The Middle Ages Revisited

Studies in the Archaeology and History of Medieval Southern England Presented to Professor David A. Hinton

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Of Pots and Pins:
The Households of Late Anglo-Saxon Faccombe Netherton

Katherine Weikert

Summary

This chapter examines some aspects of the working and enslaved households at Faccombe Netherton, Hampshire, in the late Anglo-Saxon period. Using historical and material evidence, the paper explores the enslaved community as a group with their own roles, duties, specialisations and agency, and also the 'riding household' of rædmen and the culture or business of horse-breeding that may have taken place here, or at another estate belonging to the owner Wynflæd. Overall, using interdisciplinary and microhistorical approaches, the chapter seeks to restore aspects of agency and lived experiences to the working and enslaved communities at elite Anglo-Saxon estates in the 10th and 11th centuries.

Keywords: Faccombe Netherton, Wynflæd, Slavery, Riding Men, Microhistory, Manor

In the mid 10th century, the widow Wynflæd left a detailed will for her belongings (Sawyer 1968: no. 1539; Whitelock 1930: 10–15). It had a level of detail typical for high-status women's wills in the period. Wynflæd outlined material goods, properties, livestock, and slaves that were to be distributed among her heirs. One property, Faccombe Netherton in north-west Hampshire, was to pass between her son, daughter, and ultimately grandson. Although Wynflæd's exact identity is likely to remain unknown (for discussions, see Owen-Crocker 1979; Williams 2017; Weikert 2015; Yorke 2006), Wynflæd was certainly a woman of wealth and high status.

In the 1970s and 1980s, the site of Faccombe Netherton was excavated by a volunteer group from the City of London Archaeological Society, ultimately under the direction of Jon Fairbrother (Figure 1). This excavation report was eventually supervised by David Hinton for Fairbrother's MPhil from Southampton, a piece of work that Hinton called a 'superbly recorded excavation and finds analysis which...will be possible to use to investigate a variety of different hypotheses.' (Fairbrother 1990: xiv; Hinton n.d.). Indeed, it certainly has been, and continues to be. The site was published in the British Museum Occasional Papers in 1990, and nearly thirty years later it still serves as one of England's most comprehensive excavations of a nearly-continuously occupied medieval manorial site from the early into the later Middle Ages.

Because of this wonderful combination of the will and the excavation, Faccombe Netherton provides some of the most comprehensive evidence of life at an Anglo-Saxon estate. In combining the two and taking a microhistorical approach, Faccombe Netherton gives us an opportunity to look at the working life, and lives, of a household in late Anglo-Saxon England. This allows us not just to speak about the owners and elites, but also the slaves and the riding men, which would echo so many other late Anglo-Saxon estates, alongside indications of the place as a riding household and one with an owner breeding horses, perhaps more specialist than many other places. This evidence is, as always, uneven. In a sense, this makes the picture unbalanced too: the experience of Anglo-Saxon slavery is not comparable to the experience of serving a household as a retainer, or one working with valuable stock. But in a way, this imbalanced look is a step towards a larger picture of the Anglo-Saxon household, filling in what we can whilst trying to get to a bigger picture. The household itself can serve as a microcosm for the hierarchical Anglo-Saxon society: slaves at the lowest level; retainers, free working men and women, kin and minor family members above; and the small number of the elites at the top of the pyramid. A focus on the top of the society is not reflective of a society, in any time or place, and here we have an opportunity to dwell with those dwelling from the more mundane, everyday working experience to those enslaved. Our evidence is not non-existent, and with a careful eye to what we have, much more can be said about a working household.

