

2 Land Exploitation and the Form of Settlement

The chronology of growth and organisation in the Anglo-Saxon countryside has recently occasioned much debate. On the one hand, awareness of major gaps in the evidence has banished time-honoured blanks from the map of Domesday England, and has encouraged a train of thought the extreme expression of which is P H Sawyer's claim that 'the rural resources of England were almost as fully exploited in the seventh century as they were in the eleventh'.¹ On the other hand, recent work has revealed a mobility of settlement types and field-systems which suggests widespread reorganisation during the late Anglo-Saxon and Norman centuries.

This chapter will suggest a chronology for land exploitation in Surrey. The debatable ground lies between the two extremes of the 'Sawyer dictum' and the traditional view which emphasises the colonising achievements of the 12th and 13th centuries. How far later conditions existed by the time of Domesday Book, and from how long before, must therefore be the recurring themes. The various geographical regions will be discussed in turn, for Surrey is diverse and cannot sensibly be viewed as an undifferentiated whole. The development of villages, and their relationship to scattered settlements around them, will then be analysed within this broad context of land-use.

The evidence

In the absence of written sources, place-names are of major relevance for the early stages. Especially important in Surrey are the large group of minor elements which reflect the progress of woodland clearance. Six are sufficiently common to permit distribution analysis: the widespread - *leah* and - *byrst*, and the more localised - *ersc*, - *falod*, - *ceart* and - *scēat*. The maps (figs 12 and 13) are based on analysis of forms collected in *The place-names of Surrey*.²

Domesday data for settlement and exploitation are especially difficult to use in a region where many of the resources listed were undoubtedly several miles distant from their parent manors. Mapping by hundred, as attempted in *The Domesday geography of south east England* (fig 14), is more valid than mapping by individual manor, though still risking serious distortion in the hundreds which traverse geological boundaries. Thus a third course has been adopted here. Surrey has been divided into five geographical regions, from each of which five Domesday manors or groups of manors have been selected (table 2), the criteria being their geographical stability and likely correspondence with post-medieval parish boundaries. All have a relatively straightforward tenurial history in the 13th century and after, and are represented by parishes either singly or in simple combination. This is especially important in the Weald, where none of the places chosen is known to have contained outliers of non-Wealden manors; on the other hand, a degree of distortion from the hidden Wealden dependencies of manors in other areas (for instance Mortlake and Ashtead) is unavoidable. The parish acreages have then been used (table 3) to calculate the average incidence of people and teams per 1000 acres over the five parishes in each group. The method is rough and ready, and open to objections: the classification of regions is only valid in broad terms, and few parishes fit neatly into one geographical zone. But this approach may come somewhere near to giving the Domesday data, with all their shortcomings, a localised geographical dimension.

Finally, the 1334 Lay Subsidy quotas for the same five groups of parishes have been totalled and then divided by the parish acreages (table 4). As an absolute measure of population and wealth

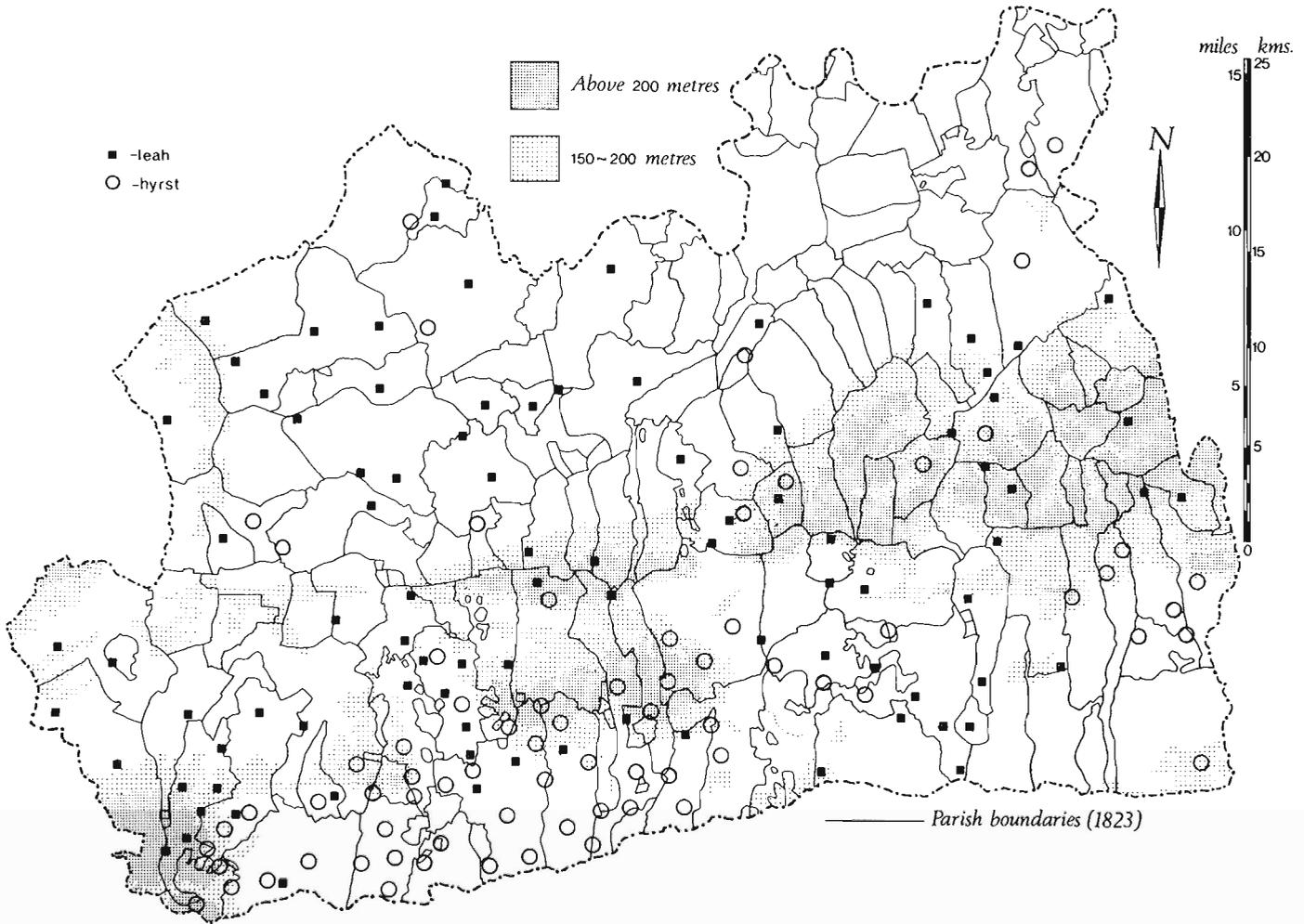


Fig 12 Clearance name elements: *-leah* and *-hyrst*

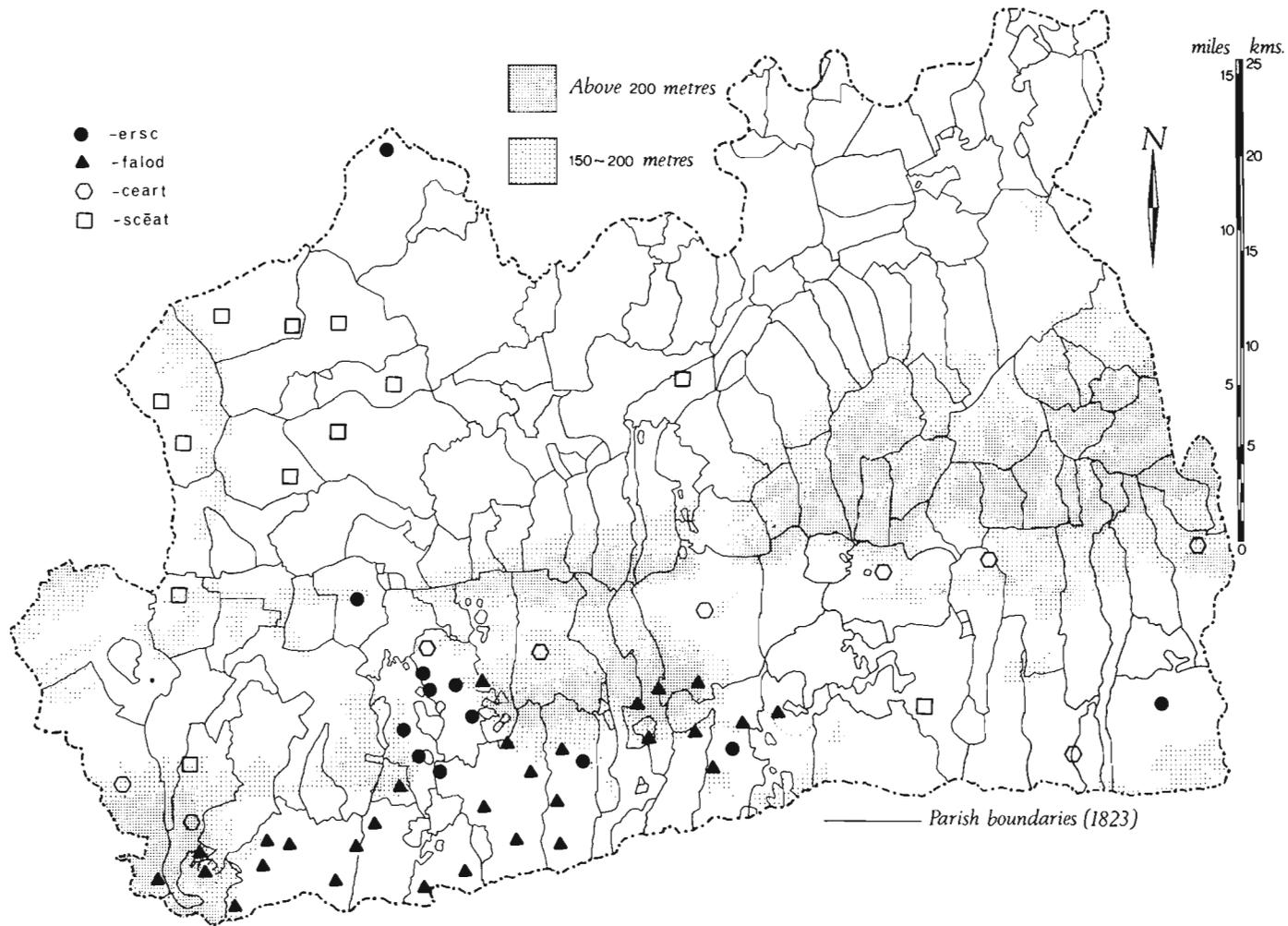


Fig 13 Clearance name elements: *-ersc*, *-falod*, *-ceart* and *-scēat*

TABLE 2 Domesday data for selected parishes in five regions of Surrey

	<i>Population</i>	<i>Teams</i>	<i>Ploughlands</i>	<i>Acreage (Modern parish)</i>
<i>North-East Surrey (London Basin)</i>				
Barnes	13	5	6	1027
Merton	69	20	21	1763
Mitcham/Whitford	28	8.5	—	2916
Morden	14	7	—	1475
Mortlake/Wimbledon/Putney	110	33	35	7037
Totals	234	73.5	—	14218
<i>Dip-slope</i>				
Ashtead	53	16	—	2645
Bookham, Great	39	19	19	3281
Clandon, West	9	2.5	3	1003
Epsom	44	18	17	4413
Horsley, West	35	10	8	2672
Totals	180	65.5	—	14014
<i>Downs</i>				
Chelsham	42	11	8	3357
Chipstead	18	7	7	2419
Farleigh	6	2	2.5	1051
Headley	22	6	—	2066
Tatsfield	26	2	—	1303
Totals	114	28	—	10196
<i>Weald Clay and Greensand</i>				
Abinger/Paddington	39	13	18	7560
Blechingley/Chivington/Horne	74	26.5	28	9972
Farnham hundred	89	43	—	26213
Hambleton	22	7	4	2721
Nutfield	45	16	12	3576
Totals	269	105.5	—	50042
<i>North-West Surrey (Forest area)</i>				
Byfleet	12	3	2	2045
Chobham	49	16	—	9057
Egham	57	12	40	7624
Pyrford/Horsell	54	7	13	4782
Woking/Sutton	58	24	9	8802
Totals	230	62	—	32310

TABLE 3 Analysis of Domesday data for the parishes listed in table 2

	<i>Pop. per 1000 acres</i>	<i>Teams per 1000 acres</i>	<i>Teams per 10 of pop.</i>
North-East Surrey	16.5	5.1	3.1
Dip-slope	12.8	4.7	3.6
Downs	11.2	2.7	2.5
Weald Clay and Greensand	5.4	2.1	3.9
North-West Surrey	7.1	1.9	2.7

Note: all figures are to nearest 0.1

TABLE 4 1334 Lay Subsidy quotas for the parishes listed in table 2

	<i>Total quota of parishes in the group (£)</i>	<i>Total acreage (From table 1)</i>	<i>£ per 1000 acres</i>
North-East Surrey	9.1	14218	0.6
Dip-slope	13.8	14014	1.0
Downs	9.5	10196	1.0
Weald Clay and Greensand	45.1	50042	0.9
North-West Surrey	23.0	32310	0.7

Source: R E Glasscock (ed), *The lay subsidy of 1334* (London, 1975)

- Notes: (a) all figures are to nearest 0.1
 (b) the totals include estimated figures for two parishes where the stated quotas are for combined townships
 (c) one quota (Byfleet), recorded as a tenth, has been converted to a fifteenth
 (d) the separate quota for the planted town of Blechingley is omitted

these data are virtually useless, but as a rough index to relative prosperity within a limited area, they may throw some light on rates of development over the previous 250 years. These tables provide a background for the more specific local evidence which will now be reviewed.

