Bulletin *347*   March 2001

The Origins and Development of Surrey Villages

The presentations and displays to the Society in November 2000 gave a flavour of what was being achieved by the Society's Villages Project. A summary of the position reached would be premature at this stage but it can be hoped that such a statement will be possible during the Society's anniversary year in 2004.

Participants in the Project are examining the development of individual villages by looking at their buildings, their documentation, their archaeology and their morphology. This has inevitably raised questions about such development and about village origins. This note is a developed version of the paper read to the Society at its AGM, November 2000, in response to some of the questions raised. The read paper was accompanied by an introductory hand-out, which has also been incorporated in the following text.

The Origins and Development of Surrey Villages   *Dennis Turner*

Introduction

There are no truths, only interpretations. (Nietzsche)

People have lived together in small settlements since the Stone Age but the degree to which well-known monuments like Skara Brae in Orkney or Chysauster in Cornwall can be called 'villages' is hardly more than a rhetorical question. Some Romano-British settlements have a stronger claim to the name 'village', but this essay is concerned with medieval and later examples. Even so, the definition is difficult and the pragmatic medieval archaeologist's criteria of 'at least six houses in addition to any manor or priests house' would appear to be too minimal. There needs to be, perhaps, rather more than six houses and some evidence of village functions – which could include the church and manor but ought also to embrace specialist trades and services not usually present in a farm hamlet. These are not easy to define – possibly not definable at all – but subjective recognition is less difficult. At the other end of the scale, the distinction between the large market village and small town is equally problematic.

We all probably have a picture in our minds of a 'typical' Surrey village. It might be a distant view of a church spire and tiled roofs across the fields. Or, at closer range, it might be of houses around a cricket green – church, pond, and so on. Villages meeting these mental pictures are perhaps rarer than we think – and were, even before the changes brought about by the railway and the motor car and by runaway population increase. As for such a village always dating back to 'time immemorial', that is one preconception we should try to forget even though some elements may be of considerable antiquity. Hambledon has a cricket green that was actually donated by the Lord of the Manor as recently as the 1950s but there is a strong hint in the plan of the village that its origin was far from recent and far from unitary – for example, the church and manor house, alongside each other in the 'classic' manner, are some way away from the rest of the village.

At Ockley, the green is also a long way from the church, manor house and manor farm. So, in this case, there is also a suggestion that we have two distinct phases: the 'village' by the green possibly being more recent that the church and manor hamlet. Brockham, with its much photographed green, seems to be a medieval, possibly 13th century, development but its church is pure 19th century.

The traditional view that the Anglo-Saxons brought the nucleated village with them to England together with its organized open field system is no longer tenable. The nucleated and expanding village, which may seem to be the most stable of rural settlement forms, is now understood as a particular settlement type: just one among many and one which appeared at different times in different places. Indeed, the nucleated village never did become characteristic in *every part* of medieval England

and, even in those areas where the nucleated village *did* become characteristic, it is still not found in *every* parish (Roberts and Wrathmell 1998). The more dispersed types of settlement, such as the farm or hamlet, preceded the village and remained more typical of England as a whole. By the 12th century the nucleated village coexisted with other, far more dispersed, settlement forms south-east of the Chiltern *cuesta*. At this date, however, there are hints that the nucleated village was the most recent addition to the range of settlement forms in SE England and the number of villages was to grow. Certainly, dispersed types of settlement were characteristic of a large part of Surrey down to modern times. Even today, by no means all country people in Surrey live in villages. (For a recent discussion of the definition of 'nucleated' and 'dispersed' see O'Keeffe 2000.)

Places and Names

The meaning of place-names nearly always involves a certain amount of guesswork. The main fact about village names in Surrey is that they are in origin overwhelmingly English, the language of the Anglo-Saxons. An Anglo-Saxon name is good evidence that today's and yesterday's village is the direct descendant of a *settlement* that existed in Anglo-Saxon times. But it does not mean that the settlement became a village in Anglo-Saxon times. Strictly, of course, it does not even mean that the Anglo-Saxon settlement whose name it bears occupied precisely the same location as today's village. Neither does it ever mean for certain that the name is as old as the settlement. Such things have to be separately established.

Many village names end in elements that seem to be related to features in the landscape. For example, names ending in '-*dun*' or '-*dene*' relate to hills and valleys but in most cases the vowel has changed in a way that introduces ambiguity and early forms have to be sought and studied (e.g. Croydon, Morden, Wimbledon). Other names ending in '-hurst' (Crowhurst, Ewhurst) more clearly relate to woodland. The village of Leigh and the common Surrey ending '-ley' and '-ly' relate to clearings in woodland (or, more probably, to settlement in a clearing). Names which end or ended in '-ton' (Carshalton), '-worth' (Betchworth) or '-sted' (Oxted) are frequently descended from Old English words for different kinds of settlement – unfortunately, we do not know how the original '*tuns*' (cognate with 'town') differed from '*worths*' or '*stedes*' (cognate with 'homestead'). Some (but not all) names ending in '-ham' (Merstham) have a similar meaning.

Some (but again not all) names ending today in '-ing' or '-ings' seem to refer to the followers of an individual leader who all settled down together (Tooting, Woking). Such elements can be found in combination (Effingham, Warlingham, Beddington, Wallington). The '-ingham' names are usually seen as of early coinage but the '-ington' form is not closely datable and may rarely be early. It goes on being used to form place-names after the Norman conquest as at Kennington (Dawson 1976, 4-5). Other villages have names that seem to defy reasonable explanation (Shere, Tandridge).

Location

A specific location becomes settled because of some geographical advantage. There must be water close to hand, there must be land fit to plough, land fit for grazing, shelter from the wind and frost, a supply of fuel within reach, and so on. Attractive locations tend to remain attractive across the centuries – which makes continuity of settlement (as opposed to mere repetition of settlement) very hard to establish. Settlements grow into villages because they have some *extra* advantage – they may be close to a busy road, be at a traffic node like a ford or bridge, or possess particularly good soil or some other desirable resource. River valley and spring-line villages may possess a whole suite of extra advantages. These factors are usually easy to recognize in Surrey.

The Society's Villages Project

The aim of the Society's project has been to examine the development of individual villages. This has been done by looking at their buildings, their documentation, their archaeology and their morphology. Only a handful of villages have, so far, been studied and few of the groups and individuals working on the project have reached the point of publication, but results have already been worthwhile. It is important that the projects continue and the Society will be encouraging this.

The approach employed highlights the particular problem of village origins and enables us to show that many places we think of today as villages were, until recently, little more than a string of hardly connected hamlets, farms and gentlemen's houses. Merton and Morden were like that until they became engulfed by London's suburbs. Crowhurst still is. Dunsfold is not much more.

The study also enables us to explain the origins of some of our newer villages. Sometimes, as at Horley, what had been two or three hamlets and a number of scattered farms made a jump straight to being a small town soon after the railway arrived. Claygate, a tiny hamlet in the 1830s, percipiently built its own church in 1840 before the arrival of the railway and, once the railway did arrive in 1885, it quickly grew into what is now a large suburban area. What is not quite so obvious, is that the centre of Ewhurst grew gradually from three hamlets into a linear village in the very late 19th century, probably also as a result of the coming of the railways to nearby Cranleigh in 1865.

