

THE

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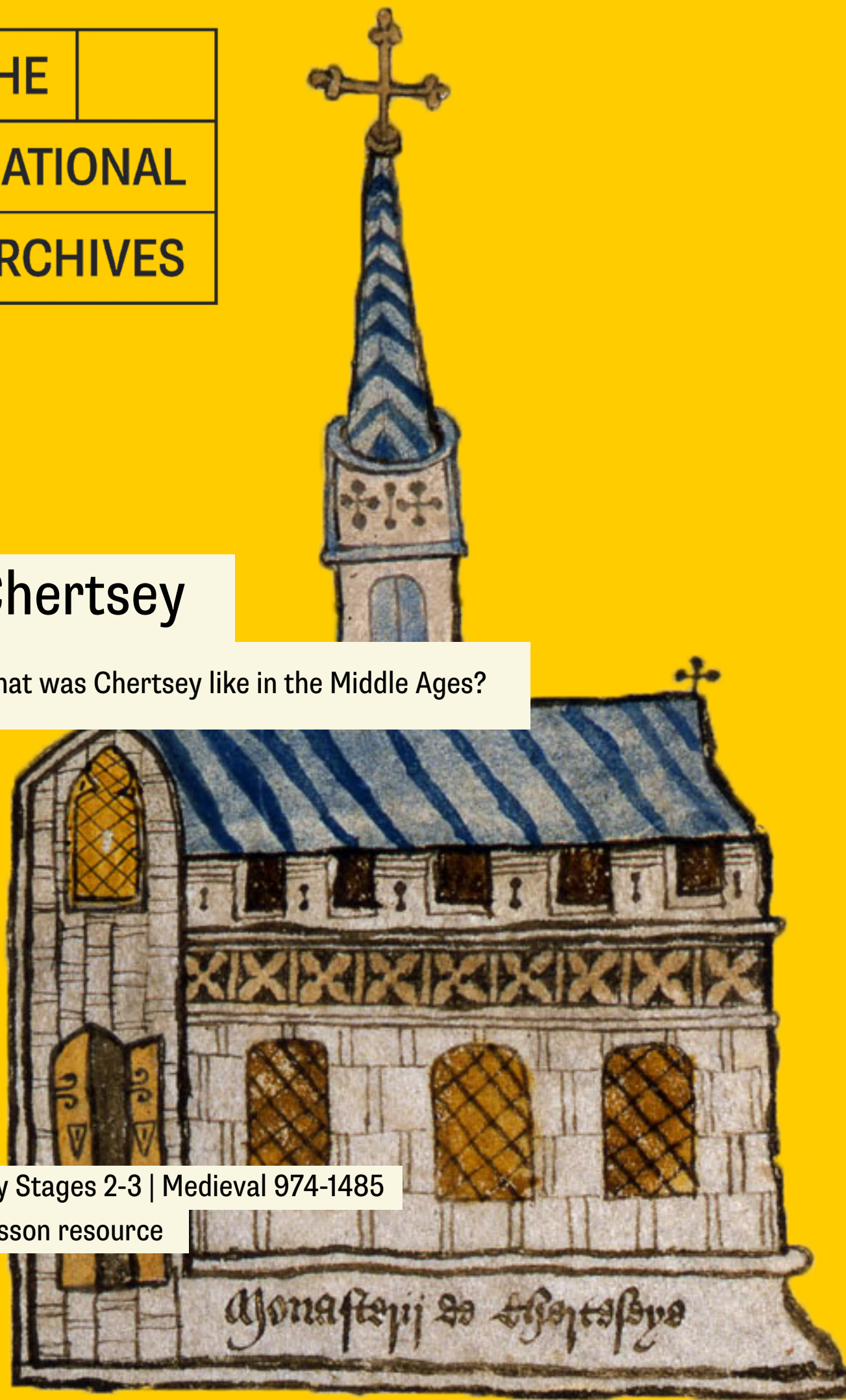
ARCHIVES

Chertsey

What was Chertsey like in the Middle Ages?

