

DEVELOPMENT OF THE KENTISH MARSHES IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE NORMAN CONQUEST

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The aim of this article is to demonstrate from the manorial valuations in the Kent *Domesday* the great progress made in the twenty years following the Norman Conquest in draining and exploiting the marshes from the Thames estuary round to Oxney; to say something of the marshland economy; and to point up the differences in its development in north Kent and on the Romney levels. Much the same evidence could be used to show the quickening colonisation of the Wealden forest, but that subject has already attracted a good deal of attention, whereas it is only recently that the geological and historical evolution of the Kentish marshes has begun to receive the really detailed scrutiny it deserves and even so the studies have been largely confined to the Romney Marsh area. This article is intended as a contribution to those studies, and one which, we hope, will also emphasise the importance of the northern marshes, on Thameside, the Swale and the Wantsum which, because they neighboured the most populous parts of the county and presented fewer difficulties of reclamation than those on Romney, were in the van of the development.

I

Although the period we shall be particularly examining is the last half of the eleventh century, this is not of course to say that the rich pastures of the marsh had not been exploited long before, progressively as the estuaries began to silt up and land could be gained and protected by embankments, such as are mentioned at Graveney in 811.¹ Indeed the earliest of all Anglo-Saxon charters to have survived

¹ CS: (Ed.) W. de Gray Birch, *Cartularium saxonicum*, 3 vols., 1885–93, no. 355; S: P.H. Sawyer, *Anglo-Saxon Charters*, 1968, no. 168.

in the original, a grant of land in Thanet made by Hlothere of Kent in 679 to the recently founded Abbey of Reculver, mentions marsh among the assets;² and four years earlier Stodmarsh appears under that name – which implies use as a stud farm – in an apparently authentic copy of a conveyance to St. Augustine's Abbey.³ Numerous grants were later made by the Kentish kings and their successors, mostly to ecclesiastical foundations, Lyminge Abbey for instance receiving land on Romney Marsh in 697 and again c. 750⁴ and Minster Abbey in 724,⁵ while the Church of Rochester was given a marsh near Cooling in 778.⁶ These and later transactions have been well chronicled by Nicholas Brooks and others, and it is not our purpose to recapitulate them.⁷ The pastoral value of the salt marshes had been recognised from early on, and they often formed an important element in the economy of the emerging manors. But the systematic inking, draining and improvement of the land gained was a skilled and expensive undertaking.⁸ The Church lords – the archbishop, his community of Christ Church and the Abbot of St. Augustine's – who together owned around half the land in Kent at the time of *Domesday Book* had the resources; and the work was pressed ahead with particular vigour by the Norman prelates in the wake of the Conquest.

The evidence of this is plain from the three-fold values given for most manors in the *Domesday* survey; those of the Confessor's time, of when the manors were received by their new lords shortly after Hastings, and of 1086 when the survey was undertaken.⁹ These were annual values, based upon what the manors were worth, or were thought to be, if leased to farmers, as was the common practice of the times;¹⁰ although we are told that in 1086 sums in excess of valuation were being paid on no fewer than 57 occasions. It is, however, the

² CS, no. 45; S no. 8.

³ CS no. 36; S. no. 7. J.K. Wallenberg, *Kentish Place-Names*, Uppsala, 1931, 9.

⁴ CS nos. 98, 160; S nos. 19, 24.

⁵ CS no. 141; S no. 1180.

⁶ CS no. 227; S no. 35.

⁷ N. Brooks, 'Romney Marsh in the early Middle Ages', in (Eds.) J. Eddison and C. Green, *Romney Marsh: Evolution, Occupation, Reclamation*, OUCA Monograph no. 24, Oxford, 1988, 90–104.

⁸ A good description of the processes is given by C. Luckhurst, 'The Chislet Levels: A transformed Landscape', in (Ed.) W.H. McIntosh, *Chislet and Westbere: Villages of the Stour Lathe*, Ramsgate, 1979, 28–31.

⁹ The *Domesday* text used throughout this article is that in (Ed.) P. Morgan, *Domesday Book: I: Kent*, Chichester, 1983.

¹⁰ See e.g. F.R.H. Du Boulay, *The Lordship of Canterbury*, London, 1966, 198–204.

contrast between the first two sets of figures that must be our starting point because, in showing the damage inflicted on the countryside in the immediate aftermath of the English defeat, they establish a base for judging the speed of the later recovery and improvement.¹¹

II

The passage of the Norman armies through Kent after Hastings was accompanied by particularly widespread devastation in the hinterland of the Channel ports and on the approach to Canterbury, the object being to secure communications with the Continent by cowing the people into submission. When west Kent was reached there was a marked reduction in the damage, a fact that lends some colour to the great Kentish legend, which tells of an encounter between William and a mass of the people at Swanscombe, at which he is said to have endorsed the ancient liberties of the county in return for peace. Taking all Kentish manors together there was a slump in value of some 25 per cent, but the losses were heavily weighted by east Kent. Among the more important places along the coast we have no comparative figures for the boroughs of Romney (which was sacked), Dover (which was burned) or for Sandwich;¹² but the value of Saltwood (including Hythe) was halved; that of Folkestone, which had been £110 in the Confessor's time, had fallen to £40 when Odo of Bayeux first received it; that of Northbourne, behind Deal, had dropped from £80 to £20; the assessment of Minster-in-Thamet was reduced from £80 to £40; and although intermediate figures are lacking for the extensive *outlands* of St. Martin's Priory, Dover, they were among the few places that had still not recovered their pre-Conquest value when *Domesday Book* was compiled. These are the major instances only. Throughout the area there was a host of lesser places, owned mostly by thegns, which had received equally brutal treatment, or worse. The two small manors of Pising and Pineham behind Dover had been left totally waste; and, to take other typical examples, the value of Coldred had slumped from £8 to £1, of Waldershare from £7 10s. to £2 10s. and of Betteshanger from £8 to £3.

¹¹ See H.C. Darby, 'The South-eastern Counties', in (Eds.) H.C. Darby and E.M.J. Campbell, *The Domesday Geography of South-East England*, Cambridge, 1971, 563–610, in particular 569–75.

¹² No figure is given for Sandwich in the Confessor's time, because we are told that it was not then at farm (*ad firmam*).

