

# A STUDY OF SETTLEMENT PATTERNS

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“The nihtegale bigon tho speke  
In one hurne of one breche  
And set up one vayre bowe  
That were abute blostme ynowe  
In ore vaste thikke hegge  
Imeyd myd spire and grene segge.”\*

## INTRODUCTION

A USEFUL generalization in a study of the English scarp-lands is that of the scarp-foot settlement. The springs and the good soils, often found together at the foot of the escarpments, are frequently associated with a line of compact villages, and strip parishes. The English village has, however, been the subject of another generalization, that of their ethnic origin. Meitzen (1895) suggested “Thus it becomes clear that the Anglo-Saxons, who came from Holstein . . . founded German open-field villages in England, whilst the Jutes in Kent and Wessex allowed the Celtic farm to remain.”

These generalizations are not mutually contradictory for the first deals with site, the second with form. They are indeed, like most generalizations, useful as an aid to memory and as a standard against which to compare reality. Reality in this instance is a part of Holmesdale, and the adjacent chalk lands in west Surrey.

## THE LOCATION, ITS GEOLOGY AND PHYSIQUE

The district to be discussed is 14 miles in east-west extent, from the outskirts of Reigate to the outskirts of Guildford, but including neither of these two towns. It contains ten parishes, all save two of which are scarp foot. The two exceptions, Headley and Mickleham, are north of the Chalk escarpment but, owing to the broadening of the outcrop eastwards, they are confined to that formation.

The area is so well known that the geological succession requires little description, but there are a number of points which must be emphasized since they might be of significance to a discussion of the settlement pattern. The two scarp formers which flank the vale are the Hythe Beds in the Lower Greensand, and the Chalk (Figs. 1 and 2). In the vale are the outcrops of the Upper Greensand, the Gault, and the two uppermost members of the Lower Greensand, that is the Folkestone Beds. and the Sandgate Beds. In the west the simple pattern of outcrops is disturbed by the Peasemarsch anticline, and this disturbance leads to some duplication of outcrops. In the east the pattern is less disturbed, but on the other hand it is masked by solifluction gravels and by terrace gravels. The

\*Lines from “The Owl and the Nightingale” written in Surrey dialect at the late 12th or early 13th century. The “v” for an “f” in vayre (fair) occurs also in the place name Wolvens Farm (site 29, Fig. 4) which was originally “ful fen” (foul marsh). Both breche (ploughed or broken-up land) and hurne (a nook) are common place name elements. There was a John atte Hurne living in Albury in 1380 and John atte Breche in Gomshall in 1332.

faulting on the north side of the Peasemarth anticline has led to the disappearance of the Gault, and the Upper Greensand throughout is narrow compared with its outcrop in Sussex. The other important structural point is the behaviour of the Hythe Beds outcrop. On the west the Hythe Beds escarpment is parallel with the Chalk and about 3 to 4 miles south. Just west of the meridian of Dorking it changes direction to north-south for two and a half miles before resuming the east-west direction. This does not involve a marked narrowing of the vale, but

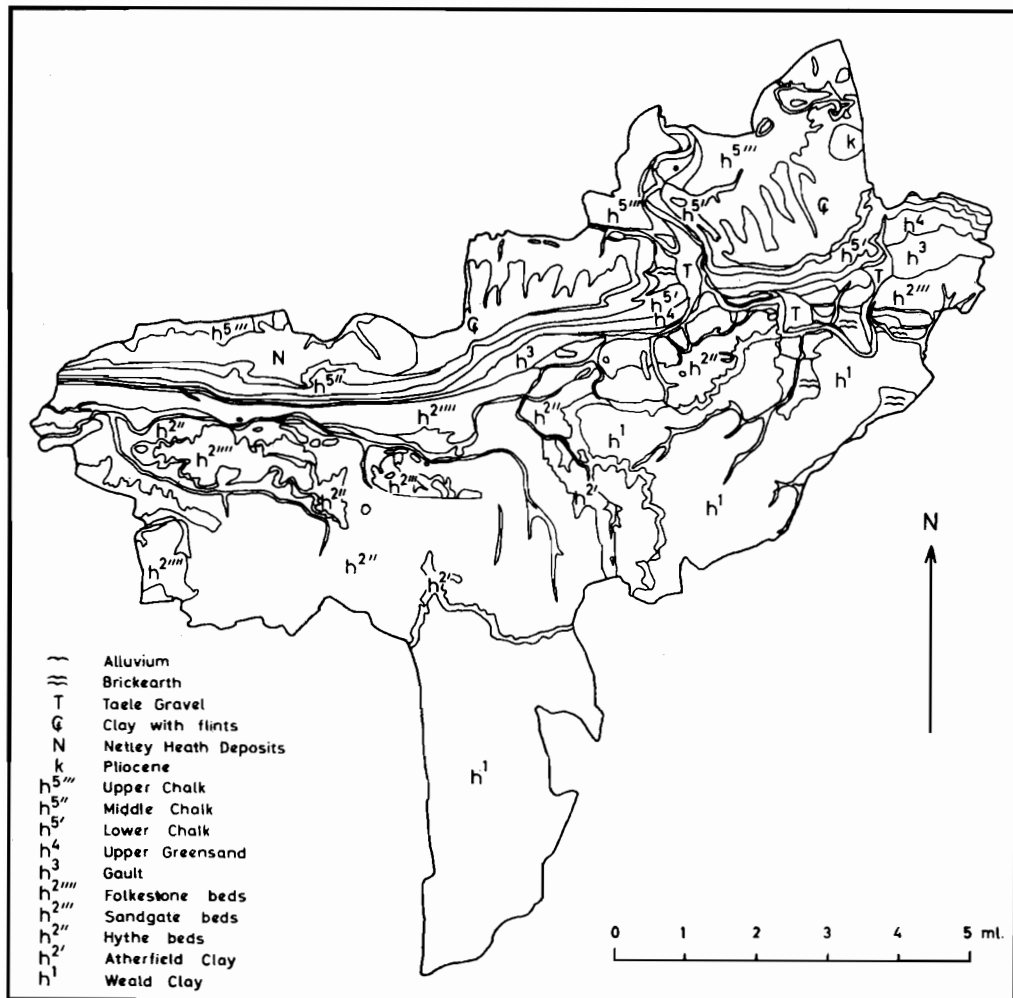


FIG. 1  
Geology of the district.

