

DARK AGE AND MEDIEVAL SETTLEMENT ON THE EDGE OF WASTES AND FORESTS

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*I think of the innumerable slow lives whose history
differs a hair's breadth from the hedge-row story:
thorns in black competition, the roped glory
of gossamer, soon gone,
with berries dipped in blood.*

(Lilian Bowes-Lyon)

As far as may be judged from place-name evidence, the farmsteads of the first Anglo-Saxon colonists to this country were sited in areas of loam soils with a good water supply. From these bases a slow colonization of the more difficult terrain took place, the areas of thickly wooded heavy clay soil, the light sands and bleak uplands. As well as accommodating this later effort of colonization the forests and wastes, as they were subsequently known, provided fuel and grazing for the loam farmers.

Since it was in the loam areas that the farmsteads were gathered together into villages (until the enclosure movement of modern times) it was considered by some scholars that the Anglo-Saxons were a people who dwelt in villages, and that their selection of the loam soils for settlement was due to their predominantly grain-farming economy. In fact very little is known of the form of Anglo-Saxon settlement or of the farming. There have been few archaeological excavations of Dark Age sites, and there are of course no written records. Pastoralism may have been as important as arable farming. Many modern villages have probably grown from Dark Age hamlets or single farmsteads. There is evidence from the Continent that such developments did take place and were associated with the intensification of arable farming, in particular with the growth of open-field agriculture with the two- or three-shift rotation. Such rotations, by means of which large acreages could be kept under plough, were possible, because of their demands on soil fertility, only on the better soils. In contrast many of the former wastes, unsuitable for intensive cereal farming, have tended to retain the dispersed pattern of farmsteads that developed as colonization extended to them from the earlier occupied loam soils.

The importance of the wastes to the farming communities living on their periphery is often reflected in the form of the parish boundaries, for such boundaries, despite the changes of the last hundred years, still show something of a division of the land made during the Dark Ages. Many parishes are elongated in the direction of former wastes and forests, and occasionally parishes have detached areas within the former wastes. The numerous records of disputes over grazing in medieval and more recent times are proof of the later importance

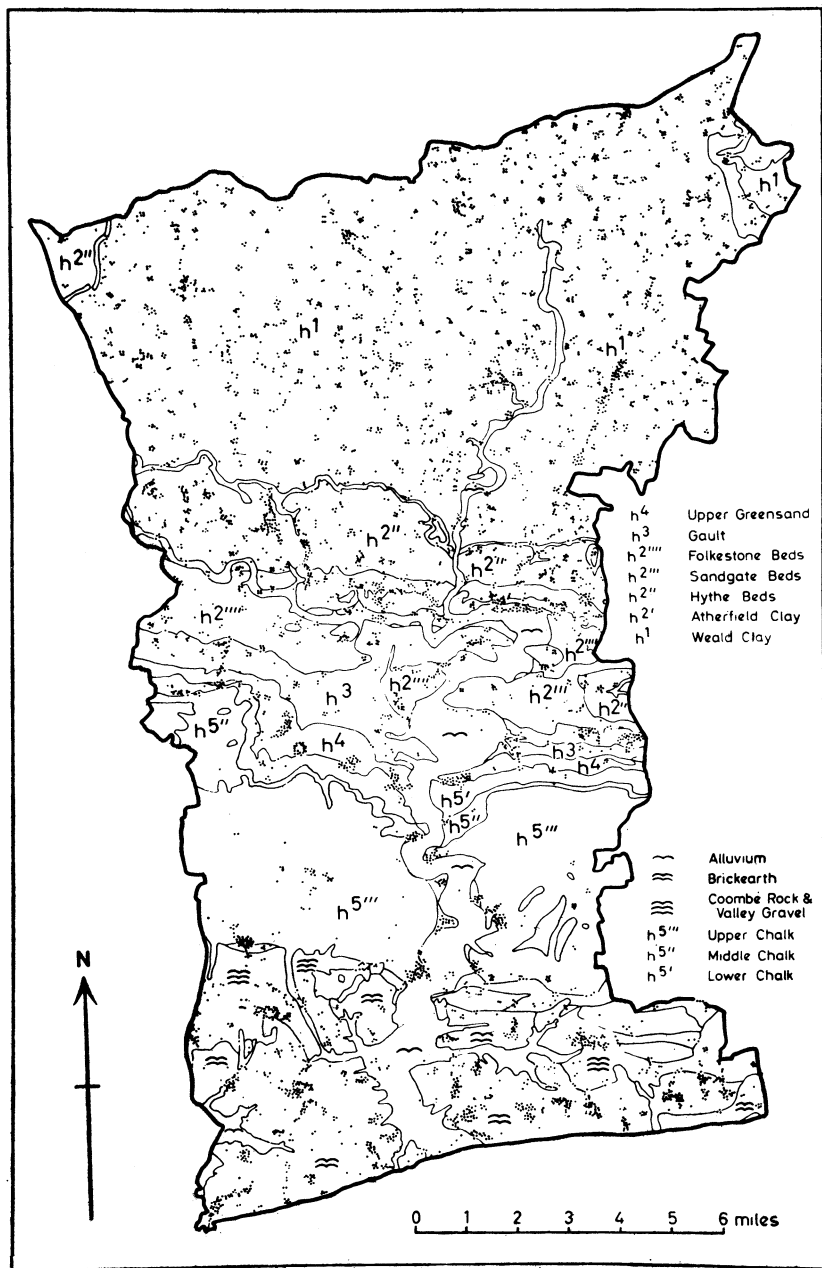


FIG. 1.

Settlement patterns in the Rape of Arundel, based upon the O.S. map of 1813. Grouped settlement is present (1) on the coastal plain on the Brick Earth, and Coombe Rock; (2) at the foot of the Downs on the Upper Greensand and Lower Chalk; (3) along the Rother, on the Hythe Beds and the Sandgate Beds. North of the Hythe Beds and within the former Wealden forest the settlement becomes dispersed.

of wastes. For the poor cottager the right to graze a few beasts on the commons was of supreme importance; for the village community the wastes provided a means of assisting the aged.* For these various reasons, although the wastes may have been long since enclosed and improved, although the woods may long since have vanished, their legacy in the landscape is considerable. As the boundary of the former waste is crossed there is often a change in field pattern and in the degree of nucleation shown by the settlement. The pattern of parishes recreates the boundary of the waste, and "waste-edge" is a pattern of settlement as well defined as "scarp-foot".

THE SUSSEX WEALD

In central Sussex two zones of villages or hamlets may be distinguished parallel to the Downs. The more southerly, extending from South Harting by Washington to Willingdon and Eastbourne, and sited on the Lower Chalk and Upper Greensand outcrops, is of the distinctive scarp-foot pattern. The more northerly, sited on the Lower Greensand outcrops and extending from Rogate by Pulborough, Henfield and Ditchling to Ripe, Chalvington and Selmeston, was on the very edge of the Wealden Forest and is therefore of the waste-edge pattern. Place name evidence shows that colonization in both these peripheral zones had certainly commenced well before the end of the sixth century. Within the former forest the single farmstead rather than the village becomes characteristic, as can be clearly seen for example in Arundel Rape (Fig. 1). In the scarp-foot zone are such large villages as Sutton, Bignor, Houghton and Amberley; waste-edge are Tillington, Petworth, Fittleworth and Pulborough, on the various divisions of the Lower Greensand: the Hythe Beds, the Sandgate Beds and the Folkestone Beds. Beyond these to the north on the Weald Clay are the single farmsteads, many with "fold" names such as Chafold and Barkfold, showing the former importance of grazing. This change in settlement pattern was accompanied by differences in farming. Many of the villages that were peripheral to the Wealden forest developed open-field agriculture. In some parishes this mode of farming was already in decay in Tudor times, but in others it survived into the nineteenth century. The rector of Amberley in his 1801 return of acreages under different crops within his parish commented: "In the arable portion of this parish each man's property is so intermingled with his neighbours in the common fields that it is impossible to cultivate to the greatest advantage . . ." (P.R.O. H.O. 67/7). His colleague at Houghton reported recent enclosures: "Hitherto the acres have been so mixed with each other that the farmers were prevented from cultivating the land according to their knowledge and wishes. The parish is this year divided which gives general satisfaction." There is no such evidence for the former forest lands: there were commons but they were commons of grazing. As a result there are strong contrasts in field pattern. The common arable of the peripheral villages has left traces in an open landscape with few hedges and few trees (except along

* "There are also erected by consente of the inhabitants of the manor of Marchington two severall cottages the one at Marchington Greene, the other in Needwoode for the necessary releife of the poore wherin one James Jennyns and Widowe Mosley severally dwell being very old and poor people." 1609. (P.R.O. D.L.43/21/5A).

