despite its unpopular origin and early history, in Richmond we can find elements of the medieval park and chase, later Victorian formal gardens and most recently, a 20<sup>th</sup> century suburban greenspace.

#### **Combining Data from Literature and Historic Maps using a GIS**

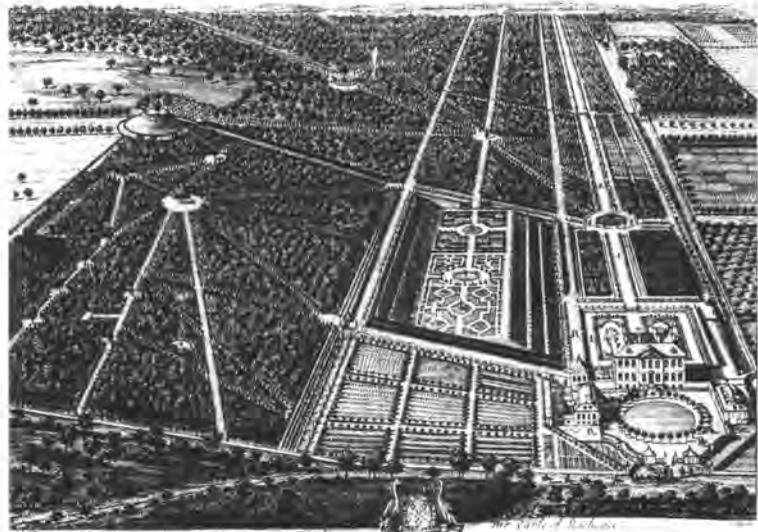
Geographic information systems have previously been used to create data layers from historic survey data, as in the case of Iowa's General Land Office survey of the 1840's (see [www.public.iastate.edu/~fridolph/research.html#GLOveg](http://www.public.iastate.edu/~fridolph/research.html#GLOveg)). Written records of Richmond Park failed to produce a similarly accurate level of data from which to work. Prior to the 18<sup>th</sup> century, most information recorded in State Papers, Pipe, Close and Charter

Rolls pertained most often to economically significant events. Even records from the rangers and gamekeepers themselves failed to provide an accurate record of the day-to-day development and maintenance of a hunting landscape. Once again, Leonard Cantor (1979) interjects that in England, estate maps were not recorded until the late 16<sup>th</sup> century well after the heyday of medieval parks. He later states that it is quite likely that some 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century estate maps picture parks much as they existed in the Middle Ages. Many of these maps remain today in the form of engravings done by Kip and Knyff, one of which exists of Petersham Park which was later added to Richmond (Figure 27). It must be noted however, that many of these drawings included elements that were suggested by the artist but never implemented by the landowner.

While today's geographic information systems provide an excellent tool for use in landscape analysis, they are only as valuable as the information they are provided with.

While maps were collected covering the lifespan of

Richmond Park, the information on each of them was unique to that specific map. In addition, land cover data (if recorded at all) was vague at best. Given the available data, there is simply insufficient information from which one could chronicle specific landscape changes with any degree of certainty. It would be useful to landscape historians if a set of



**Figure 27. Engraving by I. Kipp from drawing by Leonard Knyff of 'New Park in Surrey' (1708), Henry VIII Mound is in upper left corner.**

standards were developed to help deal with the inherent ambiguity of the information contained on historic maps. Conventions could be developed for digitizing different line types and styles. Most importantly, it must be realized that there are limitations to the conclusions that can be drawn from this type of data. For instance, comparing the areas of small ponds between two map years is unlikely to yield a statistically significant result. Larger polygons, however, can validate important assumptions such as the fact that Richmond Park's boundaries have changed very little over its nearly 400 year history.

The data collection process has yielded what could be called the most up to date compilation of information on the subject of landscape modifications for the perpetuation of game and the facilitation of sport. Where the Middle Ages had previously been a dark gap between Roman town planning and formal gardens in the teaching of landscape history, research such as this could provide headway into a fresh and relatively unexplored topic. Where landscape historians and cultural geographers have left off in their investigations of parks, forests, chases and warrens—there are still several questions remaining with implications to landscape design history.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

This case study of Richmond Park has only scratched the surface on the topic of hunting landscapes. During the review of pertinent literature, a multitude of offshoots on the central topic became apparent. Different time periods could be evaluated, from the earliest Arabic records to the Greeks and Romans up through the lavish country estates where England's royal family still shoots today. Cultural differences could be explored, as French, German and Slavic peoples were known to have designed hunting landscapes at the same time Richmond was generating its reputation as a royal deer park and well beyond (Bluchel

1997). Continental boundaries could be crossed to compare European landscape modifications for the hunt to those used by Native Americans. An evaluation of sporting art proved to be an indispensable resource for information into landscape character and conduct during the hunt for this research.