Key Stages 2-3 | Medieval 974-1485

Lesson resource



Introduction

Chertsey is an old medieval town that is mentioned in the Domesday Book. It owes its existence to the Abbey which dominated the village in the Middle Ages. These maps provide us with a way of finding out about Chertsey. Study the maps of Chertsey. What can they tell us about Chertsey in the Middle Ages?

Suitable for:

KS 2 - 3

Time period:

Medieval 974-148

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Teachers' notes

This lesson provides pupils with a glimpse of a medieval village. By using a printout of the outline above, pupils can identify the major buildings and make inferences about medieval village life. Medieval picture maps are not accurate but they do give pictorial representations. The writing on fields gives details about their size and their use. There is commonland, meadow and land belonging to the abbey. Pupils could research the nature of holding land in feudal times. A further task may be to ask the pupils to draw a modern day map of medieval Chertsey using standard symbols. Finally, pupils are encouraged to make a comparison between medieval and modern village life. They can see areas of continuity as well as change.

Sources

Medieval Map : E 164/25 f.222

Modern Map : Ordnance Survey

Background

Present day Chertsey sits on the river Thames. In the 15th century several streams also ran through it. The lands and the buildings shown on the map belonged to the Benedictine Abbey which created Chertsey. The block of houses at the top represent the village of Laleham.

Medieval picture maps like this one are rare. This one shows most of the major buildings expected in a medieval village: church, barn, mill, wooden bridge as well as a road and track. The medieval map was used to settle a dispute between the abbey and three people who rented lands from the abbey. This explains the labels on the fields which give the name of the tenant, the field's size and what the field was used for.

Map drawing in the Middle Ages was rather primitive. There were no agreed symbols for buildings as there are today. The cartographers who drew these maps drew little pictures of the key buildings. Distances were estimated and scales were not used. Nonetheless, the maps still indicated where things were in relation to each other. What is important for historians is that this map shows the buildings that existed at the time. From the buildings we can begin to make conclusions about what went on in the village and how the people in Chertsey lived.

Tasks

Source 1

This is a medieval map of Chertsey.

- Find the following buildings on the medieval map (use the transcript if you need to). Briefly say what activity took place there.
 - Oxlake Mil
 - Monastery of Chertsey
 - bridge
 - the village of Laleham
 - Burghwey Barn
 - Redewynd Causeway
 - track leading to mill
- What is the largest building on the map?
- What does the size of the Abbey tell you about religion in the Middle Ages?
- How accurate do you think this map is?