MEDIAEVAL ECCLESIASTICAL BOUNDARIES IN THE RAPE OF CHICHESTER

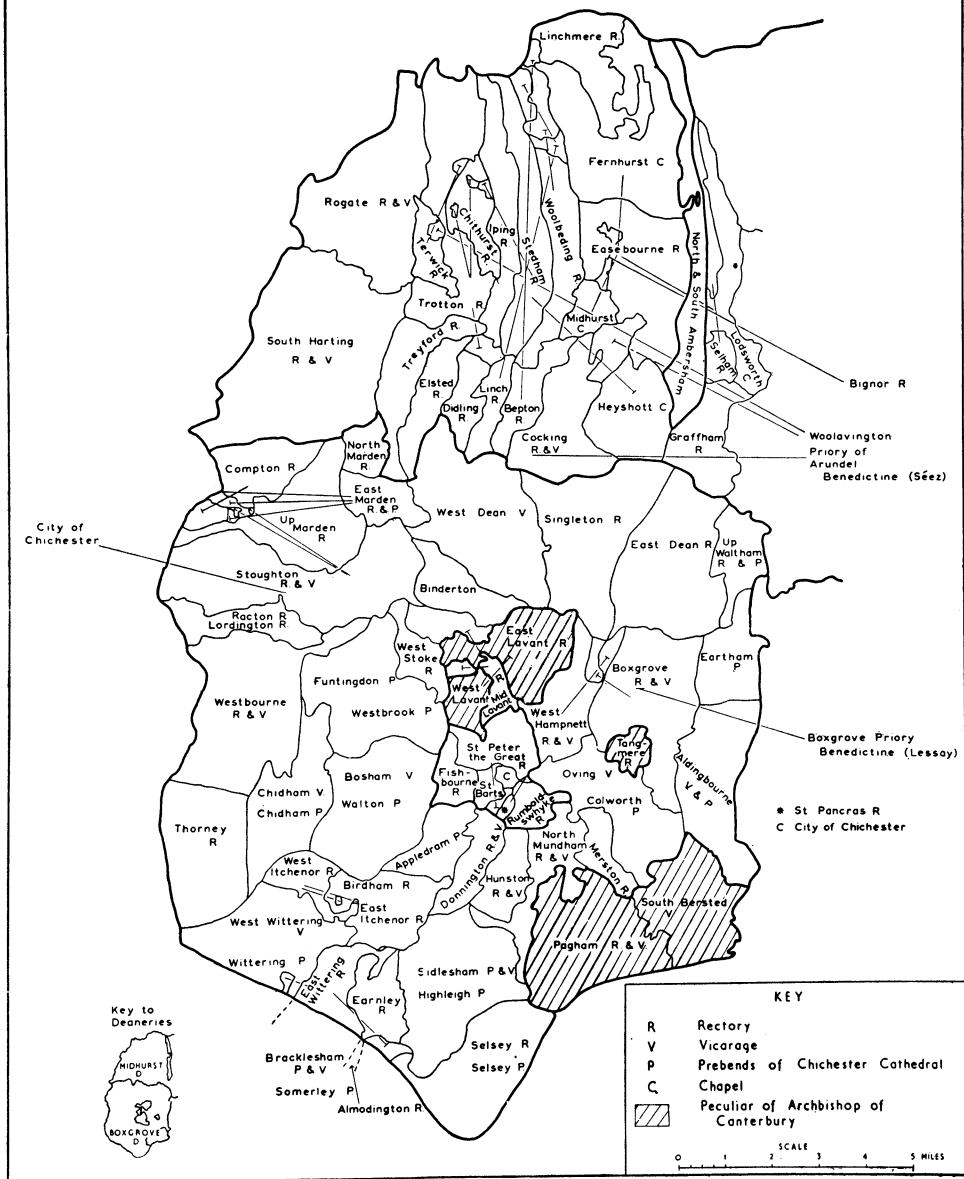


FIG. 2.

Parish boundaries in the Rape of Chichester, based upon the title index sheet of the O.S. map of 1813. The parishes of Boxgrove deanery are on the Chalk and coastal plain. No marked orientation of boundaries can be detected. The parishes of Midhurst deanery show a marked orientation. Some of the southern parishes in this deanery, e.g. Linch, have detached areas within the former forest.

the springs) and with the occasional elongated field. Within the former forest the fields are squarish, there are many thick hedgerows and numerous coppices. The remnants of the old commons of grazing are generally a wilderness of scrub and bracken.

The Wealden forest was originally important to both groups of peripheral settlements, the scarp-foot and the waste-edge, and this is reflected in the shapes of the parishes. Both groups of settlements are associated with strip-parishes as can be seen in Midhurst Deanery in the Rape of Chichester (Fig. 2). This elongation of the parish at right angles to the geology might plausibly be explained as a result of the clustering of settlement along the loam belt. Extension was only possible at right angles to the outcrop. Where no marked geological grain is present, settlement is evenly distributed and no elongation in parish pattern can be detected, as in Boxgrove Deanery on the Chalk dip-slopes and on the coastal plain. The waste-edge settlement however prevented the scarp-foot settlements from having direct access to the forest, and it is significant that Linch and Bepton parishes both had detached areas within the forest. The elongation to the forest seems therefore deliberate.

There were other grazing rights that have left no trace in the parish map. West Harting (in South Harting parish) had common of grazing in medieval times in the northern part of Rogate. Place names occasionally hint at earlier connections. Didding and Diddlesfold, the latter in the northern part of Arundel Rape, both contain the personal name Dyddel.

A second example of these various effects, both in the landscape and on the map, is Needwood Forest, in Staffordshire.

NEEDWOOD FOREST

Needwood is contained in the great right angle bend of the Trent on the south and west, and by the Dove on the north. It is described in an Elizabethan survey as extending to the rivers Trent, Dove, Pirbrook and Blithe (P.R.O. D.L.43/21/2). Its soils are heavy and stony and appear to have been very unattractive as tillage for the Anglian colonists who established themselves in east Staffordshire during the sixth century. Needwood became encircled by villages which were sited on the edge of the terrace lands of Dove and Trent. For these villages Needwood served as pasture and as room for later colonization. References to these usages are many. In a minister's account of 1370 (P.R.O. S.C.6/988/14) the villeins of Yoxhall are recorded as paying 18s. for pasture rights in Needwood, and the villeins of Ridware 20s. Some of the payments were made or valued in woodhens or eggs. Barton-under-Needwood paid in eggs to the value of 13s. 4½d. In 1656 this practice was still in existence and the woodhen rents from Tatenhill, Hanbury, and Rolleston numbered 340 (B.M.Add.Ms.34, 688). The number of settlements using the common was 17 in the early seventeenth century (Fig. 3). The cattle were branded, and each settlement had a distinctive brand except that some daughter settlements used the brand of the parent village e.g. Hanbury and Hanbury Woodend both used a cross, Marchington and Marchington Woodland both used a triangle with all three sides projected (B.M.Add.Ms.31,917). The accounts of 1370 also establish that considerable clearance was taking place. Adgardsley, the only settlement recorded in

