



Cambridge Community Heritage



Wratworth: a lost Cambridgeshire village

The Domesday Survey of 1086 tells us there was a village of Werateworde made up of five manors. By 1279 the parish seems to have been divided between Wimpole and Orwell, although separate manors continued. Could we find it?

We know the names of the first lords of the manor and their successors who have left their legacy as names of areas in what is now Wimpole: Avenell, Walters, Francis, Cobbs, Ratford.

These names were all in use in 1638. Their distribution suggests that Wrattworth covered the north and east of the present Wimpole and into Orwell.

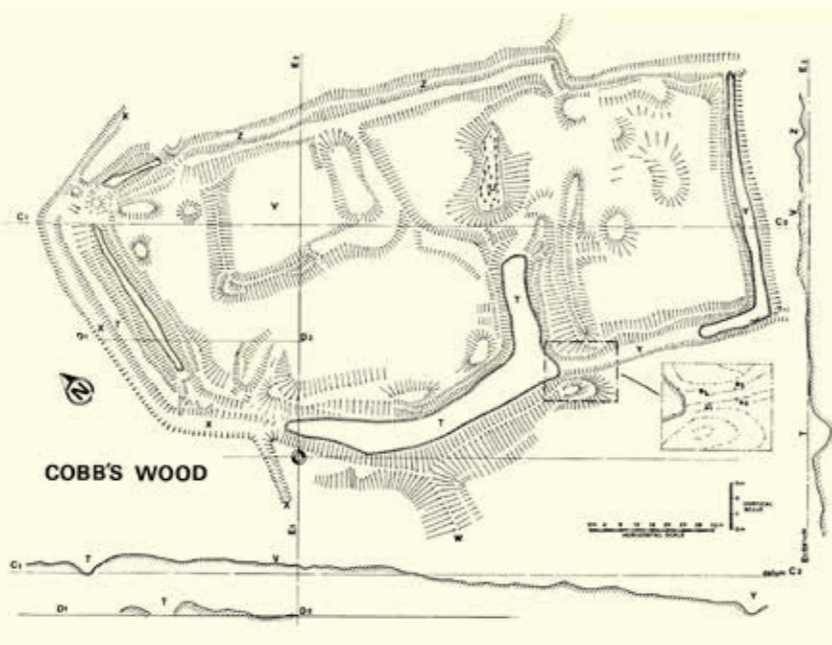
In 1279 Richard Francis held 2 manors in Wrattworth. One eventually passed to Geoffrey Cobbe (a rebel leader in the Peasants' Revolt). The other passed to the Walter family of Croydon and is today at least partly in Orwell.

Fieldwork evidence

There is a moated site within Cobbs Wood, surveyed by CAFG. It has not been proven that this is the site of a manor house, but it is highly likely. Pottery of the 11th to 13th centuries was found inside and outside the moated enclosure.



Survey carried out at Cobbs Wood



Survey results for Cobbs Wood

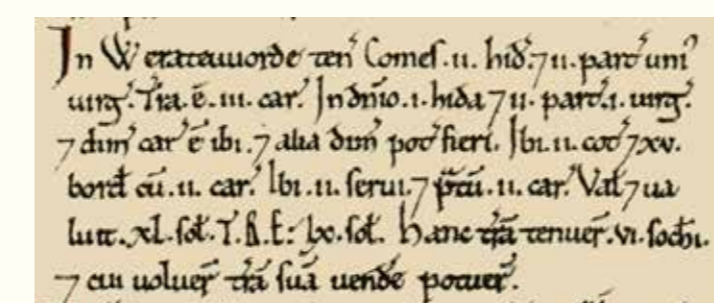
If correct, this would suggest that it is the location of Francis's manor house. Cobb held the manor from the late 14th century but may not have lived in Wimpole.

In addition, fieldwalking of surrounding fields has produced Roman, Anglo-Saxon and medieval finds. This, together with the small hamlet of Little End shown in 1638, suggests the likely area for the main concentration of settlement of Wrattworth.

Before 1066 the land of Werateworde was held by a total of 12 sokemen (free tenants), all of whom could sell their land.

By 1086 Werateworde had 5 manors:

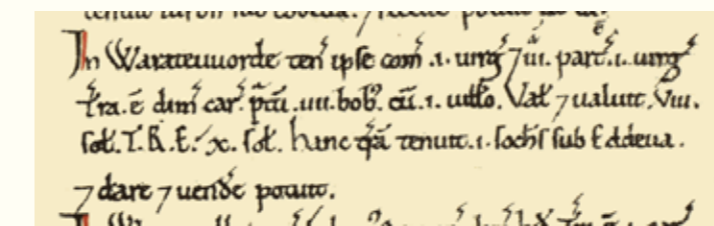
Wratworth held by Earl Roger of Shrewsbury – over half the parish belonged to him and our research suggests the land of this manor is today at least partly in Orwell Parish.