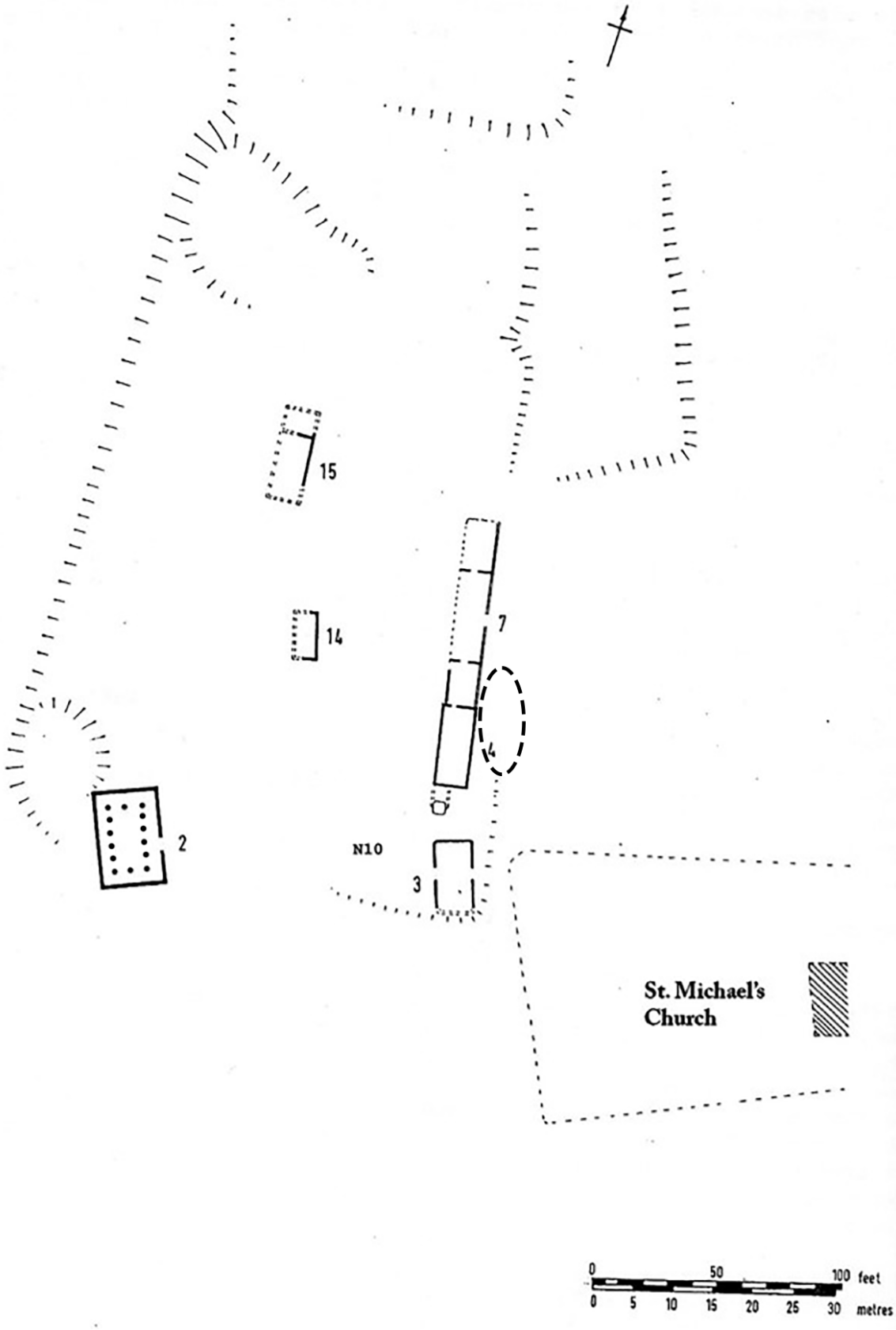

Figure 1: Faccombe Netherton, c. 920–c. 960. Buildings 7/4 constitutes the domestic long range; 3/N10 a kitchen and metalworking/craft space. Buildings 14 and 15 were only partially excavated and considered further working or craft space. Building 2 is a problematic building to date and may have at some points been an aisled hall (see Blair 2015; Fairbrother 1990; Weikert 2015. Postholes in Building 2 are indicative of number and location and not to scale. The circled area to the east of buildings 4/7 indicates the approximate area where pins were found. (Plan after Fairbrother 1990: 60, Figure 3.3).

With a very appreciative nod to Hinton's *Gold and Gilt, Pots and Pins: Possessions and People in Medieval Britain* (2005), the small finds at Faccombe Netherton alongside the historical record allow us that opportunity, and this chapter will seek to do just that. What I hope to offer here, in honour of Hinton's influential work, is somewhat an exploration of some aspects of the working estate of the Anglo-Saxon household through an interdisciplinary, microhistorical approach to Faccombe Netherton, seeing the slaves, riding men, and horse stud associated with Wynflæd, and more specifically at times with this estate. In this, I hope to provide an example that might be extrapolated out more widely in rendering interpretation across the social classes at our manorial sites. These men and women existed, had names and lives and families and work, and were no less valuable than their owners and lords, and in recognizing them in the historical and archaeological record we recognise a perhaps truer picture of the Anglo-Saxon household as a microcosm for its own society.

Slaves

Anglo-Saxon slavery is not a topic that has gone understudied, but it also does not tend to be at the forefront of writing about major manorial sites in the later Anglo-Saxon period such as at Cheddar or Goltho (Beresford 1987; Rahtz 1979). There is no need to rehash a historiography very ably covered by David Wyatt (2001; 2009: 1–60), but it is worth pointing out that much of the foundational scholarship on Anglo-Saxon England from the 18th and 19th centuries were steeped in a world-view that is no longer acceptable, and one that sought to disconnect Anglo-Saxon slavery from the slavery of their times: E. A. Freeman, for example, rather horrifically expounded on the topic in a note titled *The difference between black and white slavery* (Freeman 1875: vi, 481). These foundational works have had an impact. Whether or not the Anglo-Saxon *economy* was built on slavery is a discussion for another place, but one that is needed when slaves may have been as much as 30% of the entire population of Anglo-Saxon England at 1066 (Wyatt 2009: 31, note 134). Anglo-Saxon society was a slave *society*, and should be approached as such, as slavery aids in the creation and maintenance of hierarchical social structures in addition to providing labour (Wyatt 2009: 52)

Slavery was a state of being that roused notoriety and pity within the medieval world. The slave markets at Bristol and London, for example, perhaps 'in 1050 were notorious much in the same way Liverpool was to become in 1750' (Loyn 1975: 4). William of Malmesbury commented with some sympathy and horror on the Bristol slave market, with its 'rows of wretches bound together with ropes...daily exposed to prostitution, daily offered for sale' (trans. Swanton 1984: 126). Ælfric's dual-language *Colloquy* has the unfree ploughman stating with some sorrow that he goes about his work even in the bitter winter out of fear of his lord.[1] Slavery would have been very much a part of daily life, and not one restrained to the elite, with known examples of manumitted slaves being given, in turn, their own slaves (Whitelock 1968). Slavery was deeply entrenched in Anglo-Saxon society.