Nevertheless, the plundering had been controlled and discriminating. All six royal manors in the county (including Barham, which had been leased to the archbishop, and Wye, which was shortly to be granted to Battle Abbey) had been left completely unscathed, since William regarded them as his own property. So, in west Kent, had the estates of Siward, the Bishop of Rochester.¹³ Even in the worst devastated areas the manors of the archbishop and Christ Church had been leniently treated. Thus, Eastry, at the very centre of the destruction, appears to have suffered no harm; on Thanet there was a striking contrast between the despoliation of St. Augustine's lands at Minster and the immunity enjoyed by the Canterbury lands of Monkton and Reculver;¹⁴ and the notable gap in the area of devastation between the coast and the Little Stour valley, where it was resumed, appears to have been due to the fact that most of the intervening tract was owned by the archbishop's great manor of Wingham and the Christ Church manor of Adisham. It seems that William still had some hopes that he might be able to work with Archbishop Stigand who, despite his initial opposition and the fact that he had been excommunicated by successive Popes, was not deposed until nearly four years after the Conquest.¹⁵ But no similar tenderness was shown towards the estates of St. Martin's Priory nor, emphatically, to those of St. Augustine's, which seem indeed to have been treated with particular malevolence, as the fates of Northbourne, Minster and a number of lesser places show.

Twenty years later, however, when the *Domesday* survey was undertaken not only had the damage been made good almost everywhere, but in total the values stood some 30 per cent above the pre-Conquest levels and the actual receipts 35 per cent above. But this generalisation again means very little by itself since it conceals such a wide range of variations. The trading benefits brought by the Norman connection had prompted a remarkable recovery by the east coast ports;¹⁶ considerable advances seem also to have been made by Canterbury and Rochester;¹⁷ and other places like Maidstone and

¹³ The favour shown to Siward, then and later, suggests that he had played a large part in whatever accommodation was reached with William on his entry into west Kent. Not only did he retain his see until his death, but the tax assessment on the Rochester estates was reduced from 66½ to 40 *sulungs*.

¹⁴ Consequent on Hlothere's grant of 679 (CS no. 45: S. no. 8) Reculver owned land on Thanet around St. Nicholas-at-Wade.

¹⁵ F.M. Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England*, 3rd edn., Oxford, 1971, 659–61.

¹⁶ Thus the tolls at Dover had nearly tripled: the number of dwellings in Sandwich had increased from 307 to 383.

¹⁷ T. Tatton-Brown, 'The Towns of Kent', in (Ed.) J. Haslam, *Anglo-Saxon Towns in southern England*, Chichester, 1984, 1–36.

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Lewisham were now rapidly taking on an urban complexion. Manors bordering the Weald or owning numerous dens there had also profited greatly from a wave of forest colonisation, for which the focal point in the west was Tonbridge with its newly constructed motte and bailey guarding the vital Medway crossing on the road from London to Hastings,¹⁸ and in the east Newenden with its market on the navigable Rother.¹⁹ But the most marked and consistent advances of all were shown by those manors with shares in the marshlands.

III

In north Kent there were three areas where the effects of marshland improvement were particularly apparent. The first was the stretch of Thameside to either side of Gravesend. On the one side, the archbishop's manor of Northfleet, which had been worth £10 in the Confessor's time, was now valued at £27 and was actually paying £37 10s.; while on the other the combined value of the numerous lesser manors – places like Chalk, Cliffe and Cooling – in the hundred of Shamwell on the flank of the Hoo peninsula had doubled in value during the same period. Surprisingly, nothing similar is to be found on the Medway estuary, except at Chatham, worth £12 in 1066 and valued at the same in 1086, although it was then actually paying £35; nor along the greater part of the Swale, perhaps because the marshes hemming the narrow and sheltered channel between Sheppey and the mainland and dominated by the ancient royal manor of Milton Regis, the largest and wealthiest in Kent, had been mostly captured and consolidated well before the Conquest.²⁰ But around the eastern outlet of the Swale we again find more than ordinary gains. Here most of the marshes on the mainland side belonged to the archbishop's manor of Boughton (under Blean), the value of which had mounted since the Conquest from £15 16s. to £30 16s. Seasalter nearby had made an even larger proportionate advance from £1 5s. to £5, figures exactly matched by the Isle of Harty across the estuary.

¹⁸ V.W. Dumbreck, 'The Lowy of Tonbridge', *Arch. Cant.*, lxxii (1957), 138–47.

¹⁹ It was one of only two places (outside the boroughs) recorded as having a market, the other being Lewisham; although, by inference, there seem also to have been markets at Milton Regis, Faversham and, less certainly, Dartford. Its value increased from £5 in the Confessor's time to £10 in 1086, when it was actually paying £18 10s.

²⁰ *Domesday Book* records the payment to Newington-by-Sittingbourne of 56½ weys of cheese, apparently from Sheppey and neighbouring marshes. See also Du Boulay, *Lordship of Canterbury*, 176.

This was a relatively small pocket of recent improvement, but significant nonetheless.

Of much greater consequence were developments along both arms of the Wantsum. Of manors owning marshes here the value of Reculver had risen since the Confessor's time from £14 to £35; of Northwood (sited near Whitstable but with lands at Sarre and Stourmouth)²¹ from £24 to just under £52; and of Monkton from £20 to £40. These were manors of the archbishop or Christ Church, which had been spared by the Norman armies. Of those belonging to St. Augustine's Abbey, which had not, the value of Chislet had first fallen from £53 to £40 and then risen to £78; Preston and Elmstone together had dropped from £12 to £6 10s. and then mounted to £22; and Minster, which had been reduced from £80 to £40, had also much more than recovered to £120. This leaves the archbishop's manor of Wingham, which seems at first sight to have made a smaller proportionate gain than the others, from £77 to £100; but by 1086 six knights' fees had been newly carved out of it, including Fleet by Richborough, and these together were worth another £23. Moreover, Wingham was a huge manor, stretching south to touch Watling Street near Womenswold²² and containing some of the best arable land in Kent, so that the effect of marshland improvement along its northern fringe would have made less impact upon the total.

For these northern marshes the evidence is clear-cut, but with Romney Marsh we enter upon far more difficult and debatable ground. To understand why it is necessary to give a brief account of the development of the Marsh in early historical times, as it is now beginning to be deciphered through the work initiated by R.D. Green and Jill Eddison and continued under the auspices of the Romney Marsh Research Trust.²³ It seems that in the Roman period it was an area of lagoons and tidal flats, with some tracts of firm land, lying behind a coastal barrier of shingle extending, almost unbroken, from Fairlight to a point just south of Lympne, which was then apparently the principal outlet of the Rother.²⁴ By the eighth century, when the Marsh first features in Kentish charters, the main channel of the river appears to have shifted to reach the sea through a

²¹ Du Boulay, *op. cit.*, App. A, 381-3 (*sub* Whitstable).

²² Canterbury Cathedral MS. E.24, fos. 1-12.

