

COLONIZATION AND THE EVOLUTION OF RURAL SETTLEMENT  
IN WORCESTERSHIRE, PRIOR TO 1349

J. D. HAMSHERE

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Department of Geography,  
Faculty of Arts,  
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## SYNOPSIS

This work seeks to explore the progress of rural settlement and colonization in the county of Worcestershire in the period prior to the Black Death of 1349. The study is organised into three sections, each of which is based upon particular forms of evidence. Thus, the first part utilises archaeological, place name and charter evidence to establish settlement patterns in the pre-conquest period. The second part makes a detailed study of the Domesday evidence for the county, utilising simple statistical techniques to establish relationships within the data and to identify local Domesday economies. The final part uses a wide range of manorial, Exchequer and Taxation documents to chart the post-conquest progress of colonization, settlement initiation and woodland clearance. The impact of these developments upon selected local Domesday economies, identified in part two, is achieved by the study of manorial documentation relating to the manors of the Bishop and Priory of Worcester and those of Guy de Beauchamp.

Each section of the work contains three chapters in which an assessment is made of the evidence available for a study of settlement and colonization before proceeding to its analysis. Continuity between the sections is maintained by the production of a series of 'clearance' maps which chart the progress of settlement at the expense of woodland at the end of each of the main historical periods. The development of settlement patterns is framed within the evolution of territorial units of organisation, which allows an assessment to be made of the impact of seigniorial control as well as the influences stemming from the physical geography of the county.

(11 Chapters, 529 Pages, 78 Figures, 67 Tables, Appendix,  
Select Bibliography)

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## CHAPTER ONE : THE INTRODUCTION

This work is a study of colonization and the evolution of rural settlement in the old West Midland county of Worcestershire<sup>1</sup> prior to the onset of the Black Death in 1349. As such it forms part of a long tradition of 'area' studies within the field of historical geography. Such studies once formed a basic feature of British historical geography and were particularly prominent in the historical geographical research developed by the late Professor Harry Thorpe at Birmingham University. Under his direction several generations of research workers were engaged in studies of the historical geography of the West Midland counties<sup>2</sup> and, to some extent, this work forms part of that research 'school'.

'Area' studies had their origins in the French school of geography as expressed by Vidal de la Blache<sup>3</sup>, where concern was with the identification and explanation of distinctiveness of particular landscapes, a theme later developed as 'areal differentiation' by R. Hartshorne.<sup>4</sup> However, with the rejection of these concepts by the general field of geography, area studies became less fashionable within historical geography as attention became focussed upon more limited studies of process often involving new modes of statistical analysis. Area studies were assumed, often incorrectly, to be merely descriptive and lacking in any form of rigorous analysis. Certainly it is true that many such studies in the past were over-reliant upon environmental determinism to explain the landscape changes they identified. Also many problems existed with the interpretation of the wide range of evidence necessitated by the long time periods covered by such studies. Not least amongst these problems was the back projection of relatively modern sources to periods many hundreds of years prior to their construction. Maitland's famous statement viewing the First Edition of the One Inch Ordnance Survey maps as a palimpsest<sup>5</sup> was often taken far too literally, giving rise to serious doubts concerning the scholastic merit of such an approach. In this work, generally only those sources contemporary with the period being examined have been employed, although, inevitably, these sources often contain residual features from much earlier times.



Recently, there have been signs that area studies are re-emerging in historical geography<sup>6</sup> particularly since a renewed interest in 'landscape' has arisen amongst archaeologists with several Council for British Archaeology publications being devoted to landscape archaeology.<sup>7</sup> Similarly the wide interest in local history has culminated in the recent series, edited by W. G. Hoskins and R. Millward, on the Making of the English Landscape<sup>8</sup>, which has been organised on a county basis. The area study can thus be utilised as a vehicle in which the processes by which man has transformed the landscape can be analysed within a local context. The modes of analysis and the types of explanation need not be limited solely to those stemming from environmental determinism, indeed statistical techniques and even the process of model building have been applied to archaeological evidence in recent years.<sup>9</sup> In some cases it is apparent that the weight of statistical technique has been too great for the data to bear, but there is no reason why simple statistical techniques should not be applied to suitable data forms, such as those derived from Domesday Book. Admittedly, problems still exist in the combining together of wide ranges of source materials extending from the archaeological through to medieval lay subsidies as many of these are not strictly comparable in areal coverage or style. For this reason this work has been organised into sections which centre on similar forms of evidence.

In a study which selects as a main theme the evolution of settlement and the social and economic framework within which it is set, the question of continuity must naturally loom large. The continuity of settlement from one historical period to another has long been a theme in studies of the English landscape history, but first found cogent expression in Sir Cyril Fox's The Personality of Britain.<sup>10</sup> In that work the concepts of cultural continuity and superimposition were advanced based upon a number of distribution maps of prehistoric settlement patterns. Although the 'invasion' hypothesis upon which that work was based is no longer found acceptable, the concept that many settlement sites first occupied in prehistory had remained in continuous occupancy took firm root.

H. P. R. Finberg extended the continuity concept in his study of Roman and Saxon Withington<sup>11</sup>, although it quickly became clear that continuity was a far more complex concept than was once thought. As archaeological knowledge increased it became clear that in many of the individual settlement forms, the houses and buildings that comprised them were of a transient and flimsy nature and that births and deaths of settlements were occurring at all periods throughout English history. For example it became an article of faith, rather than proven fact, that the villages which to this day bear place names derived from Old English had Anglo-Saxon remains beneath them. Indeed much of the excavation that has taken place of Romano-British and to a lesser extent Anglo-Saxon rural settlements has shown them to have been abandoned at some stage and located on sites proximate to, but not necessarily coincident with, modern villages. It is, of course, possible that by the very nature of archaeological discovery the sites identified were in areas not currently built upon and therefore excavation has been concentrated upon the deserted villages of an earlier age. However, evidence has been accumulating that medieval villages often did move site and radically change their form.<sup>12</sup> In County Durham, Roberts<sup>13</sup> has suggested a process he terms 'settlement balling', whereby a dispersed settlement pattern, consisting of farmsteads and hamlets, was abandoned and replaced by nucleated settlements possibly at some time during the eleventh century. Similarly Wade-Martins has demonstrated that many villages in Norfolk had moved their sites as many as three times between the Saxon and medieval periods.<sup>14</sup> The implications of this settlement mobility for the concept of continuity are considerable, for it is no longer possible to view it simply in terms of continuous occupation of a particular settlement site. Continuity has therefore to include some feature by which successive communities related to a particular area, rather than a single site. An obvious candidate in this respect is continuity in terms of land use areas. Assuming that most arable land in this country was won, at some time, from natural woodland it is extremely unlikely that such sites so painstakingly cleared would have been readily abandoned. Admittedly the structure of the fields and their organisation would have changed

to meet the differing social and economic contingencies of society over time, but their location would have remained constant. For example, the villa system of Roman Britain is known to have disappeared in the fifth century, but it is extremely unlikely that the fields they cultivated and had command over did not remain in constant production by British and Anglo-Saxon peoples. The continued necessity to provide food thus becomes one of the driving forces underpinning continuity of settlement.

The relationship between communities and the areas they cultivated is, however, far more complex than merely that provided by the necessity of providing food. It is bound up with the relationship between lord and peasant, the nature and extent of servility and manner in which farm, village and administrative territory are linked together. In order to incorporate these aspects into a concept of continuity, Glanville Jones<sup>15</sup> introduced the idea of territorial continuity. Utilising medieval Welsh laws, Glanville Jones showed that medieval Welsh settlement was organised into maenors comprising groups of hamlets subject to a lord. He drew a parallel between this arrangement and the early medieval English discrete estate, which he argues expresses a territorial continuity extending back to at least Iron Age times. D. Bonney<sup>16</sup>, amongst others, has used this concept in an attempt to ascribe prehistoric origins to many of the parish and deanery boundaries that characterised the English landscape from Saxon times onward. However, the continuity of boundaries does not necessarily imply continuity of the spatial or social relationships contained within them, although it is apparent that the concept of continuity has become far more complex than merely one involving occupation of single settlement sites. In a county such as Worcestershire, with a fine set of Anglo-Saxon charters and boundary surveys, the nature and origin of the discrete estate is bound to form an important feature within the study of its settlement.

It has not been the intention of this Introduction to provide a treatise on the nature and development of either historical geography or settlement studies. Rather, an attempt has been made

to provide a background against which this work can be set and to outline the logic behind its organisation. As previously mentioned, a major problem in the organising of a work with as vast a timespan as this, is in co-ordinating the diverse source materials upon which it depends. In order to avoid the use of material distant in date from the features being analysed, this study has been organised chronologically rather than thematically. Also it has been arranged into three major sections, each containing three chapters and each centring around similar types of source material. Thus, Part I largely contains material derived from archaeological investigation, Part II, Domesday Book and Part III post-conquest Lay Subsidies and Manorial documentation. Each section is organised, to some degree, as a self-contained unit in that each is provided with a short introduction and summary and discusses the nature and limitations of the source materials before proceeding to their analysis. By this means, the mode of analysis can be adapted to suit particular sources, hence the treatment of archaeological findings is very different from the correlation and regression techniques that are applied to data derived from Domesday Book.

Despite the sectionalisation of the work, an overall unity is maintained partly by using the conclusions of one part as a basis for the analysis in subsequent parts and partly by maintaining a continuity of major themes, such as settlement and colonisation. To this end a series of 'clearance' maps have been prepared, after the manner pioneered by Professor H. Thorpe<sup>17</sup>, which allow a rough estimate to be made of the progress of settlement and colonization during each of the major time periods involved. The chronological organisation of the work means that the first part is used to provide a basic foundation of early settlement patterns against which the better documented medieval patterns can be assessed. Thus Part I establishes the background of the physical resources of the county and analyses the evidence for pre-historic, Romano-British and Saxon settlement. Utilising the place name and charter evidence for the Saxon period it is possible to establish the basic estate framework which forms the foundation for the analysis of Domesday Book in Part II. Previous studies of the Domesday geography of the county

have relied upon an environmentally deterministic framework for both the analysis and explanation of Domesday data. In this study the framework is provided by the Saxon estate structure and by analysing relationships and associations within the data it is possible to produce a typology of Domesday economies. These in turn form the basis upon which the analysis in the final section is based. In this part, the post-conquest expansion of population and settlement is studied against the background provided by the ownership and economic organisation of Domesday manors.

Notes and References

1. Under the boundary changes consequent upon the Local Government Reorganisation Act of 1974, Worcestershire became part of the newly formed administrative area of Hereford and Worcester.
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PART ONE

PRE-CONQUEST SETTLEMENT STUDY

Introduction

Chapter 2      The Physical Resource Base

Chapter 3      The first settlements :  
Prehistoric and Romano-British

Chapter 4      Anglo-Saxon settlement

Summary



## INTRODUCTION

The first part of this work lays the foundations by establishing the earliest settlement patterns. As previously stated, it is based largely upon archaeological evidence, although place names and Anglo-Saxon charters are introduced in Chapter Four. Such has been the pace of archaeological discovery in the last few years, that any interpretation of their findings is almost out of date as soon as the ink is dry. Whilst every effort has been made to include all recently reported excavation, inevitably the early settlement patterns of Worcestershire will undergo drastic revision in the next few years as increasing numbers of the sites revealed by air photography are fully excavated. Similarly, excavations currently in progress at Worcester and Droitwich will add considerably to knowledge of early town development in the county.

The time period covered by Part One is very extensive, yet the evidence is still very limited and difficult to interpret. Befitting its role as a foundation, this part of the study includes an account of the physical resource base of the county where brief summaries of geology, soils and vegetation are given. This is followed by an account of the earliest settlement patterns, up to and including the Romano-British period. It is this particular chapter which is most dependant upon reported archaeological excavation and, no doubt, will be subject to the greatest degree of revision in future years. The final chapter in this part deals with the Anglo-Saxon period, which has, more than any other in British history, undergone drastic reinterpretation in the last decade. This is reflected in this study in that the place name evidence is subjected to a complete reappraisal and combined with the evidence drawn from Anglo-Saxon charters allows a new interpretation of the early estate structure of the county. It is this estate structure that forms a vital basis for the study of Domesday Book, which is the subject of Part Two.

## CHAPTER TWO : THE PHYSICAL RESOURCE BASE

The physical resource base forms the most constant of all factors contributing to the development of settlement patterns, and as such warrants some discussion in this study. There are in existence comprehensive studies of the geology, physiography and soils of Worcestershire to which the reader is referred for a fuller treatment than can be afforded in this work.<sup>1</sup> In this brief summary it is intended to concentrate upon those aspects of the resource base that, both in past studies in the historical geography of this area and by hindsight in this study, have proved to be of most significance in the development of settlement patterns. Those aspects to be considered are relief and drainage, geology and soil types, vegetation, and consequent upon these, the physiographic regions of the country.

Although it was stated at the outset that the resource base is the most constant of factors, it is still subject to change. Man can affect changes in his physical environment that have a permanent effect on the resource base. Within Worcestershire this was probably limited to the creation of heathland during prehistoric times, necessitating subsequent clearance during and after the middle ages and the alteration to soils wrought by centuries of continuous cultivation in such areas as the Vale of Evesham. More important for the purposes of this work is not the actual physical changes in the resource base, such as leaching, soil erosion and general changes in soil characteristics, but rather man's changing perception of, and ability to adapt and utilise this resource base. The further back in time one goes then the more limited was man's ability to utilise physical resources, and thus the more dependent was the resulting settlement pattern upon factors arising directly from the physical environment. For example, it is a reasonable assumption that the first permanent settlements in Worcestershire occurred during the neolithic period, when man was limited to the use of fire and stone axes as clearance mechanisms. Whilst, at the other end of the time scale of this study, in the early fourteenth century, man possessed the technological means of overcoming most of the problems of

agricultural development of the resource base. Thus the constraints and inducements pertaining to further colonization in this latter period arose mainly out of the existing social and economic organisation. This steady diminution of the influence of the physical resource base with the rise of technology available to man, can be modified, under conditions of invasion and conquest, for the areas most attractive to the invaders will often be those previously cleared and cultivated by the conquered peoples. Thus, even if the invaders possess a higher level of technology than the existing population, their initial settlements may well be in areas colonized under a pre-existing and lower level of technology. It is not until a secondary phase of settlement expansion and colonization takes place, motivated possibly by population growth or a partial exhaustion of the early occupied soils, that the full range of the invaders' technological advantages becomes reflected in their choice of settlement sites. An example that can be cited from Worcestershire is the level of continuity of settlement within the Vale of Evesham under differing invasions of peoples throughout the Prehistoric, Roman and early Anglo-Saxon periods.

#### The Study Area

The area selected for study approximates to the modern administrative county of Worcestershire, prior to the local Government Act of 1974, although the historical nature of the study has necessitated certain adjustments to those boundaries. These adjustments have arisen directly out of the lack of coincidence through time between the area covered by documents and the later administrative county unit. The counties of the West Midlands, when originally defined in the tenth century, bore little relationship either to the Anglo-Saxon tribal pattern that preceded them, or to the pattern of estate ownership that was to follow. Moreover, the original boundaries did not remain static, for changes in hundred structure and in estate ownership gave rise to a continuous series of minor alterations, culminating in the major boundary revisions of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In an attempt to rationalise this changing administrative area, together with the changing areal coverage of the documents, a compromise boundary has been selected. This has meant the exclusion of much of the western

FIGURE 2.1

# INDEX TO THE PARISHES

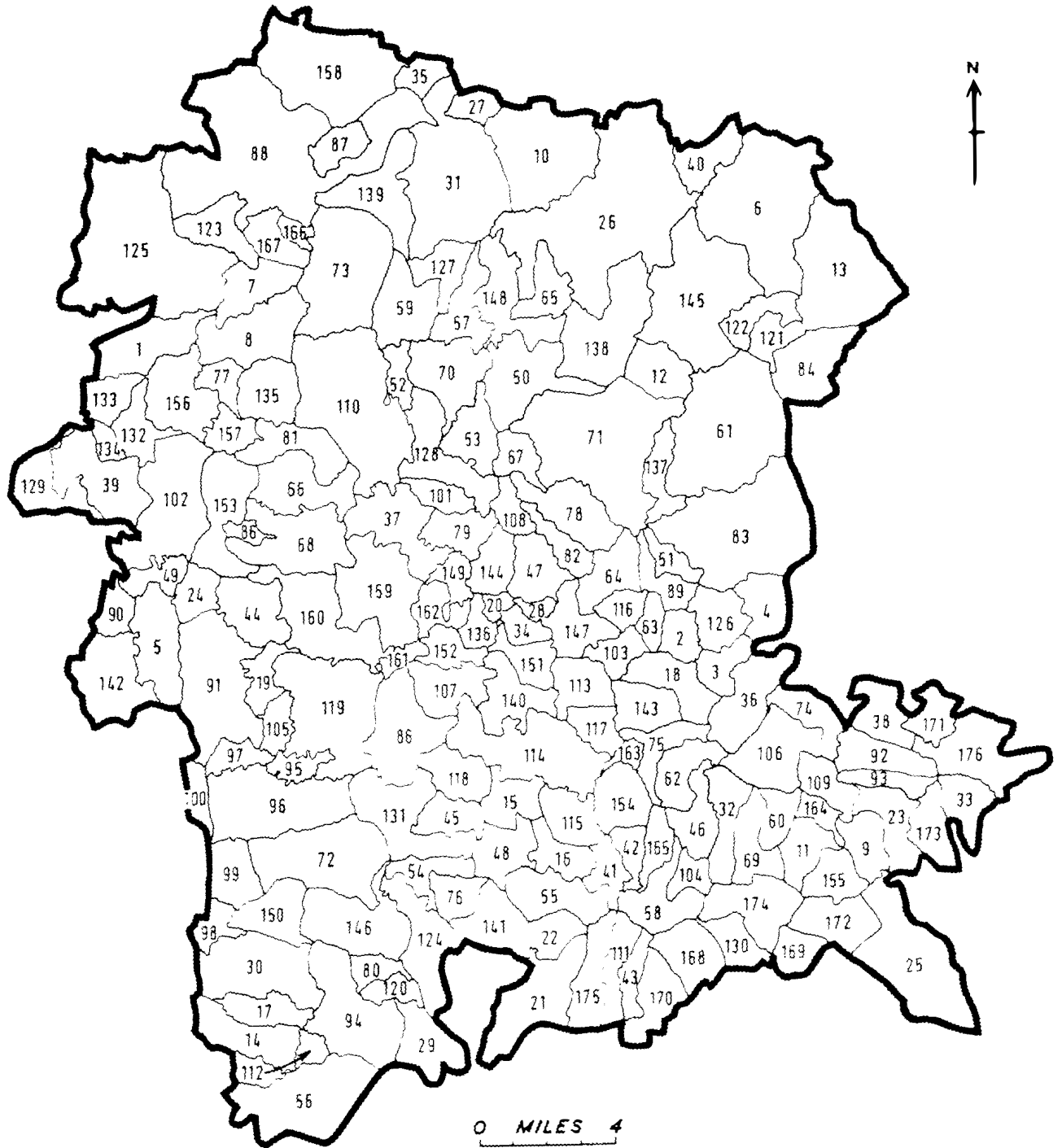


FIGURE 2.1

Index to the Parishes

- |     |                           |     |                       |
|-----|---------------------------|-----|-----------------------|
| 1.  | Abberley                  | 47. | Crowle                |
| 2.  | Abberton                  | 48. | Defford               |
| 3.  | Abbots Lench              | 49. | Doddenham             |
| 4.  | Abbots Morton             | 50. | Dodderhill            |
| 5.  | Alfrick                   | 51. | Dormston              |
| 6.  | Alvechurch                | 52. | Doverdale             |
| 7.  | Arley Kings               | 53. | Droitwich             |
| 8.  | Astley                    | 54. | Earls Croome          |
| 9.  | Badsey                    | 55. | Eckington             |
| 10. | Belbroughton              | 56. | Eldersfield           |
| 11. | Bengeworth                | 57. | Elmbridge             |
| 12. | Bentley Paucefoot         | 58. | Elmley Castle         |
| 13. | Beoley                    | 59. | Elmley Lovett         |
| 14. | Berrow                    | 60. | Evesham               |
| 15. | Besford                   | 61. | Feckenham             |
| 16. | Birlingham                | 62. | Fladbury              |
| 17. | Birtsmorton               | 63. | Flyford Flavell       |
| 18. | Bishampton                | 64. | Grafton Flyford       |
| 19. | Bransford                 | 65. | Grafton Manor         |
| 20. | Bredicot                  | 66. | Grimley               |
| 21. | Bredon                    | 67. | Hadsor                |
| 22. | Bredons Norton            | 68. | Hallow                |
| 23. | Bretforton                | 69. | Hampton               |
| 24. | Broadwas                  | 70. | Hampton Lovett        |
| 25. | Broadway                  | 71. | Hanbury               |
| 26. | Bromsgrove                | 72. | Hanley Castle         |
| 27. | Broom                     | 73. | Hartlebury            |
| 28. | Broughton Hackett         | 74. | Harvington            |
| 29. | Bushley                   | 75. | Hill & Moor           |
| 30. | Castlemorton              | 76. | Hill Croome           |
| 31. | Chaddesey Corbett         | 77. | Hillhampton           |
| 32. | Charlton                  | 78. | Himbleton             |
| 33. | Church Honeybourne        | 79. | Hindlip               |
| 34. | Churchill (Worcs.)        | 80. | Holdfast              |
| 35. | Churchill (Kidderminster) | 81. | Holt                  |
| 36. | Church Lench              | 82. | Huddington            |
| 37. | Claines                   | 83. | Inkberrow             |
| 38. | Cleeve Prior              | 84. | Ipsley                |
| 39. | Clifton-on-Teme           | 85. | Kempsey               |
| 40. | Cofton Hackett            | 86. | Kenswick              |
| 41. | Comberton Gt.             | 87. | Kidderminster         |
| 42. | Comberton Lt.             | 88. | Kidderminster Foreign |
| 43. | Conderton                 | 89. | Kington               |
| 44. | Cotheridge                | 90. | Knightwick            |
| 45. | Croome d'Abitot           | 91. | Leigh                 |
| 46. | Croptorne                 | 92. | Littleton (N. & Mid.) |

FIGURE 2.1 (CONTINUED)

93.	Littleton (South)	135.	Shrawley
94.	Longdon	136.	Spetchley
95.	Madresfield	137.	Stock & Bradley
96.	Malvern Gt.	138.	Stoke Prior
97.	Malvern Link	139.	Stone
98.	Malvern Little	140.	Stoulton
99.	Malvern Wells	141.	Strensham
100.	Malvern West	142.	Suckley
101.	Martin Hussintree	143.	Throckmorton
102.	Martley	144.	Tibberton
103.	Naunton Beauchamp	145.	Tutnall & Cobley
104.	Netherton	146.	Upton on Severn
105.	Newland	147.	Upton Snodsbury
106.	Norton & Lenchwick	148.	Upton Warren
107.	Norton juxta Kempsey	149.	Warndon
108.	Oddingley	150.	Welland
109.	Offenham	151.	White Ladies Aston
110.	Omersley	152.	Whittington
111.	Overbury	153.	Wichenford
112.	Pendock	154.	Wick
113.	Peopleton	155.	Wickhamford
114.	Pershore (Holy X)	156.	Witley Gt.
115.	Pershore (St. Andrews)	157.	Witley Little
116.	Piddle North	158.	Wolverley
117.	Pinvin	159.	Worcester
118.	Pirton	160.	Worcester (St. Johns Bedwardine)
119.	Powick	161.	Worcester (St. Peter)
120.	Queenhill	162.	Worcester (St. Martin)
121.	Redditch	163.	Wyre Piddle
122.	Redditch (N)	164.	Aldington
123.	Ribbesford	165.	Bricklehampton
124.	Ripple	166.	Mitton (upper)
125.	Rock	167.	Mitton (lower)
126.	Rous Lench	168.	Ashton under Hill
127.	Rushock	169.	Aston Somerville
128.	Salwarpe	170.	Beckford
129.	Sapey (Lower)	171.	Bickmarsh
130.	Sedgebarrow	172.	Childs Wickham
131.	Severn Stoke	173.	Cow Honeybourne
132.	Shelsley Beauchamp	174.	Hinton on the Green
133.	Shelsley Kings	175.	Kemerton
134.	Shelsley Walsh	176.	Pebworth

extension of the present county, along the Teme Valley, and of the northern Black Country fringe. Also, certain detached areas to the south of the county, which have vacillated in allegiance between Gloucestershire and Worcestershire, have been excluded, although these at one time did form part of the Bishop of Worcester's estates. The study area and an identification of those parishes that it contains are shown in Fig. 2.1.

### Relief and Drainage

The main features of relief and drainage are shown in Fig. 2.2, in which the 400 foot contour has been selected for delineating the upland areas on the basis of the significance of this height noted by Thorpe in his study of the pre-Norman settlement within the West Midlands.<sup>2</sup> The general structure of Worcestershire is synclinal, with the areas of highland situated peripherally on the western, north western, north eastern and northern edges of the county. On the west the hills extend for some twenty miles, trending almost due north-south, but rarely exceeding two miles in breadth. They are at their most striking in the south where the narrow ridge of the Malverns rises abruptly to heights of over 1,300 feet, whereas further north their increase in breadth is matched by a reduction in height and a greater degree of dissection by the Teme and its tributaries. The north-western highland area, shown in Fig. 2.2, between the Teme in the south and Bewdley in the north, comprises a much dissected plateau with an average height of 450-500 feet, and is separated from higher land of the north east, by the broad valleys of the Severn and Stour. The latter upland area comprises the southern fringe of the Birmingham plateau, which projects southward, along the eastern border of the county in the tongue-like form of the Ridgeway. As shown in Fig. 2.2, the remaining areas over 400 feet are along the southern boundary of the county, where the Cotswold scarp impinges at Broadway and an outlier of the same hills forms the striking mass of Bredon Hill overlooking the Avon Valley. Despite the peripheral nature of these upland areas it is apparent that they do not in any way form a barrier to access from areas outside the county, in fact they have often aided

FIGURE 2.2

# WORCESTERSHIRE RELIEF AND DRAINAGE



LAND ABOVE 400 FEET



external communications in the past. The Ridgeway running south from the Birmingham plateau was utilised as a dry routeway above the surrounding damp oak covered claylands by the Roman road, Ryknield Street, giving access eventually to the Fosse Way in the south and Watling Street in the north. Similarly ancient trackways running north alongside the Severn estuary used the higher ground of the Cotswolds above the marshy estuarine valley and thus impinged on Worcestershire at Broadway Hill and close to Bredon.

As is apparent from Fig. 2.2, the rest of the study area is dominated by the Severn and Avon rivers and their drainage patterns. The Severn flows north to south through the western part of the area, but despite the fact that this provides much of the lower part of the river's course, the flood plain is never particularly wide and for the most part the river flows in a shallow trench, terrace-fringed, and locally deepened. Below Worcester the flood plain does widen out, particularly on the western bank, where areas of marshland exist, such as at Longdon marsh. The main tributary streams to the Severn are the Teme, Salwarpe and Stour, the two latter joining the Severn on its eastern bank and the former on the west. Each of these has its own associated terrace belt and dissect, respectively, the northern sandstone fringe of the north-east and the west Worcestershire Hills.

The Avon flows roughly from east-north-east to west-south-west across the southern part of the study area, joining the Severn just south of the county at Tewkesbury. Although the lower Avon valley possesses a distinct topographical individuality, it is difficult to delineate any precise boundaries. To the south a purely arbitrary line is formed by the county boundary, whilst to the north the valley is bounded by a minor watershed pierced locally by streams and extending from Hill Croome through Besford Hill and Badgers Hill to the border of the county at Lench (see Fig. 2.1). Throughout the Worcestershire section of its valley the fall of the Avon is slight, being less than 2 feet per mile and a fringing tract of variable width is subject to period flooding.<sup>3</sup> Owing to a lip of slightly higher land on the northern bank it is those

tributaries south of the river, the Merry and Badsey brooks and the River Isbourne, which are the more powerful. The northern tributaries are generally shorter and of less significance, save for the Bow and Fiddle brooks, which have extensive upper courses, whose component streams have dissected the Keuper and Liassic Marl plain of mid-Worcestershire into a series of low rounded hills separated by wide shallow valleys.

The only other major stream in the area is that of the Arrow which flows for a short way from the Birmingham plateau fringe in the north-east to the county boundary near Redditch. This stream has carved an extensive upper basin due to its rejuvenation, which was associated with that of the Severn, and the relative softness of the marls over which it flows. Its course within the study area is, however, short, extending for no more than ten to twelve miles of the river's upper course.

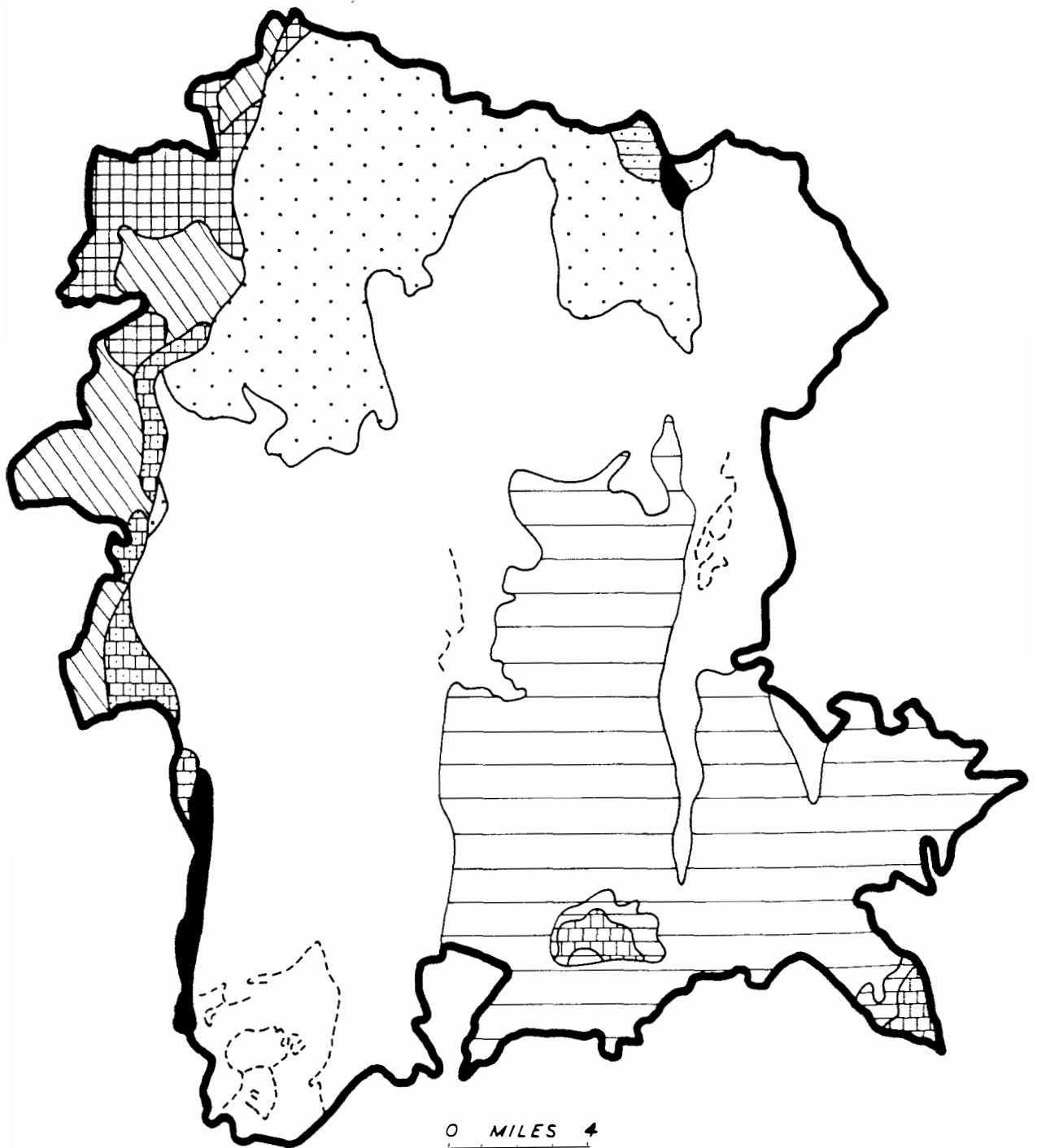
### Geology

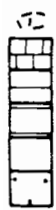
Figure 2.3 represents the solid geology of the study area which, as we have seen, is basically synclinal in structure, with a discontinuous line in the west and north of older Palaeozoic rock against which the younger rocks have been faulted and disposed in a basin. Thus it is possible to distinguish two major structural elements, the peripheral Palaeozoic uplands and the Neozoic lowlands and scarps, upon which have been superimposed the three major river valleys of the Severn, Teme and Avon. In the Palaeozoic uplands, Pre-Cambrian and Cambrian rocks are exposed in the Lickey area and the Malvern ridge, the former being typically acid volcanic and pyroclastic rocks giving rise to a loose breccia. Similar rocks are found in the Malvern area where they are associated as a minor element with larger outcrops of gneissose plutonic intrusives and form the highest relief in the county, allowing a commanding view over the Severn valley and the red Triassic plain of Worcestershire.<sup>4</sup>


Continuing northward from Malvern, along the western boundary of the county, there are outcrops of Silurian, Old Red Sandstone and Carboniferous rocks, giving rise to the broken, hilly

FIGURE 2.3

### SOLID GEOLOGY



 ARDEN SANDSTONE  
INFERIOR OOLITE  
UPPER & MIDDLE LIAS  
LOWER LIAS  
KEUPER MARL  
TRIASSIC SANDSTONE

 PERMIAN  
COAL MEASURES  
OLD RED SANDSTONE  
SILURIAN  
PRECAMBRIAN & CAMBRIAN

country which stretches from Abberley and Suckley through to the Wyre Forest and Kidderminster areas (see Fig. 2.1).

Much of the rest of the study area is dominated by the red rocks of the Trias outcrops, which from the point of view of settlement studies can most conveniently be divided between the Bunter and Lower Keuper sandstones, and the marls of the Upper Keuper. The latter occupy much of the central area of the county, extending from the Malvern Hills in the west to the Ridgeway in the east, and from Chaddersley woods in the north to the Lias outcrop of the Avon valley in the south. The former, that is the sandstones, frame this central area in the north with a narrow semi-circular outcrop extending eastwards from Ombersley, through Wolverley to Bromsgrove.

The south-eastern part of the county is floored by clays of the Lower Lias, which is locally marked by extensive drift deposits and overlain on the southern county boundary by deposits of the Middle and Upper Lias and Inferior Oolite. The latter limestones and clays have a very limited extent within the study area, occurring only as a capping on Bredon Hill and on the Cotswold scarp above Broadway. Basement limestones of the Middle Lias are exposed along scarps from Strensham through Hill Croome and Croome d'Abitot to Stoulton and Hanbury. However, they only extend near the surface on any scale at Haselor Hill and Cleeve Prior, with outliers at Bushley and Berrow. Never more than twenty feet thick, they provide a thin limestone much interbedded with shales. Locally they assume importance in their impact upon the Haselor soil series and in their use as building material in the Vale of Evesham.