Scholarly discussions of Anglo-Saxon slavery, when they take place, are frequently disassociated from place and lived experience. Works sometimes assume a bird's eye view of slavery as a status that is socially or legally dead, a role that is a 'pre-eminent source of sorrow' because of the slave's lack of freedom (Dutchak 2001-2003: 31, 38), removing any agency, society or a sense of a lived experience from the slave. Typically, the archaeological and documentary record for Anglo-Saxon slaves can be sparse, or patchy at best. Unlike with Roman freedmen burials, it is extraordinarily difficult to assign Anglo-Saxon burials as those of slaves, rendering one key area of archaeological evidence difficult to use (Peterson 2003, Mouritsen 2005, for but two assessments of freedmen burials in Rome; Reynolds 2009, 49, 57 for possible examples of Anglo-Saxon slave burials). In excavation, we might assume that slaves or servants worked and lived in the service or craft buildings at manorial sites, for example, without having clear evidence other than the logic of those who worked there, would be there. Some of the small finds, too, we might assume to be in the hands of those who worked. Documentary records of slaves tend to fall into the categories of law codes and punishments, hierarchical according to a hierarchical society, and

[1] 'for ege hlafordes mines'/'prae timore domine' (ed. Thorpe 1834: 102)

manumission documents, wills which manumit slaves, and, at the end of the period, *Domesday Book* (see Fruscione 2014: 39; Moore 1989 *passim*, Nelson 1966, reprinted 2012: 44–51; Pelteret 1995 *passim*; Runciman 1984: 11–12; Tollerton 2011: 183–186, amongst others). Some of these, such as the manumission documents and wills, have listings of names, but very little detail; the slaves are, as William Aird eloquently put it, 'names without biographies' (2012: 6).

The varying and somewhat confusing status of free and unfree in late Anglo-Saxon England has been magnificently considered in other works (most crucially, Pelteret 1995; Rio 2017; Wyatt 2009). Slaves could, and were, acquired through war or judiciary punishment, or a person or family could sell themselves into slavery to attempt to escape poverty though this method needs to be read with great caution (Rio 2017: 29–34; Runciman 1984: 11–12, though see Rio 2012 and 2017: 67–70 on self-sales and Wyatt 2001 and Wyatt 2009: 29–32 on the danger of the Christian lens through which this has been read). The status of slavery was also hereditary (Pelteret 1995: 103–105, 114-15; Wyatt 2001: 340–341), and by the later Anglo-Saxon period this may have been the primary way that the slave population was perpetuated rather than through self-sales in particular. As David Pelteret points out, in the later Anglo-Saxon period, there was an increasing amount of complication of these statuses, both legal and social, as some of the lowest levels of free people were, in an economic and social sense, becoming tied to the land they held rather than tied to a person who owned them (1995: 130).

As members of an aristocratic household, though ones who were not free and who were subjugated to this social hierarchy, there are demonstrable roles that the slaves performed such as cooking, weaving and livestock care (Whitelock 1930: 10–15; 1968). To this we should add any number of domestic duties, agricultural duties, and even religious ones as demonstrated by the manumission of a priest and a group of women who were to sing psalters for a testatrix's soul (Pelteret 1995: 115; Whitelock 1968: 32). The slave population at any given elite estate would have likely greatly outnumbered the elite family members there.

Wynflæd's will is not unique in that many slaves are named in it, though there are only a small number of Anglo-Saxon wills which are this precise. Æthelgifu's will, for example, is another instance of a will exacting very precise control over the testatrix's property, human and otherwise (Whitelock 1968). Wyatt and Rio have pointed out that the owners may have felt a 'relatively strong personal link' to their slaves, as demonstrated by their uses of personal names (Wyatt 2009: 32, quote from Rio 2017: 168), though this needs to be remembered within the framework of hierarchy, the subjugators feeling a personal connection to their subjugated and all of the inherent structural oppression and inequality inherent in this possibly one-sided feeling of personal connection. At times it is difficult to separate who precisely are the slaves in Wynflæd's will; slaves are more obvious only in their manumission, bequest to a new master, or as anonymous 'men' are bequeathed with estates, though these are likely either slaves or possibly *geburas*, technically free but owing services from or to the land (Pelteret 1995: 122, 127–128). The list of manumissions, though, is extensive. Some manumitted slaves are listed without geographic location and may have moved with Wynflæd's household, such as Wulfwaru, ...thryth,[2] Gerberg, Miscin, and Hi.... These might be considered people who were bound to Wynflæd rather than to a land, though not *freotmenn* (Pelteret 1995: 128). Other slaves were named at their estate, indicating their servitude at a specific place: at Chinnock, Eadwold, Ceolstan, Eadstan's son, Æffa's son, Burhwyn, Martin, and Hisfig were bequeathed to Eadwold. The other slaves there were given to her granddaughter Ealfgifu. Also at Chinnock, the daughter of Burhulf as well as possibly Ceolstan's wife and Ælfsige and his wife and elder daughter were freed. At Charlton, Pifus, Eadwyn and ...æ's wife were freed. At Coleshill, Æthelgyth, Bica's wife, Æffa, Beda, Gurhann's wife, Wulfwaru's sister, Brihtsige's wife, ...the wright, and Wulfgyth, Ælfswith's daughter were freed. At Faccombe Netherton, Wynflæd freed Eadhelm, Man, Johanna (or

[2] Material losses in the physical document are indicated thus in this chapter.

John),[3] Sprow and his wife, En..., Gersand and Snel.[4] In addition to all of this, Wynflæd freed those penally enslaved men *other* than those that *she herself* enslaved.[5] In this particular line, Wynflæd notes herself as someone enacting and justice and authority in her own right, over her own estates and jurisdiction as a person with considerable power at the time. The implications for this 'private jurisdiction' (Pelteret 1995: 127 n. 97, 177) are significant, and, though outside the realm of this chapter, needs at least this passing mention.

Wynflæd also bequeathed specific slaves to specific people, demonstrating the importance of these slaves in terms of their roles. To her granddaughter Eadgifu she bequeathed Eadgifu the weaver; Æthelgifu the seamstress; Ælfsige the cook; Ælfwaru, Burga's daughter; Herestan and his wife; Ecghelm and his wife and child; Cynestan; Wynsige; Brihtric's son; Eadwyn; Brunele's son; and Ælfhere's daughter. To Æthelflæd, the daughter of Ealhhelm, she gave Ælfhere's younger daughter. Note here the two daughters of Ælfhere: slaves both, one is given to Eadgifu, and the other to Æthelflæd. As this Æthelflæd is pointedly *not* Wynflæd's daughter, Eadgifu's aunt, here we have a slave family, possibly one who was 'less favoured' than the others, being destabilised and broken up (Wyatt 2009: 151). No ages are indicated for Ælfhere's two daughters.