More numerous in Surrey, perhaps, are roadside villages such as Capel, Ripley and Bagshot which grew from hamlet to village during the long period of increasing road traffic which began in the late 15th century and gathered momentum thereafter. One or two 'industrial' villages can be recognized as at Abinger Hammer and Chilworth. Working the other way, villages such as Albury, Beddington, West Horsley and, possibly, Wimbledon, have been relocated as a result of emparkment.

The haziness of our knowledge of the origin and early development of our older villages constitutes a serious gap in our understanding of settlement. For that reason, every scrap of evidence has to be scrutinized again and again. Every theory chewed over and we can turn to what can be called

Paradigms and Problems

Nationally, various hypotheses have been put forward over the years and we can note that our paradigm of village origins has changed radically in the last half-century or so. The traditional view of the end of Roman Britain used to be one of conflagration and slaughter, followed by the movement of immigrant Germanic settlers into a desolate wasteland, avoiding or ruthlessly obliterating all traces of the culture of their predecessors and imposing their own pattern of nucleated villages and open fields. The pioneer landscape historian, W G Hoskins, was writing at the end of that tradition (1955). He didn't accept the whole package, but he did accept that most villages were created from the 5th C onwards. However, almost immediately afterwards the work of Finberg (1959) and others made this view untenable and it is no longer thought that the Anglo-Saxons brought the nucleated village with them to England together with its organized field system.

Over the next twenty years, archaeological work in various parts of England uncovered an early mobility of settlement and field-systems that led to the concept of the 'Mid-Saxon shift'. But continuing work soon showed that this was not the whole picture and, to a limited extent, settlement continued to be mobile (Welch 1985). Nucleation, where it occurred, came later still.

Nucleation itself is an uncertain phenomenon and was only one of several solutions available to meet the problems of increasing scarcity. It is related to the integration of

land use and settlement – and the development of regular forms of open field systems usually does not occur unless associated with a village. Evidence from central England, where this question has been much studied, provides dates ranging from the 9th to the 12th century. Recent work has found the 10th and 11th centuries to be the most likely period for village formation and agrarian reorganization in the East Midlands (Lewis et al 1997) and similar conclusions have been provided for Somerset by the ongoing project at Shapwick (Somerset VBRG 1996; Aston and Gerrard 1999).

In summary, the current conventional wisdom has it that, in the 'Central Province', the 'classic' medieval landscape of nucleated villages and well-controlled open fields was not established until several centuries after the first waves of pagan English settlement and was produced during a rather ill-dated series of 'manorial' changes. In this context, the 'Central Province' is a broad band of countryside running roughly from Dorset and Somerset to County Durham (Roberts and Wrathmell 1998). The changes are unlikely to have occurred everywhere at once but it is argued that the 'regular' open fields and nucleated villages which dominated this band of landscape during the Middle Ages were formed between about 800 and 1150 AD. The two basic tenets of this model appear to be that

1. the Central Province is quite distinct from 'woodland' countrysides where 'irregular' open fields, or enclosed landscapes were associated with dispersed settlement well into the Middle Ages; and

2. the layout of 'regular' open fields and the imposition of settlement nucleation may have varied chronologically from place to place but occurred for similar reasons, and in a similar way, throughout the Province – generally by obliterating earlier landscapes.

Oosthuizen and James (1999, 17-18) have pointed out that most of the detailed fieldwork on which the model is based has been carried out in Northamptonshire (Hall 1996) and that both tenets may be difficult to sustain without more fieldwork. In an attempt to clarify the issues, Oosthuizen and James have initiated a research programme covering four parishes in SW Cambridgeshire on the edge of the 'Central Province'. Their work has already challenged the proposition that a clear distinction can be made between 'open field' and 'woodland' landscape. Watch this space!

As far as Surrey is concerned, there is not too much evidence with which to apply any of this, either in general terms or in particular situations. But we can note that open fields in Surrey have a restricted distribution and are distinctly irregular and that true nucleated settlements were rare south of the downs before the 16th century and hardly common until the 19th.

The important implication of the work in the 'Central Province' is that many, perhaps even most, of the villages within even the text-book Midland landscape were discretely created at some stage. Oliver Rackham (1994 and earlier works), developing an idea offered a century ago by Maitland (1897), has characterized countryside that was not fully re-organized under this or similar processes as 'ancient countryside' and most of Surrey falls into this classification.

We may safely deduce that at least some, possibly many, and perhaps even most of the villages in Rackham's 'ancient countryside', including Surrey, were themselves discretely created at some stage. Some dates can probably be supplied for Surrey, although perhaps not in too many cases yet, and only tentatively. The cause of the process can possibly be illuminated but, as yet, in even fewer cases.

Frequently, the development of a nucleated settlement will have involved radical reorganization of society and landscape and an inconclusive discussion took place about ten years ago as to whether it was the lords or the peasants who were the

primary engine of change (e.g. Harvey 1989). Surrey has some evidence to offer on this particular front as we shall see.

Leaving changes driven by later emparkment to one side for the moment, the locations of the majority of settlements in Surrey were clearly stable by the end of the medieval period and we can see that many Surrey villages had acquired sophisticated field systems by the same date. This, at least, is in line with the national picture. But what do the medieval documents tell us about Surrey's villages?

A few Surrey villages do have accessible documentation that reaches back into the Middle Ages. However, if we look at such documentation, we find that it rarely helps us in our desire to tease out clues to the village origins. The surveys and charters that survive were naturally compiled on behalf of lords, not on behalf of the peasantry. Such surveys inevitably present a seignurial view and it is likely that the men and women who lived and worked on the land saw the communities to which they belonged in a very different light. At Banstead, for example, we have manorial accounts of the 13th and 14th centuries, an extent of 1325 and the lay subsidy return of 1332: all transcribed and published in wonderful detail by Sir Henry Lambert nearly a century ago (1912). Sadly, however, not one word of it demonstrates positively whether Banstead was or was not a nucleated village. We probably know the names of all but a handful of the heads of household on the manor in 1325 but we do not know *for certain* that they lived in a village. On the other hand, the large number of villeins recorded in the extent of the manor is at least circumstantial evidence that a nucleated village did exist here in the 14th century.

The situation in Banstead is probably not unusual but in Surrey we do not have many studies to compare it with. Some of the work published by Blair, often penetrating the less accessible documentation, is in fact even less encouraging. For example, he concludes (1991, 40) that Frimley and the western half of Chobham provide virtually no evidence for settlement before the 13th century, let alone any nucleated settlements. Windlesham began as a forest pasture of Woking and supported only three households down to the late 12th century. However, Frimley, Chobham and Windlesham were on poor soil within the Surrey Bailiwick of Windsor Forest and may be atypical (*see front page*).