Colonisation of land: the London Basin and Windsor Forest areas

The north-eastern third of Surrey between the Thames, the Downs and the river Wey was extensively settled during the 5th and 6th centuries, as is clear above all from the large and numerous pagan cemeteries.³ The rectilinear field layout in the north of Leatherhead and Ashted parishes (above, pp29–30) implies, if indeed Roman, some continuity of land-use on the

London clay; while the numerous *-hām* names, indicators of early settlement (above, p28), tend to lie on or near Roman roads (for instance the group formed by Hatcham, Woldingham and Streatham). In 1086 the incidence here of population and teams was very markedly the highest in the county (table 3). North-east Surrey would clearly have attracted settlers from the time of the first Germanic incursions up the Thames Valley, and its development during succeeding centuries can only have been stimulated by the proximity of London. The contrast between this area and the rest of the county scarcely needs further explanation.

Throughout the Middle Ages most townships on the London clay retained heavy commons with a mixture of oak and brushwood cover, generally termed *bruera* in local deeds. On some manors the woodland pasture zones, whether contiguous or detached, were well-defined by the late Anglo-Saxon period. Thus the 983 charter-bounds of Thames Ditton perambulate the estate proper and then, separately, an area of wood hemmed in by enclosures and landmarks.⁴ Another clear case is Penge, a member of Battersea lying near the Kent border some eight miles from its head manor. In the 957 Battersea charter it is firmly characterised as a pasture, *se wude þe hatte Pænge*,⁵ but by the mid 13th century Penge had acquired compact arable holdings with houses and crofts.⁶ The 'tenentes de bosco' in late 13th-century Lambeth (below, p79) are suggestive of another woodland tract opened in relatively recent times to the plough. These cases reflect a pattern which will recur: the deliberate preservation of wood-pastures in a well-exploited landscape, followed by their deliberate destruction when demographic pressure outweighed the interests of the transhumance economy to which they belonged.

On the heavy clay commons of the dip-slope and London Basin townships, a trickle of small assarts seems to have continued until c1300. Oxshott, in Stoke D'Abernon parish, is first mentioned in the mid 12th century and appears in deeds of c1200–20 as a mixture of woodland, enclosures and recent purprestures.⁷ Such encroachments might make inroads into neighbours' common pasture, with consequent legal problems: a settlement of such a dispute in 1242 shows that many acres of waste in the north-east of West Horsley parish had recently been enclosed and cultivated.⁸ A similar agreement of 1287/8 between the lords of Leatherhead and Stoke D'Abernon, concerning enclosure of *bruera* on the boundary between their lordships,⁹ may be connected with the former's replanning of nearby Pachenesham as a 'satellite village' (below, pp61–2). In several townships, enclosures were advancing northwards from the heavily-farmed Reading and Thanet beds onto the London clay. These assarts, in the most densely settled part of the county, were on poor soil and their contribution to resources was probably slight. In this area common waste now remained in sufficiency rather than in abundance.

Godley and Woking hundreds, in the sandy north-west corner of the county, present a total contrast. Some *-hām* place-names are found along the Roman road towards Staines and beside the Thames and Bourne,¹⁰ and this stretch of the Thames Valley is beginning to show a concentration of mid-Saxon settlements on the river-gravels; the presence of Chertsey minster and a royal vill nearby must have stimulated development in the river-valleys. Outside this narrow strip, however, settlement evidence is negligible, and in 1086 these hundreds as a whole were sparse in population and still sparser in ploughteams (fig 14; tables 2, 3). Some large areas, such as Frimley and the western half of Chobham (fig 9A), provide virtually no evidence for settlement before the 13th century. Windlesham began as a forest pasture of Woking, and a narrative source (below, p95) states that it only supported three householders before late 12th-century expansion.

Certainly the main reason for this late development was the wretched quality of the soil, graphically illustrated by the plight of a Send tenant at the beginning of the 13th century who migrated to Yorkshire because 'non potuit morari super terram illam pro parvitate terre'.¹¹ But another inhibiting factor was the inclusion of most of the area in Windsor Forest. However strict in theory, forest law was not in practice an absolute barrier to assarts and encroachments. From

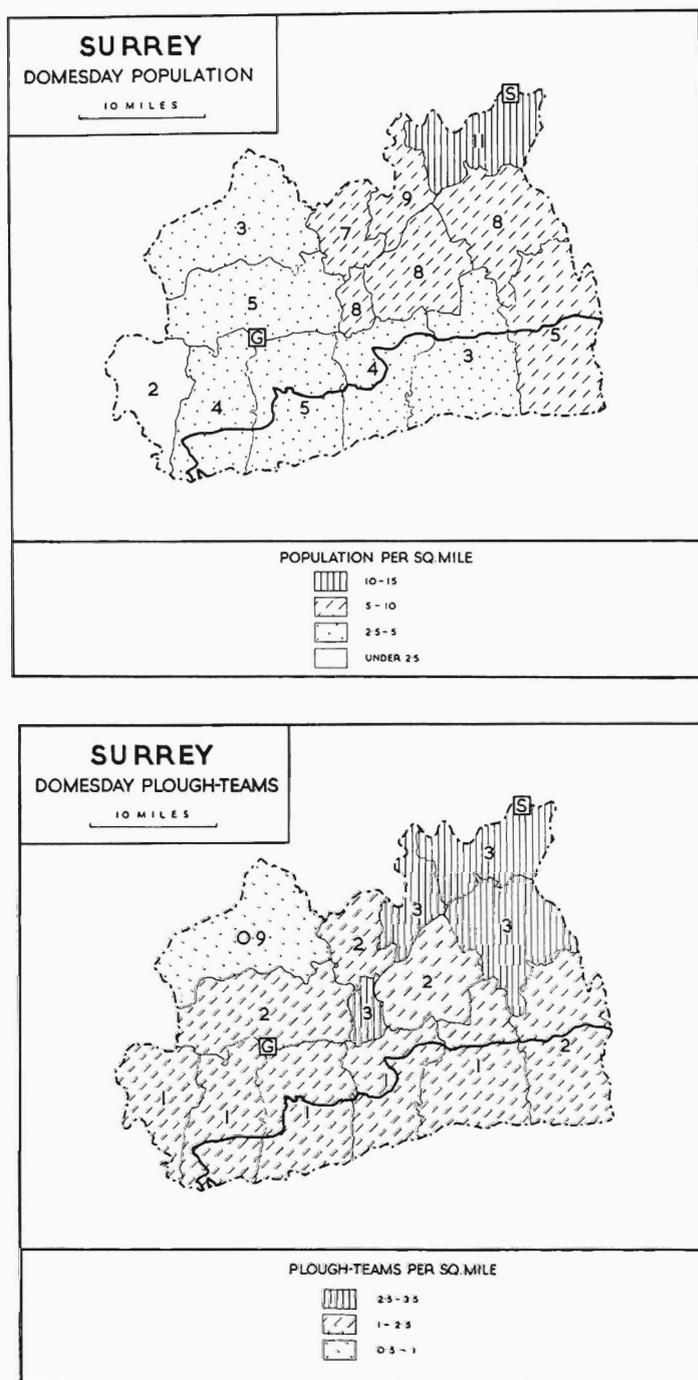


Fig 14 Population and plough-teams in 1086: densities mapped by hundreds. (From Darby & Campbell, *Domesday geography of south-east England*, figs 108, 110)

as early as the mid 12th century the need was tacitly recognised, and clearances allowed in return for fines and rents.¹² Nonetheless, a peasant wishing to colonise in the royal forest needed to overcome a whole additional set of petty hindrances and financial disincentives. In any case, it was not only the king who had an interest in restricting clearance. The concern of lords to maintain the ancient rhythm of seasonal grazing, and hence the pastures on which it depended, was a restrictive influence throughout Surrey. As late as 1234/5, litigation over pannage rights in Brookwood, Woking, shows that the grazing of large swine-herds was still important in the forest area.¹³

Thus the poverty of the soil and the restraints of crown and landlords combined to make this a landscape which developed late. From the deeds, court rolls and accounts of Chertsey and Westminster Abbeys the process can be traced from c1270 onwards; and since the region lay under forest law throughout the 13th century, detailed records of assarts and purprestures appear in forest eyre rolls for 1256 and 1269.¹⁴

The placename element *-scēat* (fig 13) supports the idea that cultivation of the woods and broom-grown heaths progressed south-westwards from the rivers, and gives a clue to the form which it probably took. This is the only clearance element with a restricted distribution which is not mainly Wealden: nine of the twelve *-scēats* lie in the western halves of Godley and Woking hundreds. The basic sense is 'a corner of land', often projecting into a different type of countryside; it could apparently describe both a neck of woodland between two fields and a strip of cultivated land surrounded by wood.¹⁵ The frequency of this element evokes just such a landscape as 13th-century sources describe: a patchwork of small enclosures, crofts of moor and strips of alder coppice, enlarged by a steady stream of small purprestures. Thus in 1228/9 Alan Basset granted to William de la Rude a Woking virgate augmented by three acres of moor and a purpresture of thirteen perches next the road from Horsell to Sidewood, in return for a release of all purprestures made or to be made by Alan and his heirs in the manor of Woking.¹⁶ Possibly the *-scēat* names reflect, in an earlier phase, this distinctive pattern of colonisation by means of innumerable tiny enclosures.

The forest eyre rolls of 1256 and 1269 include surveys of encroachments for which fines were imposed, listed individually with their acreages and classified as 'old and new assarts' and 'old and new purprestures'. Unfortunately these data (table 5) are not a complete record of colonisation in the period covered. Since 'old assarts' were evidently those surveyed in previous regards,¹⁷ the lack of correspondence between the 'new assarts' of the earlier record and the 'old assarts' of the later suggests that at least one intervening roll is missing. But even a full set of returns would have been far from comprehensive: by now most large-scale assarters were working under royal exemptions which put them outside the jurisdiction of the regarders.¹⁸ Thus the 747 acres of assarts and purprestures in north-west Surrey known to have been registered over some two or three decades can be only a fraction of the total.

The difference between assarts and purprestures in the eyre rolls was mainly one of size and use, purprestures being tiny and in general non-arable (below, p87). Even the assarts were very small, with a median plot size of 1.5 acres. A few large encroachments of 10–20 acres, the work of Chertsey Abbey and other important landlords, are very much the exception; as recorded by these surveys the process was overwhelmingly one of peasant initiative.

Three slightly later sources supplement this evidence: accounts for the Westminster Abbey manor of Pyrford from 1276; court rolls for the same manor from 1335; and abstracts of Chertsey Abbey court rolls from 1327.¹⁹ At Pyrford we find the monks clearing a demesne wood at 'Petingle' in 1288/9, when many cartloads of great oaks (*robura*) and young rafter-standards (*cheveron*) were felled and shipped to Westminster; four years later the roots were grubbed out and the area sown with 36 quarters 7 bushels of oats.²⁰ But more regular and conspicuous are the tenants' assarts: scarcely a single year's account fails to show increments and 'new rent' from

TABLE 5 Assarts and purprestures surveyed in forest eyres of 1256 and 1269

	<i>Median plot size (in acres)</i>		<i>Total acreage (in acres)</i>		
	<i>Assarts</i>	<i>Purprestures</i>	<i>Assarts</i>	<i>Purprestures</i>	<i>Both</i>
Artingdon	—	1.0	—	6.0	6.0
Ash	2.0	1.0	49.5	23.0	72.5
Bisley	—	0.006	—	1.008	1.008
Byfleet	—	0.006	—	2.6	2.6
Chertsey	1.0	0.3	50.5	57.0	107.5
Chobham	1.0	0.5	9.5	22.6	32.1
Compton	—	0.75	—	54.6	54.6
Egham	—	0.006	—	1.5	1.5
Frimley	1.0	0.5	11.5	29.6	41.1
Horsell	5.0	0.006	10.0	15.1	25.1
Pirbright	—	0.5	—	21.6	21.6
Pyrford	—	0.5	—	15.6	15.6
Thorpe	—	0.006	—	0.013	0.013
Walton-on-Thames	1.75	2.0	38.0	45.0	83.0
Wanborough	—	1.0	—	76.5	76.5
Windlesham	—	0.006	—	7.1	7.1
Woking	2.0	0.5	7.0	30.1	37.1
Worplesdon	1.0	0.75	75.0	67.1	142.1
	1.5	0.5	251.0	476.0	727.0

Sources: PRO, E32/195; E32/194

Notes: (a) Ash includes Henley and Wyke; Chertsey includes Anningley and Addlestone; Egham includes Trotsworth; Woking includes Mayford and Sutton
 (b) 0.006 acre = 1 perch

encroachments on the waste. The court rolls not only confirm and amplify this evidence, but also show that the flood of tiny assarts continued unabated until the Black Death. At Ash in 1331 four men had licence to hold in common a purpresture called la Throte, enclosed by them, containing three acres; at Pyrford in 1334 Nicolas Pychard was allowed to hold in bondage half a rood of the lord's waste at le Swer'.²¹ These are merely two of the innumerable cases involving freemen and villeins, groups and individuals, at least one or two of which were noted at the majority of courts on every manor covered.²²

Colonisation of land: the Downs and dip-slope

Between the London Basin northwards and the Greensands below the scarp-slope southwards lie two distinct groups of parishes: the elongated ones of central and eastern Surrey, descending from the London clay, traversing the Thanet and Reading beds and rising up the dip-slope of the Downs; and the more compact parishes which lay wholly or largely on the chalk. The former

group was more populous and its economic balance more highly ordered, but common problems of interpretation make it convenient to consider together the chalkland and the more fertile belt which followed its northern edge.