This brings up the aspect of acquiring slaves. Wynflæd's will demonstrates a few different methods. As mentioned above, she held slaves which she had herself enslaved as punishment, as well as slaves who had been enslaved by someone else. In all cases their crimes are unknown, though examples exist in various laws of this taking place for Sunday labour, various types of theft, incest, and as an alternative to death if the condemned person could claim sanctuary (Pelteret 1995: 247–248). *Witeþeow*, roughly 'one who has become a slave for punishment', provides the linguistic difference between this and *þeowboren* and *þeowbyrd*, 'born a slave' (Pelteret 1995: 42). The status of slavery was hereditary, as *þeowboren* indicates; in Wynflæd's will, mentions of specific slaves' children nods to them being born into slavery under her ownership. It is unclear how Wynflæd came to own the slaves which she herself had not enslaved or had been born to her slaves. As the will demonstrates, it was possible to bequeath slaves and this was one method by which she undoubtedly received some of her slaves. The slave trade is a known feature of the late North Sea worlds and slave sales are known in Winchester, Lewes, Bristol and London, to name a few in the south and west of Anglo-Saxon England (Pelteret 1995: 76–77). Wynflæd certainly may have purchased some of these men and women named in her will. Alice Rio also notes that rather than reading her manumissions as a pious act, the number of manumitted slaves suggests that Wynflæd would have acquired some of her penally-enslaved people as a 'third party' and that her will indicates that she might have been 'rather proud' of her role in enslaving (and thus manumitting) these men and women (2017: 68). We must temper our historical narrative of Wynflæd as an example of an influential, high-status woman with concepts of her buying, selling and controlling other people as chattel. Indeed all slave owners in Anglo-Saxon England need to be remembered thus too.

More can be said about the late Anglo-Saxon slave household in looking at some of the roles assigned to these slaves, both manumitted and bequeathed. Many do not have specific roles assigned to them, but may have fulfilled several duties and tasks. Those who are mentioned by role, though, can be assumed to have specialised in these skills, and some may have been relatively highly skilled. Four slaves have occupations named to them: a wright, whose name is unfortunately missing due to a loss in the document and specific skill or role is not assigned (PASE Anonymous 1042); Eadgifu the weaver (PASE Eadgifu 6); Æthelgifu the seamstress (PASE Æthelgifu 5); and Ælfsige the cook (PASE Ælfsige 24).[6] The wright was noted as at Coleshill, Berkshire, and would have been responsible for his work there. He might have

[3] The OE is 'Johannan', possibly a Latin accusative singular for John though Whitelock (1930) translates this as 'Johanna.' BL Cotton Charters viii. 38.
[4] The notation '*7 Snel*' in the will is a superscript above the beginning of the list of manumissions at Coleshill. As 'snel' means quick or quickly, this may be either an instruction to manumit the previously listed slaves quickly, or an example of a nickname for a slave becoming his or her only known name – a loss of his or her own personal identity. BL Cotton Charters viii. 38.
[5] 'gif þær hwylc witeþeow 'man' sy butan þyson þe hio geþeowede hio gelyf'ð' to hyre bearnon þæt hi ‹h›ine willon lyhtan for hyre saulle'
[6] 'ane crencestran 7 ane sem[estra]ne', 'ene coc', 'wyrhtan'.

been tied to the place or at the very least resident at the place, but his products of his work would have certainly been transported to Wynflæd's other estates. He might have been the only one plying his particular craft at Wynflæd's properties, and so his work would have been crucial to all the estates.

Ælfsige the cook played a very specific role for Wynflæd and her family; in a feasting society, the role of a cook or chef would have been one that, had 'cuisine' in a sense existed, played a crucial role in setting the scene of the feast, where social relationships and hierarchies were both confirmed and maintained: 'horizontal and vertical dimensions of power structures – that is, feelings of community and hierarchy – were at the same time established, consolidated and expressed' (Gautier 2017: 269). In fact, naming Ælfsige specifically as a cook indicates the increasing importance of food in the social relationships that a manorial household had to maintain in a hierarchical society. There are a limited number of cooks mentioned in the corpus of Anglo-Saxon charters (Birch and Birch 1883: 13–18; Conway Davies 1957: 35-38; Sawyer 1968: nos. 189, 1036, 153; Whitelock 1930: 10-15; 9), and their positioning in the record leads Alban Gautier to conclude that these were 'menial servants' (2017: 276). Ælfsige, a slave, was certainly not a man of rank. Cooks were, however, responsible for the elite household to fulfil one of their primary displays of rank, the feast, and Ælfsige was the man who facilitated this at Wynflæd's estates. He was not listed with a particular estate, and so may have travelled with Wynflæd between her manors as she required him. Ælfsige was bequeathed to Eadgifu, Wynflæd's granddaughter, keeping this valuable slave within the family rather than freeing him. Finally, Ælfsige's role was valuable enough that he was mentioned by name and by duty in the bequest: he was not an anonymous cook, nor a man without a role: he was Ælfsige the cook, though a slave, established in a specific place within the household of Wynflæd and her family.