A wider view enables us to see that the authors of medieval literary and administrative sources were not interested in topographical description and did not share our concern with the village *per se* (Dyer 1999a). Chronicles appear to mention a hierarchy of places, usually in Latin: *civitas, urbs, castellum, vicus, villa* and *vicula* or *villula*. Tax lists sometimes add tithing, hamlet and member. But the hierarchy is tenuous and we translate these documents topograhically at our peril. A vill was a tax-paying unit, or the organization that had legal responsibility, not a group of dwellings.

The word *villa* was very unspecific and could be applied to a major urban settlement or a small subsidiary rural place. Indeed, in English writing the distinction between village and town was not made until modern times and still causes semantic problems. The word 'town' might be applied to the settlement rather than its surrounding lands. 'Township', especially in the North, can be applied to either or to both.

The Lay Subsidy lists for Devon (1334), and to a lesser extent for Cumberland and Essex, make frequent use of the term 'hamlet' which reflects the dispersed pattern of settlements in those counties. But most counties with scattered hamlets, including Surrey, gathered these small settlements together for official purposes into 'vills' which are recorded in just the same way as vills which were (or, at least, may have been) nucleated villages. More precise indications of dispersed settlements can sometimes be found in those manorial surveys, mainly of the late 12th and 13th

centuries, which list tenants under the heading of 'members' and other named small places within a manor. A few more detailed surveys and rentals, for example those of the 14th and 15th centuries from the estates of Durham cathedral priory, go so far as to describe holdings in terms of rows, and even their precise location in rows, which demonstrates that the peasant cottages lay in nucleated villages. We do not seem to have that luxury in Surrey.

Finally, detailed studies of manorial court rolls in some areas of dispersed settlement suggest that the peasants recognized both the umbrella organization of the 'vills' and their hamlets and neighbourhoods in their behaviour and interactions. We need to scour the Surrey material with this in mind.

Earlier written sources for village origins are few and far between. Most of our later parish or village names appear as estate names in charters by 1100, several well before 1100 – albeit sometimes in charters which are themselves more than a little suspect. Even when the charters are authenticated, there is never any way of knowing from them whether the named estate contained a village at the date of the document, let alone when such a village began. As yet, unfortunately, archaeology has also contributed little to the solution of this problem in Surrey.

We have therefore to depend almost exclusively on topographical analysis. Topographical evidence for the Anglo-Saxon period is likely to be fugitive and has to be approached slowly and with caution.
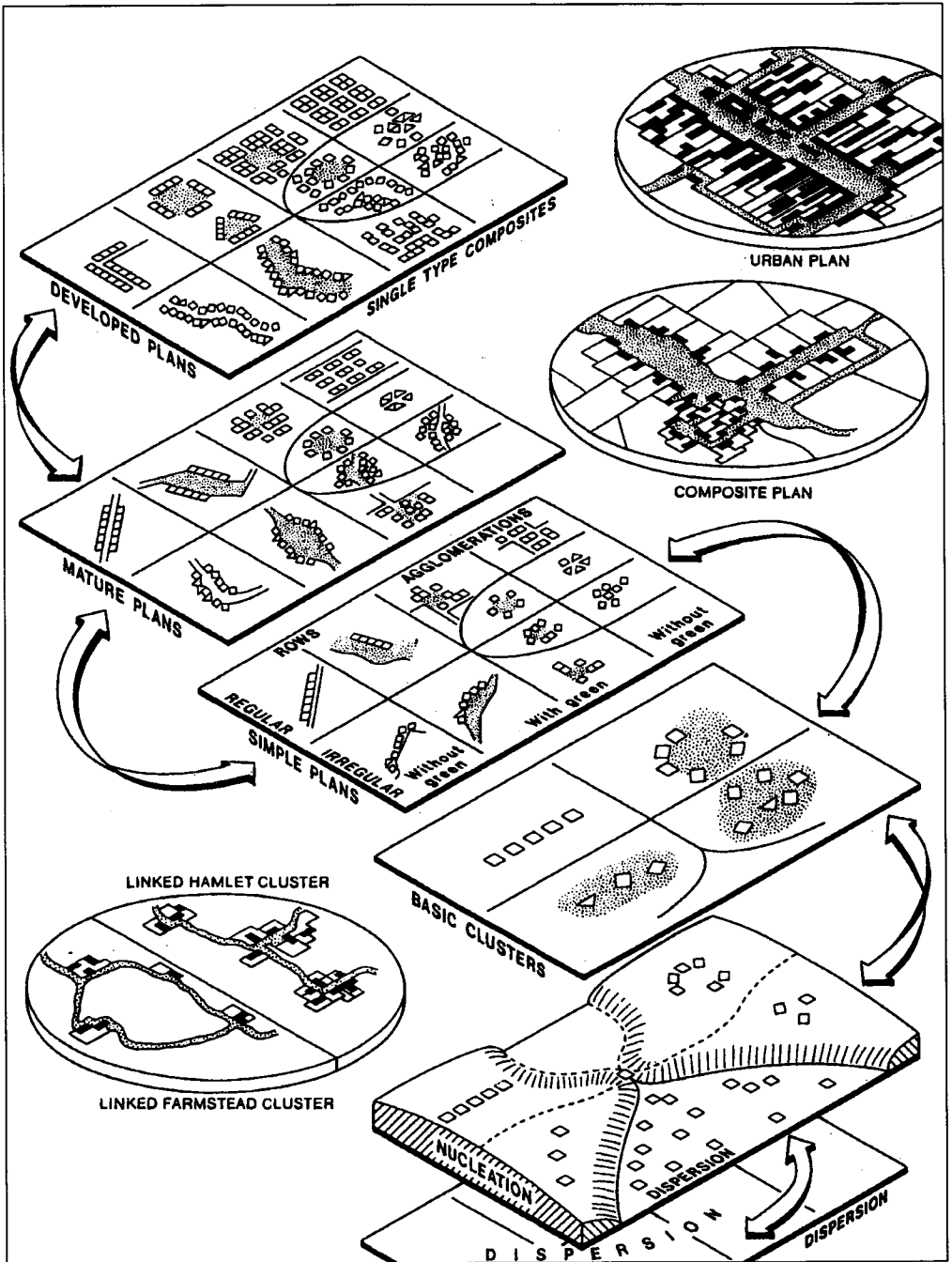
Village Development and Morphology

To recapitulate, the question is 'when did Surrey's nucleated villages develop?' Whenever it occurred, nucleation of dispersed farms and cottages into a village will obviously have involved the modification and sometimes reorganization of the dwelling and workspace. But it will also have meant a large-scale reorganization of the means of agrarian production. Moreover, new market networks and trading centres must have been created to meet the adjustments in the social and political structure of the countryside. The phenomena are widespread but this does not necessarily imply a uniform development imposed by central authority or by universal cultural mores. From time to time, however, they will have left morphological fingerprints in the landscape.

Once a village develops by organic growth or is deliberately planted by the lord of the manor, it takes a shape. Villages come in different patterns and, even in Surrey, varied building materials (just compare Charlwood and Thursley). To appreciate the range of building materials properly we have, of course, to use our imagination to strip away everything built after the coming of the railway made brick walls with first slate and then tile roofs almost universal.

