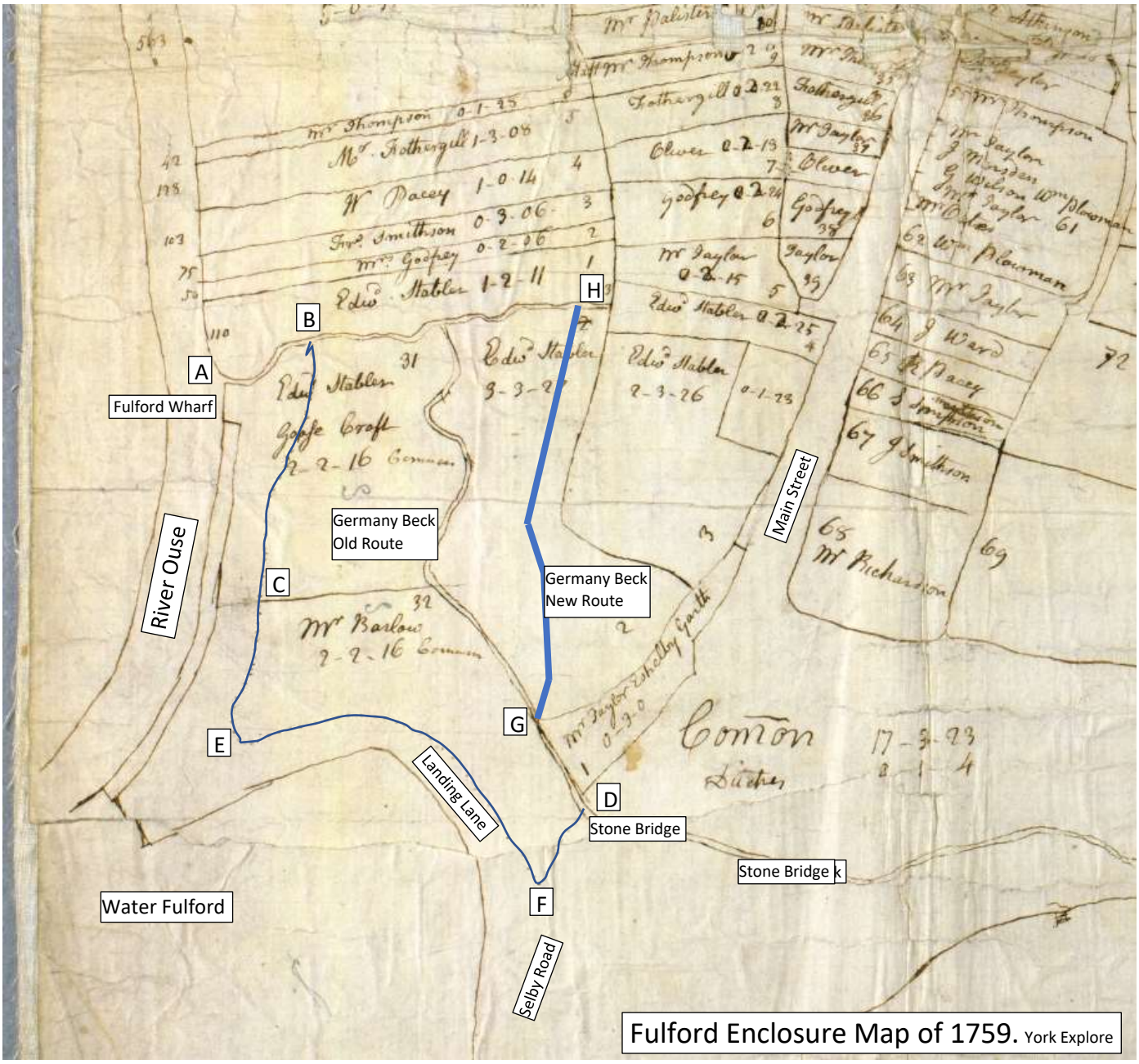
A History of Land at the Southern End of Fulford Ings



The land being sold is approximately within the area defined on this plan as: B-C-E-F-D-G-H-B.

Before the Fulford Enclosure Act of 1759, this area was common land, with an access route (Landing Lane) from the Selby Road to the village wharf. Common land was owned by the lord of the manor, but farmed collectively by people of Fulford village under a strictly managed system. The land was expected to flood during the winter, fertilising a hay crop which was cut in early-summer, villagers were then allowed to graze an agreed number of animals on fresh grass until the following winter.

Unlike the rest of Fulford Ings, this area part divided into large irregular areas, mostly defined by the river Ouse and Germany Beck and lordship boundaries of Gate and Water Fulford.

The enclosure act divided up and allocated this land into three plots. Edward Stabler, a Freeman of York, was awarded two plots; Plot No. 31 (described as Goose Garth) and Plot No. 2, east of the old route of Germany Beck. Edward Barlow of Middlethorpe Hall was awarded Plot No. 32, (described on the plan as Common but on the schedule as Goose Garth). Both these men were major beneficiaries of the enclosure awards.

The blue dotted line highlights a line shown on the enclosure map, and probably defines the boundary of the land forming the historic route from the A19 to the village wharf. This route is within the areas allocated to Stabler and Barlow, perhaps reflecting the importance of this connection between the Manors of Middlethorpe and both Gate and Water Fulford and also possibly giving these owners some control over use of the wharf.

The 1852 OS map shows Germany Beck following its modern course and has an intriguing set of letters A-B-C-D, on these plots, with an explanatory note saying, "The letters A-B-C-D show the line of the boundary claimed by the Township of Water Fulford". This suggests the wharf and the access route from the A19 was at one time under the control of the Manor of Water Fulford. The remains of a long and relatively modern masonry wharf can be seen adjacent to Water Fulford Hall, whereas the wharf north of Landing Lane has only a few stumps of timber protruding from the river bed.

The area defined as Mr Barlow's is now a Site of Special Scientific Interest with Tansey plants supporting rare Tansey Beetles. The other part of the area is also valuable habitat.

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Fulford Ings Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and

Countryside Act, 1981.

Description from Natural England:

Fulford Ings is an important example of flood plain mire located on low lying land between the River Ouse and Fulford village.

It supports a sequence of plant communities which reflect the topography and hydrology, with alluvial grassland on higher ground, adjacent to the flood bank, a transitional zone of rich fen meadow and swamp in the most low lying areas furthest from the river.

Such a sequence of plant communities is now uncommon as a result of the drainage and fragmentation of wetlands and the fact that it remains largely intact at Fulford Ings is of particular importance. The alluvial grassland is characterised by meadow foxtail Alopecurus pratensis, creeping bent Agrostis stolonifera, Yorkshire fog Holcus lanatus, great burnet Sanguisorba officinalis, ribwort plantain Plantago lanceolata, meadow vetchling Lathyrus pratensis and pepper-saxifrage Silaum silaus.

The rich fen meadow is dominated by sedges, including brown sedge Carex disticha, slender tufted sedge C. acuta, lesser pond sedge C. acutiformis and false fox sedge C. otrubae, with meadowsweet Filipendula ulmaria, great willowherb Epilobium hirsutum, marsh marigold Caltha palustris, common spike-rush Eleocharis palustris, marsh arrow-grass Triglochin palustris and stands of reed canary-grass Phalaris arundinacea.

Where the site is flooded most frequently and for the longest duration there are extensive beds of reed sweet-grass Glyceria maxima with occasional stands of yellow iris Iris pseudacorus and bulrush Typha latifolia.

The nature conservation interest is dependent upon the maintenance of a high water table and on management of the alluvial grassland and fen meadow by mowing and grazing.