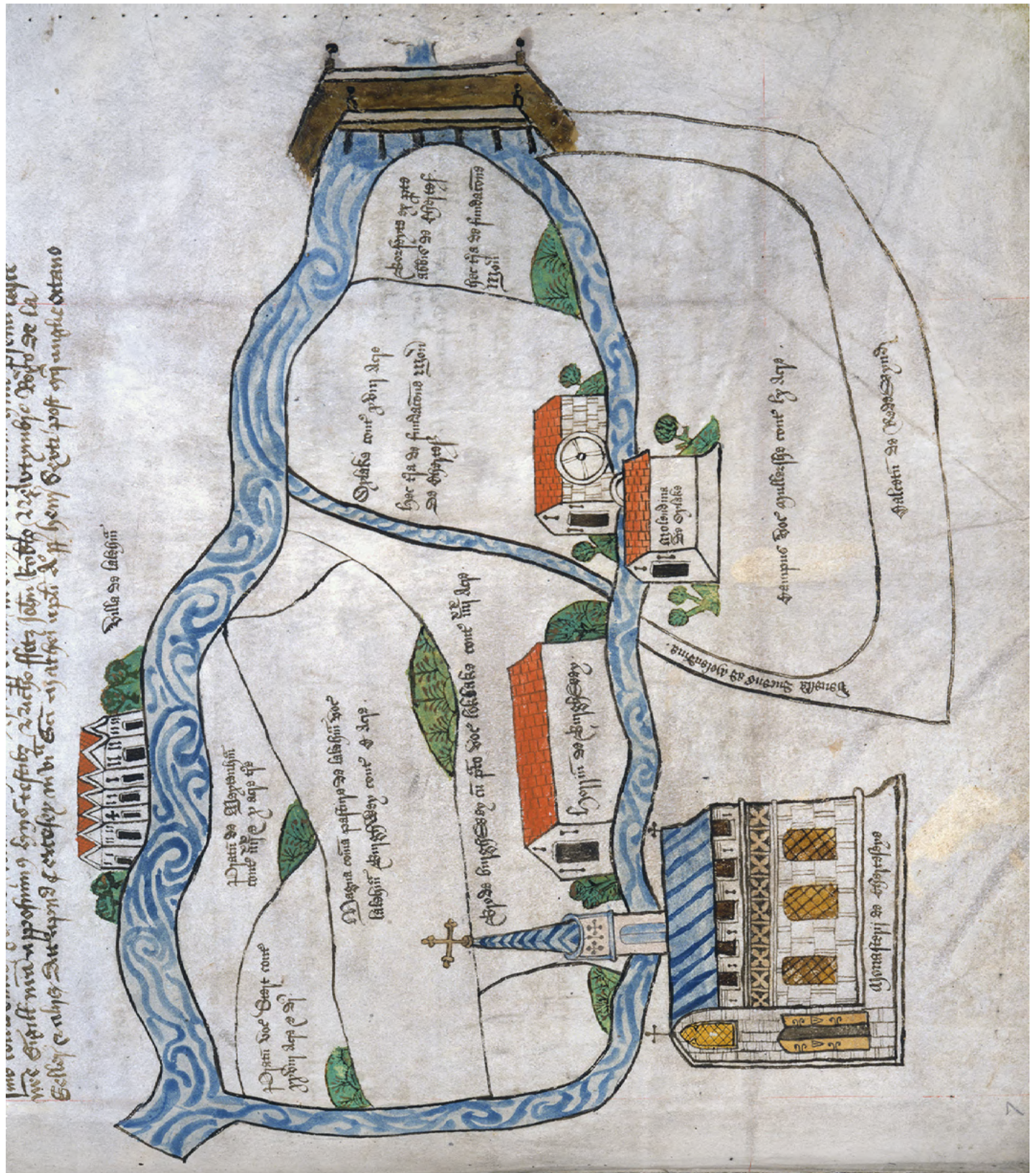
Source 2

Look at this map of Chertsey drawn in the 20th century. Compare it to your map of medieval Chertsey.

- Which parts of medieval Chertsey are still standing today?
- List all the differences you can see
- What buildings do you think are the most important ones in Chertsey today?
- How accurate do you think this map is?