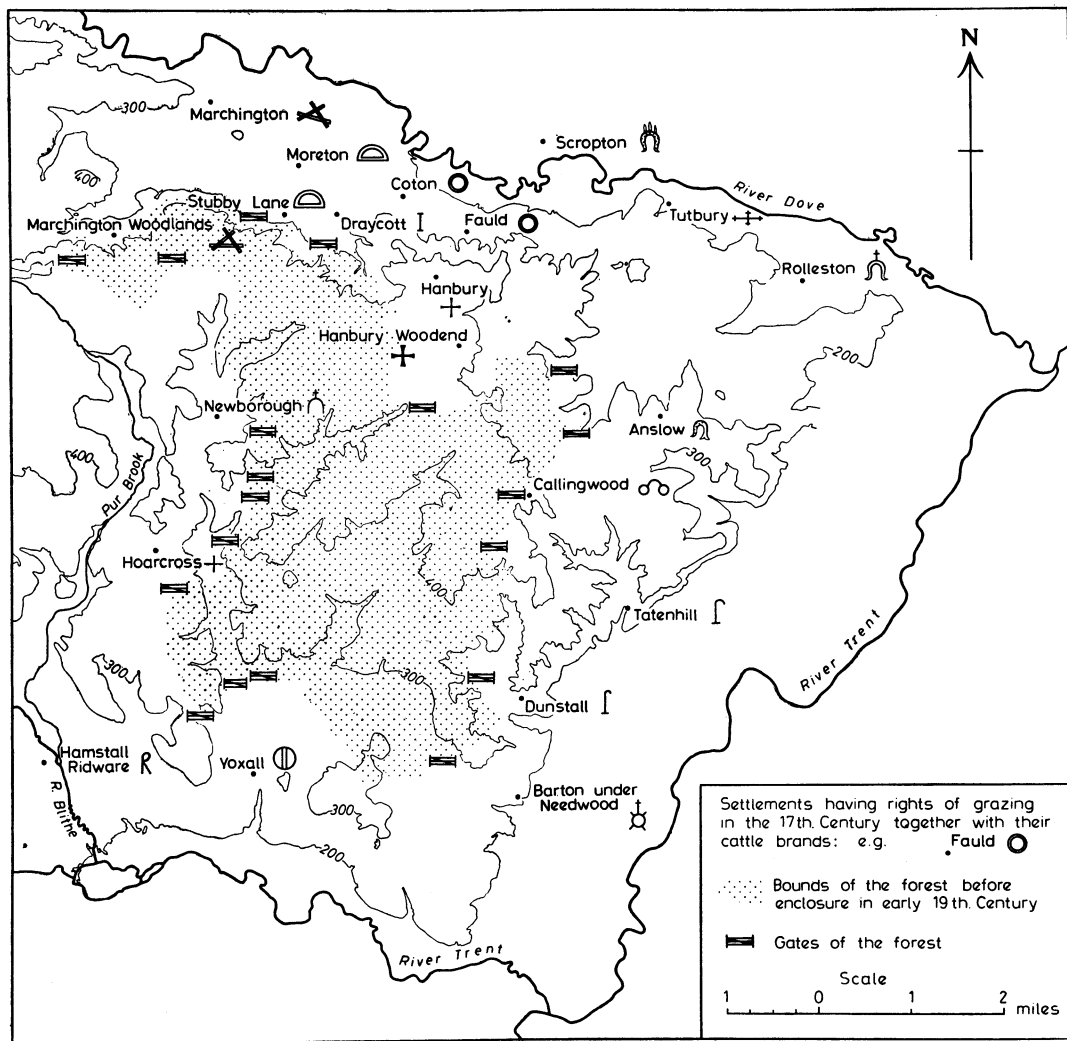


FIG. 3.

Settlements having rights of common in Needwood in the seventeenth century, together with their cattle brands. The extent of the forest and the gates are derived from a map of 1804 (P.R.O. MPC/110), the brands are given in B.M. Add.Ms. 31,917.

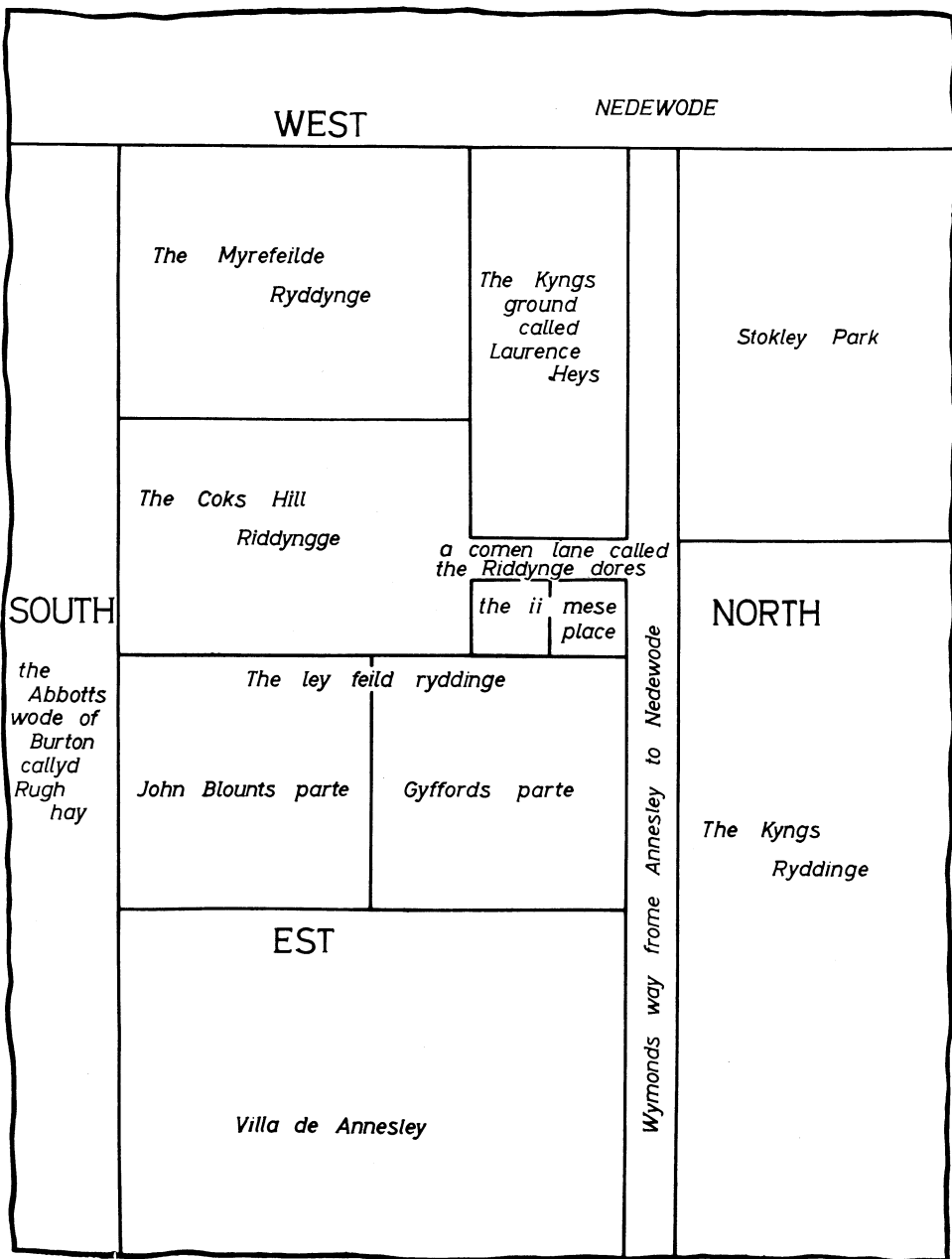


FIG. 4.

Copy of ink sketch map of 1520. The original measures $14\frac{1}{4}$ in. by 12 in.

