

Place Names in Steeple Barton

The name comes from the Old English stiepel, 'a church steeple'. The basic name is a common one, from bere-tun, 'the farmstead where barley is grown'.

Within the parish we find Middle Barton, a fifteenth century name which began life as an outlying agricultural community; Sesswell's Barton was formerly referred to as Barton Odonis and a reference to Odo who held lands here in 1210, later it became part of the lands of William de Shareshull in 1335 and the basis for the modern name. Barton Grove, Great Barton and Little Grove have names which are all linked – 'the copse by Barton', 'the place called Barton which is bigger than Middle Barton', and 'the copse which is smaller than Barton Grove' respectively – each refers to the others and would be confusing if we did not know the order in which they appeared.

Daddles Close Spinney comes from 'Dadda's spring or stream'; Rayford Lane runs through 'the ford frequented by herons'; Showell Covert talks of 'the watercourse of the seven springs'; the Hoar stone refers to a 'grey stone' which probably acted as a boundary marker; while Purgatory may seem to have sinister religious associations but in reality is just an insulting name for an agricultural project which was started but never completed.

Place Names in Westcote Barton

Recorded in 1050 as Baertune, in 1086 as Bertone, in 1221 as Parva Bartona and in 1246 as Westcot, the addition is to differentiate from other Bartons nearby. Although in 1221 the addition told us this was the 'small Barton', the later name has prevailed. It is most likely that the two names were once quite distinctly separate, albeit not be much of a distance. Thus, the bere-tun or 'farmstead where barley grows' had an area close by called west-cote or 'the west cottage(s)'.