



**DALLIWELL FOOT STILE
INVESTIGATION
STATHERN
LEICESTERSHIRE**



REPORT 2024

**PART OF THE
SEARCH FOR STATHERN HALL
INVESTIGATION**

**STATHERN HISTORIC LANDSCAPE STUDY
LEICESTERSHIRE**



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Preface

The purpose of the Dalliwell foot stile investigation was to interrogate an area of land running along the side of a boundary fence, where the visual remains of stone could be seen either side of the foot stile gate.

What we wanted to determine, was whether or not the assemblage of stones was part of a boundary wall and may once have been associated with the remains of the stone wall structures that can still be seen around two sides of the neighbouring horse paddock perimeter.

We also wanted to re-visit the neighbouring horse paddock walls to see if we could locate the buttress that H. Leslie Hubbard wrote about in his essay of 1941:

'The house was destroyed soon after Hacker's execution, but, incorporated in the boundary of one of the present fields on the site, there still remains the buttress of one of the outside walls, with part of the mortar in the interstices of the stones, protected by the hawthorn hedge which continues the boundary of the field; running from the buttress as a boundary is about fifteen yards of a stone wall, whose stones are remarkably even and smooth, save on the top where the wall has collapsed and been rebuilt, a wall which is probably part of that surrounding the grounds of the old hall. At right angles to this is another stone wall forming, with a hedge, the boundary of a field, but this is a rough structure and probably no part of the hall, although stone from it was used in the wall's construction.'

The previous archaeological investigations by the FLAG team as featured in The Search For Stathern Hall report of 2023, decided that their findings were inconclusive.

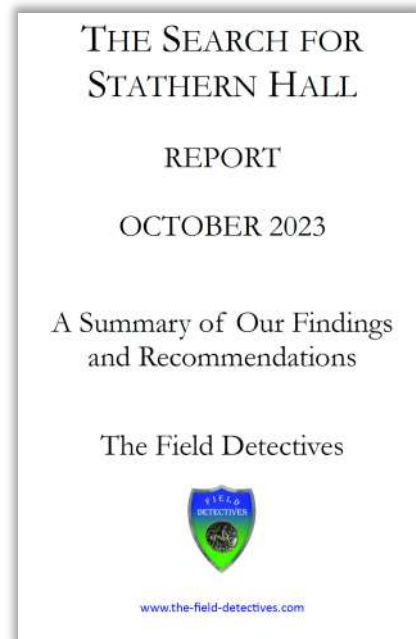
The Dalliwell foot stile investigation will, hopefully, provide a few more valuable clues that might help us to determine the layout of the manorial estate that this lost home of Colonel Francis Hacker once adorned.

If we can identify the extent of the manorial estate from the remains of the boundary walls then perhaps, we can figure out where this lost site would have been.

The remains of those walls could still be in the ground hidden from view, and only a few inches below our feet.

This report details our findings to date.

The Field Detectives
2024



The report shown above, can be found at:
www.the-field-detectives.com
under current investigations

COLONEL FRANCIS HACKER **A NATIONALLY SIGNIFICANT STATHERN RESIDENT**

THE SEARCH FOR STATHERN HALL

WHY IS IT SO IMPORTANT TO FIND THIS LOST HALL?

Because it was the home of Colonel Francis Hacker, a King Killer and the guardian of one of the most significant documents in British History.

The Death Warrant that consigned King Charles to his death resided at Stathern Hall from 1649 until 1660.

COLONEL FRANCIS HACKER
ON TRIAL

AT ST GUTHLAC'S CHURCH, STATHERN
SATURDAY 26TH OCTOBER 2024

FREE ENTRY

THE TRIAL WILL COMMENCE AT 7:30 PM

STATHERN'S MOST FAMOUS RESIDENT STANDS ACCUSED
FOR THE PART HE PLAYED IN THE MURDER OF A KING

364 YEARS AFTER THE ORIGINAL TRIAL
YOU HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO REVIEW THE EVIDENCE
AND CAST YOUR OWN VERDICT

WHAT WILL YOU DECIDE?

THE FIELD DETECTIVES www.the-field-detectives.com

On Saturday 26th October 2024 The Field Detectives re-enacted the trial of Colonel Francis Hacker in St Guthlac's church so that the people of Stathern could decide his fate.

364 years ago, a jury assembled for revenge, convicted Francis to hang from the Tyburn gallows in London.

This time the people of Stathern reviewed the trial, considered the role Francis played in the execution of King Charles I and made their own decision.

THE SEARCH FOR STATHERN HALL

THE DALLIWELL FOOT STILE INVESTIGATION 2024

PURPOSE:

To investigate a length of partly exposed stone structures to interrogate the possibility that it could be associated with the site of a farm house/manor house that once belonged to the regicide, Colonel Francis Hacker.

INVESTIGATION OVERVIEW

To clear the stone wall structure either side of the Dalliwell footpath stile to determine whether or not it is part of the stone structure that can be seen above ground within the confines of the footpath stile. The central area where the stile is situated will not be physically investigated to ensure that footpath users are not inconvenienced by the wall clearance activity.

- There will be a nominated minimal brush clearance team and a minimal disturbance excavation team

To investigate the length of wall (above ground) running south from the stile which is enclosed by a barbed wire & wooden fence on one side and a wooden fence on the other side. For safety reasons, access to this part of the investigation will be via the horse paddock.

