



Oak Apple Day Procession at Wishford, 1966

Oak Apple Day - The 1603 Charter

In order that the people of Wishford and the public generally may know what the rights of the inhabitants consist of, we have pleasure in printing the following from a book in the custody of Mr. James Gonbize of West Street, Wilton:

The Ancient Rights - 1603

Sum of the ancient Customs belonging to Wishford and Barford out of the Forest of Groveley.

Here followeth the true recital of the ancient and laudable Customs belonging and rights appertaining to the Manners of Great Wishford and Barford St. Martin in the County of Wilts.

Imprimis - The Lords and Freeholders of Wishford Magna by ancient custom have ever had and by right may and ought to have for themselves and all their Tenants common of Pasturage for all manner of Beasts and Cattle throughout all Grovely at all times of the Year (except for Cattle of two teeth and Goats and Hogs above one Year old in the Fence Month only) and no other person whatsoever besides them have any Common there, or may in Right put in any Beast or Cattle whatsoever, save only the Lord, Freeholders, and Tenants of Barford St. Martin, who may Common in all places of the forest on the south Side of Grimes Dike commonly called the French and have Chase and Rechase over the French but may not Stall. And the Ranger for the time being hath Common there for one Nag and two Calves only but for no more, nor any other thing, only the occupier of Saint Johanne's Hospital in Ditchampton near Wilton hath claimed to put in Ten Kine and one Bull and Hogs as Wishford Magna and Barford St. Martin may.

Item 2 - The lords of Wishford Magna and Barford St. Martin and all their Freeholders and Tenants in every the said Manors have ever had and by Right and ancient Custom ought to have free Common of Pasturage in all Grovely for all their hogs and pigs at all times of the Year save only Sow hogs above one year old in the Fence Month only.

Item 3 - None may put any cattle whatsoever into the said forest save only those persons aforesaid who by ancient Custom and right may justify the same. And the ancient Custom is that the Borderers aforesaid that have Common there, or as many of them as will, may at their pleasure (giving notice thereof to the Ranger, of leaving notice at his Lodge) drive all the said Forest, and if they find any Cattle there other than such as by ancient Custom are justifiable to be kept there as aforesaid they may do

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therein according to the Custom of the Forest for the preservation of good pasture for the Deer, and for such Cattle as of Right and ancient Custom are justifiable to pasture there.

Item 4 - The Lords and Freeholders of Wishford and Barford for themselves and all their Tenants and all inhabitants in the same Manors of Wishford Magna and Barford St. Martin have an ancient Custom and ever time out of mind have used to fetch and if Right may fetch and bring away Boughs at their pleasure from the woods of Grovely from May-day in the Morning until Whit-Monday at Night every Saturday and half-holiday once, viz, in the Evening, and every holiday and Sabbath day twice, viz, in the Morning and in the Evening.

Item 5 - the Lords and Freeholders of Wishford for themselves and their Tenants have ever used to fell in Grovely and in right may lawfully fell and bring away about Holy Thursday every year one Load of Trees upon a cart to be drawn by strength of People and the Lord and Freeholders of Barford for themselves and their tenants have used and in Right may fetch one other Load of Trees on Wednesday upon a Cart to be drawn by strength of People.

Item 6 - All the Lanchards, Balkes, Waters and other Boundaries whatsoever which divided the Forest from other Liberties, Parishes and Hundreds, and are and ever have been accounted parcel of the Forest.

Item 7 - The aforesaid Lords, Freeholders, and Tenants of Great Wishford and Barford St. Martin have had, or of Right should ever Time out of mind have, yearly brought unto them against every Whitsunday by the Ranger or his assigns one fat Buck, the one half to Wishford and the other to Barford to make marry withal amongst their neighbours. And the Ranger is to have from each of the Manors of Wishford and Barford one white loaf and one gallon of Beer, and a pair of Gloves, or twelve pence in Money for the whole, and if the Ranger do not bring nor send the said Buck, then the inhabitants of either the said Manors or any of them after that day may go unto the said Forest and kill and bring away a Buck for each of the said Parishes at their pleasure, and then the Ranger is not to have any thing.

Item 8 - The aforesaid Parishes of Wishford and Barford have, and time out of mind have had and of right ought always to have common Highways and Highwoods at all times, and herbage and pasturage there for all Beasts and Cattle and Hogs as aforesaid.

Item 9 - The Lords and Freeholders of Wishford and Barford for themselves and all their Tenants have also in ancient Custom and by right may fetch all kind of Wood from the French at their pleasure.

Item 10 - The old Custom is, and time out of mind hath been that the People and Inhabitants of Wishford Magna and Barford St. Martin may lawfully gather and bring away all kind of dead snapping wood, and boughs and sticks that be in the woods of Grovely at their pleasure without Controlment and none other besides them at any time may lawfully fetch away any.