Studies of colonisation in the south-eastern counties have generally concentrated on the Weald at the expense of the Downland, but Everitt's recent work on Kent redresses this imbalance. In his view the Downs, like the Weald, were a pasture zone for the first Anglo-Saxons, but were colonised so early that their character as a region of 'secondary' rather than 'primary' settlement is

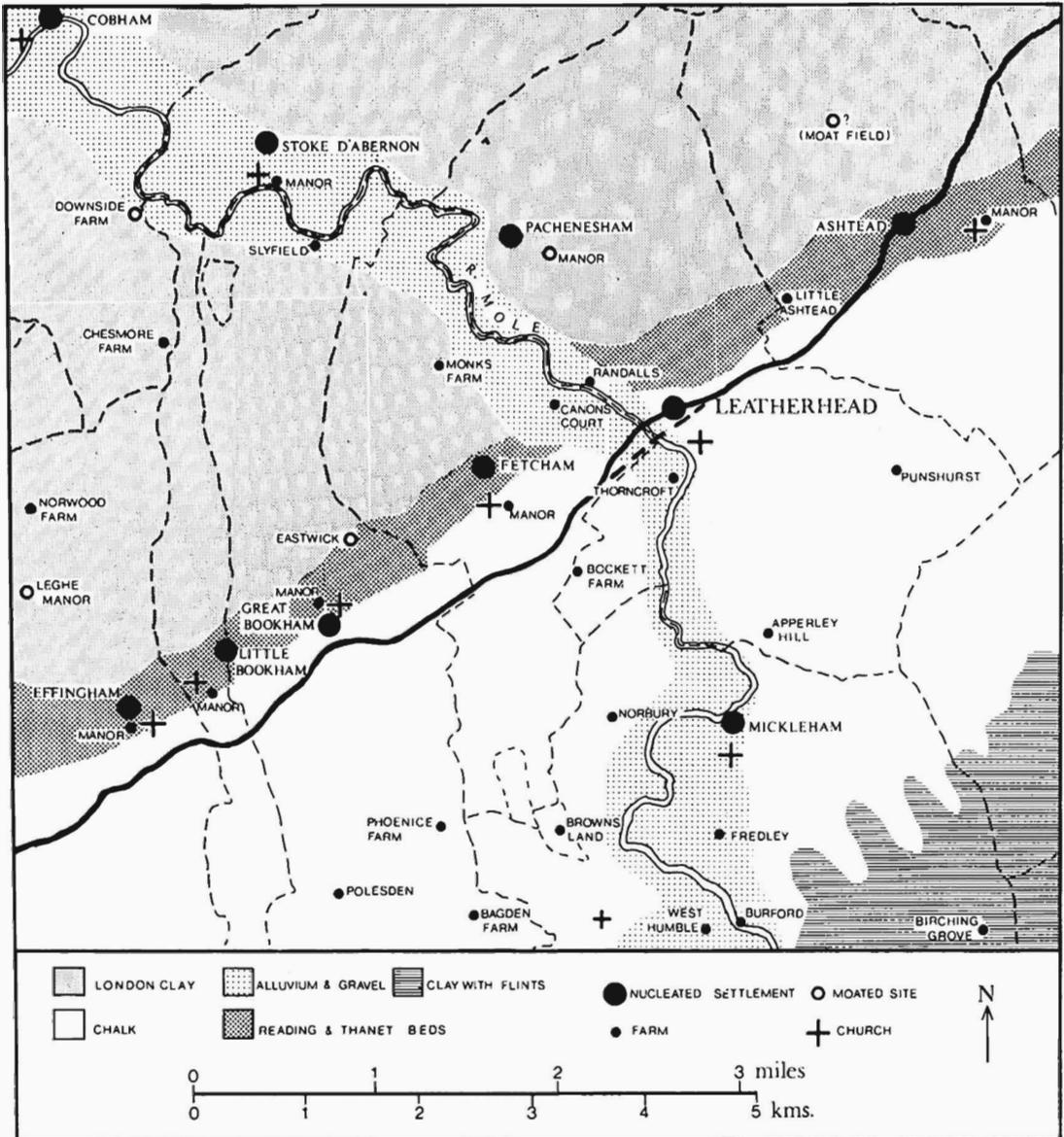


Fig 15 The settlement pattern in part of Cophthorne and Effingham hundreds in c1300. (Mainly from data in *PNSy*, supplemented from other sources in the case of Leatherhead parish)

far less obvious.²³ While it might be objected in general terms that this is altogether too rigid a view of settlement history, the important and continuing role of woodland pasture in the economy of the Downs certainly needs emphasising. Furthermore, Everitt's model of the Downs as an area of small and proliferating manors, where the initiative was taken by the developing gentry class rather than by great landlords,²⁴ matches very well with the Surrey evidence.

The frequency of *-hām* place-names in or near the line of dip-slope villages – Bookham, Fetcham, Pachenesham, Mickleham, Epsom²⁵ – argues strongly for primary Anglo-Saxon settlement along the lines of Stane Street and of the west–east trackway on which the villages lie (fig 15); the large cemetery at Hawk's Hill has produced up to a hundred inhumations of late 6th- to early 7th-century date.²⁶ Whether the communities which it served were already nucleated on the sites which now bear their names is another matter. The royal *tūn* and minster site at Pachenesham, and the suggested Roman field-system nearby (above, p29; below, p101) were both on the London clay two or three miles north of the line of villages. By 1086, at all events, the townships were relatively well-developed, their density of population and teams surpassed only by the area near London (table 3). The recurring pattern of nucleated village, common subdivided field, arable enclosures and waste appears firmly established when topography first becomes visible in 13th-century deeds.

In the purely Downland parishes, by contrast, agrarian organisation was more haphazard and few settlements seem ever to have been more than hamlets. Common fields existed, but they were usually small and are less well documented than those on the fertile downwash of the dip-slope (fig 21). On the Downs medieval cultivation was less intensive, but not necessarily less ancient. Conventional interpretations of settlement history, which would unhesitatingly classify such land as marginal, must now reckon with mounting evidence that Downland in southern Britain was extensively farmed even by the Neolithic period;²⁷ and large areas of 'Celtic' fields at Leatherhead and Coulsdon are proof of Iron Age agriculture on the Surrey Downs.²⁸ It would be simplistic to assume that exploitation was continuous, but equally so to ascribe all medieval Downland cultivation to a progressive growth which only reached such terrain at times of land-hunger. One recent archaeological study concludes that 'the small agricultural settlement based on mixed farming', with a tendency to remain stable over long periods, was the main social and economic unit on the East Sussex Downs during the late Iron Age and Romano-British periods.²⁹ Another suggests that the economic basis for the Surrey hillforts of Anstiebury, Holmbury and Hascombe 'rested on scattered farmsteads to the north, sited in favourable positions on the chalk of the North Downs and on the dip slope beyond'.³⁰ So far as purely physical evidence goes, these small farm units seem much of a piece with those which existed on Leatherhead and Mickleham Downs some thirteen centuries later (fig 16). Since the remarkable discoveries at Chalton, Hampshire (below, p55), historians can no longer assume that Downland settlements and fields were abandoned between the departure of the Romans and the advent of 12th-century colonists.

Significant 5th- and 6th-century settlement on the higher reaches of the Surrey Downs is suggested by a cluster of cemeteries (at Banstead, Beddington, Carshalton and Coulsdon), and by four parish names in *-hām* (Chelsham, Sanderstead, Warlingham and Woldingham).³¹ Cultivation during the mid Saxon period is implied by a will of 871 × 889 which bequeaths 32 hides in Sanderstead and shows that the little manor of Farleigh produced enough grain to owe a yearly corn-render of 30 ambers.³² The Domesday data for the selected townships (table 3) suggest a population considerably higher than in the Weald and Windsor Forest areas, though perhaps rather lower than in the parishes crossing the dip-slope. Clearly the region supported established settlement and agriculture in 1086 and had done so for some centuries.

The ratio of teams to people, however, is the lowest in Surrey. Partly this may reflect the lightness of the chalky soil, requiring fewer ploughs to till it, but it also suggests communities in

which cultivation was still less important than grazing. The Downs, like the Weald, had woodland for pannage, but the grazing of animals other than pigs in the open hillsides would also have had its place in the primitive Anglo-Saxon economy. Place-name evidence for the specialised grazing functions of some Downland townships is discussed above (p30); such nomenclature suggests that the main agrarian development of these places post-dated the great age of transhumance grazing.

At Merstham, charter bounds of 947³³ give a clearer picture of the late Anglo-Saxon landscape. The parish lies on the scarp-slope, its northern two-thirds rising steeply over the Downs and bisected by a dry valley. The most fertile ground traversed by the perambulation was to the south-west, on the greensand at the foot of the scarp slope. Here names suggesting habitation and farming concentrate on a short length of the Merstham-Gatton boundary: Becc's *hamm*, Beaduweald's enclosure (*bagan*), Toda's *camp* (an interesting archaism, derived from *campus*, which possibly denotes an untilled open tract)³⁴ and Scyn's curtilage (*weorþ*).³⁵ Such names also existed, however, on the summit of the Downs: the boundary passes clockwise around the north-east quarter of the parish from the bean-plot between the two *hamms* to Esne's *hamm*, and thence to Tunel's curtilage (*weorþ*).³⁶

The elements compounded with personal names in the Merstham bounds mostly suggest enclosure: *bagan*, *weorþ* and *hamm* (the last to be distinguished, of course, from *bām*). The particular frequency of *hamm* is reinforced if a charter of 967 which grants land at a place called *Cealvadune* refers to Chaldon in Surrey, a parish adjoining Merstham.³⁷ Detailed analysis would be needed both to confirm this identification and to plot the bounds, but the presence of no less than four *hamms* among the eight boundary-points (*beonningham*, *stig ham*, *fern ham* and *blosbam*) is striking. On the Downs as in the Weald, so many *hamms* must clearly be understood as 'enclosures' or 'curtilages' rather than 'river-meadows'.³⁸ As revealed in these boundaries, the man-made landscape was principally one of small enclosures, sometimes arable (the Merstham 'bean-plot' is a clear case) though not necessarily always. Interlying areas of woodland and scrub also find their place in the Merstham charter.

Were any of these names habitative? In the Merstham bounds one enclosure name, *tunles weorþ*, survives as Tollsworth Farm,³⁹ and a visible rectangular earthwork south of the farm would correspond closely with the boundary point.⁴⁰ The 'bean-plot between two hamms' (*bean stede betwib ham twam hammum*) is identifiable as a point halfway between two medieval settlement sites, Netherne Farm and Woodplace Farm, each about half a mile from the boundary.⁴¹ These cases strongly suggest that *hamm* or *weorþ* described small compact farm units, homesteads surrounded by their own arable and pasture enclosures on the pattern visible in later sources. Such a view is supported by the occurrence of *weorþ* in other minor Surrey place-names (below, p62). If so, it was possible by the 10th century to find two contiguous farms on the summit of the Surrey Downs with tilled land extending to the boundary.

Many farmsteads of this kind are described in 12th- and 13th-century sources, the economic basis of a relatively substantial freeholding class. Two Downland farms in the south of Leatherhead parish were Aperdele and Punsherst, examples respectively of the *-leah* and *-byrst* elements denoting clearance. Both occur in a deed of c1170,⁴² and from then until the early 14th century the de Aperdeles and the de Punshersts were among the leading families of Cophthorne hundred. A group of long-established farms on Leatherhead and Mickleham Downs (fig 16) can be accurately mapped in their late 13th-century form (below, p73), and since one of these was a parochial outlier its boundaries were probably fixed before c1180. Such farms on open Downland were generally smaller than their Wealden counterparts, perhaps a consequence of the lighter soil and of a pastoral economy which relied more on common sheep-runs than on waste areas within tenement boundaries.