A brief word about village morphology. Any morphological analysis of a living village runs the risk of introducing circular arguments and we have to guard against this, but its study is distinctly worthwhile. 'Classic' settlement study first attempts to separate the 'planned' from the 'organic' and postulates that, basically, the 'planned' shows more regularity than the 'organic' (e.g. Paget 1954). The 'planned' village is usually taken to be a 'planted' or deliberately re-sited or re-organized village. Planted towns, however small, frequently reveal their nature through a combination of documents and morphology (Beresford 1961). But documentary support is rarely forthcoming to divide the organic from the planted as far as villages are concerned. We have, therefore, to look particularly carefully at village morphology.

Broadly there are either four or six different types of village plan (depending on how you count them), with numerous variations. But we must always remember that the village plan is dynamic and can change with time (Roberts 1985; 1989). One has to be clear about the date for which the attempted analysis is being made, but the

URBAN PLAN

COMPOSITE PLAN

SINGLE TYPE COMPOSITES

DEVELOPED PLANS

MATURE PLANS

AGGLOMERATIONS

ROWS

REGULAR

IRREGULAR

SIMPLE PLANS

With green

Without green

Without green

LINKED HAMLET CLUSTER

LINKED FARMSTEAD CLUSTER

BASIC CLUSTERS

NUCLEATION

DISPERSION

DISPERSION

D I S P E R S I O N

Villages in time (after Roberts).

mid-19th century tithe award maps provide a convenient basis for county-wide comparisons. They are of a suitably large scale and catch the villages just before the coming of the railways.

Half a century and more ago, attempts to classify common village plan forms tended to distinguish (first) loose, irregular groupings, including clusters around greens; (second) street-line groupings (or rows); and (third) composite villages, comprising a cluster with street-line tentacles. To these, Yates (1965) added waste-edge settlements, although it is arguable that this is more a sociological classification than a morphological one. In 1977, Christopher Taylor added polyfocal settlements. Finally, there is the sprawling, muddled 'agglomerated' village, with the houses set with no clear pattern at all and no clear centre. The agglomerated village is very common and can even be recognized in a verse by A A Milne:

> Between the woods in folded lands
> An accidental village stands,
> Untidily, and with an air
> Of wondering who left it there.

The first plan type is often, but most confusingly, called the 'nucleated' village – since all villages must be to a degree nucleated to be villages, a better name is urgently needed (names do exist for sub-divisions of the category). In this type, houses cluster more or less tightly around a focus – the church, green, or some other feature (Brockham, Hascombe). The street or row village, fairly common in Surrey, where most of the houses lie (or used to lie) along a single main street (Merstham, West Clandon, Ripley) or the arms of a cross-roads or T-junction (Chertsey).

Street villages sometimes grew up (or were planted) along the road linking different types of grazing and arable lands (East Horsley, Limpsfield), while, later, others grew along major traffic routes (Ripley, Capel). The explanation of this is obvious: what is less obvious is why other villages astride major traffic routes did *not* develop into street villages.

Street villages can form organically (especially along busy roads) but the street village is also the commonest form chosen by the founders of 'planted' or 'planned' villages or parts of villages. The distinction is not always an easy one to make but house plots in organic street villages will have frontages of irregular width (Puttenham?), while planned street villages usually have house plots of equal widths or of widths bearing a discrete mathematical relationship (Bookham?).

More complicated, is the 'polyfocal' village which has more than one nucleus, which may have grown together (Cranleigh, Lingfield) or may still be in the process of doing so (Hambledon). This category includes some 'waste edge settlements' where the multiple foci may vary in their relationship with each other from the moderately compact to the well strung out: whatever the spacing, the elements were always separated in the past by areas of common-grazing.

Surrey has good examples of most of these and also examples where a settlement can be shown to have grown from one category to another. Row-villages are the most obvious, but there are many examples of other types: Dunsfold survives even today as a dispersed waste-edge settlement although 20th-century building has greatly reduced the dispersion; Charlwood has developed by infill from a rather less-dispersed waste-edge settlement into an agglomeration; and Hambledon is polyfocal bordering on the agglomerated but may have started as a series of waste-edge settlements or as a somewhat straggling two-row settlement. And so on. *There are no clear boundaries.*

Some villages have got along for centuries without a clear centre or village green. Some settlements like this have probably grown up haphazardly in the first place,

with no leadership or central planning, but in other cases an original pattern had been worn away even before the time of the tithe award maps. Sadly, 19th- and 20th-century developments have tended to reduce most Surrey villages to this category.

Nationally, much important work has taken place in the last two decades on the classification of settlements according to morphological principles (Sheppard 1974; Roberts 1996 and earlier work). There has been recognition that villages are not static, and there has also been work on mapping fundamental changes in village plans (e.g. Ravensdale 1974; Wade-Martins 1975; Taylor 1978). As a result, Prof. Brian Roberts has produced a penetrating analysis and classification of settlement forms and their development (1985). Within any morphological definition, however, we must anticipate that there may be as many deviations from as adherents to the 'model'.

Several Surrey villages show clear traces of a number of stages, in some cases distinct stages overlying each other, carrying the picture back by implication to a time earlier than the earliest surviving building, and changing the morphological classification of the village on the way. Two villages showing clear traces of such distinct stages are Mitcham and Ewell, studied over several decades by Eric Montague and Charles Abdy.

Village Greens

Greens can be found in villages of every morphological class. However, villages focused on greens (Shamley Green, Brockham) are not as common in Surrey as is sometimes imagined. Even Ockley is really a straggling street village with a large green at one end. The original purpose of the Surrey greens was almost certainly for the grazing and watering of smaller livestock, hence the pond. The theory that village greens were places of refuge, where cattle could be kept safe in times of danger might be applicable to the compact, house-girt greens found north of the Tees but seems irrelevant to Surrey's straggling examples.

The notion of a village growing up around the green may be true in some cases (Brockham) but is certainly not in others. In some cases the green is off to one side (Capel, Ripley), perhaps representing the late adoption of a piece of less-specifically used manorial waste. There is some support for this in cases like Buckland and Charlwood, where 19th century maps show multiple areas of waste named as greens but functioning as small commons with no more than one or two houses associated with each.

Quite often the village well with its communal pump was on the green (Leigh, Ockley). The stocks might be erected there (Abinger) and in the 20th century it has sometimes been thought a fitting place for the War Memorial (Buckland, Warlingham). The green was, and is, used for recreation. The butts for archery practice were set up there, and the maypole. Today it accommodates the cricket square, football pitch and, sometimes, children's swings or the November bonfire.

Village Origins

Frequently, the search for the origin of longer-standing villages seems to plough itself into deeply difficult territory. In some cases, we may even be tempted by evidence that suggests that the 15th century was actually their date of birth. If we take Shere and look particularly at the pattern of plot boundaries and compare them with the building dates, we find a distinct suggestion that two small 'planned' developments occurred within the village between 1550 and 1650. They were, equally clearly, *extensions* to a settlement that already existed and the earliest houses go back another century.