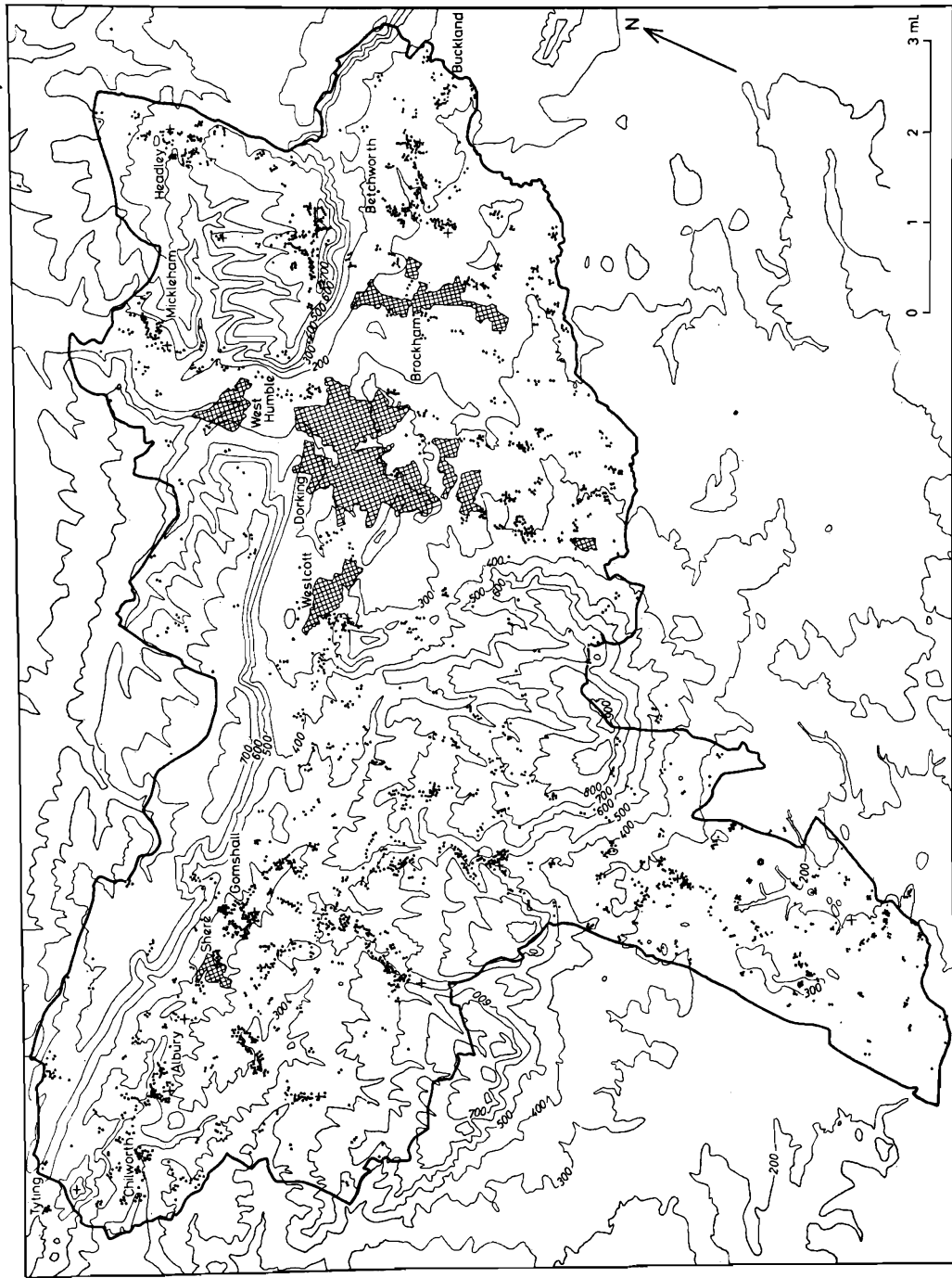


FIG. 2

Pattern of settlement 1950, together with relief.

results rather in a loss of definition. West of Dorking the wide belt of upland country provided by the Hythe Beds dip-slopes makes a sharp boundary to the vale. To the east of Dorking the resumption of the east-west alignment is accompanied by a narrowing in the outcrop, and the virtual disappearance of a strong physical feature. The southern boundary of the vale becomes for a few miles indeterminate. Views from the Chalk escarpment to the west of Dorking are over Hythe Beds country; views from the escarpment to the east of Dorking look to the central Weald, or on clear days to the South Downs.

This is, of course, of fundamental significance in the distribution of soils. The most favourable soils are the loams developed on the Upper Greensand, the Sandgate Beds, and on the terraces, especially as some of the latter have spreads of brick earth. The Folkestone Beds and the Hythe Beds provide generally poorer sandy soils, much of which is uncultivated. The strip parishes in the west, notably Abinger and Wotton (Fig. 3), contain very large areas of the poorer soils although the balance is partly redressed by the bigger outcrops of the Sandgate Beds. The eastern parishes have a smaller percentage of the poorer sands, but are also blessed with the major part of the terrace soils. In water supply this part of the vale departs considerably from the usual conditions. The Hythe Beds dip-slopes contain a number of streams flowing northward into the vale and joining the Tillingbourne, the Mole, or the Pipp Brook. Both the Tillingbourne and the Mole flow from east to west, the Tillingbourne along the axis of the Peasemarth anticline, the Mole parallel to the Chalk escarpment until it turns north through the gap. The three streams named have an added significance because of the lack of scarp foot springs. A spring line begins east of Buckland, but between Buckland and Guildford there is only one spring, that feeding the Shirebourn ponds north of Albury.\*

To sum up the points in the physique most likely to influence settlement:

- i. The larger area of heathy land to be found in the west.
- ii. The absence of springs and hence the importance of the main streams.

#### THE PRESENT SETTLEMENT PATTERN

The map shows settlement as depicted on the 25,000 sheets of the O.S. dated 1948-1953 (Fig. 2). The first inspection appears to bring out clearly the importance of the last point made in the description of the physique, that is the absence of springs. The villages are situated not at the foot of the Chalk, but along the trunk streams. From west to east along the Tillingbourne there are Chilworth, Albury, Abinger Hammer, Shere, Gomshall; along the Pipp Brook, Westcott and Dorking; along the Mole, Brockham and Betchworth. Mickleham also lies close to the Mole, and only Headley and Abinger can have been dependent on well water.

Apart from this development of village sites a short distance from the escarpment, the pattern of settlement accords well with the first generalization. The places named can be fairly described as villages (or towns in the case of Dorking), so that there is little anomalous. Furthermore, many of the villages are associated with strip parishes. Indeed, before the extensive boundary changes of the late

\*One of the ponds is now known as the Silent Pool, an example of 18th or 19th century romanticism, comparable with Tranquil Dale (site 147) and Lonesome Lodge (site 8g).