As usual, it is easier to illustrate individual farm and settlement types than to trace the general

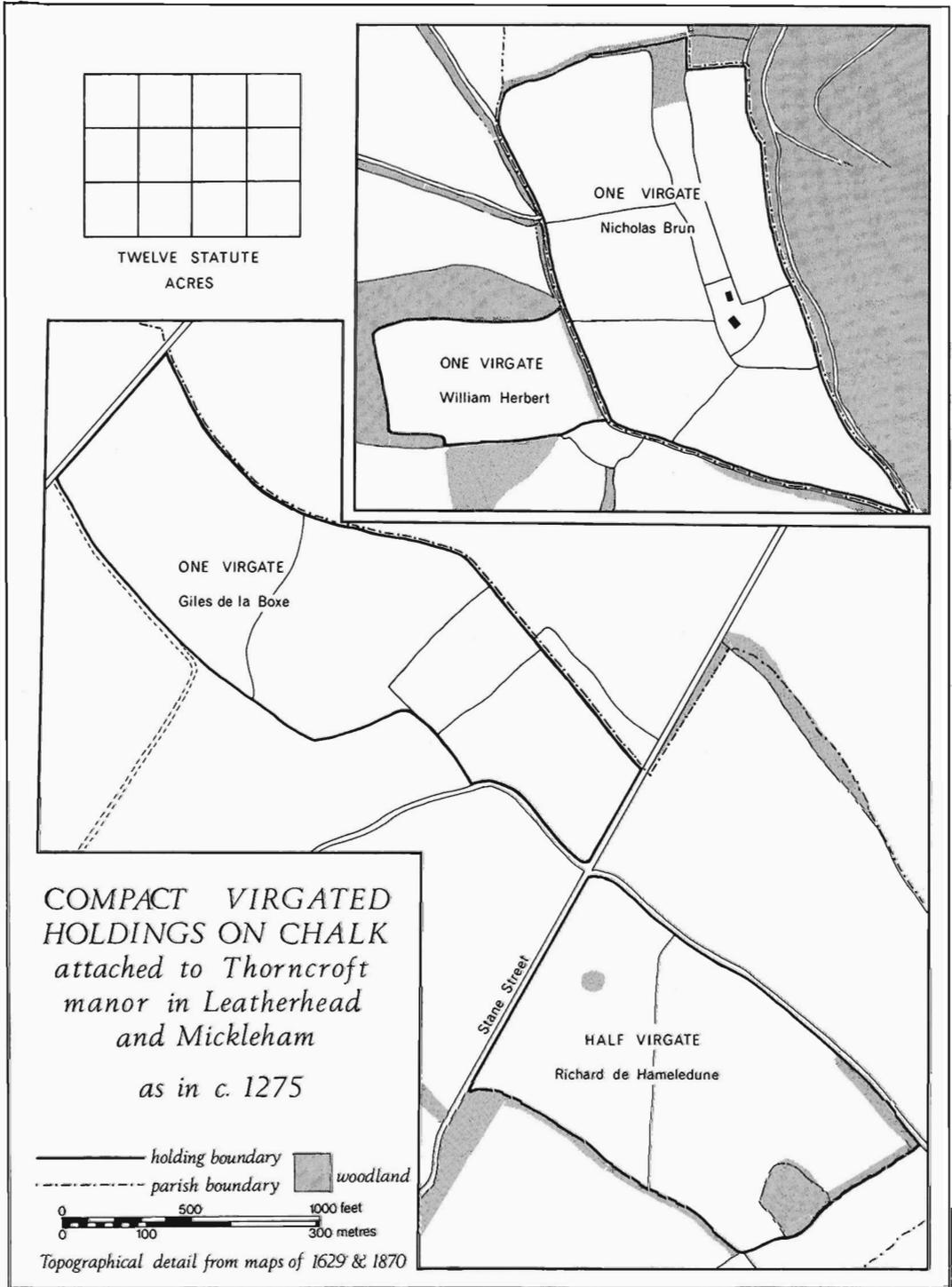


Fig 16 Compact Downland farms, illustrated by virgated holdings attached to Thorncroft manor

chronology of growth. One approach, botanical dating of hedgerows, has recently been attempted for the Downland parish of Chelsham. This study⁴³ identifies two groups of enclosures with hedges 900–1300 years old, one around the church and the other around Ficklesole Farm. Both sites are on high ground in the north-east of the parish near a Roman roadline, and are surrounded by a thin scatter of ‘early’ hedges. From these, it is suggested, clearance spread during the 12th and 13th centuries, first along the central ridge and then onto lower ground. The reliability of this kind of evidence is still very uncertain,⁴⁴ and in any case it would obviously fail to show the presence of an unhedged common field, which Chelsham may well have possessed. The 11th-century arable must have extended some way at least beyond the small ‘early’ enclaves, for Domesday Book lists 42 inhabitants and 11 teams (table 2). The Chelsham hedge survey cannot adequately reflect land exploitation before 1100, though it may give a distorted reflection of an agrarian initiative belonging to the 11th and 12th centuries rather than earlier.⁴⁵

Growth in these centuries is also suggested by the rapid appearance of churches on dip-slope and Downland manors (below, pp124–6). The proportion of churches in this area which first appear during the period 1086–1160 is the highest in Surrey; especially notable (fig 35) is the extent to which the close-spaced line of churches along the dip-slope seems to have been a product of the Norman period. It will be argued below that proprietary interest was the main motive for these foundations. It is nonetheless also true (below, p120) that the incidence of Domesday churches shows a distinct correlation with the population and resources of the manors which they served. It is unlikely that the Norman church foundations are wholly unrelated to economic growth.

The townships discussed above are all typical of the estate geography of this part of Surrey: self-contained and independent. However small, Merstham, Chaldon, Thorncroft (Leatherhead) and Chelsham were manors in their own right, not members of larger manors. By the 10th and 11th centuries, if not long before, such places supported settled communities which combined stock-rearing with some arable farming. To colonise and exploit was in landowners’ interests; the absence of any charter evidence for large-scale clearances near the centre of a demesne economy on the Surrey Downs suggests that by c1150 the main work was done. The few references to assarting in such contexts suggests a leisurely nibbling at the numerous pockets of residual woodland.⁴⁶ Large areas of Downland wood and scrub were, indeed, colonised during the 12th century; but these, by contrast, were usually outlying and subordinate parts of larger manors which had preserved something of the old economic balance.

The clearest illustration is Kingswood, the large royal wood-pasture attached to Ewell manor (above, p30). In 1158 Henry II granted Ewell with its members to the canons of Merton,⁴⁷ who soon began a parcelling-out of Kingswood to potential assarters. In 1177 × 80 the prior and convent granted to Luke son of William de la Dene and his heirs 42 acres ‘*quas Godwinus Pratavis eius per nos in nemore nostro de Kingeswude assartavit*’,⁴⁸ while another charter of the same priorate records the formal definition of new holdings:⁴⁹

Sciant presentes et futuri quod ego Robertus dictus prior ecclesie Sancte Marie de Meriton, et humilis eiusdem loci conventus, concessimus Turberto servienti nostro pro servicio suo totam terram illam que iacet ex utraque parte vallis inter duas silvas de Kingeswude, a terra scilicet quam Willelmus et Wulficus de nobis tenent usque ad viam eiusdem nemoris que vocatur Stonestret; terram dicimus in latitudine habentem ad superius capud tres quarentenas cum quadem mara, ad inferius vero capud quarentenam et dimidiam, sicut ego Robertus prior et quidam fratrum nostrorum eam perambulavimus et divisimus presente et vidente halimoto de Ewelle.

Later Kingswood deeds refer back to 12th-century assarts: re-grants of 24 acres and 25 acres in 1198 and 1218, of thirteen acres in 1238 × 49, and of seventeen acres in 1249 × 52.⁵⁰ In 1189

Richard I acquitted the Priory of forest dues on 101 acres of assart in Ewell and its appurtenances.⁵¹ The work was done by the hands of tenants, but the canons' initiative made it possible: Kingswood had been deliberately preserved as woodland pasture, and then equally deliberately assigned for clearance. While stock from the main manor was still being grazed there in the late 12th century (the grant to Turbert allows him 'communem pasturam peccoribus suis in nemore cum nostris dominicis peccoribus'), such extensive controlled clearance must indicate that this function was in decline.

A second case is the fragmented Winchester manor represented by Beddington, Carshalton and Bandon (above, pp25, 33; fig 11F).⁵² In c 900 (when it was 'fully stocked', though only recently 'stripped bare by heathen men') it had seven bondsmen, 90 acres under crop and some 300 full-grown livestock, of which something under half were pigs and the rest sheep.⁵³ For a 70-hide manor this is scarcely an impressive list: it suggests both a generally light exploitation and a pastoral bias. There must therefore have been large areas of common waste, which presumably included the tract of Downland at the south ends of Beddington and Carshalton townships which was known by c1200 as 'la Woodcote'. One Luke de la Woodcote and his prolific family were established here by John's reign on substantial arable holdings. Apparently la Woodcote was already being exploited by 1189,⁵⁴ and 13th-century deeds reveal a small community of substantial peasants farming land in large measured-out blocks (below, p84). This evidence, less explicit than that for Kingswood, points to a similar development.

Banstead was another manor which rose southwards up the dip-slope to a Downland pasture, the *Suthmeresfelda* ascribed to it in late Anglo-Saxon charters.⁵⁵ Two late 12th-century deeds reveal arable holdings here similar to those at Kingswood and Woodcote: a compact virgate which 'iacet ante portam de Sumeresfeld',⁵⁶ and another, recently assessed, which was two-thirds assart land and one-third wood (below, p84). A lease of two virgates at *Suthmeresfeld* in 1181 lists five plough-beasts, twenty sheep, eight pigs, and sixteen acres under crop.⁵⁷ This rare glimpse of a small Downland farm in operation demonstrates the continued importance of both open and woodland grazing, alongside an arable area of recent growth and perhaps of relatively recent origin.

These cases illustrate the vitality of 12th-century assarting on the Surrey Downs. Yet it was a short-lived phenomenon, one aspect of a phase of exceptionally rapid developments in the manorial economy. The much fuller documentation from the 13th century reveals no clearances comparable to Kingswood, Woodcote and *Suthmeresfeld*; all these areas had served pastoral functions within a broader system which must have prompted their 10th-, 11th- and early 12th-century lords to preserve them. From the rather sudden abandonment of this policy arose peasant opportunities which were never to recur.

Colonisation of land: the Weald clay and Greensand

For few parts of England is settlement history so controversial as that of the Weald. J H Round's statement of 1899 that the Weald 'was still, at the time of the Conquest, a belt some twenty miles in width, of forest, not yet opened up, except in a few scattered spots, for human settlement',⁵⁸ sums up the traditional view. Current work is still far from a consensus. In pointing out that the ostensible Domesday picture of an empty waste may be highly misleading, Sawyer argues for extensive, well-established settlement in the eleventh-century Weald.⁵⁹ Yet in 1973 A R H Baker could still write of the Low Weald that 'we should envisage it in 1086 as a wooded area, with woods and swine pastures attached to settlements outside the Weald, and with only occasional centres of cultivation'.⁶⁰ A reappraisal of the Surrey evidence is timely, especially after the important studies of Kent by Witney and Everitt.⁶¹ For present purposes the whole of Surrey

south of the Downs will be considered together, comprising both the main expanse of Weald clay and the Greensand bordering it to north and west.

It is now a commonplace that the absence from Domesday Book of place-names on the clay and Greensand is misleading, reflecting an undeveloped estate structure, not necessarily a lack of settlement.⁶² Within a large estate the data for many settlements, pasture tracts and dennis might be lumped together under one name, as Maitland realised long ago in relation to Farnham:⁶³

We certainly must not draw the inference that there was but one vill in this tract. If the bishop is tenant in chief of the whole hundred and has become responsible for all the geld that is levied therefrom, there is no great reason why the surveyors should trouble themselves about the vills. Thus the simple *Episcopus tenet Ferneham* may dispose of some 25,000 acres of land.

This makes interpretation of the economic data in Domesday Book peculiarly difficult, for a high proportion of the area's resources will, from an uncritical mapping of manorial centres, appear to lie outside it. In a transhumance economy Domesday pannage renders are, of course, useless as a guide to the distribution of woodland. An analysis of selected manors which were unitary, well-defined and lay wholly on the clay and Greensand (tables 2, 3) suggests that the Wealden population was far from negligible, though distinctly sparser than in other regions. The surprisingly high ratio of teams to people perhaps reflects the need for more intensive ploughing on the heavy Wealden soils. Discrepancies between the manors chosen suggest that settlement density within the Surrey Weald was very variable, though with a slight increase from west to east: Farnham hundred has the sparsest listed population with only 3.4 individuals per 1,000 acres, whereas Nutfield, with 12.6 per 1,000 acres, was as heavily settled as the dip-slope manors.

The broad conclusion must be that by 1086 some form of settlement and agriculture existed right across the clay and Greensand belt. Was this already ancient, or was it recent and still quickly expanding? Were the peasant communities concentrated on the Greensand, or were they widely scattered through the former forest? Such questions cannot be answered from Domesday data alone.

The Weald was largely forest when the first Germanic settlers arrived, and so their descendants long described it: 'the great forest which we call Andred' is the term used by the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle under the year 893.⁶⁴ Those who would argue for significant Wealden settlement in the pagan Anglo-Saxon period must explain the paucity there of the etymological and archaeological evidence which is elsewhere so plentiful. The Surrey Weald has produced not a single cemetery, and the only excavated settlement site in the area lies on the Greensand.⁶⁵ Place-names containing *-hām* and *-ingas* are rare on the Greensand and completely absent from the clay.⁶⁶ The likelihood of major early religious centres at Thunderfield and Farnham (above, pp19–20, 25) is not evidence for clearance and settlement: the tendency of Germanic pagans to worship in remote woodland places implies rather the opposite.