²³ J. Eddison, 'The Reclamation of Romney Marsh: Some Aspects reconsidered', *Arch. Cant.*, xcix (1983), 47-58. R.D. Green, *Soils of Romney Marsh*, Harpenden, 1968. (Eds.) J. Eddison and C. Green, *Romney Marsh: Evolution, Occupation, Reclamation*, OUCA Monograph no. 24, Oxford, 1988.

²⁴ B. Cunliffe, 'Romney Marsh in the Roman Period', in Eddison and Green, *op. cit.*, 83-7.

gap in the shingle barrier at Romney, leaving however a tidal inlet at Hythe, which widened into a large lagoon around Newchurch before tapering away to a point near Ruckinge.²⁵ Between this inlet and Romney the barrier beach lay well forward of the present Dymchurch Wall, and behind this and circling the lagoon towards Ruckinge was a broad arc of good, consolidated pasture land which merged to the south-west into the still largely unreclaimed morass of Walland Marsh. It was through that waste that the Rother now made its circuitous way, looping south from its entry into the Marsh at Appledore to follow very much the line of the Kent Ditch before turning up in a broadening channel to its mouth at Romney;²⁶ so cutting off on its right-hand side the Denge marshes around Lydd, which had formed behind the ever extending promontory of Dungeness and afforded some relatively poor pasture land streaked with bands of shingle.

The subsequent reclamation was in two main stages; first the draining, aided by natural silting, of the Hythe inlet and its lagoon, which appears to have been largely accomplished by the time of *Domesday Book*; and then the progressive inking from the twelfth century on of the swamps of Walland Marsh. Serious set-backs were caused during the last half of the thirteenth century by the onset of a period of great storms which resulted, among other things, in a large breach being torn in the shingle barrier near Winchelsea, with the widening and extension of what had been a relatively small inlet there so as to capture the main stream of the Rother.²⁷ This hastened the decay of Romney and silting up of its harbour, despite the construction of an artificial waterway, now marked by the Rhee Wall, to tap the river at Appledore.²⁸ But this is looking well beyond our immediate concern, which is the light shed by *Domesday Book* on the first stage of the development, and in particular on the intriguing and still unresolved question of when the Hythe inlet and its lagoon were gained from the tides.

There are a number of pre-Conquest charters to show that by the eighth century the screened areas of Marsh behind Dymchurch and

²⁵ Which was thus the principal bridgehead onto the Marsh. Presumably, for that reason the *Domesday Monachorum* shows it to have been the site of a minster, or baptismal church, only later to be moved to Lympne by Lanfranc.

²⁶ T. Tatton-Brown, 'The Topography of the Walland Marsh Area between the eleventh and thirteenth Centuries', in Eddison and Green, *op. cit.*, 105-11.

²⁷ M. Gardiner, 'Medieval Settlement and Society in the Broomhill Area and Excavations at Broomhill Church', in Eddison and Green, *op. cit.*, 112-27.

²⁸ E. Vollans, 'New Romney and the 'river of Newenden' in the later Middle Ages', in Eddison and Green, *op. cit.*, 128-41.

surrounding the lagoon, and also the Denge marshes around Lydd, were being extensively used as sheep and cattle pastures; that fishing hamlets had been established along the coast (which we learn from a charter of c. 750 was how New Romney originated);²⁹ and that salt panning was being carried out on the flanks of the inlets, as at West Hythe.³⁰ In time the small settlements expanded and new ones appeared. Already by the tenth century (Old) Romney had developed into a port of some consequence,³¹ dealing mostly no doubt in the shipment of salted fish, wool and cheese from the rich sheep pastures behind it, and timber and faggots brought down the Rother from the Weald. Hythe appears to have developed rather later as the successor to Lympe, from which the harbour had shifted as the inlet began to silt up.³² By the time of *Domesday Book* settlement in the main body of the Marsh had progressed sufficiently far for three hundreds to have been established there; those of Worth behind Dymchurch, Aloesbridge around Brenzett, and Langport between Romney and Lydd and including both. But in addition to these there was yet another centring on Newchurch. Nicholas Brooks believes that this, with others in Kent, had originated with the reorganisation of local government carried out in Wessex and other parts of England in the mid-tenth century and that the lagoon must, therefore, have been drained by then.³³ But the development of the curious hundred system of Kent has never been thoroughly studied. There are some grounds for supposing that the system was introduced later into this county, which had its own ancient and highly distinctive institutional framework, than throughout most of England; and there is good evidence that, whenever it was first introduced, it continued to evolve and at the time of *Domesday Book* was still far from complete in frontier areas like the Marsh (see Appendix).

The *Domesday* survey shows only a handful of places on the Marsh itself that could be dignified with the name of manors, although a number on its boundaries had lands there and the closely contemporaneous *Domesday Monachorum* records a scattering of churches on the older consolidated lands. The evidence of the churches is less revealing than it might be because only in two cases is there any indication when they were founded: there is nothing, for instance, to

²⁹ CS no. 160: S no. 24.

³⁰ CS no. 148: S no. 23.

³¹ It had been given a mint in the reign of King Eadgar (959–975): see, M. Dolley, *Anglo-Saxon Pennies*, London, 1970, 25.

³² Tatton-Brown, *op. cit.* in note 17, 24–6.

³³ Brooks, *op. cit.* in note 7.

tell us when Newchurch was 'new', though the inference is that this building was among the latest. The two that can be dated, Eastbridge (*Aelsiescirce*) and Blackmanstone, were evidently built only a short time before the Conquest, since they appear under the names of the then landowners,³⁴ and it is noteworthy that they stood on the fringe of the Hythe inlet and its lagoon, where it seems that settlements were just beginning to expand. The valuations are far more illuminating. They show that whereas most of the Marsh manors, places like Langport and Denge, had increased beyond normal in value in the twenty years following the Conquest, much the largest advances had been made by those on the north-western perimeter and that the progress around Newchurch, in particular, had been altogether out of the ordinary. The place itself, and the greater part of the land within the hundred, belonged to the manor of Bilsington just outside the Marsh. The manor had been worth only £10 in 1066, had increased to £30 before Odo of Bayeux received it,³⁵ was assessed at £50 in 1086 and was then actually paying £70. The clear inference from these figures is that it was in the period immediately following the Conquest that advantage was taken of the drying out of the lagoon to drain, and apparently also to settle, the land; and that it is from this time, not earlier, that the hundred with its new church must date. Also at this time Bilsington had ten salt pans, and although these were evidently small, contributing only 8s. 4d. to its value, it shows that some tidal marsh still remained.

