

Compost

In medieval times it was vital to manure fields to maintain their fertility, especially where soils were light and 'hungry'. Sometimes livestock, particularly sheep, were folded onto fields. This involved penning them overnight in temporary folds made of hurdles, so that their muck fell onto the ground and was trodden in by the animals. Where fields were near farms, muck from yards and cattle sheds was carted and spread on the fields. Muck heaps consisting of farmyard manure and human and domestic waste were sometimes sited on roads or by the edge of fields. Some fields were named for their muck-heaps. The soil of Compass/Campus Field is light and gravelly and would have needed enrichment.

1. Richard Jones, "Manure and the medieval social order" in *Land and People: papers in memory of John G Evans. Prehistoric Society Research Paper 2.* ed. M.J. Allen et al. (Oxford: Oxbow, 2009) 215–225.
2. . T. Williamson, *Shaping Mediaeval Landscapes: Settlement, Society, Environment* (Macclesfield: Windgather Press, 2003).