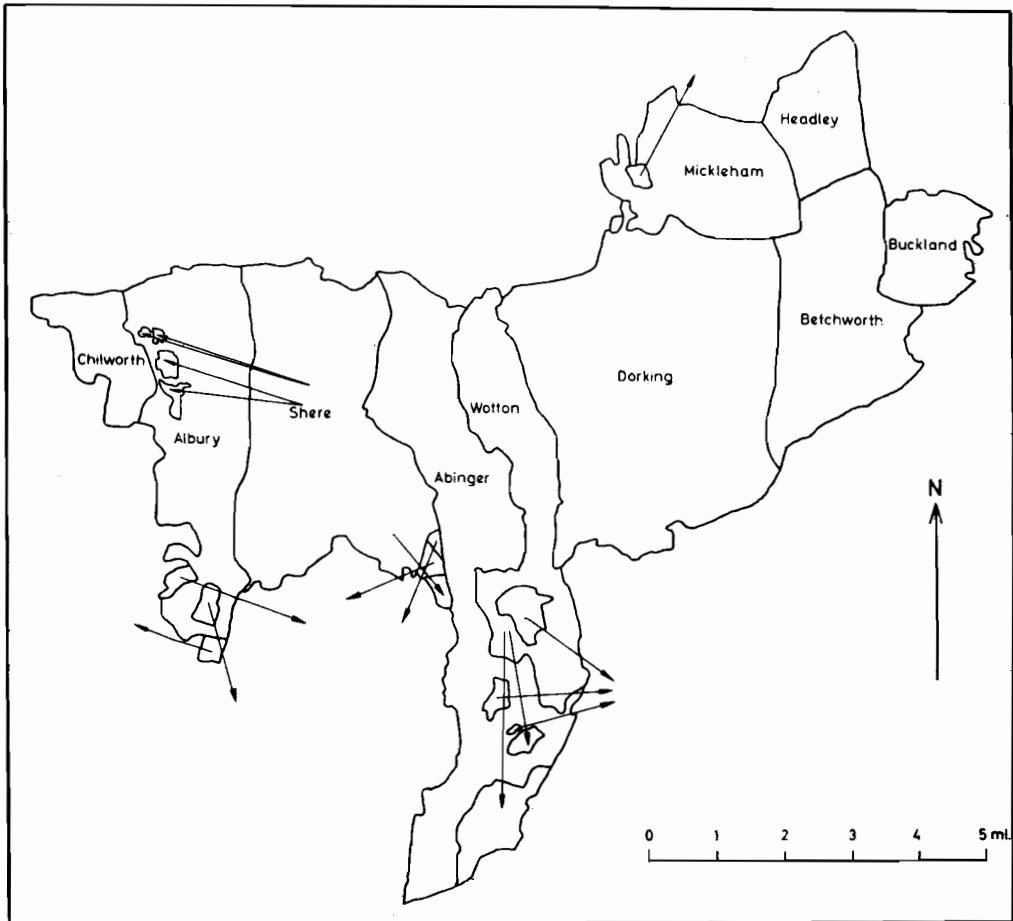


FIG. 3  
Parish boundaries in early 19th century.

19th century the strip form of the parishes was even clearer (Fig. 3). There is, too, an accordance with the second generalization mentioned in the introduction, for these villages have Anglo-Saxon names and the district is neither Kent nor Wessex. Nevertheless there are several points to which attention must be drawn. They are:

- i. Wotton, the parish between Westcott and Gomshall, has no village. There is a church, and to the south of it Wotton House (site 90). No nucleated settlement exists within the parish and Wotton is a break in the pattern described above.

- ii. Chilworth Church, St. Martha's, is likewise isolated, although there is a Chilworth village.
- iii. Abinger Hammer (site 12), has no church. This is situated at Abinger.
- iv. As well as the nucleated settlements there are many isolated farms some of which have ancient sounding names, e.g. Paddington (site 52), Sutton (site 57).
- v. Albury has two anglican churches, one in the village, the other in Albury Park.
- vi. Where a spring does exist, i.e. the Silent Pool at Albury, there is nevertheless no village at the foot of the escarpment.
- vii. South-west of Mickleham on the other side of the Mole is the village of West Humble. It consists almost entirely of modern houses without industry or shops. It is, in fact, apart from a farm and one or two older houses, a dormitory village, owing its present form to the rail line from London. The effects of this later type of development can be removed by looking at the settlement patterns at the beginning of the 19th century.

#### SETTLEMENT AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 19TH CENTURY

(With reference to Fig. 4)

This map has been constructed by reference to the surveyors' drawings for the 1st edition of the O.S. 1 inch map (dated 1806-10) and Roque's map of Surrey (1768).

There are obviously very big differences in the settlement pattern of c.1800 and that of 1948. Growth was, of course, to be expected but, although Dorking has grown enormously, it was still recognizably a small town in 1800. This is not so with Chilworth. Where there is today a village, there was in 1800 a tiny hamlet comprising little more than the present manor house and the now defunct powdermills (site 22). Chilworth of 1800 was similar to Wotton of 1948. Albury, too was much smaller in 1800, but there is one much more significant difference. The name "Albury" applied then to the area around the old church. On Roque's map a hamlet, for it was no more, still remained around the church. This hamlet form is also to be seen in an early 18th century map of Albury, preserved at Albury House (Surrey Record Office, Ph. 227).

In 1842, the landowner, Henry Drummond, pulled down the old settlement and transplanted the people to Weston which gradually assumed the name Albury (see Plate). There can hardly be a better example of impermanency in settlement pattern or site.

Both Shere and Gomshall can fairly be called villages (Fig. 4), but Abinger Hammer (site 12) and Abinger (site 58) were hardly more than hamlets. Westcott (site 102), like Shere and Gomshall, was still recognizably a village, or rather two villages, for in 1800 two separate nuclei, Westcott and Milton (site 103), were present where now one built-up area exists. To the east of Dorking the change during the period is less marked. Although very much smaller than at present, both Betchworth and Brockham were villages, but Tranquil Dale (site 147), to the north of Betchworth, was in 1800 of comparatively recent growth. Of the other villages Headley was, perhaps, closest to its present size.

