

6. The Farey Oak Tree

The Roadside Commissioner's Report from the late eighteenth century mentions a great big oak tree that stands on the side of a road. The groove now filled with hedgerows is the remnants of the old road which originally ran from Towcester to Buckingham to Lamport. The old tree they mentioned is this ancient Farey Oak which is nearly 700 years old.

Why did Lamport go?

In the seventeenth century Sir Peter Temple had ambitions to add a deer park to his estate but the site of Lamport's farming land was a space he needed to acquire. There are records of families at Stowe and Lamport already not having sufficient amounts of milk, butter and cheese due to laws preventing the overstocking of common land, so the idea of losing more farming space caused uproar.

There are stories of fights between the Dayrell family of Lamport and the Temple's gamekeeper involving swords, bucklers and long pikestaves but in 1637 the commons of Stowe and Lamport were enclosed by Sir Peter.

This drove people out of Lamport and in 1640 the Dayrells petitioned to parliament to reopen the land but were unsuccessful and the population continued to dwindle.

By 1739 there were only about a dozen houses left and in 1839 the Temples managed to obtain the last slice of land for their deer park. There were still a few buildings left in 1850 but shortly after this the village of Lamport became lost forever, with only the ridge and furrow lines left visible today.

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A modern aerial photo of the site of Lamport, you can still see the old road markings and village

The lost village of Lamport

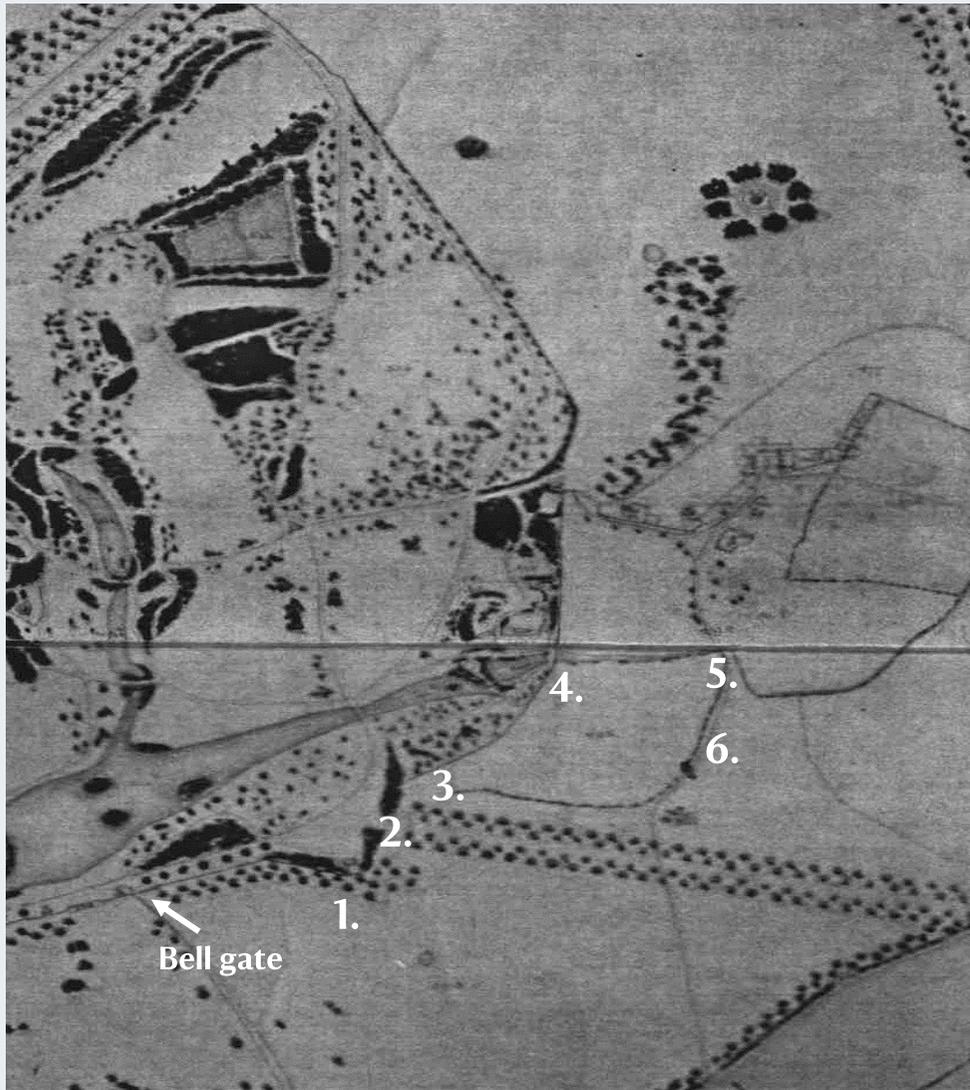
Explore part of our parkland as you unravel the history of the old village of Lamport and why it no longer stands as part of the Stowe parish

- Duration: approximately one to two hours
- Terrain: mostly grass paths and bumpy

The 1086 Domesday book records Lamport having a population of eleven people. Three of these were "villeins", which actually translates to a "free inhabitant of a village".

Where to?

To get started head down Bell Gate Drive and turn right at the kiosk just before you get to the gardens. Follow the line of the tree cages to your right. Please keep dogs on short leads.



Did You Know?

A 'close' was an enclosed area farmed by one person as opposed to 'common land' which were fields divided into portions and farmed by a mix of people.

1. The Temple of Friendship

Designed by James Gibbs in the 1730s, this was a place for Lord Cobham to entertain his friends in the mid eighteenth century. However a fire destroyed the building in the early nineteenth century and it was left as a ruin.

2. Bycell Riding

Created by Charles Bridgeman in the 1720s, the riding stretched around the whole estate. The original trees that lined the avenue were sold as part of the Great Sale in 1922. The avenue has now been replanted with a mix similar to the originals, including sweet chestnut, beech and oak trees.

3. The Sheep's Nose apple tree

There was once a school and a vicarage on this site and this tree is likely to have been in their garden. It's an unusual variety and is still harvested each year in the autumn. The line of trees that you can see leading down to the tree would have been a private access lane or driveway.

4. Lamport Gardens and village viewpoint

If you look up the hill you'll see the original site of the village of Lamport. The earliest record of Lamport's existence was in the Domesday Book in 1086, when there were two manors and a population of eleven people.

5. Farey's Close

This was a 3.5 acre section of land that was farmed solely by a Mr Farey, who was a tenant on the 1633 rent roll. The close was triangular shaped and stretched out to the boundary of Bycell Riding.