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DYFED ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST LTD

REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSED WIND-FARM DEVELOPMENT AT CORSTON, PEMBROKESHIRE

Client: Renewable Energy Systems Ltd

Project Officer: K Murphy

Report by: K Murphy, N Ludlow, R Ramsey

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1.0 RECOMMENDATIONS (prepared by Curatorial Section)

2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Methodology; content and scope of archaeological assessment

2.2 List of sources consulted

A. Manuscript collections searched

B. Manuscript maps

C. Manuscript sources

D. Printed maps

E. Printed sources

F. aerial photographs

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGY

3.1 Summary

3.2 Register of archaeological sites and areas of archaeological interest

3.3 Annotated enlargement of Ordnance Survey 1:10560 Sheet SR99NW, 1968, showing areas of archaeological interest

4.0 APPENDIX

4.1 Notes on the Landscape History of Corston

4.2 Copy of National Library of Wales PB 3135, 'Map of Corston', 1772

4.3 Copy from Ordnance Survey 1:2500 1st edition, Sheets XXXIX.15 and XLII.3, 1876

4.4 Copy from Ordnance Survey 1:2500 2nd edition, Sheets XXXIX.15 and XLII.3, 1908

1.0 RECOMMENDATIONS (prepared by Curatorial Section).

We consider that the Report provides a full assessment of all the archaeological sites and historic landscape components within and adjacent to the application area. Sufficient information is provided on the current condition of these sites and features for the impact of the proposals to be evaluated.

It is clear that over the area proposed for location of turbines, recent farming practices have degraded and obliterated historic landscape features. It is unlikely that the masts themselves would cause any further damage. However, we would recommend that, when detailed proposals are submitted, the location and construction methods for the access roads be designed to avoid any further damage to remaining field boundaries and the existing pattern of roads and tracks.

H.J. James, BA, FSA,
Principal Archaeological Officer (Curatorial)

2.0 INTRODUCTION

Details of a proposed windfarm development at Corston, Pembrokeshire, were forwarded by Dr S J R Powles, on behalf of Renewable Energy Systems Ltd, to Dyfed Archaeological Trust for comment on 3 May 1994.

Following an initial assessment of the scheme by the Curatorial Section of Dyfed Archaeological Trust, Renewable Energy Systems Ltd were advised of the need for a detailed archaeological desktop assessment of the project to be prepared as the first of two possible stages of evaluation, in order for detailed mitigatory measures to be drafted. Subsequently, in a letter dated 13 July 1994, Renewable Energy Systems Ltd confirmed that it wished the Trust to undertake the detailed assessment of the scheme.

This report, prepared by Dyfed Archaeological Trust's Field Section, is intended to provide Renewable Energy Systems Ltd with sufficient information to assess the likely impact of the proposed works upon the archaeological resource and to take this into account as a material consideration in the determination of appropriate mitigatory measures.

The Trust's Curatorial Section provided a standard brief for this report and will advise Renewable Energy Systems Ltd on its findings and recommend further action if deemed necessary.

2.1 Methodology; content and scope of archaeological assessment

The primary stage of assessment of the archaeological implications of any scheme involves consultation of Dyfed Archaeological Trust's Sites and Monuments Record for the area affected by the proposed scheme.

Dyfed Archaeological Trust's Sites and Monuments Record is designated as a County Sites and Monuments Record in the Welsh Office Planning Policy Guidance Note 16: Archaeology and Planning (PPG 16).

Consultation of the Sites and Monuments Record will establish whether any known sites or monuments are affected by the scheme. However it is important to appreciate that the Record is not and cannot ever be a complete record of all traces of human activity in the landscape. It is rather a record of past archaeological work.

Consultation of the Record is therefore followed up by a rapid search of relevant map and documentary sources, both published and manuscript. All assessments carried out by Dyfed Archaeological Trust contain a full list of sources consulted.

All available aerial photographic collections held by the Trust are consulted and, if judged necessary, collections held by other bodies will be consulted. If sites or landscapes with special interest are affected the Trust would wish to consult the appropriate period or site type specialists or societies.