Examination by members of the Shere and Gomshall Local History Society has shown that few, if any, of the buildings in the core of the village are earlier than the second half of the 15th century and the documents do not identify properties even as early as this. Archaeological sampling has produced a surprising lack of medieval pottery sherds – or even of early post-medieval sherds.

Fortunately there are some strong indicators that this evidence is misleading. The manor of Shere Vachery had a market grant of 1309; there is the legend of early 14th-century Christopher Carpenter and his saintly daughter; while names from the late 14th-century tax returns are found attached to property in the village centuries later. Without this extra evidence, we might almost have thought that Shere did not develop into a village before the late 15th century but, instead, we can be confident that there was a village here before the oldest house we can identify with certainty today.

We can probably assume that the market granted to Shere Vachery was held in Shere village. Markets or market grants can frequently be evidenced as being earlier than the earliest surviving house in the settlement concerned. Caution has clearly to be used – for example, Burstow had a market grant in 1247 but no one would suggest that there has ever been a village here. The case of Shere is more convincing and, furthermore, the team have noted that at the heart of the village, the tiny *triangular* space called today 'The Square' may well be the remains of a larger (and roughly square) market place, visible on the village plan. A space that was partly built over before the end of the 15th-century and could be older than the oldest house in the village.

'The Square' is adjacent to the important and early church. At least three of the earliest surviving secular building fragments are also close to the 'square'. If this interpretation is correct, the fact that room could be found to set out a fair-sized market square immediately west of the long-established church suggests that the wasn't much in the way of a village here before that event, possibly that the village of Shere was established around the time of the market grant in the first decade of the 14th century (c.f. Taylor 1982).

In the main, a market or market grant may be thought to imply some striving towards urban status. At the very least, it ought to imply some sort of village, some sort of nucleated settlement. But few villages had market grants and the evidence for other specialist functions may be more difficult to find. Sometimes archaeology or the documents will disclose the presence of specialized peasant industries such as potting or fulling, but these will seldom be within the village. Trade-based personal names indicating the presence of smiths or tailors may occur in the early 14th-century subsidy returns or elsewhere. The presence of the manor house or church, while not enough to award village status (the manor-church hamlet is a well-known type), must not be ignored.

The market place is only one morphological clue to origins, and a rare one at that in the village environment. Other morphological elements must be analysed. Although we have to accept that morphological categories overlap, we could categorize Surrey villages according to the scheme proposed by Roberts. But it will only be helpful in our search for origins if we can glimpse the origin behind the morphology. In an attempt to tackle this problem, the writer has so far identified some nine category clusters that may be helpful. The remainder of this essay, however, will concentrate on just three category clusters that may be of particular interest. These are, firstly, re-ordered villages; secondly, migrated villages; and, thirdly, what can possible be called 'early enclosure villages'. In all cases deeper documentary and archaeological research is required.

Let us start therefore with

Re-ordered villages

As John Blair (1991) pointed out, some Surrey villages do show evidence of having been reorganized in the Middle Ages. Blair paid particular attention to villages on Chertsey abbey land from Egham to Great Bookham. Blair also pointed out that many rural nucleations in Surrey north of the Downs were based on rows, their house-plots closely grouped without interlying wastes or greens. One or two, like part of the centre of Ewell, have rows flanking all four arms of a crossroads but most were of the simplest possible two-row form: two blocks of strip-plots facing each other across a single road, sometimes with back lanes defining the far ends of the crofts (Roberts 1977, 127).

Not all row-villages can be thought of as the result of reorganization but where there is regularity, the probability arises. Several of the two-row, dip-slope and Thames Basin villages are generally more regular than two row villages elsewhere, a regularity which is particularly evident on manors held by Chertsey. Blair found it tempting to see these as deliberate creations or reorganizations. He urged the 14th-century Abbot Rutherwyke as the chief suspect for reorganizing the Chertsey estates but there is no strong reason for dating any reorganization as late as this. Indeed, recent archaeological work has suggested that Egham, at least, was reorganized in the 12th century. This is particularly interesting because there are documents surviving that detail estate reorganization, including the creation of new villages, by the great French monastery of St-Denis right in the middle of the 12th century, in 1144-5 (Marche 1867, 164-5 translation printed by Baker et al 1952, vol I, 499-500). The short passage appears to concern itself with *new* creations in unsettled areas rather than reorganizations but what is important is that the St-Denis document shows the will and resources available to a powerful Benedictine house. It seems unlikely that the Benedictines of Chertsey would be two centuries behind their brothers of St-Denis and dates in the 12th or 13th centuries would seem more likely for the Chertsey reorganization than dates in the 14th.

A number of urban or near-urban reorganizations in Surrey belong to the late 12th century. Reigate, Blechingley and Leatherhead are well known. Recent excavations in Kingston show a great spurt in development at this time (P Andrews *in lect*, citing unpublished work by Chris Phillpotts; Anon 2000). Farnham may be similar.

The evidence for dating the replanning of the Chertsey villages is somewhat circumstantial. Such activity was certainly happening elsewhere in England and not all of it was early. There is some documentary evidence, for example, that Glastonbury Abbey manipulated the settlement pattern on its estates both early in its history (for example, at Shapwick) and late in its history (as at Mells). It is thought that the settlement at Mells was replanned by the 15th century Abbot Selwood in the shape of a cross, although only the northern arm was ever constructed. Some buildings pre-date Abbot Selwood and may lend some doubt to the purported grand design for the settlement (James Bond, in lect, 1998). At East Witton, in North Yorks, there is morphological evidence for 'urban' replanning by Jervaulx Abbey, possibly following the grant of a market and fairs in 1307.