Exceptional as Newchurch was, it appears nevertheless to have been only an extreme example of the rapid inroads being made during this period into the hitherto tidal *forlands* of the Hythe inlet. Thus Burmarsh, near its mouth, which had been assessed at £20 in the Confessor's time but had slumped to £10 following the passage of the Norman armies, had then made a much more than full recovery to £30. Of manors backing on this area of the Marsh and known to have had substantial holdings there the two largest were Aldington and Lyminge, of which the value of the first had risen since the Confessor's time from £62 to £101 and the second, which was said to

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ It belonged at the time of the Conquest, and apparently for some time after, to Alnod Cild (*aliter* Aethelnoth of Canterbury), who was no ordinary thegn but owned numerous estates not only in Kent but elsewhere in the south-east. He appears to have been one of those people with whom William had at first hoped that he might be able to work; but he remains an enigmatic figure about whom we should dearly like to know more. See, however, J.H. Round, 'Introduction to the Surrey Domesday', VCH (Surrey), i (1902), 282-3.

have been worth £24 then and £40 in 1086, was in fact paying £20 more than that. These increases were well above average, but unfortunately with manors as large and scattered as these there is no way of telling the extent to which the marshland holdings contributed to them. It is particularly regrettable that we cannot distinguish the contribution made to the Lyminge figures by the lands it owned at Orgarswick,³⁶ between Burmarsh and Newchurch. There can, however, be no mistaking the significance of the entries for such smaller border manors as Berwick in Lympne, which having been reduced in value from £3 to £1 had risen to £7; nor for Appledore, worth £6 before the Conquest but £16 17s. in 1086; nor on a lesser scale for Warehorne, where the corresponding figures were £1 and £3. Most remarkable of all was the progress made by Court-at-Street, later one of the Lords of the Marsh with lands around Lower Wall (neighbouring Aldington holdings at Willop).³⁷ In 1066, it had been a trivial place, valued only at 10s., yet within twenty years this had risen to £8, a scale of increase (admittedly from very small beginnings) unmatched anywhere else in Kent.

Although there are certain gaps in our knowledge, as at Ruckinge, for which full comparative figures are lacking,³⁸ it is nevertheless clear that over the brief period between the Conquest and the *Domesday* survey exceptional advances had been made in draining, improving and laying out the lands along the whole length of the rapidly dwindling Hythe inlet and the Appledore Dowels at its head. This must have required considerable capital expenditure, but there can have been few better investments. It is noteworthy that, when Bilsington passed to Odo of Bayeux, it was one of only a small handful of his numerous estates in Kent which he did not assign to knights or other dependents but kept in direct ownership: by 1086, it had become worth more to him than any of the others except Hoo, more indeed than his stronghold at Rochester.

IV

That the ownership of improved marsh should have made such an impact on the value of manors is easy to understand. It was not only

³⁶ Du Boulay, *op. cit.* in note 10, 117.

³⁷ M. Teichman-Derville, *The Level and Liberty of Romney Marsh*, 1936, App. III, 99–112.

³⁸ Most of it was a knight's fee held by William of Adisham as an outlier of Ickham Manor: see, (Ed.) D.C. Douglas, *The Domesday Monachorum of Christ Church, Canterbury*, 1944, 90.

excellent pasture but when fed by freshwater streams with the drainage carefully regulated by sluices to hold back water in the summer and release it in the winter, it could be converted into meadow.³⁹ The acute shortage of winter fodder made hay fields by far the most valuable type of land, and Kent, with its large areas of porous chalk and sand subsoils, was generally ill-endowed with it. *Domesday Book*, which is so often negligent in other ways, enters demesne meadow to the acre, revealing in doing so the large contribution made by marshland manors.⁴⁰ Although it is not until the thirteenth century that we get detailed comparative values they show that at that time, when moderate quality arable land was worth around 6*d.* an acre, meadow was rated at anything from 1*s.* to 4*s.* It seems that at the end of the eleventh century, before the later rapid inflation had set in, an average figure for arable would have been around 2*d.* an acre.⁴¹ For meadow the Kent *Domesday* provides us with only a single reliable value: it tells us that eight acres on the Stour at Canterbury, which had been used for the horses of the king's messengers, had since been leased for 15*s.*⁴² No doubt this was of the very best quality, but even so it shows just how profitable such lands could be.

Although the marshes lent themselves to conversion into meadow, it was only with improved drainage and where the conditions were right. Mostly they were devoted to pasture, primarily for sheep and to a lesser extent for cattle. *Domesday Book* rarely provides full particulars of livestock, but it does so at Wickhambreaux, a manor containing a sizeable tract of marsh at the mouth of the Little Stour: here, we are told, there was pasture for 300 sheep and 31 cattle, which was probably a typical proportion. Cattle, which had to be stalled over winter and made heavy demands on fodder, were expensive animals to maintain; and while oxen were indispensable as draught animals, chiefly for ploughing, it was an extravagance to keep more cows than was necessary to replace them, when milk could be got more cheaply from ewes and meat was no more than a

³⁹ B.S. Furneaux, 'A Note on the Drainage of the Marsh Pastures', in D.L. Stamp, *The Land of Britain. The Report of the Land Utilisation Survey of Britain. Part 85. Kent.*, London, 1943, 588.

⁴⁰ Much the largest quantity in Kent, 170 acres in all, belonged to Aldington, which had extensive lands on Romney Marsh. Even such a relatively small manor as Cliffe had 36 acres. Chislet, on the Wantsum, had 50.

⁴¹ E.g. 'Inquisitiones Post Mortem', *Arch. Cant.*, iii (1860), 245-9.

⁴² There is also an entry for Tottington, near Aylesford, which says that there was nothing there but two acres of meadow and yet it was worth 10*s.*; but this seems so inordinate that one is bound to assume some error, or concealed factor.

terminal product of either. It is true that a cow gave eight times as much milk as a ewe,⁴³ but it needed correspondingly more pasture, of a generally better quality, and was much more exacting in its watering requirements. Sheep were the most useful of all-purpose animals, producing both wool and milk (the balance depending on the proportion of ewes to wethers, which had the heavier fleeces).⁴⁴ They gave meat when culled or superannuated, with parchment from their skins; their droppings were the best and most plentifully available form of fertiliser; their treading improved the texture of the soil instead of puddling it; and their close cropping helped to eliminate weeds. They were, therefore, an admirable adjunct to cultivation. The usual practice, it seems, was to put the flocks to pasture from the first flush of the spring grass until the beginning of August, when they had been sheared and the ewes were weaned, and then bring them in to be folded on stubble or fallow,⁴⁵ or sometimes on unharvested fields of vetch,⁴⁶ manuring and helping to clean the land in the process. Although best housed from mid-September to Easter, when fodder (mostly vetch or peas) was needed, on dry land they could be kept in fold throughout the winter.⁴⁷ Their chief disadvantage was that they tended to be sickly animals. Du Boulay illustrates this from Wingham Barton where in 1273/4 no fewer than 409 out of 545 sheep died before shearing.⁴⁸ The accounts of Eastry manor, which pastured large flocks on the Lydden marshes near Sandwich, show annual losses of mature sheep of around a fifth, and in 1269/70 only 32 lambs survived out of more than 250 born or bought in as replacements.⁴⁹

Marsh was considered the best of all forms of sheep pasture. The agricultural expert Walter of Henley, writing in the thirteenth century, said that animals fed on it yielded half as much milk again as those grazed on scrub land or aftermath.⁵⁰ It is also clear that they

⁴³ (Ed.) D. Orchinsky, *Walter of Henley: The Husbandry*, 1971, cap. 20.