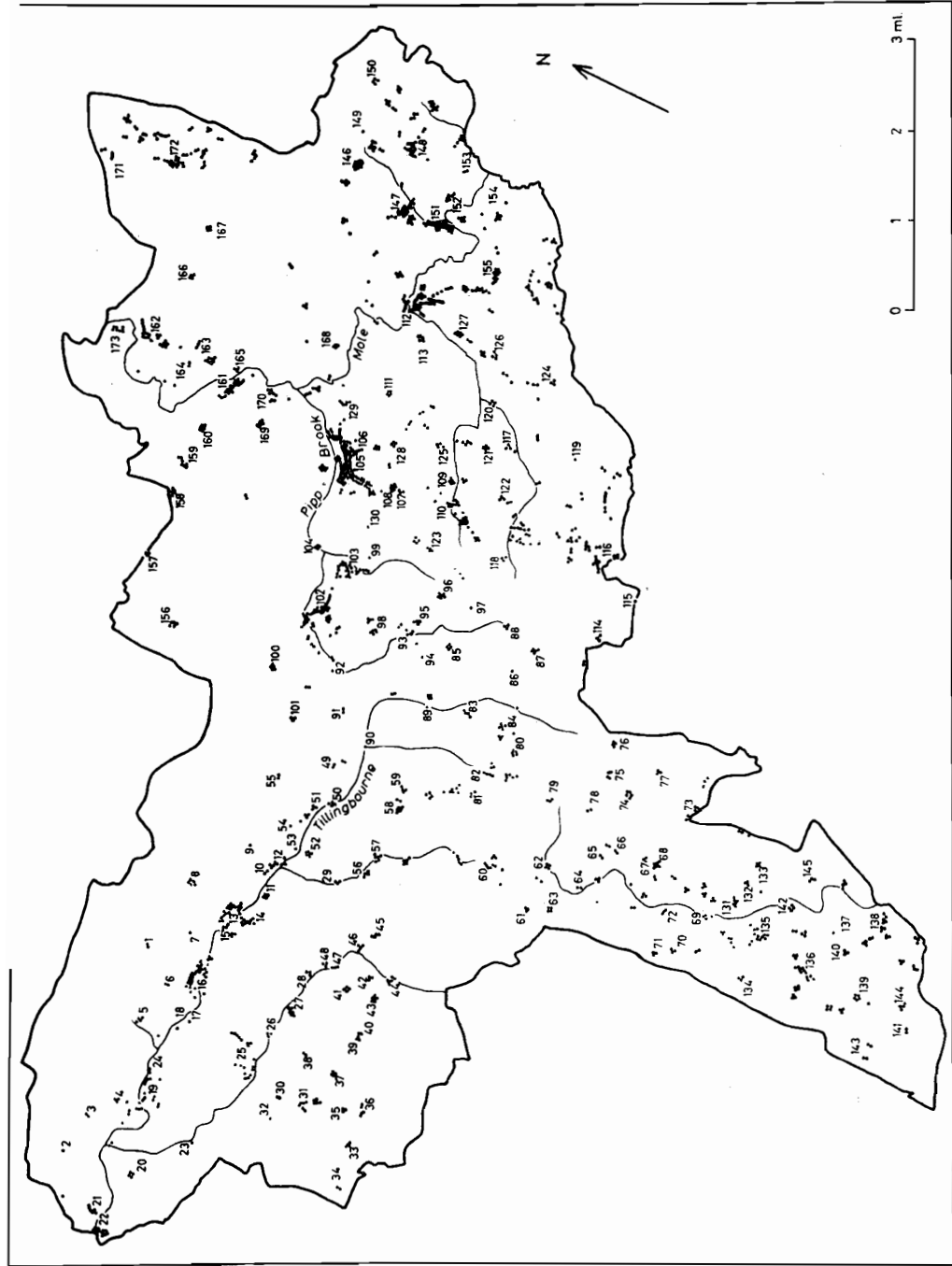


FIG. 4

Pattern of settlement c. 1800, together with main streams. The majority of the sites are numbered for reference in the text.

In 1800, Mickleham (site 162) and Buckland (site 148) were, if villages, only barely so.\*

The 1800 map shows also that, as today, the nucleations were accompanied by many isolated farmsteads. The period from 1800 to the present has not been solely one of addition. A number of farms present in 1800 have vanished. Sites 73, 36 and 64 are examples. The pattern of settlement in 1800 is much less clearly a pattern of scarp foot villages. It is rather a pattern of hamlets and single farms with only a few villages. In many parts of England isolated farmsteads appeared in large numbers only after the parliamentary or other enclosure, while in other areas isolated farms seem to constitute a settlement form of considerable antiquity. It is necessary to establish next, therefore, whether the pattern of dispersal settlement shown in the map of *c.* 1800 was one of antiquity or whether such sites as Wotton and Chilworth had once been occupied villages; whether, in other words, the now isolated church might not point to a disappeared or lost village (or, as in the example of Albury, a shifted site).

The evidence for the earlier form of settlement comes from a variety of sources.

#### EVIDENCE OF FORMER SETTLEMENT PATTERNS

##### (1) *The age of existing buildings*

The age of the present house on a site is not an indication of length of time that a site has been occupied, since a series of successive houses may have been built on the same ground. Obviously, however, it is an indication of the minimum age of occupancy. Since many old houses exist in the district, they constitute an important source of evidence for earlier settlement patterns. For example, Crossways Farm (site 51) is late Tudor, Wolvens Farm (site 29) is of 17th century date. Such field evidence can establish that a large number of isolated farmsteads existed in early modern times, before the period of parliamentary enclosures. It cannot establish that these sites were occupied before the Tudor enclosures.

On the other hand there are in Shere a large number of old cottages, and these show that a village was present in the late 15th or early 16th century. The presence of these cottages gives Shere a character not possessed by other big settlements in this part of Holmesdale, but the Shere cottages also constitute a problem. They are bigger in size than a labourer's cottage, but nevertheless, their timber work is of poor quality. Furthermore a number had their single original chimney stack at one end of the building instead of centrally placed. The end room(s) must therefore have been entirely unheated. In contrast to Shere, Gomshall has fewer of the "middle" size buildings of this age, but some very large farms. Edmunds Farm on the north side of Gomshall is a large building of which the older parts are probably *c.* 1500. The timber work is of far better quality than the Shere cottages, and close to the farmhouse are two timber framed barns of 16th century age, each as big as the Shere cottages. In other words there is evidence that during the 16th century Gomshall

\*The nucleation at site 146 is marked on the surveyors' drawings "Hoppers". It was therefore a temporary camp for hop pickers. Hops were grown along Holmesdale. In the 18th century Chilworth was reputed to have the best hop gardens in England. (British Museum Add. Ms. 23 31.)



had a small number of large farms whereas Shere was a settlement either of numerous small farmsteads or, as will be suggested later, had an industrial rather than agricultural function.

(2) *Place-name evidence*

(a) *Habitative names.*

Where ancient habitative names are thickly distributed, a dispersed settlement pattern must be of considerable antiquity. Abinger—Farm of Abba's people—(Gower, Mawer & Stenton, 1934) and Sutton (site 57) are less than a mile from each other, and Sutton is "south farm" to distinguish it from Paddington (site 52) just over half a mile north. In this respect Westcott is an interesting name since the "cott", meaning cottage, appears to be derived from the singular "cote" and denotes that Westcott was originally a single homestead.

(b) *Non-habitative place-names.*

The majority of "ton" and "worth" names\* are pre-Norman but, where non-habitative names now apply to settlement sites, there may be a considerable difference in age between the name and the settlement. Hartshurst Farm (site 77) means "the wood of the hart" or "the wood of a man named Heort". It does not indicate a habitation, but nevertheless by 1086 Hartshurst was the name of a manor (Malden, 1902). Proof of the continuous occupation of the site is partly supplied by a long series of deeds relating to the farms extending over the period of 1445 to 1623 (Surrey Record Office, Ac. 221). Cokshott Farm (site 151) is likewise a non-habitative name and the name is in itself not an indication of the age of the farmstead. Cokshott Farm is, however, linked with Hartshurst Farm in the series of deeds mentioned above and was a farmstead by 1445. Evidence for an earlier occupation of the site is provided by the poll tax lists of 1380 (Public Record Office, E/179/184/29). Under Wotton appears "John atte Cokshote". This type of name in the poll taxes lists and in the subsidy rolls of 1332 (Surrey Record Society, No. 18. 1922) provides substantial evidence for the occupation of scattered sites, not all of which however can be identified.

Included within the poll tax returns for Westcott are:

Richard atte Chargate.	Thomas atte Plestouwe.
John atte Chargate.	Adam atte Plachynhurst.
Thomas atte Well.	Robert atte More.
Richard atte Lese.	John atte Hetde.
Roger atte Monte.	Richard atte Watre.
William atte Felde.	

Plachynhurst is now Fletchinghurst barn (site 97), and is no longer a habitation; Plestouwe is Pleystowe Farm (now in Capel Parish); Watre is probably Waterland Farm (site 119); Chargate is probably Chertgate, now within Dorking. Similarly under Abinger is recorded "atte Burchetts" and this is Burchetts Farm (site 65). Even on the lists for Betchworth and Brockham for the 1332 subsidy there are sixteen "atte" names recorded. Apart from the

\*Abinger is a corruption of Abingworth.

“atte” group, some of the surnames given without any “atte” are derived from place-names, and it is likely that the first bearer of the name had lived at that site. Thus, the surname “Pynkhurst” is given under Abinger and Pinkhurst Farm is site 141. Not all the “atte” names need indicate houses outside the main settlement (where “main” settlements existed) but they are sufficiently numerous, and enough of them can be identified, to show that, as in 1800, so in the 14th century a large number of isolated homesteads were in existence.