In any discussion of the physical resource base, even one as brief as this, some account must be taken of drift deposits. Thorpe in his study of Durham Green villages<sup>5</sup>, and Harley<sup>6</sup> and Roberts<sup>7</sup> in the more local context of the contiguous county of Warwickshire, have pointed to the importance of these deposits in the establishment of early settlement sites. In areas of ill drained clay deposits, found over the extensive Keuper Marl and

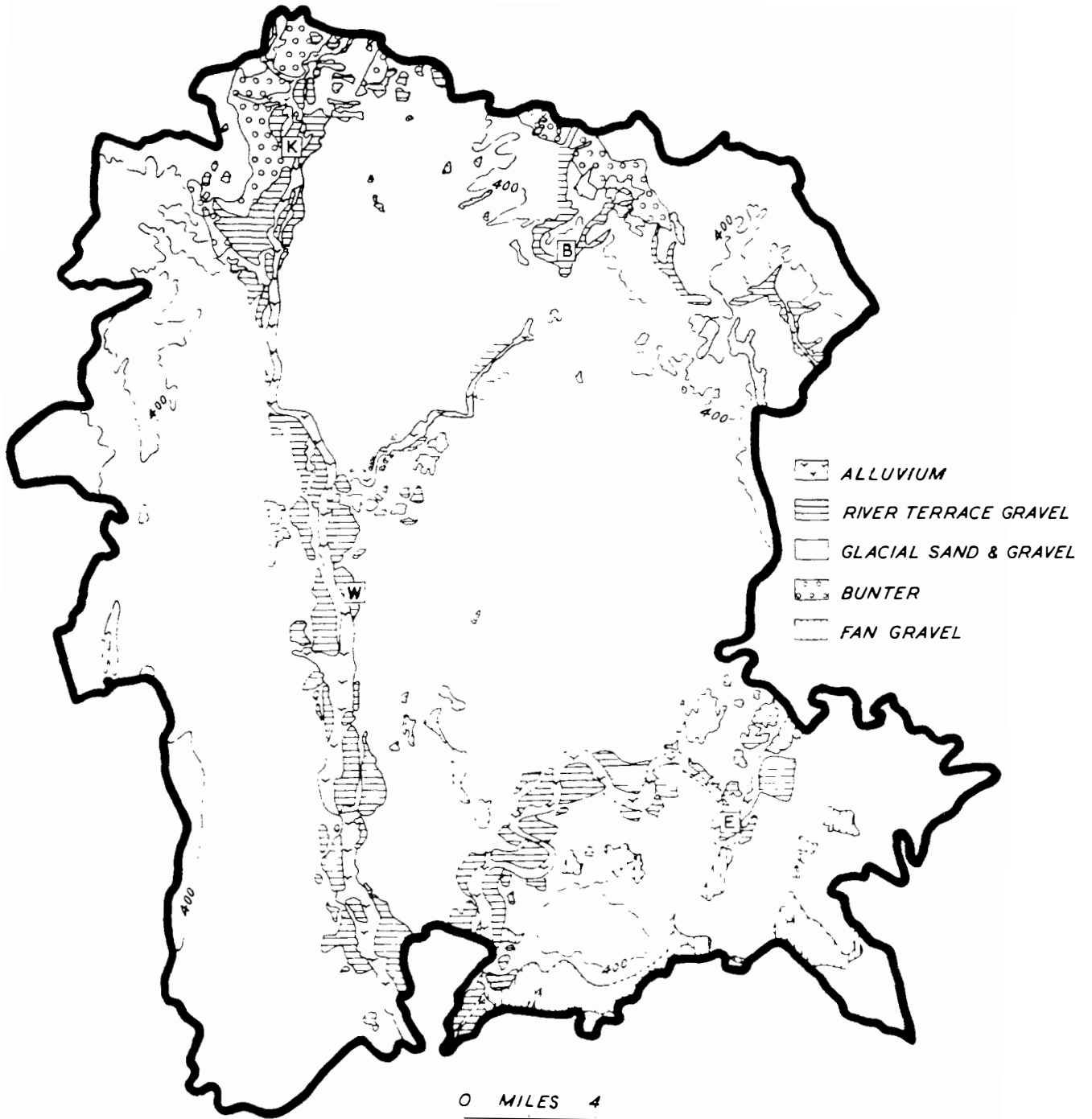
Lower Lias Clay tracts, the existence of sand and gravel drift allows the development of an adequate water supply crucial in the establishment of settlements. Unfortunately, a description of drift deposits is hampered by the scanty coverage that exists of drift geology maps, and it is, therefore, necessary to rely on a variety of sources, notably the Reports of the Sand and Gravel Commission.<sup>8</sup> Figure 2.4 has been compiled from such a report and shows the location of the more extensive tracts of drift and terrace material. However, the report was concerned largely with those deposits which were exploitable for mineral extraction and therefore tends to ignore both the smaller deposits and the variety of drift deposits. Buchanan<sup>9</sup> has divided the superficial deposits into four major types:- Boulder Clay, Glacial Sands and Gravels, Taae Gravels and River Terrace deposits and there seems no reason to depart from this classification.

Boulder Clay deposits are most widespread in the north-east of the county, particularly in the Upper Arrow Basin (see Fig. 2.2), where they form a heavy clay mask to the Keuper Marl and enjoy a local reputation for poverty.<sup>10</sup> Similar deposits, seemingly of Coal Measure derivation, are located along the eastern limb of the sandstone fringe and in a narrow belt along the Ridgeway. Owing to problems of drainage impedances and their generally intractable nature, these deposits have retained large amounts of often stunted oak woodland into the modern period, when modern drainage techniques have allowed the establishment of more improved grassland. However, their appeal to early colonizers, with ploughing techniques limited to light scratch ploughs, would have been negligible, and it is not surprising that these areas remained wooded throughout much of the medieval period.

Glacial outwash sands and gravels are found on the sandstone fringe and, more extensively in the Lenches<sup>11</sup>, as well as capping many of the isolated hill tops in central Worcestershire.<sup>12</sup> It is these deposits which provide local aquifers and the present day sites of many small villages throughout central Worcestershire. However, the discontinuous nature of these deposits and their isolation within large tracts of Keuper Marl means that their utilisation as settlement

FIGURE 2.4

### SAND AND GRAVEL DEPOSITS



sites had to await such time as colonizers were equipped to clear the damp oakwood forests and to plough and farm the virgin clay soils. As the widespread use of heavy mouldboard ploughs and sufficient man power and organization for the clearance of damp oakwood forest does not appear until Romano-British and Anglo-Saxon times, it is only within that period that evidence exists in Worcestershire for the development of extensive settlement on these deposits. However, in a recent study of Warwickshire<sup>13</sup>, Thorpe has concluded that clearance and settlement had extended locally into the Keuper Marl areas of Arden in Warwickshire at least by Romano-British times, a conclusion with obvious significance for Worcestershire, but one which in the present state of archaeological knowledge of this study area remains as yet largely unproven.

Taele gravels occur predominantly in two areas, firstly between the Malvern Hills and the Severn valley and secondly between the Cotswold scarp and the Avon valley. In the first case the debris is not homogenous, varying in character from fine sand to large angular blocks, and floors much of the area that in the past comprised Malvern Chase and Longdon Marsh. Consequent upon the clearance of the Chase, much of the area degenerated into heath, which has remained as the extensive commons of Malvern, Castlemorton and Hanley Castle. In the second location, in the south Avon valley, the Taele deposits are derived from Jurassic material and cover extensive areas from the foot of Bredon Hill in the west to Broadway Hill in the east. The varying nature of the drift deposits which cover so much of the Lower Lias clays in this area have been fully described by Tomlinson<sup>14</sup> and it is the variety of well drained soils that this parent material has yielded which has contributed to the rich agricultural history of the Vale of Evesham and the Avon valley in general.

The extent of drift deposits comprising the river terraces and alluvium are shown in Fig. 2.4, where their greatest development is within the valleys of the Severn, Avon and Teme. Wills identified five sets of terraces within the Severn valley, of which only four are found within the study area.<sup>15</sup> These are, in order of height and antiquity :- the Bushley Green terrace, the Kidderminster terrace,

the Main terrace and the Worcester terrace, of which the last two have the widest extent in the study area, particularly below Worcester. The upper terraces are far more leached and composed of a more coarse material containing much Bunter gravel, giving a poor soil, sticky and difficult when wet and quick to dry out in summer. After early woodland clearance many of these upper terrace areas seem to have degenerated into scrub and rough grazing areas, used for common grazing such as at Kempsey common. The lower terraces, however, provide light, sandy loams which, on the west bank of the Severn, where they are more fragmentary in distribution, form the sites of most of the present day settlements. The alluvial valley bottoms, although subject to occasional inundation, produced fine meadow and hay fields, which were so highly prized in the medieval agrarian economy.

The Avon valley demonstrated a very similar pattern of terrace development to that of the Severn and a similar set of five terraces have been identified by Tomlinson.<sup>16</sup> No equivalent study has been made of the Teme valley terraces, although Wills noted that the Severn Main terrace appeared to be the most prominent, extending some way up the valley from its confluence with the Severn. Smaller terrace development occurs along the Salwarpe and Stour valleys, forming prominent spreads of gravel at the points where they merge with the Severn terraces.

### Soils

The soil types of Worcestershire have been extensively described by Mackney and Burnam<sup>17</sup> and only a brief statement is needed here, assessing the nature of the major soil types developed from the parent materials mentioned above. Leached brown soils and brown acid soils, both demonstrating a degree of gleying, dominate widespread areas of the county and are most pronounced in the Keuper Marl areas. Owing to the existence of drift deposits, some variation is apparent in the distribution of leached brown soils which predominate over much of the Malvern foothills and plains, the Laugharne basin and the central Worcestershire lowlands (see Fig. 2.5). Drainage problems exist with these soils, but they do



possess a potential for general agricultural purposes, particularly for the production of grass and cereal crops. The acid brown soils are mainly developed on loose glacial sand and gravel deposits, occurring over a wide range of elevations throughout the county. The more elevated of these soils are found on the northern sandstone fringe (Fig. 2.5) and upon isolated glacial cappings on the hill tops of central Worcestershire, whilst those at a lower altitude exist mainly in the Severn and Avon valleys. The respective elevation of these soils is important in that both the nature of the deposits upon which they are developed, and the amount of rainfall that they receive, produced different potentials for agricultural development. Those at higher elevations are more suited to grassland and stock raising whilst the lower, with careful management, can be productively used for arable cultivation. In the medieval context these soils were extensively used for cereal cultivation, but owing to poor moisture retention and a low content of organic matter they would have required careful management in terms of fallow periods to allow recovery. It is unlikely that in periods of population pressure on resources and the consequent reduction of fallow periods such as Postan projects for the early fourteenth century<sup>18</sup>, that yields could have been maintained from these soils, particularly in the more elevated northern parts of the county. This would have necessitated either a change in agrarian practice from arable to a more mixed livestock farming, or a retreat of arable production to those areas more able to sustain their yields.

Over the outcrop of the Lower Lias, an association of brown calcareous soils with gleying and surface water gley soils has developed. When developed upon outcrops of Arden sandstone or drift deposits, the association is appropriately varied, but generally these soils possess a very high clay content of up to 70%, and consequently are often poorly drained. However, when well managed, these soils of the Evesham Series, break down into an excellent tilth, although ploughing has to take place when the soil is only slightly moist, for any working whilst wet results in the destruction of the soil's structure and consequent drying out in large blocks. Again during the early middle ages these soils were

extensively used for arable cultivation, but were obviously vulnerable to bad weather during the autumn and spring ploughings. A pluvial period, such as that postulated by Utterström during the fourteenth century<sup>19</sup>, would have rapidly contributed to their conversion to pasture. The high ridges and furrows that sweep over much of these soils today bear witness to their once arable cultivation and their subsequent use as grassland.

In the southern part of the county, within the Avon valley and to a lesser extent within the narrow part of the Severn valley below Worcester (Fig. 2.5), the variety of drift deposits has given rise to a number of soil associations and soil series. Generally the sands and gravels, often of Jurassic origin, in association with the Lower and Middle Lias have given rise to soils which are light, easily worked and quick to warm during springtime. The long and rich agricultural history of the Vale of Evesham, culminating in its present orchard and market garden functions, bears witness to man's recognition and utilisation of these particular soils.

### Vegetation

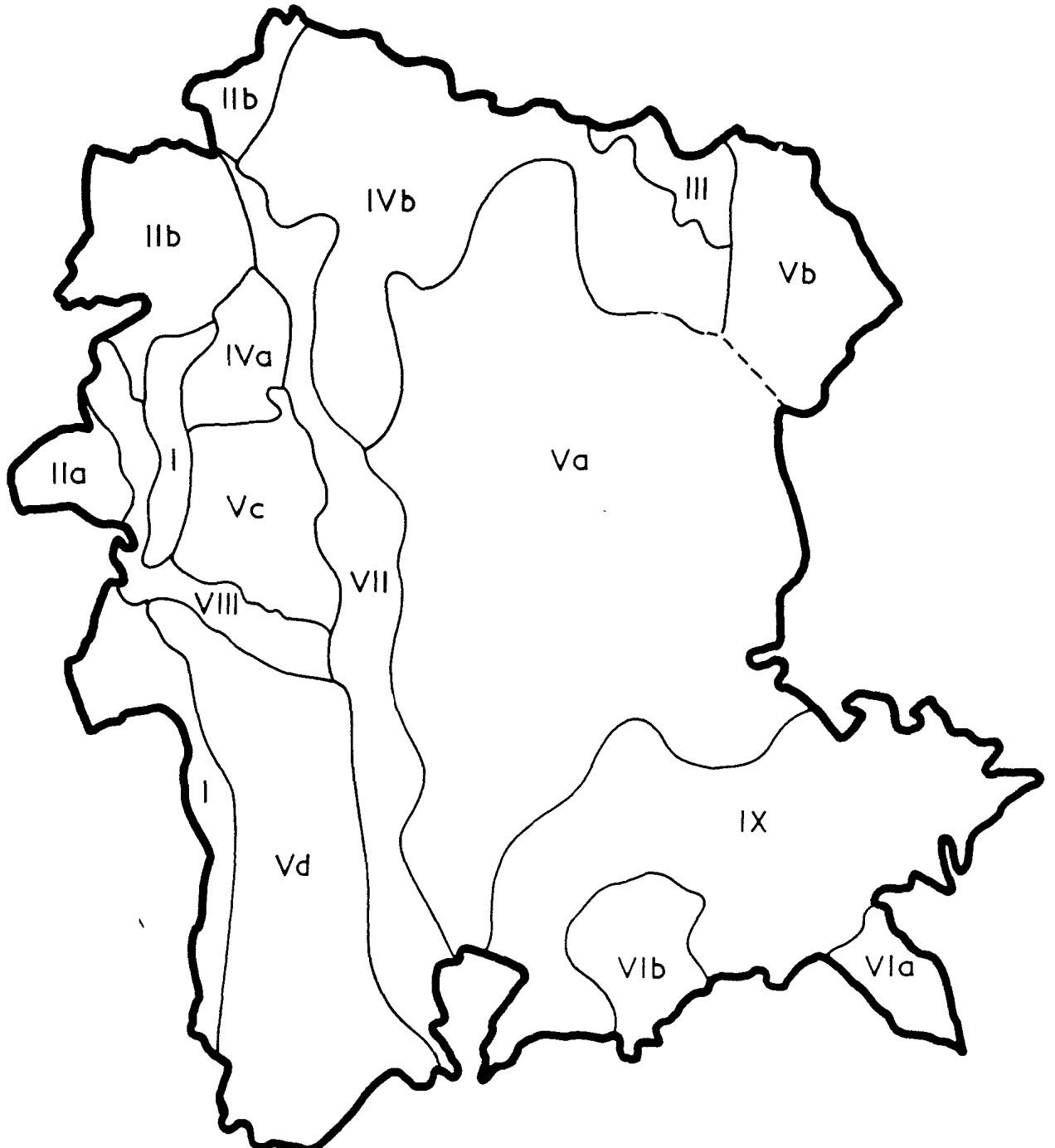
During the period under consideration, Worcestershire underwent a slow conversion from a natural landscape, characterised by deciduous woodland, to one in which the vegetation had been profoundly affected by man through the agencies of axe, fire and plough. By the time of the Boreal-Atlantic transition (6000-5000 B.C.)<sup>20</sup>, the county was covered by extensive forest, which only slowly gave way to the habitations, fields, meadows and pastures of man's creation. As Thorpe<sup>21</sup> has shown for neighbouring Warwickshire, little detail is known of the floral character of these early forests, although, by analogy with palaeobotanical studies elsewhere<sup>22</sup>, it would seem to have consisted mainly of oak, elm and lime with some birch. Certainly, by the Atlantic period, oak (*Quercus Robur*) had come to dominate the heavy clay soils of the south and west of Britain, whilst elm seems to have undergone a severe decline during the Sub-Boreal<sup>23</sup>, being replaced by the more light demanding ash, as Neolithic man began to make small inroads into the forest.

To what extent these processes occurred in Worcestershire, and whether there were significant variations in the species characterising different soil types, remains unknown. However, both Turner and Dimbleby<sup>24</sup> have shown in various parts of the county that Bronze Age man was able to make decisive and permanent changes to forest cover. Whilst on lowlands, surrounded by raised bogs, forest of the Bronze Age was able to regenerate freely as soon as pastoral activities ceased, by contrast, on lighter soils irreversible soil changes accompanied clearance, making deforestation permanent.<sup>25</sup> Thus, in Worcestershire, it is likely that permanent disafforestation had occurred on the Avon and, to a lesser extent, the Severn terraces by the end of the Bronze Age. This is attested by the increasing amount of evidence being provided by air photography for settlement in this period.<sup>26</sup>

The evolution of ruderal or 'wayside' habitats, now so common in the county, has been associated by Turner with the expansion of Celtic peoples dating from 250-450 B.C.<sup>27</sup> However, as these habitats are closely related to permanent disafforestation, it is likely that they began to develop in selected areas as soon as the forest area was significantly reduced. This again suggests earlier changes to the vegetation of the Avon and Severn valley corridors than were occurring in the rest of the county.

Despite the extensive colonization and clearance that had occurred by Romano-British and Anglo-Saxon times, Worcestershire retained its wooded nature throughout the early medieval period, as the Domesday survey reveals extensive woodland clothing the northern and western parts of the county. Worcestershire place names, coined throughout the Old and Middle English period, bear eloquent testimony to the nature of its woodland. For example, Oak is represented in the name Acton Beauchamp (first mentioned in 727 A.D.), Aggberrow (1275), Rock (1224) and Oakhampton (1275); Hazel is represented in Hazel Farm (1275) and Haselor (1220); Elm in Elmley (780) and The Elms (1182); Birch in Birchley (1235); Holly in Hollins (957); Ash in Ashridge (1249) and Ashborough (1036). Indicative of man's impact upon the vegetation are the

FIGURE 2.5

**PHYSIOGRAPHICAL REGIONS**

- I WEST WORCESTER HILLS  
 II NORTH WEST PALEOZOIC UPLAND  
 a OLD RED SANDSTONE PLATEAU  
 b WYRE FOREST UPLAND  
 III PLATEAU FRINGE  
 IV TRIASSIC SANDSTONE ARCH  
 a WITLEY SUB REGION  
 b MAIN SANDSTONE  
 V WORCESTERSHIRE PLAIN  
 a CENTRAL UPLAND  
 b UPPER ARROW BASIN  
 c LAUGHERNE BASIN  
 d MALVERN PLAIN

- VI COTSWOLD FRINGE  
 a BROADWAY HILL  
 b BREDON HILL  
 VII SEVERN HILL  
 VIII TEME VALLEY  
 IX AVON VALLEY

0 MILES 4

many names ending in heath as well as those with more oblique references, such as Broome (1169), Bromley (1295) or Cropthorne (780). Apart from the above names, which extend, in terms of first mention, over a period in excess of five hundred years, the survival of so many fine late medieval timbered buildings utilising huge oak beams, also attests to the late survival of woodland. Indeed, the creation of five Royal Forests, those of Wyre, Malvern, Feckenham, Ombersley and Horewell suggests that, as early as 1086, a degree of protection was felt necessary to limit the cutting of timber. Admittedly, not all the area covered by Royal Forest was wooded and in the case of Ombersley and Horewell, complete disafforestation was effected by the thirteenth century, whilst Malvern became a private chase soon after the conquest. However, Feckenham was only finally disafforested in the late sixteenth century and the Wyre area remains well wooded to this day.

Thus, the vegetational history of Worcestershire is similar to other West Midland counties, being one of a slow and relatively late clearance of deciduous woodland, giving rise to distinctive open field and woodland landscapes, which existed in symbiosis throughout the middle ages. This has left the county with a legacy of a 'leafy' appearance and a rich variety of hedgerow plants characterising ruderal habitats. Subsequently in this work, the progress of woodland clearance will be charted by a series of maps constructed after the methods employed by Thorpe in a study of Warwickshire.<sup>28</sup>

#### Physiographical Regions

Buchanan has produced a subdivision of the county into physiographic units for the purpose of The Land Utilisation Survey<sup>29</sup>, and it is upon his work that Fig. 2.5 is based. Buchanan also appends a detailed description of each region, which it is unnecessary to repeat here, as much has been subsumed by the details of geology, soils and relief mentioned above. Whilst it is recognised that there is, of necessity, no deterministic relationship between physiographic regions and settlement patterns it is felt that they

do form a useful framework for summarising the resource base against which the patterns of colonisation and settlement can be expressed. Figure 2.5, therefore, represents a reference map, which will be useful in identifying particular areas within the study, in order to assess the resource base as one of the variables affecting colonisation and settlement patterns.

### Summary

Worcestershire exhibits a varied resource base with a wide range of soil types and relief. Its internal drainage structure with two major river valleys running both north-south and east-west aided transport and movement within the county in the past when means of land transport, Roman roads apart, were both rudimentary and time consuming. Similarly, the peripheral nature of the more elevated parts of the county did not hamper internal communications and in fact aided external communication in allowing access to the Jurassic Way and the major Roman roads of Watling Street and the Fosse Way. The major river valleys of the Teme, Severn and Avon allowed access respectively to Wales and the border country, South-Western England and the east midlands. However, in common with the other West Midland counties, Worcestershire's western location in central England made it somewhat remote from many of the invasion waves of both prehistoric and early historic times. Also, the high proportion of clay based soils, dominated by a canopy of damp oakwood, delayed the full impact of colonization until relatively late in the Middle Ages, as compared with many of the southern and eastern counties of the country. The Domesday Survey and the Forest Proceedings of the thirteenth century fully attest to the wooded nature of the county, and despite the distinction that has to be made between the legal sense of the term forest and its actuality, in terms of woodland, the evidence is clear that woodland clearance remained a dominant feature throughout the thirteenth and even into the fourteenth centuries. However, despite the tardy nature of colonisation in certain parts of the study area, the resource base was eminently capable of supporting a thriving agrarian economy under medieval conditions of exploitation. This is evidenced by the rich returns

in both crops and money that the Bishop of Worcester was able to extract from his estates during the late thirteenth century.

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## CHAPTER THREE

## THE FIRST SETTLEMENTS : PREHISTORIC AND ROMANO BRITISH

The first traces of man in Worcestershire were fragmentary and transient by nature, being set within an enormous time scale and allowing only the most fleeting of glimpses of any possible settlement distribution. It is for this reason that this chapter of the study appears to cover a disproportionate amount of time, for the limited nature of the evidence necessitates a much wider temporal collection period before a sufficient corpus of material can be assembled to reach any meaningful conclusions.

Source Material

As much of the work in this section depends upon the outcome of archaeological investigation, the sources used are entirely secondary. In order to gain a complete catalogue of all archaeological finds recorded in Worcestershire, it was necessary to make a thorough search through all Journals of the various Archaeological Societies. In this respect, the most useful proved to be the local journal, the Transactions of the Worcestershire Archaeological Society (T.W.A.S.) and the Transactions of the Birmingham Archaeological Society (T.B.A.S.) and their daughter publications, the West Midland Archaeological Newsletter and the Worcestershire Archaeological Newsletter. The work of C.N.S. Smith<sup>1</sup> and L.F. Chitty in establishing a catalogue of archaeological finds proved an invaluable starting point. Unfortunately, many of the locations and datings of random finds, first recorded in the nineteenth century, are extremely vague and considerable cross-checking was necessary in order to establish their likely identification. Similarly, in order to understand the significance of isolated random finds, reference was made to a wide range of archaeological works of a general and thematic nature, whose scope goes well beyond the confines of this study.

The use of aerial photography, introduced locally through the agency of the Severn-Avon Research Group, has had a considerable

impact on the study of prehistoric settlement in the West Midlands. New sets of occupation sites, particularly in the Avon Valley, have been revealed, casting considerable doubt on the previously held views on early settlement in the area. Fox in 1938<sup>2</sup> considered the area to have been a vast tangle of damp oakwood forest which prior to Roman, if not Anglo-Saxon times, demonstrated only scanty and transient human occupation. Both Seaby (1949)<sup>3</sup> and Thorpe (1950)<sup>4</sup> suggested that this generalisation was far too sweeping, and the evidence of aerial photography seems a vindication of their arguments. However, many of the occupation sites have yet to be excavated and those which have been, often in the face of imminent destruction by gravel working, have sometimes produced inconclusive evidence. Nevertheless, the initiation of the Severn-Avon research project has led to an upsurge of interest in the archaeology of the County, as witnessed by the introduction of the Worcestershire Archaeological Newsletter, the appointment of an Archaeological Field Officer for the County and the establishment of several local history and archaeological groups.<sup>5</sup> This has led not only to an increase in the amount of excavation but also to increased reports of spot finds observed from field walking, road construction and the like. Hence the archaeology of the County is in a state of flux and, inevitably, this account which attempts to draw all the material together will, in some respects, be outdated the moment it is written.

One of the main problems is to effectively utilise the crop mark evidence revealed by air photography. With only limited excavation of these sites, attempts at identification by morphological characteristics alone, must remain tentative in their conclusions, making the task of correlating them with the catalogue of stray finds and excavated sites a difficult one. Generally the two sources have been considered separately in this work, although there are obvious implications and connections between the two. As a guide to early occupation in the study area the catalogue of archaeological finds has been expressed as a distribution map, following the method employed by Thorpe in his study of early settlement in the Birmingham area.<sup>6</sup> Two such maps have been constructed (Figs. 3.1 & 3.3), the first showing the location of finds dating from the

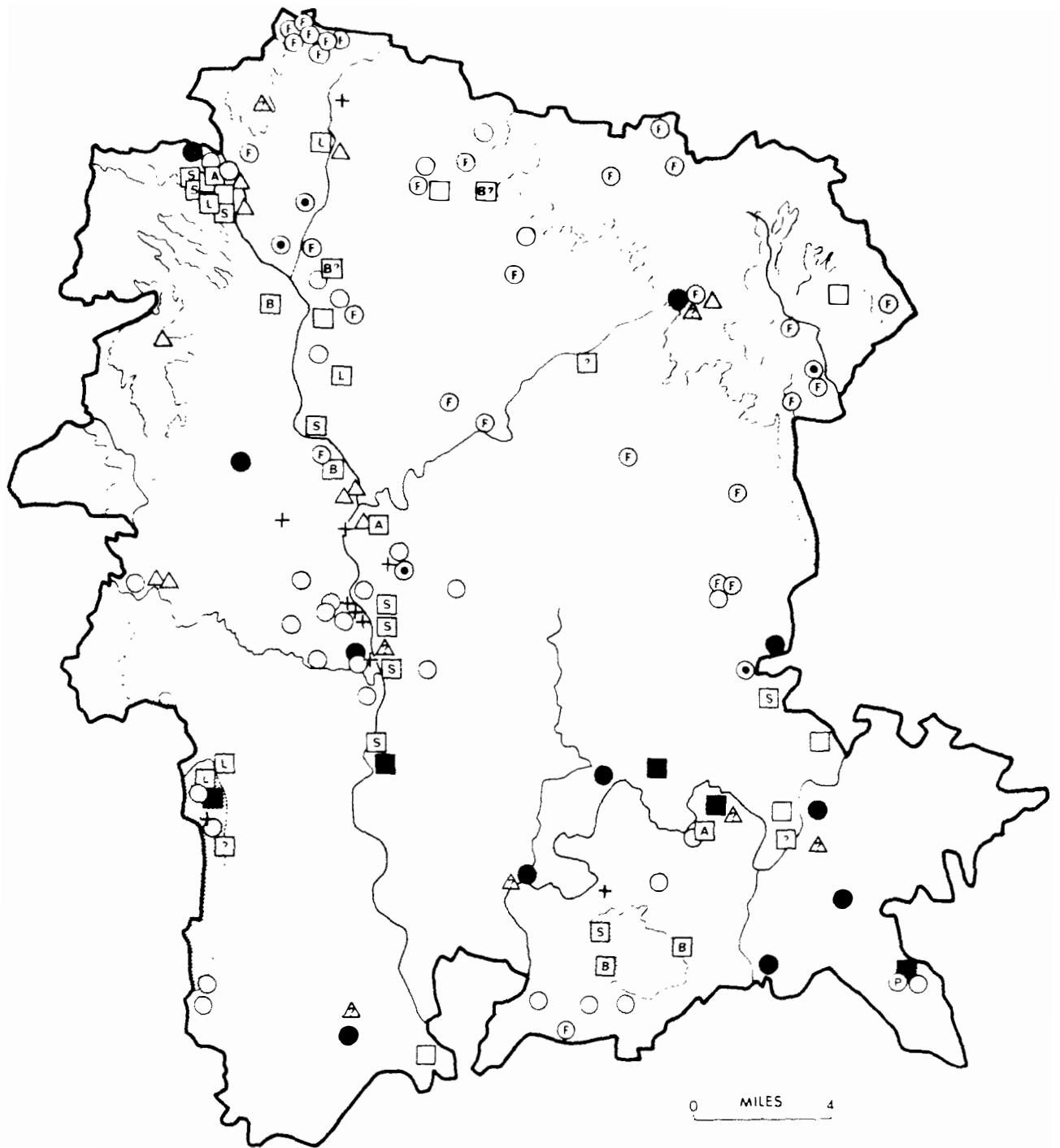
Palaeolithic to the Bronze Age and the second those of the Iron Age and Romano-British periods. Such a division is an arbitrary one, made for the convenience of cartographic clarity. The method employed is very useful in providing a summary of a disparate number of objects and for highlighting concentrations of finds, which may suggest a continuity of occupation in certain localities. However, it has limitations in the immense periods of time covered and the large area covered by the symbols for finds on each map. Therefore, the finds from each period are considered separately in the text.

### Palaeolithic - Bronze Age

Reference throughout the ensuing discussion is made to Fig. 3.1 and for closer identification of the sites, reference should be made to Fig. 2.1.

The earliest finds date from the Lower Palaeolithic period, and comprise only nine in number, seven of which were found in the terrace gravels of the Severn between the Salwarpe and the Teme valleys. The earliest find is that of an Acheulian hand axe found at Henwick, near Worcester<sup>7</sup>, (SO 836547), but such drift finds do not necessarily denote occupation, as the implements could easily have been river-borne and redeposited in the terrace gravel, possibly becoming severely eroded in the process. However, their concentration within a relatively small area does allow the possibility that a scanty population may have lived on the more open gravel sites above the flood level of the river. No finds which can be definitely dated to the Upper Palaeolithic have so far been discovered, although evidence does exist for some development of a Mesolithic culture in the Avon valley and on the East Warwickshire plateau in the neighbouring county.<sup>8</sup> However, it is notoriously difficult to date many of the microliths, flint flakes and scrapers to any one period, so many of the stray flint finds recorded on Fig. 3.1 could in fact date from any period between the Mesolithic and Bronze Ages. It is most probable, however, that most date to the late Neolithic and early Bronze Age periods.

DISTRIBUTION OF SPOT FINDS, PALAEOLOGIC TO BRONZE AGE



**PALEOLITHIC AGE**

+ PALEOLITHIC FINDS

**NEOLITHIC AND MESOLITHIC AGES**

- FLINT AXES
- STONE AXES
- FLINT FINDS MICROLITHS FLAKES SCRAPERS WASTE FLAKES ETC
- NEOLITHIC FINDS

**BRONZE AGE**

- △ STONE AXES PERFORATED
- △ OBJECTS OF STONE NOT NECESSARILY BRONZE AGE
- A OBJECTS OF BRONZE FLAT AXES
- B PALSTAVES
- C LOOPED PALSTAVES
- D SOCKETED AXES AND SPEARHEADS
- E OTHER METAL OBJECTS NOT NECESSARILY BRONZE AGE
- POTTERY
- B BARROW
- B POSSIBLE BARROW SITE NOT NECESSARILY BRONZE AGE

The advance in culture evident in southern and eastern England during Neolithic times finds little reflection in the study area in terms of the number and nature of spot finds. Only three pottery sherds have been found and there is an equivalent absence of long barrows and causewayed camps, reinforcing the impression of a backward and heavily forested area. Generally, the Neolithic culture is represented by stone implements, many of which Seaby considered to be the chance losses of traders, hunters and travellers, rather than the accoutrements of settled communities.<sup>9</sup> Their distribution (Fig. 3.1) is mainly along the terrace gravels of the Severn valley, with a similar concentration as the Palaeolithic finds on the hundred foot terrace between the confluences of the Severn, Teme and Salwarpe rivers. Smaller concentrations occur near the present day site of Bewdley and on the Malvern Hills. More recent finds of flint scrapers, waste flakes and microliths, reported in the Worcestershire Archaeological Newsletter, have considerably supplemented the distribution. Dating difficulties make it difficult to ascribe many of these finds to an exact period between the Mesolithic and early Bronze Age. Intensive field walking and survey by the Stour and Smestow Archaeological Research Group has revealed a number of flint artifacts found on the lighter soils of the Stour Valley around Blakeshall (SO 833813) and Little Kingsford Farm (SO 818809)<sup>10</sup>. Similarly, flint finds have been made in the Upper Arrow valley near Redditch (SP 055655)<sup>11</sup> and in the excavations at Bordesley Abbey (SP 045686). The latter being thought Mesolithic in date.<sup>12</sup> More remarkable have been a series of finds connected with the construction of the Hanbury to Shrawley Natural Gas pipeline. This narrow and archaeologically random strip of land has produced a number of finds of flints and Romano-British pottery in areas dominated by Keuper Marl deposits which previously had been thought uncolonised until late Saxon times.<sup>13</sup> Most notable, in terms of flint scatters, have been the sites at Hanbury (SO 963621) and Feckenham (SP 018601), which when considered together with the finds at Thorne in Inkberrow (SP 007561, 014555, 015557, 006562, 007561)<sup>14</sup> suggest a late Neolithic to early Bronze Age presence in the Keuper Marl plain of mid-Worcestershire (Fig. 3.1) and thus a much earlier exploitation

of the area of lighter soils provided by outcrops of Arden Sandstone and local glacial drift deposits, than was hitherto thought possible.

In common with the rest of the West Midlands a high proportion of Neolithic finds in Worcestershire are stone axes of which only 21% are composed of flint. This high proportion of axes is not surprising, considering the heavily wooded nature of the terrain in the prehistoric period. From Boreal times onwards the Keuper Marl and Lower Lias clays were dominated by damp oakwood (*Quercus Robur* and *Quercus Petraea*) mixed with hazel scrub<sup>15</sup>, and even the more open vegetation of the terrace gravels would have necessitated clearance by axe and fire. With only these rudimentary clearance mechanisms at his disposal man would have been limited to the more open areas of the terrace gravels, the higher areas of the Malverns and the Birmingham Plateau and, possibly, the lighter soils provided by glacial drift deposits and outcrops of Arden sandstone. Here, small clearances could be made to accommodate the flocks of animals and the small fields connected with shifting cultivation.

Past authorities have emphasised movement of peoples into the area rather than sedentary settlement within it. Recent finds, however, have reversed this emphasis, although it is still instructive to look at the origins of the material from which the stone implements were fashioned in order to gauge likely patterns of movement and trading connections. Only a few Worcestershire stone axes have been petrologically examined by Shotton<sup>16</sup> giving a wide scatter to places of material origin, for these Neolithic axes originate from areas as far apart as Cornwall and Westmorland. Local quartzite pebbles were used by Palaeolithic man, and this material continued in use throughout the Neolithic and Bronze Ages, such that the majority of perforated pebbles, maces and hammer stones were manufactured from local drift deposits. It is unlikely, however, that the flint implements were manufactured from local drift material as the hard black flint nodules found in the local chalky boulder clay would have been too hard and brittle for the successful manufacture of implements.<sup>17</sup> The three flint chipping floors at Tutnall, Hoarstone and Stone (Fig. 3.1) were most probably working, or reworking flint from much further afield. The most extensive of these sites, that



at Tutnall (SO 990700) extended over four fields and demonstrated a high concentration of implements, flakes and waste<sup>18</sup>, whilst that at Stone (SO 260758) included pink flint flakes which Edwards suggested may have originated from Antrim.<sup>19</sup> If Cantrill's conclusion that flint from local glacial drift was unsuitable for implement manufacture<sup>20</sup> is accepted, then it becomes necessary to postulate trading connections with other parts of Britain. Chitty<sup>21</sup> has suggested two main trading routes by which material and implements may have been brought to Worcestershire, namely :-

1. From the northern counties of Cumberland and Westmorland. This route is postulated as progressing via the upper Trent Valley, crossing south Staffordshire, east of Cannock, and entering Worcestershire near Stone and finally debouching into the Coventry-Baginton area of Warwickshire. Thence it continued eastward across the Jurassic ridge of Northamptonshire to East Anglia.
2. From Cardigan Bay, reaching the Severn valley near Bewdley, by way of Kerry, Clun and the Clee Hills.

Within the county, two local routeways were postulated:-

1. From Bewdley, south along the Severn valley to Worcester and Tewkesbury.
2. From Bewdley, crossing the Severn to the Stone river valley and thence along the eastern slopes of the Clent-Lickey ridge to the Ridgeway. From there south through Tutnall, Astwood Bank, Bevington Waste to Broadway and the Cotswolds. Another branch of this routeway continued north from the Clent-Lickey ridge to Hagley, Stourbridge, Wolverhampton and so to Cannock Chase.

Inspection of the Ordnance Survey maps of Ancient and Iron Age Britain, together with the distribution maps constructed by Fox and Chitty<sup>22</sup>, illustrates the very tentative nature of these postulated trading connections. The chance nature of the discovery of stray finds together with the large areas devoid of any find evidence, makes the postulation of connections between groups of like artifacts a dubious exercise. However, the discovery, near Coventry, of three Craig Lwyd axes from the manufacturing site at Penmaenmawr<sup>23</sup>

adds weight to the validity of a supposed trading route from North Wales crossing the Severn at Bewdley. Archaeological evidence from within the county also points to the importance of the terrace sites around Bewdley (Fig. 3.1) where concentrations of Palaeolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age artifacts have been found. It is possible, therefore, that a routeway could have entered the county via the Old Red Sandstone and Upper Coal Measures of the Wyre Forest upland, as it forms a flat topped ridge of between 400-500 feet high, overlooking the Teme valley.

Evidence for trading connections between Worcestershire and the Lake District is much weaker, being dependent merely upon a polished flint axe from Great Lonsdale, discovered at Stourbridge and a few flint flakes found at Tutnall. Admittedly three of the possible flint chipping sites were all situated on the Triassic Sandstone plateau fringe which connects with the higher land of the Coal Measures to the west and the Birmingham plateau to the east. This area is traversed by the Stour valley, itself the site of some finds, and could provide a link with the Ridgeway on the eastern border. Certainly, the Ridgeway was a routeway of some antiquity, the Romans using it for the construction of Ryknield Street and its elevated position between the Arrow and Avon river basins may well have commended its use as a routeway at an even earlier date.

The first part of the tripartite Bronze Age had little influence on Worcestershire, for it is not until the transition period between the A and B Beaker peoples that there seems to have been any penetration into the county. It is to this period that most of the perforated hammer stones found in the county have been tentatively dated, although by comparisons with other parts of the country, it would be possible to date some of the unperforated hammers, together with those exhibiting hour glass perforations, within the Neolithic age. However, without strong corroborating evidence this would be dangerous, particularly since the discovery at Sedgebarrow of two unperforated stone axes in association with two bronze spearheads<sup>24</sup> points to the manufacture, or at least use, of these axes throughout the Bronze Age.