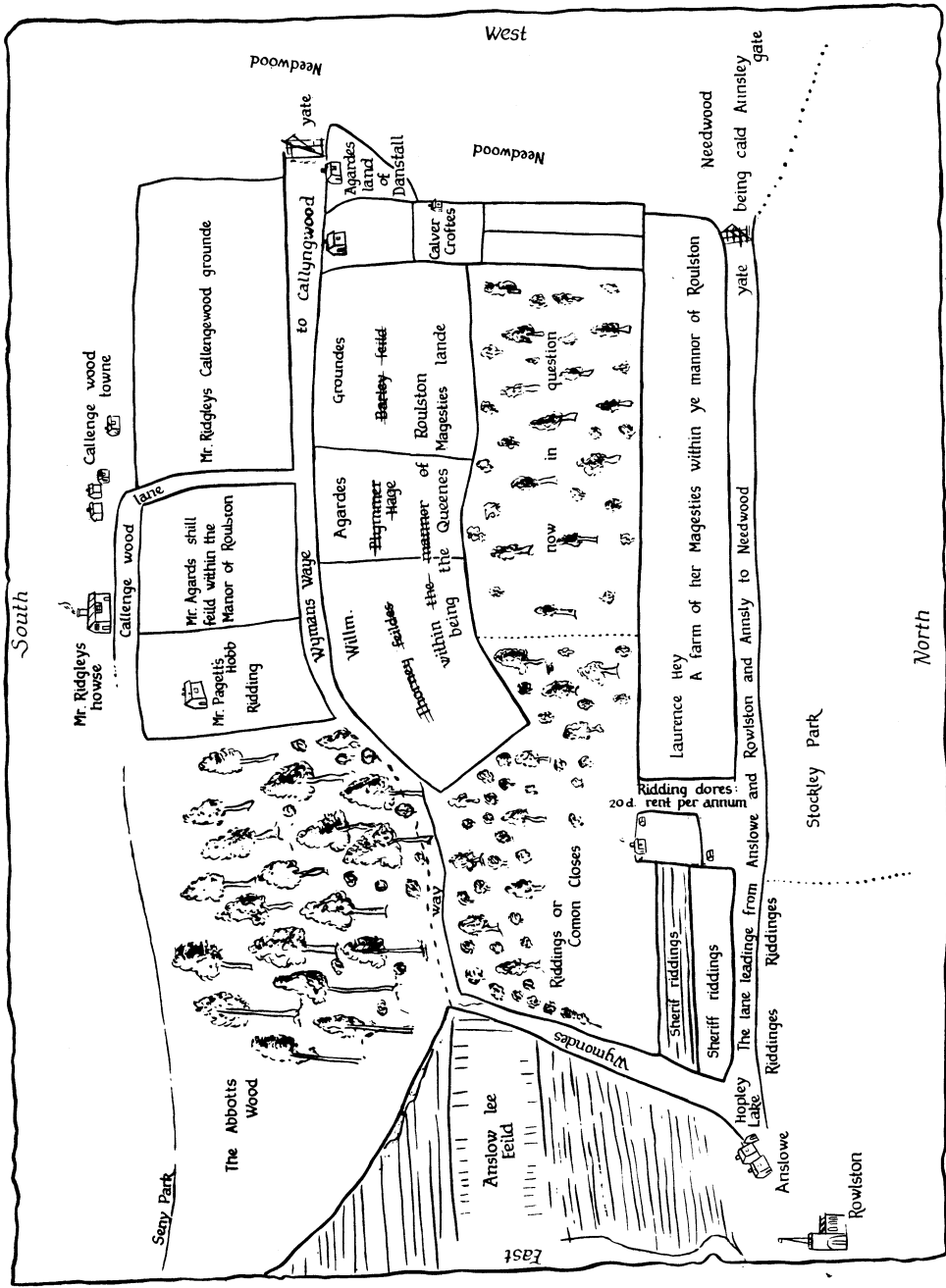


FIG. 5.

Copy of map of 1596. The original measures 18 in. by 24 in. and is coloured. The deletions are on the original. (Copies are used for clarity with the lettering on the old maps used in this article is either unfamiliar or faded. Apart from alteration in the style of lettering, the copies are as exact as is possible.)

1086 as within Needwood, paid 36s. 5½d. in assart rents; Yoxhall paid 57s. 8½d. Such assarting was undoubtedly associated with the development of new settlement, and with consequent differences in field pattern. Two early maps of Anslow and the modern six inch sheet record this sequence.

The first of the maps is little more than a sketch dating from 1520 (Fig. 4, P.R.O. D.L.3/7/B1). It was drawn as evidence in a dispute over the rights of grazing attached to three fields; "Cokshill, Myrefield, and Leyfeild", forming a parcel of land lying between two lanes (and the sketch is therefore most ineffective since only one lane, that on the north side, is shown). The case was instituted as complaint to the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster made by John Blount that on the 20th April, 1519 Thomas Rolleston of Rolleston, Robert Statham, John Eyton and others had cast down his hedges and departed their cattle on his grass in the three fields. On the 23rd November a commission of five was appointed to gather depositions and they went to the land in question on the 6th January. Evidence was collected from the disputants and from local people. The case turned on two points: the tenure of the land, i.e. whether it was held copyhold or in severalty; the descent of the land. Since both of these points required a precise identification of the parcels the sketch was drawn. Blount argued that the northernmost boundary, separating the "Kynges ryddinge" from "Leyfeild ryddinge", was Wymondsway (as shown on the sketch) because his various deeds described the land as so bounded. Also a document produced by one Robert Stokys gave rights of common over land north of Wymondsway. If the southern boundary of the disputed land was Wymondsway then common rights attached to all the land at variance. A certificate submitted by the Abbot of "Rouster" (Rocester), John Wallis and Thomas Kyndsley showed Wymondsway to be the southern boundary and many of the local people were adamant that they possessed common rights over the land.

The clearest testimony was made by John Wylkerson of Rolleston. "In the time of the Duke of Clarence when ye dukes counsell lay at Tutbury one John Thirkell then of his myght and power enclosed all the grounds called Leghfeld Cookyshyll and Myrefeld and other parcels of land adjoining called Thornyfeld, Barlyfeld, Calvercroft and Byrdefeld all of which ought to lie open. On the mediation of the counsell the parcell called Leyfeld, Cookyshyll and Myrefeld that John Blount supposeth to be ye ryddings should from ye tyme lie open at all tyme of ye year for ye kings tenants of Rolston, Tutbury and Barton".

Barlyfeld, Thornyfeld, Calvercroft are not shown on the sketch of 1520, since they were not at variance, but they do appear on a map of 1596 (Fig. 5, P.R.O. MPC/241), and the evidence of Wilkerson above establishes that they were enclosed before the murder of Clarence in 1478. They are therefore examples of the Yorkist-Tudor enclosures. They had certainly once been part of the forest since Barton, Rolleston and Tutbury all had common grazing rights but at the time of the enclosure were arable lands. "Barlyfeld" is evidence of this but confirmation is contained in the testimonies of 1519. The Tudor government was much concerned about the conversion of tillage to grass and the commission was instructed to enquire whether the land had been ploughed. Blount himself replied to this question "every parcel thereof of oldetyme hadde

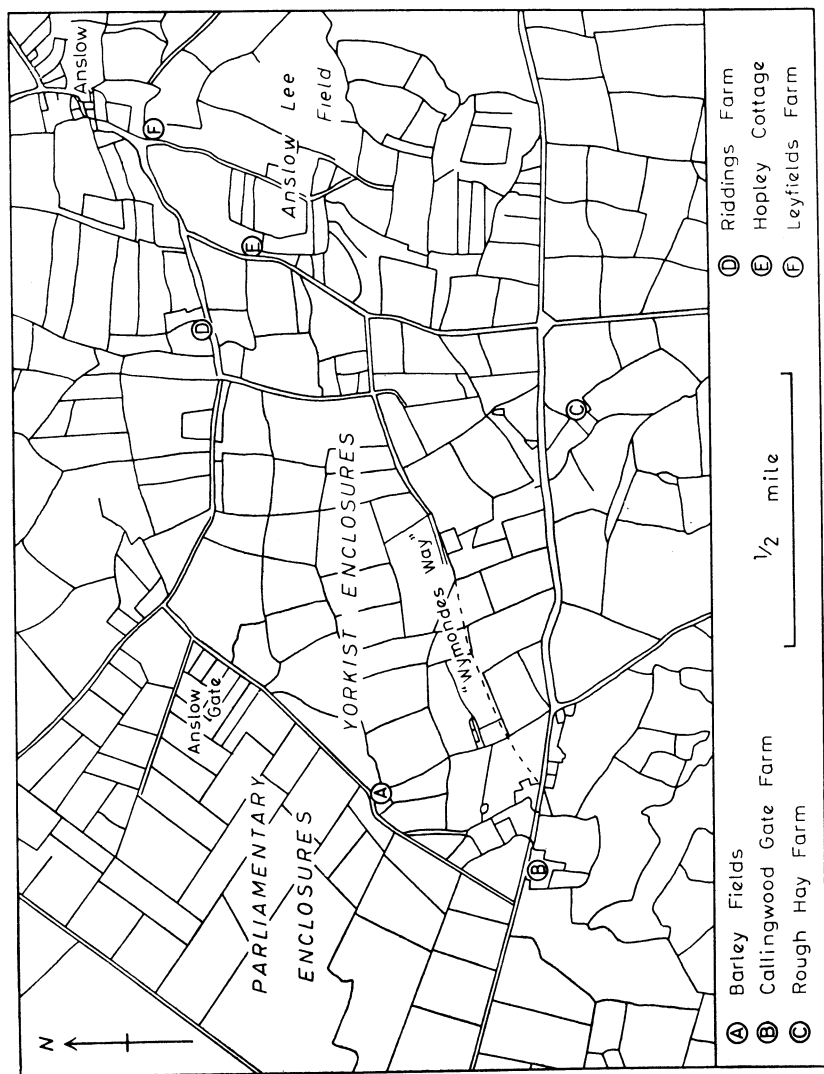


FIG. 6.