- There will be a nominated minimal invasive wall investigation team

A tarpaulin will be placed in a designated area close to the investigation area where all tools must be placed when not in use. Access to the route of the footpath must remain clear at all times.

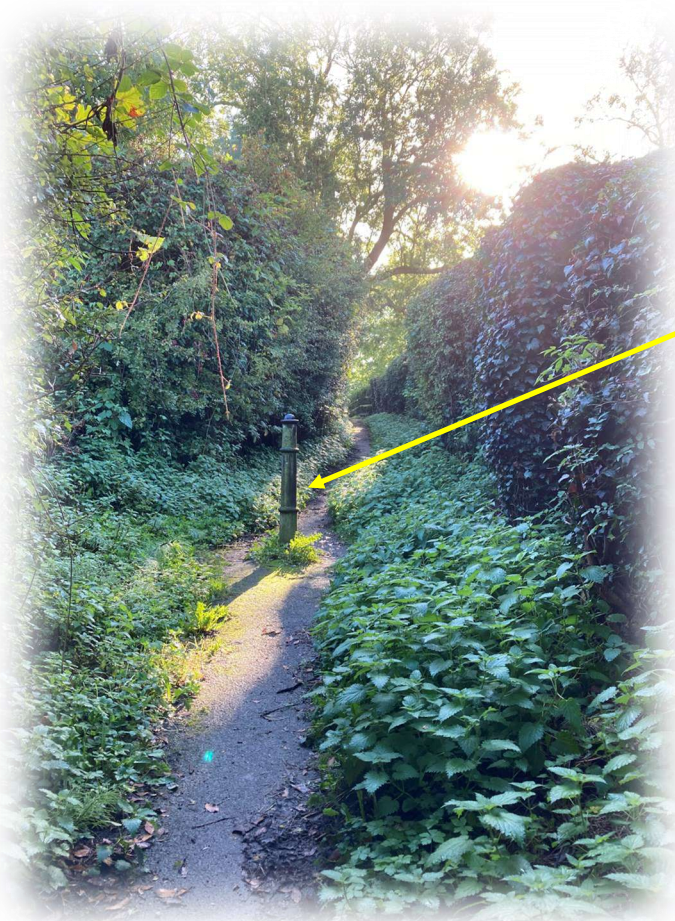
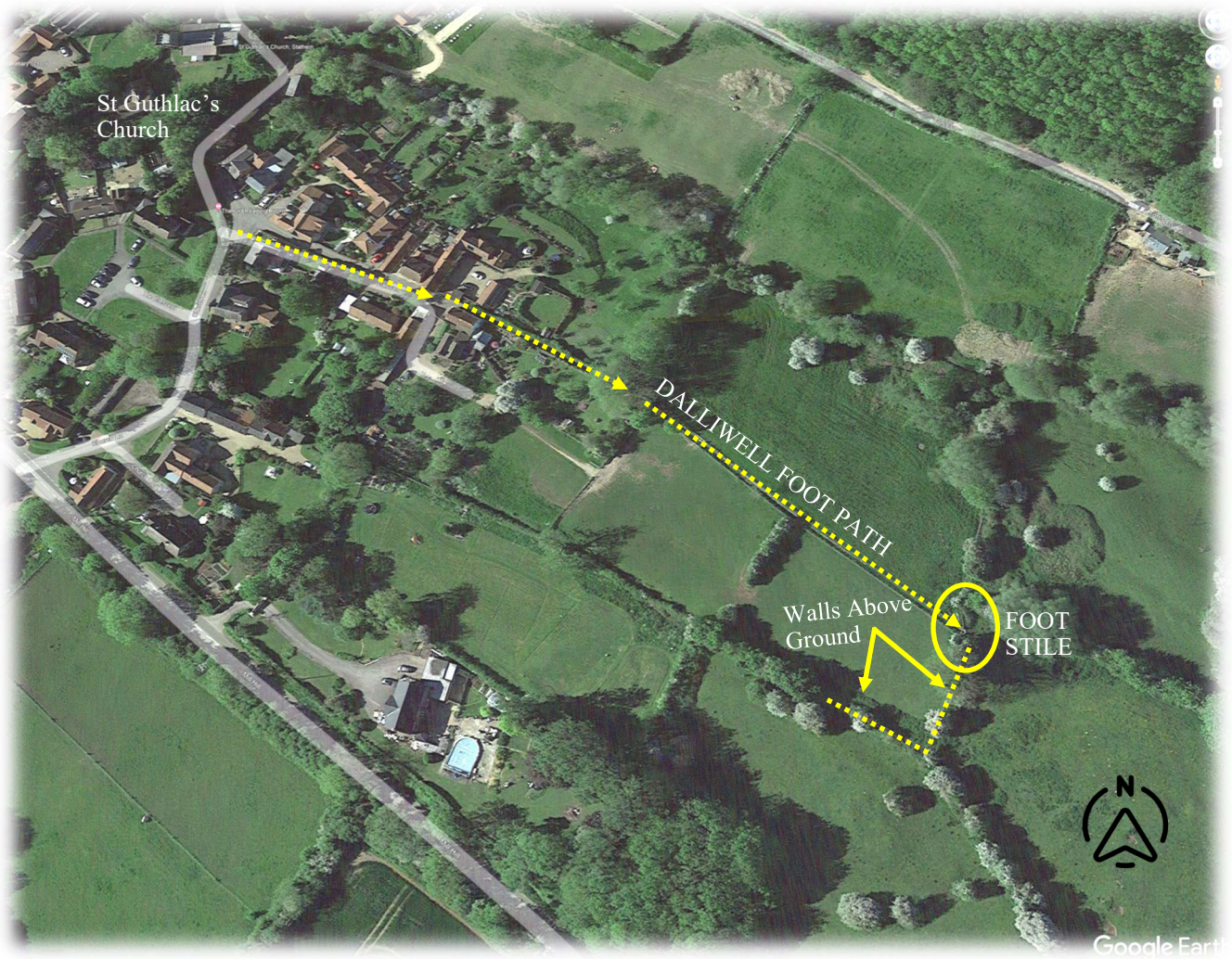
The investigation will be conducted over a block of four days running from Thursday to Sunday. Start and finish times will be determined by the weather forecast.