All desk-top assessments involve a field visit or visits to the scheme area by a professional archaeologist to check whether any previously unknown sites or monuments are affected by the scheme and to assess the overall landscape history of the area.

2.2 List of sources consulted

A. Manuscript Collections searched:

Dyfed Sites and Monuments Record, curated by Dyfed Archaeological Trust, Shire Hall, Carmarthen Street, Llandeilo, Dyfed.

National Monuments Record, curated by Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments Wales, Crown Building, Plas Crug, Aberystwyth, Dyfed.

Indexes and schedules of documents in National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, Dyfed.

Indexes and schedules of documents in Pembrokeshire Record Office, The Castle, Haverfordwest, Dyfed.

B. Manuscript Maps:

National Library of Wales PB 3135 Framed, 'A Map of Corston in the Parish of Monkton Pembrokeshire belonging to Mr Abraham Leach', 1772.

National Library of Wales Roller Map B122, 'Plan of Corston Estate in the Parish of Monkton in the county of Pembroke the property of Henry Leach Esq.', 1858.

National Library of Wales, 'Ordnance Surveyor's Drawings' Sheet 182, 1810 (copies in NLW, originals with Ordnance Survey).

National Library of Wales, 'Tithe Map and Apportionment of Monkton Parish in the County of Pembroke', 1839.

Pembrokeshire Record Office DX/198/2, 'Orielson', 1841.

C. Manuscript Sources:

Kissock, J., 1993 'Historic settlements project - south Pembrokeshire', Dyfed Archaeological Trust.

Murphy, K., 1993 'Castlemartin RAC Range electrification scheme 1993: report on archaeological monitoring', Dyfed Archaeological Trust.

D. Printed Maps:

Ordnance Survey, 1876 *Pembrokeshire Sheet XXXIX.15 and XLII.3*, 1:2500 1st edition, surveyed 1864. Southampton.

Ordnance Survey, 1908 *Pembrokeshire Sheet XXXIX.15 and XLII.3*, 1:2500 2nd edition, revised in 1906. Southampton.

Rees, W., 1932 *South Wales and the Border in the Fourteenth Century*, SW Sheet. Southampton: Ordnance Survey.

E. Printed Sources:

Charles, B. G., 1992 *The Place-names of Pembrokeshire*, 2 vols. Aberystwyth: National Library of Wales.

Fox, C. and Grimes, W.F., 1928 'Corston Beacon: An early bronze age cairn in south Pembrokeshire', *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, 83, 137-174.

Howells, B. (ed.), 1987 *Pembrokeshire County History, Vol. III Early Modern Pembrokeshire 1536-1815*. Haverfordwest: Pembrokeshire Historical Society.

Laws, E., 1888 *Little England Beyond Wales*.

Owen, H., 1911-18 *A Calendar of Public Records relating to Pembrokeshire*, 3 vols. London: Hon. Soc. Cymmrodorion.

Smith, P., 1988 *Houses of the Welsh Countryside*

Thorne, R., 1981 'The Leach family of Castlemartin', *The Pembrokeshire Historian*, 7, 29-51.

F. Aerial Photographs

Held by NMR (RCAHMW):	F21 58/2985 0337-40	(1959)
	F22 58/2985 0313-16	(1959)
	CPE/UK 1774 4008-11	(1946)
	106G/UK 1399 4138-41	(1946)

Held by Pembrokeshire Coast National Park:		
	5683/32 023-24	(1983)
	5683/33 037-40	(1983)

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGY

Summary

The modern landscape of large fields enclosed by hedges probably evolved during the 16th and 17th centuries out of a open or strip field system. There has been much amalgamation of these fields in recent years though the pattern established by the time of the earliest map of Corston, 1772, can still be easily traced on the ground. Superimposed over this landscape is a pattern of gardens and woodland planted in the 18th and 19th centuries by the Leach family of Corston.

Corston was a village in the Middle Ages. The site of this former village is uncertain, though a possible location to the E. of Corston House is proposed here (see record no. 11663). Potentially this is an important site; deserted medieval villages are rare in south-west Wales.

