



POUNDS

In Medieval and later times each manor would have a small secure enclosure or 'pound' to keep animals which strayed on to manorial lands. Strays could be destructive if not 'impounded'. A fine had to be paid in order to retrieve them.

An 'estray' was a stray animal kept in the pound for which no owner could be found. Manorial court rolls recorded the finding of estrays. In the 16th century the finding of an animal often would be recorded in Latin but its description would be in English; for example a bullock called 'a steere' colour 'blake whitebalde' and a sheep called 'a wether' colour 'whytt'. The animal would be proclaimed as an estray. If after three successive proclamations no one claimed it, it became the property of the lord of the manor or later the parish. An owner reclaiming an animal was fined and also had to pay for its upkeep whilst impounded.

The pound keeper or pinder was a manorial or parish officer in charge of the pound. He was required to care for the animals in his charge and to recover the monies due when they were reclaimed. This was a responsible job and incumbents had to be sworn in by the magistrate. They were often provided with accommodation.

Pounds were relatively small enclosures with secure walls to prevent estrays from escaping. The best preserved example in our area is the Limpsfield Pound which was in the manor of Oxted. It can be seen at Wolfs Row, Limpsfield (TQ 40721 52551) just south of the A25. It is polygonal with stone walls about 1.7 metres high and is about 3.7 metres in diameter. It is a Grade II listed building and bears a plaque which reads:

*LIMPSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL
LIMPSFIELD POUND.
Stray animals were impounded here
at least from the 16th century.
This pound was rebuilt before
1765 and was in use until the end
of the 19th century.*

POUNDS

Another pound in the former Oxted Manor can be seen in Sandy Lane in Old Oxted. This is a stoned walled rectangular enclosure next to the Pound House.

Manorial pounds should not be confused with 'pounds' used by long distance drovers of animals destined for fattening in lowland pastures or for the markets in the towns and cities which burgeoned with the industrial revolution. Cattle could manage between 12 to 15 miles a day and sheep about 4 miles. Overnight accommodation was needed for both men and their animals. Inns often had meadows or enclosures attached which were known as the 'stance' or the 'pound'. Cowden pound probably became a drovers pound but one certain example is the Red Lion at Handcross on the route to Smithfield in London.

There is evidence of at least four manorial pounds within the RH7 area and there are several others outside RH7 but in our immediate vicinity.

POUNDS WITHIN RH7

Crowhurst Pound

Crowhurst became a manor in the 14th century when the Gainsford family acquired lands in the area. The Domesday Book has the Crowhurst area, which was well wooded, as part of Oxted Manor.

Pound Farm is recorded on the John Roque map of 1768. The position of the pound is shown on the bend of Crowhurst Lane on the pre-enclosure map (i.e. before 1815) and the First Edition of the OS c1860 (TQ 3915 4780). St George's Cottages, built in 1922 for agricultural workers, now stand on the site.

Puttenden Pound

Puttenden Manor was in existence in the 13th century. The 16th century manor house and a pound is shown on the Puttenden Manor map drawn in 1700. An adjacent field of some 9 acres is called Pound Field. The pound is on the north side of the Lingfield to Edenbridge road and is marked on the 1914 OS one inch to a mile map at TQ 4080 4540. There is no evidence of the pound now but a nearby dwelling is known as Pound Cottage which may have provided accommodation for the pound keeper.

Billeshurst Pound

The 1607 map of the manor of Billeshurst shows 'the pounce fiede' of some 10 acres downstream from Neylondes Mill (TQ 3950 4440). An ancient lane leads from the Lingfield to Crowhurst road across the Eden Brook to Park Farm. Logically the pound, if there was one, would have been sited by the bridge but there is no evidence to be seen today.

Lingfield Pound

The 1720 map of the messuage of Magnus Deo shows a pound at the east end of Plaistow Street where it becomes Lingfield High Street (TQ 3806 4305).

LOCAL POUNDS OUTWITH RH7

Blackham Pound

A 1795 map of Blackham, which is located on the East Grinstead to Tunbridge Wells road (A264), shows a pound and the Pound Farm on the south side of the road (TQ 4990 3950). The map is marked 'The Pound' and below 'F'. Other farms are named without the definite article, i.e. 'Hale Farm'. There is no evidence on the ground where the pound might have been sited.

East Grinstead Pounds

The 'Old Parish Pound' was bought from the church wardens for £50 by the London Brighton and South Coast Railway. It was then demolished during the construction of the line from East Grinstead to Oxted which opened in 1884. It is shown on the 1873 OS map on the road to Killick's Farm just off the London Road. The site was about at the present day junction of St James's Road and Station Road (TQ 3880 3835). See W H Hills "History of East Grinstead". Nearby there were other pounds serving the Brambletye and Forest Row manors. (Information from Michael Leppard.)

Cowden Pound

Cowden Pound lies some 2 miles north of Cowden Village on the west side of the Edenbridge to Hartfield road, the B2026 (TQ 4630 4250). A pre-1850 map shows the pound and Pounds House. The OS Second Edition (1897) shows Cowden Pound and the Queen's Arms. The area generally is now known as Cowden Pound.

The pound was established in the Middle Ages and was rebuilt in 1797 with a pound house for the pound keeper. The house was demolished in the 1880s. It was occupied in 1841 by the Longley family who ran the Queen's Arms. ("The History of Mark Beech" by T Boyle, 1990).

The 1787 stewards accounts for Cowden manor record that one Langridge was appointed pound keeper and was required to be sworn in by the justice. In 1788 Thomas Longley was appointed pound keeper and gamekeeper. ("History of Cowden" by Guy Ewing, 1926.)

Local folklore has it that the pound was established on a drovers road from Wales to Kent. However it is more likely to have been used by drovers from the Sussex marshes taking fat stock to London. An individual drover with the aid of a dog could manage up to 30 cattle or sheep at a time. Their animals would be rested in the pound field. If this is correct it would account for the pound being sited some distance from Cowden village. However latterly it would seem that it was used simply as a manorial pound. ("The Kent and Sussex Weald" by Peter Brandon, 2003.) At present it is a matter of conjecture whether the pound at Cowden Pound was one and the same as the pound serving Cowden Manor some mile or so distant.