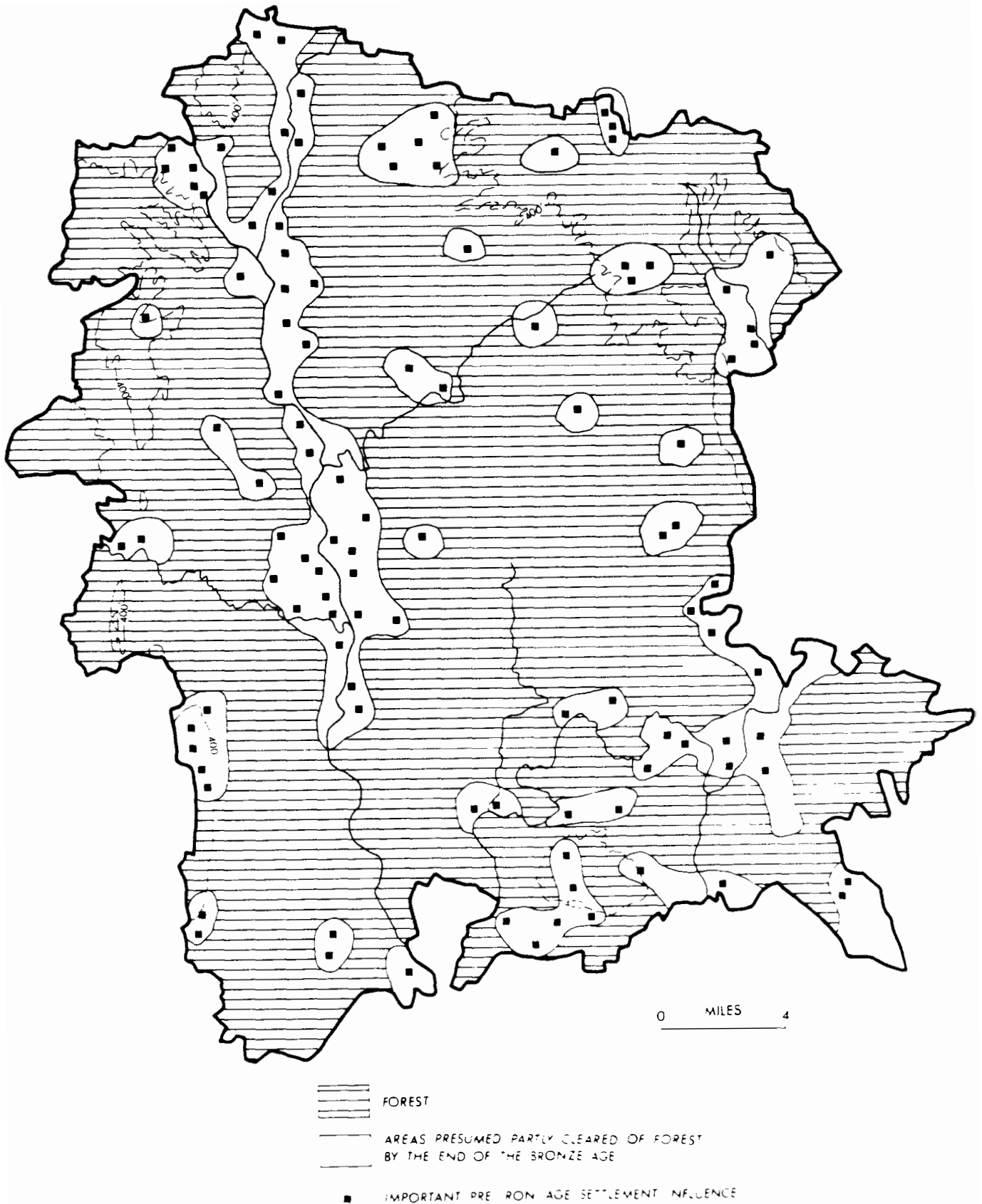
Only one early Bronze Age beaker has been found at Draycott located on the Severn terrace gravels, close to Kempsey.<sup>25</sup> This poor imitation of a British B Beaker suggests a more western influence on this culture than was previously supposed and goes some way to confirming Fox's view of how they reached the Welsh coast, which he suggests was via the Northamptonshire uplands and the Avon and Severn valleys to the Black Mountains. Other beakers recorded in Worcestershire are of later periods, comprising a C Beaker found in association with a burial group at Hill and Moor, and two C Beakers within a Beaker harrow on the south western corner of Bredon Hill (Fig. 3.1).<sup>26</sup>

The Middle Bronze Age was probably a period of cultural absorption and development, when such Beaker folk as existed in Worcestershire became merged into a more local culture and the flat axes of the early Bronze Age evolved into an axe with a stop ridge and side flanges, usually known as a palstave. The distribution of palstaves and other Middle and late Bronze Age finds continues to reflect the same pattern as the Neolithic period, that is the terrace gravels of the Severn and Avon river corridors being the sites of the vast majority of the finds. In the north-west of the county, close to the Severn crossing point at Bewdley, a group of looped and non-looped palstaves and socketed axes has been discovered, again giving prominence to this site as part of the possible Wales-Severn trading route. Also the Severn terraces around the present site of Worcester have yielded three bronze vessels of the Middle Bronze Age, whilst other finds include a footed urn of the food vessel type at Charlton (SP 005463), a pygmy cup at Malvern (SO 769454) and a tripartite rim urn at Broadway 27 (SP 108384).

Round barrows have been identified at Astley (SO 808698), Bredon Hill (SO 953397) and Holt (SO 825622), the latter having been recently excavated where five cremation urns of the Middle to Late Bronze Age were found.<sup>28</sup> Other possible round barrow sites, all of which may not necessarily be Bronze Age, have been suggested at Chaddesley Corbett (SO 908751), Clent (SO 8947943 and SO 894674) and Hartlebury (SO 820700).

FIGURE 3.2

# WORCESTERSHIRE AT THE END OF THE BRONZE AGE



### Summary

In the past, most writers on the early settlement history of Worcestershire have stressed the paucity of evidence and the possibility of movement of people through the area rather than settlement within it.<sup>29</sup> Admittedly, the county lacks the field monuments and array of finds that characterise more southern and eastern counties, yet sufficient evidence has accumulated in recent years to allow a reassessment of its occupation by Neolithic and Bronze Age peoples. To this end Figure 3.2 has been constructed which shows the likely areas cleared of forest cover at the end of the Bronze Age. As previously stated<sup>30</sup>, this map was constructed after the methods pioneered by Thorpe<sup>31</sup> and by its very nature must be viewed as highly conjectural. However, it does provide a useful summary of the totality, as far as is at present known, of the likely occupation sites of man prior to the Iron Age. Emphasis is very much upon the terrace gravels of the Severn and Avon and their tributaries, notably the Stour, Teme, Arrow, Carrant and Badsey Brook. Not only did these sites provide light, free draining soils but also it is a reasonable assumption that, once having been cleared of their natural woodland, subsequent leaching would effectively prevent regeneration of forest, although heathland and scrub might well appear if the site was abandoned. Studies of fossil soils sealed under barrows suggest that, as early as Mesolithic times, permanent changes to both soils and the vegetation cover were being wrought by man.<sup>32</sup>

In Worcestershire it seems likely that early man selected these terrace sites, not so much for any quality of soil, but rather because of their role as ecotones, that is marginal transition zones between major ecosystems allowing access to a varied supply of wild plants and animals.<sup>33</sup> The nature of the terrace gravel deposits, particularly the hundred foot terrace of the Severn, would possibly inhibit the development of dense oak forest making clearance a relatively easier task, whilst the river itself would provide a water supply, fish and access to other groups vital for the trading of flints and axes. Despite the scant remains of the complex late Neolithic period, society had progressed sufficiently to construct

Henge monuments in the Avon Valley, as evidenced by crop marks at Charlton and Norton which will be discussed more fully later.<sup>34</sup>

The varying Neolithic cultural traditions represented in Worcestershire amalgamated to produce a more uniform Bronze Age society from the seventeenth century B.C. This period is represented entirely by stray finds of metalwork, largely from the terraces of the Severn and its tributaries, and round barrow sites. However, with the current reassessment of early agriculture and the role of the ard in the formation of field systems<sup>35</sup>, it is likely that many of the crop marks revealed by air photography in the Avon and Severn valleys will need to be reinterpreted.

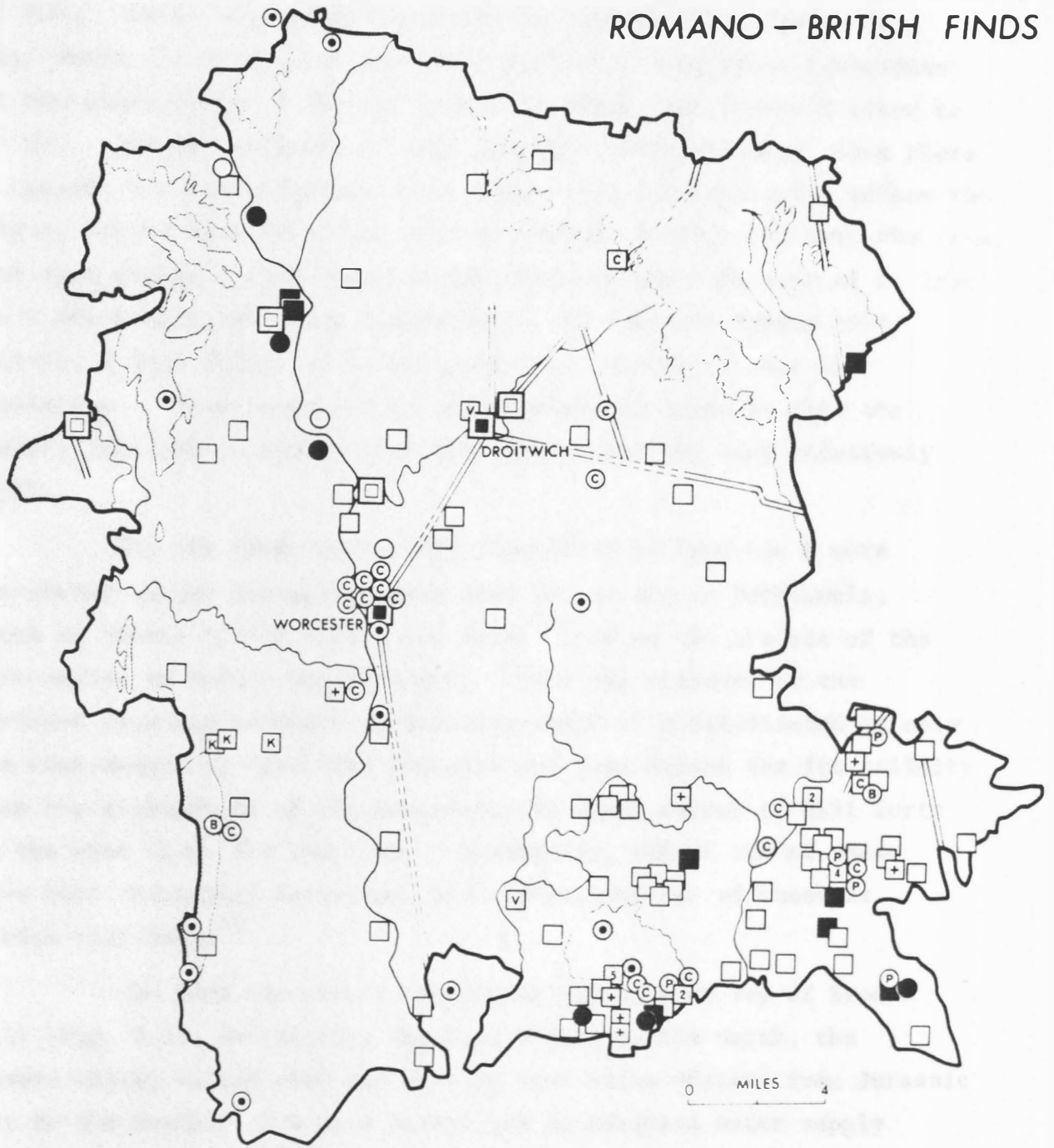
Perhaps the most surprising of recent discoveries have been the chance finds associated with pipe line construction, which appear to suggest penetration by early peoples to the headwaters of the small streams draining the Keuper Marl and Lower Liassic Marl areas of the county. It also implies a very early recognition of the importance of local outcrops of Arden Sandstone and small cappings of glacial sands and gravels which previously had been thought unoccupied until late Saxon times. With increased archaeological surveillance, it is possible further sites will be discovered in these areas of the county, bringing about a complete reassessment of the levels of Neolithic and Bronze Age populations in Worcestershire.

### Iron Age

The Iron Age provides a great increase in the number of finds within Worcestershire (Fig. 3.3) compared with previous prehistoric periods, but still far less than the counties of south and eastern England. The date of entry of early Iron Age peoples into Worcestershire is a subject of some controversy, for Smith<sup>36</sup> has stated that Iron Age peoples did not influence the region to any great extent, whilst the evidence from Bredon Hill Camp would seem to suggest otherwise.<sup>37</sup> Iron Age peoples of Hallstatt stock entered Britain by way of the south and east coasts<sup>38</sup>, and were thus likely to approach Worcestershire from the east, via the Trent and Avon valleys. In a reassessment of Iron Age classifications Hawkes<sup>39</sup> suggested that the 'Western First A', as these people had previously

FIGURE 3.3

### DISTRIBUTION OF IRON AGE AND ROMANO-BRITISH FINDS



**PRE ROMAN IRON AGE**

- ORNAMENTAL OBJECT
- ⓑ CURRENCY BAR
- Ⓒ COIN
- Ⓟ POTTERY
- ⦿ CAMP
- SETTLEMENT SITE

**ROMANO-BRITISH**

- ROMANO-BRITISH FIND
- Ⓢ NUMBER OF FINDS IN VICINITY
- Ⓥ VILLA
- Ⓜ ROMANO-BRITISH KILN
- Ⓒ ROMAN COIN
- TOWN
- SETTLEMENT SITE
- CAMP
- ⊕ BURIAL SITE
- ROMAN ROAD
- - - PROJECTED ROMAN ROAD

been known, should be reclassified as lb, and their arrival dated to 425 B.C. Again this disagrees with the evidence from Bredon Hill Camp, where the pottery of the first period of occupation illustrates the characteristics of lb, but cannot be dated from a period prior to 150 B.C. If the evidence of this pottery can be accepted, then there is support for the existence of an early Iron Age population within the county, but no clue as to the date or method of its entry into the area. Find spot evidence also supports the claim of the existence of an Iron Age A population, but also demonstrates, as does the Bredon Hill pottery, a high degree of integration with existing Bronze Age population. This degree of inter-relationship suggests that the numbers involved in the initial Iron Age population were relatively small.

The few finds positively identified as Iron Age A were discovered on the terrace gravels near Worcester, at Perdiswell, where an ornate bronze torque was found<sup>40</sup> and on the gravels of the Avon valley at Badsey and Broadway. Thus the evidence of the earliest Iron Age settlers in Worcestershire is substantiated by only the most meagre of spot find evidence and must depend for its validity upon the excavations of the comparatively large number of hill forts in the area (Fig. 3.3 and 3.4). Nationally, only a few of these have been thoroughly excavated, but fortunately one of these is Bredon Hill Camp.<sup>40</sup>

The camp occupies a commanding position on top of Bredon Hill (Fig. 3.3), overlooking the Avon Valley to the north, the Severn Valley to the west and is only five miles distant from Jurassic Way to the south. The site itself has no adequate water supply within the camp, a situation that is not unknown in similar fortifications, but one which would provide severe limitations in withstanding a siege. However, it is possible that subsequent to the camp's construction, the water table could have been lowered, which together with the subsidence of several acres on the north western edge of the camp has altered the spring line to its present position, some forty feet below the camp ramparts. The other feature of the site is the construction of the camp astride a trackway, which coincides exactly with the camp's entrances. The trackway is



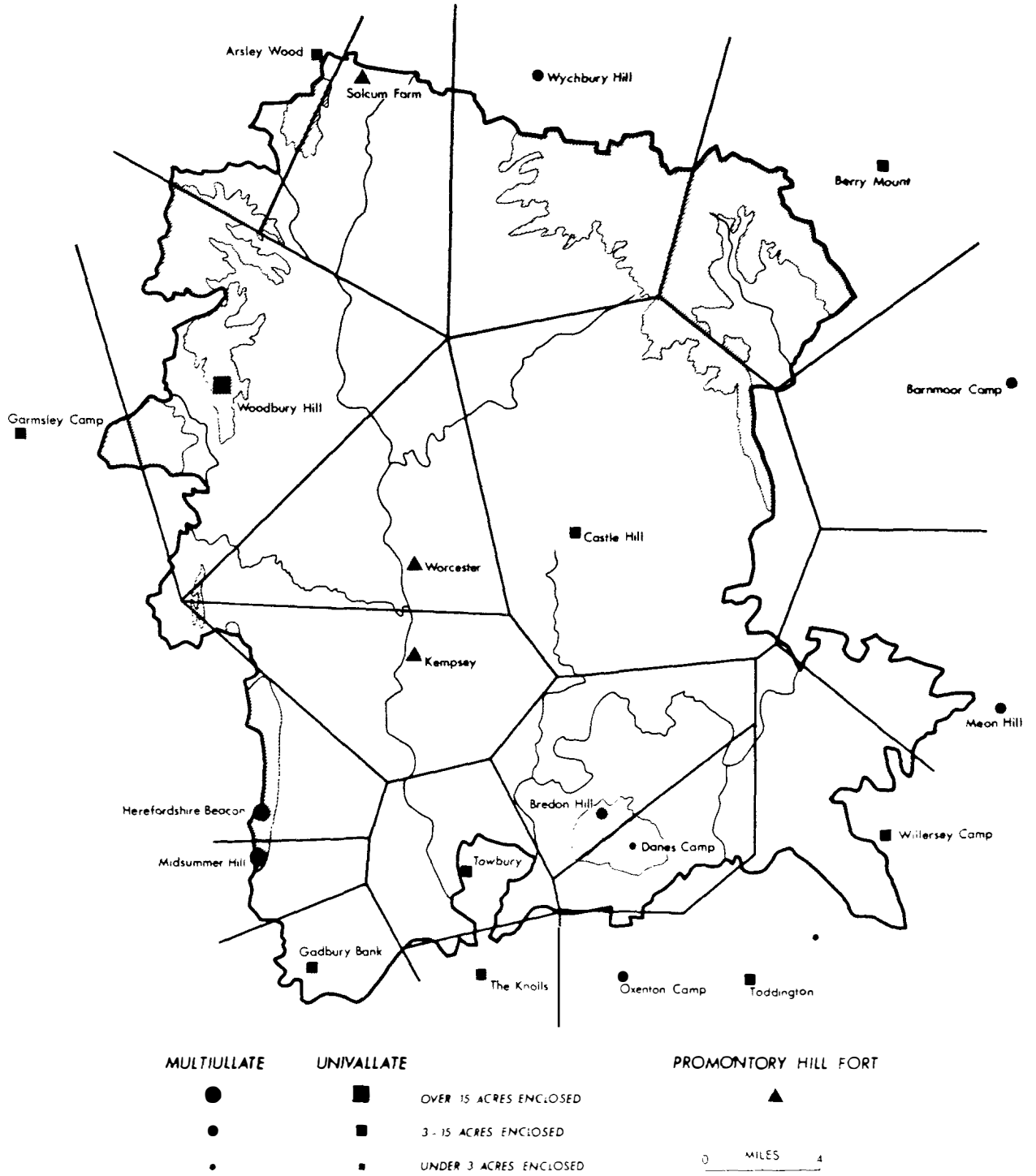
known to be of considerable antiquity, being described in the Habene Hame Saxon Charter<sup>42</sup>, as 'Hrycwey' (ridgeway), which connected Tewkesbury with the saltway (Eald Street), passing through the camp which was then known as Baenintes Burh. (See Fig. 4.15).

Excavation revealed that during the first phase of the camp the earthworks consisted of a single rampart and ditch enclosing an area of about twelve acres.<sup>43</sup> Shards that were discovered were of well-fired clay with a distinctive duck-shaped pattern stamped around the rim, which initially suggested a link with a cultural complex previously only known in the south-west peninsular of Cornwall. This culture was assumed to have been intrusive from the Continent around 150 B.C. and to have moved into the western Cotswolds between 100-50 B.C. where it was responsible for the building of Bredon Hill Camp. The occupied area consisted of a series of hut traces, usually circular in shape and possessing hearths, storage pits and water sumps connected with a water catchment outside. In the shelter of the high ramparts traces of a hut with an associated bronze smelting floor were discovered, although the latter seems to have been abandoned during the first phase occupation. Most of the small finds proved of little significance save for one spear of the flamboyant type previously only rarely identified on the continent. Also found was a certain amount of unspecialised ware attributed to a native Iron Age A population who occupied the site prior to the arrival of the intrusive Iron Age B pioneers.

Hencken<sup>44</sup> has suggested that the entry route of these Iron Age B peoples was via the Severn estuary, they having been pushed westward by strong Iron Age A populations occupying the south and eastern coastal areas, and who thus guarded the shorter sea crossing. Leeds<sup>45</sup>, however, suggested that the attraction of the south west to these peoples was not so much its undersettled nature but the iron deposits of the Forest of Dean and thus the forts they subsequently established were to command traffic in this product along the Severn. Certainly other sites exhibiting distinctive duck stamped pottery have been found along the Cotswold edge overlooking the Severn valley<sup>46</sup>, and during the excavation at Bredon quantities of scrap were discovered as well as evidence of earlier metal working on the site, as witnessed

FIGURE 3.4

### IRON AGE HILLFORTS Possible territorial areas using Thiessen's Polygons



by the bronze smelting floor. Many other small finds made at the camp appear representative of a centre through which several trading routes converged, for finds have been associated with north-east Yorkshire as well as with south-western England and the continent, pointing to a strong connection with the trading routes of the Jurassic Way.

Other Iron Age hillforts have also been identified in Worcestershire and their distribution shown on Figure 3.4. Definite hillforts exist on the Malverns (Midsummer Hill and British Camp), on Bredon Hill (Danes Camp), Woodbury Hill Camp near Witley, Gadbury Bank near Eldersfield, Wychbury Hill Camp, Garmsley Camp, Arley Wood Camp, Castle Hill and Berry Mound. Promontory forts have been discovered at Kempsey (SO 847492), Solcum Farm (SO 822808) and at Worcester (851550). Other earthworks, suggestive of hillforts, exist at Elmley Castle (SO 979403), Hanbury Church (SO 954644), Beoley (SP 065695), Ipsley (SP 065655, 043665), Wassell Wood (SO 794717) and Berrow Hill (SO 745585). Without further confirmation, however, it would be dangerous to treat these earthworks as dating from the Iron Age and so they have been omitted from Figure 3.4. These hillforts form by far the greatest surviving prehistoric field monuments in the county and yet remain largely unexcavated.

Overall, Castle Hill, Kempsey and Worcester apart, the distribution is peripheral, with the majority of hillforts that could be said to have had some sort of territorial control over the area (see Fig. 3.4) existing outside the county boundaries. This is not surprising in that the synclinal shape of Worcestershire's physical structure means that any search for strategically significant highland will automatically mean the selection of sites close to, or over, the present county boundary. Concerning those hillforts within the study area, most seem sited to control the river corridors. Woodbury Hill commands access along the Teme valley, whilst Solcum Farm overlooks the Stour, just as Bredon Hill and Danes Camp overlook the Avon and Carrant brooks respectively. Recently discovered promontory forts at Kempsey and Worcester protect the early settlement sites of the Severn terraces, and Gadbury Bank, also of low elevation, is the only high point overlooking the Severn in what were the

Eldersfield marshes, which were not fully drained until the 1850's. Castle Hill (SO 938554) provides an unusual site in that it is outside the main river valleys on the junction of the Lower Lias and Keuper Marl plain of Worcester in an area where Iron Age settlement was previously unknown. The two hillforts on the Malvern Hills could not be said to directly control transit along the Severn, although their site on steep hills, rising sheer from the Severn plain, gives a magnificent prospect commanding much of the Keuper Marl and Lower Lias areas to the east and the valleys of the Leadham and Leigh Brooks, which cut the Old Red Sandstones of Herefordshire to the west.

Concepts of territorial continuity were initially explored in the introduction to this work, but it is only in the second century B.C. with the initiation of Iron Age hillforts that tentative steps in its exploration can begin. To this end, Figure 3.4 has been constructed using Theissen's Polygons to describe possible territorial areas. This method, which has been used by some archaeologists in the context of hillforts<sup>48</sup>, simply divides territory equally amongst the known distribution of hillforts. The method of apportioning the areas takes no account of the size of each hillfort, which varies from under three acres enclosed at Danes Camp to over twenty five acres at Woodbury Hill. It is possible to weight the boundaries according to hillfort size<sup>49</sup>, although in Worcestershire this makes little difference to the general pattern of boundaries and adds a spurious exactitude to what is essentially a conjectural exercise. Of much greater significance would be the addition of any of the previously mentioned possible hillfort sites. For example, the addition to Figure 3.4 of Berrow Hill, Martley, which has a long vernacular tradition as a hillfort, would severely curtail the areas shown as dependant upon Worcester and Kempsey, leaving them with only small areas west of the Severn.

Generally, the densest distribution of hillforts and hence the smallest 'territorial' areas exist in the south of the county, which coincides with the distribution of other Iron Age finds. The Avon terraces are shared between Bredon Hill Camp and Willersley Camp on Broadway Hill, whilst Danes Camp overlooks the smaller terrace

deposits of the Carrant Brook. To the west of the Severn, the two large hillforts on the Malverns and Gadbury Bank have only small territories in the county largely comprised of low lying marshy ground and much of the area which was to form the forest of Malvern Chase. As previously stated, these areas described by Theissen's polygons are conjectural and known connections between hillforts and lowland open settlements are few and far between. Few hillforts have been fully excavated and the results published, in fact, in Worcestershire, this applies only to Bredon Hill, although some excavation has taken place at Danes Camp and Midsummer Hill. The one feature which would seem to tie settlement sites at Badsey, Beckford, Broadway and Astley with the hillforts of Bredon, Danes Camp and Midsummer Hill is the existence of duck-stamped pottery on each of the sites. This pottery has customarily been associated with the presence of an intrusive culture labelled Western Third B, generally thought to have emanated from Cornwall and entering the county via the Severn corridor.<sup>50</sup> This is based upon the assumption that pottery was made close to, or on, the same site and hence can be used as a cultural indicator. However, recent petrological examination of this pottery<sup>51</sup>, together with similarly ornamented ware from Herefordshire and the Cotswolds, conclusively show that it was manufactured in or near the Malvern Hills. It thus appears that the pottery was the object of a well organised trade involving specialist potters, and its distribution is more likely to be due to commercial rather than cultural factors. Three distinct groups of pottery have been identified petrologically and, as each is accompanied by a characteristic range of stylistic traits, it has been suggested that three separate pottery concerns existed in the Malvern area. Although these sites are unknown it is possible that they existed close to the Romano-British pottery kilns identified at Malvern Link (SO 789497) and Leigh Sinton (SO 780506) at the northern end of the Malvern range.

The development of settlement in Worcestershire during Late Iron Age times still continues to lean heavily for its evidence upon the excavations at Bredon Hill Camp. During the First Century A.D. drastic remodelling of the defences took place, allowing stone walled passages to be driven between the ramparts and ditches to form

a long corridored entrance to the camp. The same pattern was discernible in the constructions of the outer defences where the remains of an exaggerated inturned entrance were discovered, thus directing all traffic ascending the hill into the funnel formed by the entrances and narrow curving gateways. Stratified evidence for exact dating was lacking, but pottery found in context was of a local character and very different from that found in association with the earlier phase of the camp.

The stamped ware prominent in the initial construction of the camp had become swamped by more local types of ware implying that the intrusive south western B element identified by Hencken had been completely integrated with local peoples. Similarly, the rampart construction seems to represent a return to native building methods of local stoneworking techniques in preference to the previous imported construction methods. The probable date of these reconstructions would seem to be somewhere in the early decades of the first century A.D.<sup>52</sup>

Fortification and refortification at about this time appears widespread throughout the West Midlands as evidenced by the pottery found at the Malvern Camps and the chronology of the Hereford hillforts, where the same inturned entrances are apparent.<sup>53</sup> The camps arose under conditions of stress when refugee groups were on the move, which Chitty has attributed to pressure from Belgic peoples fighting their way into south western Britain.<sup>54</sup> At Bredon there is plentiful evidence that refortification was necessary, but unsuccessful, as the remains of some 50 individuals, who had fallen during a desperate struggle, were discovered on the roadway of the inner entrance. Extensive mutilation of the bodies had occurred and, judging from the fact that the bodies were left in situ, the camp was deserted and never used again. The many finds of hand weapons and sling stones of late Iron Age type have been dated to the early part of the first century A.D., allowing only a very short life span to the new fortifications. Hencken<sup>55</sup> advanced three possible solutions as to the events causing this destruction:-

- (1) A result of the Roman conquest.
- (2) The work of local enemies.
- (3) The upheavals of the Belgic conquest.

The first was deemed unlikely as the earliest Roman influence in the locality, in terms of settlement, was not before 60-70 A.D. and there is good evidence that the Romans did not mutilate bodies.<sup>56</sup> It could have been the work of tribal allies of the Romans, but set against this is the immediate desertion of the camp, again not the practice of Romans or those under their control. The second solution was also considered improbable, as the strength of Bredon's fortification would have deterred marauding bands of unfriendly neighbours. Hencken opted for the third as being the most likely, although there is no direct evidence, for both the strength of the invaders and the mutilation of corpses is in accord with Belgic attacks. Chitty<sup>57</sup> also makes a similar conclusion concerning the Herefordshire hill camps, although Kenyon<sup>58</sup> doubts that the influence of Belgic tribes extended as far as the West Midlands. This, of course, would not rule out other tribes moving into the area, having been displaced by Belgic depredations, notably the establishment of control over the area by the Dobunni.

Other evidence of late Iron Age settlement in Worcestershire is very scanty (Fig. 3.3), being limited to finds at Badsey, Broadway, Ashton-under-Hill, Astley and Beckford. Badsey has been previously mentioned in connection with stamped ware, whilst the site at Broadway exhibited continuous occupation for about a century from the third part of the first century. Later Romano-British and early Anglo-Saxon sites are also found in close proximity<sup>59</sup>, their location no doubt affected by the proximity of early trading routes.<sup>60</sup> The initial Iron Age finds date from the period of the sack of Bredon Hill and Danes Camp and could feasibly have been one of the settlements established by the refugees or conquerors of the camp. Excavations at Astley were primarily concerned with unearthing a Romano-British settlement, but in the process of investigating the complex of crop marks both a Bronze Age barrow and an oval pit and chimney groove of the late Iron Age were also discovered.<sup>61</sup> The site is situated on the Severn terrace gravels close to the meeting point of the suggested Neolithic and Bronze Age trading routes, which might account for the settlement continuity. During the Iron Age, however, the stratified pottery evidence reveals only a

transient settlement which Walker suggests may represent a small group of refugees from Bredon, fleeing from Belgic expansion.<sup>62</sup>

The excavation of an ancient settlement site at Beckford (SO 984364), first identified from the aerial photographs taken by Baker and Pickering<sup>63</sup>, has added considerably to knowledge of Iron Age settlement in Worcestershire. Although only published as an interim report<sup>64</sup>, its conclusions call into question many of the assumptions made by the earlier work of Hencken<sup>65</sup> and, almost certainly, provide the forerunner of many such sites that have been identified from crop marks on the Avon terraces (Fig. 3.7). The site is situated on a narrow gravel ridge within the valley of the Carrant Brook on the north side of Bredon Hill (see Fig. 3.8), and has provided evidence of occupation from Neolithic times through to the Romano-British period of the first to third centuries A.D. Material relating to the earlier periods is limited to flint-work and a polished flint axe providing little evidence for assessment of either the landscape or settlement type. The Early-Middle Bronze Age (c. 1610-1210 B.C.) is represented by a boundary ditch dated by small fragments of decorated pottery from the secondary fill. The ditch had become entirely in-filled by the middle of the third century B.C. when the succeeding Iron Age settlement was formed.

The Iron Age settlement is based upon several ditched enclosures dated by pottery of stamped and tooled designs and a single radiocarbon date of 160  $\pm$  120 B.C. (Birmingham 432). The recutting of the enclosure ditches and changes in the internal arrangements indicate a period of occupation in the order of several centuries, although the complete settlement plan is as yet unknown. The form is distinct from that of the isolated farmsteads that characterise the Wessex downs and also from the multiple, but unenclosed, settlement sites in the upper Thames valley. On present evidence, it would be precipitous to describe the grouping as a village, but it is clear that there were a number of contiguous habitation areas, separated from each other by ditches, which have the appearance of being individually owned. Major features of the individual enclosures, so far excavated, include roundhouses, evidence of bronze smelting, storage pits and quantities of animal bones.



Preliminary analysis of the latter reveal them to be almost exclusively domestic animals with a predominance of cattle and sheep with some pigs, dogs and horses. A hoard of ten currency bars of the variety termed 'spit - shaped' by Allen which have been largely found within the lower Severn and Avon valleys were also discovered. The ore from which these were made was low in phosphorous suggesting a probable origin in the Forest of Dean or Llantrisant in Glamorgan.

Later pre-Roman Iron Age evidence is provided by a site immediately to the west of the one under consideration, which has been excavated by Oswald.<sup>66</sup> A rectilinear enclosure was excavated which produced evidence of earlier settlement in the form of stamped shards, but the main enclosure appeared to be of late pre-Roman date and probably associated with stock rearing. However, little dating evidence was found and hopefully greater evidence will be gained in the future to make exact identification more secure.

The Romano-British period on the Beckford site is represented by trackways, a small inhumation cemetery and a series of small rectilinear enclosures, although no buildings of Roman date have yet been discovered. Other features of the site were the ridge and furrows of a medieval field system, which were developed on top of an earlier system of ditches which defined the strip-field boundaries.

The largest single group of finds from the late Iron Age is formed by coins (Fig. 3.3) which are distributed in two main concentrations; one on the terraces surrounding the present site of Worcester and the second on the terraces of the Avon valley. The former continues the emphasis placed on the terrace belt between the Severn, Salwarpe, Teme confluences as both a settlement and trading area from Neolithic times, whilst the latter confirms the importance of the Avon valley, already suggested by the existence of hill camps and other settlement sites. The long period of use of a coin makes it difficult to place such finds within a particular settlement period, although it is a reasonable assumption that once Roman influence had become predominant, then Iron Age coins would have gone out of circulation.

The pre-Roman coins found in Worcestershire, with the exception of an 'Andoc' coin found at Evesham, belong to the western coin group and originate from the Dobunnic tribe. Allen<sup>67</sup> suggests the Dobunni were centred on Cirencester, but inhabited a wide area whose boundaries stretched northwards from the Kennet, Brue and Avon, westwards from the Thames and Cherwell, with their western boundary along the Wye and an indeterminate northern boundary in the West Midlands. The coinage follows a stereotyped pattern centring on the following names :- 'Antedrig', 'Eisv', 'Catti', 'Comux', 'Corio' and 'Bodvic', which suggest a sequence of native rulers, although the distribution of finds does not give any clue as to their likely territories.<sup>68</sup> The terminal date of striking of the coins, but not of their circulation, was about the middle of the first century A.D., after the Roman conquest of the tribe. Allen<sup>69</sup> considers that the coins show a conscious effort to resist the further advance of the Belgae, which could also have effected a transference of their trade routes from Belgic to non-Belgic territory. The cutting off of the more accessible northern trade routes along the Test and Thames valleys could have placed more importance on the outlet along the Severn. The earlier Iron Age folk had already made this route an important one as far as Worcestershire was concerned, and it is possible that the county increased its importance within the tribal area in the last few years of Dobunni rule, both as a place of refuge and as a trading area.

### Summary

Evidence for early Iron Age settlement within the county remains scanty and distributed largely along the terrace gravels of the Avon and Severn, thus reiterating previously established settlement distribution rather than breaking any new ground. The Iron Age A peoples that entered the county were probably small in number and added little to the cultural advancement of the area, being absorbed into the already existing Bronze Age culture.<sup>70</sup> It is unclear from excavations at Bredon Hill camp whether the site was fortified by Iron Age A peoples prior to the supposed intrusion of Western B folk, although it is evident that the site was occupied by Iron Age A people. Both camps on Bredon Hill were permanently occupied, not

just temporary refuges, thus exhibiting the same characteristics as other hill camps that have been associated in the past with the South Western B immigration.<sup>71</sup> However, Alcock<sup>72</sup> draws a distinction between hillforts situated at lower elevations, which were permanently occupied, and those at higher, more exposed sites, which were only seasonally occupied. Whether this distinction could be applied between the camps at Bredon and those on the Malvern Hills remains doubtful, as the chronology and settlement of the Malvern camps has yet to be fully established.<sup>73</sup> Aerial photography of Herefordshire Beacon camp<sup>74</sup> has revealed a large area within the outer ramparts pitted with small depressions that could mark hut positions. Also it was reported that as late as 1875, 11 terraces with over 200 hut sites were visible at Midsummer Hill camp, together with a series of dams across a stream and a cluster of hut sites outside the main camp area.<sup>75</sup> Until such times as thorough excavation can be undertaken, these reports must remain unconfirmed, although the impression gained initially supports permanent occupation.