Earl Roger's land:

In "Ratford" the earl holds 2 hides and 2 parts of a virgate. There is land for 3 ploughs. In demesne [is] 1 hide and 2 parts of 1 virgate, and there is half a plough and there can be another half. There are 2 cottars and 15 bordars with 2 ploughs. There are 2 slaves, and meadow for 2 ploughs. It is and was worth 40s; TRE 60s. 6 sokemen held this land and could sell their land to whom they would.

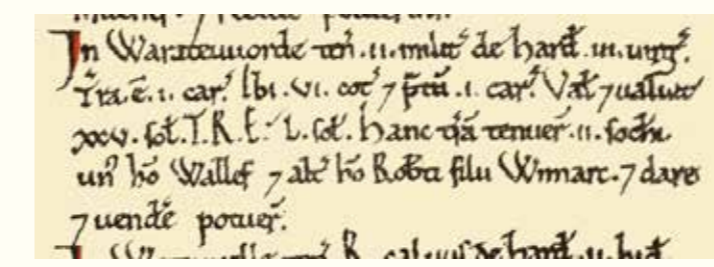
Beech's or Avenell's held by Count Alan of Brittany



Count Alan's land:

In "Ratford" the count himself holds 1 virgate and the third part of 1 virgate. There is land for half a plough, [and] meadow for 4 oxen, with 1 villan. It is and was worth 8s; TRE 10s. 1 sokeman held this land under Eadigfu (Eddeva) and could give and sell it.

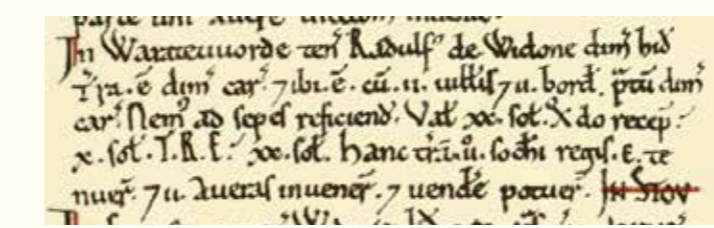
Mortimer's held by Hardwin de Scales (2 knights his tenants)



Land of Hardwin de Scales:

In "Ratford" 2 knights hold 3 virgates from Hardwin. There is land for 1 plough. There are 6 cottars, and meadow for 1 plough. It is and was worth 25s; TRE 50s. 2 sokemen held this land, one of the man of Waltheof and the other the man of Robert fitzWimarc, and they could give and sell [their land].

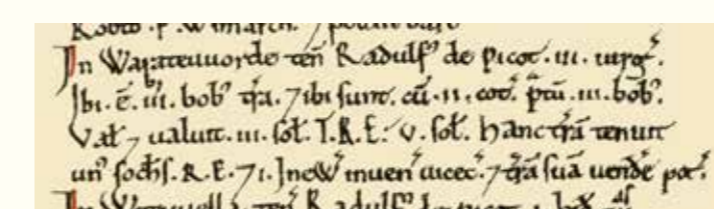
Francis's, later Cobb's, held by Guy de Raimbeaucourt (tenant Ralph de Bancs)



Land of Guy de Raimbeaucourt:

In "Ratford" Ralph holds half a hide from Guy. There is land for half a plough, and there is [half a plough], with 2 villans and 2 bordars. [There is] meadow for half a plough, [and] a wood to repair fences. It is worth 20s; when received, 10s; TRE 20s. 2 sokemen of King Edward held this land; and they provided 2 cartage-dues, and could sell it.

Banks or Baunces held by Sheriff Picot of Cambridge (tenant Ralph de Bancs)



Land of Picot of Cambridge:

In "Ratford" Ralph holds 3 virgates from Picot. There is land for 3 oxen and there are [3 oxen], with 2 cottars. [There is] meadow for 3 oxen. It is and was worth 3s; TRE 5s. A sokeman of King Edward held this land, and he provided 1 watchman for the sheriff, and could sell his land.

In all 32 tenants were recorded in 1086 (compared with 13 in Wimpole):

- 3 villans/villeins (higher status villagers),
 - 17 bordars (small-holders or peasants, lower status than villeins),
 - 10 cottars (cottagers, similar status to Bordars)
 - 2 slaves
- There was land for 7½ ploughs, meadow for 4½ ploughs and wood to repair fences.

DOMESDAY BOOK, English translation by Alecto Historical Editions 1992 Wrattworth Ratford (Werateworde) TRE = in the time of King Edward

Whilst we were researching the parish records, we noted the predominance of names that looked suspiciously like derivations of Wrattworth. This poses the question as to whether our lost village has survived in the family names of people we can see in the historical record for WIMPOLE.

1327: The earliest record of the name of the Parish being used is Laurenc de (of) Wro(a)ttworth who appears in the Lay Subsidy for Wimpole. This is the only record of the surname beginning with W.