Hi visibility vests must be worn at all times. Each of the four days will begin with a Health and Safety session and an investigation review.

Once the investigation has been completed, the findings will be written up and presented to the Leicestershire & Rutland Wildlife Trust.



Roger Hawkins, pictured above, examining the area we are about to investigate.



SO, WHY IS THIS HERE?

One of the first things you come across on the way uphill from St Guthlac's church towards the Dalliwell foot stile, is a metal post, fixed into position it would seem for some purpose now lost to history.

What this purpose would have been for remains a mystery.



**Leicestershire
& Rutland**
Wildlife Trust

This permit authorises:

Field Detectives and associated volunteers.

To visit: Coombs Meadow Nature Reserve

Purpose of visit: To clear the stone wall structure either side of the Dalliwell footpath stile. The central area where the stile is situated will not be investigated to ensure that footpath users are not inconvenienced by the wall clearance activity.

The Old Mill
9 Soar Lane
Leicester
LE3 5DE

0116 262 9968
info@lrwt.org.uk
www.lrwt.org.uk



Date/period of validity:

October – December 2024

To be completed within one month of commencement. 4 weekends (Friday, Saturday & Sunday).

Conditions:

1. This permit should be carried whenever a visit is made to the reserve and be produced on demand to the warden.
2. Except with the written permission of the Senior Reserve Officer, no collections of any kind may be made. You are particularly requested not to disturb nesting birds and to generally respect the wildlife of the reserve at all times.
3. On geological sites the use of hammers is normally strictly forbidden.
4. No vehicle or caravan may be taken into the reserve and no tent or hide may be erected without written authority.
5. No dogs or other animals may be taken on the reserve without permission.
6. Smoking and lighting of fires is strictly forbidden.
7. Visitors will be expected to comply with the above regulations and also with any proper request of a warden or other official of the Trust.
8. It is an expressed condition of the issue of this permit that the Trust accepts no responsibility for any loss or injury occurring on the reserve.
9. The Trust retains the right to withdraw this permit at any time.

Creating a wilder Leicestershire and Rutland

The Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust Limited is a registered charity in England and Wales (no. 210531). A company limited by guarantee registered in England (company no. 561833). Patrons: Sir David Attenborough OM, CH., Lady Gretton DCVO, JP, Sir Laurence Howard KCVO, OBE. Vice President: P L Ward, MA, LLB. Chief Executive Officer: Mat Carter

10. No research programme may be carried out on the reserve without special permission from the Senior Reserve Officer. Details will be required of the nature and purpose of the research and the methods to be used.
11. All results must be communicated to the Trust office in writing within six months of completion, and all publications resulting from this study, in part or in full, must acknowledge the authority of the Leicestershire & Rutland Wildlife Trust.
12. Any artefacts recovered during the investigation will remain with the respective landowners.
13. It is the responsibility of the permit holder to ensure the safety of the work area during and between working parties. This relates to working practice, tool storage and how the site is left safe between work sessions – if barriers of any kind are necessary, it is the permit holder's duty to install them.
14. It is the responsibility of the permit holder to read and address any issues raised in the LRWT risk assessment for the site, provided as an attachment to this permit.
15. The permit holder is responsible for any volunteers on site; it is their duty to ensure that any volunteers participating in this task are following the permit guidelines and aware of issues raised in the site risk assessment.



**Leicestershire
& Rutland**
Wildlife Trust

The Old Mill
9 Soar Lane
Leicester
LE3 5DE

0116 262 9968
info@lrwt.org.uk
www.lrwt.org.uk

Date of issue: 20th September 2024

Senior Reserve Officer: Sarah Bedford

Signed:

For and on behalf the Field Detectives – including any volunteers present on site.

Name:

RICHARD PINCOTT

Signature:

23/09/2024

Creating a wilder Leicestershire and Rutland

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LIDAR IMAGES

SUPERIMPOSED WITH THE POSITION OF THE FLAG TRENCHES

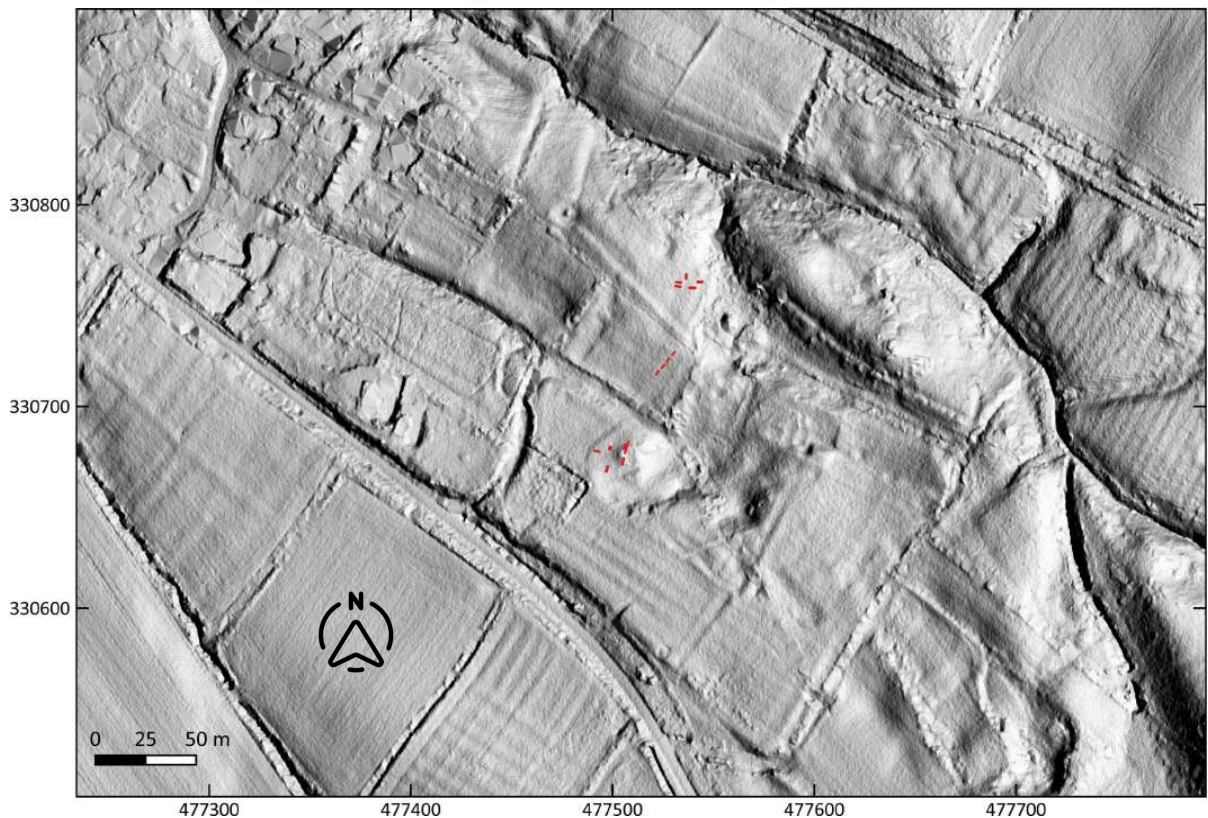
Showing the suggested location of the FLAG trenches as featured in the 2023 Search for Stathern Hall report

Lidar residual digital surface model (illuminated from the east)



Note: The Lidar image shown above includes vegetation and buildings, and the one featured below shows the same area with the vegetation and buildings removed

Lidar residual digital terrain model (illuminated from the east)



THE DALLIWELL FOOT STILE INVESTIGATION

A VISUAL RECORD



Mrs Moo greeted us on the first visit to the site on Saturday 12th October 2024. The cattle were no problem and this was the only occasion when their curiosity brought them down to see what was going on.

This visit was all about removing the nasty thorn-ridden bramble across the length of the wooden fence, to ensure that it would be thorn-free and safe for the team to investigate the area of stone on the following day.

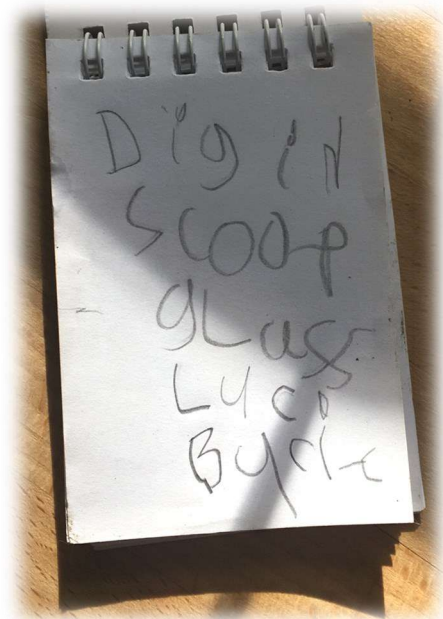
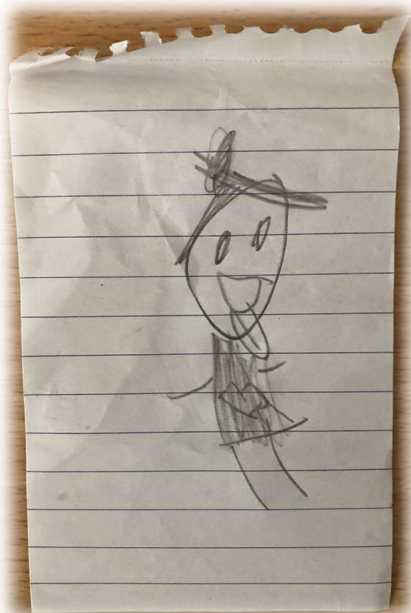
Team on site: Richard Pincott & Roger Hawkins
11:00 am - 2:00 pm & it rained!

While Catherine & Richard examined the neighbouring horse pasture walls, the Detectives cleared the paddock side of the Dalliwell foot stile to reveal the remaining section of a boundary wall that appeared to have been severely disrupted.