Corston Beacon, a prehistoric burial mound, is the only Scheduled Ancient Monument in the vicinity of the proposed wind farm. It lies over 500m away from the site of the nearest proposed turbine.

The 18th-19th century remodelling of the landscape appears to have affected its historic features rather less than more recent work has. Whilst many boundaries have been lost within recent decades, fieldwalking also suggests that the fields have been intensively ploughed and rolled, and that some degree of earth moving has also occurred. For instance, a dwelling is marked at Axen Hill on the 1968 OS map (see record no. 27962). Nothing now survives. The site of the dwelling lies in a large field of improved pasture. The potential for any findings through further fieldwork must be judged in the light of this evidence.

3.2 Register of archaeological sites and areas of archaeological interest

The reference numbers in the following catalogue are those allocated in the Dyfed Sites and Monuments Record. These numbers are shown on the following annotated engineer's maps.

541. (SR 93319990) Corston Beacon. Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM Pemb No. 59). This important site lies outside the area of the proposed wind farm. The existence of a prehistoric burial mound has long been known - it marked on the earliest surviving map of the area, dated 1772. The site survives as a low mound, approximately 1 - 1.5m high and up to 30m in diameter, in an arable field. It has been ploughed over. In the 1920s, damage to the site led to its partial excavation by Fox and Grimes (1928). A central burial placed in a large cist and accompanied by a bronze dagger discovered by the excavators demonstrated the prehistoric character of the site. In recent years a neolithic stone axe (site record no. 261) was found in the field in which

Corston Beacon is situated.

6443. (SR 92759933) Corston House. A fine example of a late-18th century or early-19th century country gentleman's residence. The seat of the Leach family from the mid-18th century to 1936. At an earlier period, the farm was in the hands of the Perrot family and seemed to be a substantial holding; the estate of Owen Perrot of Corston was valued at over £99 at his death in 1604. The farm and house were the successors of a medieval village at Corston (see record no. 11663).

8749. (SR 92349930) Bridge. Farmhouse, now unoccupied. The building dates from a number of periods and now forms an alignment of 4 elements. The earliest is a sub-medieval (early modern) 3-bay house with a massive masonry end chimney with a stone chimney stair. In the adjacent end bay the facade displays a projecting outshot, the original function of which is uncertain. The windows, and the facade wall, appear to have been remodelled when a new house was constructed alongside in the later 19th century. At either end of the building complex is a later shed/byre. The building is in poor condition and is rapidly becoming derelict. The adjacent farm buildings are of late-19th and 20th century date.

Chimney-stairs are cited as defining features in domestic building development by Smith, 1988, 427-3, who however omits Bridge Farm from his list, and indeed limits the occurrence of this feature to areas beyond Dyfed.

8177. (SR 941994) Pantile Park. This field name occurs on the tithe map of 1839 and Orielson map and 1841 (called Pantyle Park). The meaning of the name is unclear. Hedgebanks on the W. side of the field have now been removed. There was nothing of interest to be seen at the time of the survey (17.8.94).

27962. (SR 93009892) Axen Hill. Not in existence in 1864. A dwelling is marked here on 1908 and 1968 OS maps. Nothing now survives. The site of the dwelling is in the centre of a large field of improved pasture.

11663. (SR 930992) Corston Deserted Medieval Village. The *Inquisition Post Mortem* of Aymer de Valence in 1324 lists among his estates '...the rent of John de Castro and Isabella, his wife, who held for term of life one-third of the vill of Carston ...' (Owen, 1911-18, vol. 3, p85). Later, in 1331, it is stated that this one-third of the vill is part of the demesne of the Earl of Pembroke and that it comprises 6 bovates (Owen, p89). A bovate is a measure of arable land and is one-eighth of a hide which achieved a standard measure of about 120 acres. The total acreage of arable land of the vill at Corston would have been about 270.

Documents are largely silent about the subsequent fate of the village at Corston. An entry in the Ministers' Accounts of 1480/1 mentions 50s rent for a farm of one-third of Corston (Owen, p151). This would suggest that by this date the village had been abandoned and its land farmed as a single unit. Certainly, the listing of the goods and chattels of Owen Perrot in 1604 indicates that by Corston was a single farm (Howells 1987, 48).