⁴⁴ J.P. Bischoff, 'I Cannot Do't without Counters': Fleece Weights and Sheep Breeds in late thirteenth and early fourteenth Century England', *Agricultural History*, 57 (1983), 153–60.

⁴⁵ E.g. Canterbury Cathedral MS E.24, fos. 64–69 (Bishopsbourne manor).

⁴⁶ As, for instance, at Adisham. See, S. Campbell, *Some Aspects of the social and economic History of the Manor of Adisham c. 1200 to the Dissolution*, unpublished M.Phil. thesis, University of Kent, 1981, 110.

⁴⁷ Walter of Henley, *Husbandry*, *op. cit.* in note 43, cap. 101.

⁴⁸ Du Boulay, *op. cit.* in note 10, 214, n. 4.

⁴⁹ M.M. O'Grady, *A Study of some of the Characteristics of the Holdings and Agriculture of Eastry Manor, East Kent, from c. 1086–1350*, unpublished M.Phil. thesis, University of London, 1981, p. 284, Table 3.10.

⁵⁰ Walter of Henley, *Husbandry*, *op. cit.* in note 43, caps. 87, 88.

could support larger flocks. In this an illuminating contrast is provided by two nearly contemporary accounts. At Folkestone, we learn in 1263 of 120 acres of demesne pasture, evidently on the Downs, capable of supporting 300 wethers, two and a half to the acre, each animal reckoned as contributing $\frac{3}{4}d.$ to give an annual leasehold return of just under $2d.$ an acre,⁵¹ around a third of the then value of moderately priced arable land. The Wingham custumal of 1285/6 mentions certain 'marsh cottars' who occupied between them rather less than 35 acres of demesne land on which they were estimated to keep 250 sheep, a remarkably high average of 7–8 to the acre. In return they had been accustomed to pay the archbishop, as lord, $\frac{3}{4}d.$ a year on each animal and to use his fold; but the folding requirements had for some time been rescinded and the *per capita* charge on the animals doubled,⁵² partly no doubt to compensate for the loss of manure but also, one suspects, as a timely adjustment to off-set the effects of inflation. However that may be, the return to the archbishop was close on $11d.$ an acre, or five times what was got from the hill pasture at Folkestone and comparable in value to the best arable. (On these marshes, however, there is a suspicion of overstocking, which may have contributed to the high mortality among the flocks).

Large as the return at Wingham may seem, it cannot all have been pure profit. This, clearly, was old inned marsh, and as it was part of the archbishop's own demesne assigned to the cottars he would have remained responsible for its protection and drainage, a major commitment. At the close of the eleventh century, when reclamation was gathering pace, much of the marsh here must still have been *forland* outside the defences and exposed to the perils of flood and drowning of stock. The difference in value is excellently illustrated in an agreement made by Archbishop Hubert Walter (1193–1205) by which he leased a quantity of marsh within the sea wall at Stone-in-Oxney for $12d.$ an acre and outside it for $2d.$, with a further $10d.$ to be paid should it become enclosed.⁵³ It was the rapid progress of inning in the years immediately after the Conquest and the great increase in profits that resulted, despite the accompanying costs, that show so clearly in the *Domesday* valuations of the marsh manors.

⁵¹ 'Inquisitions Post Mortem', *Arch. Cant.*, iii (1860), 255–64.

⁵² Canterbury Cathedral MS. E.24 fo. 3.

⁵³ N. Neilson, *The Cartulary and Terrier of the Priory of Bilsington, Kent*, Oxford, 1928, 51.

For all the similarities in the pastoral régimes, the circumstances of the northern marshes were in many ways different from those of Romney, both because they were nearer the centres of population and because, however extensive, they lacked depth and almost everywhere could be used and overseen from the long settled countryside behind them. The Wantsum marshes, moreover, had the advantage of belonging along almost their entire length to the great Church lords, who had the resources to devote to reclamation; and although exposed to the dangers of tidal surge from either end of the divided estuary, and to freshwater flooding from the Stour, they were nevertheless screened by Thanet and more sheltered from storm than the wide open levels of Romney. Here the waterway of the Stour, like the Roman roads from Richborough and Reculver, led back to the thriving markets of Canterbury, the seat of the archbishop and other ecclesiastical magnates; whereas on the Romney marshes, where land communications were generally difficult and round-about and the Rother led only into forest, the orientation was towards the coast and the ports were the outlets. Although the Wantsum, as the smaller area, had less to offer eventually, it is not surprising that at first it should have been more consistently and thoroughly exploited. Right down into the fourteenth century it was here, by preference, that the Church lords kept their demesne flocks, on marshes which, unlike so many of those on Romney, were not remote outposts of the manors that owned them, but directly attached to them, and so could be fully integrated into the farming cycle. Thus, the two largest *bercharia* maintained by Christ Church, each of some 2,000 animals, were at Monkton and on the Lydden levels just south of Sandwich.⁵⁴ The area in which drainage appears to have been most difficult, and which in the thirteenth century had still been left largely as *forland*, was at Eastbere between Hersden and Groveferry,⁵⁵ where the freshwater of the Stour was ponded back as it met the tidal channel of the Wantsum. Not all of this has yet been properly drained. But, this apart, it seems that the whole stretch of the estuary, from one mouth to the other, was pasture and meadow land *par excellence*, with some tidal flats left for salt panning but almost no intrusion of cultivation.

⁵⁴ R.A.L. Smith, *Canterbury Cathedral Priory: A Study in monastic Administration*, 1943, 151–3. *Domesday Book*, however, provides little evidence that the Lydden marshes had been developed by then: this extension of the Wantsum marshes may not have been effectively reclaimed before the twelfth century.