Much of the past interpretation of Iron Age settlement in the county has been based upon the cultural implications of the distribution of duck-stamped ware. Indeed the whole existence of the South-Western B peoples rests primarily on the distribution of this distinctive pottery decoration. The petrological examination of this ware and the conclusions derived from it<sup>76</sup> necessitate a complete reassessment of Iron Age settlement in the area. No longer is it feasible to view the study area as the recipient of a series of invasions resulting solely in the establishment of fortified hilltop forts. The whole invasion hypothesis has recently become the object of much criticism notably by Hodson<sup>77</sup> and Cunliffe<sup>78</sup>, with much more emphasis being placed on trade, regionalisation and the steady development of local communities. Thus the old distribution maps of duck-stamped ware used to illustrate the territory of the South Western B peoples have now been replaced by distribution of pottery manufactured from Malvernian materials, which has been designated by Cunliffe as Croft Ambrey - Bredon Hill.<sup>79</sup> This area accords, to some degree, with the distribution of spit shaped currency bars and suggests a developing regional grouping that was to finally

produce the territory of the Dobunni in the years immediately preceding the Claudian invasion.

The fortification and refortification of the hillforts is thus interpreted as a response to political and social changes consequent upon population growth rather than invasion. Population growth during the Iron Age, in turn, can be explained by the development of winter sown grain allowing two sowings and hence much larger yields. The surplus thus created supported a warrior class whose hillforts still form such an impressive feature of our modern landscape.

When applied locally to the study area this thesis has some fascinating implications although evidence from excavation, upon which it should be based, is still tantalisingly slender. The first implication is that early populations, up to and including the Iron Age, were much larger and had a more widespread distribution than was previously thought possible. This is, in part, confirmed by the increasing number of artifacts from Mesolithic through to Iron Age date that have been discovered recently. Also their distribution shows an increasing awareness by early populations of the site advantages of the glacial sand and gravel cappings and Arden sandstone outcrops of the Worcester plain. Accompanying larger populations would be a much greater woodland clearance such that it is no longer possible to view the Iron Age landscape of Worcestershire, as Hencken did, as one of the relatively few hilltop settlements surrounded by a mass of wooded and marshy lowlands. Rather, the picture that is beginning to emerge is one in which the terraces of the Severn and Avon, together with those of the larger of their tributaries, had been largely cleared of woodland by the middle to late Bronze Age. Population had reached sufficient levels in some areas for demarcation of territory to be necessary as witnessed by the Bronze Age boundary ditch at Beckford.<sup>80</sup> The emergence of a distinctive social structure dominated by a ruling theocracy in the late Bronze Age cannot be confirmed by any of the Worcestershire evidence, although there are a number of barrows which were possibly used for aristocratic burials.

It is probable that woodland clearance continued at an increased rate during the Iron Age consequent upon population growth and the introduction of more effective tools. Much of the clearance that was previously attributed to the Saxons undoubtedly took place during Iron Age and Roman times as is increasingly being demonstrated by the wide distribution of finds in the county and by implication from palaeobotanical evidence from elsewhere.<sup>81</sup> Already finds have been discovered showing occupation of sites on the Liassic and Keuper Marl plain of Worcester and it must be anticipated that more will come to light in future years.

Evidence from excavated Iron Age settlements in Worcestershire shows settled communities occupying sites for several hundred years who engaged in a mixed pastoral and grain economy. Stock enclosures and grain pits exist in close proximity and do not seem to show a divergence between peasant grain producers and warrior pastoralists that has been postulated by Cunliffe.<sup>82</sup> Indeed, the nature of the relationship between the valley side settlements of Beckford, Badsey and Broadway and the hillforts that overlooked them remains unknown. Certainly both communities were engaged in similar activities and were roughly contemporary. Trading links existed via the Severn corridor with the ore producing areas of the Forest of Dean and South Wales. Similarly, both obtained pottery from the Malvern kilns. Whether a bond-overlord relationship existed, it is at present impossible to tell, just as the fate of the Avon Valley settlements after the destruction of Bredon Hill fort is also unknown.

The siting of the hillforts and the conjectural areas they commanded, as shown on Figure 3.4, can also be viewed speculatively in terms of territorial continuity. Studies of hillforts in southern Britain have suggested that the sites were chosen for their religious or social significance which they had gained as early as Bronze Age times. In Worcestershire there is no evidence to suggest these hillfort sites had any occupation before the early pre-Roman Iron Age. However, the territorial areas described in Figure 3.4 do, in the cases of Bredon, Broadway, Worcester and Kempsey, bear considerable similarity to the early Saxon monastic estates granted in the seventh and eighth centuries. However, the actual siting of the hillforts

would appear to bear closer relationship to strategic considerations than to any pre-existing religious foci.

More striking in terms of territorial continuity is the growing regional identity of the lower Severn and Avon area during the Iron Age which was to reach its final form in the tribal territory of the Dobunni, in the years immediately preceding the Claudian invasion. The area ascribed to the Dobunni, as suggested by the distribution of their coinage<sup>83</sup>, shows a striking similarity to the area of the Saxon Hwicce tribe whose boundaries were ultimately selected for the medieval diocese of Worcester, thus predating the evolution of county boundaries by some two thousand years. This has obvious implications for the late Roman and early Saxon periods, which will be discussed later.

#### Romano-British

As previously mentioned, in many respects the Romano-British period should be regarded as a natural extension of Iron Age C times, although Roman rule did bring about major changes in the settlement geography of the county. The proximity of Worcestershire to the frontier with the Silures meant that the Severn became one of the major lines of defence, bringing military supply roads, camps and a degree of urbanisation to the county. Also, the long period of Pax Romana allowed colonization to proceed at a faster pace than previously, as the area became opened up by a road network, and the terrace soils of the Severn and Avon valleys became more fully exploited by rural communities. The Romans provided the native population with a major incentive to produce an agricultural surplus in order to supply the needs of their army and also the roads and markets by which these products could be moved and exchanged. However, the Romano-British settlements that developed in Worcestershire did not necessarily benefit from any great upsurge in cultural level for, as Pitt Rivers has shown<sup>84</sup>, it was unlikely that peasant communities sampled many of the refinements of the Roman way of life. This view has been confirmed by Walker in an excavation of a Romano-British habitation site at Astley<sup>85</sup> (site 50 Fig. 1.7) where he concludes that the way of life of the resident farming community was virtually untouched by the process of Romanization.

The initial Roman impact on the area was a military one, for the central column of the three Claudian forces, probably comprising the Fourteenth and Twentieth Legions<sup>86</sup>, struck toward the central watershed of England and thus into the West Midlands. The probable ultimate aim of such a force was the conquest of Wales, as the undersettled and forested Midlands were unlikely to provide a major military objective alone. In order to protect the newly won area from raids by the Silures, defences were erected and a frontier supply road, the Fosseway, was constructed skirting Worcestershire to the east. Collingwood dates the Fosseway to the time of P. Ostorius Scapula, when a supply road was necessary to protect Roman troops and the friendly Dobunni against Silurian raiders.<sup>87</sup> However, Webster doubts this dating, suggesting the road was constructed earlier, by Plautius, when a new frontier with the Silures was adopted along the Exe, Severn, Avon and Trent rivers, the Fosseway thus providing a supply road behind a buffer zone.<sup>88</sup> By this means, Webster explains the development of roads and fortifications on the banks of the Severn from Gloucester to Worcester, Grimley, Droitwich and Greensforge (see Fig. 3.3). He cites in support of this the evidence from aerial photographs of the number of forts, many as yet unexcavated, around the Fosseway and in the area between it and the Severn.<sup>89</sup>

Within the study area, five Roman forts have been discovered; two of them, at Walltown Farm and Worcester, sited on the Severn, with a possible third at Hawford to the north of Worcester (Fig. 3.3). The fort at Clifton-on-Teme on the western edge of the present county boundary appears to have been associated with a similar fort to the south west, at Tedstone Wafre which is outside the study area. The other known fort is at Dodderhill, overlooking the Roman town of Droitwich, and is connected by road to the fort at Greensforge in Staffordshire.

At Walltown Farm, the fort was strategically well sited on rising ground on the west bank of the Severn, overlooking the entrance to the Stour Valley; a site that has previously been mentioned in connection with possible Neolithic and Bronze Age trading activities (Figure 3.2). The establishment of the fort has

been tentatively dated to the late first century A.D. and remained occupied until the late second century<sup>90</sup>, during which time the original turf and timber construction was replaced by stronger stone walls. The fort at Hawford had many features in common with Walltown, being situated on the west bank of the Severn, close to its confluence with the Salwarpe River (Fig. 3.3). The exact state of this site remains doubtful, as it was identified from an air photograph<sup>91</sup>, which revealed a ditch defining a rectangular enclosure some 300 feet long with rounded angles. Adjacent to this was a circular area, 50 feet across, again bounded by a ditch and with an entrance to the west, the whole complex suggesting a Roman military work, comprising a small fort and signal station. Two trial excavations<sup>92</sup> have failed to agree on either the date or exact function of the site, although on balance it appears most likely that it does represent a small fort built to protect the entrance to the Salwarpe valley and to give advance warning to Worcester and Droitwich of Silurian raids.

The largest military work in the county was the fort at Dodderhill standing high on a ridge above the Salwarpe valley, overlooking the civil community of Droitwich. St. Joseph suggested only a temporary occupation of the 12 acre fort<sup>93</sup>, but later work has shown that it was occupied for at least two periods, between 47 and 70 A.D. and 120 and 150 A.D. The military significance of the fort is suggested by its size of 12 acres, which is twice the size of an auxiliary fort, housing 1,000 men. The other fort shown on Figure 3.3 was situated near Clifton-on-Teme at a height of 613 feet on a flat-topped interfluvium between the steeply incised Sapey Brook and the River Teme. Excavations revealed two distinct periods of construction, and the paucity of finds suggested only temporary occupation during troubled times in the latter centuries of Roman rule.<sup>94</sup>

The total known military provision for Worcestershire appears relatively light and mainly temporary by nature, a situation which was commensurate with the role of the area as a buffer region close to the border between the civil and military zones. The main threat to Roman rule did not emanate from the friendly indigenous population, but from Silurian raids across the Severn.



The Roman military advance was accompanied by the provision of a road network which was initially constructed to fulfil military needs, but under peaceful conditions would have been used for purposes of trade and the opening up of previously underdeveloped areas for settlement. The Fosse Way was situated some way outside the county to the east and Watling Street to the north and the majority of Roman roads within Worcestershire ultimately connected with these two main roads. Ryknield Street (Fig. 3.3) impinged on the eastern side of the county, following the line of the Ridgeway south from the Birmingham Plateau, and appears to have given access from the Fosse Way to settlements at Alcester and Wells, and ultimately linking with Derby and Templeborough in Yorkshire. Although no Romano-British settlements have been discovered on its course through the study area, two spot finds have been recorded.

It is evident from Figure 3.3 that Droitwich formed the centre of the known road network during the Roman period, for roads converged on this town from Alcester (Warks.,) and the Fosse Way; from Wall (Letocetum - Staffs.,) on Watling Street, via the marching fort at Metchley (Warks.,); from Greensforge fort; and from Gloucester via Worcester. A section taken across the road running north from Droitwich to Greensforge revealed broad asymmetrical ditches from which the agger had been quarried and at least two periods of construction, although no evidence was available to suggest dates.<sup>95</sup> Margary has suggested that this road retained a military importance until late in Roman times<sup>96</sup> and therefore the second period of construction might well have been in the form of repairs to the road surface.

The road with the longest course in the county connects the two major Roman settlements of Worcester and Droitwich with Gloucester in the south and Watling Street in the north. The exact course of this road in certain parts is still doubtful<sup>97</sup>, but large sections north of Worcester are at present occupied by the road to Birmingham (A.38). South of Worcester the road occupied the terrace belt on the east bank of the Severn, although its course is not always coincident with modern roads. The other major road ran due east from Droitwich to Alcester and later became known as

a saltway (see Fig. 4.15), although there is no evidence to suggest that this function extended back to the Roman period.

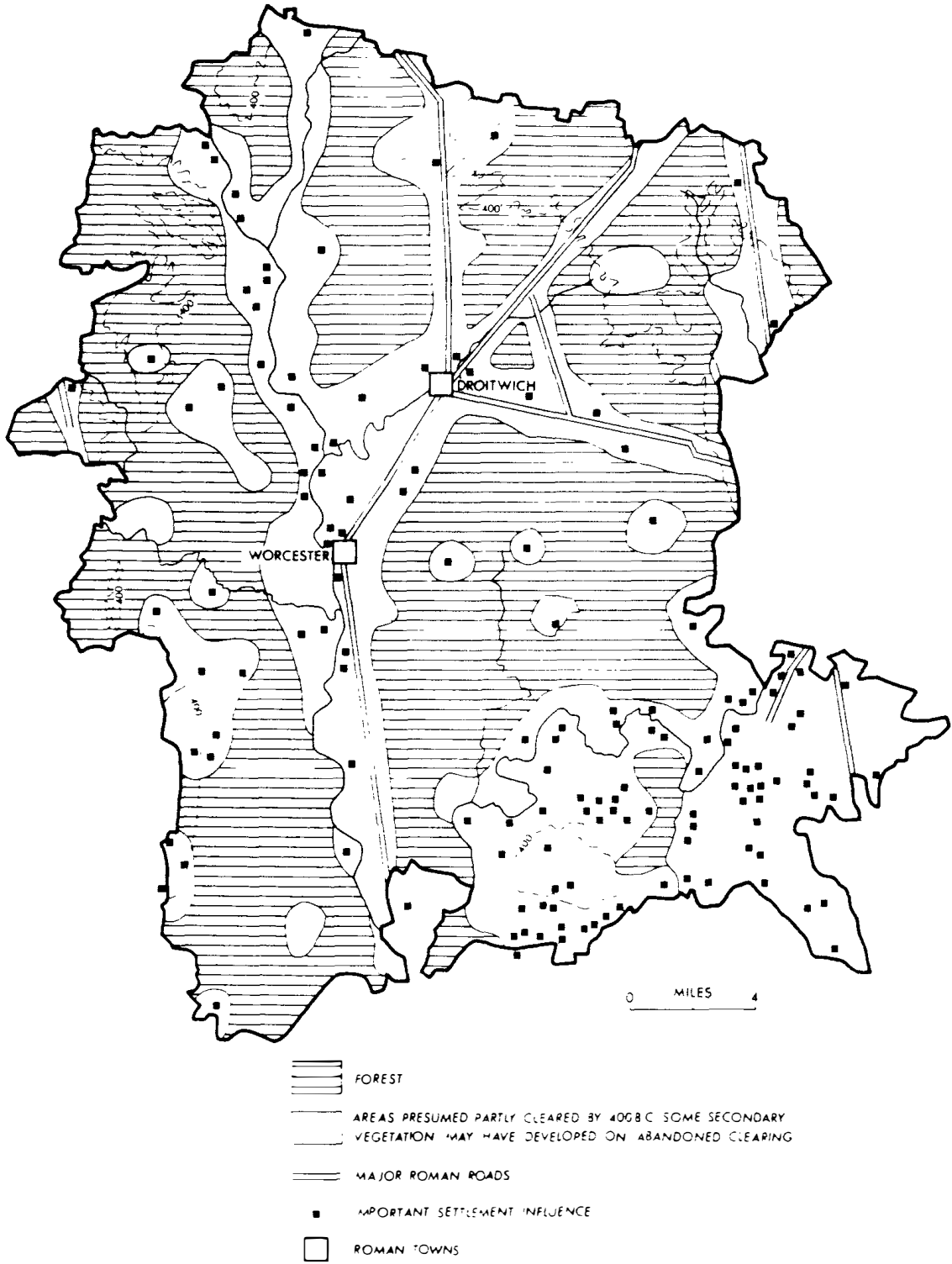
The courses of other roads marked on Figure 3.3 are only known over short distances and their destinations remain doubtful. At Cleeve Prior a short section of Roman Road has been discovered in conjunction with several Romano-British finds<sup>98</sup> and it is conceivable that this road ran through Badsey to connect with an early trackway leading to Cirencester, which was known to have been in use during the Roman period.<sup>99</sup> Similarly, another short section of road was discovered from an air photograph<sup>100</sup> in conjunction with the fort at Clifton-on-Teme, from which point the road probably forded the Teme and continued on to Worcester.

The roads discussed above would have represented only a small proportion of the roads in use during the Roman period for pre-existing trackways would have continued in use, as would the important routeways along the Avon and Severn terrace belts. Figure 3.3 illustrates that the centre of gravity of Romano-British rural settlement lay in the Vale of Evesham, where no Roman roads have yet been discovered, although it is possible that the short section discovered at Cleeve Prior may have been part of a road serving this area. However, it is more likely that the rural community depended on a network of small trackways, such as those discovered in recent explorations at Beckford.<sup>101</sup> Some of these almost certainly found documentary recognition in the Anglo-Saxon Charters (see Fig. 4.15)

The establishment of a limited road network seems to have been of more significance in the development of urban communities than the extension of rural settlements, which appear to have avoided these military roads throughout both Romano-British and Anglo-Saxon periods. Two centres, Worcester and Droitwich, exhibited some urban development during the period, although its precise nature is still very unclear. The site at Worcester, on the east bank of the Severn, was one associated with possible occupation from Palaeolithic to Iron Age times (see Figs. 3.2 and 3.3), but the establishment of a small Roman town provides the first definite evidence of permanent occupation. Little is known of the size or layout of the Roman town; such excavation that has taken place revealed a ditch of Roman military characteristics that

FIGURE 3.5

### ROMANO BRITISH WORCESTERSHIRE



would appear to circumscribe a small area now occupied by the Cathedral, the Bishop's Palace and the site of the old castle.<sup>102</sup> The majority of stray finds in the town have also been discovered in this area, although some glass objects, Samian and plain ware and a brooch were discovered on the Market Hall site.<sup>103</sup> The pottery ranged in date between about 75 A.D. and the third and fourth centuries A.D. with a vast preponderance of coarse ware rather than Samian. The overall impression gained from such evidence is of a pre-existing British population that had been defended and organised by the Romans into a frontier community perhaps trading along the Severn valley and the Roman road to Droitwich. Whilst Worcester had some history of previous human occupation, Droitwich, on the other hand, was situated in an area where archaeological finds for the Prehistoric, Roman and even early Anglo-Saxon periods are sparse, the area apparently remaining well wooded until late in the Middle Ages. It is difficult to see what attraction the Romans saw in siting a town here unless it was to utilise the brine springs, and although Droitwich is usually associated with Salinae, there is, in fact, no definite evidence of Roman exploitation of the brine springs. Although the size and significance of the fort at Dodderhill is reasonably clear, the settlement which clustered at its foot on the banks of the Salwarpe river is known only in part. The relatively few finds discovered were concentrated in an area of low ground beside the Salwarpe and dating from as early as the first century A.D., which corresponds with the first known period of occupation of Dodderhill fort. This could represent the evolution of a small community enjoying both the brine springs and the protection afforded by the fort, but if Droitwich is to be equated with Salinae, a spa town, then it would be reasonable to expect a fairly extensive system of baths. Despite claims that have been made in the past<sup>104</sup>, no such system has yet been discovered, although the excavation of two houses to the north west of the present town, revealed a degree of sophistication not found elsewhere in the county. Both houses upon excavation<sup>105</sup> appeared to have been Romano-British villas dating to the late third or early fourth century and were found in association with a long coin series (117-388 A.D.), a cobbled road, a pair of 'T' shaped corn drying kilns, a mosaic and an extensive area of sandstone paving. The late date of the villas compared with the first

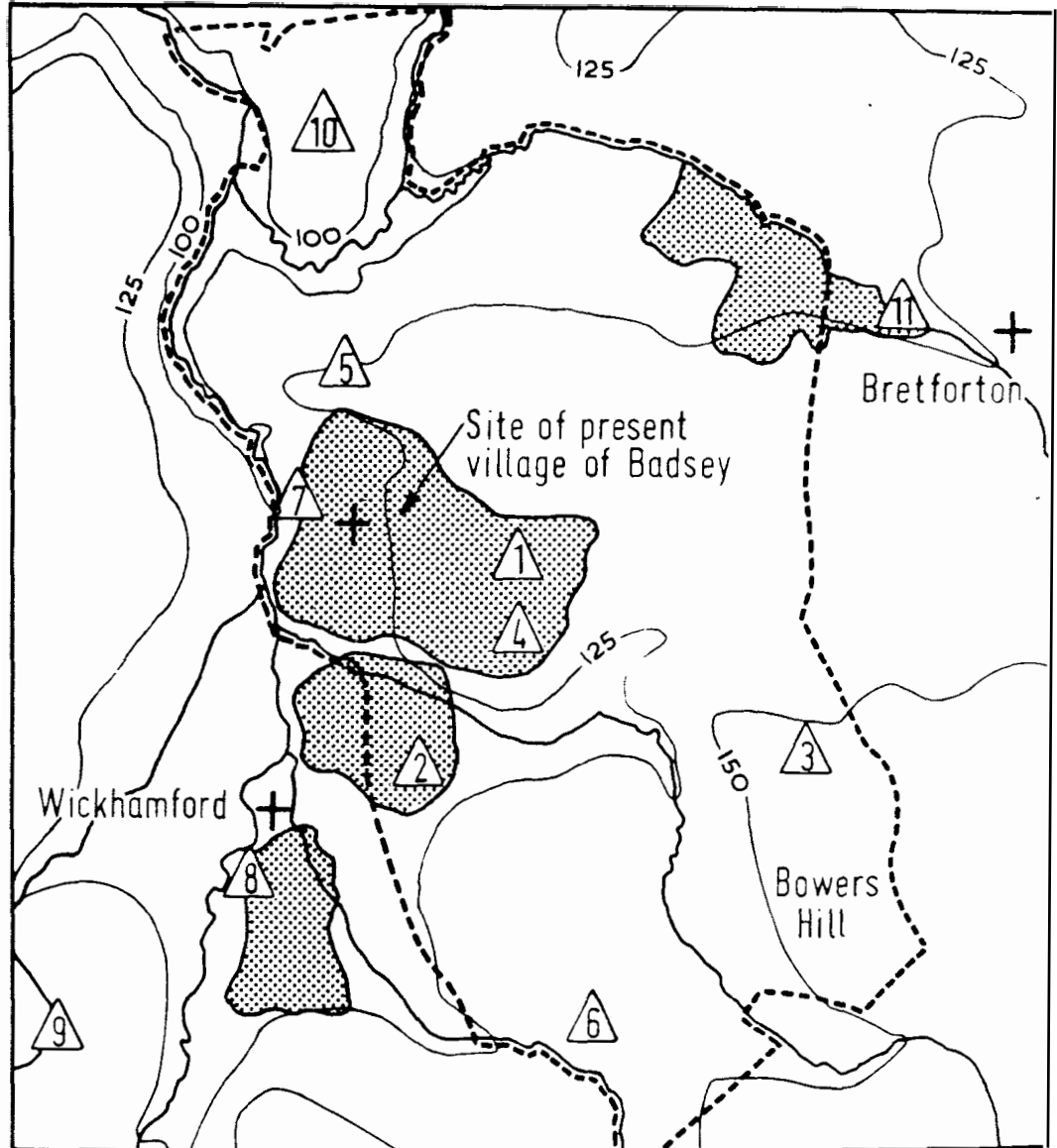
century finds in the town itself suggests that Droitwich had possibly achieved, by this time, sufficient reputation to attract such dwellings. The existence of corn drying kilns suggests occupation by wealthy Romano-British gentry, as the practice of baking corn to preserve it pre-dates the Roman conquest and died out under Roman influence.<sup>106</sup> However, the mosaics reveal a degree of cultural sophistication and Romanization not usually evident in Romano-British rural communities and, although there is no evidence to connect this wealth and the brine springs of Droitwich, it is unlikely that their proximity was purely fortuitous. However, such humble beginnings of urban life in Worcestershire would only have affected the surrounding rural communities in terms of their demand for foodstuffs and as a place to market such goods.

The main weight of evidence for Roman Worcestershire concerns rural communities and has been gained largely from an unpublished list of Romano-British habitation sites, compiled by Dr. Malkin and housed at Worcester Record Office.<sup>107</sup> When plotted these sites produce a notable concentration in the Avon valley, particularly on the fan and terrace gravels south of the river, whilst another less dense concentration appears along the terraces of the Severn valley (Fig. 3.3). Thus a pattern of find distribution established in Neolithic and Bronze Age times is repeated in the Romano-British period. On Figure 3.3 only those sites conclusively proved by excavation to be settlement sites have been so marked, although it is clear from many of the full descriptions given by Malkin that many others were also habitation areas.


Within the Vale of Evesham a distinct concentration of Romano-British finds and habitation sites occurs along the line of Badsey Brook (Fig. 3.3), which drains down the scarp face of the Cotswolds close to Broadway and flows into the Avon at a point near Offenham (see Fig. 2.2). This area is characterised by a series of fan gravels brought down the Cotswold scarp by the Badsey Brook (see Fig. 2.4) and distributed in such a manner as to link ultimately with the Avon terrace gravels. Figure 3.6 shows the location of Romano-British finds in the Badsey area, to which attention had first been drawn by Jones<sup>108</sup> and fuller descriptions added by Malkin.<sup>109</sup>

FIGURE 3.6

## ROMANO-BRITISH FINDS IN BADSEY AREA



- 1 BADSEY FIELDS
- 2 BADSEY BRIAR CROFT
- 3 BADSEY BLACK GROUND
- 4 BADSEY FOX HILL
- 5 BADSEY BLACK BANK
- 6 BADSEY GLEBE FARM
- 7 UNDER BADSEY
- 8 WICKHAMFORD (NORTH OF PITCHERS FARM)
- 9 WICKHAMFORD SANDYS ARMS
- 10 BLACKMINSTER (2000' S W OF)
- 11 BRETFTON BAPTIST CHAPEL

- PARISH BOUNDARY
- 125— CONTOURS
-  GRAVEL DEPCSITS

0 1/2 ML.

The area concerned is relatively small, lying between 100-160 feet above sea level and has three patches of fan gravel distributed through the centre of the area at a height of about 140 feet. The majority of the Romano-British finds have been discovered on or near the fan gravel and appear to represent seven distinct settlement sites. A few sites have been excavated, although the evidence remains inconclusive, a typical find sequence at Badsey being an association of a Romano-British burial, pottery sherds of both coarse and Samian ware, a whole range of miscellaneous objects from pot boilers to buckles, and a number of coins dating from late first century to late third century A.D. On this particular site some marked pottery and a pit, presumed to be Iron Age in date, were also discovered. From the siting of such finds in the Badsey area the attraction of both the fan gravels and an adequate water supply in the location of settlement sites is clear, although it also appears that some movement into the Lower Lias clays had also occurred during the Romano-British period. However, the two sites in the Badsey area that exhibited Iron Age precedents are both situated on higher areas of fan gravel.

Other finds discovered throughout the Avon Valley exhibit very similar characteristics in location and type to those found at Badsey. Occasionally, stone foundations have been unearthed by the plough and an extent of flooring has been uncovered at North Littleton. Flue and floor tiles were common finds, and at Offenham enough evidence came to light to suggest the existence of small ditched road surfaces. All of these suggest a well developed rural community distributed throughout the valley, but conclusive evidence from excavation is still largely lacking. By far the most common finds were coins, varying in date from about 80 A.D. to the fifth century, with the greatest number from the third and fourth centuries. Whilst a few settlements, such as those at Badsey, Ashton-under-Hill and Broadway, have Iron Age precedents and the Romano-British farmsteads on the sites are probably late first century in origin, the main period of development seems to have occurred towards the end of the second century. This complies with the closing of the Roman campaigns against the Silures and the establishment of a fairly lengthy period of peace. The finds of coins in such numbers suggest that trading became an

important element within the rural economy, and probably comprised the sale of livestock and cereals in the surrounding urban markets. The road system that had developed allowed access to Alcester and Droitwich in the north, whilst the old ridgeway route to Cirencester continued in use throughout the period. Similarly, by use of the Avon and Severn rivers and their associated terraces, the Roman towns of Worcester and Gloucester were also accessible.

Apart from some trial excavations by Malkin<sup>110</sup>, the only major excavations undertaken in the Avon valley were at Broadway<sup>111</sup>, on the slopes of Bredon Hill<sup>112</sup>, at Beckford and at Ashton Mill. At Broadway the site lay to the north west of the present village in an embayment in the Cotswold scarp cut by the headwaters of the Badsey Brook. Situated on fan gravels at a height of 200 feet, it was close to the crossing point of the Jurassic Way and Icknield Street and showed signs of occupation from Bronze Age times. However, during the Romano-British period stratified finds proved a continuous occupation for over a hundred years from the third quarter of the first century, although later Romano-British and Anglo-Saxon sites were situated higher on Fish Hill at about 1,000 feet near Broadway Tower. Bredon Hill continued from Iron Age to Romano-British times as a favoured settlement site, although the connection between the two settlement phases is unknown and at present must be viewed as entirely distinct. Iron Age settlement had been dominated by the two hill camps and a small agricultural settlement at Ashton-under-Hill at the foot of the south facing slope, but during Romano-British times the camps remained deserted, although some stray coins were found at Danes camp.<sup>113</sup> Settlement appears to have been concentrated on the south side of Bredon Hill, where the Victoria County History<sup>114</sup> lists a number of finds showing a degree of sophistication not found elsewhere in the county. They include a pair of silver earrings, several fibulae, Samian and other potsherds and a considerable number of coins, apparently demonstrating a fairly wealthy community, who could afford good quality fibulae, glass and Samian ware. This was substantiated by an excavation undertaken by Williams<sup>115</sup>, at Grafton, on a site previously discovered by Foll<sup>116</sup>, where a medieval farmhouse was found overlying a Romano-British site. Both reports confirmed the high



quality of the finds and the existence of a terrace some 150 yards long and 6 to 7 feet wide, which Williams suggested may have been a strip Lynchnet used in Romano-British times. Recent work on strip lynchnets, however, suggests that this latter was more likely to be associated with the medieval farmhouse, rather than Romano-British agriculture.<sup>117</sup> However, the considerable amount of ash, oven debris and pottery found indicated the existence of a corn drying mill and a pottery kiln. A high percentage of the pottery was identified as Glevum ware, dating from the beginning of the second century until the mid-third century, and much of which was of a wide-mouth jar variety, previously only found on a few outlying Cotswold sites.

Other finds on the gravel terraces to the south of Bredon Hill have been a Roman burial near Conderton<sup>118</sup> and a series of post holes describing an oval enclosure at Beckford which were identified from an air photograph. Upon excavation<sup>119</sup>, this latter was identified as an animal stockage in use between A.D. 1-70, when it was destroyed by fire. Two other Roman burial sites were discovered in the Avon valley at Fladbury<sup>120</sup> and Bretforton, both of which were single crouched burials.

Thus, throughout the south side of the Avon valley the impression is gained of the establishment, during Romano-British times, of a series of farmsteads, which were not only centred on the lighter soils provided by the various drift deposits, but also were beginning to extend onto the heavier soils of the Lower Lias clays. Iron Age traditions seemed to have been retained, as witnessed by the number of stone axes found and the continuing cultural and economic affinities with the Cotswold area. Despite the apparent wealth of some parts of the community, there is no evidence to suggest the widespread existence of anything as sophisticated, or planned, as a Roman villa system. Generally, it appears unlikely that the Romans made any great contribution towards raising the level of native agriculture, save in a few very specific areas, such as the Fens.<sup>121</sup> Certainly, in Worcestershire, there is no direct evidence for the introduction of heavy mouldboard ploughs prior to Anglo-Saxon times, nor is it likely that the Vale of Evesham could have been the type of sponsored Imperial Granary that has been suggested at Cranbourne Chase.<sup>122</sup>

However, it is possible that in times of trouble when legions were stationed along the Severn, a tax could have been imposed on crops and animals which might have encouraged, rather harshly, an increase in production. The discovery of a corn mill and an animal stockade suggests a duality to the agrarian economy, which probably formed the basis of any trading activities that in turn are implied by the large number of coin finds. Only one substantiated pottery kiln has been discovered in the area, apparently built for the production of domestic coarse ware, but was not sufficiently large to supply the whole area. It is probable that most of the roof tiles and domestic ware were produced locally, although the finer ware was undoubtedly imported from the Gloucester area.

Outside of the Avon valley the distribution of known Romano-British sites is much sparser, being concentrated upon the terrace belt of the Severn, the Salwarpe valley and the extreme western edge of the county, along the high ground of the Malvern and Abberley Hills (Fig. 3.3). Worcester formed the centre of settlement along the Severn, which, with its associated fort at Hawford, has been discussed previously, but other finds are mainly limited to stray objects not necessarily representative of settlement sites. For example, a coin and a fibula were discovered at Bushley and similar finds have been made on the 100 foot terrace at Upton on Severn, Severn Stoke<sup>123</sup> and near Ripple. A Romano-British burial site was discovered in 1833 at Powick, near the confluence of the Severn and the Teme, and contained four sepulchral urns, but unfortunately no further details are available for this site.<sup>124</sup> Further north, in the Severn valley, two Romano-British habitation sites were excavated at Astley,<sup>125</sup> a site previously mentioned in the context of Iron Age settlement. The sites were first identified from an air photograph, which revealed lengths of ditches forming four irregular enclosures. Upon excavation sherds of over 600 vessels were discovered, dating the first and second enclosures to between the first and third centuries, and the third and fourth enclosures to the third and fourth centuries. A well was also discovered, which, from pottery finds within it, seemed to date to the late fourth century. Walker concludes that transient occupation occurred during the Iron Age,

followed by permanent occupation during the second and fourth centuries, with a break during the third century. A second smaller site was identified to the south-east of these enclosures and illustrated the same pattern of occupation, although more emphasis was placed on the fourth century. Walker suggests these sites were typical of the general expansion of agricultural settlement that occurred during the Pax Romana in Worcestershire, the area being occupied by communities that continued an Iron Age tradition and were little influenced by any upsurge in cultural level that had been brought about by Roman occupation. This conclusion, however, seems to ignore the differences in wealth and cultural level between these Severn-side settlements and those in the Avon valley. These latter might not have demonstrated a vast degree of Romanization, but they did abound in stone building materials, Roman roof tiles, fibulae, Glevum ware and a considerable number of coins, which despite the short distance between the two river valleys, does draw a distinction between the two communities. Even discounting the differences in wealth, their whole economic background appears to have been different, for, in the former case, the emphasis was on self-sufficiency and isolation, whilst in the Avon valley trade and contact with other communities appears to have been an important aspect of their existence. The two areas are physiologically distinct<sup>126</sup>; for, on the one hand, the Astley region is underlain by Upper Bunter sandstones and basal Keuper breccia, where strong erosion by the tributaries of the Dick Brook (Fig. 2.2) has produced a diversified landscape of rolling hillocks of red sandstone. Terrace belts provide free draining, light and warm soils, but they are neither as extensive nor so diversified as in the Avon valley, where, on the other hand, the sandy river terraces and extensive fluvio-glacial deposits produce a whole range of different, free draining soil types. It is likely that these deposits were characterised by a much more open natural vegetation, making clearance easier and the resultant soils more rewarding for cultivation, for even the heavier loams in the Avon valley are sufficiently free draining to break down naturally into a good crumb structure. Thus, not only did the Avon valley possess an advantage in resource base capable of being exploited by Romano-British peoples, but also it probably had a

greater tradition of territorial and social organisation dating from Iron Age times than did the upper Severn valley.

Three other Romano-British sites discovered along the Severn add little evidence to alter the contrast drawn between the Avon valley and elsewhere. At Kempsey an indefinite Romano-British site has been discovered, together with a number of second century pot sherds<sup>127</sup> and similar inconclusive evidence was forthcoming from Grimley, where two parallel 'V' shaped ditches were discovered.<sup>128</sup> An air photograph of Bevere Island in the Severn, north of Worcester, revealed an apparent Romano-British ditched enclosure, which upon sectioning revealed both second century and medieval pottery.<sup>129</sup> Scatters of pottery have also been discovered on two sites at Little Witley (SO 764619, 775633) which suggest occupation sites.<sup>130</sup>

The second focus of settlement outside the Avon valley was along the Salwarpe valley and the Roman roads centring on Droitwich, which formed the nucleus of settlement in the area. Other sites were mainly identified by stray finds, which provided only limited evidence for settlement, as many were simply finds of coins. Red earthen ware pottery and some Samian ware were discovered at Hadley Heath, near Ombersley, in 1815<sup>131</sup> and at Martin Hussingtree an air photograph revealed a complex of irregular shaped enclosures which, when sectioned, again revealed second century pottery.

The final area of find concentration, along the western edge of the county, demonstrates even sparser evidence of settlement, finds being limited to a hoard of about 300 coins at Little Malvern and two pottery kilns at Malvern Link<sup>132</sup> and Leigh Sinton<sup>133</sup> (Fig. 3.3). The kilns probably used Keuper marl as raw material, which was also the case at Diglis, near Worcester, but excavation has only been undertaken at Leigh, where the main product was roof tiles, manufactured during the late third century. The siting of the two kilns in the western area of the county is remarkable in that although the area is virtually devoid of any known Romano-British settlements, it has a long tradition of pottery manufacture.

The construction of the pipeline across the Marl plain of Worcester has revealed some unexpected finds of Romano-British date.

Two sites at Hanbury (SO 947630, 973617)<sup>134</sup> have yielded Romano-British sherds, Severn valley ware and some Samian and coated pottery suggestive of occupation sites. Similar pottery has been discovered at Bradley (SO 992608) which suggests that cultivation of the Keuper and Liassic marls, which had begun during the Iron Age, continued to develop in the Romano-British period.