This pattern of desertion is mirrored by a similar site at Linney a few kilometres to the S. in Castlemartin parish. Here a series of terraces and low walls mark the former site of village (Murphy, 1993, 11). No such definite evidence exists for the former village of Corston. However, a possible site for the village may exist centred on grid reference SR 930992 in a field that was former parkland of Corston House. On 1946 aerial photographs (106G/UK 1399) a series of low rectangular earthworks can be see 30889 immediately to the S. of the road from Corston Cross Roads to Corston House. Each rectangle may be the site of house. A curved linear earthwork, the site of a road established between 1772 and 1864 (see 1876 OS map), seems to cut across these earthworks, though this is not certain on the aerial photographs. This road - a clear earthwork on the 1946 photographs - is not now traceable in the field, indicating recent substantial earthmoving. Likewise, there is no trace of the earthwork platforms. However, the identification of these earthworks with the site of the deserted medieval village is far from secure. It is possible that they represent pre-1858 garden features rather than the remains of the village.

27963. (SR 928992) Corston House Gardens. Gardens were established here by 1772 (see appendix 4.2). They were subjected to extensive redesign and extension by Henry Leach after his return from the army in 1858 (Thorne 1981, 50). He was also responsible for much tree planting in an attempt to improve the estate's shooting potential - much of the woodland to the S. of the house is his work. The 1876 OS map shows the gardens and woodlands at their peak. Nowadays, much of the garden is overgrown. No attempt was made to trace former garden features as they lie outside the proposed area of the wind farm. ??

27964. (SR 934⁵9885) Axton Hill Quarry. Small quarry established here by 1864 (OS 1st ed. Pembs XLII.3). Abandoned by 1908. No surface evidence now survives.

27965. (SR 92459952) Bridge Farm Quarry. Marked as 'Old Quarry' on the 1864 OS map (Pembs XXXIX.15). There is now no trace of this quarry.

27966. (SR 93309892) Axton Hill. On 1946 aerial photographs (CPE/UK 1774 4008-11) a line of low earthwork depressions seem to be the site of former quarries. On the ground in 1994 these

depressions are still visible and are accompanied by three large conglomerate or coarse concrete blocks. It is uncertain if this site is a quarry or a WWII military installation.