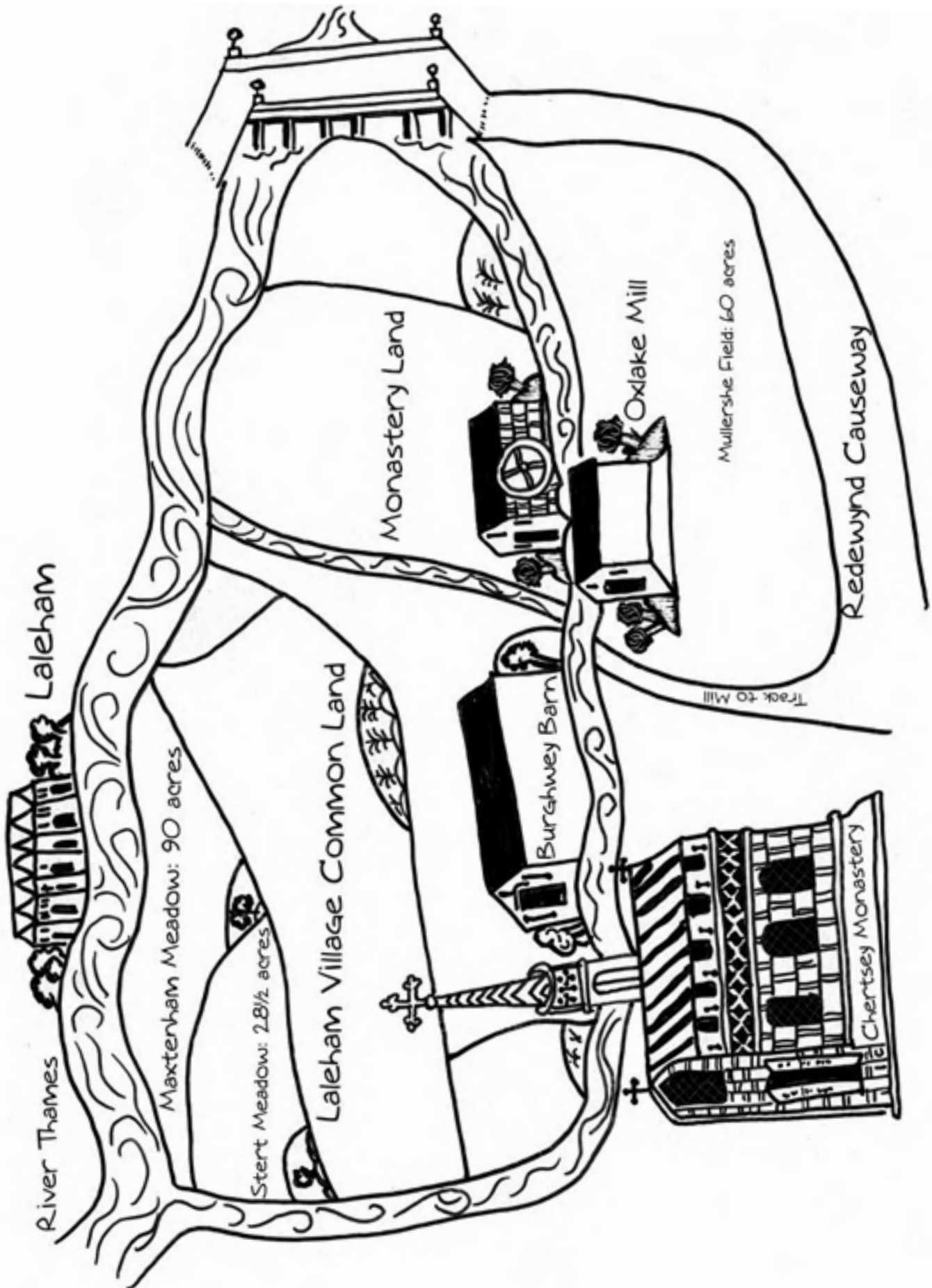
Source 1: Chertsey Abbey map, 1432.

Catalogue Ref: E 164/25 f222



Source 1: Transcript of Chertsey Abbey map, 1432.

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Map description: Source 1

Map showing a river connected in a circle. It flows from the top left corner, labelled 'River Thames', splits in two, and then joins together and flows out again at the far right.