⁵⁵ (Eds.) G.J. Turner and H.E. Salter, *Register of St. Augustine's Abbey commonly called the Black Book*, Oxford, 1915 and 1924, i, 172–6.

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Salt was essential both for dairying and curing fish and the pans an integral feature of a marshland economy in which pastoralism and the coastal fisheries had always been closely associated. The methods were simple and seem to have been little changed over the centuries. Spring tides, flowing in over marsh, were trapped and left to be reduced by the summer suns to brine, which was then extracted in the autumn and distilled in leaden pans.⁵⁶ With the general shortage of peat in Kent large quantities of faggots were needed for fuel – a charter of 732 specifies 120 wagon loads a year to feed a single pan near West Hythe⁵⁷ – which meant that extensive woodland had to be nearby or cheaply accessible by water. Such conditions existed on Romney Marsh, backing upon the Wealden forest, and on the Wantsum and Swale, both backing on Blean forest. These were the very areas where demand was greatest and where, in the eleventh century, all but two out of nearly 140 pans recorded in Kent were concentrated.⁵⁸ The name of Seasalter, at the mouth of the Swale, derives from *sealterna steallas*, a salt house;⁵⁹ but nowhere in the county were all the elements that together composed the marshland economy more closely fused than along the Wantsum.

We can illustrate this from the manor of Chislet, owned by St. Augustine's. This was almost ideally situated, fronting on rich marshes, backing directly upon Blean, and commanding both arms of the estuary at the point where the Stour emptied into it. At the southern outlet of the estuary was Sandwich, which at the time of *Domesday Book* was the major fishing port in the county, paying a rent of 40,000 herrings a year to Christ Church and another 4,000 to St. Augustine's out of a total catch which must have approximated to half a million. Upstream the Stour was navigable as far as Fordwich on the threshold of Canterbury. Chislet, lying midway between the two, had 47 pans, evidently small but supplying St. Augustine's with 50 packhorse loads (equivalent to 200 bushels)⁶⁰ of salt a year in rent, a quantity which had quadrupled by the end of the thirteenth century, when we are told that much of it was being carried to a herring house maintained by the Abbot at Sturry,⁶¹ the twin of Fordwich. Although

⁵⁶ (Eds.) K.W. de Brisay and K.A. Evans, *Salt: The Study of an ancient Industry*, Colchester, 1975, *passim*.

⁵⁷ CS no. 148: S no. 23.

⁵⁸ Two were owned by Maidstone manor, we are not told where but probably on the Medway estuary above Rochester.

⁵⁹ Wallenberg, *op. cit.* in note 3, 494.

⁶⁰ R.E. Zupko, *A Dictionary of English Weights and Measures*, Wisconsin, 1968, 154.

⁶¹ Turner and Salter, *op. cit.* in note 55, 96–7, 120–1.

Chislet was particularly well placed it was no more so than Sarre and Stourmouth, off-shoots of the archbishop's manor of Northwood, which had seven large pans between them, with a greater combined value than any other group in Kent; and there were lesser pans all along the estuary from Reculver to Fleet (Richborough). Much of the salt they produced would have been marketed at Canterbury, but much, too, would have been used locally at the fisheries and for dairying. In this relatively small area the marshland economy, with all its interdependent elements, can be seen in its most perfectly articulated form. Everything conspired to it.

VI

On the Romney marshes, too, we find the same combination of pastoralism with fishing and salt-panning, fuelled by wood loads brought cheaply from the nearby Weald or its extension *Sibersnoth*.⁶² It seems, too, e.g. from the turburies recorded at Broomhill,⁶³ that there were some peat beds in and around Walland Marsh, which may help to account for the remarkable assemblage of pans, some 100 in all, entered in *Domesday Book* in the neighbourhood of Rye. In Kent itself there was another important group at Eastbridge on the fringe of what remained of the Hythe inlet and less productive ones near Newchurch and at Langport. But because of the much greater depth and expansiveness of the marshes here than on the Wantsum the various activities were more loosely knit; and another factor of major importance, almost absent on the northern marshes, had been introduced well before *Domesday Book*, that of settlement. To begin with this seems often to have been unprompted, pioneering families taking possession of patches of newly dried out land of uncertain ownership; hence the small groups of *socmen* (a rare category of person in Kent), who were tenants of no manor but required to give allegiance to some magnate. At the time of *Domesday Book* this was almost invariably Hugh de Montfort, whose principal seat in Kent was at Saltwood; but by then the number of *socmen* had been reduced, most of the holdings having been sorted into manors. The bulk of the settlers were probably manorial tenants from the beginning, occupying pastures that had been conveyed by royal charter to the religious houses or to thegns. There was, in fact, every incentive

⁶² The tongue of clay forest centring around Orlestone: see, Wallenberg, *op. cit.*, in note 3, 473-4.

⁶³ Gardiner, *op. cit.* in note 27.

for the lords to encourage settlement on these remote and exposed marshes, where constant vigilance was needed to maintain the dykes and drainage channels, so that in later years it became common practice of the lords to insist on building as a condition of tenancy or lease.⁶⁴

At Newchurch, where reclamation appears to have been not piece-meal but wholesale, the evidence is of systematic settlement on a regular pattern. The lands here belonging to Bilsington manor were laid out in units known as *dolae*, of largely uniform area varying between 40 and 50 acres, and thus conforming to the conventional standard of the *yokes* in the old settled land of north Kent. As in the *yokes*, the occupants of each unit were treated corporately for the purposes of rents and services and on terms that were virtually identical, the pure essence of *gavelkind*. The tenements were freeholds; each *dole* paid a rent of around 5s. (1½*d.* an acre) with the superimposition of a further payment called *mala* at about 6s. (1¾*d.* an acre) apparently to off-set inflation; and there were a few ploughing, mowing and carting services of a lower assessed value and so evidently light.⁶⁵ All this was standard Kentish practice. The one novelty, introduced under the ancient custom of the marsh, was a procedure known as *in pignore* (literally, in pledge or pawn) which provided that, on the failure of the tenants to maintain the defences of the land against flooding, the lord should repossess it for a year and a day and himself carry out the necessary works: during that period it could be recovered on double payment of the costs, but otherwise it was forfeited.⁶⁶ Even this seems to have been an adaptation of the custom of *gavelate* prevailing in the uplands.⁶⁷

The appearance at Newchurch is, therefore, of planned settlement, amounting almost to plantation, making use of familiar Kentish models. Judging by nomenclature, the Dowels of Appledore must have been laid out on the same principle⁶⁸ and, judging from the *Domesday* valuations, at much the same time. The division of the land into *dolae* was more than a feature of systematic reclamation: it established a framework for the corporate maintenance within each of the units of the embankments and water channels, the costs and

⁶⁴ Neilson, *op. cit.* in note 53, 53.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 61–2.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 50–1.