In Durham and Yorkshire there appear to be many examples of regularly planned settlements, the origins of which have been the subject of some controversy (Sheppard 1973, 183-4; 1976). J A Sheppard (1974; 1976) undertook a metrological analysis of the regular Yorkshire villages that led to a discussion of the basis for linear measurement in northern England. He argued that the fundamental system of measurement was the surveyor's rod or perch, which in Yorkshire showed considerable variation between $17^1/2$ and 24 ft, although the most frequently
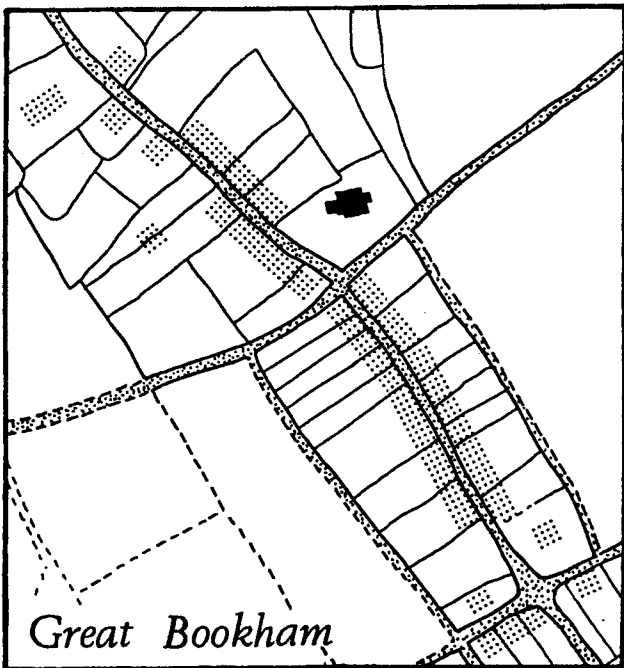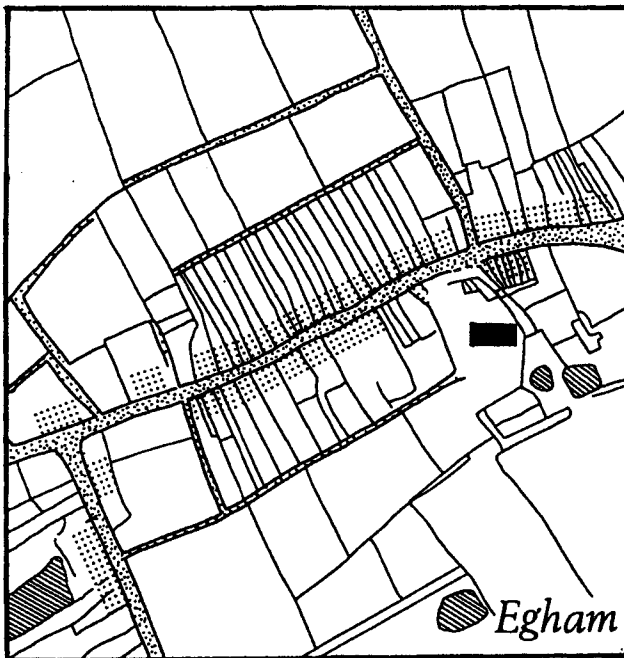
Egham and Great Bookham (after Blair). Typical examples of two-row villages with back lanes.

employed were those of 18 and 20 ft. In Durham it can be shown, however, that a rod of 21 ft was commonly used, particularly on the bishop's estates (Roberts 1972, 48).

In Surrey, less has been done. We have already referred to work by John Blair undertaken for his doctoral thesis and later published (1991). Somewhat earlier analysis by Bailey (1968, 1-8) on the Archbishop of Canterbury's manor of Mortlake-Wimbledon seemed to show that the settlement at Putney began as a formal two-row village with equal ten-perch frontages. An act of deliberate village planning seems clearly indicated but cannot as yet be dated.

The construction of property boundaries based on standard-width street or green frontages is a pretty basic method of tackling the problem facing the medieval administrator and there are hints that more subtle methods were sometimes used. Peter Hopkins (pers comm) has found that there is a series of early holdings running like 20th-century ribbon development along what is now Central Road in Morden. They have varying frontage lengths and differing shapes, but a group of five contiguous (or nearly contiguous) holdings each cover $11^{1}/_{4}$ statutory acres. It is hard to believe that this could be the result of coincidence.

In summary, therefore, we seem to have a number of Surrey's best documented landowners creating villages and tiny towns out of dispersed settlements from the late 12th century to the early 14th. We can possibly surmise that the emergence of many other Surrey villages was also spread over a similar time range. Which is a little later than the dates others have produced for Midland England.

Migrated Villages

A second category is that of migrated villages. This may overlap the first category – a village may be *forced* to migrate to a new, planned site. Such classic examples as Milton Abbas (Dorset) and Nuneham Courteney (Oxon) are nationally known.

In Surrey there is a strong suggestion that one or two of our villages moved after the establishment of the manor-church nexus (earlier migrations are far harder to uncover). Godstone and Ockley are the obvious examples but there are others. Ashtead looks to be a possibility. But, in each case, there may have been two settlements from an early date, only one of which grew into a village. The growth was almost certainly encouraged and possibly caused by the commercial interests of the inhabitants (Godstone and Ockley both received market grants). However, at West Horsley the lord of the manor was probably the instigator of migration and emparkment the motive. At Beddington we seem to have another case of medieval emparkment. Wimbledon may also be a case of Tudor emparkment. Migration and
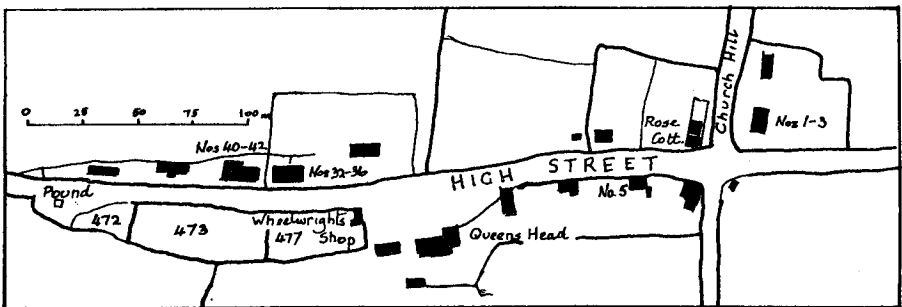
Nutfield in 1840 (after Gray). Typical example of irregular two-row settlement, probably established on road-side waste.

more recent emparkment can be seen as a force at Albury. There are other examples in the county.

Deserted Villages

In all these cases, except perhaps Godstone, we have potential deserted medieval village site to investigate. Some villages failed and village failure provides the prime source of deserted village sites. Such villages may have grown up or been founded over-optimistically on marginal land or they may have been overcome by disease. Examples of desertion, although common in some parts of England, have been difficult to identify and harder still to locate with certainty in Surrey. A few Surrey villages can be identified that may have experienced stress and shrinkage, but they recovered. The proximity of London probably had an influence in this respect. However, some Surrey villages do seem to have been suppressed because their landlords could make more money by dispersing the inhabitants and using the fields for pasturing sheep (Woodcote near Wallington and Waddington near Kenley).

As a consequence, Surrey does not have the great number of DMV sites with visible earthworks that are found in the Midland Zone and are so profitable to study and excavate. This may be in part because our deserted sites have become overlain by later development – at Woodcote, traces of a deserted medieval village were seen by Camden or his continuators and were substantial enough to be mistaken for a Roman town, but today the site cannot even be located (Muckleroy 1973). On the other hand, the lack of deserted sites in Surrey may be because few Surrey villages shrank to the point of desertion.

Early 'Enclosure Settlements'

A better name is needed for this category.

Our third group of villages, which may be among the earliest that we have, is a more than somewhat speculative category of villages which seem to have at their heart a road or property boundary pattern resembling an enclosure that acted as a focus for local trackways. The putative 'enclosures' would seem to be similar in many respects to the so-called 'minster enclosures' identified elsewhere by Blair (1992). Such 'minster enclosures' seem to be widespread – they are identifiable in Merovingian times across east France for example. Traces of minster enclosures might be expected at Chertsey, Bermondsey and Woking, where 7th or early 8th-century minsters are attested, as well as, possibly, at Southwark. Bermondsey and Southwark have been too overbuilt for topographical analysis but what may be the boundary ditch of a minster enclosure has been found at Bermondsey (Dawson, pers comm). There are traces of a possible enclosure at Old Woking, where there is a focusing of communication routes.