The remaining stones were quite large and well-made for the purpose of building a very strong wall. Our theory is that the wall joined the line of a wall sitting under the current foot stile gate and connected to the neighbouring paddock wall as a curved structure. If that was the case, then why the curve?

Team on site: Catherine Pincott-Allen & Richard Pincott (in the neighbouring horse paddock), Roger Whitehead, Sophie Chell, Jill & John Barlow, Carrie and Margot (Stathern residents)

Sunday 13th October 2024
10:30 am - 1:30 pm & it didn't rain



Margot took notes and made drawings which captured the progress of our investigation to perfection.

THE DALLIWELL FOOT STILE INVESTIGATION

A VISUAL RECORD

Roger Hawkins and Richard Pincott braved the uncertainty of the British weather to clear the long fence side of the Dalliwell foot stile, to reveal what appeared to be a layer of stone rubble lying under and adjacent to the line of the Coombs Meadow wooden boundary fence. Once again, many of these stones were quite large and worked in a fashion to be incorporated into a strong stone structure.

Towards the end of the day (Friday), Roger made a remarkable discovery.

On the other side of the wooden boundary fence (neighbouring field), the face of a stone wall had been revealed. Roger had proved that the rubble on the Coombs Meadow side of the fence were the remains of a stone boundary wall that at some time in the past had been pushed over. This was a breakthrough moment.

Not only had we found the evidence we needed to identify a further section of a stone boundary wall, but we had also proved that it connected to the stone wall foundation remains sitting under the Dalliwell foot stile gate.

Friday 18th (9:30 am - 2:30 pm) & Saturday 19th (12:00 pm - 3:00 pm) October 2024

By Sunday, the site had become very wet and very muddy!

Richard was the only Detective silly enough to be there...



The image above shows both sides of the Dalliwell foot stile cleared of foliage, and the exposed layer of rubble on the Coombs Meadow side of the wooden boundary fence.

THE DALLIWELL FOOT STILE INVESTIGATION

A VISUAL RECORD



The two images featured above, show the stone rubble layer on the Coombs Meadow side of the wooden boundary fence in more detail. Roger can be seen pictured, providing a degree of scale.



The image to the left, shows the newly discovered stone wall sitting just beneath the soil on the neighbouring side of the Coombs Meadow boundary fence.

The remains of this wall have been pushed over towards the line of the Coombs Meadow boundary fence.

The image featured above, shows an area of the wall that warrants further investigation.

Does the wall continue, does it end here or, does it turn?

THE DALLIWELL FOOT STILE INVESTIGATION

A VISUAL RECORD



The images featured left and below show that the newly discovered stone wall sited on the neighbouring side of the Coombs Meadow wooden boundary fence, connects with the remaining stone wall sitting beneath the modern day Dalliwell foot stile.



The image featured below provides a view from the village approach to the Dalliwell foot stile.

Note how steeply the hill falls away to the north side of the stile. The question is; how much of the slope did the boundary wall encompass?

This is another landscape mystery that would warrant further investigation.

The more we learn about the extent of the estate boundary walls, the better chance we have of pinpointing the site where the former home of Colonel Francis Hacker once stood.

The Dalliwell foot stile investigation has proved to be a success, and has moved us one step closer to finding Mr Hacker's home.