Item 11 - It is not, nor ever hath been lawful for the Ranger or his Keeper or any in right of the Forest to pitch any hays or catch any Conies without the standards of the hedge-row of the King's Coppes or Woods of the said Forest.

Item 12 - The Lord of Wishford Magna hath had and of right ought to have the office of Fee Forester in Grovely, who in regard of his Office is by himself, his deputy or assigns to walk the said Forest in the north side of Grimes' Dike called the French and by himself, his deputy or servants to do his best endeavours by all means to drive, chase and keep the Deer out of the fields the North side of the French, and chase and keep them into the King's woods from damaging the borderers. His fees by ancient custom are and he hath had and of right ought to have a fee certain in Money, the right shoulder of every Deer that is killed within the said walk, and also the skin if he kill the Deer himself. He hath also had and by the ancient custom ought to have four loads of the wood called Chimney Wood yearly and every year in Highwood and all the Moots, Dotes, and Windfalls within his walk, and after the Coppices are one year old he may have and of right ought to have feeding for two Calves and one Colt in each of them at his pleasure till the copse hedges are taken down, and then he ought also to have all the said copse hedges

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within his walk (except only twenty lugs which are due to the Ranger for the same time being) and the Lord of Barford Saint Martin hath like office and fee on the South side of the French sometimes called Grim's Dike aforesaid.

Item 13 - The Ranger in Grovely for the time being by himself and all his under officers and his servants should and in right ought from time to time do all their best endeavours by all means to lodge and keep all the deer within the hedge range of the King's woods and coppices in Grovely at all times and to preserve all the Borderers from hurt or damage.

Item 14 - There hath been within the Forest of Grovely Feeforesters, Verdurers, Agistors and other officers as in other Forests of the like kind which said officers or some of them from year to year when any of the King's coppices of the said Forest were appointed to be sold have ever used and in right ought now yearly at every sale to set such reasonable prices upon every acre thereof as in their conscience they think most convenient and reasonable. And the Lord of the Manor of Wishford aforesaid hath had and in right and ancient custom ought still to have for himself his freeholders and tenants of Wishford aforesaid so many acres thereof as is convenient to supply their needs of the best, amongst the rest of the officers at the same price so set by the said officers. And likewise the said Lord of the manor of Great Wishford hath had and of right and by ancient custom he ought to have to his own use all the corners that did fall out in the measure of the sale of any coppices on the said North Side of the said French two of them (viz) **Each Of Them One Corner**. And the Lord of Barford St. Martin was to have the like for himself, his Freeholders and Tenants there and at the same price, and the corners that fell out on any sale on the South Side of Grim's Dike or the said French. And the King's officers that measured the said coppice so sold were to have two shillings for every Acre commonly called earnest money.

Item 15 - The custom is and ever time out of mind hath been that the Lords and freeholders of Wishford Magna and Barford Saint Martin and their Tenants by themselves, their servants, and assigns may take and fetch in the woods of Grovely, speeke rods and breeding rods of their houses standing within the said Manors of Wishford and Barford and also fold-shears and wreaths to be employed within the said Manors of Wishford and Barford at all times without controlment and every one of the said Lords and Tenants that do use to fetch such ought to give one hen to the Ranger at Shrovetide if he require and send for the same.

Item 16 - The ancient custom is that at all Courts holden at Grovely the Jury or Homage for the said Forest hath ever been made and in right ought still to be made of the freeholders, Tenants or Inhabitants of Wishford Magna, Barford Saint Martin aforesaid and of none other.

Item 17 - The Lords, Freeholders, Tenants, and Inhabitants of the Manor of Great Wishford or so many of them as would in ancient times, have used to go in a dance in to the Cathedral Church of our blessed Lady in the City of New Sarum, on Whit Tuesday, in the County of Wilts and there made their claim to their custom in the Forest of Grovely in these words:

“Grovely! Grovely! And All Grovely!”

Item 18 - The Lords, Freeholders, Tenants and Inhabitants of the Manor of Barford Saint Martin or so many of them as would in ancient time used also to go the same day in the like dance to the said Cathedral Church and there made their claim to their custom in the said Forest in like manner in these words:

“Grovely! Grovely! And All Grovely!”

Surname	Given Names	Title
Baker	John	
Bower	John	Clerk
Carpenter	George	

Carpenter	James	
Carpenter	William	
Hayter	Robert	
Hibberd	Christopher	
Kingman	Walter	
Walker	Francis	

These customs written in the foresaid leaves next before are part of the ancient customs which the Lords, Freeholders, Tenants and Inhabitants of Great Wishford and Barford Saint Martin have and ought to have in Grovely aforesaid.

Signed -

Surname	Given Names	Title
Dear	John	Snr.
Fanner	Christopher	
Hampton	John	
Hitherthorne	John	
Katkat	Stephen	
King	Nicholas	
Kingman	Edwin	
Mills	John	
Munde	Edwin	
Wratham	Robert	

This amongst other things was presented by the Jury of Wishford and Barford and delivered into Court kept in Grovely 15th day of March, 1603.