Also revealed were the theatrical qualities of large scale orchestrated slaughters in Germany and France where game was driven from the forest and funneled into what could best be described as a stage set. The panicked animals charged through the set and emerged from open windows and doors only to find that the set had been placed on a river or pond bank. They promptly landed in the water where waiting shooters shot them from boats (Figure 28). Bizarre events like this bring together interesting implications for landscape design, architecture and sociology alike, and are far from mainstream research but worthy of investigation.

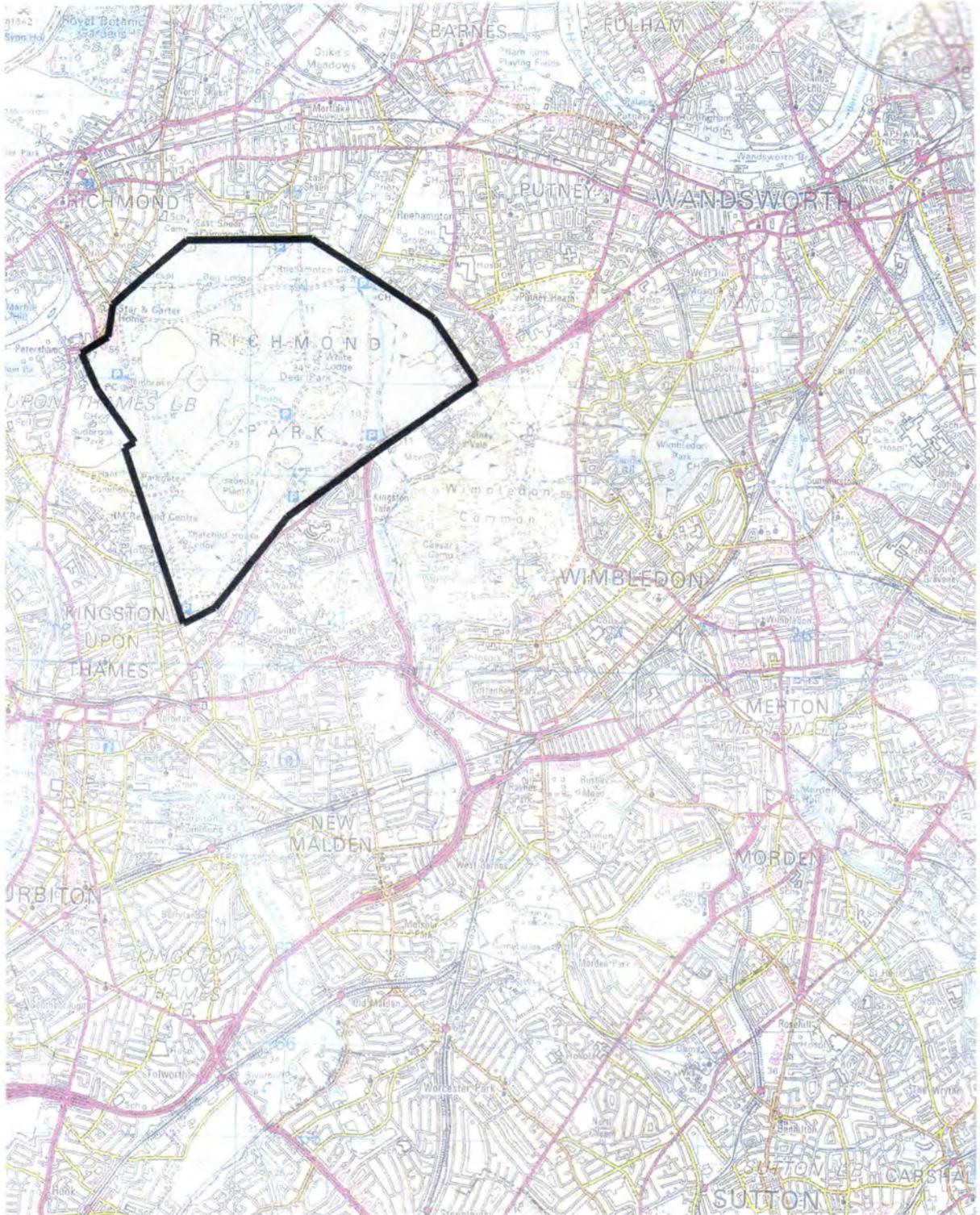


**Figure 28. Late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century paintings of the theatrical qualities of hunts from France and Germany.**

Agriculture and industrialization have led to the demise of the vast majority of England's hunting landscapes. Artifacts remain of a few; fewer yet are still in operation. Richmond Park's royal origin has spared it from the plow and helped preserve a unique landscape that combines elements of the medieval deer park and chase. Its written history, though by no means complete, provides useful insight into how far reaching the effects of hunting on a landscape can be. From the Norman Conquest of 1086 through 1350 and again from 1509-1761, hunting affected not only landscapes. Its associated laws and warrants permeated the cultural, economic and judicial elements of English society.