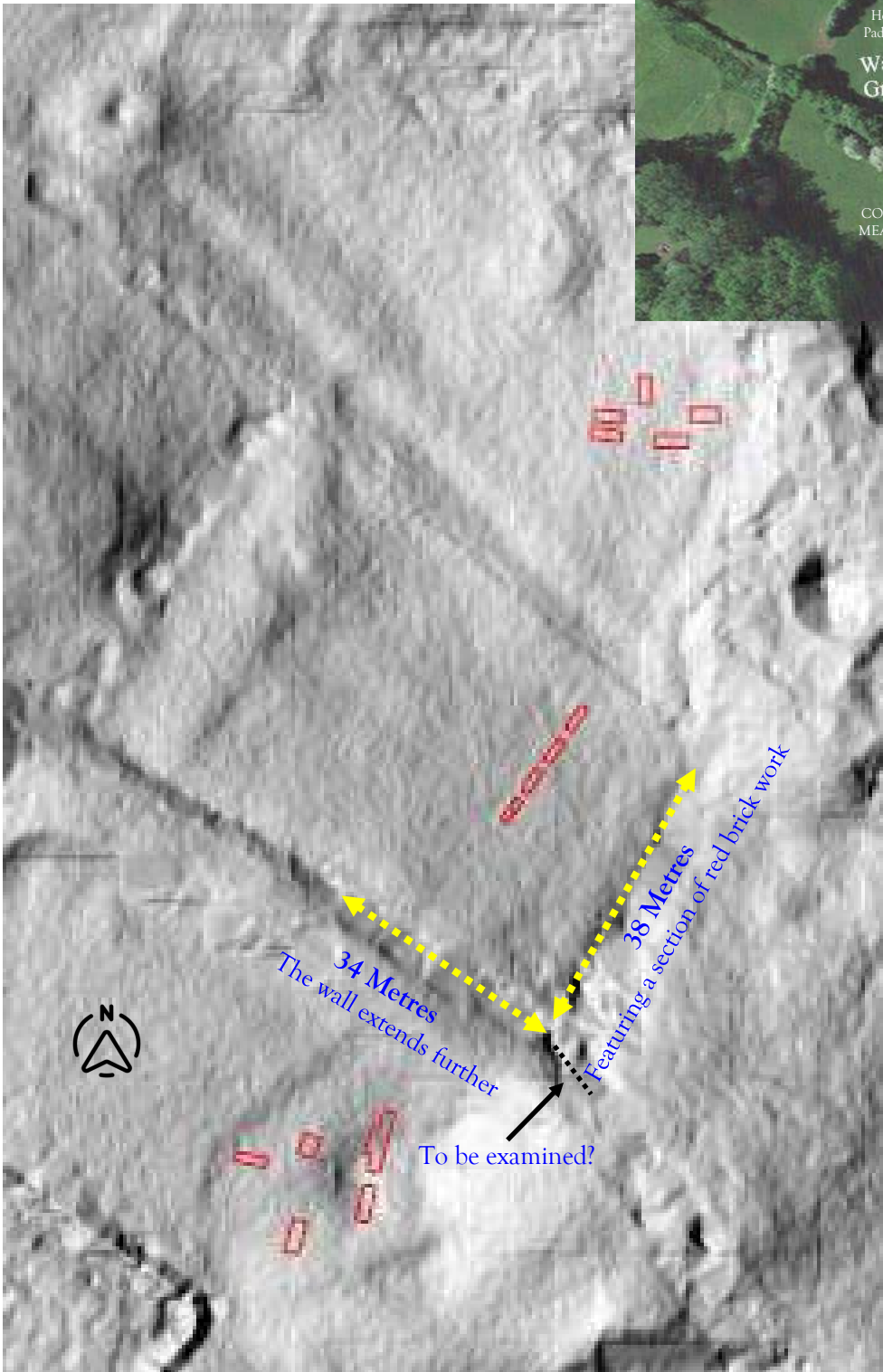
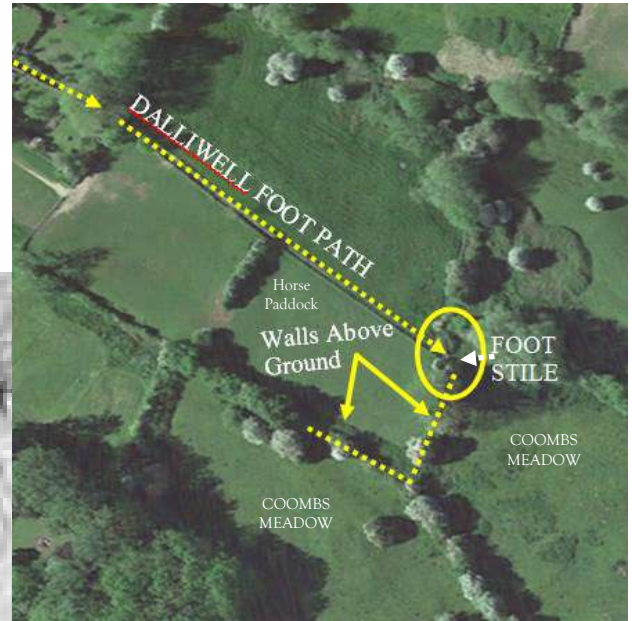
THE NEIGHBOURING HORSE PADDOCK RE-VISIT

PADDOCK PERIMETER WALLS EXAMINATION

Thanks to the kind permission of Sally and Bob Wadsworth, The Field Detectives were able to examine the remaining stone walls that line the edges of the horse paddock as shown on the image below.

The Lidar image featured below captures the wall measurements and their proximity with the earlier FLAG archaeological trenches.

Team on site: Catherine Pincott-Allen & Richard Pincott
Sunday 13th October 2024; 10:30 am - 1:30 pm




THE SEARCH FOR
STATHERN HALL

REPORT

OCTOBER 2023

A Summary of Our Findings
and Recommendations

The Field Detectives



www.the-field-detectives.com

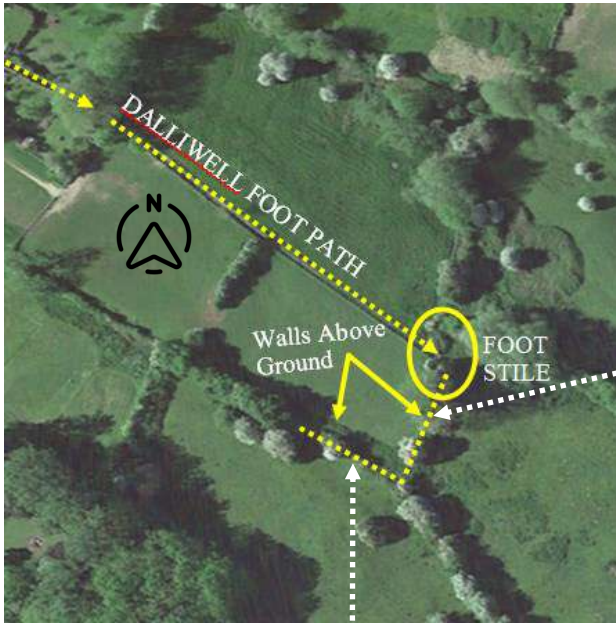
The report shown above, includes the initial FLAG archaeological reports.

The report can be found at:

www.the-field-detectives.com
under current investigations

THE NEIGHBOURING HORSE Paddock RE-VISIT

Paddock PERIMETER WALLS EXAMINATION



Now, this is an interesting feature.

There is a relatively short section of red bricks and mortar built snugly into a structure that nestles right up to the face of the stone wall. The red bricks on top of this structure appear to provide a low flat surface.