⁶⁷ W. Lambarde, *A Perambulation of Kent*, 3rd edn., 1970, 513–31. See also, C.L. Sinclair Williams, 'The Codification of the Customs of Kent', *Arch. Cant.*, xciv (1979), 65–79.

⁶⁸ For derivation, see Wallenberg, *op. cit.* in note 3, 361.

labour being presumably shared, then as later, between the occupiers in proportion to the size of their holdings. It seems also that from early on the *consuetudo marisci*, as it applied to Romney Marsh proper and was afterwards extended into Walland Marsh, provided for the appointment of a body of jurats to determine disputes over liability.

Although for reasons of distance the Romney marshes were less favourably placed for large scale demesne sheep farming than those on the Wantsum their capacity for settlement could be put to increasingly good account as land hunger grew with the mounting population. The alluvial soils here varied considerably in profile and quality,⁶⁹ but in general had a much greater potential fertility than the sterile and wooded Downs or than could be found at any but a few places in that other great frontier region the Weald. As during the twelfth century the innings were steadily extended into Walland Marsh and the levels of the Rother around and beyond Oxney the terms of conveyance were simplified. Grants of land were still made in *gavelkind*, that is freehold and subject to partible inheritance, but for rents that were no longer custom-bound but fully economic, the other requirements being reduced to suit of court and the single service, which was sufficiently onerous in itself, of maintaining the defences and watergangs – although, the better to ensure this, it was also often made a condition that a tenant who was not already resident in the manor should build on his holding.⁷⁰ Where the lord had himself inned the land, as the archbishop appears to have done over wide areas of the Rother levels around Oxney, the rents were commensurately high, like the 12*d.* an acre stipulated in a grant made c. 1200 to William and Juliana of Pesyndene;⁷¹ but the marshes here, besides being more sheltered than those on Walland, were well fed by the freshwater channels and small tributaries of the Rother and the better able of being converted into good meadow. On the bleak Walland marshes, where the Christ Church manor of Appledore came to take an increasing lead in reclamation, the practice developed of making grants of tidal marsh, or *forland*, to prospective tenants on condition that they should themselves enclose and drain it, the rents being waived for the first two years or so to help with the initial outlay and then charged at a moderate rate, such as 4*d.* an acre.⁷² In such cases the grants tended to be on a smaller scale and, as

⁶⁹ Stamp, *op. cit.* in note 39, 604–6.

⁷⁰ Neilson, *op. cit.* in note 53, 53.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 51–2.

⁷² Tatton-Brown, *op. cit.* in note 26.

aerial photography has revealed, characteristically rectangular.⁷³ It seems, too, that they were often uniform in size, like the five units at Misleham in Brookland parish conveyed by Christ Church between 1191 and 1207 and studied in a recent article by Tatton-Brown, each of which was within a fraction of 35 acres.⁷⁴

Gavelkind tenure was the crucial factor. As freehold, it provided the latitude essential for pioneering ventures with all their attendant difficulties and dangers. To begin with grants seem usually to have been made to individuals, clearly people of substance, like the Baldwin Scadeway who at some time *c.* 1160 first undertook the reclamation of marshes around Misleham and left his name to the inns there;⁷⁵ or the Doudeman and Ellis de Ria who were active at much the same time at Broomhill;⁷⁶ or the Pesyndenes whom we have previously mentioned. But as time went on lots in unreclaimed marsh might be assigned to groups of much poorer folk joining in co-operative ventures; so that the five 35-acre units laid out at Misleham *c.* 1200 were taken in shares of anything from 17 acres to one by some 40 people in all, apparently little related to each other and with names – Aluric, Lefwin and so on – still predominantly Anglo-Saxon in type.⁷⁷ The custom of partible inheritance, which accompanied *gavelkind* tenure, itself tended to a rapid filling up of the lands, as Mark Gardiner has demonstrated at Broomhill where the property acquired by Doudeman had within three generations come to be divided between eleven of his descendants.⁷⁸ More than that, however, the right freely to buy and sell land without leave of the lord encouraged entrepreneurs, so that the initial occupier might, in effect, act as middle-man for numerous folk with lesser resources. It was a system which served admirably to promote colonisation but created its own problems. Although the rents and obligations remained attached to the land through whatever hands it might pass, it was inevitable that, as the number of transactions multiplied and the generations succeeded to each other (in an age of limited life expectancy), there should be increasing uncertainties and disputes over the precise incidence of liabilities, most critically for the upkeep of the dykes and drainage ditches. With the onset of the period of furious storms in the thirteenth century, it was found that the

⁷³ Eddison, *op. cit.* in note 23.

⁷⁴ Tatton-Brown, *op. cit.* in note 26.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷⁶ Gardiner, *op. cit.* in note 27.

⁷⁷ Tatton-Brown, *op. cit.* in note 26.

⁷⁸ Gardiner, *op. cit.* in note 27.

time-honoured *consuetudo marisci* was no longer capable of resolving these matters with the speed demanded in times of acute peril. It was for that reason that the upkeep of the defences was removed from the purely local forum and made subject to royal ordinance, under which authority, and answerable now to the royal courts, jurats and bailiffs were appointed to establish responsibilities, inspect the works, settle disputes and enforce proper and regular maintenance.⁷⁹

By this time the Marsh had become a well populated countryside, as shown by the numerous recorded churches, some disused now and others ruinous or totally destroyed. The bias was still strongly pastoral with a predominance of fodder crops, hay, oats and beans, suited to the soil and conditions, but almost as much wheat was being grown as oats and, with improved drainage, even some barley.⁸⁰ Here, as in the Wealden forest, the two hundred years following the Conquest had witnessed a great surge of colonisation, relieving the intense population pressures building up to the north, while leaving the wooded Downs only sparsely settled as an increasingly valuable, because readily accessible, source of fuel, for which the demands had become every bit as clamant as for cultivable land.

VII

The developments we have described are clearly presaged in the Kent *Domesday*. The sharp decline in manorial values in the immediate aftermath of Hastings, though no more than a brief episode in political history, has nevertheless attracted more attention than the magnitude and incidence of the later gains.⁸¹ Yet, it is those that better repay study, because they were no passing phenomena but show a quickening of processes that were to have a profound and durable effect on the whole economic and demographic balance of the county.

If, in following those processes, we have given more attention to Romney than to the northern marshes, which were cumulatively as large and in their different way no less valuable, it is because most recent research has been attracted in that direction by the fascinating interplay of geological, environmental and historical factors. But the

⁷⁹ Neilson, *op. cit.* in note 53, 40–7.