The Farnham charter of 685 × 7 (above, p25) has been used to support arguments for very early colonisation of the Weald and its periphery. It certainly shows that this large multiple estate was already divided up into named and hidated tracts, though there is no evidence that the marginal areas bore anything but the light assessments characteristic of Wealden land (above, p22). Sawyer suggests that since the charter and Domesday Book both assess Farnham at 60 hides, its arable resources failed to increase significantly between the 680s and 1066.⁶⁷ But if the TRE hidations are indeed as ancient and formalised as is claimed above (p21), this argument falls. Economic growth would not have changed the Farnham assessment; it would simply have made it less and less real. But even if it could indeed be shown that this estate was extensively settled by the 680s, there would be no grounds for extrapolating to the adjoining Weald clay. Farnham

hundred lies mainly on the Greensand, and the absence of a heavy forest cover may have encouraged early clearance. Small, widely dispersed settlements may have been established early, but then prevented from expanding by the limitations of the soil; in 1086 Farnham was in fact one of the least densely settled parts of the county. There can be no analogy here to prejudice evidence for the later development of the Weald; and such evidence, etymological, documentary and physical, is certainly not lacking.

Place-name elements suggesting clearance in and around the Weald tend to be localised. The element *-ceart* (a rough common with undergrowth) is confined to the greensands along the northern fringe of the Weald (fig 13); continuing a pattern equally conspicuous across Kent, these names may reflect an early advance towards the forest margins from settlements on the edge of the Downs.⁶⁸ It remains likely that this strip was always exploited more heavily than either the chalk or the clay – a view which the Merstham charter bounds (above, p46) tend to support.

Other elements record the piecemeal destruction of the forest from within, but marked vagaries in their distribution imply differences either in chronology or in local usage.⁶⁹ In the Kentish Weald, *-denn*, ‘clearing at the heart of a swine-pasture’, is the most common and characteristic primary clearance name; yet it is less common in Sussex⁷⁰ and hardly occurs at all in Surrey. This must reflect localised terminology, combined perhaps with the later survival of the denn system in the eastern Weald (below, p54): it is unquestionable that numerous Wealden settlements in Surrey began as swine-pastures. The nearest Surrey equivalent may be *-falod* (a ‘fold’ or enclosure for animals, not necessarily sheep),⁷¹ which is virtually confined to the south of Godalming, Blackheath and Wotton hundreds (fig 13), spreading into the adjoining area of Sussex. Two further elements, *-byrst* (‘a wood or wooded eminence’) and *-ersc* (‘stubble-land or plough-land’),⁷² concentrate in the same area as *-falod* (figs 12, 13), though the first is very common and is found throughout Surrey.

It is possible that differences in the incidence of clearance place-names are sometimes chronological. Thus *-leah*, that most characteristic such element throughout Anglo-Saxon England,⁷³ does not show marked concentrations within Surrey, though it is notably absent from the north-east (fig 12). On its own it suggests assarting which was no more dynamic in the Weald than outside it. Possibly the other elements reflect later phases: *-byrst* the first serious attack on the woodland, and *-falod* and *-ersc* an intensive, localised colonisation of the western Surrey Weald and adjoining Greensands. The *-falod* communities such as Alfold, Chiddingfold and Dunsfold, agrarian by the 12th century, must have been pastoral in origin, while *-ersc* (in Wonersh, Rydinghurst, etc) carries connotations of newly-broken arable. Whatever the date of these names, they evoke the rapid exploitation of large, under-developed tracts.

Written evidence for pre-Domesday settlement in the Surrey Weald is confined to the two easternmost hundreds, Reigate and Tandridge. Ealdorman Alfred’s will (871 × 889) bequeaths six hides in Lingfield and one at Linkfield, Reigate.⁷⁴ The first of these properties is very likely identical with the six hides at Lingfield which Queen Æthelflaed (dead by 964) reputedly gave to Hyde Abbey with two hides at Langhurst.⁷⁵ Another Anglo-Saxon will, that of Brihtric and Ælfswith (973 × 987), mentions the manors of Titsey and Godstone and ten hides at Stratton.⁷⁶ Despite the evidence for extensive later assarting (below, pp53–4), south-eastern Surrey evidently contained significant arable areas by the late 9th and 10th centuries. But the absence of such data from the other Weald and Greensand hundreds is striking, and it is no coincidence that Reigate and Tandridge hundreds appear more populous than the rest of the Surrey Weald in 1086 (fig 14). Further west the very localised *-falod* and *-ersc* names, as well as some of the *-byrst* names, suggest a contrasting pattern: an intensive primary exploitation in the very late Anglo-Saxon period.⁷⁷

Church buildings (ch 5) support the view that the Surrey Weald, and especially its western half, was expanding fast in this period. Despite major difficulties in interpreting the evidence, a

strong impression emerges that this area, like the Downland, was acquiring new churches exceptionally rapidly through the 11th and early 12th centuries (figs 32, 35). Four late Saxon buildings in the Godalming area were identical in size and proportion, suggesting that little churches were springing up in the area with a speed which even encouraged stereotyped planning (fig 31; below, p122). Three of these are on the clay, and one (Alfold) retains an early Norman font – surely a clear sign of established settlement. Further east, the Chertsey Abbey denn at Horley had probably not long possessed a church in 1086, while the steady expansion of Wealden communities over the next fifty years is reflected in a succession of church foundations which are almost certainly post-Domesday (below, p126).

Some parts of the Surrey Weald evolved as unitary tracts, others as complex archipelagos of manorial outliers. The second pattern predominates in the area straddling the ‘Leatherhead’ and ‘Wallington’ territories (above, p17). Here parish boundaries do not neatly reflect older units but sprawl untidily across the complex of intersecting rights, with numerous outliers remaining into the 19th century.⁷⁸ There are clear traces here of multiple denn systems analogous to those which survived later and more conspicuously in the Weald of Kent.⁷⁹ Most of the evidence is late and describes Wealden farms and fields owing rents to distant head manors, but occasional pre-Conquest sources establish the sequence of development from denn to dependent arable holding.

Horley and Newdigate parishes illustrate the process. Most of Horley was divided between estates immediately northwards on the Downs dip-slope. Part was attached to the Chertsey Abbey manor of Sutton, to which its church belonged;⁸⁰ two Chertsey forgeries which probably include genuine pre-Conquest material list Sutton with appurtenant woods and ‘cum cubilibus porcorum’ in Thunderfield, Horley.⁸¹ But this can only have been a fraction of the modern parish. In 947 Merstham had dependencies at Petridgewood, Lake and Thunderfield, all in Horley,⁸² while in 963 × 75 the 70-hide estate at Beddington had ‘rura . . . cum silvis sibi pertinentibus’ at *Cysledun*, Tandridge and Lake.⁸³ The last of these, at a more developed stage, presumably explains the 20s ‘de redd’ de Horle et de Lake’ in a late 14th-century Beddington rental.⁸⁴ The Wealden swine-pastures attached to twenty hides at Cheam⁸⁵ were perhaps identical with the holdings at Duxhurst, Horley dependent on the archiepiscopal manor of Cheam in 1283/5.⁸⁶ Later evidence links other tenements with the manors of Banstead,⁸⁷ Walton-on-the-Hill and Woodmansterne, and even post-medieval Horley remained a bewilderingly complex patchwork of outliers.⁸⁸

The Newdigate evidence, entirely post-Conquest, is otherwise very similar. Part of Newdigate was held of the Warenne lordship, and its chapel seems to have been subject either to Reigate or to Leigh.⁸⁹ But much of the parish, which remained a detached part of Copthorne hundred into modern times,⁹⁰ comprised dependencies of Leatherhead, Ashted and Ewell. Two virgates in Newdigate can be traced through the Thorncroft (Leatherhead) court rolls and rentals from c1270 onwards,⁹¹ their last remnant, a house and small curtilage, appearing on a manorial survey of 1629.⁹² Fourteenth-century deeds suggest that land in Leatherhead and Mickleham was often held with land in Newdigate.⁹³ Sixteenth-century Ashted rentals list property in Newdigate comprising a freehold called Breles, fields of ten acres called Ockeleys, a dwelling and pasture called Rolfes, a farm called Marshlands, a tenement called Horseland, a tenement called Beameland, and 60 acres of land.⁹⁴ Property in Newdigate called Kingsland is identifiable with a messuage and 60 acres there held as ancient demesne in 1291 and owing rent at the court of Ewell.⁹⁵ The pattern resembles Horley and clearly reflects a similar origin in multiple swine-pastures.

All the later medieval sources describe tenements and settled homesteads; the 10th-century sources, with one or two exceptions, describe dens and nothing else. The listing of individual dens in pre-Conquest charters implies that enclaves had already been created and equipped with

shepherds' huts: this may be the sense of *rura cum silvis* in the Beddington charter of 963 × 75. Clearance proceeded within this late Anglo-Saxon framework. Systematic assarting is indicated by the blocks of long, linear farm units in central Horley, which contrast with the less regular and perhaps older topography of the riverside enclosures near the parish church.⁹⁶ This, like Kingswood, suggests a large area parcelled out *en bloc*, though the work may have been carried out rather earlier. Even without deliberate clearance, the innate destructiveness of grazing animals would have caused a rapid decline in the woodland cover once dens were established. Whatever the precise chronology, the implication of the charters is unmistakable; settlements which were pastoral and perhaps merely seasonal in the 10th century had become agrarian communities by the 13th. Again our attention focusses on the 11th and 12th centuries.

Exploitation of unitary estates in southern Surrey was curiously uneven. The advanced development of Lingfield and Godstone has already been noted,⁹⁷ and other manors were populous and well-stocked by 1086. Thus Nutfield rivals the dip-slope townships with 12.6 people and 4.6 teams per 1,000 acres (table 2), and numerous long-established settlement sites distributed through the parish have recently been identified.⁹⁸ While the largest concentrations were probably on the Greensand strip, it cannot be doubted that many of the inhabitants of these manors were scattered widely in small settlement nuclei. On the royal manor of Godalming and its church glebe,⁹⁹ the high proportion of bordars/cottars to villans (41 to 55) possibly reflects the presence of a nucleated bond settlement at the manorial centre on the Greensand (below, p75). On the other hand the adjoining manor of Witley, which was almost wholly on the Greensand, had 37 villans but only three cottars.¹⁰⁰ Here the Domesday categories seem to reflect the social and topographical antitheses evident in later agrarian arrangements (below, pp74–7). The bordars/cottars probably lived in servile nucleated communities with some form of common agriculture, whereas the villans, like their descendants, mostly farmed isolated severalties.

The two groups of manors which comprised Blackheath hundred (above, pp25–7) show a demographic contrast. Domesday Book lists total populations of 105 for the 'Gomshall half' (Gomshall, Shere, Albury and Chilworth) and 209 for the 'Bramley half' (Bramley, East Shalford and their members). Thus the 'Bramley half' supported twice the population of the 'Gomshall half', notwithstanding that it was much the same size geographically,¹⁰¹ and it is interesting that the incidence of *-falod* names in the 'Bramley half' is considerably greater. That 11th-century Bramley had a population which was both scattered and relatively numerous is also suggested by the presence there of three churches by 1086 at the latest (below, pp116–19). Does this mean that the 'Gomshall half', which was largely royal demesne, had been organised in a conservative fashion which still reserved large Wealden pastures, whereas assarting had been encouraged throughout Bramley by Æthelnoth of Canterbury and his successor Odo of Bayeux? Again agrarian expansion reflects its tenurial context; with active seigneurial encouragement and the removal of restrictions it was bound to proceed more quickly.¹⁰²

This becomes still clearer after the Conquest. Subinfeudation, which created self-contained tenurial units (above, p31), significantly increased the pace of Wealden exploitation. A knight's direct and undiluted interest in his new, under-developed holding must have been a powerful stimulus in transforming it from a scatter of dens into an independent settled community. The granting of a former woodland common as a knight's fee must imply that its economic development was either accomplished, proceeding or envisaged; conversely, its previous lack of identity suggests that such development was still relatively recent in the late 11th century. Emergent Wealden communities must often lie concealed in unspecific Domesday entries such as 'A knight holds two hides of this manor'. Two examples which can be identified are the adjacent parishes of Burstow and Horne, in origin the southern, wood-pasture halves of two long, strip-like estates (fig 11G).