Field boundaries in part of Needwood derived from O.S. 6 in. SK12 NE and SK22 NW dated 1955. *Crown copyright reserved.* The area includes that shown in Figs. 4 and 5.

ben eyred and tilled and lyeth with ryge and reyne "(ploughed and tilled and lies in ridge and furrow).*

The dispute was not settled in 1519-20 for the matter was raised again before the chamber of the Duchy of Lancaster in 1532 (P.R.O. D.L.3/20/B5) and again in 1596 when the second map was drawn (P.R.O. D.L.1/184/R6) and (P.R.O. MPC241). The map (Fig. 5) shows clearly the scatter of settlement that had grown up in the former forest and the gates to the remaining forest. The irregular shape of the fields within the old forest, associated with the dispersed settlement, is similar to that of fields within the Wealden forest. Also striking are the two small elongated fields named "Sheriff riddings". One of these is coloured brown with drawings of furrows, the other is coloured green. The map shows that Wymondsway was the southern track and therefore the tenants of 1519 had been correct. Both the 1519 sketch map and the 1596 map show the open arable lands of Annersley or Anslow, and the Yorkist-Tudor enclosures.

This pattern can still be seen on the ground or on the modern 6 inch map (Fig. 6). Piecemeal enclosure of the former open-fields of Anslow has left many long strip-fields, which contrast with both the irregular Yorkist-Tudor enclosures and the straight boundaries of the nineteenth century enclosures. The Abbots wood of 'Rugh Hey' has disappeared to be replaced by Rough Hay Farm. Barleyfeld is now a farmstead, Needwood has gone but its legacy to the modern landscape is considerable.

DARTMOOR

Dartmoor provides a fine example of waste-edge settlement. Since in this instance the waste is an upland, the peripheral character of the settlement impressed itself on the drawer of the earliest sketch map of the moor.† The exact date of the map (Fig. 7, P.R.O. S.C.12/2/39) is difficult to establish but it was drawn in consideration of a claim to pasture on the moor by Thomas Denys. He had bought the demesne of the dissolved Buckfast Abbey and inherited the claim, previously made by the Abbots, to a large part of the moor. This claim was resisted by the venville or "vynderfelde" men.‡ In the Duchy of Cornwall records, extracts from the Privy Council book report the case as beginning in 1541, and the setting up of a commission to hear evidence. The map was probably part of the commission's work and is therefore *circa* 1541.

The rights to common were certainly very important. Numerous ministers' accounts for the moor, from the late fourteenth century to the late sixteenth century, survive in the Duchy of Cornwall records or in the Public Record Office, and from some of these accounts it is possible to calculate the number of stock grazing on the moor. In 1597 cattle numbered 10,356, sheep 1,325 and horses or ponies

* In view of the controversy over the origin of ridge and furrow, Blount's reply is of great interest. Since the land lay in ridge and furrow it had once been arable, but there is no suggestion that it had once been open-field arable.

† A similar circular map is preserved in the Duchy of Cornwall records. It is undated but the handwriting suggests that it is probably a hundred years younger than P.R.O. S.C.12/2/39.

‡ The venville men were the farmers of the surrounding villages and hamlets who had rights of common. Venville is probably a corruption of *finis villarum*, the fine being the rent paid for the common rights. On the sketch map venville is given as Vynderfelde, one of the many variants to be found in documents dealing with the moor.

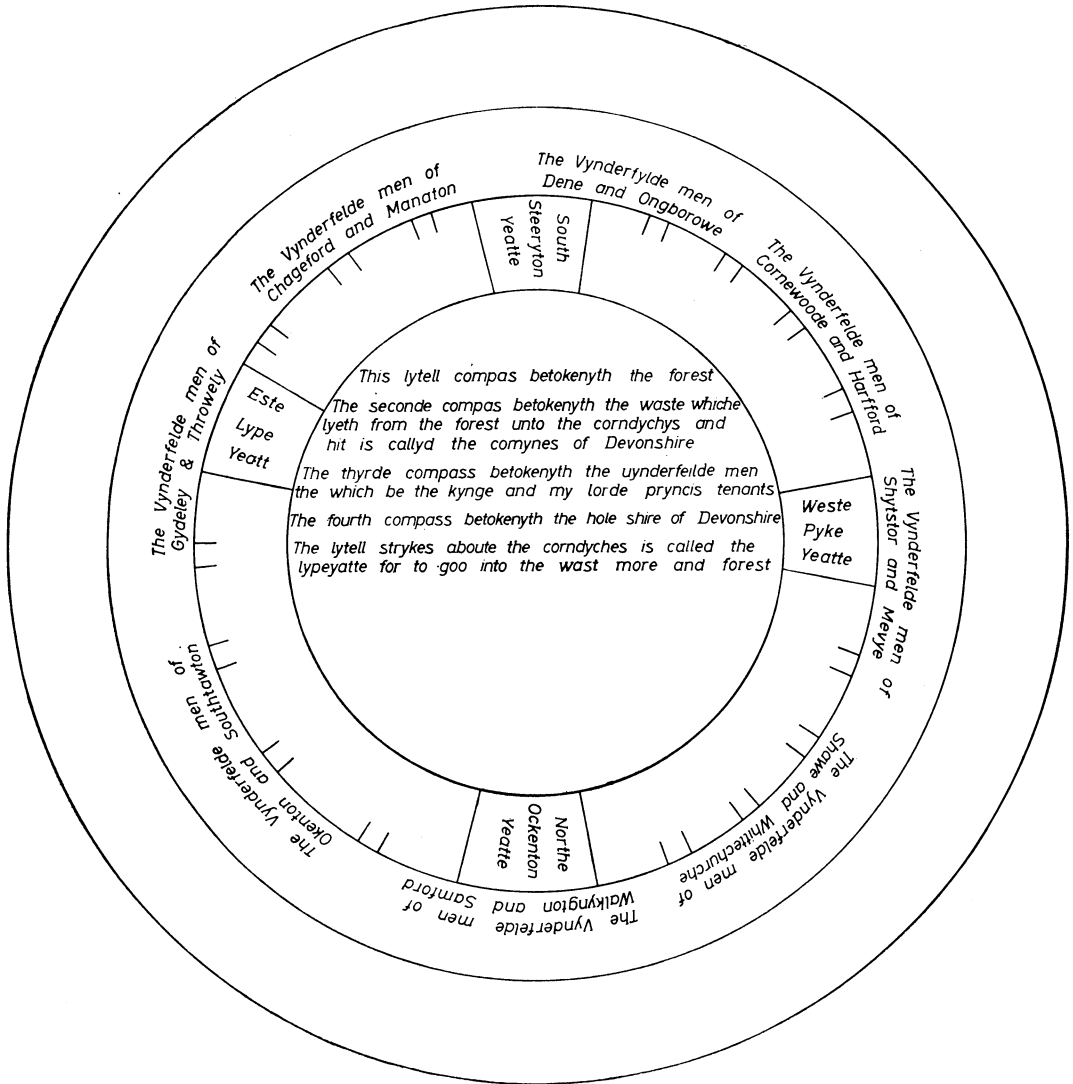


FIG. 7.

