



## *The History of Enford*

It is known that Enford was a well-established settlement a great many centuries before the keeping of records. The earliest evidence of occupation was the discovery of a greenstone axe c2000-1500 BC. Near Enford Bridge. There have been many more finds of a comparatively later date. Thus one can assume that Enford has been in existence some 3000 years.

The earliest known mention of Enford occurs in a Saxon Charter of 934 AD, where there is record of the gift on 30 "hides" (the Saxon term for a variable amount of land sufficient to support a family\_ at Enedford to Winchester Cathedral by King Athelstan, a grandson of Alfred the Great. "Ened" in translation from Old/Middle English means a duck. You can still see ducks by Enford Bridge, which is where the ford used to be. In 924 AD King Athelstan had given the whole parish (of Enedford) to St. Swithun's Priory at Winchester, so it is probable that the monks built the original church in Enford.

The county in which Enford is situated in Wiltshire, a name developed from Wiltunscir, a district dependent for local government in Saxon and Norman times upon Wilton, near Salisbury, with land divided into 'hundreds'. There were a hundred householders to each hundred, so called from the name of the place where they met. Enford, along with Everleigh, Netheravon and Fittleton, was in the hundred of Elstub, and met in a field which still bears that name, south-east of Newtown. It is mentioned in the Domesday Book (a census of towns, villages, people, houses, lands and livestock compiled for tax purposes for William the Conqueror in 1086) as Alestabe. This means 'elder tree stump' and such trees are still to be found in the field.

The Domesday Book contains an entry for Enford which has been translated as follows:

"The Bishop (of Winchester) holds Enedford, taxed for 30 hides in King Edward's (Edward the Confessor - died 1066) time. There are 24 carucates (a measure of land replacing a hide, based on the amount of land a team of oxen could plough in a year) of land of which 10 are in demesne (domain or 'home' farm, farmed by the owner - probably Enford Farm) and there are 3 carucates, 6 slaves, 12 villeins (tenant farmers), and 15 bordars (holders of tied cottages), with 10 carucates - 2 mills (at Coombe and Littlecott) yield 25 shillings - 17 acres of meadow and a pasture 2½ miles long and 1½ miles wide. William (a Norman) holds 5 hides of this land, Harald (a Saxon) 2 hides, and an Englishman 3 hides - they hold there 10 carucates and a priest 1 hide (only 5 Wiltshire villages are mentioned in the Domesday Book as having a priest, which suggests the presence of a church). Those who held in King Edward's time could not be separated from the Church - when the Bishop received it, it was worth £34 - now the demesne is

worth £20 and what the soldiers (landlords who held their land on condition that they provided men and materials in a national emergency) and the priest hold £19.'

Those 10th century monks will have divided the lands into farms, which they leased, keeping the 'demesne' or home farm for themselves. Six hundred years later, at the dissolution of the monasteries, Henry VIII gave Enford to the Culpepper family, and the property passed through many hands by descent or sale to Sir Edmund Antrobus. In the early 1900's the land was acquired by the War Department. In 1676 the patronage of the church was sold to Christ's Hospital, London; the school remains a patron today.