Burstow's primary association with Blechingley, likely on topographical grounds, is undo-

cumented; it first appears as a member of Wimbledon twenty miles away. Domesday Book either ignores it or subsumes it in the entry for the main manor, but by c1090 its lord, the archbishop, had farmed it for £8 pa to a family which quickly adopted the surname of de Burstow. The church, dedicated to a saint with Canterbury associations, was built or rebuilt at about this time (below, pp126, 147). This cannot mark the beginning of Burstow's development: the rent was substantial, and there is a hint (above, p20) of a meeting-place here well before the Conquest. But subinfeudation firmly divorced it from a federative estate economy and established it as the main demesne manor of a knightly family.¹⁰³

In 1086 half a hide was held of Chivington manor by Roger d'Abernon, here as elsewhere a tenant of Richard fitz Gilbert.¹⁰⁴ This is identifiable with land in Horne, probably the farm later known as Bysse Court. The church and an adjoining ditched homestead (fig 43) existed by c1160–80, by which date Horne seems to have been subinfeudated by the d'Abernons or their successors to a local family taking its name from the Bysse area.¹⁰⁵

The evolution of these two parishes was similar but not contemporaneous. A local family had immediate control of Burstow by c1090, when its development was well advanced. On Roger's half-hide in Horne Domesday Book only lists one plough and five bordars, the latter perhaps indicative in this case of newly-cleared land.¹⁰⁶ It was evidently some decades before the manor acquired a resident lord, and charter evidence (below, p84) shows that significant assarts were still being made there in the later 12th century. This contrast between adjoining tracts of similar soil cannot have a purely economic cause. Burstow's transhumance grazing functions may have been sacrificed earlier because it lay so far from the parent manor, making separation convenient. Horne was physically attached to Chivington, and here the ancient pattern may not have started to decay until the 1070s. In each case, the advent of a substantial resident family and a church heralds the coming of age of the young manor.¹⁰⁷

By the late 11th century, then, farming communities existed throughout the Weald and Greensand areas of Surrey. Significant colonisation continued well beyond 1100; thus a Nutfield deed of c1180 × 1200 grants to John de Heddresham 'totum nemus illud in villa de Nutfeld' quod vocatur Widihorn . . . ita quod predictus Johannes vel heredes sui predictus nemus essartare poterunt, si voluerint, et ad proprios usus convertere'.¹⁰⁸ The Cheam denn of Duxhurst in Horley is stated to have been assarted in the time of Archbishop Hubert Walter (1193–1205),¹⁰⁹ and a group of Oxted deeds shows active if relatively small-scale assarting around 1200.¹¹⁰ On the Greensands of Farnham and its townships, piecemeal clearance by means of tiny assart plots can be traced through the 13th and early 14th centuries on a scale comparable to that of the Windsor Forest area.¹¹¹

But overall the pace was slackening. Private deeds often mention small assarts but rarely very large ones; the earliest specific evidence, from c1180 onwards, suggests that most new intakes could be fitted into a topographical framework and described by the landmarks of a settled countryside (below, p84). In this Surrey differs from parts of the Sussex Weald, where the 12th and 13th centuries have long been recognised as the great age of assarting. It has been shown that Battle Abbey was founded in an almost totally unexploited terrain, while Brandon's study of the East Sussex Weald shows large-scale clearance continuing through the 13th and even into the early 14th century.¹¹² By the 13th century a similar divergence existed between the two halves of Wealden Kent, the western resembling Surrey, and the eastern retaining the whole elaborate system of dennis and droving.¹¹³

The Surrey Weald nonetheless retained many wooded areas (as indeed it does today), and many less tangible traces of its past. The characteristically large Wealden virgates, a result of generous assessment for obligations, reflect the high proportion of woodland and unexploited areas within their bounds (below, p74). Mid 12th-century grants of pannage rights prove that transhumance grazing still retained a certain importance.¹¹⁴ In 13th-century legal sources we

occasionally glimpse the last stages of a conflict of interests which must have begun when the first Wealden land came under the plough. 'Leftsilver' (a payment in recognition of the right to cultivate) reminds us that regular cropping of the dennis began under sufferance, while the yearly 'sumerhus' which Shellwood tenants were still obliged to build in 1226 had originally been for the lord's use when he came to inspect the pannage in late summer.¹¹⁵ Geological and geographical limitations made it impossible for Wealden settlement and agriculture ever to reach the stage of intensity found elsewhere in Surrey (below, p85), and large areas of the Wealden land surface were permanently fossilized as chase, park or warren.¹¹⁶ In agreeing with most recent work that the traditional chronology is incorrect, we must not ignore the many sharp differences between the Weald and surrounding areas. By c1100 the Surrey Weald was extensively settled and farmed; but this settlement and farming was based on a relatively recent woodland past whose traces were everywhere apparent.

The development of settlement types

Throughout Surrey, nucleated and dispersed settlements existed side-by-side. Within the county, the pattern varied somewhat: strongly-marked lines of villages amid a scatter of farms characterised both the dip-slope townships (fig 15, and above, p45) and the Greensands of the Vale of Holmesdale under the scarp-slope, whereas Wealden and Downland villages were more tenuous and diffuse and the farmsteads around them more numerous. Conventional settlement history once provided an easy interpretation: the nucleated villages are characteristically Anglo-Saxon, founded by the first settlers or their near descendants; on the poorer soils farms proliferated later in response to medieval population growth.

In 1961 a study of the scarp-foot villages between Guildford and Reigate by E M Yates gave a new slant to this well-worn theme.¹¹⁷ He pointed out that the pattern of farms and hamlets seems well-established when it first becomes clearly visible in the early 14th century, and must have resembled parts of Kent where a primary pattern of dispersed settlement has long been accepted. Some homesteads of the original colonisers (such as Chilworth, Tyting, Abinger, Dorking and Betchworth) developed as hamlets or villages because of their geographically favourable sites along the Pippbrook, Tillingbourne and Mole. Thus the villages represent primary settlements but were not in origin large clusters of dwellings, while an equally early origin for other farms which failed to grow is not, by implication, excluded. Unfortunately Yates failed to cite early evidence in support of this hypothesis; and his suggestion of a 'Jutish' origin for dispersed settlement in Kent and Surrey Holmesdale has perhaps, at a time when ethnic interpretations are unfashionable, caused him to be taken less seriously than he deserves.

Since Yates wrote, a new orthodoxy has replaced the old, static view of English settlement.¹¹⁸ Excavation and fieldwork have destroyed all credibility in the assumption that villages as we know them were established early in the Anglo-Saxon period. While many 5th- and 6th-century settlements have now been excavated, they tend to be haphazard clusters without alignment, streets or plot-boundaries; to quote P Rahtz, 'in no case is anything like a nucleated or "green" village plan in the medieval sense discernible'.¹¹⁹ So far as the very meagre evidence goes, mid- to late-Saxon 'villages' were equally formless. On the other hand, investigations at Chalton, Hampshire have proved that existing valley-bottom villages were merely the final stage in a long sequence of development. Irregular clusters of dwellings on the summit of the Downs, themselves at least one stage removed from the primary, discrete settlements, were abandoned during c900-1000 in a general population shift; thus, in Fowler's words, 'Domesday Book represents developments which took place mainly in the previous two centuries and not the previous five'.¹²⁰ C C Taylor's analysis of field evidence has revealed 'polyfocal' villages, complex

nucleations fusing together earlier discrete elements, and emphasises the mutable rather than the static elements in village topography.¹²¹ Fieldwork in East Anglia has suggested that existing 'green' villages originated in a post-Conquest shift from mid- or late-Saxon settlement sites identified by scatters of pottery.¹²²

This barrage of new evidence emphasises the danger of preconceptions. It is, for instance, common but wholly fallacious to assert that any particular village, as such, is mentioned in Domesday Book; still more so to date its creation by the *-bām* or *-ingas* name which it now bears. However stable the nomenclature and boundaries of a geographical area, the precise form of settlement within it is more likely to have changed many times over than to have remained static. For Surrey, it must be made clear from the outset that there is no archaeological evidence to establish a pre-Conquest origin for any later medieval village. The physical record is confined to small groups of huts at Farnham and Ham for the early Saxon period, and fragmentary occupation evidence at Wallington, Battersea, Weybridge and Croydon for the mid- to late-Saxon period;¹²³ none of this bears any significant relationship to the perceptible medieval pattern.

The three pre-Conquest *burhs* are a case apart.¹²⁴ The late 9th-century Burghal Hidage mentions Southwark (*Suðringa geweorce*) and Eashing (*Escingum*).¹²⁵ Eashing is now visible only as a flat, lightly fortified promontory overlooking the Wey;¹²⁶ it was quickly abandoned, probably during Æthelstan's reign and presumably for strategic reasons, in favour of Guildford.¹²⁷ A mint existed at Guildford by the 970s, and the basic street-plan and encircling ditch are probably pre-Conquest.¹²⁸ Southwark's importance was considerable, for it guarded the southern approach to London bridge and the city.¹²⁹ A mint existed under Æthelred, and the *burh* figured prominently in the Danish raids of the late 10th and early 11th centuries.¹³⁰ By the Conquest the functioning *burhs* must both have been commercial as well as military centres. In 1086 twelve rural manors scattered widely through eastern Surrey maintained town houses in Southwark, while Guildford contained a recorded 77 *hagae* and four *domus*, three of these properties being attached to the nearby manors of Bramley and Shalford.¹³¹ To these two major centres of population we can probably add at least one other: with its religious importance and links with the dignity of the West Saxon crown (below, p99), Kingston upon Thames must surely have attracted significant settlement by the 11th century.¹³² How much this was true of the other *villae regiae* and minster church centres we cannot even guess.

By 1300 Surrey contained the usual sprinkling of market towns, none large and some hardly distinct from the surrounding villages. Little can be added here to M O'Connell's survey,¹³³ but it is important to note that several of the small towns were founded or replanned during this period on a new, regular layout. Sometimes this may have happened before 1100: it is hard otherwise to explain the abandonment of the isolated minster at Godalming in favour of a smaller church in the present town centre (below, p99).¹³⁴ Farnham and Reigate stand out as planned towns of the mid 12th century, the former probably the work of Bishop Henry de Blois and the latter of the Earls Warenne.¹³⁵ Chertsey (fig 18) adjoins the precinct of the great Abbey; a fair was granted in 1133¹³⁶ and excavation of one burghage has demonstrated continuous occupation beginning in the 12th century.¹³⁷ The very regular plan of Haslemere may plausibly be associated with a market grant of 1221, following a reorganisation by the Bishop of Salisbury in which it superseded an earlier settlement at Pepperhams.¹³⁸

Smaller centres become visible during the 13th century: Dorking with a market by 1241,¹³⁹ and Croydon with a market grant in 1276 and slightly later references to urban property.¹⁴⁰ Two interesting cases, suggesting seigniorial replanning influenced by tenorial factors, are Leatherhead and Blechingley (fig 17): both on Clare manors, both with pre-existing churches as their foci and both based on road-systems at estate boundaries. At Leatherhead, a track dividing the separately-held manors of Thorncroft and Pachenesham seems to have been re-aligned to allow

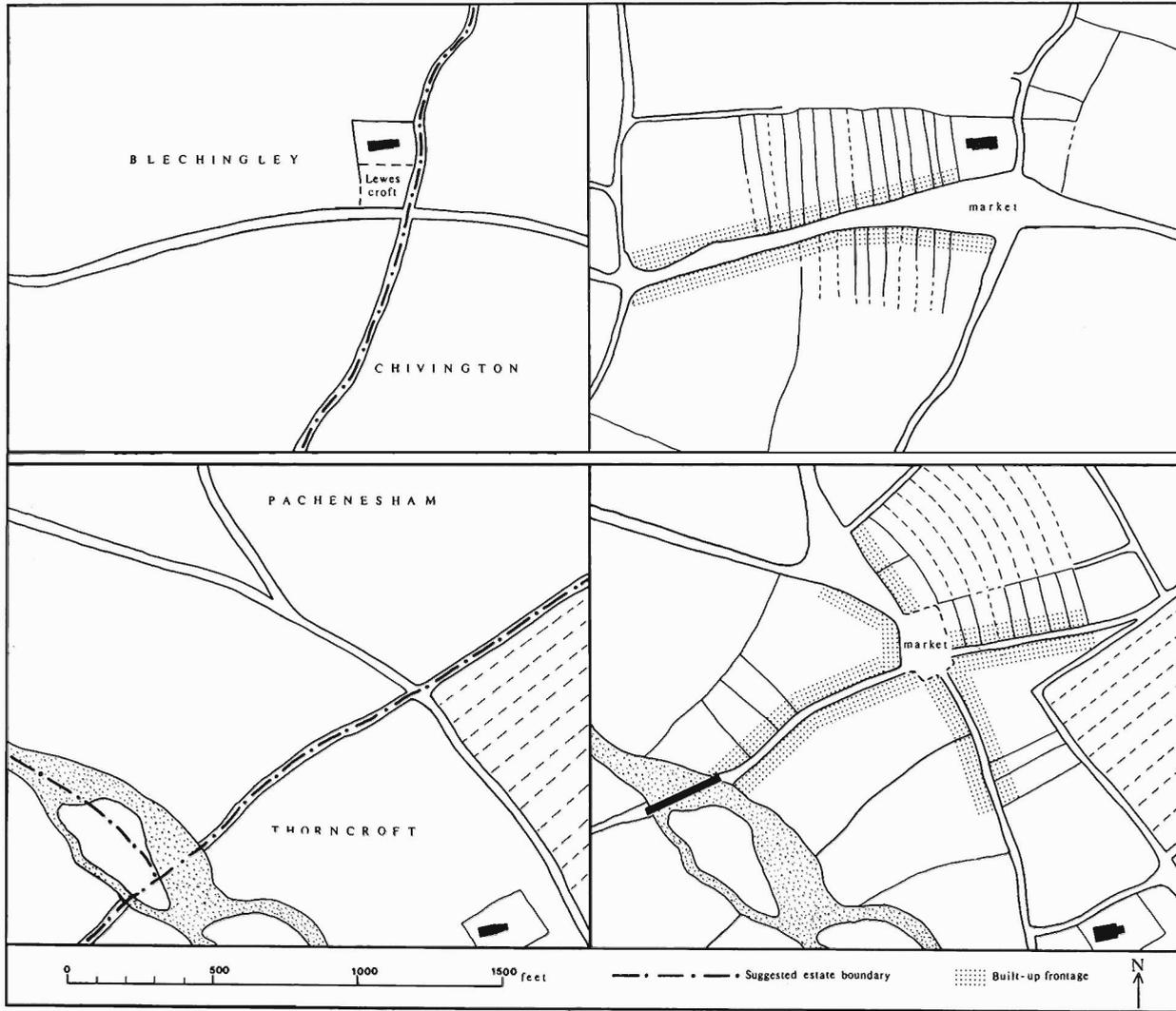


Fig 17 Suggested interpretation of the origins of Leatherhead and Blechingley towns. (Built-up frontages are represented schematically)