Copy of circular map of Dartmoor circa 1541. The original measures 17 in. in diameter.

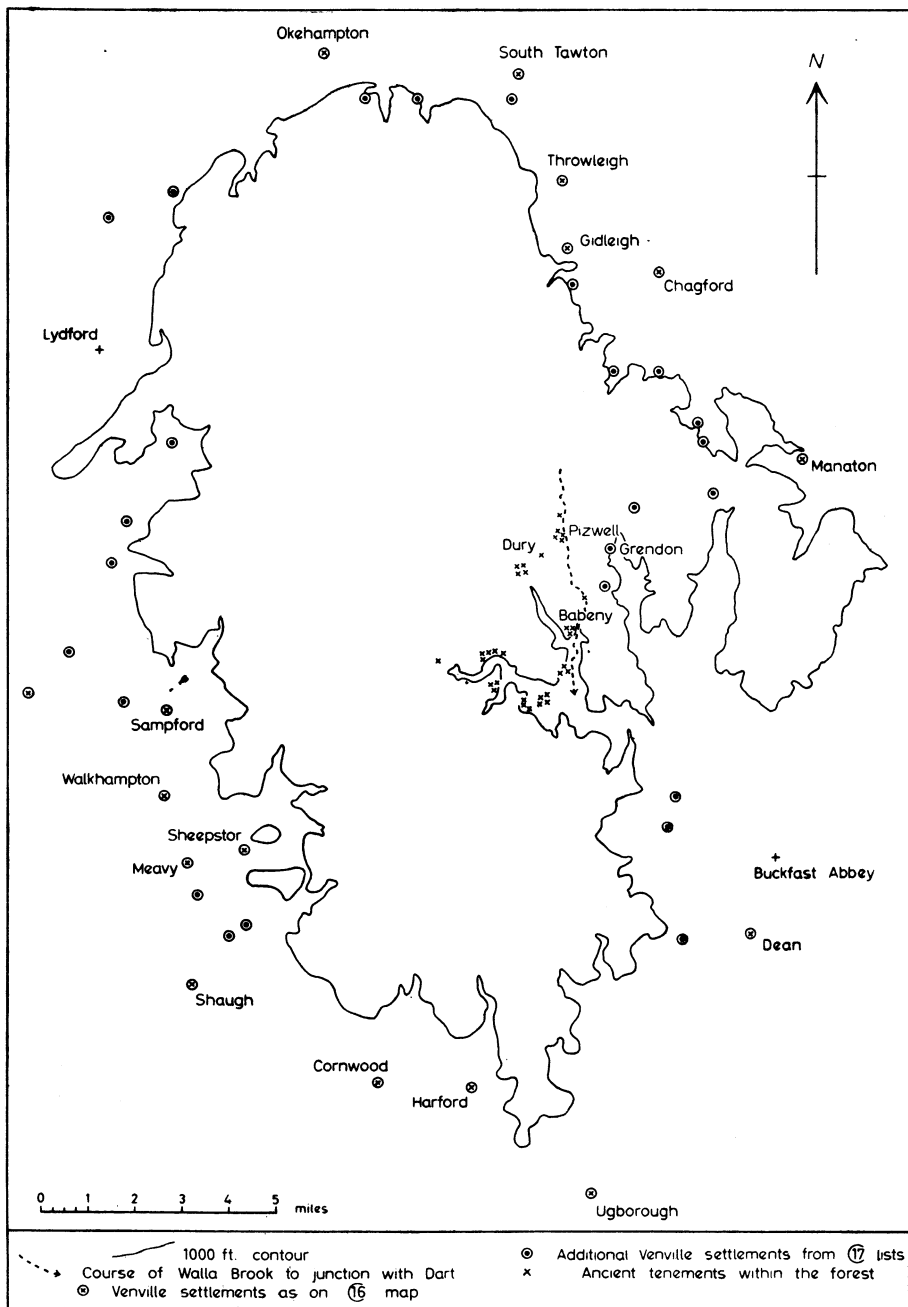


FIG. 8.

Venville settlements on edge of Dartmoor, including area depicted by inner three circles of Fig. 7.

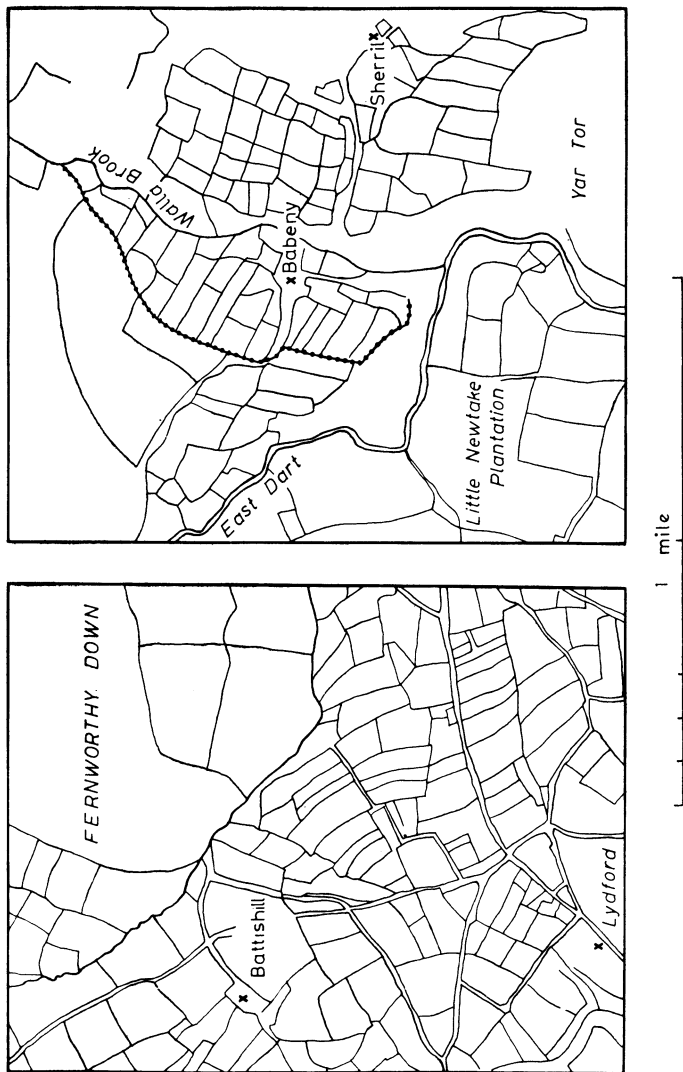


FIG. 9.

Left—traces of two-field system at Lydford, shown by elongated fields with curvilinear boundaries. Based upon the O.S. 6 in. Devon 88 SW. map of 1907.

Right—field system around Babeny, derived from O.S. 6 in. SX67SE and SX67 NE dated 1954. *Crown copyright reserved*. The dotted line indicates the supposed moor-side boundary of the infield. Note the walled cattle track leading through the fields to the open moor. No ms. evidence in support of this interpretation of the field pattern has yet been discovered.

215 (P.R.O. S.C.12/Port.7/3). Some of the graziers possessed very large herds and give the impression of big scale enterprise. For example, John Jele had 200 cattle in west Dartmoor, William Shillabeare 130, and Andrew Carter in east Dartmoor had 280 beasts. Also important was the peat cutting. Some thirty peat cutters are recorded in the same account. In earlier rolls the number had been even greater. In 1388 there were 129 peat cutters. Grazing and peat cutting on this scale over hundreds of years must have much altered the vegetation of the moor.

As in the Weald there is ample evidence of colonization on the moor. The venville settlements shown in the early sketch are situated generally at 600 feet (Fig. 8). These today are villages. Above them, and reaching above 1,000 feet in many examples, are the hamlets and single farmsteads, generally representative of a later stage of colonization. They are of two types. Some are themselves venville settlements, situated outside the boundaries of the original royal forest, but having grazing rights within it. The list of venville settlements given in the sixteenth and seventeenth century ministers' accounts includes many such hamlets and farms that can still be identified, although often with a change in size. Grendon, described as a village and paying a large venville rent of 12d., now consists of only one farm. Of the other type were the "ancient enclosures", the term by which they are described in the many documents. These lay within the old forest and were originally subject to forest law. The bounds of the forest in 1239 can be traced at least in part and followed the Walla Brook to its confluence with the Dart (P.R.O. E.32/9). Babeny, Dury and Pizwell, as ancient enclosures, lay on the forest side of the Walla Brook. Grendon and Kendon as venville settlements were without. All were alike in being moorland settlements.

