

Thank you for using eradoc, a platform to publish electronic copies of the Rothamsted Documents. Your requested document has been scanned from original documents. If you find this document is not readable, or you suspect there are some problems, please let us know and we will correct that.



ROTHAMSTED
RESEARCH

The Manor of Rothamsted

[Full Table of Content](#)

THE MANOR OF
ROTHAMSTED
AND ITS OCCUPANTS



Introduction

Rothamsted Research

Rothamsted Research (1978) *Introduction* ; The Manor Of Rothamsted, pp 1 - 1 - DOI:
<https://doi.org/10.23637/ERADOC-1-277>

I

HISTORY OF THE MANOR OF ROTHAMSTED

INTRODUCTION

The Saxon name 'Rothamsted', of which the present form appeared as early as 1248 although it did not prevail until considerably later, has been variously interpreted. 'The rooky homestead', suggested by the earliest known form 'Rochamstede' (1210–12) and 'Rokemstude' (in the early thirteenth century *Gesta Abbatum Monasterii S. Albani*), is the interpretation favoured by the English Place-Name Society.

However this may be, the region was certainly inhabited in pre-Roman times by the Belgic group of Celts, who had important settlements at Wheathampstead and St Albans; evidence of their occupancy, in the form of calcined flints and fragments of pottery, has been revealed by excavation. The Romans came here too, and left a more considerable monument to their presence—a small shrine (or tomb), in Little Knott field. The remains of this shrine, enclosed in a square flint wall and containing fragments of a draped figure in limestone, have been assigned to the early second century; burials comprising an urn, a 'screw-neck' flagon, a Samian dish and a cup of rough-cast Castor ware, were laid bare within the enclosure in 1937. At least two of the agricultural practices of these early inhabitants have survived; they grew corn, and they dressed the land with chalk, hauled up through shafts sunk in the clay, as described by Pliny in his *Natural History* (17, 8). The Rothamsted fields still contain hollows formed by the collapse of chalk-pits, dug out at various times during the past two thousand years.

Within about one hundred years after the departure of the Romans in the fifth century, the Saxons arrived. Although we have no buildings from their hands, they left us our name. In their time Rothamsted was a small farm (as a large farm it would have been mentioned in *Domesday Book*): it has never been a village, and there is no evidence of strip cultivation, although the arable commons of Harpenden were laid out