⁸⁰ A. Smith, 'Regional Differences in Crop Production in medieval Kent', in (Eds.) M. Roake and J. Whyman, *Essays in Kentish History*, London, 1973, 37–50.

⁸¹ E.g. H.C. Darby, 'The South-Eastern Counties' in Darby and Campbell, *op. cit.* in note 11, 569–75.

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development of the Kentish marshes needs to be interpreted as a unity because the interests of the great ecclesiastical lords, the archbishop, the Prior of Christ Church and the Abbot of St. Augustine's, were spread throughout all and the policies pursued were not makeshift but balanced and complementary. Sooner or later, when time and resources allow, the studies will have to be widened to include a more detailed scrutiny of the northern marshes than they have yet received, but well merit.

APPENDIX

THE HUNDREDS

Whenever the hundred system was first introduced into Kent, which is debatable, it is clear that at the time of *Domesday Book* it was still not fully formed, even in the older settled areas of the north. A good illustration of this is that whereas the *Domesday Monachorum*, c. 1100 or a little later, shows the Darent valley divided between two hundreds, those of Axton around Dartford to the north and Codsheath around Otford to the south, some twenty-five years earlier *Domesday Book* itself had included the whole area in the single hundred of Axton. At the close of the eleventh century new hundreds were still being created, and it seems that they continued to be so for a good deal longer than that in areas of late colonisation. In this the Weald provides what is probably the best guide to developments in that other frontier area, Romney Marsh.

Of the hundreds recorded in the Kentish Weald in the thirteenth century no fewer than seven, mostly in the central core of the forest, make no appearance in *Domesday Book*: those of Tenterden, Barclay (around Biddenden), Cranbrook, East Barnfield (around Hawkhurst), West Barnfield (south of Goudhurst), Marden and Brenchley.⁸² It is true that the survey mentions very few places in the Weald at all, most of the inhabited dens apparently being treated indistinguishably in the accounts of the northern manors that owned them, and that the handful that are mentioned are all assigned to hundreds, as Newenden to Selbrittenden and Tudeley to Wachlingstone. It is, therefore, arguable that the other hundreds did, in fact, exist and had escaped record only because they happened to contain no settlements sufficiently independent to have been separately surveyed. But it seems that in the case of at least one of them that explanation will not do. The Hundred Rolls of 1274 clearly imply that Marden had originated merely as a large outlying fragment of Milton Hundred (on the Swale), to which it was still subordinate.⁸³ Moreover, for as long as the system survived, as it did in shadowy form right down into the nineteenth century, fragments of other upland hundreds – Ruxley (Cray valley), Hoo, Maidstone, Teynham, Faversham and Chart – remained embedded in the Weald.⁸⁴ Originally, it seems, the great majority of dens had been treated simply as outliers of the northern hundreds in which their parent manors lay; and it was only as the settlements developed and the links with the uplands were severed or became attenuated that local hundreds came progressively to be formed.

⁸² K.P. Witney, *The Jutish Forest*, London, 1976, 124–5, 142 (map).

⁸³ Conveniently set out in R. Furley, *History of the Weald of Kent*, Ashford, 1871 and 1874, ii, 121–62, esp. 132.

⁸⁴ Witney, *op. cit.* in note 82, 142 (map).

The impression that *Domesday Book* gives of the Marsh hundreds is a singularly indeterminate one.

(a) Of the places that were later included in the Hundred of Worth only Eastbridge and Blackmanstone are specifically assigned to it in the survey; the entries on these being followed by references to three small unnamed places occupied by *socmen* and presumably in the same area but described merely as being in *Marasc de Romenal*. Burmarsh is located in the same way, and (extraordinarily) is entered in the associated *Excerpta* of St. Augustine's Abbey as being in Blackbourne Hundred, which centred on Woodchurch beyond the Marsh to the west.⁸⁵ Orgarswick does not feature at all, being apparently surveyed as part of Lyminge manor and so under Loningborough Hundred.

(b) There are only two references to Aloesbridge Hundred, both in connection with small places that are unnamed. Brenzett is mentioned as an outlying possession of St. Martin's Priory, Dover, but is not assigned to any hundred; and nor are the priory's two other outliers on the Marsh, viz. Ripe (later in Langport Hundred) and Norwood (later apparently in Newchurch).⁸⁶ The account of the priory's lands reads as though these three places were attached to certain of its upland holdings in the hundreds of Street, Bircholt and Blackbourne, and came under those jurisdictions.

(c) The later hundred of St. Martin's, Pountney, makes no appearance; but Midley is recorded among numerous places in Eastry hundred in north-east Kent. This entry may simply be badly misplaced, but no other hundred is suggested for it. It looks as though St. Martin's, Pountney, was only formed when progress began to be made with the reclamation of Walland Marsh.

It seems, therefore, that at the time of *Domesday Book* the Marsh hundreds in general were in an inchoate state. Except for Langport, surrounding the port of Romney itself, which appears as a compact and well established entity, they look still to have been in the process of being pieced together. There remains Newchurch which we have suggested, on the evidence of the *Domesday* valuations, was then a novel creation, a conclusion which is supported by the undeveloped state of its neighbours. Just as, in later years, St. Martin's, Pountney, was created with the inking of Walland Marsh, so it appears had Newchurch been with the silting of the Hythe inlet and draining of its lagoon, at or about the time of the Conquest.

⁸⁵ Wallenberg, *op. cit.* in note 3, 360.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 470.

The most noticeable lingering influence that the Norman conquest still has in English is the class distinction that goes with it. If you just speak in good, short English words, they'll take you for a peasant and want you to serve at board or clean out the beasts' stalls. Whereas, provided you habitually employ a more elevated vocabulary of predominantly French origin, you will naturally be assumed to be part of the ruling elite. As such, it gradually became less reflective of the spoken language, especially in the Danelaw. Norman French. A legacy of the Roman Empire was the fact that the area west of the Rhine spoke Latin. In the early years of the occupation the Danish settlements were little more than armed camps. But gradually the conditions stabilised and the Danes began to bring their families. The Norman Conquest. Soon after Canute's death (1042) and the collapse of his empire the old Anglo-Saxon line was restored but their reign was short-lived. The new English king, Edward the Confessor (1042-1066), who had been reared in France, brought over many Norman advisors and favourites; he distributed among them English lands and wealth to the considerable resentment of the Anglo-Saxon nobility and appointed them to important positions in the government and church hierarchy. The Southern group included the Kentish and the South-Western dialects.