Salisbury Times, 2 June 1893

OPC Note:

The transcription quoted from the 1893 newspaper above, was probably from a transcription from the original document, made by the former schoolmaster of Wishford, Mr. James Goulden, in 1822, at the request of the then rector.

Below is a continuation of the 1603 Charter document, as transcribed from the original by the Rev. E. H. Steele, rector of Wishford 1945-1963, in March 1951, which was at that time kept in the Parish Church of Wishford Magna:

“ Imprimis we saye that Grovely doth consist onlie of Fowertene Copces lyenge together the one adjoyninge to the other. That is to saye Ashgoore Copces, Haddon Copces, Bemerells Copces, Isbry Copces, Stotefold Copces, Radnell Cpces, and Ppoltenstone Copces lyenge on the north side of Grymes Dike in the parish of greate Wishford. And Rowden Copces, Sangate Copces, Thornell Copces, Chilfench Copces, Appledore Copces, Hempshill Copces and Shortingrove Copces lyenge on the south side of Grymes dike within the parish of Barford St. Martin in theCountie of Wiltes.

And we do further present that divers of those Copces are greatelie decayed by meanes that the woodwards of late tyme at the sale of any Copces have sold all the woodes in the said Copces without reserving any to repaire the hedged that have byn greatelie in decaye of other yonngge Copces formerlie solde, for the use hath byne and still ought to be that at the sale of everie Copces there hath been taken and reserved sufficient wood to repaire the hedges of all the younge Copces formerlie solde, until they have byne seaven yeares olde, wheras nowe the woodward doth sell all without reserving any for that

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purpose. And therefore when the hedges of any young Copces are in decaye as often they are the hedge menders where the hedges are in decaye fell and cutt down the woodes in nearest Copces thereto which Copces beinge then in Common and unclosed the springes thereof are utterlie destroyed. Further we saye that theis Copces beinge but small in quantitie and barren and the deere many in number for want of pasture are enforced for their relief some to lepp the hedges to the younge Copces if possibly they maye and other to randge abroad without the harte and Regarde of the Forrest into the purlwes and some altogether fourth of the Regard or hart of the Forrest and Purlwes alsoe into forreigne places and beinge chased home and findinge their little pasture and lesse hay they are enforced for the most parte of the winter to leeve with Catts Tayles that hange on the top of hasells which hasells in pullinge down for the said Catts tailes they breake and thrashall when they are fower or five yeares olde to the greate spoyle thereof.

Farther we present that the Inhabitants of Barwicke St. James, Stapleford, Stoford, Newton, Chilhampton, Ditchampton and Wilton do often use as namelie goodwife White of Stapleford, and others there, John Baker of Everall the Clark of Newton and divers others there, Robert Blake of Chilhampton and divers there, and out of Ditchampton some and out of Wilton very many doe often resort into Grovely woodes and fetche fearne and wood there without any auuthoritie for the doeinge thereof. And therefore We humblie desire that reformacon thereof may be had by the Rangers and Keepers there.

Likewise we present that whereas the Lorde and Tennants of Wishford and Barford st Martine have Comone of pasture in Grovely for all manner of Cattle to goe and feede there at all tymes of the yere exceptinge onlie for Cattle of two teethe and goates and Pigges above one yeare olde in the fence moneth onlie. And whereas some of the poore neighbours of the said Wishford this present winter 1603 did accordinge to their Right and Custome drive some of their Cowes and Beastes and putt them into the woodes of the said Grovely there to pasture, the Beastes then beinge lefte their in their Comon. And afterwards going by chaunce into the younge Copces and the woodward findinge them there throughe his owne default for not loockinge to the mendigne of the hedges as he ought to doe but suffernge them to ly shamfullie open, and all to torne to the greate spoyle of the younge Copces did take them and cause them to be impounded to the greate wronge and oppression of the poore Borderers and made them to pay money for their beasts before they could have them out of the pounce. In Considracon whereof we humblie desire that refomacon hereof might be had and that the Borderers may not hencefourth be in like sort wronged and oppressed any mor by the woodward who hath offered this hard measure more than any wooder of wood Officer did ever heretofore."

Rev. Steele lists the signatories to the document - there is a slight difference in the list of names to that list published in the newspaper in 1893:

John Bower. Cler.
George Carpenter
Willm. Carpenter
Christopher Hibberd
John Parker
James Carpenter
Walter Kingman
Francis Walker
Robarte Hayter

Edmund Kingman
Signum X Chritstofer Tanner
Signum X Jhon Deere Senior
Sign O Jhon Milles
Sign X Jhon Hitherthorne
Signun X Jhon Hampton
Sign X Nicholas Kinge
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Sign X Stephen CatKat
Sign X Edmunde Deere
Ro: Wartham

Rev. Steele's transcription also refers to the local name for Grime's Dike as "The Trench" (not the French).

The History of Oak Apple Day in Wishford Magna published 1972