It is possible to point to a number of Surrey examples of similar but non-minster enclosure that are vaguely circular. The most noticeable are at Mitcham and Ewell, but there may be others at Thorpe and, less probably, at Wallington. There is also a hint of something similar at Merton. At Hambledon, we have a possible rectangular example.

Both Mitcham and Ewell can be seen as early settlements on archaeological grounds. There are Anglo-Saxon cemeteries close to the postulated enclosures at Mitcham and Ewell and at Mitcham there was a key grave, possibly originally beneath a barrow, actually within the enclosure.

The possible enclosure at Ewell is low-lying and may even have been liable to flooding, however. Which raises problems. Possibly the enclosures excluded rather than contained. It may not be without significance that, at Mitcham, Merton and Ewell, the Christian church is *outside* the enclosure (for a discussion of churches sited

within probable prehistoric circular enclosures, see Rodwell 1993, 73-6). Mitcham and Merton are in the area of primary pagan settlement in Surrey and Ewell is not far behind. The church is also outside the possible enclosure at Thorpe, a settlement or estate that appears fairly early on place-name and documentary grounds. There are interesting parallels for this at Witham in Essex (Rodwell 1993). There are probably others.

The church is outside the possible enclosure at Hambledon as well, but, for various reasons, Hambledon, where the enclosure appears to have been embanked and sub-rectangular and rather larger than the others, may not be an early creation. A possible enclosure at Wallington (tentatively identified by John Phillips, pers. comm.) is larger still but more tenuous and there is no early church site nearby. The enclosure here, if it really exists, may be a different kind of animal altogether. But Wallington is in the area of primary pagan settlement and has an early place-name, which was given to the hundred.

We have already noted that Ewell incorporates a 'four-row' element and we can see that a discordant road was superimposed onto this before the start of the 15th century (Shearman 1968, plate IV). Mitcham also has many elements. In all cases, however, the hypothesized 'enclosure' can be considered as the stating point for later developments. It is possible that all these villages have their origins in the early Anglo-Saxon period but the implications for this, especially as far as Hambledon is concerned, have yet to be worked out. The 'enclosures' may pre-date the Anglo-Saxon settlements (c.f. Witham, Rodwell *op cit*).

Strategies

Something needs to be said about possible strategies for approaching the problems of village origins and development. Clearly, individual village surveys and associated documentary research must continue in greater and greater detail, for a whole range of reasons that do not require repeating. The examination, and particularly the dating by dendrochronology, of more of our earliest standing buildings must also be pursued with vigour.

Some attempt should be made to undertake surveys in Surrey in order to see whether metrological analysis can confirm or refute suggested 'regular' portions of possible re-ordered villages in order to test theories of planned villages, and to find whether estimates of a local 'rod' similar to those for Yorkshire and Durham can be teased out of the evidence.

Such work will teach us much about the development of our villages and something about the extent of the historic core.

The past generations of the poor do not necessarily feature in the documents and never in the standing buildings but the lost homes of the poor may be susceptible to archaeological detection. They will, of course, have left only extremely fugitive traces but this caveat probably applies to the vast majority of lost medieval dwellings, even quite substantial dwellings. Work on deserted village sites and elsewhere (Hanworth and Tomalin 1977; Austin 1989; Wrathmell 1989a; 1989b; 1994, 2000; c.f. Currie 1988; Gardiner 2000) has shown just how slight the archaeological evidence for medieval settlements can be even on relatively undisturbed sites. At Pirbright Manor, for example, excavations failed to uncover any trace of a late medieval cross-wing known to have once existed (Jackson *et al* 1999, 222): presumably enthusiastic gardening had removed all traces of flimsy foundations: At Wimbledon, even the much more robust Elizabethan manor house of the Cecils, the approximate position of which is known, continues to elude discovery.

It must be acknowledged that traces of the lost flimsier medieval dwellings are unlikely to be found by the kind of limited (and often mechanical) trenching currently

employed during 'evaluations' of development sites that constitute the vast majority of archaeological interventions within village envelopes today. It is even less likely that such traces will be found by the almost casual 'watching briefs' that are so often applied on development sites. These techniques may also miss other settlement indicators.

Thirty years ago, labour-intensive hand digging of a site within the backlands of houses around Mitcham Fair Green produced an unstratified pottery sequence that arguably mirrored the occupation history (Montague, pers. comm.). Recent developer-funded evaluation in a similar location followed standard techniques involving topsoil stripping and produced no evidence of any lost occupation sequence. A two-metre trench with topsoil stripped mechanically, searching for 'deep features' and ignoring the contents of the top soil, will just not find the sort of evidence that needs to be looked for in village centres. In open rural sites the value of collecting unstratified surface material is widely accepted.

While the scope for a conventional archaeological approach has been demonstrated in many urban situations from Reigate to Staines, it has to be recognized that, wherever occupation has been continuous, the archaeological record may well be elusive. Consequently, there is an urgent need for a change of attitude and approach during 'development-driven' archaeology within the ancient cores of our villages. If the search for structures which may or may not have existed and whose position is uncertain is to be successful, it will need far more extensive and intensive research than that provided by current archaeological evaluations.

It would be preferable, in fact, to rise above a dependence upon the random incidence of developer-driven archaeology. We must build upon the success to date of the Society's Villages Project. There are several villages where opportunities exist to undertake more intensive interdisciplinary research projects to seek evidence for the village origins. As a very minimum, in such villages, the prospect of development within or close to the historic village envelope must be met by extensive excavation undertaken to an appropriate brief and research design. In other villages, the research design for evaluations in advance of development must be improved.

Migrated villages may offer the most rapidly achievable results from the application of an archaeological research strategy because it would be two-pronged. The research strategy for Surrey's deserted village sites should be no different from that at dozens of similar cases up and down the country and a clear priority should be the search for surviving earthworks and for geophysical indications, however vestigial. There is an equally urgent need for more research-driven area excavation in the same locations for this as well as the other reasons. The research strategy for the 'new' site of migrated villages would be similar to that for reordered villages.

Perspectives

And finally, let us admit that it is possible to pay too much attention to the problem of village origins and we must not forget the value of archaeology in providing material for an holistic analysis of medieval social and economic conditions, the social, economic and physical setting of the village. Because of 19th and 20th C developments, we perhaps no longer have in Surrey many villages or parishes as open for research of the kind undertaken famously at Shapwick (Aston and Gerrard 1999) or planned for the Whittlewood area on the Bucks-Northants border (Dyer 1999b) but there are parishes where a more restricted version of the same strategy could well be pursued.