The literature available on Richmond Park failed to provide additional information to bolster the landscape descriptions recorded on the 1632-7, 1754, 1876 and 1999 maps. Combining the two sources in a geographic information system, however, yielded valuable insight into dealing with historic maps. It is readily apparent that one must recognize the limitations of the conclusions that can be drawn from such data. Landscape scale generalizations can be made with some certainty, but analysis of point data should be avoided. The inconsistencies in line weights, type, and scale encountered in this case study indicate that standards could be developed to increase the accuracy of the digitizing process. Such conventions would greatly enhance the validity of conclusions drawn from archival survey data, furthering the study of landscape architectural history.

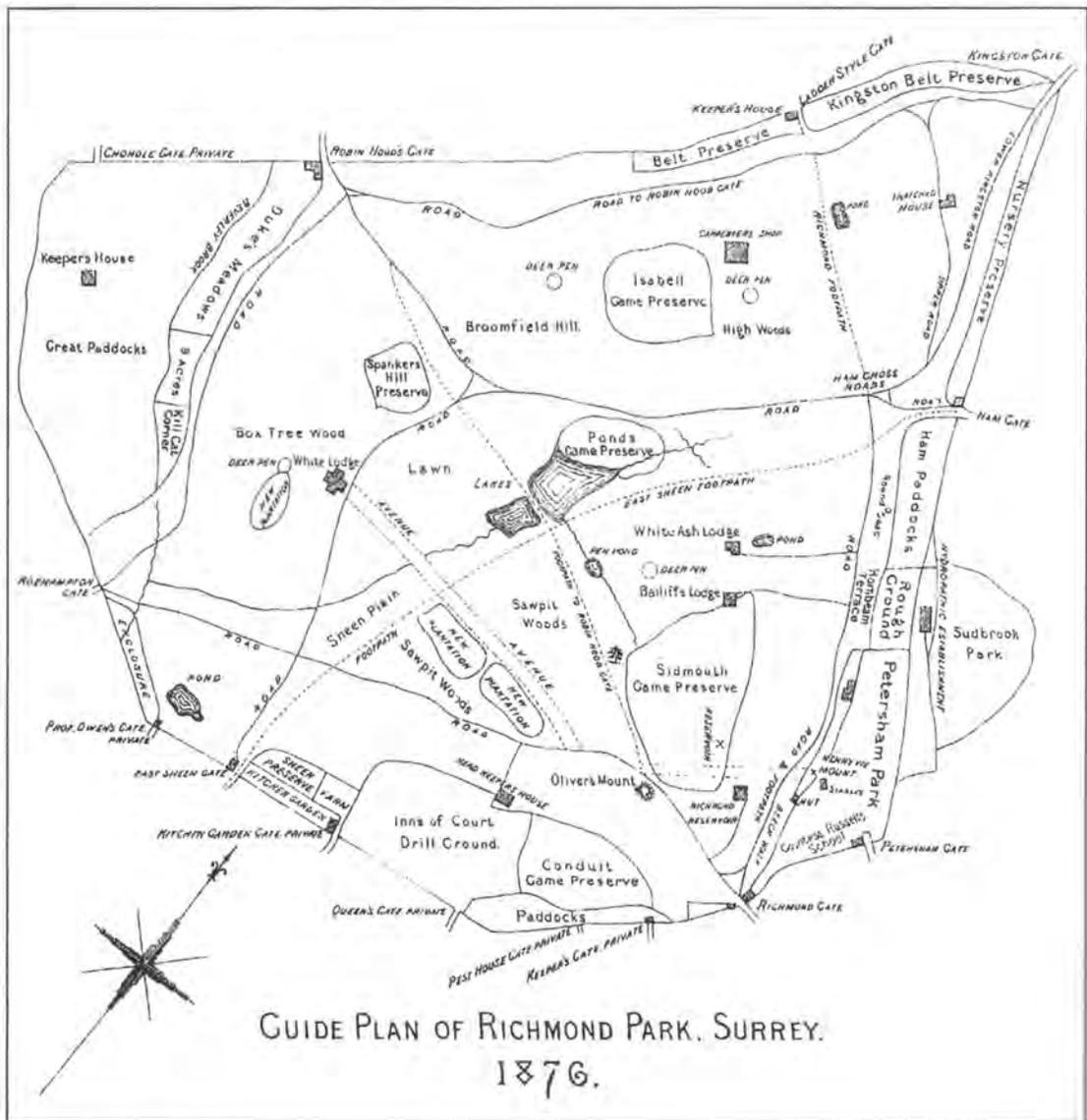
APPENDIX



Enlarged version of Figure 1, Location of Richmond Park







Enlargement of Figure 9, Richmond Park 1876



Enlargement of Figure 10, Richmond Park 1993

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