Field walking over the past few years, as reported in the Worcester Archaeological Newsletter, has produced a considerable range of Romano-British pottery from the Avon terraces and along the Worcester-Gloucester county boundary. Most of this pottery has been found on sites identified from crop marks revealed by aerial photography and will be discussed in the following section. Notable concentration of these finds have been in the vicinity of Wick by Pershore, Bricklehampton, Cropthorne, Aston Somerville and Dumbleton in Gloucestershire.<sup>135</sup>

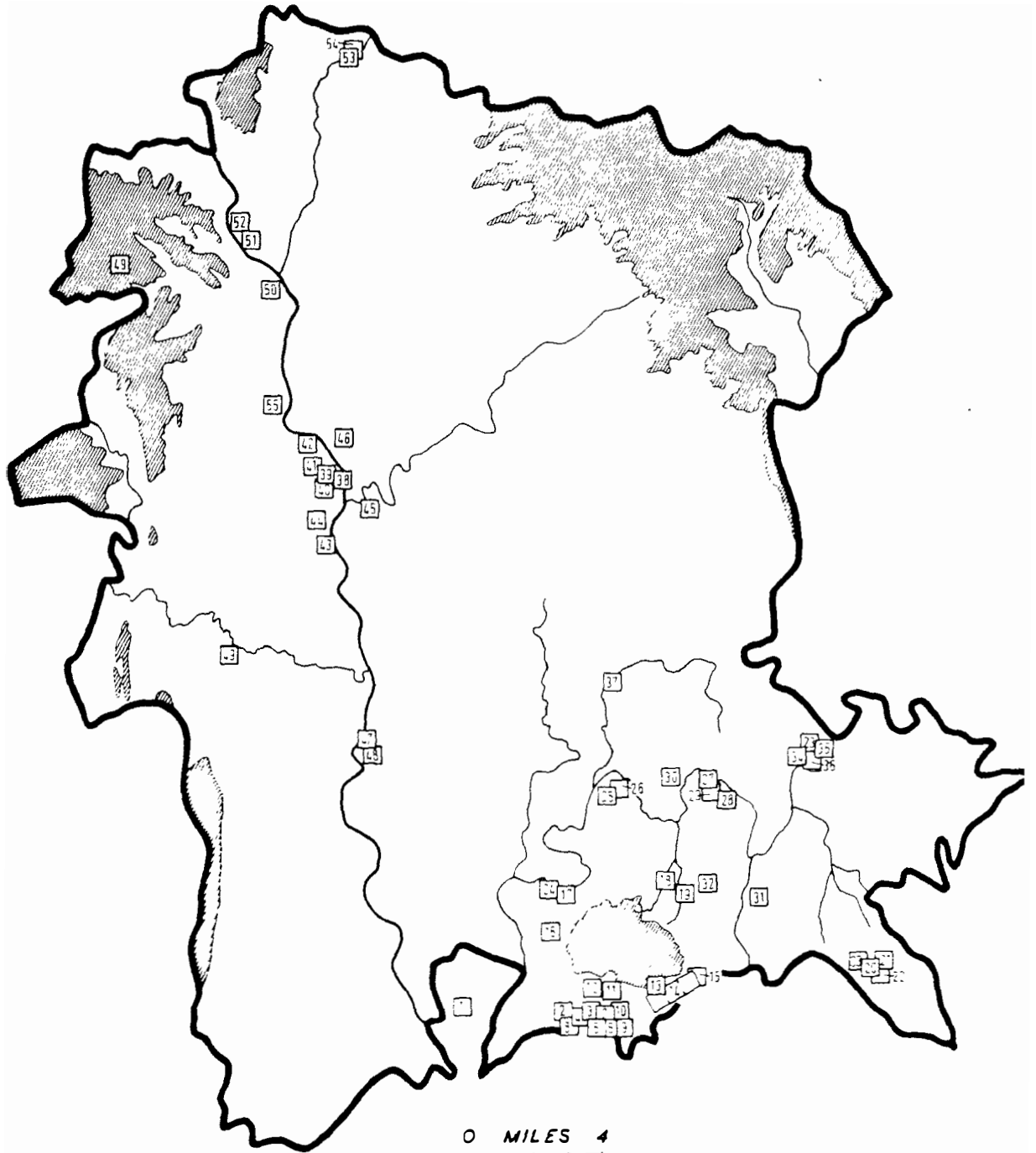
Evidence is almost entirely lacking for settlement during late Romano-British times and this period is better explored from the point of view of survival under conditions of a new wave of Anglo-Saxon colonizers and, as such, finds a retrospective place in the next section of this work. The only finds relating to this period have been coin hoards found at Malvern, close to Iron Age currency bar finds, and at Cleeve Prior. In both cases, most of the coins were largely late third and fourth century in date and appear to have been hidden sometime during the fifth century indicating a period of troubled times. It is tempting to equate this with pressure from Anglo-Saxon invasions, but it has been generally accepted that the West Midlands did not feel much effect from this source until the sixth century at the earliest. However, without supporting evidence, these coin hoards have little significance and will have to be discussed further in the light of early Anglo-Saxon evidence.

#### Aerial Photography of the Severn and Avon Valleys

As previously mentioned, this evidence is reviewed separately owing to problems of dating the crop marks revealed and the subsequent difficulty of organising the material chronologically. Thus, the

FIGURE 3.7

*SEVERN-AVON RESEARCH PROJECT SITES*



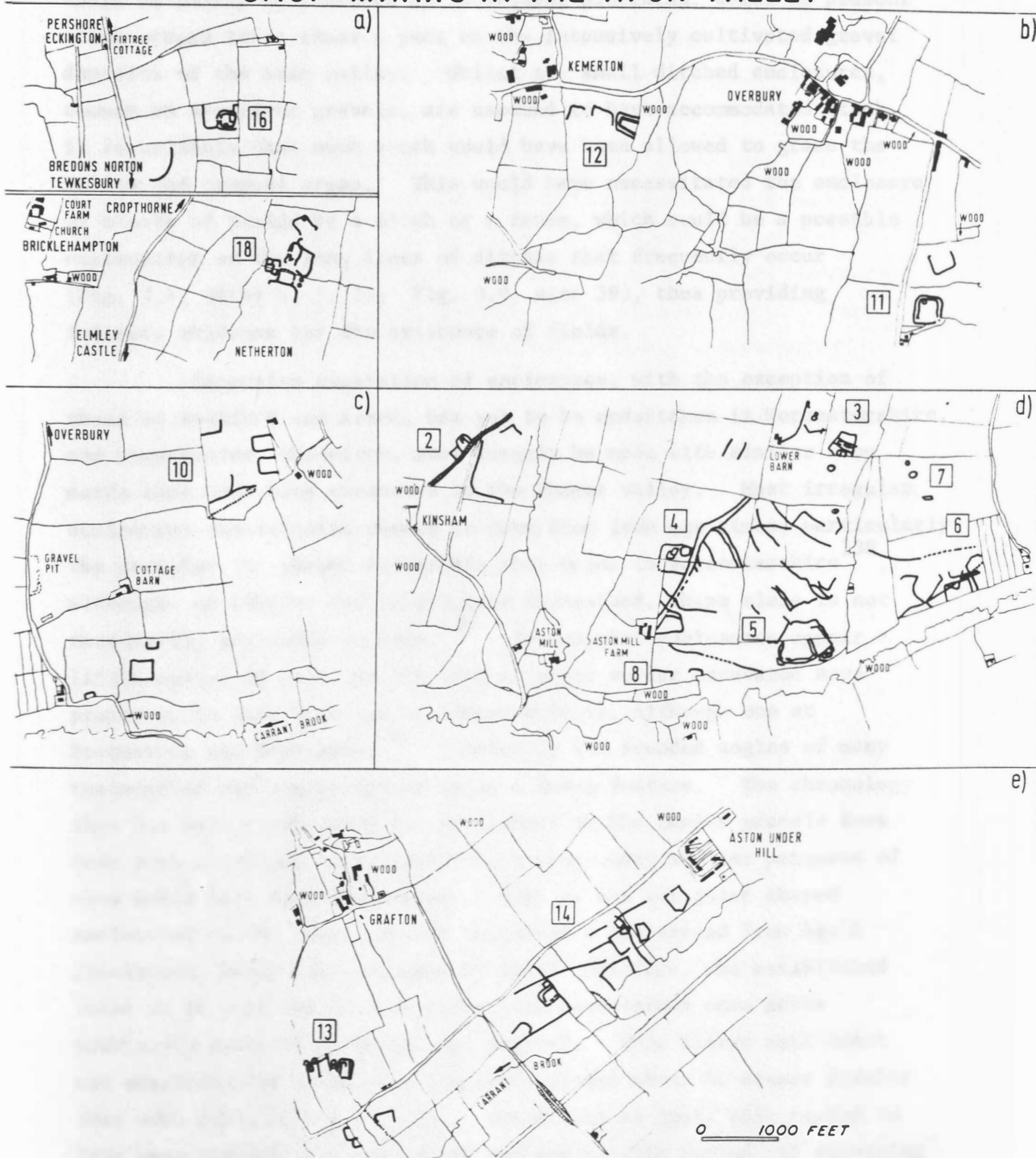
distribution of early settlement sites that has emerged from the work of the Avon-Severn Research Project is best considered against the background of all evidence for the prehistoric and Romano-British periods. Generally, unless supplementary evidence from finds or excavation exists, the identity of the sites must remain tentative, being based upon a knowledge of 'type' sites and the congruity of the patterns of crop marks revealed with excavated sites elsewhere. As a basis for identifying 'type' sites the general survey of crop marks on gravel terrace sites in England, produced by the Royal Commission on Historic Monuments has been used.<sup>136</sup>

The crop marks revealed on the gravel terraces of the two valleys can be roughly classified into enclosures, circles, cursuses, pit alignments and groups of boundary ditches, all of which show a marked affinity to those discovered in the valleys of the Trent, Welland, Nene and Thames.<sup>137</sup> A full list of all sites discovered in Worcestershire is given in the Appendix and which can be identified from Figure 3.7. In this section only the main type sites and their implications for Worcestershire will be discussed, whilst the overall evidence will be covered in the general conclusions at the end of this section.

Enclosures are the most common crop mark revealed both in the Severn and Avon valleys and throughout the country, and usually occur in complex groups representing several periods of occupation (see Fig. 3.8, site 14). Often associated with enclosures are linked lengths of ditches, usually parallel, and assumed to represent tracks or drove roads. Also, irregular clusters of dark spots occur on some photographs and have been identified as storage or rubbish pits, although it is possible that they could be produced by natural hollows in the gravel, or patches of different soil. Enclosures can be resolved into two main categories :- irregular rounded enclosures (e.g. Fig. 3.8, site 14), and rectangular or trapezoidal enclosures, often with rounded edges (e.g. Fig. 3.8, sites 10, 11, 12, 14). However, such a classification does not necessarily distinguish between enclosures and ancient field systems, although it is generally accepted that fields are usually represented by contiguous blocks of

FIGURE 3.8

### CROP-MARKS IN THE AVON VALLEY





enclosures, remains of which are rare outside the silt Fens. Where so-called 'celtic' fields have been preserved, it seems that they were not individually surrounded by ditches and thus their remains could be easily obliterated by subsequent ploughing, which at present often occurs three times a year on the intensively cultivated gravel deposits of the Avon valley. Whilst the small ditched enclosures, common on the river gravels, are assumed to have accommodated stock, it is unlikely that such stock would have been allowed to graze the fallow and cropped areas. This would have necessitated the enclosure of blocks of fields by a ditch or a fence, which could be a possible explanation of the long lines of ditches that frequently occur (Fig. 3.8, sites 4, 5, 14; Fig. 3.9, site 39), thus providing indirect evidence for the existence of fields.

Extensive excavation of enclosures, with the exception of those at Beckford and Aston, has yet to be undertaken in Worcestershire, and comparisons, therefore, must largely be made with similar crop marks that have been excavated in the Thames valley. Most irregular enclosures investigated seemed to date from Iron Age times, particularly the peculiar 'D' shaped enclosures that occur in Worcestershire<sup>138</sup>, although, as Webster and Hobley have emphasised, shape alone is not necessarily any guide to date.<sup>139</sup> Rectangular enclosures appear a little easier to date, as the vast majority so far excavated have proved to be late Iron Age or Romano-British, although one at Dorchester was Neolithic.<sup>140</sup> Certainly the rounded angles of many rectangular enclosures appear to be a Roman feature. The chronology that has been established for settlement on the Thames gravels does have some relevance to Worcestershire where many similar patterns of crop marks have been discovered. Most of the irregular shaped enclosures in the Thames valley represent a widespread Iron Age A population, which was succeeded by Belgic settlers, who established farms on or near the earlier sites, and even spread onto areas previously occupied by Bronze Age barrows. This latter settlement was characterised by smaller compounds fenced about by deeper ditches that were periodically renewed. Transition to Roman rule seemed to have been accomplished peacefully and during this period, if recutting of the farm and stock enclosures became necessary, the opportunity

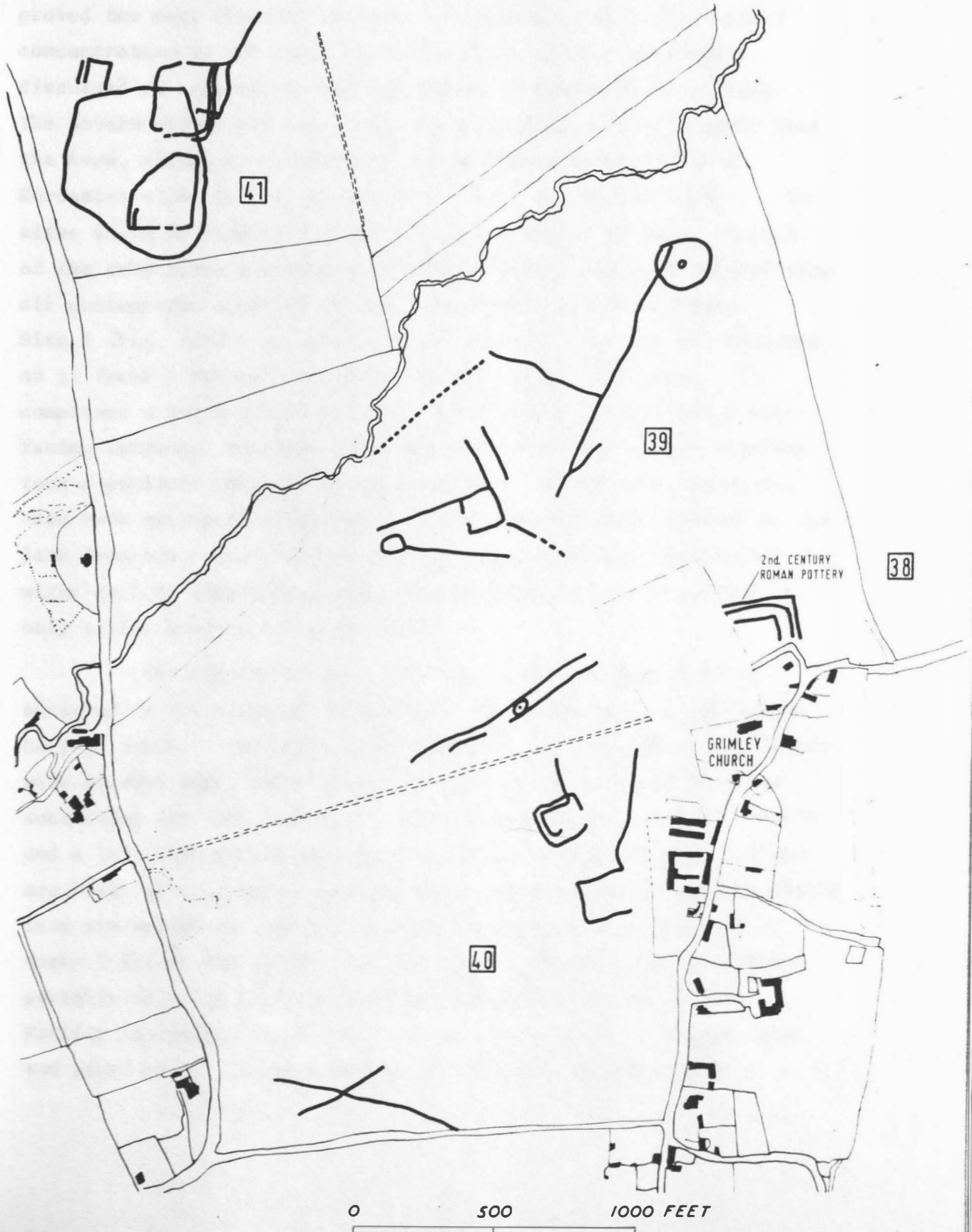
was taken to dig straighter ditches enclosing a more rectangular area. At the same time, the more wealthy Britons appear to have replaced their thatched round huts with more substantial timber framed farms and, in a few cases, even with elaborate villas. It is tempting to draw an immediate parallel with the crop marks found in the Avon valley, but without considerable supporting evidence this would be very dangerous.

Circular crop marks, or 'ring ditches' have been known for some time, although their existence in Worcestershire is a new discovery. The rarest type is easily recognisable as a religious or ritual monument by its large diameter, broad ditches with opposed entrances, and sometimes concentric arrangements of pit or post holes. More common are the 'compass-scribed' circles, probably representing ditches around Bronze Age barrows, although when between 30 to 50 feet in diameter and associated with enclosures, they are more likely to indicate hut sites. Some 40 circular crop marks have been tentatively identified as Bronze Age barrows along the whole course of the Avon, of which ten are located within the study area (see Appendix and Fig. 3.9, site 39 in the Severn valley).

Cursuses are not yet fully understood, but they comprise straight parallel pairs of ditches about 200 feet apart, running for distances of 500 to over 2,000 feet. Other common features are their location parallel to rivers and their association with barrows or large monuments, which suggest some religious or sacred significance. Those so far excavated have proved to be Neolithic in origin, but they are comparatively rare, only two possible sites having been identified in the Worcestershire section of the Avon valley.<sup>141</sup>

Pit alignments are more common, but no less puzzling than cursuses, for, unlike other crop marks, they are confined solely to river valleys where they generally run at right angles to the course of the river. Those that have been excavated showed no signs of ever holding posts, and it is probable that the line of pits with the resultant upcast between them formed some sort of boundary. In 'A Matter of Time'<sup>142</sup> it was suggested that their riverine distribution implied a probable date early in the Anglo-Saxon period, although Webster and Hopley report that excavation in the Welland valley had

FIGURE 3.9

**CROP-MARKS AT GRIMLEY, WORCESTERSHIRE**

suggested an Iron Age dating. Some seventeen examples have been identified along the course of the Avon in Warwickshire and Worcestershire.

In Worcestershire, as Figure 3.7 shows, the Avon valley proved the most fruitful in terms of crop marks with the largest concentration to the south of Bredon Hill, an area previously discussed in connection with the wealth of Romano-British finds. The Severn valley has a more sparse distribution of crop marks than the Avon, although an important concentration occurs north of Worcester close to the confluence of the Salwarpe and Severn. The sites shown on Figures 3.8 and 3.9 were selected as being typical of the crop marks discovered in Worcestershire and were redrawn from air photographs supplied by the Avon-Severn Research Project. Site 1 (Fig. 3.8) lies just outside the study area but was included as it forms a natural extension of sites within the area. It comprises a rectangular enclosure with rounded corners and a west-facing entrance, together with three stray ditches, which together form a pattern common in the Avon valley. Where such enclosures have been excavated elsewhere they have usually been assigned to the late Iron Age - early Romano-British period, and this particular site might well be viewed in context with Trowbury Hill Fort, which lies only a mile away to the north west.

The complex of crop marks on sites 2-8 (Fig. 3.8) is situated to the south of Bredon Hill, on the gravels alongside the Carrant Brook. The most common features are rectangular enclosures with rounded ends, which appear at sites 2, 3, 4, 6 and 8, often containing circular hutments. Drove roads appear at sites 2 and 4 and a large 'D' shaped enclosure at site 5, whilst on site 4 there are signs of a possible field system. Romano-British pottery dating from the second to fourth centuries has been discovered close to sites 5 and 8, and it seems reasonable to suggest that the complex probably dates to the late Iron Age and Romano-British periods. Earlier settlement is, however, suggested by circular barrow rings and grave marks, possibly Bronze Age in date, at sites 4 and 7.

Sites 10-15 (Fig. 3.8) illustrate a similar pattern of rectangular enclosures, although a number are double ditched and one enclosure, at site 13, seems superimposed on two circular barrow ditches, possibly indicating an expansion of later settlement into areas previously occupied by Bronze Age barrows. Site 14, at Beckford, as discussed earlier, has been excavated and proved to be mainly of Iron Age date, although quite extensive scatters of Romano-British pottery have been found in the vicinity. Site 15 and 16 both have finds associated with the crop marks; in the former case an Iron Age pot sherd, a Dobunnic coin, Roman pottery and a long coin list from the third to fourth centuries; whilst in the latter case, only an Iron Age pot sherd. Romano-British pottery has also been found in conjunction with rectangular enclosures on other sites at Wick (sites 25, 26), Overbury (11), Netherton (19), Conderton (10) and Bricklehampton (18). All of these suggest Romano-British farmsteads on these sites, but of course does not preclude the possibility of a much longer history of settlement stretching back into the Iron Age or beyond.

The site descriptions in the Appendix demonstrate that the majority of crop marks in the Avon valley comprise rectangular enclosures, but some of the more uncommon crop marks are noteworthy. For instance, possible barrow rings occur at both Broadway (20) and Havington (35), whilst pit alignments have been observed at Ashton-under-Hill (14) and Charlton (27), where over fifty pits are arranged in two lines, meeting at a right angle. Two possible cursuses exist at Charlton (29) and Norton and Lenchwick (34), although this identification must remain tentative until excavation is undertaken.

The Severn valley has a more limited number of sites (Fig. 3.7), the most important of which is close to the present day site of Grimley village shown on Figure 3.9, being sites 38-41 described in the Appendix. Finds of second century Roman pottery and the military 'V' shape of the ditches revealed upon sectioning, effectively identify the rectangular enclosure on site 38 as being Roman. Elsewhere a range of enclosures and drove roads are apparent, although site 39 is dominated by a possible barrow ring and central graves,

which could push back the time range of settlement around Grimley to the Bronze Age. The other Severn valley sites continue the pattern of 'D' shaped and rectangular enclosures, although further possible ring ditches occur at Holt (42).

### Conclusions

The distribution of early settlement in Worcestershire resolves itself into two major areas of concentrations: firstly, within the Avon valley and its northern flowing tributary streams, particularly the Carrant and Badsey brooks; secondly, within the Severn valley, together with (although of less significance) its tributaries of the Teme, Salwarpe and Stour. This distribution has some significance in terms of physical geography in that the valley areas provide areas of light, well drained soils situated mainly on the terrace gravels, in the case of the Severn and its tributaries, and on both terrace and glacial-derived detrital gravels in the Avon valley. These soils probably supported a more open climax vegetation and thus would be easier to clear than the damp oak woodland which dominated the Lower Lias clays and Keuper Marls, subsequent to Boreal times. It is within these valley corridors, which allowed ease of access and movement to early peoples, that the first settlements would be expected, but these purely physical considerations have to be assessed together with factors arising from migration and the evolution of social organisation.

This latter is evident when considering Neolithic settlement in the county for, although the Avon valley provides the most attractive settlement area in physical terms, the majority of finds are situated in the Severn valley and the higher ground of the Birmingham plateau (Fig. 3.1). This may be due in part to the chance nature of the finds and in part to the long history of intense cultivation in the Avon valley which has tended to eradicate many of the signs of early occupation. However, as excavation proceeds, increasing numbers of microliths and flint scrapers are coming to light suggesting Mesolithic occupation of the terrace gravels. The additional discovery of cursuses in the Avon valley add a degree of permanence and sophistication to Neolithic occupation of the area hitherto unsuspected. Due to the lack of large scale field monuments,

many authors continue to be dismissive concerning early settlement in the West Midlands<sup>143</sup>, but the slow but steady accumulation of small scale evidence continues to add weight to the prophetic suggestions made by Seaby<sup>144</sup> and Thorpe<sup>145</sup> in the 1950's. No longer can the existence of permanent communities during the Mesolithic and Neolithic periods be doubted, nor can the catalogue of finds be merely viewed as the accoutrements of a few trading groups passing through the area. Admittedly, the evidence is still thin, but increased excavation coupled with palaeobotanical analysis is likely to reveal in the future an even greater degree of forest clearance than is suggested in Figure 3.5.

Similarly, previously held views concerning Bronze Age and later settlement must now be modified in the light of recent evidence for aerial photography. The Avon valley, and to a lesser extent the Severn valley, have now taken their place with the Welland, Nene and Trent valleys as Midland valleys with hitherto unsuspected archaeological potentialities. Bronze Age finds in the Avon valley at Broadway, Cropthorne, Church Lench, Evesham and Harvington can no longer be viewed merely as stray finds, but must be seen in perspective with the addition of forty possible barrow sites along the whole course of the Avon river. These barrow sites possibly attest to a permanency of settlement that previously was only suspected, and Shotton's<sup>146</sup> views on the penetration into the heart of the Midlands, by Bronze Age peoples, who followed the river terraces, drift deposits and Bunter and Keuper sandstones, now assumes a greater degree of relevance. Similarly Bronze Age finds in the vicinity of Worcester and Bewdley, in the Severn valley, also assume new significance when viewed in context with barrow sites at Grimley and Holt.

However, the nature and form of Bronze Age settlements in Worcestershire remain unknown as none have, as yet, been excavated. An impression can be gained from Figure 3.5 of the main areas of known occupation and an estimate of the amount of forest clearance, but as this cannot represent the totality of Bronze Age settlement, it must be regarded as, at best, a minimum estimate. The nature of the social organisation of Bronze Age Society in the county also remains

uncertain. The slender evidence of a number of barrow sites and the solitary boundary ditch at Beckford could be used as starting points for theories postulating the existence, on the one hand, of a theocracy, and, on the other, of sufficient population pressure on the terrace belts to necessitate demarcation of possessions. Without further substantiating evidence, however, these must remain as speculation.

The question arises as to how far back in time any degree of permanent settlement can be shown to have existed in Worcestershire. Certainly older views that the West Midlands were virtually barren of human occupancy before Anglo-Saxon times must now be abandoned, although it is doubtful whether Neolithic settlement made any sizeable impact on the study area. Two possible cursuses in the Avon valley could be said to endow the rather paltry Neolithic finds with a greater degree of significance, but it still seems, on balance, that the most the evidence will allow is for a very limited degree of occupancy of the terrace gravel sites. However, it now seems justifiable to argue that the seeds, in terms of clearance, of late Iron Age - Romano-British settlement expansion had been sown during the Bronze Age, in the sense that the elements of later settlement distribution had already been established, albeit in embryonic terms.

Evidence for Iron Age and Romano-British settlement is now more plentiful and firmly establishes the Avon valley in the forefront of settlement within the study area. However, the relative wealth of settlement within the Avon valley poses problems as to the nature of the economy of the area during Romano-British times, for it seems unlikely that under the Romans the basic Iron Age economy altered very much, save for a very gradual increase in efficiency and production. Piggot has suggested that, at this time, the Jurassic Way divided the civil zone between a stock raising economy to the north and a grain producing economy to the south.<sup>147</sup> Worcestershire is thus placed just inside the stock and pastoral area, and whilst a considerable number of enclosures exist, which point to a stock raising economy, there is also sufficient evidence of grain drying kilns, grain mills and field boundaries to suggest a degree of mixed farming within the economy. Also wide-necked jars, probably used for carrying grain, have been found in some numbers to the south of Bredon Hill. Such



conclusions that can be reached are that by early Romano-British times, and possibly earlier in the late Iron Age, a prosperous community existed in the Avon valley, wealthy enough to furnish themselves with a range of luxury goods. The origin of this wealth was probably the product of trade of their animals and grain, initially with the Dobunnic capital of Cirencester and later with the growing urban communities of the lower Severn.

As to social and territorial organisation, evidence is very limited, although it seems that from the time of the establishment of the Bredon Hill camps some outline of social and territorial organisation had been initiated in the Avon valley. Exactly what relationship existed between the permanently occupied hill camps and the farming communities clustering at the foot of Bredon Hill is unclear, although some sort of lordship and bond community may well have operated, if only to make possible the construction and subsequent reconstruction of the hill camps. At the very least, the coincidence of the hill forts and nearby farming communities would suggest the existence of some sort of tribal organisation coupled with a local concentration of population. Even subsequent to the abandonment of the hill forts, the continuing importance, within the settlement of the Avon valley, of the community on the south side of Bredon Hill is evident from the relative wealth of Romano-British finds in the area. It is thus possible that there exists here the outline of an emerging pattern of the discrete estate similar to that postulated by Glanville Jones<sup>148</sup> that was finally to crystallise under the Anglo-Saxons. However, the exact relationship between the small Romano-British hamlets and farmsteads and any 'manorial' settlement is unknown as is the relationship between one farmstead and another. Also unfathomable is the status of the occupants, whether bond or free, independent or co-operative, which is fundamental to any attempt to categorise the settlements into any form of social or territorial organisation. Undoubtedly the whole role of the Briton in the organisation and economy of the Anglo-Saxon settlement is much in need of re-appraisal, but by the very nature of things the evidence for such must be largely retrospective in nature. It may well be that in the light of further excavation of both Romano-British and Anglo-Saxon sites, the first

glimmerings of the territorial organisation, later to manifest itself in the Domesday Survey, is discernible in Romano-British, or even pre-Roman Iron Age times.

The clearance of woodland within the county forms a natural corollary to its settlement, although the precise areal extent of either by the end of the Romano-British period remains unknown. However, in a recent study of Warwickshire, Thorpe<sup>149</sup> has made estimates of the extent of clearance at different periods of time, based upon the archaeological and historical records of that county. In preparing maps to illustrate this process, he states 'clearing influence', in whole or in part, has been assumed to have taken place within a radius of half a mile of all major occupation sites, clusters of finds, datable crop marks, and important routeways.<sup>150</sup> It is instructive to compare the maps for Warwickshire produced by Thorpe with similar assumptions concerning clearance within the neighbouring county of Worcestershire as shown in Figure 3.5. By the end of the Romano-British period, Thorpe's map<sup>151</sup> shows that in Warwickshire clearing has extended beyond the Avon Terrace Belt south to the Fosse Way, and north along Ryknield Street and the Alne valley. This resulted in the definition of the extensive triangular wooded area of the Forest of Arden, bounded by the Avon Terrace Belt on the south east, by Ryknield Street and Alcester and Metchley on the west and by Watling Street and its cleared flanks on the north east.<sup>152</sup> Across the county boundary into Worcestershire, the pattern of clearance by the fourth century, is very similar, extending southward from the Avon terraces to encompass the scarp foot of the Cotswolds at Broadway and the outlier at Bredon Hill. North of the river, the area of 'clearing influence' was probably less well defined, but undoubtedly included the north bank terraces with lobes extending along the valleys of the south flowing tributaries of the Avon, such as the Piddle and Bow brooks (Fig. 2.2). However, the penetration of clearance onto the Lias and Keuper clays of the Worcestershire plain (Fig. 2.5), despite the recent increase in the number of archaeological finds and occupation sites, remained limited, leaving a large area of probable damp oak forest to await later clearance. This latter area corresponds with the Forest of Arden in Warwickshire and eventually

became designated as the Royal Forests of Feckenham, Ombersley and Horewell. Such clearing influence as did exist here by the end of the fourth century centred upon Droitwich, the road pattern emanating from this Roman town, and the Salwarpe valley in general (Figs. 2.2 and 2.3).

The terraces of the Severn can also be assumed to have been largely cleared of virgin woodland by the fourth century although the discontinuous nature of occupation sites along the valley might well argue for the regeneration of secondary vegetation upon abandoned clearings. Indeed, the occurrence of the name Heath, particularly on the west bank (for example, Longdon Heath, Heath Farm, Hallow Heath) suggest abandonment at some stage during the history of clearance in the Severn valley. West of the Severn, clearing influence would appear to be limited to the upland areas on the western boundary of the county, particularly around the Malvern Hills, which formed an important and early strategic site. The terraces of the Teme valley were also likely to have undergone some clearance, as the valley provided access from the Severn to Malvern and the west, avoiding the marshy areas of Longdon Marsh and the woodland later to be protected as part of Malvern Chase.

In total, the extent of 'clearing influence' outside the terrace belts of the main river valleys remains less apparent in Worcestershire than Thorpe has demonstrated for Warwickshire, but otherwise the clearance patterns, at this time, show a general similarity, both emphasising the importance of the river terrace belts and areas of lighter soil provided by glacial sands and gravels for the establishment of early settlement sites.

In summation it can be stated that by the end of the Romano-British period a regional identity of the people dwelling in the lower Severn and Avon valleys had become firmly established. This expressed itself, in archaeological terms, in the territory of the Dobunni, which appears to have remained virtually intact throughout the Roman period as it re-emerges during the Anglo-Saxon period as the kingdom of the Hwicce. By this later time the centre of influence had moved northwards along the Severn from the Cirencester-Gloucester area to Worcester, with the establishment of the extensive estates of

the Church of Worcester. However, in the period that has been under review it is impossible to identify any territorial units below the major regional one with any degree of certainty. All that has been possible is to establish the basic distributions of artifacts and settlement sites as are currently known and some speculative territorial groupings as shown in Figure 3.4. These can then be used as a basic framework against which the greater information for the Anglo-Saxon period can be assessed.

## Notes and References

Throughout: T.W.A.S. is The Transactions of the Worcestershire Archaeological Society

T.B.A.S. is The Transactions of the Birmingham Archaeological Society

W.A.N. is The Worcestershire Archaeological Newsletter

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## CHAPTER FOUR : THE ANGLO-SAXON SETTLEMENT

Previous studies of the Anglo-Saxon period in Worcestershire<sup>1</sup> have viewed it as a time of considerable colonizing activity in which the assumed small and discontinuous prehistoric and Romano-British occupation of the river valleys was converted into a widespread distribution of villages closely approximating to the modern settlement pattern. Just as, in the previous chapter past assumptions upon the nature and the level of Romano-British occupation were seriously questioned, so the whole concept of a 'new beginning' to settlement history in the Anglo-Saxon period has been subjected to increasing criticism in recent years. Indeed some authorities, notably Fowler<sup>2</sup>, have even postulated massive population declines in the early part of the Anglo-Saxon period, although this particular theory has yet to be substantiated either regionally or nationally. Whatever the truth of this, the work of Glanville Jones, Taylor and Fowler<sup>3</sup>, amongst others, has given considerable currency to the concept of continuity between the Romano-British and the Anglo-Saxon periods. However, as was discussed in Chapter 1, 'continuity' is a very broad concept that needs considerable refinement in terms of individual settlement locations and the territorial framework within which they were set. Thus, whilst 'continuity' forms an important theme within this chapter it should be stated at the outset that the period between the fifth and seventh centuries is particularly problematic in Worcestershire, being poorly served by either archaeological or documentary evidence and is therefore a period in which any theory has only a small body of evidence to nourish it.

The purposes of this chapter are twofold:- Firstly, to assess from such evidence as is available, the distribution and nature of Anglo-Saxon settlement within the county, as part of the evolutionary strand that runs throughout the thesis. Secondly, to explore the establishment and distribution of ecclesiastical manors and estates, that, not only provided part of the vital framework within which the settlement pattern was contained, but also underpinned the fabric of the Domesday survey that forms the subject of the second part of this work.

### The Evidence

The local evidence relating to the Anglo-Saxon period falls into three broad categories : archaeological evidence, place names and the Saxon charters with their associated boundary surveys and leases. The former of these, archaeological material, is very limited within the county, partially reflecting the general lack of interest in Medieval archaeology in the past. Although this situation has changed radically in the past few years, the full impact of this new interest in the archaeology of the Anglo-Saxon landscape has yet to be felt in Worcestershire. Both locally and nationally, cemeteries of the pagan period remain the main excavated evidence and in Worcestershire these are few in number and limited mainly to the eastern part of the Avon valley. Although Romano-British and even prehistoric habitation sites have been excavated within the county, no Anglo-Saxon settlement site has yet been fully excavated. Indeed, even nationally, few such excavations have taken place. Despite recent excavations at Mucking, Maxey and Chalton<sup>4</sup> together with Wade-Martins' work in Norfolk<sup>5</sup>, the nature of Anglo-Saxon villages, if they were villages, remains little known. It remains an article of faith, rather than proven fact, that Anglo-Saxon habitations underlie the modern village sites that bear Saxon names.

As archaeological material can provide only a fleeting glimpse of Anglo-Saxon Worcestershire, it is place names that must provide the bulk of the evidence for the nature of the settlement pattern. The place names of Worcestershire were first studied in depth by Mawer and Stenton in 1927 in the production of The English Place Names Society volume for the county.<sup>6</sup> The interpretation, as was current in the 1920's, was essentially a Teutonic one with only passing attention given to any Celtic elements within the place names. Also habitation name endings such as -ton, -ham, -inga featured prominently within the analysis, particularly in the significance given for their contrasting distribution with the woodland elements of -ley, -worth and -wode. Despite its shortcomings, this work remains an invaluable guide to Worcestershire's name elements and has been extensively used in this study. Again,

recent work has led to considerable reassessment of the significance of place name elements within Anglo-Saxon settlement. M. Gelling<sup>7</sup> has highlighted the importance of topographical name elements, whilst J. McNeil Dodgson<sup>8</sup> has shown that the -ingas elements can no longer be assumed to be as early as was once thought.