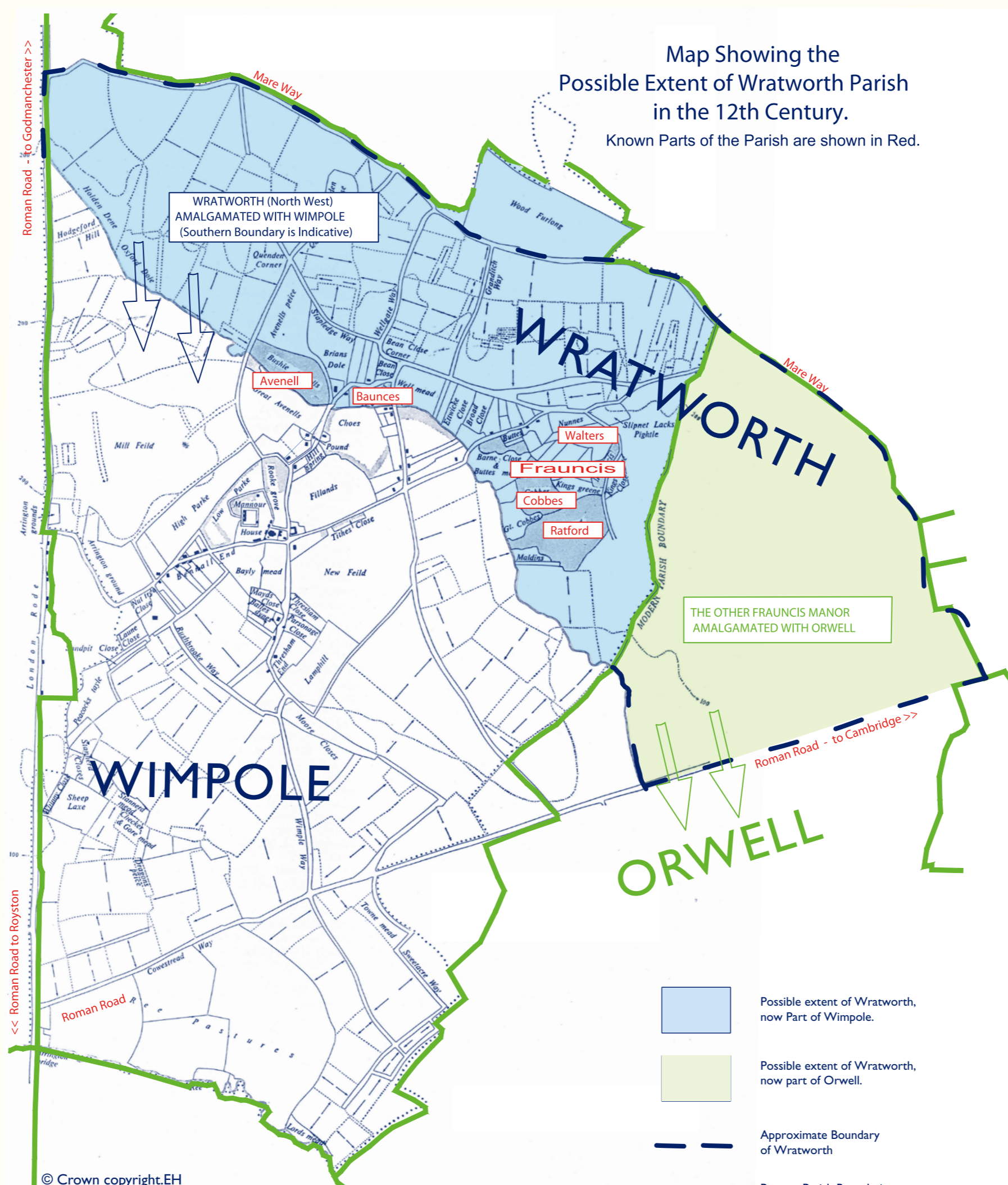
1565 to mid 17th C: Rutt, Rutter and sometimes Rutterworth and Rutterforth(e) all appear in the Parish and other records.

We have created a family tree of this large local family traceable in Wimpole from the beginning of the Parish records.

Some records use the longer forms of Rutterworth and Rutterforth(e), are they remembering their heritage?

17th C: Ratford seems likely to be another corrupted form of Wrattworth. The wood south of Cobb's is called Ratford.

William Ratford, born in nearby Whaddon, worked as a carpenter on the estate. We excavated his house at Wimpole in 2011.



We also considered the possibility the name might have survived in ORWELL

1327: The earliest record of the name of the Parish being used is for Willo and Basilia de (of) Wrattworth - who appear in the Lay Subsidy for Orwell & Malkeston (Malton).

1590: We discovered a reference to a person called Wrattworth Crawden, an unusual and so far unique use of Wrattworth as a first name. The lord of the manor of Wrattworth at the time was William Walter who was also lord of the manor of the village of Croydon.

1565 through to the mid 17th C: Rut, Rutt

As in Wimpole we find in the parish records a family group using the name Rutt or even Rut in its most shortened form, but not in any longer form as we found in Wimpole. Are they also descendants of a family that traces its roots to our lost village?

The name Wrattworth continued as the name of a separate manor until at least 1686 and its sale to Sir John Cutler.