Appendix: Morphological Classifications Relevant to Village Origins

1. Parishes that still have no village today: Wotton; Crowhurst; Burstow; Horne.
2. Polyfocal or waste-edge villages that are pretty dispersed even today: Dunsfold.
3. Parishes that had only dispersed polyfocal or waste-edge settlement until (say) the 19th century: Ewhurst; Merton (surprising for a parish so close to London); Horley.
4. Villages whose acquisition of this status can be roughly dated and explained: Capel; Ripley; Abinger Hammer;
5. Re-organized villages: Chertsey Abbey estate villages; Blechingley; Leatherhead; Haslemere.
6. Villages that seem to have developed organically from some earlier (dispersed, polyfocal?) form: Charlwood; Hambledon.
7. Migrated villages: Ockley; Godstone; Albury.
8. 'Enclosure' villages: Mitcham; Ewell; Wallington(?).
9. Green villages: Brockham.

Bibliography

Anon 2000 Charter Quay, Kingston, *SyAS Bulletin* **338** (May), 2-6.
Aston, M A and Gerrard, C 1999 'Unique, traditional and charming', the Shapwick project, Somerset, *Ants Journ*, **79**, 1-58.
Austin, D 1989 *The Deserted Village of Thristlington, County Durham: Excavations 1973-1974* (Society for Medieval Archaeology Monograph Series **12**).
Bailey, K A 1968 Medieval Putney, a planned village? *Wandsworth Historian*, **51**, 1-8.
Blair, W J 1991 *Early Medieval Surrey* (Stroud).
        1992 Anglo-Saxon minsters: a topographical review, in W J Blair and R Sharpe eds *Pastoral Care before the Parish* (Leicester), 226-66.
Beresford, M W 1961 *New Towns of the Middle Ages.*
Currie, C R J 1988 Time and chance: modelling the attrition of old houses, *Vernacular Architecture* **19**, 1-9.
Dawson, G J 1976 *The Black Prince's Palace in Kennington* (BAR 26).
Dyer, C 1999a How medieval people perceived settlement and landscape (c.500-1600), *MSRG Annual Report* **13**, 13-14.
        1999b The MSRG Whittlewood project, *MSRG Annual Report*, **14**, 16-17.
Finberg, H P R 1959 *Roman and Saxon Withington: a Study in Continuity* (Leicester Univ Dept of English Local History Occ Paper **8**).
Gardiner, M 2000 Vernacular buildings and the development of the later medieval domestic plan in England, *Med Arch* **44**, 159-80.
Hall, D 1995 *The Open Fields of Northamptonshire.*
Hanworth, R and Tomalin, D J 1977 *Brooklands, Weybridge* (SyAS Research Volume **4**).
Harvey, P D A 1989 Initiative and authority in settlement change, in M Aston et al (eds) *The Rural Settlements of Medieval England*, 31-44.
Hoskins, W G 1955 *Making of the English Landscape.*
Jackson, G, Maloney, C and Saich, D 1999 Archaeology in Surrey 1996-7, *SyAC* **86**, 217-55.
Lambert, Sir H 1912 *History of Banstead.*
Lewis, C, Mitchell-Fox, P and Dyer, C (eds) 1997 *Village, Hamlet and Field: Changing Medieval Settlement in Central England* (Manchester).
Maitland, F W 1897 *Domesday Book and Beyond.*
Marche 1867 Œuvres complétes de Suger (Paris), trans. in Baker, E *et al* 1952, *The European Inheritance*, vol I, 499-500.
Muckleroy, K W 1973 'Woodcote, or Woodcote Warren, once a city, according to tradition', *SyAC* **69**, 37-45.
O'Keeffe, T 2000 Reflections on the 'dispersed-nucleated paradigm' in medieval settlement archaeology, *Ruralia* **3**, 103-105.
Oosthuizen, S and James, N 1999 The south-west Cambridgeshire project: interim report, *Medieval Settlement Group Annual Report* **14**, 17-25.
Paget, E 1954 Settlements, in A F Martin and R W Steel (eds) *The Oxford Region: a Scientific and Historical Survey* (London), 158-64.
Rackham, O 1994 *Illustrated History of the Countryside.*

Ravensdale, J R 1974 *Liable to Floods: Village Landscape on the Edge of the Fens AD 450-1850.*

Roberts, B K 1977 *Rural Settlement in Britain* (Folkestone).

1985 Village patterns and forms: some models for discussion, in D Hooke (ed) *Medieval Villages* (Oxford University Committee for Archaeology Monograph no. 5), 7-26.

1989 Nucleation and dispersion: distribution maps as a research tool, in M Aston et al (eds) *The Rural Settlements of Medieval England*, 59-76.

1996 *Landscapes of Settlement – Prehistoric to Present.*

Roberts, B and Wrathmell, S 1998 Dispersed settlement in England: a national view, in P Everson and T Williamson (eds) *The Archaeology of the Landscape* (Manchester).

Rodwell, W 1993 *The Origin and Early Development of Witham, Essex* (Oxbow Monograph 26).

Rolston 1956 *Haslemere.*

Shearman, P 1968 *Fitznells Cartulary.*

Sheppard, J A 1973 Field systems of Yorkshire, in A H R Baker and R A Butlin (ed) *Studies of Field Systems in the British Isles* (Cambridge),

1974 Metrological analysis of regular village plans in Yorkshire, *Agri Hist Rev* **22**, 118-35.

1976 Medieval village planning in northern England: some evidence from Yorkshire, *J Hist Geography*, **2**, 3-20.

Somerset VBRG (Somerset Vernacular Building Research Group) 1996 *The Vernacular Buildings of Shapwick.*

Taylor, C C 1977 Polyfocal settlements and the English village, *Med Arch* **21**, 189-93.

1982 Medieval market grants and village morphology, *Landscape History* **4**, 21-8.

Taylor 1978 Aspects of village mobility in medieval and later times, in S Limbrey and J G Evans (eds) *The Effect of Man on the Landscape: the Lowland Zone* (CBA Research Report **21**), 126-34.

VCHSy

Wade-Martins 1975 The origins of rural settlement in East Anglia, in P Fowler (ed) *Recent Work in Rural Archaeology*, 137-57.

Welch, M G 1985 Rural settlement patterns in the early and middle Anglo-Saxon periods, *Landscape History* **7**, 13-25.

Wrathmell, S 1989a *Domestic Settlements 2: Medieval Peasant Farmsteads.*

1989b Peasant houses, farmsteads and villages in NE England, in M Aston et al (eds) *The Rural Settlement of Medieval England*, 247-67.

1994 Rural settlements in medieval England in B Vyner (ed) *Building on the Past*, 178-94.

2000 Modelling medieval peasant buildings, lecture to the Vernacular Architecture Group 16.12.00.

Yates, E M 1965 Dark Age and medieval settlement on the edge of waste and forest, *Field Studies* **2/2**, 133-53.

The frontispiece map shows part of north-west Surrey including the villages of Bagshot, Windlesham, Bisley, Chobham, West End, Knaphill and Pirbright. It is based on the Tithe maps of the 1840s and Rocques Survey of 1793.

The Council of the Surrey Archaeological Society desires it to be known that it is not responsible for the statements or opinions expressed in the Bulletin.