The late seventh century provides the first local documentary evidence available for the study of the county. These are the Anglo-Saxon charters of which Worcestershire possesses a particularly fine collection. The best of these relate to the Church of Worcester and were copied, presumably from the originals, by the monk Heming, "quietus etiam si, ut assolet, continginet, quod aliqua negligentia testamentorum scedulae perderentur, earum exemploria sultem in ibi conscripta sullatenus oblivioni tradentur".<sup>9</sup> The other two collections also concern ecclesiastical estates, those belonging to Pershore and Evesham, although great caution has to be exercised in the interpretation of these charters as they have been demonstrated to be, in part at least, fabrications. Problems of authenticity are particularly difficult to resolve for, although proof of ownership, or rights over certain areas can be checked against Domesday Book, the date from which the ownership or rights commenced may well have been fabricated to read from many centuries earlier than actually occurred. For confirmation of authenticity it has been necessary to rely upon accepted Anglo-Saxon scholastic opinion and fortunately the Worcestershire charters have been catalogued by W. G. de Birch<sup>10</sup> and translated by Grundy<sup>11</sup> and Finberg.<sup>12</sup>

The Charters have been divided into three groups for the purpose of this study, the first of which represents the grant to the Church of a tract of land or freedom from dues from that property. There has been considerable controversy over these particular charters<sup>13</sup>, but for the purposes of this study all that is assumed is that such charters denote some sort of ownership or right over the estate in question, which allows the development of a chronology of the estates. Secondly, a group of charters takes the form of leases of parts of estates, usually for a stated number of lives with eventual reversion back to the original owner. These are exclusive to the Church of Worcester and date from Oswald's period as Bishop.

Whilst the historical significance of these early leases has been fully discussed by several authorities<sup>14</sup>, in this work they are mainly used to denote that the estate in question was in the hands of the Church of Worcester at least by the date of the lease. The third and most important category from the point of view of this study, are the surveys usually attached to both the grants and leases. These give the bounds of the estates and some topographical description, which allows the areas to be identified.

#### Settlement and Colonization

Tradition gives the earliest Saxon penetration of the county as occurring after Ceawlin's victory over the British at the battle of Dyrham in 577 A.D.<sup>15</sup>, which allowed the West Saxons access to Worcestershire via the Severn Valley. This view has been supported by Grundy<sup>16</sup> and Stenton<sup>17</sup>, who see this date as marking the beginning of a controlled settlement under Royal authority. However, if English settlement cannot be established prior to the late sixth century, a considerable gap in the record is created between this date and the last coin evidence of Romano-British habitation in the late fourth century. Thus, in order to establish any degree of continuity between the two settlement periods, the dating of the pagan Anglo-Saxon cemeteries becomes crucial. Unfortunately, this has proved to be a difficult task as Carbon 14 dating techniques often have too wide a level of tolerance to date the cemeteries accurately within the early Saxon period and, in any case, the Worcestershire cemeteries were largely excavated before the use of such techniques was widespread. The dating of the cemeteries has largely been conducted by typology of grave goods, but the evidence was sufficiently strong for Myres<sup>18</sup> to confirm a Saxon presence in the Avon valley extending through Warwickshire and into Worcestershire, by the end of the fifth century.

Whatever the accuracy of this date, it is true that the archaeological evidence of early English presence within the county remains slender and is still largely dependent upon the excavation of the Saxon cemetery on Broadway Hill. Situated on the Cotswold ridge, at just over 975 feet, the cemetery comprised eight known graves oriented on an east-west alignment.<sup>19</sup> However, only two graves possessed grave goods of value for dating purposes and included a pair of saucer brooches, a zoomorphic buckle and a square headed

brooch. The designs of the former two were of Roman origin, in use on the continent at about 400 A.D. and a close parallel to the saucer brooches that had been discovered at Boughton Poggs in Oxfordshire, which, on closer examination, proved to have been cast from the same mould. The Saxonised Roman zoomorphic buckle has several parallels, discovered in both Saxon and Roman contexts, and whose use appears to have been widespread on the continent during the fifth century. However, there are no good reasons why the Broadway buckle should not have been a product of Saxon craftsmanship, and it has been suggested that this stylized decoration had been adopted from the Romano-British and perpetuated by Saxons during the pagan period. Both finds indicate an early date for the grave, probably late in the fifth century. The square headed brooch, akin to groups B3 and B4 as classified by E. T. Leeds<sup>20</sup>, has no close Midland parallels, but in association with other grave goods, appears to date from the mid sixth century. Similar evidence emanated from the excavation of an important Saxon cemetery at Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire, where grave goods were discovered exhibiting the same Romano-British inspired motifs and comparative datings.<sup>21</sup> Although evidence from only two cemeteries is obviously limited in its applications, it does imply the existence of people of Saxon stock in the area prior to 577 and suggests some degree of co-existence between them and the Romano-British community.

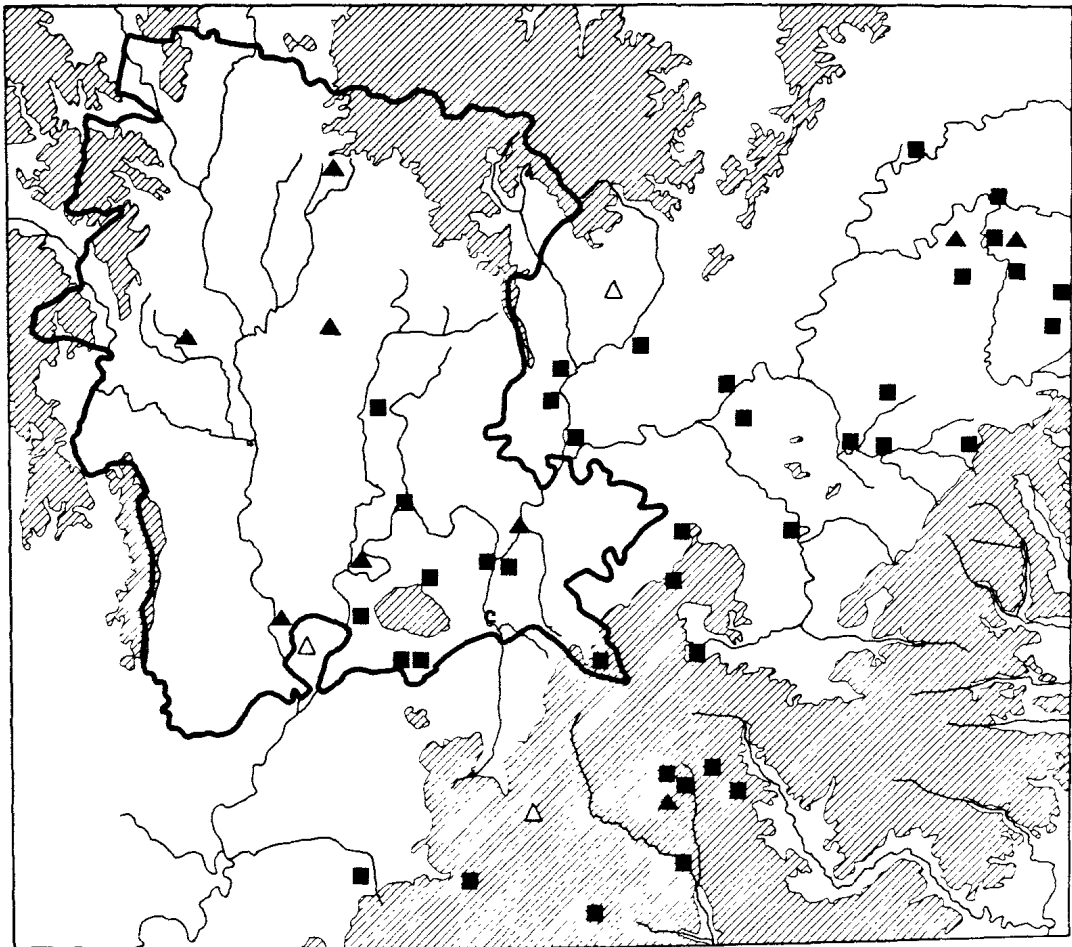
Unfortunately, other archaeological evidence in Worcestershire adds very little, for, of the two cemeteries discovered at Beckford, the first (A and B)<sup>22</sup> appeared to have been in use during the sixth century, whilst the second appeared to represent a large community (107 graves), but gave little indication as to the period of use. Upton Snodsbury<sup>23</sup> and Little Hampton cemeteries (Fig. 4.1) appeared later in date, probably late sixth and early seventh centuries, and whilst some grave goods displayed Anglian influence, the majority were Saxon in nature, and of a late Broadway type. Other finds yielded little of datable value for this early period, including recent discoveries of possible Saxon burials at Fladbury and Worcester and a saucer brooch at Fladbury.<sup>24</sup>

The distribution of cemetery sites is shown on Figure 4.1, where the Worcestershire evidence is shown in conjunction with that



FIGURE 4.1

**ANGLO-SAXON CEMETERIES AND  
EARLY PLACE NAME ELEMENTS  
—THE WEST MIDLANDS**



- ANGLO-SAXON CEMETERY
- ANGLO-SAXON COIN (WORCESTERSHIRE ONLY)
- △ PLACE NAME IN —INGAS—
- ▲ PLACE NAME IN —INGA—
- COUNTY BOUNDARY OF WORCESTERSHIRE
- ▨ LAND OVER 400 FEET

0 MILES 8

of the neighbouring counties of Warwickshire and Gloucestershire. The distribution declines from east to west suggesting that Worcestershire was placed on the margins of an early Saxon intrusion emanating from the east, unlike the later intrusion associated with Ceawlin which came via the lower Severn valley. This may partially explain some of the Anglian influence found in the cemeteries which also appears in place names such as Phepson.

The individual sites of the cemeteries, although only indicating the proximity of a habitation site, are of interest in respect to possible relationships with Romano-British settlements. In fact, all the sites, with the possible exception of Upton Snodsbury, are close to established Romano-British sites and in the case of Beckford and Broadway (Figs. 4.1 and 3.3) appear virtually coincident with known Romano-British settlements.<sup>25</sup> It seems highly unlikely that the well established community in the Avon valley, during Romano-British times, could have been destroyed by what appears to be a small group of Saxons and grave goods evidence argues for some form of coexistence. Also, if the chronicles can be accepted, there must have still been a strong, organised British community to fight against Ceawlin in 577 A.D. Cook advanced the theory that the cemeteries represent the remains of a small Saxon group, whose initial entrance was via the Wash and who were subsequently driven west by advancing Angles.<sup>26</sup> This implies that the Saxons lived in peaceful harmony with the existing Romano-British community, in settlements alongside their possible village sites, and absorbed a sufficiency of their crafts to manufacture objects of the kind found at Broadway, Stratford and Bidford. However, another interpretation can be put upon the existence of Saxon settlements close to Romano-British communities in this particular period. This entails viewing the Saxons as Feoderati employed for the protection of the Romano-British community after the withdrawal of the Roman legions. Such Feoderati are known to have existed in eastern parts of the county and S. C. Hawkes has argued for a much wider distribution than has been previously acknowledged.<sup>27</sup> She points to the failure in this country to locate and excavate late Roman cemeteries, as well as the failure to compare evidence from the few excavated with early Anglo-Saxon material.

On the continent the pattern of German Feoderati, settled behind the frontiers, is well known and supporting evidence can be cited from the continental military metalwork that has been discovered in eastern and southern England for their existence on a fairly wide scale in this country. Thus S. C. Hawkes suggested that a line of defence was formed across the West Midlands, comprised of a type of yeomanry based on the towns. The use of military buckles well into the fifth century suggests that the force was maintained, possibly with further Germanic recruitments, long after 410 A.D., when the British were left to take measures for their own defence.

This thesis provides an attractive interpretation of early Saxon finds in Worcestershire, for the buckles from Broadway and Beckford can be associated with continental examples and skeletal evidence at Broadway suggests that the males were very powerfully built, which would be consistent with their possible employment as warriors.<sup>28</sup> Also, the cemeteries in the Avon valley are sited such that the Saxon population could have been associated with the protection of the Romano-British community. A similar correlation of early Saxon cemeteries and Romano-British habitation sites is also apparent in Warwickshire and Gloucestershire, in the latter case the prime example being the cemetery at Fairfield just outside the Romano-British town of Cirencester. This thesis would also allow for the West Midlands being in British hands prior to Ceawlin's victory at Dyrham in 577 A.D.

However well this theory seems to accommodate the known facts, a cautionary note must be introduced, as the evidence upon which it rests is very slender and open to wide interpretation. Until further evidence can be obtained from excavation of late Roman and early Saxon cemeteries, the existence of Saxon Feoderati in the West Midlands must remain, at best, a supposition. Indeed the total excavated archaeological evidence for the Anglo-Saxon period provides a very inadequate framework within which to assess settlement progress and it is still to place name and charter evidence that recourse has to be made. By its very nature, the connection of this latter evidence with the earliest period of invasion tends to be more tenuous and any conclusions reached, more tentative.

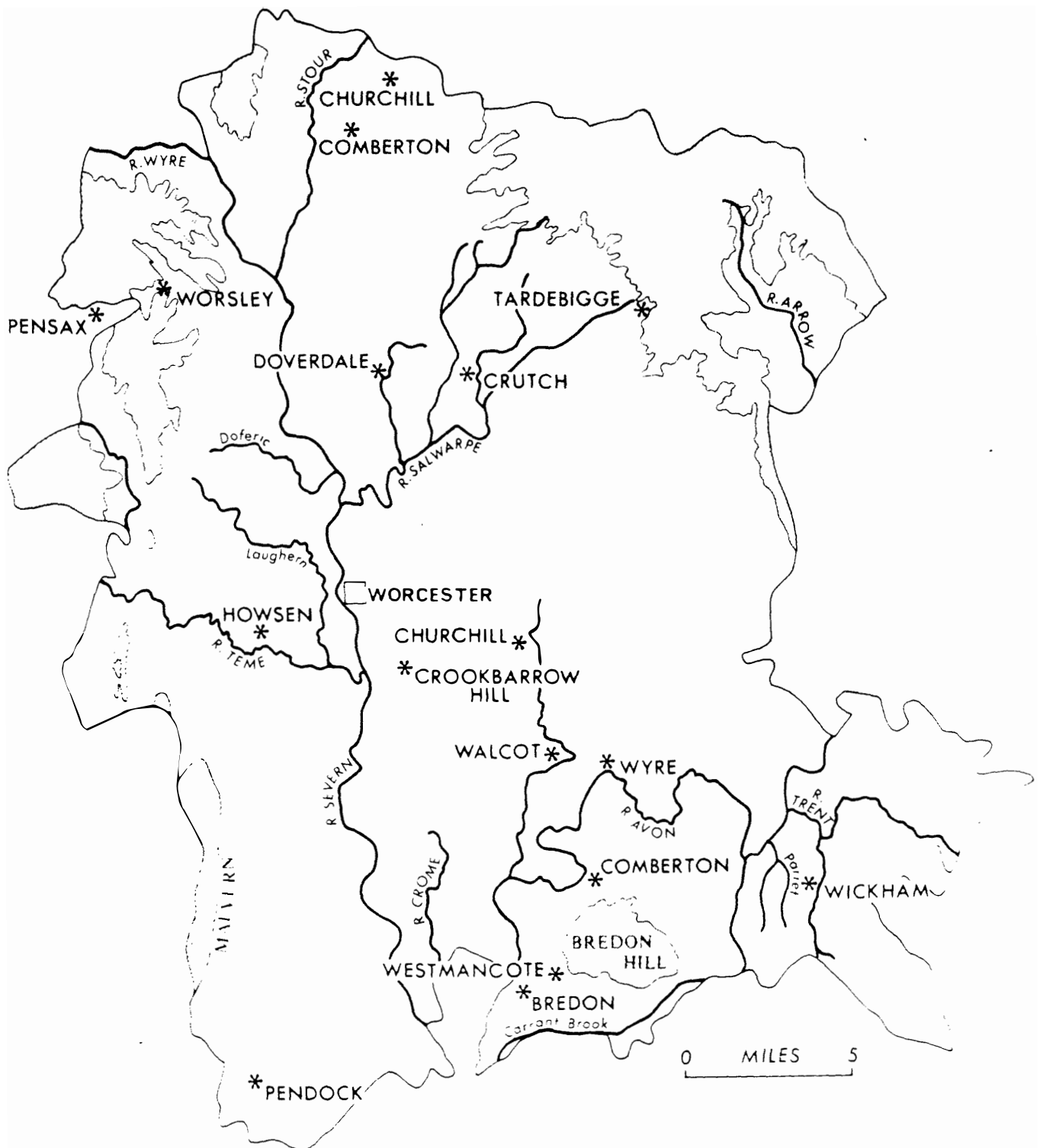
Despite the rich variety of Saxon name elements found in the county, most authorities in the past have deemed these elements to be relatively late in form.<sup>29</sup> This has been based upon the scarcity of elements thought to be very early in form, such as -ingas name endings, and the number of feminine personal elements that occur. This would seem at first sight to confirm the literary tradition of controlled settlement in the late sixth and early seventh centuries, particularly if the rich crop of personal name elements are taken as evidence of manorialisation. However, recent work by McNeil Dodgson<sup>30</sup> has displaced the -ingas name endings from their role as indicators of the earliest English settlement and M. Gelling has shown in Berkshire that the use of personal names, although usually associated with manorialisation, often supersedes earlier topographical names which were applied to whole groups of villages.<sup>31</sup> Indeed the whole field of place name scholarship has been thrown into some considerable turmoil in recent years, from which the only safe conclusion appears to be that no prior assumptions should be made regarding the chronology of name elements of any particular county before beginning an analysis of their spatial distribution. This would seem particularly applicable to Worcestershire, where it has long been noted that the type and mixture of elements appear to be particularly idiosyncratic, suggesting a degree of isolation in the period when the names were first being coined.<sup>22</sup>

Little controversy surrounds the interpretation of Celtic or British name elements where they can be shown to exist. It is generally accepted that they represent survival from a period when both Celtic languages and English were commonly spoken and thus can be used to denote the survival of a British population. The difficulties surrounding these name elements are twofold; firstly the identification of the name elements when the predominant interpretation has been a Teutonic one - a feature pointed out some time ago by Dorothy Sylvester<sup>33</sup>; and secondly, that the majority of such name elements refer to topographical features such as hills and rivers and, therefore, do not directly imply the existence of settlements.

The distribution of Celtic name elements in Worcestershire are shown on Figure 4.2. Included on this map are all elements which can be defined as Celtic as well as Old English elements which appear to refer to the British, such as *cumbra*, *bretta* and *walla*. Even allowing the widest interpretation possible, only some thirty Celtic elements can be identified. As can be seen, they demonstrate a slight, but widespread distribution throughout the county with the possible exception of the south-west and large parts of the plain of Worcester, where these elements are lacking. Most commonly the Celtic elements are found in river and stream names, although again it is noticeable that they are lacking in the relatively large numbers of small streams that drain into the Avon from the Worcester plain area. Of the Celtic elements in settlement names, many take the form of topographical description, such as the Old Welsh cruc meaning hill, found in Crutch, Churchill and Crookbarrow. Similarly, the Old Welsh adjectival element crum, meaning crooked, is found in the name Croome and presumably refers to the nature of the stream which later became applied to the villages which stand on its banks. Pen also refers to a hill and is found in Pendock and Pensax, the latter being remarkable as one of the very few references to Saxons in Celtic place names. The first element in Worcester itself, appears to have a Celtic origin, in the form of Wigra, the meaning of which is unclear but again may well be connected with a stream name found in Wyre Forest, Wyre Piddle on the Avon, and possibly in Worsley and Wickham. Thus even in those Celtic name elements associated with settlements the allusion is overwhelmingly topographical, which tends to suggest the adoption of these elements into the English language by people of farming stock whose prime concern was with describing the cardinal features of the physical rather than the human landscape. The only exceptions to this are those name elements which are not strictly Celtic at all, but are Old English elements which appear to describe settlements of Welsh speaking peoples, or as has been suggested, owned by Welsh speaking persons. Such is the case of Comberton (the farm of the Welshman), Walcot (the cottages of the Welshman) and possibly Westmancote. Throughout the country, these name elements are often associated with servile contexts, representing small subsidiary settlements within a

FIGURE 4.2

## DISTRIBUTION OF CELTIC NAME ELEMENTS



larger estate unit, a fact often recorded in the second part of their name, -cot, meaning a humble dwelling. The implication would be that the British community became absorbed into Anglo-Saxon society at a servile level, which would allow for a continued influence on Anglo-Saxon art forms and at the same time provide the foundation of the large slave population found in western counties in Domesday Book. However attractive this thesis may appear, it can hardly apply to the Comberton found in the Avon valley, which formed the centre of a rich estate, one of the jewels in the crown of the Church of Pershore's possessions.

Despite the increasing number of name elements which are now being ascribed to Celtic origin, it would still be rash to make any firm conclusions based upon the slender distribution shown on Figure 4.2. However, it is clear that the interpretation placed upon the few Celtic elements identified by Mawer and Stenton<sup>34</sup> and Grundy<sup>35</sup> as representing a handful of Welsh speakers pushed into the least accessible parts of the county is no longer acceptable. Celtic name elements are just as common in the Avon valley which was well occupied by Romano-British peoples as they are in the more wooded north and west. Indeed if the claims for a Celtic origin for the place names of Pershore and Evesham made by D. C. Cox<sup>36</sup> are accepted, not only does the Avon valley demonstrate the greatest density of Celtic names but, more significantly, all three centres of the major ecclesiastical estates that were to dominate the county from the seventh century onwards bear Celtic elements within their names.

Past studies of the Old English elements in Worcestershire place names have always drawn a distinction between habitation name endings, such as -ton, -ham and -ing and those which imply some form of woodland clearance, such as -leah, -worth, -hyrst and -holt, but which do not directly refer to habitation. It was assumed that the former elements were the earliest, whilst the latter represented a secondary phase of Saxon colonization into the still largely undisturbed woodland areas of the county. Those elements bearing topographical elements were largely ignored, despite the obvious significance that elements such as -wic (a group of buildings)

FIGURE 4.3

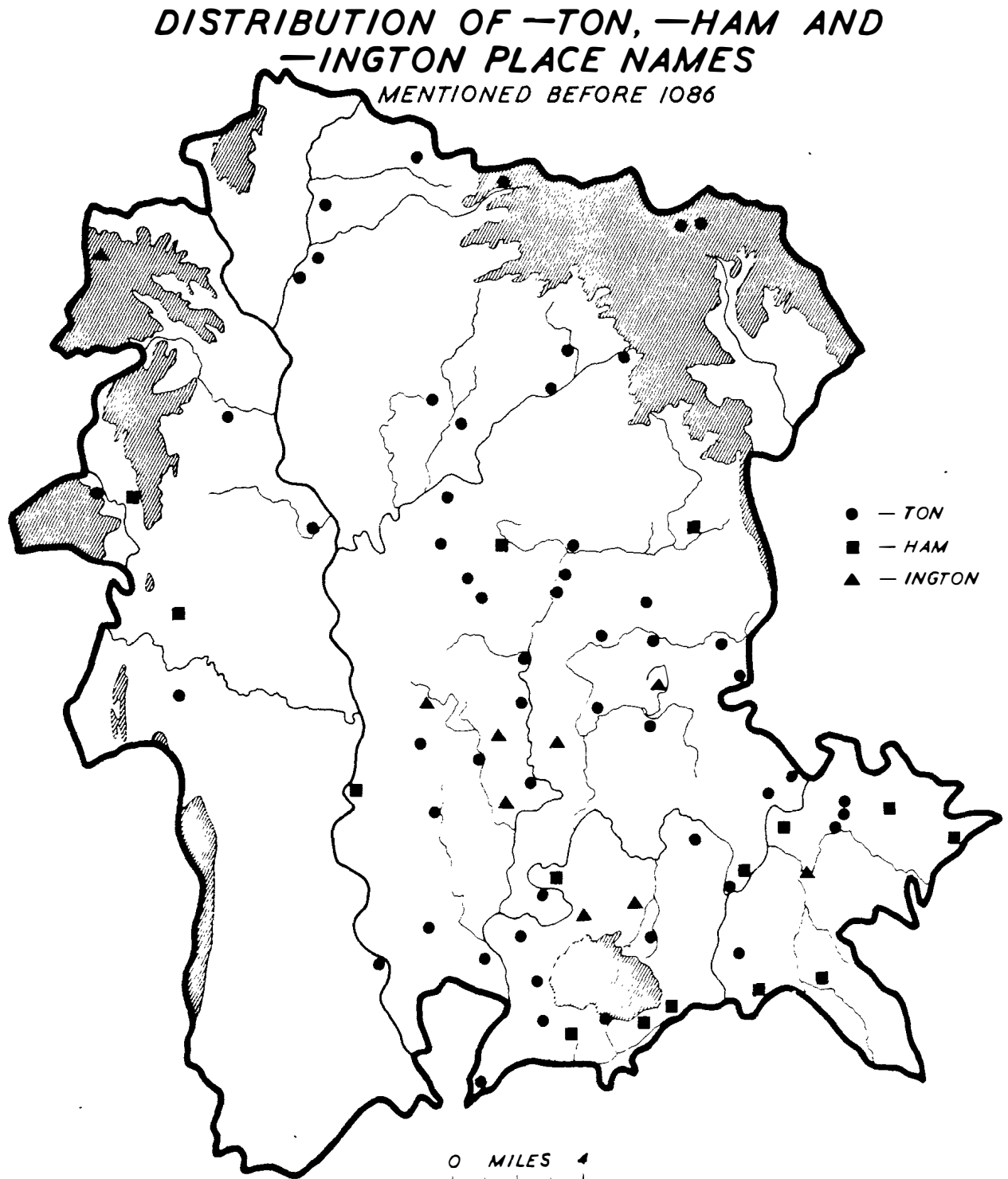
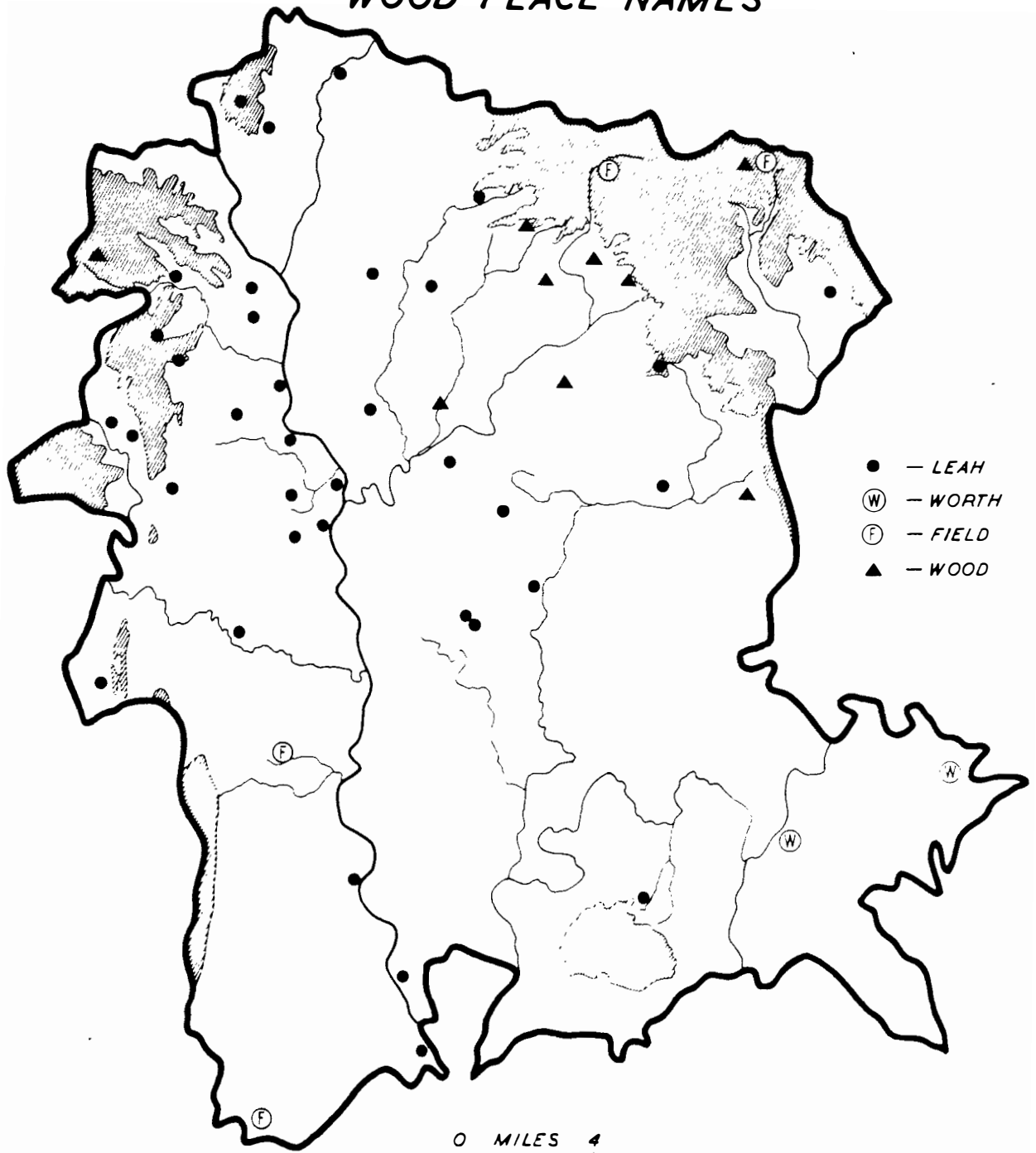




FIGURE 4.4

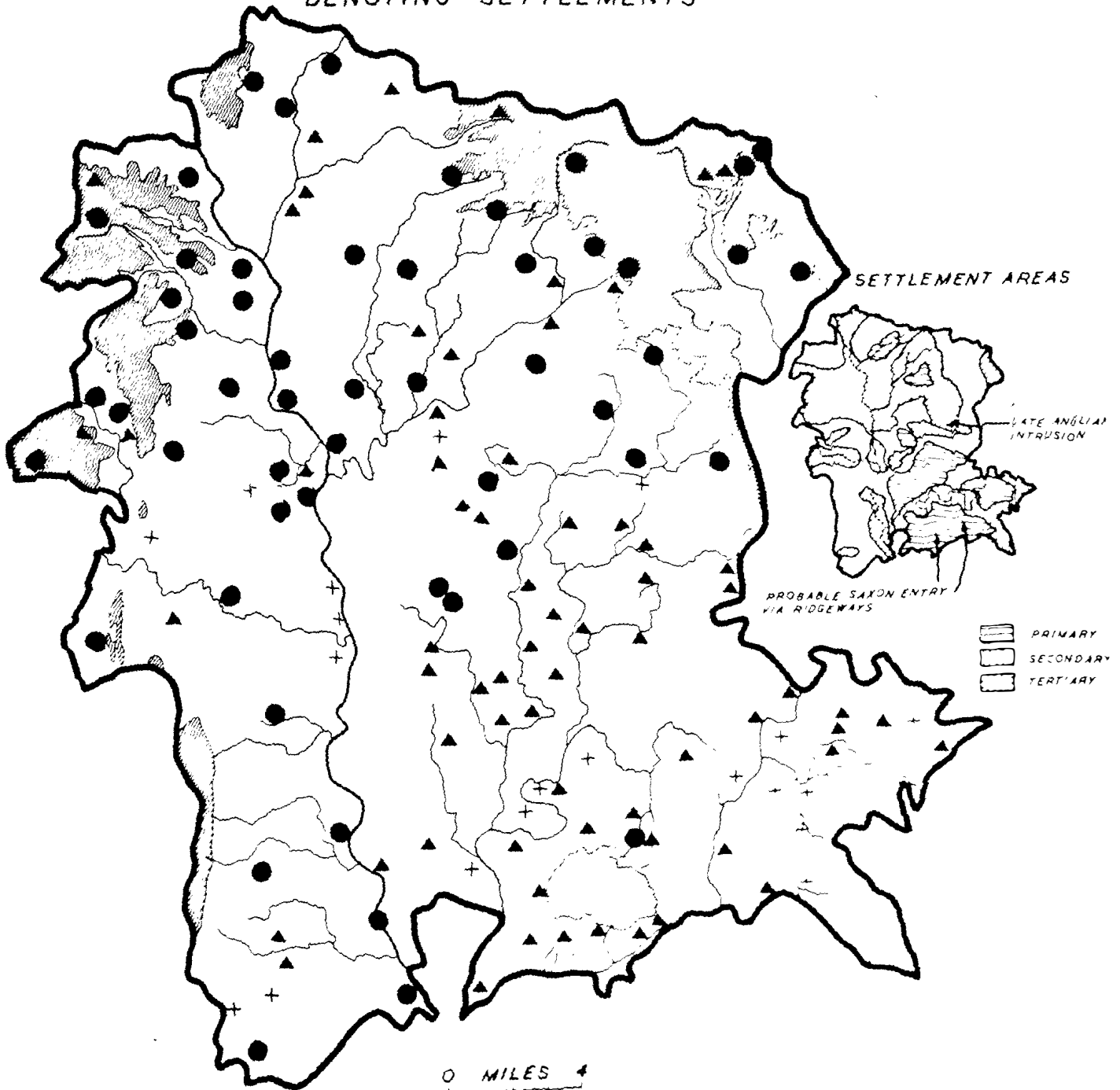
**DISTRIBUTION OF —LEAH, —WORTH, —FIELD AND  
—WOOD PLACE NAMES**



-burh (a fortified house or manorial centre) or -ford (a river crossing) have for the settlement of the county. However, it is undoubtedly true that those habitative elements previously selected as being early in form do have a strikingly contrasting distribution to those deemed to suggest woodland clearance. The distribution of those -ton, -ham and -ing elements mentioned in Domesday Book or before, appears on Figure 4.3. The focus of this distribution is on the tributary streams of the Avon valley encompassing much of the Marl plain of Worcester and the southern Cotswold fringe. This is in marked contrast to the distribution of -leah, -worth, -field and -wood elements which appears on Figure 4.4., where the focus is much more in the north and western parts of the county. Nationally, such a distinctiveness in the distribution of the two sets of elements is a rare feature, being limited mainly to the counties of Warwickshire and Worcestershire. This led earlier workers, such as Grundy<sup>37</sup>, to the conclusion that the Anglo-Saxon settlement of the two counties came from the south, by military conquest, after the battles of Dyrham and Fethanleag in 577 and 585 A.D. respectively. Moreover, the subsequent progress of colonization was seen to be geologically conditioned, with an initial preference being shown by Saxon farmers for the soils developed in the Liassic Marls, with only subsequent and intermittent expansion onto the Keuper Marls and sandstone series of the north and west. Employing this restricted choice of name elements and the assumptions made as to their likely date, it is possible to produce a map purporting to demonstrate the chronology of Saxon settlement. This is shown in Figure 4.5, where the selected name elements have been divided into three chronological groups along the lines suggested by A. H. Smith<sup>38</sup> and Grundy.<sup>39</sup> The three groupings appear regionally distinctive in their distribution, with surprisingly little overlap between them. Thus it is possible to construct 'settlement areas', in a chronological sense, as shown in the small inset map. Obviously there are severe limitations associated with their mode of analysis and certainly with the environmentally deterministic interpretation that has been given in the past. Grundy's analysis of selected name endings, vis a vis the geological setting they occupied, has many clear failings. The soils developed on the Lower Lias Marls are, if anything, intrinsically

FIGURE 4.5

**SAXON PLACE NAME ELEMENTS  
DENOTING SETTLEMENTS**



- ▲ EARLY (-TON, -HAM, -ING)
- + SECONDARY (-WORTH, -HAM, -COT)
- TERTIARY (-LEAH, -STED, -FOLD)

less fertile than those of the Keuper Marl series and in any case the majority of the settlement sites bearing -ton, -ham and -ing name elements are situated on glacial drift cappings overlying the Liassic Marls.

An even greater limitation lies in the selection of the name elements themselves. Of those habitative elements shown on Figures 4.3 and 4.5, only -ham is now accepted as being indisputably early. B. Cox in a study of -ham names throughout south-eastern England found some accord between their distribution and the Roman road network and concluded that -ham had gone out of use by the sixth century, a view which has found general acceptance amongst place name scholars. The analysis of -ham elements in Worcestershire is hampered by the fairly widespread occurrence of -hamm elements (an enclosure in a river bend) from which the final 'm' has been lost. Indeed it is unlikely that many, if any, true -ham elements exist in the county, again suggesting that the main period of Saxon name giving occurred after the sixth century. The increased time period thus given to the essentially Romano-British settlement pattern makes it unlikely that the Saxon settlement pattern can be viewed in any sense as a 'new beginning'. If there is to be a revision as to the chronology of Saxon name elements with the expectation of far greater coincidence between Romano-British and early Saxon settlement patterns, then those name elements selected for analysis in Figure 4.5 are likely to leave much to be desired. Indeed, a comparison between the Romano-British settlement distribution and Figure 4.5 reveals a number of important anomalies. For instance, the lower terraces of the Avon valley and part of the Vale of Evesham are shown on Figure 4.5 to be characterised by only secondary name elements which is surprising in the light of their dense occupation in Romano-British times. Similarly, large parts of the Severn terrace belt, again well occupied in Romano-British and earlier times, do not seem to bear any name elements that were ascribed to the early period of Saxon occupation. Of course it could be argued that such was the strength of the Romano-British community in these areas that the first Saxons were pushed into more marginal areas, but even so it would be expected that some names would have been ascribed to these

settlements by Saxon folk. The explanation is more likely to be that advanced by M. Gelling<sup>41</sup>, in that these areas are characterised by a range of name elements, both topographical and habitative in form, which hitherto have not been recognised as early.