4.0 APPENDIX

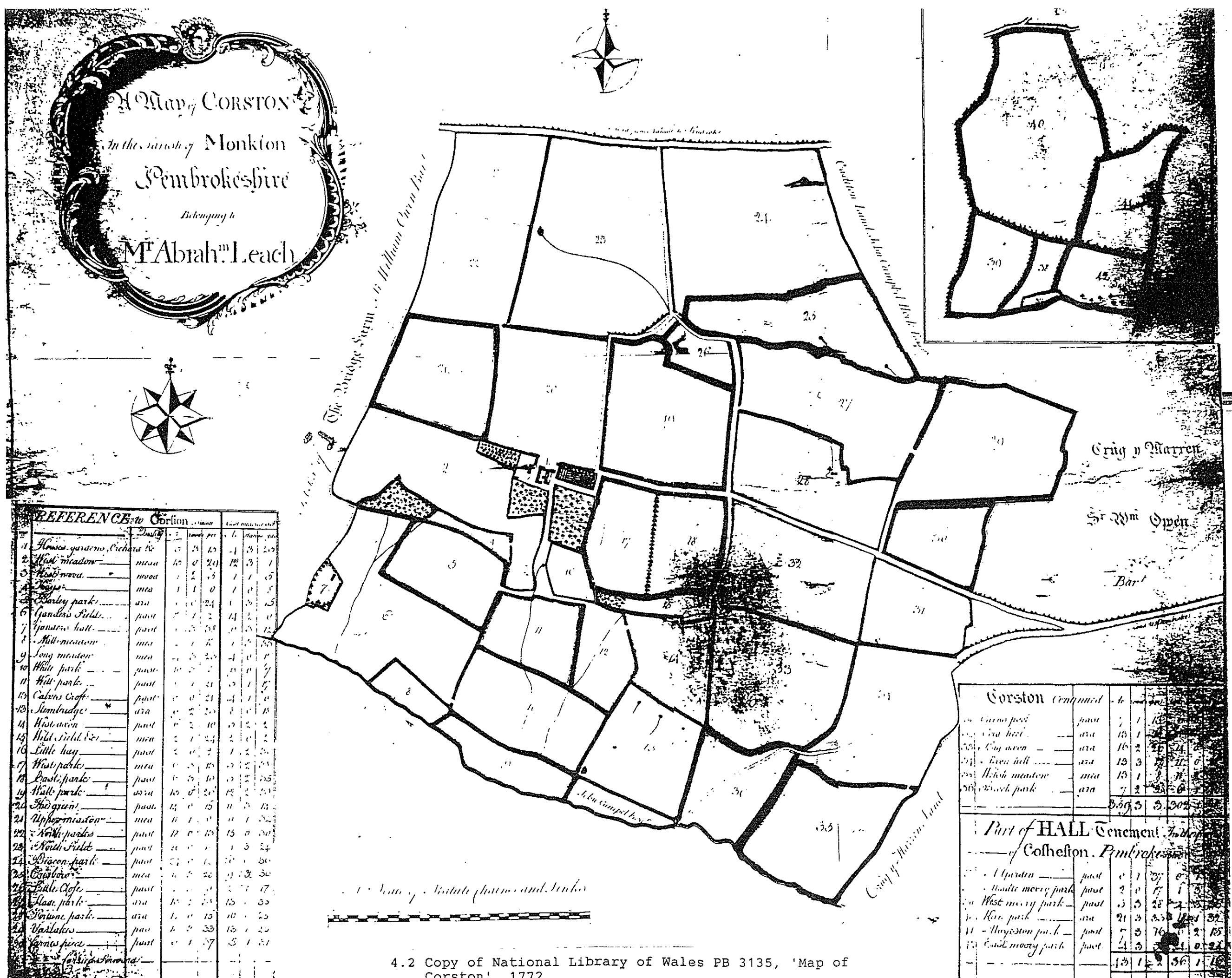
4.1 Notes on the Landscape History of Corston

The landscape of large fields enclosed by hedges and depicted on large-scale OS maps was established by 1772 - the date of the earliest surviving map of Corston. This landscape has experienced considerable changes in recent years following the removal of hedges and the amalgamation of fields to facilitate ease of stock control on a modern dairy farm. The origins of this landscape are not easy to trace. In other parts of the Castlemartin area it has been demonstrated that the modern landscape of large rectangular fields evolved from a open or strip field system of, at least, 12th century date (Murphy 1993). Throughout the 15th and 16th centuries strips were amalgamated into larger holdings and then enclosed by hedges and so producing by the 17th century the modern landscape. At Corston an enclosed strip to the N. of Goblin Coome testifies to this process.