This type of evidence can also be derived from earlier documents. Thus, in a deed dated 1316 relating to a mead in Dorking, the people involved were Thomas atte Cherchegate and Robert atte Monte\* (S.R.O. Sc. 43/58/9). The deed was witnessed by Robert atte Sonde, William atte Chere, William atte Mulle, and Adam de Anstighe. Thomas atte Cherchegate lived in Dorking, but the other names show scattered settlement. Anstighe, for example, is Anstiebury (site 114) and Sonde is Sondes Place (close to site 104).

### (3) *Other Evidence Derived from Manuscript Sources*

Many of the other names shown on the poll tax lists do not indicate where the bearer of the name lived. When under one parish or tything a long list of names appears (and the poll tax lists were presumed to contain all the adults) we are only able to assume at first that the form of settlement was either:

- (a) a large number of scattered farms,
- or (b) a large village,
- or (c) a form intermediate between (a) and (b) with both dispersed sites and a village or hamlet.

The numerous “atte” names discussed above show that (b) would not have been the case in this part of Holmesdale and we are left with (c) or (a). On the other hand a short list of names for a tything or parish certainly shows that no village could have existed. Abinger has only 20 persons listed, two of these are “atte” names and a few others give some indication of sites. These are Pynkhurst, Heyhurst, Upperfold and Ashurst. Pinkhurst has already been mentioned (site 141). Ashurst is probably High Ashes Farm (site 79). Abinger in 1380, therefore, can only have been a tiny hamlet. Paddington on the other hand has 61 persons recorded, but this includes four “atte” names, and must also represent the settlement now known as Abinger Hammer.

The poll tax returns date from after the Black Death and the possibility that some considerable shrinkage in the size of Abinger had taken place must be considered. The subsidy rolls of 1332 show that Abinger and Paddington had together 34 taxpayers compared with 78 at Shere, 120 at Gomshall and 95 at Dorking. The subsidy rolls record only heads of households as taxpayers. Very poor people were not considered, and probably some people escaped altogether. The number on the subsidy rolls must therefore be at least doubled to make them in any way comparable with those on the poll tax lists. This being so it would appear that Abinger and Paddington had much the same size of population in 1380 as in 1332. If Abinger had suffered from the Black Death in 1349,

\*These men were probably freeholders. This point will be considered later.

it had recovered in size by 1380. The hamlet form cannot be attributed to a reduction of population due to the pestilence.

The 78 taxpayers at Shere, the 120 at Gomshall and the 95 at Dorking were the largest numbers recorded for the district. The majority of the other tythings or parishes had much smaller totals: Buckland 20, Milton 13, Westcott 22, Wotton 21. Intermediate between these two groups were Albury 54, and Betchworth and Brockham together 65. It is unlikely that any village can have been present at Buckland, Milton, Westcott or Wotton. Considered with the other evidence it would appear likely that villages were present at Shere, Dorking, Gomshall and Betchworth.

The other important early source of population statistics is the Domesday Book (Malden, *op. cit.*). To the figures given therein the same type of difficulties of interpretation arise as with the poll tax and other taxation returns: there are omissions; the areas to which the population statistics refer, *i.e.* the manors, vary in size; only heads of households are given. Nevertheless, bearing in mind the variation in areal extent, the Domesday population statistics are of value for comparative purposes. The largest population was recorded at Dorking with 55 persons, followed by Gomshall with 44 persons. Shere had 31 persons recorded. This is consistent with the 1332 taxation returns, but Buckland had a large recorded population of 37 in 1086 compared with the 20 taxpayers of 1342. Most of the other manors had recorded populations of about 20 and the existence of any large villages is most unlikely. Additional evidence for this comes from comparison with some of the manors of Berkshire which were similarly situated on or near the Chalk escarpment. On the first edition of the O.S. 1 inch sheet XIII, Blewbury, Lambourn, Sparsholt and Wantage appear as large villages. Their recorded Domesday populations were respectively 93, 138, 100 and 89. In contrast some of the Holmesdale manors were extremely small. Chilworth had a recorded population of eight.

Evidence for population before 1086 is, of course, very meagre. On the other hand, for the interval from the poll tax returns to the first edition of the O.S. 1 inch sheet, some impression of the density of population can be gained from a wide variety of sources. One of these is the hearth tax returns of 1664 (S.R. Soc., 17, 1940). These were drawn up for a tax on hearths; industrial concerns and houses worth less than a pound were exempt. Since both the number of hearths and the number of houses liable and not liable are all given, we have evidence about the size and number of houses within the parishes. Mickleham has 40 houses, Shere 78, Headley, 30 Gomshall 76, Albury 92, and Chilworth 7. Chilworth was obviously still a very small settlement. Once again, however, a large number of houses does not prove the existence of a village. Wotton had 71 houses, but 39 of these were "below the hill", *i.e.* on the Weald Clay in the south.

The hearth tax must therefore be considered together with other evidence. Thus, from the field evidence already noted, it is obvious that some of Shere's 78 houses did form a village. The 40 houses of Mickleham, and the 30 of Headley would not allow for the presence of anything larger than a hamlet, if due allowance is made for the isolated farms. In Mickleham parish, for example, there were certainly houses at Norbury (site 173), Fredley (site 164), and there is evidence (S.R.O. Court Rolls of West Humble, 1711, Ac. 439) for some

cottages at West Humble (site 161). The 30 houses at Headley may indicate more of a grouping, since there is less evidence for dispersed sites within that parish, but the older houses in the village show that Headley was not a closely knit village. Three of the non-liable houses of Headley had only one hearth each and were therefore possibly turf or cob built. A turf built house is recorded in Coldharbour as late as 1801 (S.R.O. 53/13/3). The existence of such houses (or hovels as they are occasionally called in the documents) helps to explain how easily the changes in settlement pattern can have taken place. Albury had 92 recorded houses, quite sufficient for the presence of a village, but here we must turn to a further body of evidence.

#### (4) *Map Evidence*

A number of early maps of the district are available. The early map of Albury dated 1701 (to which reference has already been made) shows that, despite the 92 houses within the parish, Albury itself was then a hamlet. A 1649 map of Dorking confirms its small size at that date (the hearth tax shows about 185 houses). A 1634 map of Brockham and Betchworth (Fig. 5) shows Brockham to have been a tiny hamlet and Betchworth, although a village, had developed about two centres, with numerous isolated farms in the same parish. Further maps exist (Guildford Muniment Room, and Minet Library, Camberwell) of isolated farms such as Crossways Farm (site 51) 1724, Wolvens Farm (site 29) 1723, and Little Burchetts (site 65) 1739.

#### (5) *Evidence of Site*

Finally we must return to field evidence, not of the actual houses, but of the site. At Headley for example the limited water supply must have inhibited the development of a large village. Perhaps the most telling piece of evidence of all, comes from an examination of the site of Tyting, formerly within Chilworth parish, but now transferred to Guildford. This site is between the Chalk and the Folkestone Beds, where the outcrops of the Gault and the Upper Greensand have been drastically reduced by faulting. The site is too restricted for a village and the water supply limited. Nevertheless the name is a true "ingas" name, and therefore the settlement is of great antiquity. There can be little question that Tyting, from its foundation, has never been more than a hamlet. It was recorded in 1086 as having land for 2 ploughs (compared with 14 at Shere and 20 at Gomshall) with a population of 7.