Eadgifu and Æthelgifu, the weaver and seamstress, are again some of the few named textile workers in the Anglo-Saxon record, and slaves. Textiles would have been a part of everyday life, a constant need in late Anglo-Saxon England, particularly those that experienced regular wear and tear such as clothing (Hyer and Owen-Crocker 2011: 159). Fine embroidery is more often associated with the social elite. Eadgifu and Æthelgifu might have been involved the creation of fine items such as the bed-curtains and linens, the gowns, cloaks and tunics, seat-covers and wall-hangings all seen in Wynflæd's will, but they would have certainly been involved in their maintenance and repairs as needed, as well as creating the everyday items needed by all members of the estate, not just the fancy clothes and wall-hangings (Owen 1979; for the production of embroidery and its industries in Anglo-Saxon England, see Makin 2017). Their economic and social worth here too is relative, such as with Ælfsige. They were still certainly slaves, bequeathed as they were to Wynflæd's granddaughter, and slaves that were not associated with an estate, so likely moving with the household as needed. They, as Ælfsige, were probably not highly-trained but skilled in their duties, proficient, and probably very good. But they likely were not creating the high-end embroideries that we see in cases such as the vestments famously embroidered '*Ælfflæd fieri precepit*', made on the orders of Ælfflæd, second wife of Edward the Elder, and given by Bishop Frithestan to Winchester Cathedral and, subsequently re-gifted by Ælfflæd's step son King Æthelstan to the shrine of St Cuthbert at Chester-le-Street; or the likes of the embroidered cross-cloth commissioned by Cuthbert himself and his predecessor at Hereford (Budny 1991: 267; Hinton 2005: 133; Lapidge 1975: 812; Smith *et al.* 2001: 593–594). These two women also probably represented only a small part of the workforce creating the textiles for Wynflæd's households: one weaver and one seamstress for six estates is low, and these two might then represent those textile workers who were the most skilled at these particular crafts. We should imagine a larger number of men and women involved in the creation of household textiles, from the spinning of wool to the sewing of garments. Indeed, it has been suggested that the nature of the drop-spindle means that many people could go about other activities whilst spinning wool into yarn (Petty 2014).

As these are only the slaves mentioned by name as either bequeathed or freed, what stands out is the outstanding *number* of them, both tied to place but also overall. We should realign our thinking of high status Anglo-Saxon manorial sites and places to include a broader sense of the entire population there, a household not just of the elite but of the slaves too. At Faccombe Netherton, there were eight known

slaves freed, listed above; by the time of the Norman Conquest there were still at least four slaves at the estate (Morris 1982: Hampshire 1.46). These are only the *known* slaves at Faccombe Netherton, and as they were listed as a part of the estate, probably tied there, living at the manorial site or in the village more largely. But their duties would be at the manor or its appurtenances, and they would have been a presence at the site. The amount of social visibility they had, of course, was negligible; the fruit of their labour was a part of the elite construction at the estate, but they themselves were not (Weikert forthcoming). The functions they performed for the estate, or for Wynflæd more personally, were the visible portion of their social presence.

It is more difficult to express what their lived experiences were, and how these slaves and other workers would have experienced everyday life. One glimpse comes from the location of needles outside the long range, buildings 7 and 4 combined, to the east of the building (Fairbrother, pers comm) (Figure 1). Jon Fairbrother envisioned people sewing there in the morning, catching the better light in the early day, facing the east (Fairbrother, pers comm; see also Makin 2017: 152). Indeed, in cooler months, this could equally be a way to catch what warmth was available from the sun, with backs against a wall that was catching and holding the light and heat, and possibly blocking the wind. This may not have been, strictly speaking, slaves or servants doing this morning sewing; anyone with anything to sew could have been there, or brought their things there for the sewers to fix, patch or repair. We might want to think of Eadgifu the weaver and Æthelgifu the seamstress there, plying their specific duties and skills. This small space, specific to place, time, and the people there, could have created a space of a small gathering, a chance to talk and connect. There would have been social constraints if the group consisted of not only the slaves but those of free status, or even the elite of the estate; it could have equally been a crucial but informal gathering space for slaves to foster communication and community (an idea adapted from Battle-Baptiste 2011, particularly 99–100). The east side of the building also faced the village; this was a visible place to gather not just to those at the manor but those who might pass by. This is a surprising amount of literal, bodily visibility for slaves or workers at the manor at a time when the slaves' and servants' work was the socially visible aspect of their lives, not their actual selves (Weikert forthcoming). Interestingly, though, is the temporal boundary inherent in this possibility. If this were a gathering in the mornings, then this was a disruption of the elite view of the place in a temporally specific setting; at a specific time, a potential gathering of the men and women around sewing and other activities formed a small community of socially visible slaves at the estate, an act of both community and resistance.

Riding Men and Horses

The riding man appears late in the pre-Conquest period as a household member who was utilised in the circumstances of military, escorting, guarding, hunting or messaging services (Gillingham 1995: 139–141). The riding men of the Anglo-Saxon estate is an infrequently-discussed, and difficult to pin down, part of the household. He has been long understood as an aspect of Anglo-Saxon military service and society, though there are questions whether this was a feudal or proto-feudal relationship (see Brooks 2011; Nelson 1966, reprinted 2012: 47-8 for an overview of earlier works by Maitland and Round). It seems unlikely that the riding men fulfilled only one role at the expense of the others, and Gillingham's assessment of the riding men fulfilling a range of responsibilities is more likely.