tenement plots to be laid out entirely on Pachenesham territory; thus a new crossroads and central market were superimposed on the ancient lane and field pattern. This had happened by the 1280s, and is possibly to be associated with the grant of a market and fair in 1248.¹⁴¹ Blechingley town lies on a boundary between the Domesday estates of Blechingley and Chivington, united in the hands of Richard fitz Gilbert shortly before 1086. The quasi-urban layout, which almost certainly existed by 1225, is based on an earlier crossing of the north-south boundary road with the road between Reigate and Godstone, its funnel-shaped market place occupying the site of an arable croft mentioned in 1138 \times 52.¹⁴² As well as creating new foci for local trade, both acts of re-planning suggest internal changes: an economic coalescence of Thorncroft and Pachenesham on the one hand, and of Blechingley and Chivington on the other, around new main settlements. These deliberately planned 'market villages' blur the dividing-line between towns and purely rural settlements.

The pioneer work of B Roberts has shown the value of village plan analysis. Contrasts in settlement forms, identified by systematic classification, throw light on the dates and original functions of the settlements.¹⁴³ Villages were neither static nor the product of one period only; a full analysis of their development in Surrey would go beyond the scope of this study. Some broad similarities and differences are, however, relevant to early medieval conditions, and certain types of settlement may be closely associated with tenurial and agrarian changes. This discussion (based largely on the Ordnance Survey maps of the 1860s and 1870s) will follow Roberts's classification, in which the main factors are the degree of regularity, the form of layout, and the presence or absence of a green.¹⁴⁴

Except in the Windsor Forest area, most rural nucleations north of the Downs were based on rows, their house-plots closely grouped without interlying wastes or greens. Few villages had rows flanking all four arms of a crossroads. Most are of the simplest possible linear form: two blocks of strip-plots facing each other across a single road, sometimes with back lanes defining the far ends of the crofts. These dip-slope and Thames Basin villages are generally more regular than the agglomerations elsewhere, a regularity which is particularly evident on manors held by Chertsey Abbey (fig 18). Chobham, Egham and Great Bookham are excellent illustrations of regular two-row plans, while Sutton, Epsom and Effingham, more changed in recent centuries, show traces of the same arrangement. Putney seems to have begun as an equally formal two-row village, its tofts with equal ten-perch frontages.¹⁴⁵

On the Weald clay, the scarp slope, the Downs and the Windsor Forest sands, linear plans are the exception rather than the rule. Wealden villages tend to sprawl irregularly over a larger area, though they usually contain fewer house-plots. Several, such as Hambledon, Thursley and Charlwood, are 'polyfocal', not true nucleations so much as groups of individual farms scattered around the same complex of road intersections. At Cranleigh, Elstead and Westcott (the latter proclaimed both by its name and by its location as a satellite settlement of Dorking), three roads with straggling plots converge on a village green. Downland and Greensand villages, some of which have probably suffered depopulation, are either formless and very small (as at Buckland, Gatton and Woldingham) or again of irregular 'green' type (as at Coulsdon and Warlingham). Much the same can be said of virtually all the old settlements in the sandy hinterland of Godley and Woking hundreds; typical examples are Windlesham, a diffuse scatter of farms around a circuitous road-system, and the small, shapeless clusters at Bisley and Horsell.

The essential contrast is between the compact, regular villages in areas of heavy Domesday settlement, and the haphazard clusters in area of light, individualistic agriculture and large assarts. Villages in a strict social sense – the nuclei of communities unified by custom and obligation (cf below, p75) – were villages in a strict topographical sense also. The agglomerations of severalty homesteads in the heavily wooded areas appear more the products of accident or convenience, their formation perhaps spread over many generations. Thus the gradual expansion

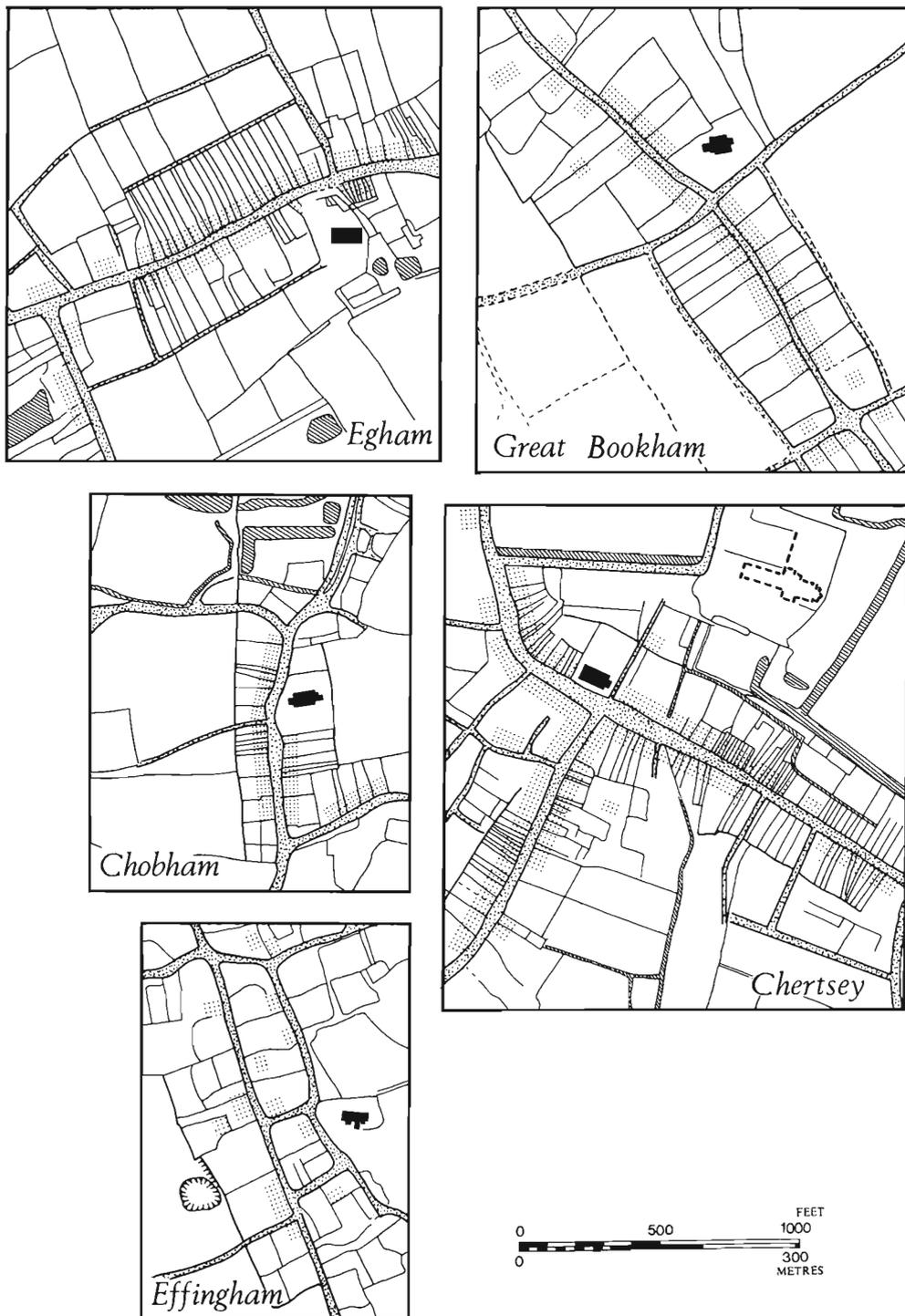


Fig 18 Regular row-plan villages on manors of Chertsey Abbey. (Great Bookham after map of 1618 reproduced *PLDLHS* 2. 10 (1966), 281-3; the rest after OS Surrey 25" 1 edn sheets. Built-up frontages are represented schematically.)

of Windlesham from three households, still remembered locally in the early 13th century (below, p95), has left a permanent record in the untidy sprawl of the village.

Rural settlements in Surrey are more easily classified than dated. For the 'irregular' plans, indeed, there is no evidence beyond occasional charter references which show that some villages in the Weald and below the scarp-slope existed in the 13th century: Cranleigh by c1270, Ewhurst by 1295, and Alfold by 1305/6.¹⁴⁶ For Puttenham, unusually specific evidence is provided by a charter of c1200 × 20 granting a virgate 'ubi masagia sedent in exitu de Puteham';¹⁴⁷ the modern village, a simple double-row with irregular house-plots, is indeed on the edge of the parish. For the Kentish Weald, Witney has noted that most later villages are first mentioned as *ville*, *villate* or *ville borge* between the 1190s and c1300.¹⁴⁸ This is not conclusive evidence either that the settlements were nucleated or that they had only recently become so. However, his general conclusion that Wealden villages began to develop during the 12th century, when the balance had tipped firmly from pannage to cultivation, may well be right; it was, at least, at this time that Wealden communities acquired sufficient stability and internal cohesion to justify the name of *villata*. The presence of a church may often have provided a focus for nucleation; on the available evidence it is impossible to say whether 12th-century Wealden churches were built in villages, or whether they caused villages to grow around them (below, p135).

The origins of the 'regular' villages are scarcely less obscure. Detailed work has shown that the orderly layout of Ewell was established in essentials by the 14th century, and many others certainly existed by this date, including most of the Chertsey Abbey villages.¹⁴⁹ Expansion is suggested by late 12th-century deeds which imply the recent development of open-field arable for house-plots: at Mitcham, land variously described as the acre 'quam Galfridus inedicavit' and the acre 'ubi Galfridus ad Crucem manet',¹⁵⁰ and at Wandsworth, half an acre 'que iacet apud Cleiputte super quam Sigar sedit'.¹⁵¹ None of this throws much light on village origins. But a notable feature of a few townships, discussed further in ch 3, is the correspondence between regularly-apportioned subdivided holdings and regular groups of tofts. At Godalming each cotland was attached to a house-plot in a specific and identifiable area of the town (below, p75). The pattern is reminiscent of County Durham, where regular double-row villages, in existence by the end of the 12th century, have been identified as a product of precise, regular apportionment of holdings together with their obligations.¹⁵²

Such repetitious symmetry must have had a once-for-all cause. In County Durham Roberts attributed it to reconstruction after the Harrying of the North. Discovery of the same pattern in southern England weakens this interpretation, but the case for deliberate re-planning is unimpaired. With mounting evidence for the systematic rearrangement of subdivided field-systems in the 11th and 12th centuries (below, ch 3), it becomes easy to envisage the apportionment of dwelling-plots as part of the same process. Even outside this agrarian context, the concept should not now be hard to accept. Historians have long been familiar with seigneurially planned towns, and no clear line divides small market centres like Leatherhead and Blechingley from surrounding villages. Economic growth and major tenorial changes were powerful stimuli for reorganisation, and both characterised the 150 years following the Conquest. The regular Chertsey Abbey villages (fig 18) may reflect a systematic policy, perhaps linked with the building of new churches on Abbey estates around the mid 12th century (below, p129). Chertsey itself is typical of the settlements which were appearing before monastery gates through much of Northern Europe, prompting Peter Abelard's complaint that Benedictines had 'built great villages on monastic sites, and thus they have returned to the world, or rather have brought the world to them'.¹⁵³ Might not the monks have extended the same activities to their rural manors?

