



## Did you know that North Marston got its name from Granborough?

In Saxon times, Granborough was known as “grenesberga”, meaning green hill. In 792, the great Mercian Saxon king Offa gifted Granborough to St Alban’s Abbey as part of a four estates including Little Horwood. It was lost by the Abbey, possibly during the Viking incursions, but re-endowed in 948. At Granborough’s southern boundary, the St Alban’s estate would have abutted the land of Aylesbury Minster. Including the area we now know as North Marston. This boundary was marked by an ancient hedge-line known as hertmere which ran from Hoggeston to Hogshaw following the line of an ancient track.

St Alban’s Abbey would have marked the boundary to their endowment wherever a road crossed into their estate. Charters from the time show that these boundary markers were often stones marked with a cross (you can see one to this day in Quainton) and the stone would have been called a *maerstun*, and the local (Mercian) pronunciation would have been *marston*.

Therefore, where the track northwards to Granborough intersected the boundary there would have been a marston, as spoken in local dialect. Over time, any adjacent settlement would have been known by this feature. But because there were over seventy marstons in the ninth and tenth centuries, they tended to be differentiated by a descriptive that differentiated them: *north*, *fleet* or *long* for example.

Therefore it is true to say that due to *grenesberga* being given to St Alban’s Abbey, North Marston got its name.

if you want to see a short film about this, visit the North Marston History Club's website ([www.northmarstonhistory.org](http://www.northmarstonhistory.org)) or go to YouTube and search under "How Did North Marston Get Its Name?"

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