The riding men were free, could have possessions of some significance and meaning, and served the late Anglo-Saxon elite households in a variety of capacities. They also had the potential ability to rise from their rank into a higher one. The presence of these men would have been practically axiomatic at any estate of a certain social level, regardless of their exact social status whether 'servile' and 'grubby' (Crouch 1992: 130) and an 'unheralded serving retainer' (Harvey 1970: 4) whose work resembled the services of a *geneat*, a 'peasant with some characteristics of a mounted retainer' (Stenton 1971: 473), or if they were men more closely resembling a later knight, quite simply: 'not peasants' (Gillingham 1995: 142), on the upper ranks of freedmen. Their documentary records tend to be in the discussion of fees with particularly good sets of evidence coming out of Canterbury (Brooks 2011), and of course the records of Domesday with their *milites*. They are also seen in Domesday Book as *radmanni* and *radchenistri* (Nelson

1966, reprinted 2012: 44). The *geneat*, a similar tenant noted by Douglas and Greenaway (1982: 875, note 3) as a 'riding servant...of some standing', and his responsibilities also feature heavily in the *Rectitudines Singularum Personarum,* including responsibilities pertaining to providing horses and going on errands. Archaeologically, again, evidence is more difficult to pin directly to riding men: evidence of horses, or horse-trappings, might be associated here, although obviously not universally applicable to these men in all instances.

The role of the riding man within the late Anglo-Saxon household was one that encompassed far more than military service into escorting, messaging, hunting, and other tasks. Outside of what constituted the 'military' services and those discussions, which dominate the secondary literature, it may seem a rather mundane role and one closely tied to an estate or household. However, as Ryan Lavelle has pointed out, some of the more prosaic-seeming duties of a riding man could be dangerous in the doing: consider the messenger attacked and killed by wild dogs seen in Ælfric's sermon, and a West Francian example of a messenger captured in Flodoard's annals for 948 (Lavelle 2010: 280; *Ælfric*: 280-281; *Flodoard* 2004: 51). Acting as an escort or messenger could be more than a rote task.

The riding men worked for a lord or lady; he was above those in servant positions but not a thegn; he was a man whose work implied some amount of trust from, and closeness to, the lord or lady of the manor, but not quite one whose rank allowed them the ability to establish themselves on their own manor. The possibility was there, though: in gaining reward from their lord or lady, that in goods or (more importantly) land, they might be able to rise into thegnly class. Indeed, contra to Sally Harvey's assessment of the poor knights in Conquest-era England, records to the riding men in the border counties with Wales included men with a not-insignificant amount of land (Harvey 1970; Nelson 1966, reprinted 2012: 45; see also Brown 1984). There is no known explicit instance of a man rising from this rank into thegn-hood, though the advancement laws made it clear that this was a possibility (Whitelock 1979, 468–469; Williams 1992). Perhaps some of the lower-ranking thegns seen in *Domesday Book*, for example, might be instances of these riding men rising into a different social class, though it would be impossible to do more than point at particular men in *Domesday* whilst considering their land-holding circumstances at 1066. Additionally, the specific nomenclature of riding men and its variants are not particularly strong in *Domesday*, with the majority appearing in the counties of the Welsh border; Hampshire, for example, had only six riding men in Domesday, both at estates held directly by William I in lordship (Morris 1982: Hampshire 1.8, 1.28, for Mapledurham (2) and Christchurch (4) respectively). Lynn H. Nelson maintained that the riding men were specifically a 'product of a frontier environment' of the 10th century environment between Mercia and the Welsh kingdoms, but *Domesday* numbers do not allow for the role to be more widely filled in the 10th century, and particularly for a role or rank that Nelson notes may have already been an 'anachronism' by the 11th century (1966, reprinted 2012: 51). But we need to think outside the term *radmen* and its Latin variants, as the position (rather than the term) was probably more widely applicable than *Domesday* suggests. Faccombe Netherton allows this opportunity, as well as the opportunity to consider a little more closely some of the elements of a riding household in the 10th century.

Evocatively, there is possibly a riding man seen in Wynflæd's will, though not specifically named as such. Ælfwold received a gift of two buffalo horns, a horse and a red tent (Whitelock 1930: 13).[7] Ælfwold's relationship to Wynflæd is unclear; he is at best listed as man 'known to' Wynflæd (PASE *Ælfwald* 18). He was unlikely to have been an immediate member of her family, as her other relatives are acknowledged as such and were in fact limited to her son, daughter, and two grandchildren. Some sort of fictive kinship, such as a foster relationship, may be possible, and Ann Williams allows for the possibility of him being kin to Wynflæd as the rest of the section of the will in which he appears deals with Wynflæd's family (Williams, pers comm). Ælfwold was certainly a member of her household on some level, though with an unclear role. The gifts, though, might indicate this. The drinking vessels are not 'best' for the immediate family, as the ones given to her son, daughter and grandson have descriptions of being metal or decorated with metal, so these given to Ælfwald were probably second-best and not needed by the family to set

[7] 'Aelwolde hyre twengen wesendhornas 7 an hors 7 hyre re'a'de ge[t]eld' (Whitelock 1930: 12)

the scene in their hall culture. These horns might be practical, but also a reward; something on the way to Ælfwold setting up his own household, where the horns could be used in his (future) hall. The horse and tent, however, could be used in a role of riding or travelling. Ælfwold may have been a riding man, or perhaps even a higher status. As his position, even his personage, is unclear, it also remains unclear what happened to him after Wynflæd's death. If he were indeed a riding man, this might indicate his role as something of a 'free agent' such as the riding men at Chalton who, Domesday noted, could withdraw elsewhere (Morris 1982: Hampshire 1.8). Perhaps at Wynflæd's death Ælfwold was able to offer his services to another household, if he had not yet received enough reward in land or money to be able to start to establish his own household or small farm.

The presence of horses at Faccombe Netherton also adds to the image of these households as working ones, populated by those working with a horse stud as well as the riding men. Indeed, horse riding would have been a main mode of transportation for those who could afford to have a horse, or horses. Riding men, by default, either owned a horse, or were able to use one of their lord or lady, though there may be a preference for thinking of the riding men as possessing their own horse as a barrier to entering that particular role. Horses were also not cheap; the early 10th century *Dunsæte* values a horse at 30 shillings, and the *VI Æthelstan*, at a half-pound (Lavelle 2010: 96, note 242): those in possession of a horse were in possession of a valuable creature. Horses could also be used for carting, though they were more generally used for riding (Keefer 1996: 119). The presence of horse accoutrement is not necessarily evidence solely of riding men but it could indicate this, and it certainly is evidence of the presence of men and women who rode.

