



Hertfordshire: A landscape history

HERTFORDSHIRE a landscape history



Anne Rowe & Tom Williamson



More than three decades after the publication of Lionel Munby's seminal work *The Hertfordshire Landscape*, Anne Rowe and Tom Williamson have produced an authoritative new study, based on their own extensive fieldwork and documentary investigations, as well as on the wealth of new research carried out over recent decades by others – both into Hertfordshire specifically, and into landscape history and archaeology more generally.

The authors examine in detail the historical processes that created the county's modern physical environment. The form and location of settlements; the character of fields, woods and commons; and the distinctive local styles of architecture are all considered. Both the rural landscape and that of Hertfordshire's towns and suburbs have their particular stories to tell, and the book reveals how the landscape is itself an important source of information about the past.

The great diversity of Hertfordshire's landscapes makes it a particularly rewarding county to study. Dividing the county into four broad regions, the authors show how, in the course of the middle ages, natural characteristics influenced the development of

land use and settlement to create a range of distinctive landscapes. Change was small-scale and piecemeal and the development of the medieval environment organic and gradual. Variations in farming economies, in patterns of trade and communication, as well as in the extent of London's influence, all added to this variety in the course of the post-medieval centuries, and the authors track Hertfordshire's continuing evolution right through to the twenty-first century.

Lavishly illustrated with maps and photographs, this authoritative work will be invaluable reading for all those with an interest in the history, archaeology, and natural history of this fascinating county.

Anne Rowe is a landscape historian and the author of *Medieval Parks of Hertfordshire* (Hatfield, 2009). She co-ordinates the research work of the Hertfordshire Gardens Trust.

Tom Williamson is Professor of Landscape History at the University of East Anglia and heads the Landscape Group within the School of History. He has published extensively on landscape archaeology, agricultural history and the history of landscape design.

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