#### (6) *Discussion of the Evidence*

The pattern of settlement which was present in Holmesdale resembles that of present day Kent. As already noted the Kentish pattern of settlement was interpreted ethnically by Meitzen, being attributed to a survival of a Celtic population. Joliffe (1933) on the other hand considered that the scattered settlement of Kent was a characteristic of the Jutish colonists.\* Furthermore he suggested that the Jutish area of settlement originally extended far beyond Kent, and that evidence of Jutish settlement is still to be found beyond the confines of the county, although he did not in fact include the district of west Surrey with which we are now concerned. The early history of Surrey is very obscure, but

\*Bede named Kent, parts of Hampshire, and the Isle of Wight as of Jutish settlement. Joliffe would include much of the intervening tract, i.e. Sussex and part of Surrey.

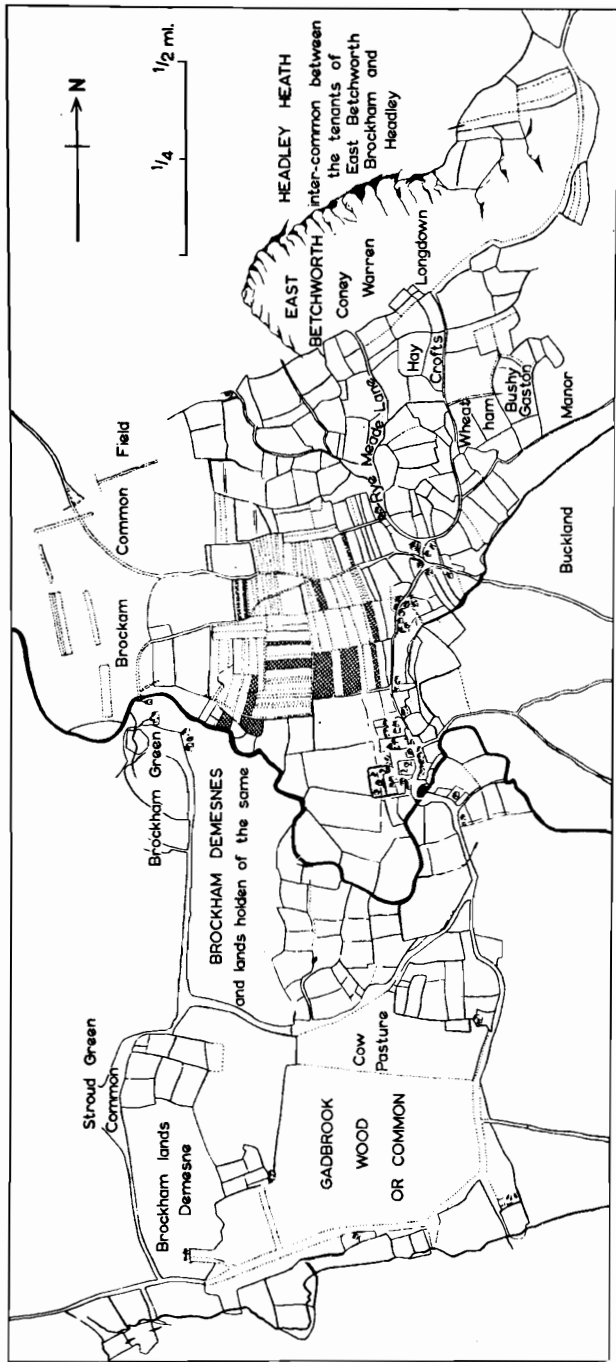


FIG. 5

Map of open-field at Brockham and Betchworth 1634. Redrawn and simplified from original map in Surrey Record Office. The shaded strips in Betchworth open-field are the holdings of one man. The division of Brockham field is not given but strips belonging to Betchworth demesne and lying in Brockham field are indicated. (By permission of the Surrey Record Office and with acknowledgement to Major General E. H. Goulburn, D.S.O.)

in early medieval times west Surrey had a dialect different from that of Kent and may have been originally peopled by a different group of colonists (Sundby, 1950).\* At this point, however, it is useful to turn for evidence to the continent, from whence these peoples came in the 5th and 6th centuries. Modern research by Müller-Wille, Mortensen and Jäger (1957) has shown that an early form of Germanic settlement was the small hamlet, and there has been an extension of these ideas to England (Kirbis, 1952). The large villages of southern Germany, that have come to be taken as representative of Germanic settlement, are a later growth. This growth of hamlet to village has not taken place throughout Germany. In Münsterland the hamlet form survives. By analogy the villages of Berkshire have developed from hamlets, but Kent preserves the primitive form. This form, as demonstrated, once existed in Holmesdale. Its preservation in Kent may be in some ways related to the Jutish social pattern. Since however the hamlet has also been preserved in Münsterland it is useful to enquire further why in Germany the growth to villages took place in some areas and not others.

A number of reasons have been suggested, most of which, not unnaturally since we are dealing with rural settlement, are related to the development of agricultural practice, in particular to the establishment of the open field system with two or three shift rotation. The growth of this agricultural system is variously associated with: co-aration, that is communal ownership of plough and plough team; the growth of the manorial system; the pressure on the common grazing land which led to a need for controlled pasture rights on the arable. The conditions in Holmesdale may help to further establish one of these hypotheses.

#### FIELD SYSTEMS

Since many of the hypotheses dealing with the growth of the German village are related to the gradual establishment of the open-field two shift rotation method of farming, it is necessary next to consider the evidence for the existence of this system in the area under review. Fields divided into strips are shown on the 1634 map of Dorking, and are described in the accompanying survey (S.R.O. Ac. 344). Five fields lay to the north of the town and at the southern end of the Mole Gap. They extended from the spurs of the Downs on the west to the Mole on the east. They were: Dorking Down, Summerleas, Fosterwood, Shipland, Stonyland. There were also a few crofts or smaller fields likewise subdivided, one of which "Above the Town field" lay south of the town.†

\*Nevertheless a Kentish place-name occurs in a 17th century deed for Wotton (S.R.O. 43/58/119) referring to land called "Nyetimber alias Newtimber". The "nye" may be derived from the Kentish form of new, that is "nige". Similarly at Gomshall in 1332 there was a John de Nyewodegate.

†The location of the main arable area north of the town is accounted for by the distribution of soils. "Dorking Downes and Summerleas yeild store of Chalke which is beneficial to themselves and their neighbours. Stonyland, Shipland, and the rest of the north side of the Pip Brook are of a lomye fat nature. The meadows adjacent to the sayed brook do yearly produce a plentyfull burden of excellent grass, a commodity of great esteem in the town. From the Pip brooke to the tops of Highland Hill, and Nower hill the soil is altogether a hot dry sand and from these hills southward the ground becomes a kind of mixture of sand and lome until Bourne Brook makes a separation betwixt the foresaid mixtland and a soft clay which is apt to dissolve with any moisture that the least rain make it a puddle and after a little confirmed wett the wayes are scarce possible."

A large number of strip-divided fields may perhaps be a sign of the decay of a "classic" open field system, but on the other hand it might be an original feature. The open field system at Dorking was certainly in decay in the 17th century. A previous survey of the manor had been made in 1610 and in this occurs the statement "James Lucas holdeth one parcell of lands nowe enclosed in the common field of Shipland containing two acres" (B.M. Add. Ms. 27,535). In the survey, however, Shipland is described as a common field, and elsewhere in the survey the same description is given to the other fields named. Similarly the 1610 survey also leaves no doubt that there were a number of smaller fields bearing "croft" names that were likewise strip-divided. A large number of common strip-divided fields rather than one great continuous block seems therefore to have been the original pattern at Dorking. Similarly 16th century court rolls for Headley reveal the existence of a number of open fields known as Townfield, Holmeffield, Northfield, Westfield, and Longfore.