The list of the ancient enclosures is given in evidence collected in a dispute over tithes, since the enclosures, although near to Widecombe, were within Lydford parish (P.R.O. E.134/3 Ann, Mich.11). They were then said to be 35 in number.* It is exceedingly difficult to establish their age. Hoskins (1957) has suggested that Babeny and Pizwell, first mentioned in 1260, may have been originally British settlements. The Duchy of Cornwall records however give details of monies paid for enclosures in the Dart valley, so that even if we have examples of remarkable continuity in Pizwell and Babeny there was much medieval colonization. It is very interesting to note, in view of the ancient enclosure known as Dury, that one of the men making payment for enclosure of lands in 1379 was Richard Dury (D.C.R. Ministers' Accounts). Between the moorland settlements and the lower lying villages there were undoubtedly differences in husbandry for at least some of the latter practised an open-field system. The "corndyche" of the sketch would otherwise be meaningless. A survey of Lydford in 1448 confirms this (P.R.O. S.C.11/Roll 165). The various tenants had virgates or farthing lands of which no details are given. In addition they were renting old demesne of which 150 acres lay mainly in two fields: South field and West field. These were sown in alternate years and of no value when fallow. This lack of value in the fallow period normally indicates common of grazing at that time. Lydford therefore possessed some open arable gathered into two fields and worked on the two shift rotation. Traces of this may still be

* They have dwindled in number, and three—Hastiland, Warner, and Lake—have not been identified.

seen in the field pattern and contrasts strongly with the field patterns of the moorland farms (Fig. 9). Some of the latter are exceedingly irregular but that at Babeny is particularly interesting. The complex of fields to the west of the hamlet looks very much like an infield. The boundaries are of massive boulders and they are not likely to have been much altered. There is a stock road running through the centre to the moorland beyond.

As in the Weald, the value of the grazing has had a marked effect on the parish pattern (Worth, 1944). So important was the grazing that, in addition to Lydford, no less than 23 other parishes touch the edge of the forest.

THE FOREST OF MORFE

The Forest of Morfe lay in east Shropshire and seems once to have formed part of a great belt of woodland that stretched from Kinver in Staffordshire *via* Shirlett and Corve Dale to Clun. Much of this became subject to forest law and, unlike Dartmoor, remained royal forest for centuries. This may have delayed the process of clearance and colonization but certainly did not prevent it, as is shown clearly, indeed almost pathetically, by a map of 1582 (Fig. 10, P.R.O. MPB/17(2)). This was drawn as evidence in an enquiry about grazing rights, and shows the remnant of the forest consisting of saplings and stumps (the latter looking rather like onions!). During a further enquiry into the extent of the forest held in 1615 John Hatton of Claverley said that he knew the "great waste common called Morfe Wood reputed to be a forest but he never did knowe any deare to be there in his memorie neither is there any woode or underwood but few trees in many miles compass" (P.R.O. E.178/4428). Some of the destruction was on a large scale. At an earlier enquiry in 1592 a witness recalled the cutting of 4,000 oaks for Lord Dudley and 4,000 for the queen. He also commented that when the Council of the Welsh Marches met at Bridgnorth two to three hundred cart loads of fuel at a time were sent from Morfe to the town (P.R.O. E.134/34 Elizabeth E.18). This use for fuel and building timber can be traced back over a long period. In the forest proceedings of 1272 the peripheral settlements of Claverley, Morfield and Bridgnorth were reported as having cut between them some two or three hundred oaks (P.R.O. E.32/47).

As in the previous examples Morfe was important to the peripheral settlements, and to those that grew up within the forest, for its grazing. At yet another inquiry, held in 1589, witness William Potter listed the numerous villages and hamlets that had rights of grazing, some lying within and some without the forest in the legal sense (see Fig. 11). According to another witness John Billingsley, each of the inhabitants of the named places holding a yard land was entitled to graze 100 sheep, 12 cattle and two horses and to take three loads of fuel (P.R.O. E.134/31 Elizabeth, H.28).

The extension of arable farming into the forest can be traced. Both Claverley and Worfield were large settlements in 1086. Claverley had a large demesne with five ploughs, and there were 28 other ploughs in the vill. Morfield had four ploughs in demesne and there were 25 others in the vill. Both had increased in value during the period 1066 to 1086, Claverley from £7 10s. to £10, Worfield from £3 to £18 (Midgley, 1958). The number of ploughs show that considerable clearance had already taken place, the increase in values suggests

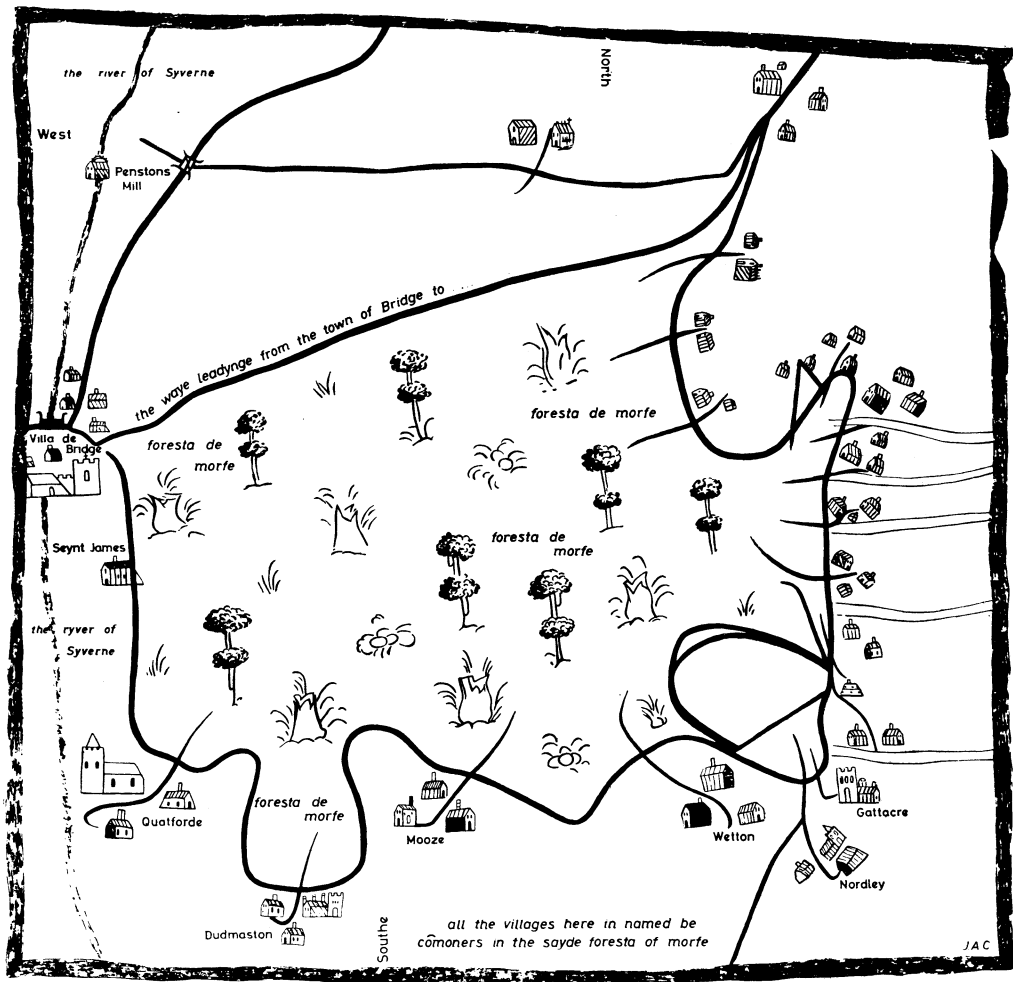


FIG. 10.