They seem to be more contemporary with the building of the nearby 20th century pill box, than anything to do with the 17th century boundary walls we are searching for.

Red brick measurements: 221mm Long, 72mm Deep, 103mm Wide



In inches: 9 x 3 x 4

Just as interesting, and in need of further investigation, is the line of stones, which arguably make up the line of a boundary wall were seen & noted here.



We found no mortar in the walls that we examined. On average, they are approximately 50 centimetres wide and about 80 centimetres high with around 6 courses of stones.

FINDS FROM THE DALLIWELL FOOT STILE INVESTIGATION



36

35



The artefacts shown above were found halfway down the Coombs Meadow wooden boundary fence. They were in the soil removed to reveal a layer of stones that were pushed off the top of a stone-built boundary wall situated on the other side of the fence.

The artefacts that were found during the Coombs Meadow foot stile investigation weren't many in number, but two of them were significant date wise.

The artefacts shown above were found on the paddock side of the Dalliwell foot stile gate, in soil removed to reveal the tumble down remains of a stone boundary wall.

A glass shard and a pottery sherd arguably dating to the period we are investigating is hugely encouraging, as it is an indication that the stone walls are those that would have been built to secure the perimeter of Colonel Francis Hacker's manorial estate.

Summary

On Saturday 19th October 2024, The Field Detectives concluded the Dalliwell foot stile investigation. The purpose of the investigation was to interrogate an area of land running along the side of a wooden boundary fence, where the visual remains of stone could be seen on either side of the foot stile gate.

We were hoping to prove that the stones were the remains of a c. 17th century manorial estate boundary wall, that once defined the perimeter of Colonel Francis Hacker's home. We also wanted to examine a stone wall in the neighbouring horse paddock.

Despite the uncertainty of the weather, the initial curiosity from the cattle and the bramble that covered the extent of the wooden boundary fence, the investigation was a fabulous success.

We were able to prove that the stones sitting above the ground were part of a stone-built wall, and we found two artefacts that arguably support a date of c. 17th century. This places the wall into the timeframe of the house we are searching for, which is great news.

The picture we are beginning to build through the location of these stone walls is one that shows the extent of a 17th-century manorial estate. Geoff will now be able to start plotting these walls and the associated artefacts digitally onto the Stathern historic landscape study map.

There is a long way to go, but this small-scale investigation has brought about a new wave of encouragement that is driving a renewed energy of wind in our sails.

If we can establish the extent of the c. 17th-century manorial estate boundary walls, then we will have a much more informed picture of the historic landscape. This, in turn, should provide the clues we are looking for and ultimately lead us to the lost home of Colonel Francis Hacker.

All we need now is permission to keep looking, good health and dare I say it; good weather.

The Field Detectives
2024



Pictured above, from left to right, Roger, Margot and Carrie on their way to solving a mystery

*Thank
you* 

To Sarah and everyone at the Leicestershire & Rutland Wildlife Trust, Roger, Barbara, Geoff, Carrie, Margot, Sally, Bob, Robert, Alex and to the many Stathern residents who continue to provide the warmest of welcomes.

To our Heritage Sector Colleagues who continue to encourage, support and facilitate the opportunities that are helping us to edge ever closer to finding the lost home of Colonel Francis Hacker.

To our fellow Field Detectives, family and friends and to all of you who share your time so generously in the pursuit of solving mysteries.