A new approach to the spatial analysis of Saxon place names within the county is required, which allows the selection of significant name elements from the vast array extant, without making preconceived judgements as to their nature. To this extent, the approach adopted here is a somewhat radical one. A frequency distribution of all Saxon name elements for the county was conducted and a list of the most common elements (appearing 10 times or over) is contained in Table 4.1. Also included in the table is the number and proportion of these place names that are mentioned in or before Domesday Book of 1086.

In the total county area, 269 Saxon name elements have been identified with 1,313 place names bearing these elements. Thus, although the 26 most common elements form only 9.6% of the total variation, over 60% of all place names in the county are compounded out of those 26 most common elements.

The list of name elements is itself of some considerable interest, in that it gives some insight into those features of the county that Old English speakers saw as being the most prominent. This provides almost a content analysis of Old English landscape description, or, at least, the nearest thing to it that is possible. It is obvious that topographical elements dominate, only 7 out of the 26 referring directly to habitation. Overall the list very much reflects a farming peoples concern with topography (beorg, cumb, dun, hrycg, hyll), water supply, (broc, ford, mere, wielle), enclosure of land, ( (ge)heag, hamm, heall, leah), and descriptions of types of landscape (eg, field, haeð, mor). The continuing well wooded nature of the county also finds considerable reference (ac, leah, wudu), whilst even the habitative names have a distinctly farming ring to them (tun, hamtuen, wic, cot). Only burh and possibly healh (hall) have any administrative overtones to them. Few of these elements appear to possess any military significance and suggest that the main period in which place names evolved was

TABLE 4.1 MOST COMMON NAME ELEMENTS IN WORCESTERSHIRE

Element	Number of Place Names in County	Number Mentioned by 1086	Percentage Mentioned by 1086	
ac	12	1	8.3	
beorg	28	6	21.4	
broc	10	2	20.0	
burh	27	10	37.0	
cot	28	7	25.0	
cumb	10	2	20.0	
dun	17	7	36.8	
eg	12	4	33.0	
feld	20	5	25.0	
ford	50	10	20.0	
(ge)leag	17	1	5.8	
haed	11	0	0	
hamm	20	6	30.0	
hamtuen	15	2	13.3	
healh	36	6	16.6	
heall	10	0	0	
hrycg	16	4	25.0	
hyll	81	10	12.3	
ingtun	38	16	42.1	
leah	113	50	44.2	
mere	11	2	18.1	
mor	26	3	11.5	
tun	106	62	58.4	
wic	28	16	57.1	
wielle (waelle)	26	6	23.0	
wudu	23	3	13.0	
TOTAL	26	793	242	30.5

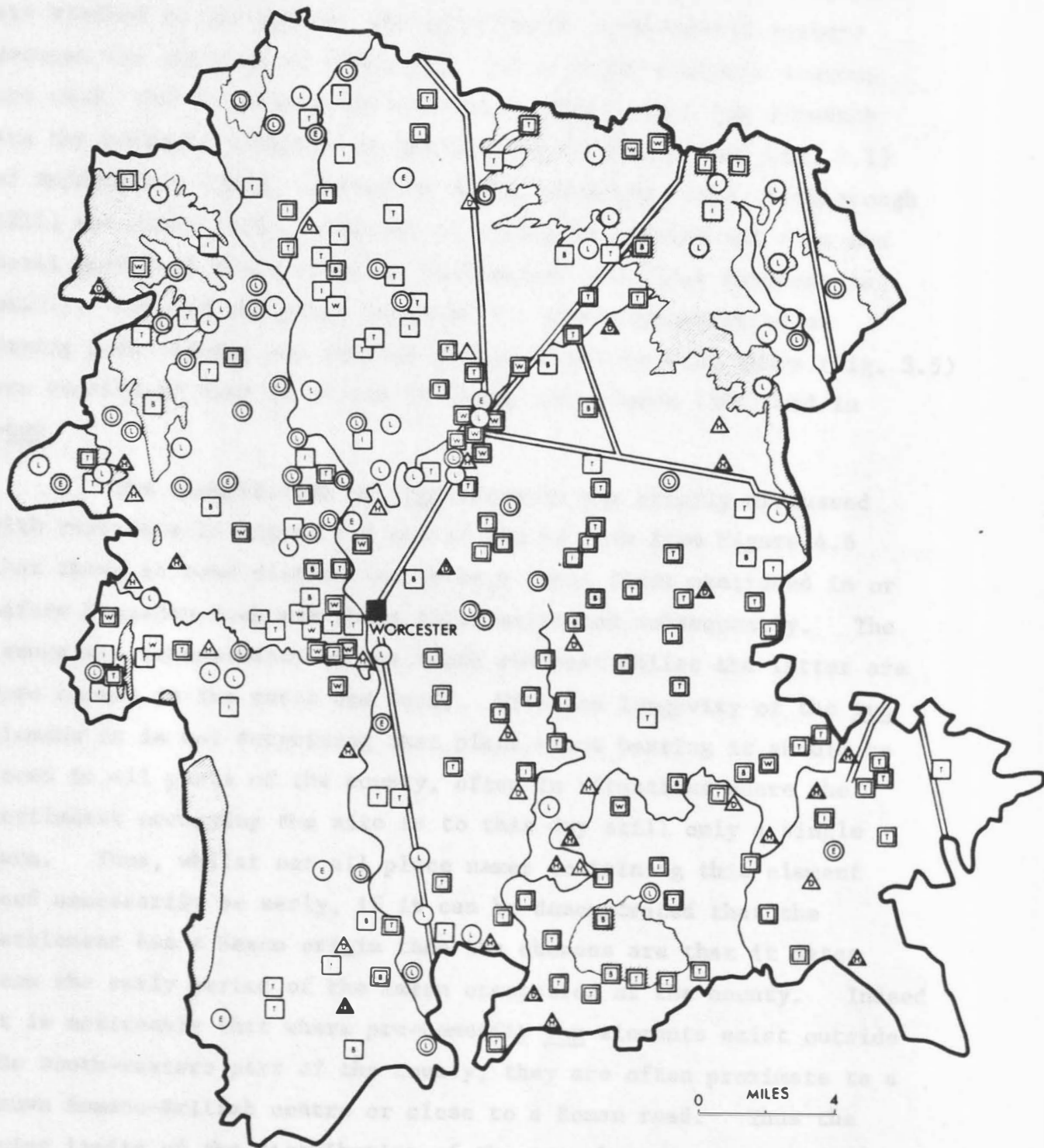
one dominated by farming folk with agrarian pursuits in mind.

Although all the elements in Table 4.1 are Old English it is still possible that they could have been coined over a wide time scale, even extending to the period of post-conquest colonization. In order to refine the list somewhat, the proportion of each element first mentioned in or before 1086 is calculated. Admittedly this is a somewhat crude index as Domesday may well omit many small secondary settlement names, although this is balanced somewhat by the earlier Anglo-Saxon charter boundary surveys which include many topographical elements in their descriptions. The advantage of this method of selection is that the elements are indisputably Saxon and almost certainly early in form. The mean percentage for all 793 place names is 30 percent mentioned at, or before, 1086 and it is that figure which has been taken in selecting elements for further consideration. Not surprisingly, four of the seven habitative names are so selected as against four from nineteen other elements.

The distribution of these eight elements is displayed on Figure 4.6 where all the places bearing these elements are shown, although the name elements are distinguished between those mentioned prior and subsequent to 1086. In total, 313 place names are plotted, which compares with 233 individual entries contained in Domesday Book for the same area. The general distribution is far more complex than that shown on Figure 4.5 and is thus best discussed on an element by element basis. Of those elements implying habitation, tun is by far the commonest element, and has the highest proportion mentioned by 1086. A. H. Smith<sup>42</sup> traces the development of the element from its original meaning as an enclosure or enclosed infield, through its use to mean farmstead, to its ultimate form describing a community of people in a hamlet, village or manor. He suggests that it does not date from the earliest invasion period, but is associated with secondary colonization from earlier centres or Saxon expansion into western shires. The most frequent occurrence appears to be in the sixth century and afterwards, when it replaces ham as the most common settlement name ending. This complies well with the Worcestershire evidence, where the majority of Saxon names appear to date from a period subsequent to the sixth century, although it is

FIGURE 4.6

DISTRIBUTION OF SELECTED EARLY PLACE NAME ELEMENTS



TOPOGRAPHICAL CLEARING		SETTLEMENT	
△ -DUN	○ -EG	□ -TUN	△ ● □ FIRST MENTIONED BY 1086
△ -HAMM	○ -LEAH	□ -INGTUN	△ ○ □ FIRST MENTIONED 1087-1500
		□ -BURH	══ ROMAN ROAD
		□ -WC	



doubtful whether the tuns here can be viewed as resulting from secondary colonization. Indeed, in whatever manner place names are studied in the county, the tun element consistently appears amongst the earliest of elements. If only pre-conquest sources are used, that is mainly Anglo-Saxon charters, then tun elements are the dominant elements in the Domesday hundreds (see Fig. 5.1) of Doddingtree (33%), Oswaldstow (26%), Pershore (29%), Fishborough (22%) and Clent (31%), although it should be pointed out that the total number of place names in Doddingtree and Clent hundreds is small. Also if the place names of the areas hypothesized as having been cleared and settled during Romano-British times (Fig. 3.5) are considered then 18 of the 51 Saxon place names (36%) end in -tun.

The distribution of -tun elements was briefly discussed with reference to Figure 4.3 and it can be seen from Figure 4.6 that there is some distinction between those first mentioned in or before Domesday Book and those first mentioned subsequently. The former are concentrated in the south and east whilst the latter are more common in the north and west. With the longevity of the tun element it is not surprising that place names bearing it should be found in all parts of the county, often in situations where the settlement occupying the site is to this day still only a single farm. Thus, whilst not all place names containing this element need necessarily be early, if it can be demonstrated that the settlement has a Saxon origin then the chances are that it dates from the early period of the Saxon occupation of the county. Indeed it is noticeable that where pre-Domesday tun elements exist outside the south-eastern part of the county, they are often proximate to a known Romano-British centre or close to a Roman road. Thus the outer limits of the distribution of the tun elements mentioned by 1086 plays a crucial role in linking the Romano-British and Saxon settlement patterns. Although they do not necessarily represent continuity of settlement site they are likely to represent continuity of land use. These were the areas that the Saxon peoples already found cleared and farmed on their arrival in the county and thus their overall distribution probably is as indicative of late Romano-British colonization as it is of early Saxon settlement.

The other elements compounded with tun to form a place name show a wide variety of forms both topographical and personal. There is no evidence, either etymological or spatial, to suggest that the personal elements are necessarily the earlier. Indeed, the reverse is probably true, continuing the tradition of topographical description that comes through from those names bearing Celtic elements. Similarly, apart from their general distribution, tun elements do not have the same implication for territorial continuity as they do for land use continuity. This can be illustrated by a consideration of the place names of the Saxon estates of the Church of Worcester, which are the earliest attested territorial units within the county.

Of the manorial centres only 3 out of 26 bear the appellation tun (11%) whilst a further 2 (7%) have ingtun as an element. Yet, of the appurtenant place names 17 of 61 (28%) have tun as an element with a further 3 (5%) having ingtun. This further confirms the view of tun as indicating a farm, whilst the main settlements of the territorial units bear a wide variety of name elements, many of which are topographical in form. The implications this has for the structure of the early estates will be discussed later when fuller reference will be made to table 4.2.

The ingtun name elements obviously have many similarities in form to the tun element, although are much fewer in number. Ekwall regards this element as a derivative of ingatun, where the medial -a- has been lost.<sup>43</sup> This gives the element a genitive inflection and implies a collective meaning in the sense of 'the farm of the people of ....'. Smith disagrees with this analysis as he can find no evidence to support the loss of the medial -a-, or, necessarily, of a genitive inflection.<sup>44</sup> He prefers the definition of 'the farm pertaining to....', thus Teddington becomes the farm pertaining to Teotta rather than the farm of Teotta's people. Certainly not all the Worcestershire ingtuns are compounded with personal names as many have directional elements, such as Suddington or Northington. However, it is noticeable that there is a sharp distinction between those first mentioned by 1086, the vast majority of which are compounded with personal names, and those mentioned after 1086, few of which have personal name elements. Similarly,

TABLE 4.2

## PLACE NAMES OF THE ESTATES OF THE CHURCH OF WORCESTER

DOMESDAY MANOR	APPURTENANT SETTLEMENTS
1. Kempsey ( <u>eg</u> )	Mucenhill ( <u>hyll</u> )
	Norton ( <u>tun</u> )
	Stoulton ( <u>tun</u> )
	Whittington ( <u>tun</u> )
	Wolverton ( <u>tun</u> )
2. Wick Episcopi ( <u>wic</u> )	Holt ( <u>holt</u> )
	Witley ( <u>leah</u> )
	Kenwick ( <u>wic</u> )
	Cloptune ( <u>tun</u> )
	Laure ( <u>tun</u> )
	Greenhill ( <u>hyll</u> )
3. Fladbury ( <u>burh</u> )	Cotheridge ( <u>hrycg</u> )
	Inkberrow ( <u>beorg</u> )
	Ablench ( <u>hlenc</u> )
	Bishampton ( <u>hamtun</u> )
	Piddle ( <u>pidele</u> )
	Moor and Hill ( <u>mor</u> , <u>hyll</u> )
	Bradley ( <u>leah</u> )
4. Bredon ( <u>dun</u> )	Treddington ( <u>tun</u> )
	Mitton ( <u>tun</u> )
	Cutsdean ( <u>tun</u> )
	Redmarley ( <u>leah</u> )
	Pendock ( <u>Peondoc</u> - Celtic)
	Washbourne ( <u>burna</u> )
	Westmancot ( <u>cot</u> )
	Norton ( <u>tun</u> )
	Bushley ( <u>leah</u> )

TABLE 4.2 (CONTINUED...2)

DOMESDAY MANOR	APPURTENANT SETTLEMENTS
5. Ripple ( <u>ripel</u> )	Upton ( <u>tun</u> ) Earle Croome ( <u>crumb</u> ) Croome d'Abitot ( <u>crumb</u> ) Holdfast ( <u>feaston</u> ) Queenhill ( <u>hyll</u> ) Bursley ( <u>leah</u> )
6. Blockley ( <u>leah</u> )	Ditchford ( <u>ford</u> ) Icomb ( <u>combe</u> ) Dailesford ( <u>ford</u> ) Evenlode ( <u>lode</u> )
7. Treddington ( <u>ington</u> )	Tidmington ( <u>ingtun</u> ) Blackwell ( <u>weille</u> ) Longdon ( <u>dun</u> )
8. Northwick ( <u>wic</u> )	Tibberton ( <u>tun</u> ) Hindlip ( <u>loep</u> ) Alfreton ( <u>tun</u> ) Warndon ( <u>dun</u> ) Aston ( <u>tun</u> ) Cudley ( <u>leah</u> ) Oddingley ( <u>leah</u> ) Huddington ( <u>ingtun</u> ) Whittington ( <u>ingtun</u> ) Rodleigh ( <u>leah</u> ) Churchill ( <u>hyll</u> ) Bredicot ( <u>cot</u> ) Pirie ( <u>Pirian</u> )
9. Overbury and Pendock ( <u>burh</u> and <u>Peondoc</u> Celtic)	
10. Sedgeberrow ( <u>beorg</u> )	
11. Shipston ( <u>tun</u> )	
12. Harvington ( <u>ingtun</u> )	

those earlier mentioned elements are almost entirely found in the south-eastern part of the county where they tend to occupy the terrace deposits of the Severn and Avon rivers, whilst those of later mention are mainly in the north and west. (Fig. 4.6).

The ingtun element is not thought to date from the earliest years of Saxon invasion and the personal name element suggests that most were derived in a period when estates were being granted to individuals. Occasionally the personal name used does correspond with the earliest documentation, which appears to give an accurate dating to the origin of the place name. This rare feature occurs locally in the case of Kemerton, which has been associated with Kyneburg, an abbess of Gloucester in the late seventh century and in the case of Tredington, associated with Tyrda Comes, who held land there before 735 A.D. Of course, this does not preclude the possibility that the original tun was renamed in the period of estate granting to include the personal name, much in the same way as the Normans were later to add their family names to settlements, such as occurred in Worcestershire with the D'Abitots and Beauchamps. However, the direct association of ingtuns with known areas of Romano-British settlement is much less than occurs with tun and even some topographical elements, which suggests they may well date from a period of estate granting in the seventh century, prior to the establishment of the main ecclesiastical estates.

The origin of the element burh undoubtedly stems from an association with a fortified place, although it later came to mean a manor. It has a wide period of use, and indeed many of the manorial references are post-conquest in origin. For this reason the element has rarely been used as indicative of early Saxon settlement, yet in Worcestershire it often appears in the context of settlements, such as Fladbury, which have a known continuity of occupancy back to prehistoric times. Certainly some of the burh names, particularly those not compounded with a personal element, are late in form and refer to post-conquest manors, such as Bury End in Wichenford, and Upton-on-Severn. Similarly Burley, Burcot and Burystede are late in form and may well refer to post-conquest clearance and colonization. Again it would seem that first mention by 1086 is a crucial indicator of the likely antiquity of these name

elements. Certainly, several of the burh names in Worcestershire are direct references to Iron Age hillforts, such as found in Libbery, Woodbury, Banbury and possibly Chadbury, Elbury and Overbury. Interestingly, with the exception of Overbury, none of these form manor or parish names, or ever seem to have been centres of administration, so that no direct link can be established with the territories of Iron Age hillforts. Although the use of burh elements has to be very selective, many do represent settlements of considerable administrative significance and antiquity, as is revealed by the number of appearances burh makes in the areas of Romano-British settlement and their role in the early Saxon estates.

The final habitative element to be considered in detail is that of wic, whose strict meaning is a dwelling, or collection of buildings, used for a special purpose. However, in Worcestershire its meaning seems to resolve itself into two major groupings; those referring to salt production around Droitwich and those referring to dairy farming or cattle raising (for example Hardwick). Figure 4.6 reveals the concentration of wic elements around Droitwich which shows Saxon recognition of this important centre of salt production whose history is now known to extend well into the pre-Roman Iron Age. It is noticeable that the wic elements are not confined to the immediate area of the town of Droitwich suggesting, as does Domesday Book, that salt manufacture may well have spread well beyond the confines of the Roman and Saxon town. The other wics, associated with cattle and dairy production, are mainly found in the alluvial valley bottoms of the main rivers, the Avon, Severn and Teme, with a particular concentration in the area immediately to the west of Worcester, another Roman town. Admittedly, wic elements are known to have been coined in a post-conquest context, although in Worcestershire it seems safe to assume that the vast majority are early in form and reflect the long history of livestock raising in the county. Nationally, many wic place names do not appear in Domesday Book, reflecting their general status along with cot as minor settlements. In this respect Worcestershire is something of an exception, in that nearly the same proportion of wic elements are first mentioned by 1086 as are tun elements. Again this would seem to reinforce the agrarian state of the county in Saxon times.

The two topographical elements selected as being both common and early within the county show many similarities in their development as name elements. Hamm originally implied some form of enclosure usually near a river or stream. This usage seems to have ended early as it later became associated with water meadows. The association with rivers is clearly seen in the Avon valley on Figure 4.6, where in one case the element is combined with a Celtic name at Evesham (Cronuchomme) suggesting very early origin. The location of so many hamm elements on bends in the river courses has suggested to many authorities that the element might well refer to the river course itself, rather along the lines of the Celtic crumbo found in Croome. Similarly, the element dun, meaning hill, is occasionally found in conjunction with Celtic names, as in Bredon, (Bretta - dun) and indeed it has been suggested that the dun element itself is a German loan from the Old Celtic duno. Its use seems to be restricted in Worcestershire to the early Saxon period after which it was replaced by the more common Saxon element hyll. The location of these elements (Fig. 4.6) also supports their early nature and reflects the long tradition of using hill and river descriptions so clearly seen within the surviving Celtic names.

The final two elements, designated as pertaining to woodland clearance on Figure 4.6, are quite distinctive in both their form and distribution as compared with those place names previously considered. The leah elements, meaning a woodland clearing, have been briefly discussed with respect to Figure 4.4. After tun, this is the commonest name element in the county, yet its distribution is very different. It is only rarely found in areas of dense Romano-British occupation and, considering the number of such elements, is relatively infrequently found in a manorial context. In the past, this name element was viewed as indicating the final stage in Saxon colonization, indicated by a progression from primary settlements compounded of ing and ingas name elements, through secondary centres, ham and tun, to a final stage of leah, worth and stoc. This argument is no longer given much credence, although it is still generally accepted that the leah element does indicate new Saxon settlement in areas that were previously sparsely occupied or completely unoccupied. The leah element does have a long

period of usage and it is known to have been used in a post-conquest context to mean meadowland, although its obvious association in Worcestershire with areas still well wooded in 1086 suggest that it has a predominantly woodland meaning within the county. It would be a mistake to view all leah place names as representing a late phase in Saxon colonization, pertaining only to a period when all the better sites had been occupied. Many could have originated at the same time as the tuns and other elements, although a different type of landscape was being occupied; that is one dominated by woodland rather than farms and fields. However, their general location in the least accessible parts of the county does suggest that many must have resulted from a later phase of Saxon colonizing activity. Many of the leah elements are compounded with a personal name element bearing a genitive inflection, which again supports their designation as new Saxon settlements. As with tun elements, the personal name occasionally matches that contained in early documentary evidence, such as at Wolverley, where Wulferd is known to have been the recipient of an eighth century grant of land.

The final element, that of eg, has by far the smallest occurrence of all the elements considered. The meaning of eg is usually taken as island and the place names of which it is compounded are usually associated with streams or rivers. However, it does occasionally assume the meaning of well watered land, which would seem to apply in many of the Worcestershire instances. This duality in meaning would seem to be reflected in the former case in those elements found in the main river valleys, such as Kempsey and Badsey, which are located close to major Romano-British sites and almost certainly reflect early Saxon influence, and, in the latter case in those well away from the main valley areas, where they are more likely to be associated with new Saxon settlement and such elements as feld and leah.

Several general points emerge from the study of the commonest of Worcestershire name elements. Firstly, the presence of Anglo-Saxon peoples in the area, prior to the late sixth century, as attested by the pagan cemeteries, finds no reflection in the place name record. The nearest settlements to the few excavated



Worcestershire cemeteries, Beckford (ford), Hampton (tun), Upton Snodsbury (burh) and Broadway (weg) have nothing in the composition of their place names to suggest that they are in any way distinctive from place names throughout the south-eastern part of the county. The view that the cemeteries represent the remains of a group of Feoderati or West Midland yeomen is not supported by their restricted distribution. Surely if they were employed to protect the British community then important cemeteries could be expected close to the main Roman towns of Worcester and Droitwich, where, despite considerable recent excavation, no traces have been found. It is more reasonable to view this early Saxon intrusion as representing the most westward point reached by Saxons migrating along the Warwickshire Avon when further progress was halted by the British victory at Mons Badonicus. They thus remained as a small group on the periphery of a predominantly British area.

Secondly, all the main Worcestershire name elements are consistent in form with a late Saxon intrusion, consequent upon the West Saxon victories at Dyrham and Feathenleag in the late sixth century. Thus by the time Saxon names were being coined in Worcestershire, parts of eastern England had already been in English hands for nearly two centuries. The pagan period in Worcestershire is therefore a very short one, which probably accounts for the paucity of cemetery sites that have been identified.

Thirdly, past analyses of place name elements, in order to demonstrate a step by step progression of Anglo-Saxon colonization, are not acceptable. This is partially because the underlying assumption of a 'new beginning' of settlement in this period is no longer widely held, and partially because the small but widespread survival of Celtic elements in the county do not support the contention that the British population was decimated. Also, the distribution and nature of Saxon name elements in the county do not provide any evidence of stages within a process of planned settlement. A far more realistic view of the place name elements is that they represent a Saxon view of the landscape as they saw it, but which was not necessarily the result of their own activities in creating farms and fields. Thus both habitative and topographical elements are of

equal significance in comprehending the Anglo-Saxon landscape and one type of element is not necessarily any earlier than the other. The crucial feature to emerge from this thesis is that those habitative elements which can be demonstrated as being relatively early for the county, almost certainly describe areas that the Saxons found already cleared of woodland and developed with farms and fields. This is reflected in the very terminology that they commonly used, in terms of tun, ingtun, hamtun and wic. This does not necessarily argue that there was direct continuity of settlement site between Romano-British and Saxon times, indeed the archaeological evidence of Romano-British settlement sites suggest that most were abandoned in the fifth century and that they were located on the edges of modern village sites. Of course, it is possible that Romano-British, and even Iron Age remains, are present under many of the Worcestershire tuns and wics, although this has yet to be demonstrated. The continuity that is envisaged is much more that of continuity of land use. Whilst the individual houses of a settlement provide a relatively impermanent landscape feature, lasting, even in the late middle ages, often for no more than a generation, the fields that had been painstakingly won from the woodland were likely to be perpetuated from one generation to the next, and to have formed the real basis of any ownership structure that emerged.

Continuity or cataclysm in terms of the occupants of the farms and villages is a much more difficult question to approach. It is possible that the occupants of the tuns continued to be a British speaking population for some time and that the present names, particularly those compounded with a Saxon personal name, date from a period of territorial reorganisation when estates were being granted. Thus names such as Comberton would have been far commoner features than they now appear. This would be particularly apposite, if the view is taken that the West Saxons were likely to put the area under tribute rather than direct settlement for some time after their military victory. However, it is also likely that the British population had suffered considerable reduction, not only from the impact of warfare, but also from the plagues and pestilences that J. Morris suggests swept the land in the sixth century,<sup>45</sup> thus making it all the more likely that continuity should be expressed in terms of land use rather than of settlement sites.

One feature of the place name study that does suggest a Saxon impact on the clearance and settlement of the landscape is those place names bearing the elements leah and possibly feld, worth and stoc. Particularly where those elements bear a personal name with a genitive inflection. The general distribution of these elements is mainly confined to the north and western parts of the county outside the main river valleys, where evidence of Romano-British occupation is either very limited or non-existent. The areas of the county that can be directly linked with Saxon clearance activities, although still considerable, is much more limited than was previously thought. This also complies with palaeobotanical evidence from elsewhere, which is suggesting a considerable reduction in the amount of woodland clearance during the Anglo-Saxon period with a concomitant increase in that pertaining to Romano-British, Iron Age and even earlier times.

The fourth point to emerge from the place name analysis is the process of estate creation which led directly to the manorial structure that underpins Domesday Book. This process can be dimly perceived in the personal element in the place names that occasionally overlaps with the early charter evidence. This carving up of the landscape into territorial units, often of a discrete nature, with central and appurtenant settlements is crucial not only in considering possibilities of territorial continuity as perceived by Glanville Jones, but also in understanding the structure and data of Domesday Book. This forms the main subject of the next part of this chapter.

Finally, much of the above analysis finds summary in graphic form on Figure 4.7. This estimates the extent of Saxon settlement and clearance at some time towards the end of the Saxon period and has been constructed along the same lines as those for the Romano-British and Bronze Age periods (Figs. 3.2 and 3.5). The main thrust of Saxon clearance activity can be seen in the northern areas of the county, largely representing the area dominated by the leah name elements. On the Lower Liassic Marl and Keuper Marl plain of Worcester, the amount of woodland displayed in Romano-British times is undoubtedly overestimated, which tends to suggest a greater Saxon activity than actually took place. Similarly, areas such as the Teme valley were



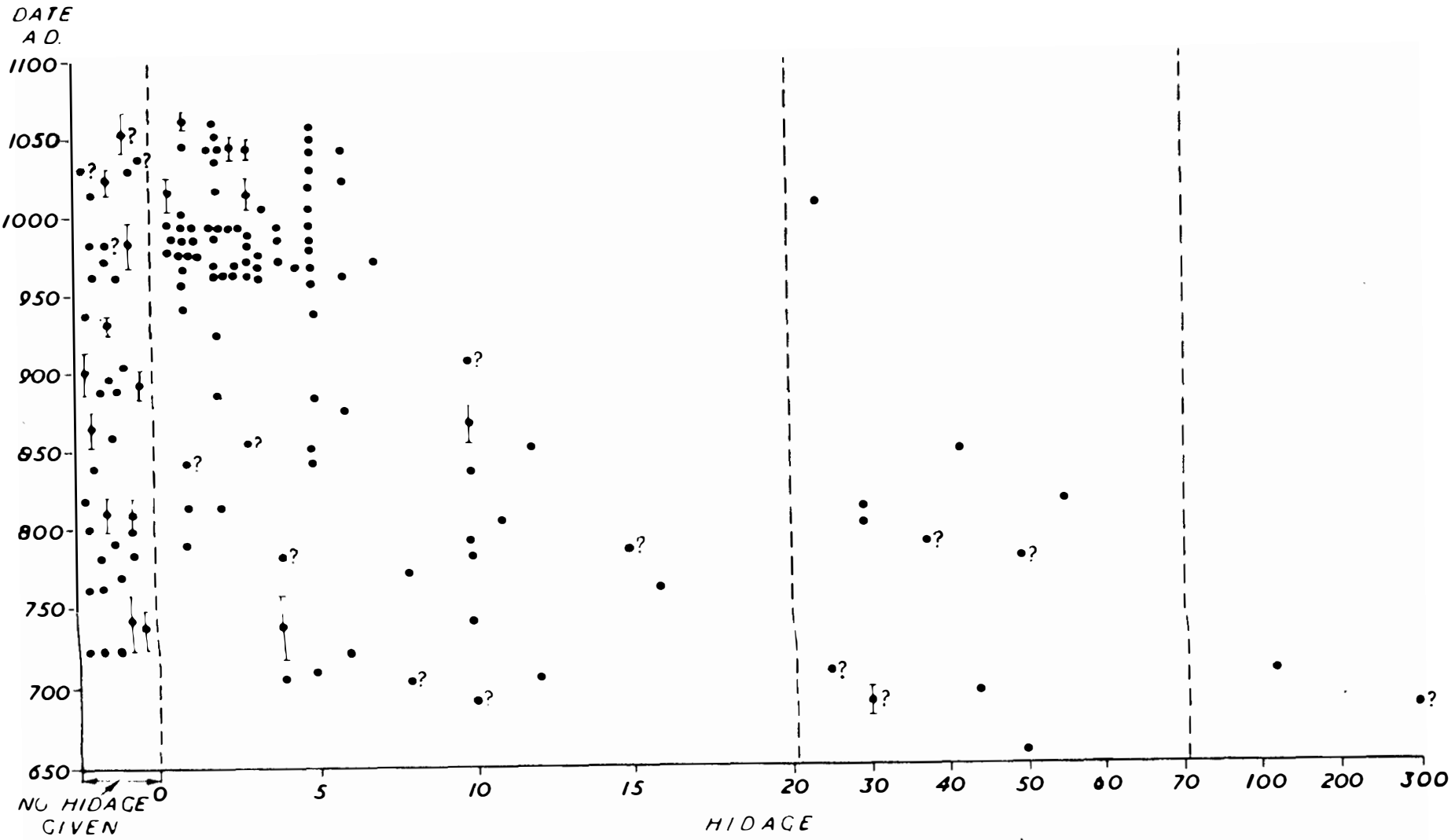
probably more developed in Romano-British times than current archaeological knowledge suggests. However, the amount of residual woodland at the end of the Saxon period was still very considerable, a fact amply reflected in the Royal Forests and woodland economies revealed by Domesday Book.

#### The Establishment of the Major Estates

Undoubtedly the most significant feature of the Saxon period in Worcestershire was the establishment of the ecclesiastical estates that were to dominate both the administrative and economic fabric of the county until the sixteenth century. Indeed, the very structure of the county itself was to be created largely out of the tenurial patterns established by the major estate units. No doubt some form of Celtic Christianity had been established in the late Romano-British period and with such a relatively short period of paganism postulated for Worcestershire it is probable that its influence was never entirely absent. Recent excavation of burials under Worcester Cathedral refectory, dated to the early Saxon period (536 A.D. + 107)<sup>46</sup>, have been interpreted as a possible sub-Roman survival of Christianity. Added to this, four of the earliest monastic centres (Bredon, Worcester, Evesham and Pershore) probably have Celtic elements in their place names. Whatever claims can be made for the survival of the Celtic church, it is undoubtedly true that the role of the church in the Saxon period expanded from one of influencing men's minds to that of controlling, through the vast territories they owned, their economic destinies. The morphology and structure of these estates not only have important implications for the possibility of territorial continuity from Iron Age times, but also form the basic framework within which data for Domesday Book was collected and should be studied. It is felt, therefore, that a close appraisal of the growth and development of these estates is necessary for any understanding of the settlement of the county.

The evidence for these estates is mainly drawn from the cartularies of the three main religious bodies of Worcester, Pershore and Evesham, although most reliance is placed upon the Worcester charters because of their earlier date and greater authenticity. The charters themselves have been viewed as proof of ownership, whilst

DATE AND HIDAGE OF ANGLO-SAXON CHARTERS



the boundary surveys have been used to identify the estate areas. In the latter case reliance has been placed upon the translations provided by Grundy, although the boundary identifications have been checked against the First Edition Six Inch Ordnance Survey maps. Concern has been with the general configuration of the estate units, rather than with 'solving' the boundary surveys on the ground, which forms the work currently being undertaken by Della Hook. Certain of the boundary landmarks have been selected for cartographic display, but on a scale whereby precise accuracy of location is relatively unimportant. Four categories of landmark have been selected, mainly for the insight they give into the nature of the Anglo-Saxon landscape, and these comprise those indicating woodland, waste, leas and agriculture. The first of these is self evident, but also included landmarks implying the proximity of woodland, such as swinegates and game enclosures. Waste includes all mentions of marsh, open downland and scrub, whilst leas occur quite frequently and are assigned a separate category as they seem to imply a transi<sup>u</sup>tory stage between woodland and agriculture, important in the extension of colonization. Agriculture is taken to include both mentions of arable and meadowland. These landmarks are shown with their appropriate surveys on Figure 4.12 and 4.13 for the churches of Worcester and Pershore and Evesham, where it is apparent that the description afforded is very limited in that it only applies to estate margins. Also the surveys are of different dates, although this is partially mitigated by the intention of the Saxon surveyors that the landmarks chosen should be identifiable over a considerable period of time. Indeed, in the case of Shurnock in Feckenham, the Saxon survey, translated into Middle English, was still used in the thirteenth century.<sup>47</sup> However, to avoid confusion each survey is only considered in the context of its original date.

Figure 4.8 shows the total number of charters relating to Worcestershire, plotted by date and hidage, and this should be viewed in conjunction with Figures 4.9 and 4.10, which show the location and beneficiary of each of the various charters. As the size of the hide is still uncertain and likely to have been variable, only a diagrammatic representation is shown in Figure 4.10, each grant of hides being enclosed within the parish area to which the charter

# ANGLO-SAXON CHARTERS

LOCATION OF GRANTS GIVEN



FIGURES = Nos. OF CHARTERS OF DIFFERENT DATES



FIGURE 4.10

# ANGLO-SAXON CHARTERS

## HIDE UNITS IN GRANTS



- CHURCH OF WORCESTER
- ABBEY OF EVESHAM
- ▨ ABBEY OF PERSHORE
- ▧ LAY GRANTS
- ▩ ELY ABBEY
- ▤ MONASTERY OF BREDON
- 1 HIDE

relates. Where no survey exists, this provides the closest approximation to location that can be managed. The temporal range on Figure 4.8 extends from 657 A.D. to 1066 A.D., whilst the hidage size varies from a half hide to 300 hides. Two points emerge; the concentration of nearly all grants of over ten hides in the period before 850 A.D., and secondly the concentration of those under 5 hides in the period 950 - 1050 A.D. Thus two distinct operations appear to have been in progress, the former representing the granting to, and agglomeration by, ecclesiastical authorities of large estates throughout the county, and the latter mainly representing the leasing of small parts of the estates in return for various services. This suggests an economic and administrative reorganisation of the estates, whereby smaller units within them were utilised to offset military services by farming them out.

The location of charters and their hidage (Figs. 4.9 and 4.10) reveals that a large part of the county is covered by some form of extant charter. Admittedly the coverage is much better in the south-eastern parts, but this was the area with the densest occupation in Romano-British times and has been associated with the greatest degree of continuity in terms of land use. It is clear that the ecclesiastical bodies managed, during the Saxon period, to gain control over the richest parts of the county, a fact amply illustrated in the analysis of Domesday Book in Part II of this work. Of course, the nature of the charters recorded in the two figures varied in size, type and authenticity. This latter point can best be illustrated by those charters relating to Evesham Abbey. At best, most of these can be regarded as interpolations and at worse complete fabrications. Certainly many cannot date from a period any earlier than the eleventh century, when the church authorities were desperately trying to prove title to their estates in a dispute with the Bishop of Worcester. However, there is good reason to believe that the central estates that formed the bulk of the hundred of Fissesburg were in the hands of Evesham Abbey by the eighth century, but little reliance can be placed upon those charters which purport to date from that time. This problem will be more fully discussed when the estates of that church are considered in detail.

A final caveat regarding the analysis of the charters is that they almost entirely refer to ecclesiastical estates, which, as is revealed by the Domesday analysis, were often quite distinctive in their economic and administrative organisation. Thus little can be safely inferred from them concerning developments on the Royal and lay held estates. Throughout the ensuing discussion reference to individual charters is either by their catalogue number in the *Cartularium Saxonicum*<sup>48</sup> (hereinafter BCS) or by the catalogue number ascribed by Finberg<sup>49</sup> (hereinafter Finberg).

#### The Estates of the Church of Worcester

The Church of Worcester was founded in 680, with the appointment of Tatfrith as Bishop and the order was dedicated, as were most other early Benedictine orders, to St. Peter. However, as the monastic element, dedicated to St. Mary, grew in size and influence it became distinct from the secular college of St. Peter until the two were reunited by St. Oswald in the cathedral church of St. Mary's at Worcester. The church was originally founded in 961-2 A.D., but was not finally completed until 983 A.D. It is possible to make a distinction between grants of land or rights to the Bishop and those specifically to the monastic community, although in the pre-conquest period this distinction is not always clear so the two have been considered together.