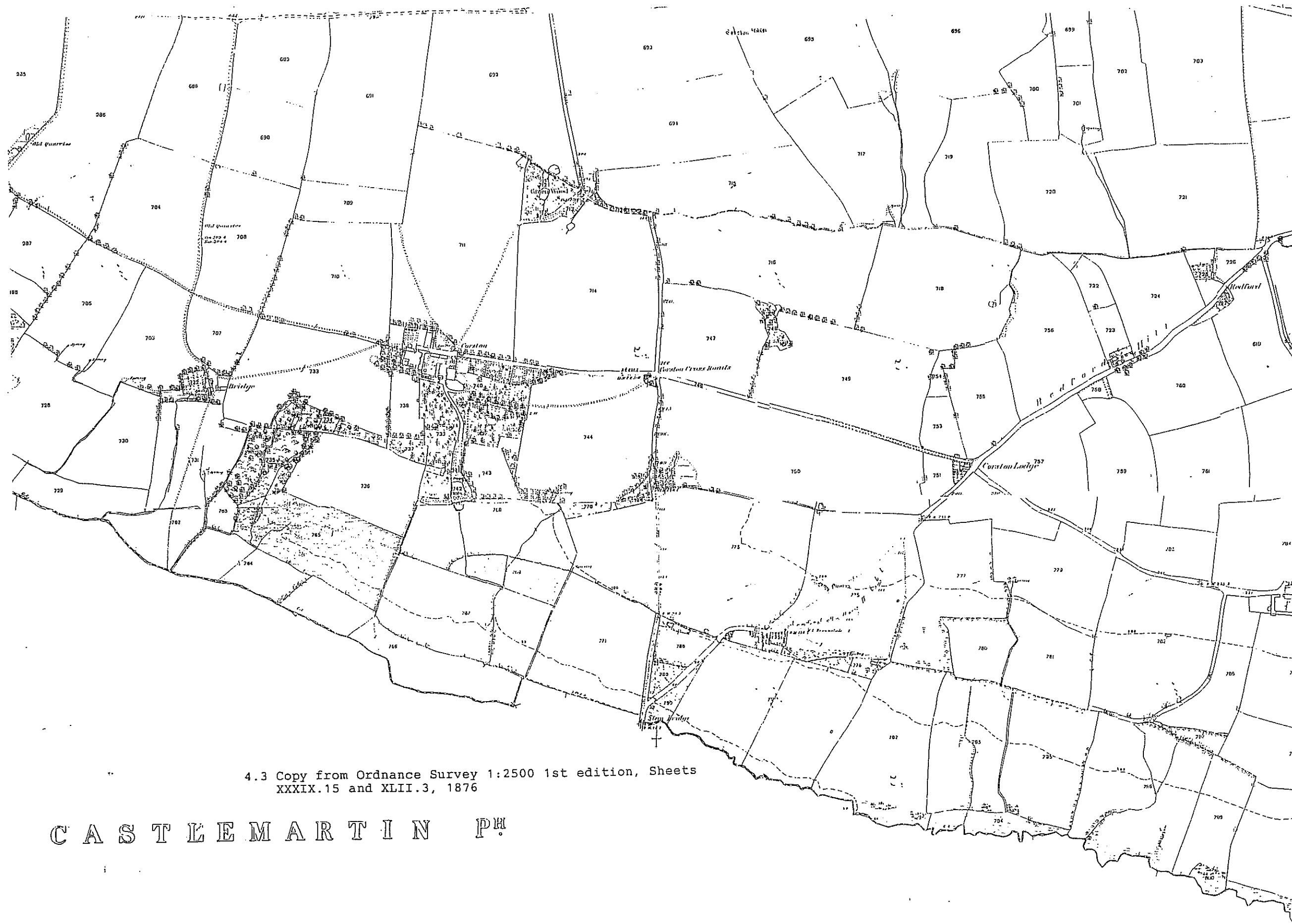
The pattern already established by 1772 was modified, but not obscured, by the Leach family in the process of transforming Corston into a gentleman's country estate. Brakes and coverts, mainly of beech, were planted to improve the shooting. However, the establishment of 2 or possibly 3 small quarries within the holding probably belongs to the Leach tenure.

Perhaps the greatest transformation has occurred during the last 2 decades. Many boundaries and trackways have been lost, few of them even surviving as cropmarks testifying to the degree of their removal and subsequent ploughing. Where boundaries do survive they are predominantly hedgebanks, though a concentration of limestone walling exists around Corston Farm itself and includes the garden enclosure. The complete removal of Axen Hill has been remarked upon above; of greater significance has been the effacement of all the earthwork features tentatively assigned to Corston medieval village. Indeed all fields are now remarkably even and level. While pasture predominates, roughly 25% of the total area is under arable. This is concentrated in the NE corner of the holding and is entirely given over to cereal production including 2 fields of maize.

For present day field boundaries see the annotated plan, 3.3.



4.2 Copy of National Library of Wales PB 3135, 'Map of Corston', 1772



4.3 Copy from Ordnance Survey 1:2500 1st edition, Sheets
XXXIX.15 and XLII.3, 1876

C A S T L E M A R T I N P^H.



4.4 Copy from Ordnance Survey 1:2500 2nd edition, Sheets XXXIX.15 and XLII.3, 1908