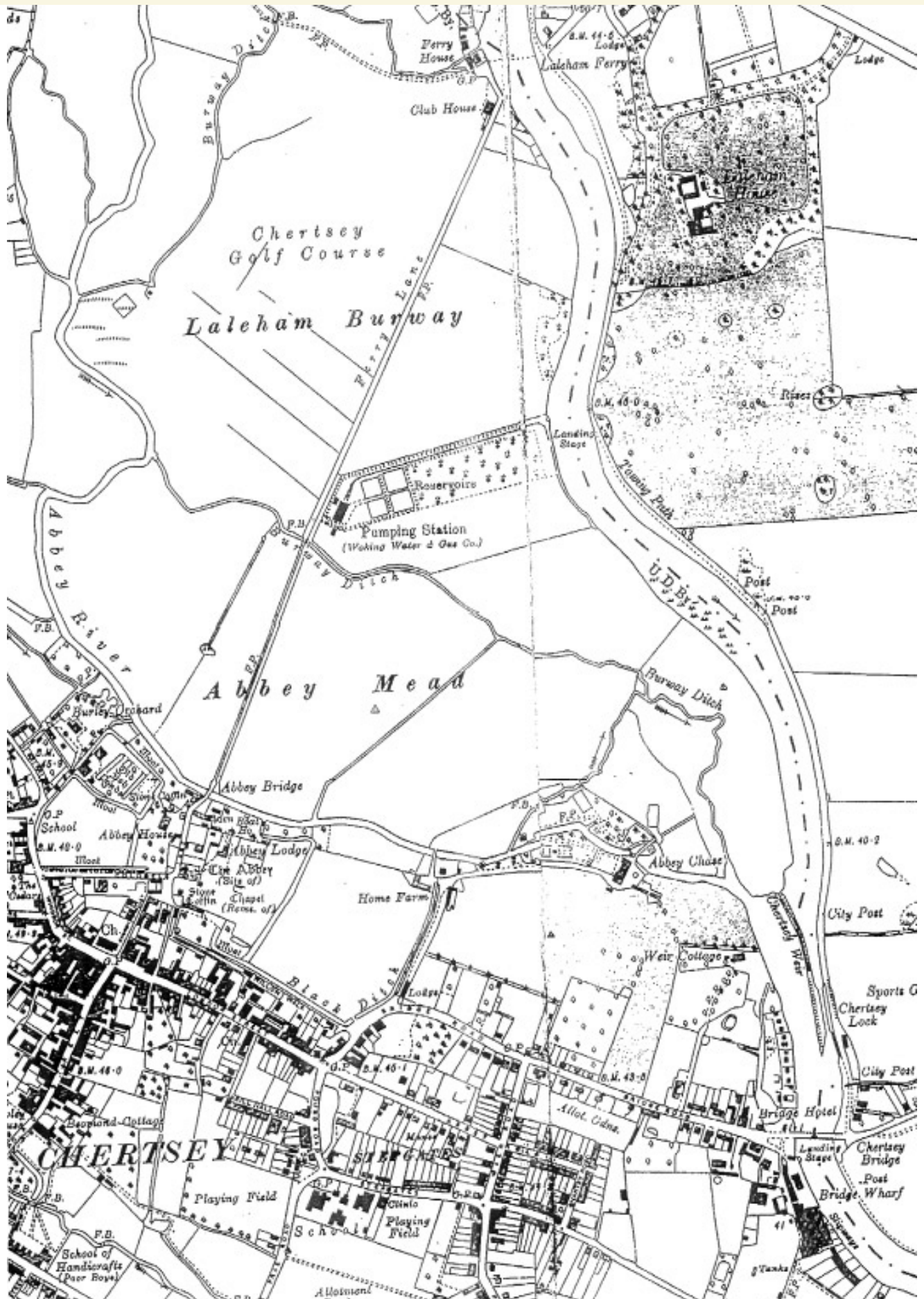
The right branch of the river that splits from the top left runs across the top of the map. It flows next to a group of houses labelled 'Laleham'. Underneath, inside the circle formed by the river, are multiple fields. The top field is labelled 'Maxtenham Meadow: 90 acres'. The field underneath is labelled 'Stert Meadow: 28.5 acres.' Underneath is an area labelled 'Laleham Village Common Land'.

The river flows to a bridge on the far right of the map, where the two sides of the circle join and keep flowing underneath the bridge and off the map. Going clockwise to follow the branch of the river that runs at the bottom of the map, we see it flows next to a mill house labelled 'Oxlake Mill'. The area above the mill, inside the river circle, is labelled 'Monastery Land'. The area underneath the mill, outside of the river circle, is labelled 'Mullershe Field: 60 acres' and a road underneath it is labelled 'Redewynd Causeway and 'Track to Mill'.

The river keeps flowing next to a building labelled 'Brughwey Barn'. Underneath this, just outside the river circle, is a large church labelled 'Chertsey Monastery'.

The river then flows up to join with the initial junction.

Source 2: 20th century map of Chertsey



Map description: Source 2

Map that shows a river flowing downwards through a number of fields. On its right at the top of the map is a building labelled 'Laleham House'. Near the bottom of the map the river flows underneath a bridge labelled 'Landing Bridge'.

Above the bridge, the river branches off to the left, now called 'Abbey River', and flows around an area labelled 'Abbey Mead'. Below Abbey River is an area called 'The Abbey (Site of)', at the top of the town of Chertsey.



Why do our hyperlinks come with footnotes?

Our resources are designed to be printed and used in classrooms, which means hyperlinks aren't always accessible digitally. We include the full link at the bottom of the page so that you can type in the address without distracting from the main text of the lesson materials.

Did you know?

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