The "fore" means furlong so that Longfore may have been once part of a larger open arable area. Townfield on the other hand suggests that there was originally one small open field (Townfield itself) to which the other fields were added as the land was cleared. (Fosterwood field at Dorking must be an example of the same clearing process.) All these fields were divided and all were thrown open to common.\* Parts of the open-field of Headley survived to the beginning of the 19th century (Minet Library: Headley 81).

At Brockham and Betchworth something nearer to the "classical" open field system appears on the map of 1634 (Fig. 5). Both settlements have large continuous areas of arable, divided into strips and lying in various named furlongs, e.g. Middlefore, Longfore, Uppershott, and Townfore (S.R.O. Ac. 300). The map certainly shows decay since some of the fields near to Betchworth reveal in their shape that they were once part of an open field and the court rolls for the manor also show enclosures in progress in the 17th century (S.R.O. Ac. 319, entry for 1672). On the other hand, the fields nearer to the Downs have irregular boundaries, and look rather as if they were cleared piecemeal from the original woodlands and never became part of the open field system. The names "gaston" (a grass enclosure), "ham" and "croft" also suggest this. Nevertheless some of these were still divided into strips. Earlier evidence for the open field at Betchworth is contained in the *Valor Ecclesiasticus* (ed. Coleby and Hunter, 1834) made in Henry VIII's reign, where the "Grete Comon Felde" is mentioned. At Westcott in 1392, the demesne was scattered in a number of fields: Estdonne, Roughdonne, Holedonne, Lytelstrode, Parke-land, Michylstrode, Wodham, le Hurst (P.R.O., DL/43/14/3).† Nevertheless, these fields appear to have been subject to the three shift rotation, for in a valuation in 1348 it was stated that two-thirds of the demesne acres were sown yearly,

\*This is quite clear. In a dispute over commoning on Headley Heath witnesses were called: "Walter Roger of Bookham husbandmen of 60 years sworne and examyned in this saith upon his oath that he knoweth the Downes in Headley and hath knowne them fortie and five years—but at the same time as the areable feilde be open and unsown which doe lie against said common the tenants sheep have commoned there and he saith further that the farmers did usually keepe his flock of sheep where he thought good upon Headley Heath." (S.R.O. Ac. 108, Headley Court Rolls, entry for 1612).

†"Holedonne" survives as Holehill; Hurst Copse is immediately adjacent.

whilst the other lay common to all tenants (Manning and Bray, 1804). Common arable other than demesne existed down to the beginning of the 17th century for there are references in court rolls of Elizabeth and James I to "le common Furlong" (S.R.O. Ac. 192/1/2). The three-shift rotation was therefore applied to a number of small fields, and not one continuous area of arable divided into three for rotation purposes. The field names themselves are interesting since "strode" means marshy scrubland, and "hurst" of course means wood. Again there is a suggestion in such names that the land, as cleared from the forest, was not always added to one continuous block of open land, but often remained in individual fields.

In 1327 the demesne arable at Wotton lay in three separate fields (Manning and Bray, *op. cit.*) amounting in all to 523 acres. There were 22 free tenants and their land was probably scattered throughout the parish.\* The labour for the demesnes presumably came from the seven villeins and eleven cottars recorded. The presence of these villeins and cottars is a hint that a hamlet may once have been present in Wotton near the manor house. A three shift rotation was applied to the demesne lands, but the third not sown was worth 2d. an acre since they were separate (B.M. Add. Ms. 6167). The unsown acres at Westcott were valueless, because they were subject to common grazing.

The evidence for a three shift rotation is of 14th century date. This may be quite fortuitous, due to the chance survival of manuscript material, or it may indicate that a change from a two shift to a three shift rotation took place then. A valuation in 1299 of the demesne arable at Gomshall had 90 acres at 4d. and 100 at 2d. (Manning and Bray, *op. cit.*). This was probably a two shift rotation on land not subject to commoning, that is 4d. when sown and 2d. when fallow. Similarly at Paddington in 1338, there were 46 acres at 4d. and 40 acres at 3d. By 1350, however, the Paddington demesne, then estimated to be 100 acres, was subject to the three shift rotation. The two-thirds cultivated was worth 4d. an acre, "and no more because the land is dry and sandy and lies on the hill". The other third was valued at 2d. as pasture (Manning and Bray, *op. cit.*). A two shift rotation appears to have survived for a long period at Mickleham, for a simple division into an east and west field can still be detected in a map of 1770 (B.M. Map Room, 5310 (40)). This evidence in general shows that the two or three-shift rotation was widely practised. The presence of the rotation is therefore not alone of significance to the settlement pattern. More significant may be its application to one continuous area of arable rather than a large number of small fields. Betchworth, before the open field system decayed, was centrally placed in its arable lands (Fig. 5). If a man's lands were scattered throughout the arable then obviously his farmstead would be most conveniently placed at a central point. The growth of Betchworth would then be a consequence of the development of a "classic" open field system. The development of this system in an area where, as we have seen, settlement was originally dispersed suggests a degree of coercion or planning that may be associated with the growth of the manorial system and of demesne farming.

\*It is unlikely that villeins would appear as witnesses to documents involving the grant of lands and therefore the "atte" names appearing as witnesses are probably those of free tenants. Hence the lands of free tenants were scattered.



## DEMESNE FARMING AND THE SETTLEMENT PATTERN

Demesne farming was often dependent upon the labour dues of the villeins, plus some full-time manorial servants, many of whom were originally serfs. Where the population was very scattered the enforcement of these dues on one central consolidated demesne would have been very difficult. The villeins living at Oakwood (site 131), would have been seven or eight miles from the demesnes near the Wotton manor house. The demesne at Betchworth was close to the village, and initially the village may have been the result of a deliberate grouping of population, villein, cottar and serf, around the manor house to supply labour for the demesnes.

Buckland, it will be recalled from the discussion of the Domesday statistics, had a large recorded population of 37. Of this no less than 10 were serfs. The demesne was not large in 1086 for there was only one plough in demesne. In 1315, however, 304 acres of demesne were present, and the inquisition post-mortem in which this figure is quoted gives the impression of a strongly manorialized community (B.M. Add. Ms. 6167). The rents of the villeins and cottars were £4 os. 0½d., and their labour dues were valued at £6. The free tenants, who probably comprised the majority of those living away from the village, paid rents worth only 16s. 6¾d. They are therefore (the free tenants) not likely to have been numerous since in 1327, in Wotton, 22 free tenants paid £10 6s. 8d., as against £1 8s. 4d. paid by seven villeins and eleven cottars. By 1391 this strong "manorialization" at Buckland had gone. A bailiff's account for that year shows that the demesne lands were let, even the demesne meadow, and the labour dues converted to money rents (P.R.O.Sc. 6/1010/24).\*

In the development of demesne farming there must have been a clash between the interests of the peasantry and the coercive powers of the demesne lord. It is therefore significant that the Domesday demesne lord of Shere, Gomshall and Dorking, the three settlements which appear to have been nucleated for a long period, was the King. It is the struggle between demesne lord and peasantry that may explain the persistence of scattered settlement in Kent, for the Kentish peasantry was noted in medieval times for its relative freedom from feudal dues, protected by the Kentish Custom. Whether this freedom and the persistence of the custom is directly related to a Jutish origin it is difficult to say, but continental evidence is again of interest.