Copy of 1582 map of Morfe. The drawings of the River Severn and of houses to the east of the map are very faded and may only be clearly distinguished under ultra-violet light. Even with this aid, the names north of Gattacre are illegible and consequently are not shown on this copy. The original is coloured and measures 25 ins. by 27 ins.

that clearance was still active. The large size of Claverley church, already imposing in Norman times, is further evidence for a considerable population (the recorded population in 1086 was 100) so that probably many of the hamlets or farms such as Chyknell were already in existence. This clearance continued. In an extent *temp.* Edward I the assarted land of Claverley totalled 63½ acres (P.R.O. S.C.12/14/24). In the forest proceedings there are many references to acres or half acres, newly assarted and planted, usually with oats. In 1272 Hereward de la Syche held small assarts of this character at Claverley, Bobbington and Nordley, and the Abbot of Haughmond (the Augustinian abbey near Shrewsbury) held an acre at Beobridge (P.R.O. E32/147). The church does indeed appear to have played a part in the development of Morfe for the Abbot of Haughmond had a grange at Claverley, and the Abbot of Buildwas (the Cistercian monastery near Ironbridge) had virgate in Worfield at the time of the extent mentioned above (S.C.12/14/24). To the assarters must be attributed much of the dispersed character of the settlement within the once wooded parts of the royal forest, and their names conjure up a picture of this dispersion—William atte Mor, Robert atte Ok, Robert atte Lee, Richard atte Feldehouse (P.R.O. E.32/149). A William Fyldhous, presumably a descendant of the last named, was living in Claverley in 1441 (S.R.O. 377/1). Much of the forest settlement was certainly individual farmsteads, as can be seen by the high incidence of “cot” suffixes. It is often difficult in modern place-names to decide whether the “cot” derives from an original plural or singular form. In Shropshire, however, the survival of such place names as Coton, derived from the plural, suggests that Farcot, Dalicot, etc., are singular forms.

The remnants of the waste, left after medieval assarting and Tudor destruction, were finally enclosed in 1812 (S.R.O. B.29) and the resulting pattern of regular fields, often with quickset hedges, can be seen clearly, as for example along the A458 (Fig. 12). This regular pattern contrasts with the parts of the forest earlier settled with winding deep-cut lanes and irregular fields, elements of a more ancient landscape. Many of the small fields that formed part of this more ancient landscape were individually held. Lee Farm near Dalicot, associated with Robert atte Lee mentioned above (S.R.O. 985/1, 9, 11) and Sytch Farm, associated with Hereward de la Syche, contained crofts that were not part of an open-field system. At Claverley on the other hand there were certainly some open arable furlongs (S.R.O. 985/11) and in the sixteenth century Bromley had common arable fields. There were also three common arable fields adjacent to Worfield belonging to the contiguous settlement of Hallom, two of which were known as Maserdine Field and Cranmere Field (B.M. Add.Ms. 28, 832). Cranmere, which gave its name to the field, is now “The Bog”; Maserdine survived as a field name in the 1838 tithe apportionment map. Both of these fields lay north of the village and traces of the old divisions remain, but there has been considerable change in the field boundaries even since 1838.

CONCLUSION

Waste-edge settlement is therefore an element of importance in the landscape. Its incidence is not limited to ancient woodland areas or uplands, for the same

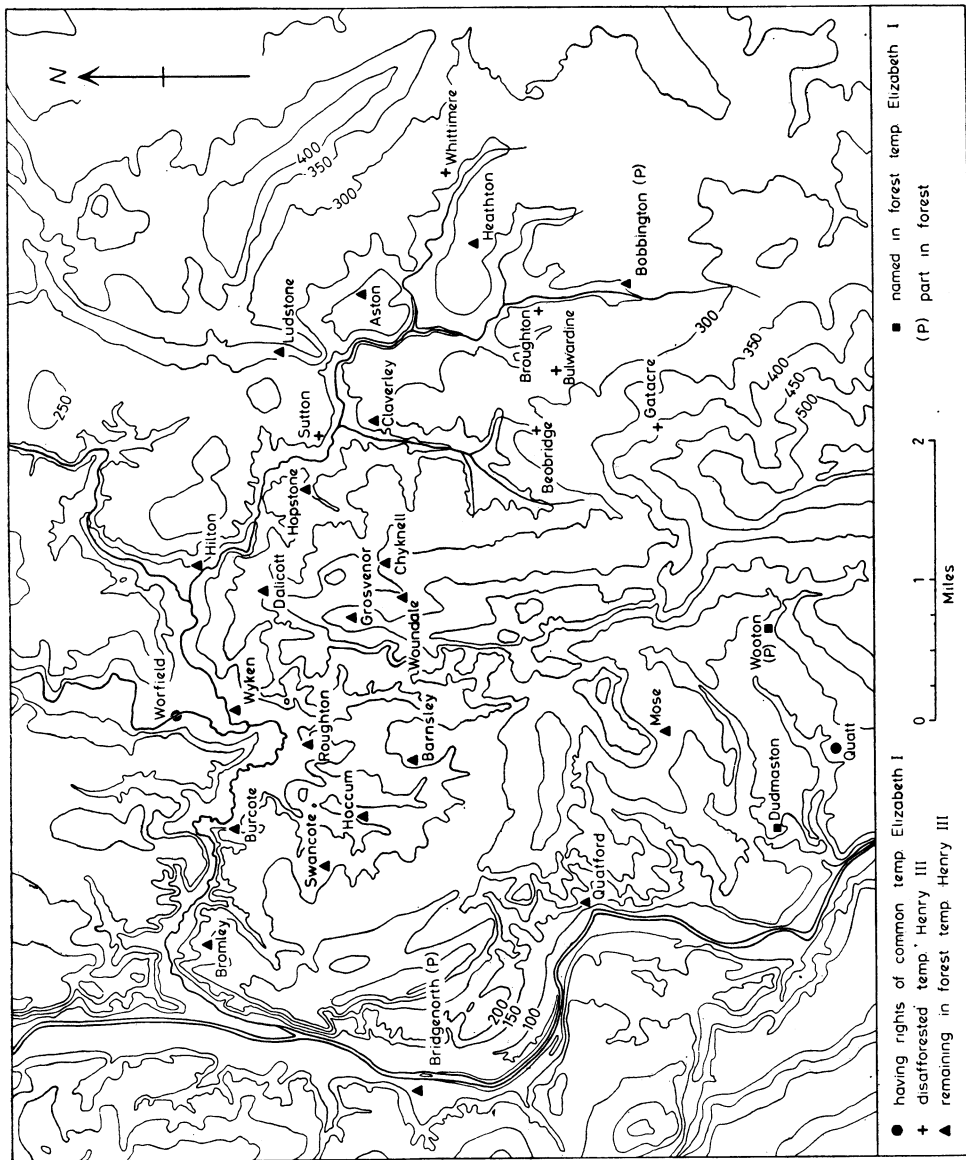


FIG. II.

Villages, arms and hamlets associated with the forest of Morfe in medieval and early modern times. The 'P' in the key means that the settlement had part of its land deforested.



FIG. 12.

Left—early nineteenth century enclosure along the A.458.
Right—irregular enclosures around Sytch House Green, probably of medieval origin. The direction of flow of the “sitch,” or stream is indicated by arrows.

Derived from O.S. 6 in. SO79 SE dated 1954. *Crown Copyright reserved.*

type of settlement occurs around former marsh. The fen-edge settlement is well known, and can be paralleled by examples from the Lancashire mosses, the Weald Moors near Shrewsbury, and from Otmoor. The later importance of the wastes can be gauged from the amount of litigation and rioting to which threats to their common rights gave rise, both in medieval and early modern times. It is indeed unwise to emphasize their unattractive nature when considering early farming communities. Since farming during the Dark Ages appears from continental evidence to have had a strong pastoral element, the presence of good grazing lands was perhaps as important as the availability of loam soils.

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References to ms. material are given in the text with the following abbreviations:

- B.M. British Museum
D.C.R. Duchy of Cornwall
P.R.O. Public Record Office
S.R.O. Shropshire Record Office

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