Wynflæd's will certainly indicates a household actively involved in horse culture. Her will bequeaths an indeterminate number of horses, though at least five if counting for at least two in every instance of the gift of 'horses' – plural. However, the wording of the bequests suggests a greater number than that, and indicates that Wynflæd's estates were breeding and training horses. Horse breeding and training in Anglo-Saxon England surely took place at the manorial level; this too is indicated in several other wills (Napier and Stevenson 1895: 126; Whitelock 1930: 30–35, 46—51, 56–63; Sawyer 1968: nos. 1492, 1487, 1503, 1536 respectively). This has not gone unnoticed (Keefer 1996: 126, for example), but can be further pushed to think about the members of the household who were a part of this activity. The recipients of Wynflæd's horses include Ælfwold, receiving one horse and who was discussed in detail above; Cynelufu; Eadwold, Wynflæd's grandson; and Eadwold's sister Eadgifu. Eadwold and Eadgifu received tame horses, and Cynelufu, untamed ones. Eadwold was to also receive Faccombe Netherton after the death of his father and aunt, Wynflæd's children, and as such he is one of her three main heirs. Cynelufu, a woman of unknown relationship to Wynflæd, received a share of the untamed horses, which were pastured with Eadmær's, indicating that Eadmær too had an interest in the horse stud (Whitelock 1930: 15).[8]

There is rather a lot to unpack in these short bequests. First, the implications of untamed horses. Although '*wildera*' is used here in the Old English, 'wild' may give an implication of 'free', which is unlikely. These were untamed horses, not broken for the saddle, probably kept in some manner that would allow their collection and movement by those working with them. These were not the mustangs of the chalk. They would have been enclosed, not running free. Additionally, there is nothing a person can do with a wild horse, in any sense of agriculture, breeding, riding, or any other domesticated purposes. Untamed horses may, of course, breed on their own, creating further stock, and this may have happened with Wynflæd's untamed stock. However, this is an inefficient use of a very valuable resource, and broader indications of horse breeding in late Anglo-Saxon England indicate more strategic and selective breeding (Davis 1987: 69–71; Keefer 1996). It seems unlikely that a horse stud and training outfit of a sort would leave their valuable resources with nothing better to get from them than further, uncontrolled, and unselected stock, when this can be done with trained horses who are of much further benefit and value, socially and economically, to an estate.

[8] 'hio becwið Cynelufe hyre dæl þera wildera horsa þe mid Eadmære's' synt' (Whitelock 1930: 14)

Second, the persons involved in these bequests: Eadwold and his sister received tame horses. The will elsewhere indicates that Eadwold is not yet an adult at the time of this will, and we might assume the same of Eadgifu. Tame horses here might be simply valuable property which will be useful as the two grow up. No further investment in time or training is needed; they are ready-to-use horses. The untamed horses, though, again provide a lot of needed commentary. Wynflæd notes that her untamed horses are with Eadmær's. Eadmær, then, also had an interest in horse-breeding and training. Cynelufu, a woman about whom we know nothing about other than this snippet in the will in which she received the untamed horses (PASE *Cynelufu* 1), presumably also had an interest in horse breeding and taming: someone who owned horses and was a part of a horse stud. Whether or not her role was as an active one, or more 'managerial', will remain unknown, but a few further inferences can be drawn out. Cynelufu is not mentioned in relation to any husband or kin; we cannot assume that these untamed horses would have gone into the stock of another man's or family's other than her own. Additionally, there is no indication that Cynelufu, as Ælfwold, was meant to remain a member of the family's household, if she was one to begin with. Who she was will remain unclear, but we can say with some certainty that she was a free woman, probably without husband, who, if she were a member of Wynflæd's household, received a very valuable gift and the ability to use it to her benefit without remaining a member of Wynflæd's children's households.

Archaeologically, as well as in Wynflæd's will, Faccombe Netherton presents evidence that suggests riding men, and an owner who dealt in horse breeding. Late Anglo-Saxon spurs and other horse accoutrement were found in excavation at Faccombe Netherton. A fragment of a bridle bit was found in a context of ca. 920–960 (Fairbrother 1990: 421; Weikert 2015: 256–261 for sequencing); a spur fragment from the late Anglo-Saxon period was also found (Ellis 1990: 421). Horse bones were not heavily represented at any period, but the ages of them and the wear indicated both that horses might have been bred onsite, and that they were used for carting or riding (Sadler 1990, 484).

Spurs, as found in the excavation, also seem to be the exclusive domain of male riders: an illustration of the allegorical Superbia in the *Psychomachia* shows the woman riding astride without spurs, though admittedly without shoes either. Although Owen-Crocker (2004: 212–213) warns that it is difficult to take this illustration 'as evidence for Anglo-Saxon dress and customs' since the *Psychomachia* was based on a document of 5th century continental origin (citing Woodruff 1930), she does note that this illustration of Superbia does contain many elements of 10th and 11th century Anglo-Saxon women's dress. Generally, not many men utilised spurs in Anglo-Saxon England, and there may have been little visible difference in the social classes between the elite and the riding men (Hinton 2005: 155–157). These spurs might also be seen as those of the men of the household, including the riding men. However, even with the gendered association of spurs, horse riding and even riding astride was not an exclusively masculine pursuit. The recent examination of the osteology of Wessex-born Queen Eadgyth, consort of Otto I of the East Franks (Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz 2010; University of Bristol 2010), has led to the diagnosis of a Poirier's facet on one femur, indicating not only a lifetime of riding but also a rider who rode astride (Alt, pers comm; Owsley *et al.* 2006: 94). Indeed, riding was not a solely masculine pursuit at all, as the bequest of horses from Wynflæd and indeed other women such as Æthelgifu demonstrate alongside the osteological evidence of Eadgyth. Another account of a woman rider comes from Lantfred's 10th century telling of the miracles of St Swithun, describing a woman decking out a horse with trappings and riding with her husband to a wedding (Lapidge 2002: 293). Spurs may have been masculine, but riding was for both sexes.