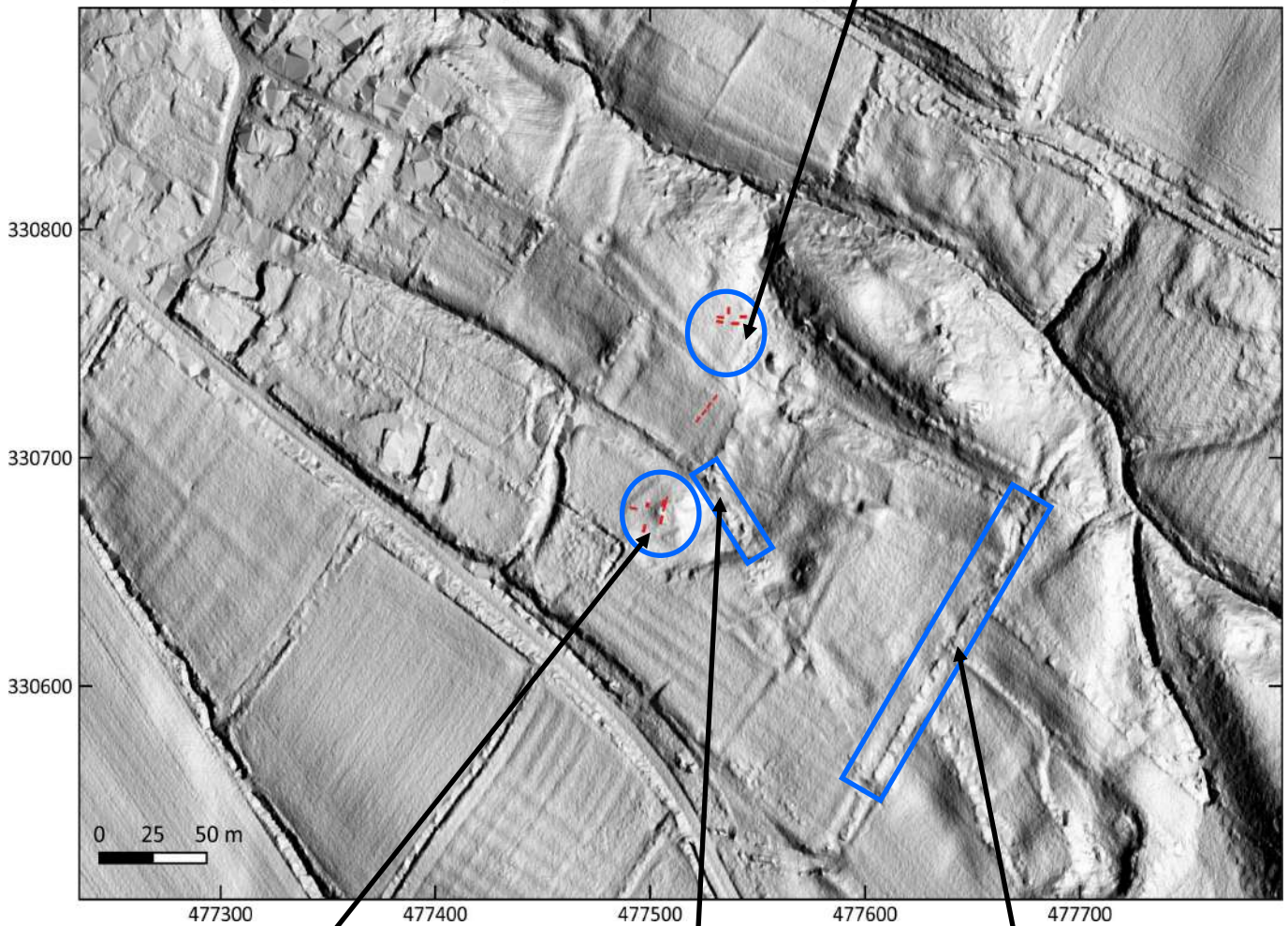
DALLIWELL FOOT STILE INVESTIGATION

The Lidar image featured below, has been used to highlight the next phases of the Search for Stathern Hall investigation if permission can be obtained to progress them. Our research tells us that the building we are looking for will be more like a large farmhouse than a high status hall. Most probably best described as a Manor House.

NEXT STEPS

Seek permission from the landowner to investigate the stone built boundary wall heading north from the Dalliwell foot stile gate to determine the extent of the manorial estate boundary.

Lidar residual digital terrain model (illuminated from the east)



Revisit the FLAG trench that revealed a stone wall so that we can expose more of the structure to enable an identification and date.

Investigate the above ground remains of a stone wall hidden in amongst the foliage.

Investigate the above ground remains of a stone wall hidden in amongst the foliage to see if it could be a c. 17th century manorial estate boundary wall.

METAL DETECTING

Due to the fact that we are struggling to locate, identify and record artefacts found by people using metal detectors around the area where we believe that Colonel Francis Hacker's home once stood, we would welcome the opportunity to carry out our own metal detecting surveys on the land in question. All artefacts recovered during the surveys will be returned to the respective landowners once they have been recorded and the related historic landscape study reports have been written. As this investigation is part of a broader community engagement heritage programme, The Field Detectives forfeit any claim to a treasure trove award.

The Field Detectives

Historic Landscape Studies

Who We Are & What We Do

The Field Detectives seek opportunities to survey fields that can tell us more about how our historic landscapes evolved - by sharing the stories that we uncover from our field survey activities, we help to inform a better understanding of how our historic landscapes evolved over the centuries. On completion of the field survey activities, a field survey report is produced that precisely records all of the associated survey finds (coins, artefacts, pottery etc.).

Once the field survey reports have been processed, the artefacts are curated as a landowner-held Historical Landscape Study Collection where they are safeguarded for further research and study. With landowner approval, a community presentation/display can then be arranged where the information is shared and an opportunity is provided for the local community to get involved in future research activities.

By submitting the completed field survey reports as an exact finds location record, and by working closely with our heritage sector colleagues, we are establishing a growing archive of landscape-focused historical studies. These context-recorded studies are held in trust by the respective landowners who act as heritage custodians, which in turn, safeguards a unique set of rich historical landscape investigations for further study and learning.

If you want to be the focus of our next investigation, give us a call - Every Field Tells a Story...

Mob: 07896 225 691 Tel: 0115 9377 318

email: fielddetectives@talktalk.net website: www.the-field-detectives.com



Richard Pincott
Survey Director & Historic
Landscape Detective



Catherine Pincott-Allen
Family Historian, Author &
Historic Landscape Detective



Steve Wells
Finds Photographer,
Treasurer & Historic
Landscape Detective



Sophie Chell
Historic Landscape
Detective



Brian Lovett
Farmer & Historic
Landscape Detective



Julie Penaluna
Historic Landscape
Detective



Alan & Sylvia Massey
Prehistory Consultants &
Witch Bottle Experts



Jill Barlow
Historic Landscape
Detective



John Barlow
Historic Landscape
Detective



Tim & Jenson Elsworth
Historic Landscape
Detectives



Jane Morris
Dowser &
Historic Landscape
Detective



David Bate
Geologist & Historic
Landscape Detective



Cherry Bishop
Historic Landscape
Detective



Barry Topliss
Historic
Landscape
Detective



Peter Ball
Historic Landscape
Detective



Aileen Ball
Historic
Landscape
Detective



**Roger
Whitehead**
Historic Landscape
Detective



**Lady
Helen Nall**
Historian, Artist &
Historic
Landscape Detective



Justin Russell
Archaeologist &
Munitions Consultant