In northern Friesland the peasantry remained relatively free in medieval times (van Bath, 1945). This freedom is attributed to the emphasis on stock farming due to the large areas of grazing available. The persistence of scattered settlement in Münsterland has also been explained in terms of the large areas of grazing land. Conversely, as previously noted, the development of the village and the need for open field system with two or three shift rotation has

\*The fields included Esthame, Podesunt, Hamelegh and Bromelegh. The summer pasture was sold in Hamelegh and Bromelegh so both fields must have been lying fallow in that year. Esthame, which was sown, was let for 50s., and was therefore quite a large field. Winter pasture in the manor was sold for 26s. 8d. The impression gained from the bailiff's account is of two shift rotation applied to a number of fields. The rents of free tenants had risen to £7 18s. 8d., and some of this increase is probably due to a rise in the number of free tenants.

Despite the strong manorialization some dispersed settlement definitely existed. Sixteen pence rent was received for "Heggland" from Roger Kempe. Kemps farm is still in existence (site 149). An "atte Hegge" was previously recorded in 1281.

been associated with the reduction in the amount of common grazing land, due to clearance. In the Weald, with wide areas of difficult or poor soils, such a stage cannot have been reached by the 14th century.

It is true that the commons were, in legal fiction, amongst the possessions of the demesne lord, and could be enclosed providing enough grazing were left for the freeholders. Thus, an extent of the demesne at Shere in 1297 included 300 acres of wood, worth a *id.* an acre for grazing, and 200 acres of heath (Manning and Bray, *op. cit.*). Paddington in 1295 had 14 tenants of assart, presumably men settled on the grazing lands by the demesne lord (B. M. Add. Ms. 6167). Nevertheless huge areas of common remained, especially in the west of our district, and their presence may well have contributed to the greater freedom of the peasantry.

#### URBAN AND INDUSTRIAL INFLUENCES ON THE SETTLEMENT PATTERN

The various hypotheses discussed so far cannot completely account for the settlement pattern, because it is not due solely to agricultural communities. Obviously today most of the inhabitants of Westcott, West Humble, Dorking, etc. are in no way connected with farming, and this influence of London can be traced back over a long period. Besides this urban influence there has also been an industrial influence of surprising antiquity. The powder mills at Chilworth (site 12) have already been mentioned. These were for some two centuries of great importance, notably serving the Parliamentary cause during the Civil War. The Tillingbourne also provided the power for the hammer at Abinger Hammer, besides power for numerous corn mills. Most important of all however was the cloth industry in the western part of our district. This survived to the mid-18th century at Shere (B.M. Map Room, Bowens Map 1749, 7. E.16) and was certainly very important in the 14th century. In 1380 there were 10 weavers and 21 spinners at Gomshall, 4 weavers and 21 spinners at Shere, besides peltersers, shearers, fullers, etc. (P.R.O., E./179/184/29). This pressure of industry may be the explanation of the Shere cottages. Drapers living in the Blackheath Hundred (which includes Shere and Gomshall) are named in the Ulnage accounts of 1436 (P.R.O., E./101/344/22). In Henry VIII's reign Shere was included in a list of places at which long cloths of 20, 22 and 24 yards, were made (P.R.O., E/101/347/17). A "dye house" is mentioned in the survey of Dorking manor 1610 (B.M. Add. Ms. 27,535).

The hammer site (of Abinger Hammer) as well as using the Tillingbourne power was also dependent upon wood, and of this commodity the Hythe Bed areas and the Weald clay must once have yielded great quantities. In 1380 Shere and Gomshall also contained coopers and charcoal burners, and these trades persisted for centuries. Thus, Thomas Elkington of Willesden was given permission to cut oaks, beech or ash of one foot or more in dimension in Abinger and Wotton in 1560 (B.M. Add. Ch. 44558). In 1549 the two witnesses at a dispute over land ownership in Abinger were a "a collyer and a lath maker" (P.R.O. Req. 2/17/52). Such rural industries probably explain the existence of many isolated cottages that were never farm houses.

#### THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SETTLEMENT PATTERN

We have so far considered the form of the settlement and the evidence for

change. The concluding paragraphs are an attempt to describe the development of the present settlement pattern. To do this an interpretation of the evidence is necessary and we move from facts to hypothesis.

The original Saxon-Jutish settlement pattern was a series of farms or hamlets. The earliest were sited, in the absence of springs, along the Tillingbourne, Pipp Brook and Mole: Ceola's farm (Chilworth), the place of Tyta's people (Tyting), the farm of Abba's people (Abinger), the place of Deorc's people (Dorking) and Becci's farm (Betchworth).<sup>\*</sup> These farms or hamlets were occupied by kinship groups, i.e. Tyta's people, Deorc's people, each hamlet having one arable field (later to become the "town field") used continuously. The great areas of pasture available in the forests and wastes made the maintenance of fertility in this field possible, so that the agricultural practice resembled the "in field out field" system which persisted until modern times in upland areas. With the decay of the kinship groups these original fields were divided into large strips.

From these first settlements the colonists spread, developing further farmsteads such as Wotton, Headley, Buckland, Paddington, Sutton, Westcott, and extending over the centuries on to much more difficult soils as at Hartshurst and Anstiebury. Some of the original hamlets also showed growth as the town-field nucleus was added to, and in course of time these larger arable areas, made of several distinct fields, were farmed with a simple two shift rotation. By Domesday times Shere, Gomshall, Dorking and Buckland had grown to be small villages, the development due to the growth of a manorial economy and the need for labour on the demesne. At Betchworth the development of demesne farming was accompanied by the emergence of a "classic" open-field system with a two shift rotation. This development likewise was associated with the growth of hamlet to village.

In the growth of hamlet to village obviously both physical and historical factors were important. Although the majority of the earliest settlements had been placed on the best land or near the best water supply this did not apply to all. The site of Tyting was not capable of further growth. Even when the physical factors permitted the establishment of a village, the actual establishment of a large settlement depended upon the power of the demesne lord and the degree of resistance offered by the peasantry.

By medieval times the woollen industry and forestry added to pattern of settlement. The woollen industry led mainly to the development of the already existing nucleations of Shere and Gomshall. The forestry industry on the contrary helped maintain a dispersed pattern. Also in medieval times an urban element appears. Dorking became a market town. In modern times the development of better roads and rail routes from London have led to a rapid development of West Humble, Dorking, Westcott, Betchworth and Brockham, etc.

Not all the development has been positive however. Farms have vanished; Albury has shifted. In the 14th century Wotton was a small hamlet near the site of the present manor house, but this hamlet has disappeared.

The pattern of settlement is thus in no sense static. Its attractiveness and its difficulty as a field of study lie indeed in this continuous change in response to

<sup>\*</sup>Both the "ingas" names are likely to be very early, and Ceola as a personal name is recorded from 732 onwards (Redin, 1919).

historical circumstances and in relation to the physical factors of the landscape. The view from Picketts Hole, Betchworth Clump or Newlands Corner, visited and studied by hundreds of students of geography every year, shows a pattern of settlement that cannot as yet be fully explained.

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