Beyond that, Wynflæd, Eadmær, and Cynelufu were clearly involved with the business of horse breeding and training; whether it was at Faccombe Netherton or at another of Wynflæd's estates is unknown, but it would have taking place her properties and Cynelufu's elsewhere beyond that. Ælfwold, as some part of Wynflæd's household, also participated in the horse culture of the estate, possibly as a riding man. If the gifts contained in the will were known in advance of Wynflæd's death, the gifts to both Ælfwold and Cynelufu would have strengthened the bond of loyalty, whatever its base, between Wynflæd, Ælfwold and Cynelufu (Lavelle 2010: 121).

Horses were, of course, a valuable asset not only commercially but socially and symbolically. Wynflæd's will and Faccombe Netherton itself gives an opportunity to look more widely at the larger estate: the excavated portion is simply the manorial portion. Obviously, if there were horse breeding and management at this estate, we must look to the greater landscapes for the location of this and doubly so as the separation of stallions and mares for breeding takes some distance (Davis 1987: 70): in this case, as with others, we should think of these studs as covering a good deal of territory and possibly, if not probably, spread out amongst an owner's estates. A horse stud is just one example where we can think more widely in attaching the manorial site to the much-larger landscape to gain a more comprehensive idea of all the activities at manorial sites, and linking the people linked to those activities too.

This combination of historical and archaeological evidence points to Faccombe Netherton as a 'riding household' with a semi-regular population at the estate probably representing these riding men, with a clear indication of a horse culture surrounding Wynflæd. Interestingly, the riding men, whether Ælfwold or anonymous men not present in her will, also represented a specific construct of masculinity, with a particular role narrowed and assigned to one sex. These riding men had specific duties to the head of the household whilst his physical proximity to the head of the household was crucial for the riding man's own social advancement (Gillingham 1995: 139–142). However, at Faccombe Netherton in particular, until possibly as late as *c*. 990, this was the household of a woman (Weikert 2015: 265–267). Here, the importance of the riding man's physical proximity to the lord of the estate was at this time and at this estate a matter of proximity to the lady of the estate. Later in the Anglo-Saxon period at Faccombe Netherton, male owners were present, such as Wynflæd's own son and grandson, and the later, pre-Conquest Lanc de Lere (Weikert 2015: 267–271). Then, this proximity of the riding man would have been to male owners, so a close alignment of a particular type of masculinity with a figure of authority, either a man or a woman. These figures of Anglo-Saxon masculinities and Anglo-Saxon horse culture present interesting facets of the social ranks and relations within the household.

Some summarising thoughts

The Anglo-Saxon manorial household is more than the elite experience there, and in fact it may be more apt to speak of households rather than one singular household at one estate. This separation of household is largely down to social experience: a slave household is a different lived experience than those of the slaves' owners. This has long been recognised, but work needs to further explore what we can of the social history and archaeology, the lived experience, of the wider communities there: we need to remember that a place can hold many experiences, and tell the stories of as many as we can. 'History from below', a cry from the earliest days of postmodernism and post-processualism, still bears repeating. We see this now, and in more contexts, than even two decades ago: sites such as Flixborough look at a wider community and settlement (Dobney *et al.* 2007; Loveluck and Atkinson 2007; Loveluck and Evans 2007; Loveluck 2007); there are displays such as the ones remembering the 18th century black prisoners-of-war at Portchester Castle (Coppins n.d.); important works such as Wyatt's (2001, 2009) deconstruct the historiography of Anglo-Saxon slavery: all of these go towards raising a greater interest in a wider society and all of its experiences rather than the elite's alone. This is promising. The aristocracy of late Anglo-Saxon England was not the only, and certainly not the majority, of England's pre-Conquest past.

The greater Anglo-Saxon household, or giving multiple and varying views of what constituted the Anglo-Saxon households, is one area where we can try to push our research further into seeing a larger part of its society. In these days where shiny, special finds such as the Staffordshire Hoard, or nearly anything to do with iconic sites such as Stonehenge, will receive the media attention (and the research money), it can be difficult to forge forth with new large-scale excavation projects. New, large-scale excavations would undoubtedly be a wonderful thing, but for the moment perhaps we can work with what we have, the large-scale excavations from previous decades that might have overlooked these parts of Anglo-Saxon society. Indeed, this chapter hopes to redress the balance from my own gaps in interpretation in previous work on the site (Weikert 2015).

Faccombe Netherton, so fruitful in so many ways to so many researchers thanks to the meticulousness of Jon Fairbrother's excavation and the thoughtfulness of David Hinton's supervision, is one place where the archaeological and historical evidence can allow interpretations about the late Anglo-Saxon working and enslaved households. It is my hope that an interdisciplinary, microhistorical approach to the slaves and riding men, and the possibility of a horse stud if not here then within Wynflæd's properties, can prove to be an instance from which we can extrapolate a wider experience, if very different experiences from even each other. If a space is a lived experience, an intersection between physical place, people, and time (de Certeau 2011: 117), this allows for multiple experiences in the same place and space: not just elite but working and slave experiences coexisted in the same places. We must not prioritise one narrative over another, but instead look to create a whole picture of multiple experiences.

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