Some nucleated settlements were still developing in the 13th century. References in the forest eyre rolls of 1256 and 1269 to 'purprestures with houses built on them' (below, p88) suggest a



Fig 19 The remains of the deserted settlement at Pachenesham, Leatherhead. (After W J Blair, A small 14th-century cragloft house at Leatherhead, Surrey, *Antiq J* 61 (1981), 328–31, fig 2)

significant growth of housing in Godley and Woking hundreds. Even on the London clay, some landlords continued to augment their rents and services by answering the needs of a rising population. In 1252 × 92 Merton Priory granted to Simon de la Hoke an acre in Tolworth which his father had held in villeinage, 'ita quod idem Symon tenebit dictam acram et eam edificabit et inhabitabit'.¹⁵⁴ Patsom Green, nearly two miles north-west of Leatherhead on the sparsely settled clay, lies near the former site of Leatherhead minster church (above, p101). However, the settlement here may be associated with enclosures from the waste, realignment of roads and the rebuilding of the nearby manor-house, all carried out by Sir Eustace de Hacche in the 1280s and 1290.¹⁵⁵ In 1343 it supported ten villein households, and a survey of c1380

shows a series of regular ten-acre holdings in the process of amalgamation and engrossment.¹⁵⁶ These lay in compact blocks to the north of Gutter's Bridge, where a scatter of small houses around a green between the moated site and the river (fig 19) preserved traces of the former village into the post-medieval period. This typifies perfectly the 13th-century marginal settlement: established on poor soil with servile tenancies, it succumbed quickly and easily to post-plague depopulation.

When we turn to isolated farms, we find nothing which marks them out as secondary to the nucleated villages. The quantity of farm names collected in *The place-names of Surrey* leaves no doubt that they sprinkled the whole county by the 13th century, when the main sources appear. In this respect the area shown in fig 15 is typical.¹⁵⁷ In this chapter and the next, several examples are given of compact holdings which existed by the late 12th century and which probably contained their own homesteads. Where they can be equated with round units in the old hidage assessment (above, p28), they are likely to be very ancient indeed. Until field evidence of an entirely new kind is found, it may well be asked whether the Surrey villages are necessarily older than, or indeed as old as, the farms around them.

It has been argued (above, p46) that dispersed settlement existed on the Downs throughout the Anglo-Saxon period, and that 'Tunēl's *weorþ*' and 'the two *hamms*' mentioned in the 947 Merstham charter were homesteads identifiable with later farms. This approach can be extended to other areas by means of certain place-name elements compounded with personal names. One which provides an exceptional number of such compounds is *-weorþ*. Seven of these were near the Thames (Apers, Chadsworth, Ember, Lisleworth, Papercourt, Trotsworth, Wandsworth), two on the London clay (Batsworth, Tolworth), four on or near the Downs (Betchworth, Lollsworth, Tollsworth, Winkworth) and the remaining three in the Weald (Abinger, Edgeworth, Utworth).¹⁵⁸ The example of Tollsworth ('Tunēl's *weorþ*') and more general parallels would suggest that some at least of these widely scattered locations were actually the homesteads of the people whose names they bear.¹⁵⁹ Most names which reliably include *-hamm* are located in the Weald, including all cases compounded with personal names (Pepperhams, Prinkham, Sugham, Tedham);¹⁶⁰ here, as on the Downs (above, p46), the element must bear a broad meaning of 'field' or 'enclosure'. The elements *-hyrst* (fig 12), *-cumb* and *-denu* (valley) and *-dun* (hill)¹⁶¹ all provide compounds with personal names distributed across the county. In 'Aylivehaw' and Edser,¹⁶² respectively in dip-slope and Wealden parishes, *-hagan* recalls the 'Beaduweald's *hagan*' of the Merstham bounds.

There is no evidence that all these names are habitative rather than merely possessive. It seems highly likely, though, that some or many of them are; at least they suggest a pattern of severalty farming which would be most consistent with dispersed settlement. Furlong names in common fields (below, p77) sometimes tell the same tale, for they suggest that the field-systems in which they occur had evolved through the subdivision of compact holdings. There is a distinct suggestion here that dispersed farms were not merely as old as the nucleated villages, but may actually have preceded them.

Notwithstanding the evidence for compact holdings at this very early date, excavation has shown that many farm sites were first occupied in the late 12th and 13th centuries. This is true of the manor-houses at Pachenesham in Leatherhead, Alsted in Merstham and the king's manor-house in Guildford Park,¹⁶³ as well as the humbler moated sites at Hookwood in Charlwood and Lagham in Godstone,¹⁶⁴ and a fragmentary homestead near Tandridge.¹⁶⁵ It has become clear that most Surrey moats were dug after c1240, though at Pachenesham and Park Manor (following a pattern now familiar elsewhere) they surround sites already occupied for fifty years or more. This may also apply to the visible earthworks at Church Farm in Horne and Moat Farm in Tandridge, two Wealden homesteads mentioned in the mid 12th and early 13th centuries respectively (below, pp142, 157 and fig 43). The creation of the moat at Langshott Manor,

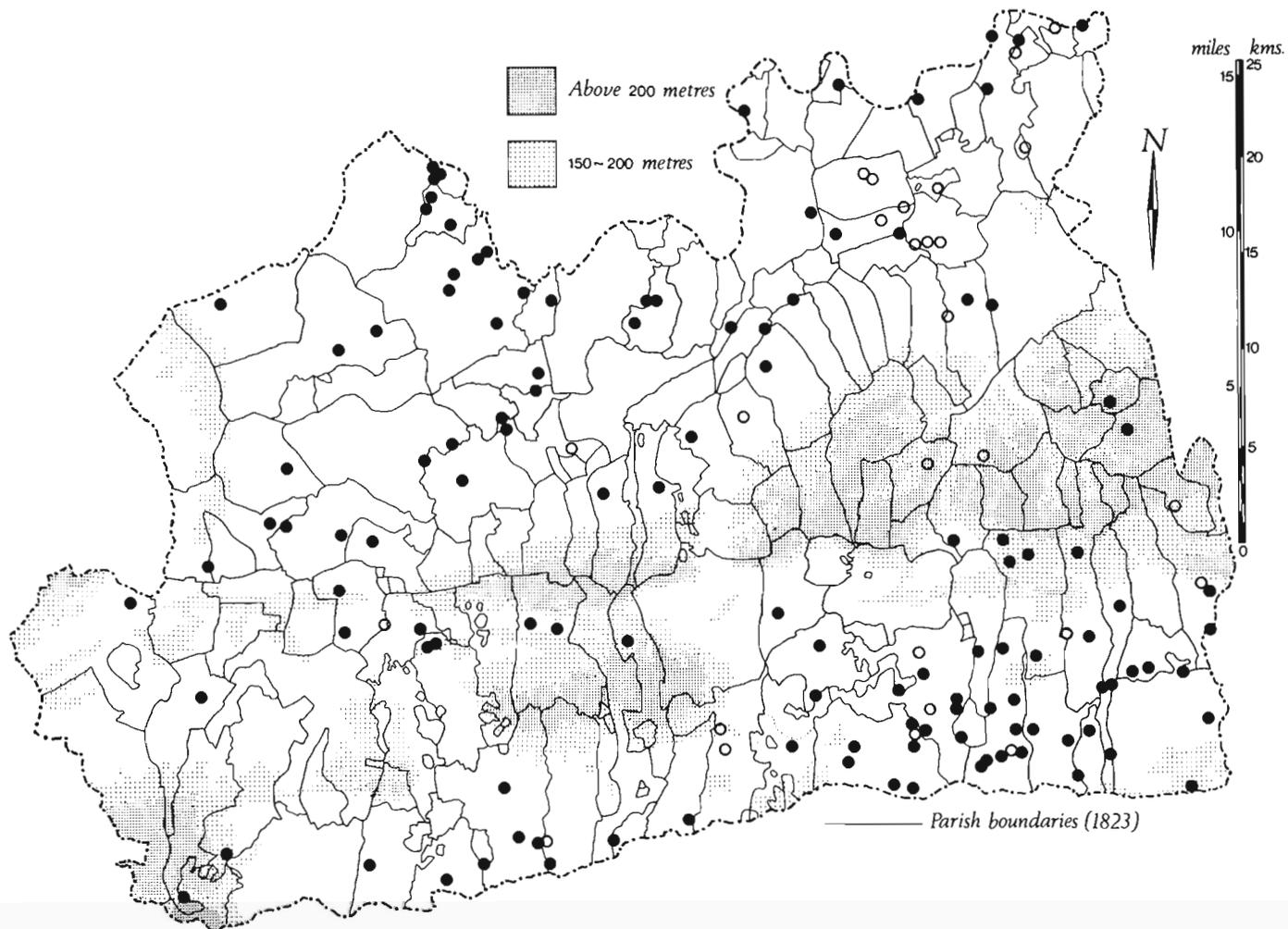


Fig 20 Moated sites in Surrey. (After D J Turner, in Bird & Bird (eds), *Archaeology of Surrey to 1540*, 231
 Solid circle: certain. Open circle: doubtful)

Horley is probably recorded in a deed of 1249 × 52 by which Merton Priory confirms to Robert de Horle 'quatuor acras terre extra nemus de Langset' in qua de novo edificavit'.¹⁶⁶

High concentrations of moats are often interpreted as primary assart settlements reflecting late colonisation. This has been proved in the case of late 12th- and 13th-century peasant clearances in the Forest of Arden, and may be generally true over Midland and Eastern England.¹⁶⁷ The same explanation has recently been extended to the Surrey Weald,¹⁶⁸ implying more large assarts after c1180 than the present interpretation (above, pp53–5) admits. But this evidence must be treated cautiously. A distribution-map of known sites (fig 20) shows that, although there is indeed a distinct concentration in the eastern Weald, moats also occur widely scattered across Surrey, with the Downland forming the only notably blank area. The fact that so many exist in central and north-eastern Surrey, and on the old-settled strip of river-gravel beside the Thames near Chertsey, is sufficient evidence that numerous moats are compatible with a long-established human presence.

Moated sites were a fashion of the 13th and early 14th centuries: thus the presence of a moat suggests building activity during that period. But there need be no other difference between moated and unmoated homesteads beyond the fact that the former are easy to locate. Essentially, then, the sites known to us are those which their 13th-century owners chose to rebuild or refurbish. Frequently, or even normally, this may have involved a change of location. The desire for better conditions, or better drainage, may have caused the widespread abandonment of unmoated houses which are now lost, and the construction of new moated ones which are still conspicuous. The lack of known earlier sites is merely part of the general dearth of settlement evidence from Anglo-Saxon England as a whole: the earlier inhabitants of Surrey, both Wealden and non-Wealden, must have lived somewhere. The total number of farmsteads doubtless did increase, and the partition of large holdings in the Weald may have been an especially frequent cause. But the moated sites do not, on the whole, testify to the colonisation of marginal land; they are merely one element in a pattern of dispersed settlement which had been evolving over many centuries.

Conclusion

It is virtually impossible to prove *absence* of human activity in an undocumented period. This chapter has, however, described evidence for major expansion between the 10th and 13th centuries, and has argued that some important characteristics of medieval rural society appeared, or at any rate crystallised, during this period. Geographically, there are sharp contrasts in the time-scale: effective colonisation of the London Basin and dip-slope areas was achieved early in these centuries or before them, whereas clearance of the Windsor Forest area lagged far behind the rest of the county. The main general effect of the process was to reduce the heterogeneity of Surrey's geographical resources. It was far less a county of contrasting regions in 1334 than it had been in 1086: the Lay Subsidy quotas (table 4) suggest little local variation in the incidence of movable wealth. If we could look back another two centuries before Domesday Book, we would probably find the distinctions within Surrey as a whole between arable, grazing and pannage zones, between settled communities and their commons, drawn yet more strongly.

As such distinctions faded in the face of general growth, the structure of exploitation changed. The 'federative' system was decisively in decay when areas defined as pastures within its complex framework began to develop as independent communities. During the 11th and 12th centuries this was happening throughout Surrey: Penge in the London Basin, Windlesham in the Forest, Kingswood on the Downs and Horne in the Weald are essentially similar in their origins. Preserved intact for so long, they were colonised rapidly when their proprietors began to

anticipate richer gains from the rents and services of settlers. The corollary of the larger 12th-century assarts is the decline of transhumance grazing. Diversity of functions within a large territory was the very essence of multi-vill organisation: the more the components developed their own internal economic balance, the more obsolete the old order became. But the importance of individual seigneurial policies makes it easier to understand why some manors grew so rapidly while their neighbours seem to have remained static.

A parallel consequence of growth was stronger organisation within the elements: these microcosms of the old federative systems required new foci. In this light the problems of village origins become less intractable, for a phase of rapid nucleation would be very consistent with the evolving estate structure and general context of agrarian growth. Changes in field layout, too, are now widely associated with the nucleation of previously scattered communities.¹⁶⁹ Thus the clear evidence for ancient dispersed settlement, combined with the presence of subdivided field-systems by at least the 12th century (below, pp74–7) might suggest that nucleated communities were developing in the later Anglo-Saxon period in a landscape of existing farms.

Surrey still lacks the field evidence available for other regions. Recent work in Northamptonshire places the dual process in the 8th century, when 'on the one hand the small early Saxon sites were deserted to form the present nucleated villages, and on the other the landscape was divided up on a massive scale into strips' (ie field furlongs).¹⁷⁰ In East Anglia, too, the post-Conquest villages seem to have replaced earlier nucleated settlements.¹⁷¹ Whatever the chronology in Surrey of the evolutionary first stages (and they may well have been later than in either of these cases), the conditions existed by the Conquest for that rearrangement of settlements which we seem to detect in the 11th, 12th and 13th centuries. But this is only half the story: for further signs of organisation systematically imposed, we must turn from the villages to the fields which supported them.