The growth of the estates of the Church of Worcester is shown on Figure 4.11, where a distinction is made between those charters which appear to comprise original grants of land, those explicitly granting an exemption from royal dues of an area of land, and finally leases by the Church of areas of their estate. Whereas the first category appears to have amounted to title deeds giving the date of the original gift, the second two only give the earliest date when the areas concerned were known to have been in the hands of the Church, as the date of original grant is unknown. The class intervals of charter dates on Figure 4.11 have been selected from the whole range of charters shown on Figure 4.8 and complies with the main phases of estate agglomeration discussed in conjunction with the latter figure.



The overall structure of the estates shown on Figure 4.11 is best compared with Figure 6.3 showing the Domesday manors of the church estates. This more clearly identifies the total outcome of the acquisition of property during the Saxon period and the various linkages that existed in the composition of the discrete elements within the total estate structure. Concern in this chapter is with the acquisition of the estates rather than the nature and conditions attached to subsequent leases of parts of those estates. The insight that these leases provide into Anglo-Saxon kingship and tenure have formed the subject of intensive studies by, amongst others, E. John, F. M. Stenton and D. Whitelock.<sup>50</sup> In the acquisition of estates by the Church of Worcester, two processes are evident; firstly, the block grant of a large territorial area comprising a named administrative centre and many other component parts, some of which are discrete; secondly, a piecemeal process of acquisition of small territories, which were either added to the previously held estates, or were later combined together to form an administrative unit of their own. Obviously, the first process is of most interest as far as territorial continuity is concerned, whilst an understanding of the latter process is vital for the analysis of Domesday data.

Aston<sup>51</sup> has argued that the type of discrete estate found in Worcestershire, existed all over England by the seventh century. Such federal estates, he saw as being created by an expansion of the English population outwards from the main village which had been occupied from the earliest of Anglo-Saxon times by a group of English settlers acknowledging the supremacy of a single lord. Glanville Jones<sup>52</sup>, on the other hand, argues for a different interpretation of the origin of these estates. He points to the correspondence between the structure of these estates and those of the medieval Welsh maenor, a group of hamlets subject to a single lord. In his view, the English settlers merely took over a Celtic pattern of estate organisation that had existed since the Iron Age and, thus, the dependence of the peripheral settlements did not result from any outward movement of the English population from a primary settlement. Which, if any, of these views can be sustained in Worcestershire can only be resolved by a study of the individual estates of the Church of Worcester, whose charter, by and large, are both early and authenticated.

The earliest charter that specifically mentions the Church of Worcester as beneficiary is dated 691 A.D., in which Aethelred, King of the Mercians, granted to Oftor, Bishop of Worcester, a shed and two furnaces belonging to the great brine pit at Wic (Droitwich).<sup>53</sup> Although this is not the first mention of the Droitwich salt industry<sup>54</sup>, it does confirm the place name evidence as to its continuing importance, and it seems no coincidence that two out of the three earliest grants to the church refer to the Droitwich area (Fig. 4.11). The same pattern is followed in the earliest grants to both the Evesham and Pershore churches (Fig. 4.14) and it seems that the royal benefactors were not solely giving access to salt for the consumption of the monastic communities, but also were donating a share in a thriving enterprise that was likely to yield a steady income.

At a relatively early date the Church was granted three large areas within the county that were to form the nucleus of their estates throughout the medieval period. These were centred on Fladbury, Wick Episcopi and Crophorne, each of which is considered in turn. Just prior to 700 A.D., Oftor, Bishop of Worcester, was granted 44 'cassati' at Fledenburgh (Fladbury) in order that monastic life could be re-established there (BCS 76, Finberg 198). Unfortunately, no survey of bounds is attached to this charter, nor to the two later charters concerning Fladbury<sup>55</sup>, and therefore it is impossible to locate precisely the extent of the estate. On Figure 4.11 the area shown is only that of the parish of Fladbury, but if, as is thought, 44 'cassati' represents the same number of hides, then the area granted must have been much larger. Also, it is unlikely that an area the size of the parish of Fladbury would have been sufficient for the support of a monastic community of any size. The Domesday survey credits the manor of Fladbury with 40 hides, the extent of which are shown on Figure 6.3 and included 5 hides at Inkberrow, 5 at Ab Lench, 7 at Rous Lench, 6 at Piddle, Hill and Moor, 1 at Bradley, 10 at Bishampton and 7 in demesne at Fladbury itself. It appears a reasonable assumption that this area formed the substance of the original grant, for later leases show that Abbots Lench was in the hands of the Church in 983 A.D. (Finberg 317, 334) and Hill and Moor in 1046 (Finberg 357).

The area thus designated as the estate is an interesting one in that in the south it impinges on to the Avon terraces, where Fladbury, the administrative centre, has a known history of settlement continuity back to at least Iron Age times. From there it curves north-westward through Rhaetic and Liassic uplands of the Lenches and so onto the Lower Liassic Marl plain of mid-Worcestershire, possessing one discrete member at Bradley. Due to the lack of any early boundary survey it is not possible to tell whether this represents the total area of the original grant, or whether the discrete member of Bradley was added at a later date. Reference to Table 4.2 shows that the place names encompassed by the estate are predominantly topographical with the exception of Bishampton and Fladbury itself. The name Fladbury, with its feminine personal element, has strong 'manorial' associations and probably reflects a change of name at the time of the establishment of the first church community there. Despite the contiguity of most of its component parts, the estate does not possess the geographical unity that is demonstrated by the Vale estates of Evesham or the Worcester estate of Cropthorne. It included part of the Lench country, a rolling upland plateau of some six square miles, with a general elevation of about 300 feet. Throughout the Middle Ages this area tended to remain somewhat isolated and retained a high proportion of woodland and waste. During the thirteenth century, for instance, it achieved notoriety in providing refuge for thugs and such unsavoury individuals as the Musard gang.<sup>56</sup> Domesday Book confirms the relatively undeveloped aspect of parts of this estate by recording quite extensive woodland under the entry for Fladbury (2 leagues x  $\frac{1}{2}$  league).

Despite the undoubted antiquity of the main settlement of this estate, there is no good reason to suppose that the area dependent upon it represents the survival of any Romano-British territorial unit. Over much of the area no trace of any Romano-British habitation has been discovered and only Bishampton would seem to have any claims to a possible survival of a Romano-British farming unit in terms of place names. The impression thus remains that this was a relatively undeveloped area that was granted to the church in the expectation that the monastic community would develop it.

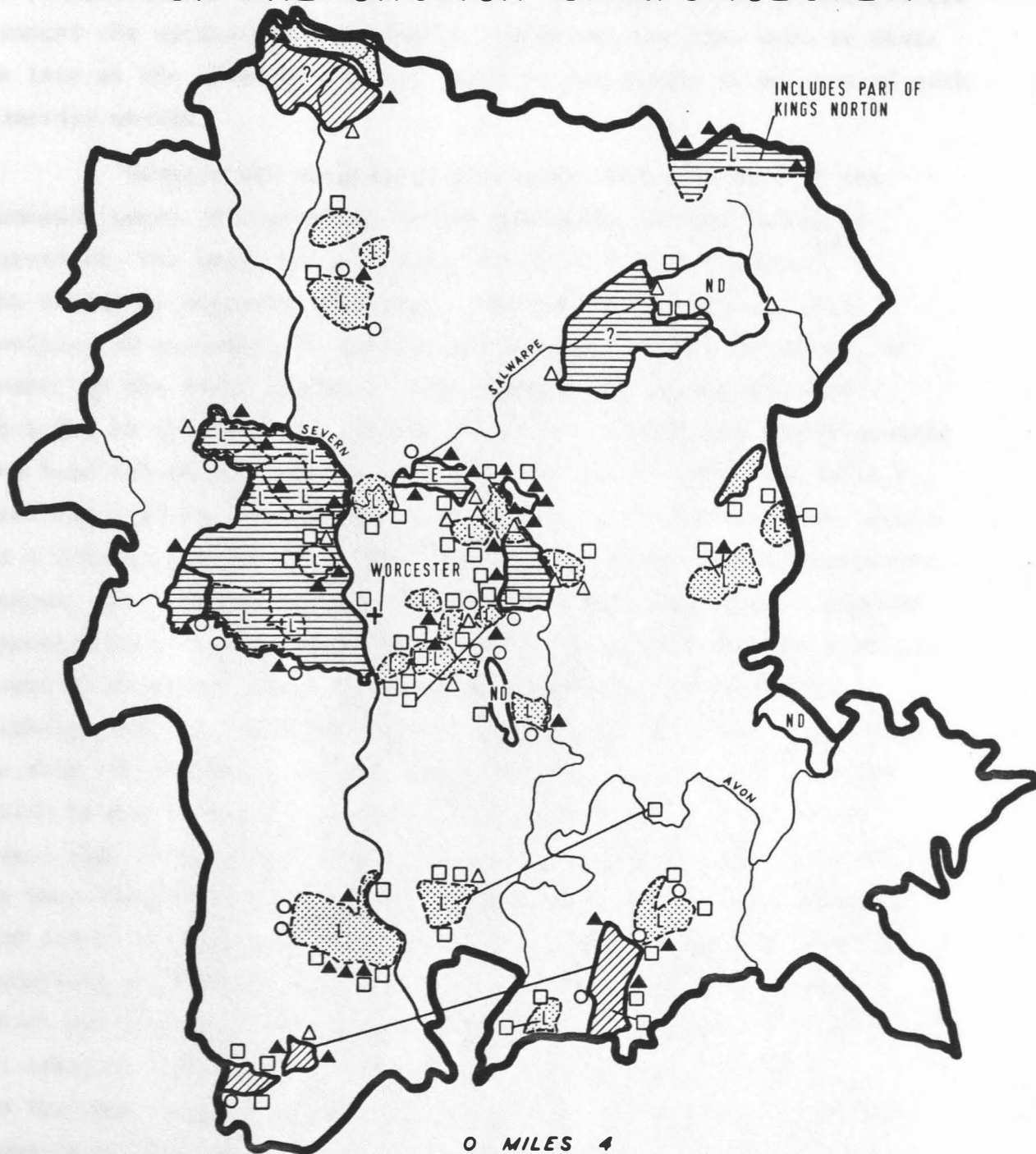
Coterminus with, but situated on the opposite bank of the Avon to Fladbury, lay the large estate of Cropthorne. It comprised 50 'manentes' (hides) in all, of which 7 were situated at Cropthorne, 1 at Netherton, 2 at Elmsley Castle, 1 at Hersoe, 14 at Charlton, 15 at Great and Little Hampton and 10 at Bengeworth (Fig. 4.11). The charter (BCS 235) purports to date from 780 A.D., although Finberg has questioned its authenticity, believing only that it may embody some authentic material or record a genuine transaction.<sup>57</sup> As no survey is attached, the area shown on Figure 4.11 has been approximated from later lease and survey evidence as well as the Domesday Survey. In 1066 the manor of Cropthorne, comprising 5 hides at Hampton and 4 at Bengeworth were subinfeudated to the Abbot of Evesham and 11 hides, whose location was unstated, were held by Robert Dispencer. Round locates these 11 hides at Charlton (7) and Elmley Castle (4) which forms half the church's holding at Charlton and twice that at Elmsley Castle.<sup>58</sup> It is, therefore, clear that the Cropthorne estate had come into the possession of the monastic community at Worcester at some date prior to the conquest, although the precise date remains unknown.

The location of the estate within the fertile Vale of Evesham and surrounding Evesham itself on the south and west meant that it was always likely to produce conflict of ownership between the Churches of Evesham and Worcester. The complex pattern of charters relating to parts of the estate and the number of possible fabrications that occur bear out the contentious nature of ownership patterns in this area. Charters, together with some surveys, are extant for Elmley Castle, Hampton and Bengeworth. Elmley Castle is confirmed as being in the possession of the Church of Worcester in 1042 when it was alienated by Lyfing, Bishop of Worcester (Finberg 347), although only 2 'mansae' were involved, which agrees with the Cropthorne charter, but fails to explain why Round identified Robert Dispencer's 4 hides as being situated here. The survey attached to the charter (Fig. 4.12) makes reference to a 'headland of ploughland' and to a 'dairy farm of the Bryding family', the latter being one of many references found in the charters to pastoralism, which appears to have assumed a considerable importance within the Anglo-Saxon



FIGURE 4.12

# ANGLO-SAXON SURVEYS OF THE ESTATES OF THE CHURCH OF WORCESTER



- ORIGINAL GRANT
- LEASE FROM THE CHURCH
- EXEMPTION FROM DUES TO THE KING
- BEFORE 700 A.D.
- 700 - 850 A.D.
- 850 - 950 A.D.
- 950 - 1066 A.D.

- WASTE
- WOOD
- LEA
- AGRICULTURE
- FABRICATION OF DATE
- SURVEY WITH NO DATE

agrarian economy of Worcestershire. However, the area delimited in the survey does not coincide with the whole parish of Elmley Castle, seemingly referring only to the north-eastern part. Identification of bounds, as far as has been possible, is shown on Figure 4.12, where amongst the agricultural landmarks, reference was also made to waste as late as the eleventh century which is surprising in an area of such Domesday wealth.

Hampton and Bengeworth also were listed as part of the Domesday manor of Cropthorne in the possession of the Church of Worcester, but held, at that time, by the Abbot of Evesham.<sup>59</sup> The series of charters relating to the two places reflect this conflict of ownership in that most are forgeries brought about, no doubt, by the rival claims. Both Hampton and Bengeworth were included in the spurious charter of 709 A.D. which supposedly granted the home estate of Evesham monastery (BCS 125). Then, in 780 A.D., both appeared as part of the grant of Cropthorne to Worcester, again in a dubious charter (BCS 235) after which the two areas diverge and become, if anything, more complicated in their ownership. Hampton appeared in a charter dated 988 A.D. in which Ethelred purported to grant 5 'manentes' there to his thegn Northmann (Finberg 326) although Finberg considered this a complete fabrication. Attached to this charter was a survey, whose bounds are on Figure 4.12 and which Grundy identified as either an original or copy of a late Saxon type of survey.<sup>60</sup> The bounds were generally easy to locate as they faithfully complied with those mentioned in the Bengeworth and second Evesham surveys. The next phase in Hampton's complex ownership is provided by a series of charters, the main upshot of which was the conferring of the area upon Holy Trinity at Evesham at least by the early eleventh century (Kemble 911, 938, 941). In the case of Bengeworth the situation is not so clear as the area appears to have oscillated in ownership between the crown and the Bishop of Worcester, and, Domesday Book and the spurious Evesham charter apart (BCS 616), at no time appeared in the lands of Evesham church.

The landmarks identified from the surveys concerned with Hampton and Bengeworth are shown on Figure 4.13, and are worth

consideration for the light they shed on the bounds of the Cropthorne estate. The most striking feature is the number of references to agriculture, settlement and roads that exist, with the majority of features associated with the later Domesday manor finding mention amongst the landmarks. Strips of arable land, water meadows, farms and access roads are found along the bounds, as are references to Heathen Barrows (Hethenan Beorgas) and Heathen burials (Hethenan Byrgena). The specific reference to 'heathen' implies settlement at least prior to the seventh century christianisation, although any link with settlement contemporary with the survey remains unknown. A second survey of Bengeworth made during the early eleventh century includes the note "within these boundaries are the five hides which Wulfstan the Archbishop granted to Aelfric, and eight acres of meadows at Pyriehomme which lies over against the orchard at Cropthorne, and the messuage at Worcester, which Ufic possessed and a salt furnace at Droitwich" (Finberg 369).

Thus the impression gained of the Cropthorne estate is of a compact area centred on the Avon terrace gravels, but extending onto the fan gravels south of Evesham at Hampton and Bengeworth. By the late tenth century, if not earlier, it had assumed the trappings common amongst large Domesday manors of orchards, arable farming, meadows, messuages in Worcester and an interest in the Droitwich salt trade. The Domesday survey confirmed this impression as only three 'quarentenes' of woodland were mentioned, together with valuable meadows, acreages and even a vineyard at Hampton.<sup>61</sup> The estate appears to have been a royal possession until the time of its transfer to the church of Worcester in whose triple hundred of Oswaldslawe it appeared in 1086 despite the long dispute with Evesham over two of its constituent parts, Hampton and Bengeworth. The archaeological record confirms the survey's mention of heathen burials, as an early Anglo-Saxon cemetery has been discovered at Little Hampton and aerial photography has suggested several possible barrow sites along the terraces of the Avon in this area.

Despite the complex history of disputed ownership and possibly fraudulent charters, this estate bears all the hallmarks of an early and important territorial unit. An early centre of Royal

authority, it possessed a privileged position as the original hundred of Cuthburgelawe, which from the evidence of the famous Altitonantis Charter<sup>62</sup>, formed an important element in the tenth century creation of the triple hundred of Oswaldslawe. It possesses a neat geographical unity, centring on the lower drainage basins of the streams draining north into the Avon from the Cotswold edge and Bredon Hill. Its boundary not only contains mentions of pagan cemeteries, but also impinges on Bredon Iron Age hillfort in its far north-western corner. The place names comprising this contiguous, but federal estate are also revealing in that they display a mixture of elements. Three tun elements at Charlton, Hampton and Netherton, two clearing elements at Elmley (leah) and Bengeworth (worth) and topographical elements at Kersoe (hoh), Longdon (dun) and, most significantly, at Cropthorne itself (Croppa's thorn tree). Two of the personal elements are thought to be very early in form; Croppa (in Cropthorne) is deemed by Mawer and Stenton<sup>63</sup> to have gone out of use prior to written records and Croida (in Kersoe) is found amongst the earliest of Mercian genealogies. The element Cearl found in Charlton implies the existence of low status but free peasantry and is an element that is usually found in association with centres of early Anglo-Saxon importance.<sup>64</sup>

Thus this estate bears all those elements necessary for it to be considered a territorial unit of considerable antiquity and continuity. A possible interpretation of its history is as follows: Some time in the Iron Age this area comprised a group of settlements dependent upon the Bredon hillfort. With the advent of the Romans and the demise of the hillfort, the centre of this group of settlements was moved to the banks of the Avon where access was better and the bulk of the population dwelt. The settlement chosen was probably sited close to a crossing point of the Avon (Pirifords in Cropthorne - first mentioned 972, now lost) and may well have acted as no more than a collecting centre for Roman tribute or the centre of a small, but geographically coherent, marketing area. With the first arrival of the Saxons, moving east along the Avon valley, this became a natural area to be taken over by a Saxon overlord who re-established the dependency between the Romano-British farms (tuns) and the settlement

he re-named on the banks of the Avon. The Saxon dead were buried on the periphery of the estate, finding mention some centuries later when the bounds were first codified. The general conquest of the area by the West Saxons in the late sixth century saw the absorption of the estate into the royal household from whence it was transferred to the Mercian household on the confederation of the Hwiccan sub-kingdom into Mercia. From this date royal privileges were granted conferring the status of holding assemblies and possibly dispensing justice, which could have, in turn, stimulated settlement expansion on the margins of the estate, hence the leah and worth name elements. Finally, the estate was transferred to the Church of Worcester, who over time adapted the dependency relationships, already extant, between peasant and lord as well as between farm and central settlement to accommodate the demesne production necessary to support the growing monastic community.

The final group of estates belonging to the Church of Worcester in the southern part of the county are those pertaining to Bredon, Ripple, Overbury and Conderton. Unfortunately the charter evidence is not such that as clear a picture emerges as it does for the Cropthorne estate, although the possibility of territorial continuity from Iron Age times does still exist. Bredon and Ripple, surprisingly, would not appear to have been within the hypothetical area of dependency envisaged for Bredon hillfort (Fig. 3.4), but rather within that of Towbury, the territory ascribed to which roughly encompasses the core area of the two estates. Overbury and Conderton, on the other hand, appear in the territory hypothetically ascribed to Danes Camp.

The estate centred upon Bredon again demonstrates an early ecclesiastical connection, predating its acquisition by the Church of Worcester. It appears to have been originally granted to support the small 'family' monastery of St. Peter's.<sup>65</sup> Bredon, although there appeared to be an early connection between this and the larger community at Worcester, for in 780 A.D. part of St. Peter's possessions in Coften Hackett were stated to be 'for the use of the Bishop of Worcester' (BCS 234). Similarly, in 781 A.D., in an exchange of land with Offa, the Bishop of Worcester received confirmation of certain

possessions including 12 'manentes' at Bredon (BCS 241), although it remains unknown exactly when the Bredon estate became part of Worcester's possessions. The original estate of St. Peter's comprised 10 'cassati' at Bredon's Norton, 10 at Washburn (Glos.), 10 at Cutsdean (Glos.) and 5 'manentes' at Teddington (Glos.), (Finberg 208). The area thus formed a type of discrete south-westerly transect extending between the two commanding positions of Bredon Hill and Cutsdean on top of the Cotswold scarp, with the terrace and other drift deposits associated with the Carrant Brook in between. At some time before the conquest Bushley, Welland and Pendock became associated with this discrete estate, although the charters give no clue as to the process by which it came about. The evidence from surveys (Fig. 4.12) mainly comes from tenth century leases (BCS 433, 166, Finberg 276, 322, 328, 362) and provides limited description of arable, meadowland and a continuing process of colonization of woodland clearances. For instance, the lease of Caldincote (983 A.D.), which from its bounds is identified as Kinsham in Bredon, states that the grantee was to hold, 'both arable and meadow' by chartered tenure (Finberg 322). The bounds describe a property lying mostly in common arable, or at least amongst fields, and refer to the 'Bishop's oatland'. Similarly an eleventh century lease of Bredon's Norton comprised "Two hides and one yardland, and four acres from the clearing that go with the two hides, the meadows and the grove that belong thereto, and also three acres of meadow at Afonhomme" (Finberg 362). Both references imply the existence of some form of agriculture, although the continuing process of clearance still finds mention. The Domesday survey confirms the impression of a rich agricultural area, but also one possessing woodland cover, particularly in the parts of the estate west of the Severn (Fig. 6.12).

The charters and surveys relating to Overbury and Conderton exhibit many similar features to those of Bredon, although the first grant of the two areas to Worcester appears to have been in 757 A.D. (Finberg 215). However, a more instructive charter is that of 875 A.D. which establishes the Church's possession of 6 'cassati' at 'Uferbreodun vel Uferbiri cum duabus villulis Cantuaretun videlicet, Peonedos" (BCS 541), as it provides the first instance of a grant of actual settlements. Usually the grant was of a tract of land within

which it was understood that the village or hamlet after which the charter was named was situated. The attached survey (Fig. 4.12) illustrates a mixture of agricultural, waste and wood landmarks, but the outstanding feature is the number of personal names ascribed to topographical features. In most surveys, mention is made solely of the swampy ground or the water course, but here they are nearly all dignified by a personal name, for example, 'Eomods', water course, 'Rumwolds' swampy ground', 'Dudda's stone', 'Sumaeri ford', and the like. This suggests a possibly greater degree of colonization, through the implication of ownership, extending to the periphery of the estate. Included within this charter were the bounds of Pendock which demonstrated far more detail than those of Overbury and Conderton, but provides more problems of identification due to the division of the parish area into two separate parts (see Fig. 6.3). The survey gave the area of the grant as two hides, which were presumably evenly split between the two parts, and Figure 4.12 gives a tentative identification of the landmarks. The western part appeared to be well colonized and cultivated, with many agricultural references ('Grass croft of the Gyding family', 'the herdsman's ploughland'), whilst the eastern portion appeared largely wooded, although mention was made of a lea implying some clearance. The Domesday survey did not differentiate between the hides, making it difficult to check the impression gained from the survey, although woodland was recorded as being half a league in length and breadth, which was of quite sizeable extent for an area as small as Pendock.<sup>66</sup> A note appended to the survey dealt with outlying lands including 'Feodecing Lea', a small flax land, two strips of ploughland among the land of the servants, and every third strip of ploughland at Didcot (Beckford). It is not possible to identify these with any certainty, although Grundy considered them all to have been in the vicinity of Pendock save for the ploughland at Didcot, which he associated with Overbury.<sup>67</sup> However, a later charter of 967 continued to associate the hide at Didcot with the two at Pendock and no further clue was given by Domesday survey. However, by 1086 Pendock was held by Urse d'Abitot, Worcester's notorious sheriff, and was surveyed as part of Bredon manor, whilst Overbury, although designated as the manor of Overbury and Pendock, in fact only included the six hides at Overbury and Conderton.

The other part of the southern group of estates was centred on Ripple and possesses even less charter evidence for its early development. In 1086 it included an appurtenant member of Upton on Severn and, as part of the manor, Earls Croome, Croome d'Abitot, Hill Croome, Holdfast, Queenhill and Bursley (Fig.6.3). The seventh century grant of Ripple to Worcester church gave an area of thirty 'manentes' with appurtenant woods, pastures, arable, fields, meadows and fisheries (BCS 51), which compares with the 25 hides assessed in Domesday Survey. No survey is attached to the charter making it impossible to discover the precise bounds, but it is unlikely to have included Upton and Hill Croom, as they possessed separate charters (Finberg 260, 267). Surveys exist for Upon and Hill Croome being attached to tenth century leases and landmarks from them are identified on Figure 4.12. In the former case, mention was made of wood, waste, marsh and occasional agricultural references including thirteen acres of ploughland on the east side of the Severn. The Ripple estate seems to have agglomerated around the central holding at Ripple throughout the Anglo-Saxon period until it achieved its Domesday form, as there is no evidence to suggest it was ever granted as one large discrete estate.

As far as can be discerned, the development of these three estates follows a similar pattern. Their core areas were characterised by small, but dense occupations by Romano-British peoples of the terraces of the Avon and Severn rivers and the sands and gravels of the Carrant Brook. These may, at an earlier period, have been dependents of the Iron Age hillforts of Towbury and Danes Camp, although this can only be extended as a supposition. These estates were too far west to be affected by the earliest Saxon intrusion and probably underwent a period of gradual decline under British authority when the old ties of dependence were only hazily remembered. With the West Saxon advance after 577 A.D., they formed small estates which were gradually built up by the addition of discrete members as new Saxon settlements were established in the extensive woodlands west of the Severn. Many of these discrete elements may well have been added after they became part of the Church of Worcester's possessions. An analysis of their component place names lends some support to this hypothesis. The estate centres, Ripple, Bredon, Overbury, have essentially topographical



elements, but are all associated with tun elements locally, for example Mitton, Conderton, Aston and Upton. The discrete parts of the estates, however, bear a far greater proportion of woodland and leah elements and indeed remained considerably wooded at the time of Domesday Book. One exception is the curious case of Pendock, bearing a Celtic name element, and a peculiar parish structure reflecting its split possession between two of these estates.

The final two estates, where charter evidence suggests the possibility of some form of territorial continuity, are those at Wick Episcopi and Kempsey; both close to the monastic centre at Worcester and based in the Severn valley. The estate that centred on Wick Episcopi comprised a large area to the west of the Severn, extending both north and south of the city of Worcester, which was sited on the opposite bank. A whole series of charters and surveys, dating between 757 A.D. and 985 A.D., deal with this area, but the original grant appears to have been made between 757 and 795 A.D., when Offa granted to Mildred, Bishop of Worcester, land belonging to the 'villa' of Wican (Wick Episcopi) (BCS 219). As can be seen from Figure 4.11 and Figure 2.1, the area includes parishes of St. Johns in Bedwardine, Cotheridge, the southern part of Wichford, North Hallow, Grimley, Kenswick, Little Witley and that part of Worcester city west of the Severn. This comprised what appears to have been the home estate of the Church of Worcester, comparable with the grant made in the Great Pershore Charter to the Church of Pershore. The bounds revealed from the accompanying survey are shown in Figure 4.12 along with other topographical description that was included. Much of the perimeter of the estate follows river and stream boundaries, the whole eastern side being delimited by the Severn and the southern by the Teme. The majority of the landmarks suggest woodland and *wasæ* (Fig. 4.12) and the general impression gained of the area at the time of its granting is of a wooded tract of country. This impression is fortified by surveys attached to later leases of parts of the estate, which by the time of Domesday had become three separate manors of Wick Episcopi, Hallow and Grimley (Fig. 6.3). A tenth century survey of land leased at Grimley, Moseley and Wick (BCS 1139) makes reference to game enclosures and small woods, whilst a lease of Bentley refers to woodland used to supply the salt furnaces at Droitwich, as well as

the brook of the woodland swine pasture (BCS 1087). Similarly, earlier ninth century charters and surveys referring to land in Holt, released the Bentley area from the duties of pasturing the King's swine (BCS 487) and mentioned the existence of an old ride through the wood (Finberg 339). Moreover, the lease of Little Witley (977 A.D.) is even more specific concerning woodland in the area, where it is stated that 'these are the boundaries which belong to the westernmost hide at Witley, of open and woodland as it is divided' (Finberg 310).

However, mention is made in all the above surveys to landmarks of an agricultural nature as well and these are shown on Figure 4.12. The Grimley lease mentions the 'Higna Gemaere' (balk of the labourers - Grundy), which possibly implies the existence of some sort of common field arable, although the translation should not be over exploited. Similarly, in a survey of the bounds of Lawern, mention is made of 'Aever Hege' (hedge of a strip of ploughland), 'Gubura Lande' (peasant arable land) and 'Sulig Graf' (Grove of the little furrow) (BCS 1108). Added to this should be the tenth century gift from King Edgar to the church, of a meadow called Kingsham which adjoined Henwick (Finberg 295). Few though these mentions are, they do imply some kind of arable development, whilst mentions of Gebura and balks of the labourers is suggestive of a type of manorial structure akin to that described by the *Rectitudines Singularum Personarum*.<sup>68</sup> However, as Figure 4.12 indicates, the bulk of the landmarks are descriptive of woodland or woodland activities, such as hunting.

The final charter to be considered that relates to this area is the Hallow-Hawling Charter of 816 A.D., in which Coenwulf grants to Denberht, Bishop of Worcester, in exchange for 14 'manentes' at Sture, exemption from certain dues of Whittington, Spechley and Tollandine, together with 30 'manentes' at Hallow and 25 at Chaddersley Corbett (BCS 357). This charter, with its surveys, has generated much discussion in the past, but seems to have been most successfully interpreted by Finberg.<sup>69</sup> Significant points emerging from the charter, from the viewpoint of this study, are the name ascribed to and the extent of, the area concerned. Hallow is originally described as 'Weogoran - leage', or the woodland clearing of the peoples called

Weogoran, who appear to have given their name to the city of Worcester, and inhabited an area between the Loughern brook and the Severn, and from Hallow Heath down to Powick bridge. This comprises nearly the whole area described in the first Wick Episcopi charter and suggests that the bounds of this latter grant may have been made on the basis of a group of peoples possessing a distinct regional identity.

In common with some of the southern estates, Wick Episcopi possessed a clear geographical unity in that the estate corresponds closely with the Loughern Basin (Figure 2) extending onto the Severn terraces in the east and the Teme terraces in the south. The area is mainly one of low relief, floored almost entirely by Keuper Marl apart from small patches of glacial drift around Grimley and Hallow and, as is to be expected, the settlement pattern has probably always reflected this contrast between drift deposits and the Keuper Marl. The latter remained largely clothed by woodland, at least until Domesday times, whilst the main settlements of Hallow, Holt, Grimley, Henwick and Wick Episcopi were situated on terrace deposits at the periphery of the estate. These terraces demonstrate a long continuity of occupance from Iron Age times at least, and it is quite possible that both the Iron Age and later Romano-British settlements formed some sort of dependency upon what became the Roman town of Worcester. This is lent some support by the identification of the territory of the estate with the Folk name, Weogoran, whose Celtic element suggests a long association with the town of Worcester. The place names (Table 4.2) show an interesting concentration of wic elements which reflects the long usage of the alluvial flats close to the confluence of the Severn and Teme valleys as important pastures. The other name elements comprise a mixture of tun, late burh and clearing elements such as leah and holt, which appear to confirm the evidence of the charters and Domesday Book that this area retained a considerable amount of woodland throughout the Saxon period.

The estate centred on Kempsey also bears some of the hallmarks of an early territorial unit. Centred on an Iron Age promontary fort, it has early ecclesiastical associations with the mention of a minster during the eighth century. Its place names reveal the familiar pattern of a topographical element at the estate

centre, Kempsey (eg) with dependant tun elements (Stoulton, Whittington, Norton, Wolverton) in its component parts. However, the charter evidence is not as good as elsewhere and does not allow very detailed analysis. The first grant in 799 A.D. of 30 'manentes' belonging to the minster of Kempsey was made to Abbot Balthun (BCS 295) presumably for the support of the monastic community from whose possession it was later transferred to Deneberht, Bishop of Worcester. As no survey is extant, the area comprising the thirty 'manentes' remains unknown, although in the Domesday Survey the twenty four geldable hides included Norton-juxta-Kempsey, which presumably was also included in the original grant. However, it is unclear whether Stoulton and Whittington were also included as only later tenth century leases remain in existence. These include surveys of Upper and Lower Wolverton, now in Stoulton, and four mansae at Whittington<sup>70</sup> (Fig. 4.12) and mention the sixty acres of wheat growing land which the Bishop had attached to his manor of Kempsey (Kemble 691). In a further survey of Lower Wolverton (Fig. 4.12) only one reference to woodland is found amongst the short bounds as against three agricultural references, although the most striking feature is the number of references to salt. These include a salt highway, salt carriers' spring, salt brook and salt carriers' dean, and presumably reflect the position of the area astride one of the main routes by which salt was brought from Droitwich to Worcester (Fig. 4.15).

Of the remaining Charters and leases, the majority refer to the Church's possessions in the plain of Worcester area, immediately to the east of the town of Worcester (Fig. 4.11). Unfortunately few charters exist which purport to be original grants, and the process by which these properties were acquired seems to have been one of piecemeal accumulation. At some later date, probably coincident with the reorganisation of hidage in the tenth century, these properties were banded together to form the complex manorial structure that is evident in Domesday Book (Fig. 6.3). Although place names in this area are dominated by tun elements there is little evidence to suggest any long standing federal structure. It is probable that Romano-British settlement in this area was discontinuous, being divided one from another by stretches of woodland such that each settlement

retained a degree of independence. The church authorities began to accumulate possessions in this area, probably from the eighth century onwards, but the resultant estate structures reflected more the piecemeal nature of their acquisition than any ancient territorial continuity. The one exception may have been the estate of Northwich and Whitstones. This manor is shown in the Domesday survey as comprising 25 hides in an area completely surrounding Worcester city on its eastern side (Fig. 6.3). However, no charters are extant which reveal how this situation came about, although normally it would be expected that an area so close to the cathedral church would have been amongst the earliest of grants, as was the case with the estate west of the Severn. All that remains is a series of leases<sup>71</sup>, some with surveys (Fig. 4.12), mainly dating to the tenth century, which alienate some of the small units that comprised the Domesday manor. The landmarks identified are not very instructive as they are comprised mainly of agricultural and clearing (lea) references and, as to be expected in an area so close to Worcester, a number of road references.

The only remaining part of the Church of Worcester's Domesday possessions for which Anglo-Saxon charters provide much information are the dispersed northern areas of Hartlebury, Wolverley, the northern part of Alvechurch, Stoke Prior and Tardebigge. Such surveys as exist are generally much harder to identify than elsewhere and produce a far smaller number of landmarks that can be fitted into the four categories that have been used. Hartlebury appears to have been originally granted between 852 A.D. and 874 A.D., although the charter is now lost (Finberg 253, BCS 1320) and all that survives are three century leases dealing with small parts of the area. Only one of these, Waresley, can be identified with any certainty, as the old bounds are shown on the tithe award for Hartlebury (Fig. 4.12).<sup>72</sup>

Wolverley has a complicated history which would appear to arise from its wooded and undercolonized nature for, although the original grant to the church was an early one (718-745 A.D.) (Finberg 210), land within the area was still being granted as late as 1052 (Finberg 359). It seems that the original grant did not include the total area of the later parish of Wolverley, although by Domesday the church appeared to have assumed control over an area of five hides (Fig. 6.3). Charters from the intervening period recorded grants of

part of the areas to individuals other than the Church of Worcester, making such surveys as exist very difficult to interpret. That shown on Figure 4.12 must remain very tentative and, although a charter of 866 gives some description of the nature of the area when it states "... with pasturage for seventy swine in the common wood of Wolverley, five wainloads of good brushwood, one oak annually and other timber necessary for building, firewood sufficient for his needs and other rights in woodland and open land pertaining to two manentes" (Finberg 261, 262). The Domesday entry makes no mention of woodland, although the area appears but sparsely occupied by either population or ploughteams.

The remaining charters for the church estates give only a very inadequate picture of the areas to which they refer. In the case of Stoke Prior the earliest grant (716 A.D.) mentions only a piece of ground (BCS 137), and later charters accompanied by surveys (Fig. 4.12) appear fabricated in order to bring the area assessment up to its Domesday total of ten hides. The bounds of Tardebigge were copied by Heming, although no charter remains extant, from which the assumption is made that the area once belonged to Worcester (Fig. 4.11). However, at the time of Domesday, the manor was part of the Royal estates. Cofton Hackett originally formed part of the grant to St. Peter's Bredon (BCS 234) and appears to have descended with the Bredon estate to the church of Worcester. As previously mentioned, an early link was formed with Worcester by the grant of woodland and appurtenances to the Bishop of Worcester and similarly, at an early date, the 5 'manentes' at Cofton Hackett became associated with land at Hopwood and Washhills in Alvechurch (BCS 455, 701).

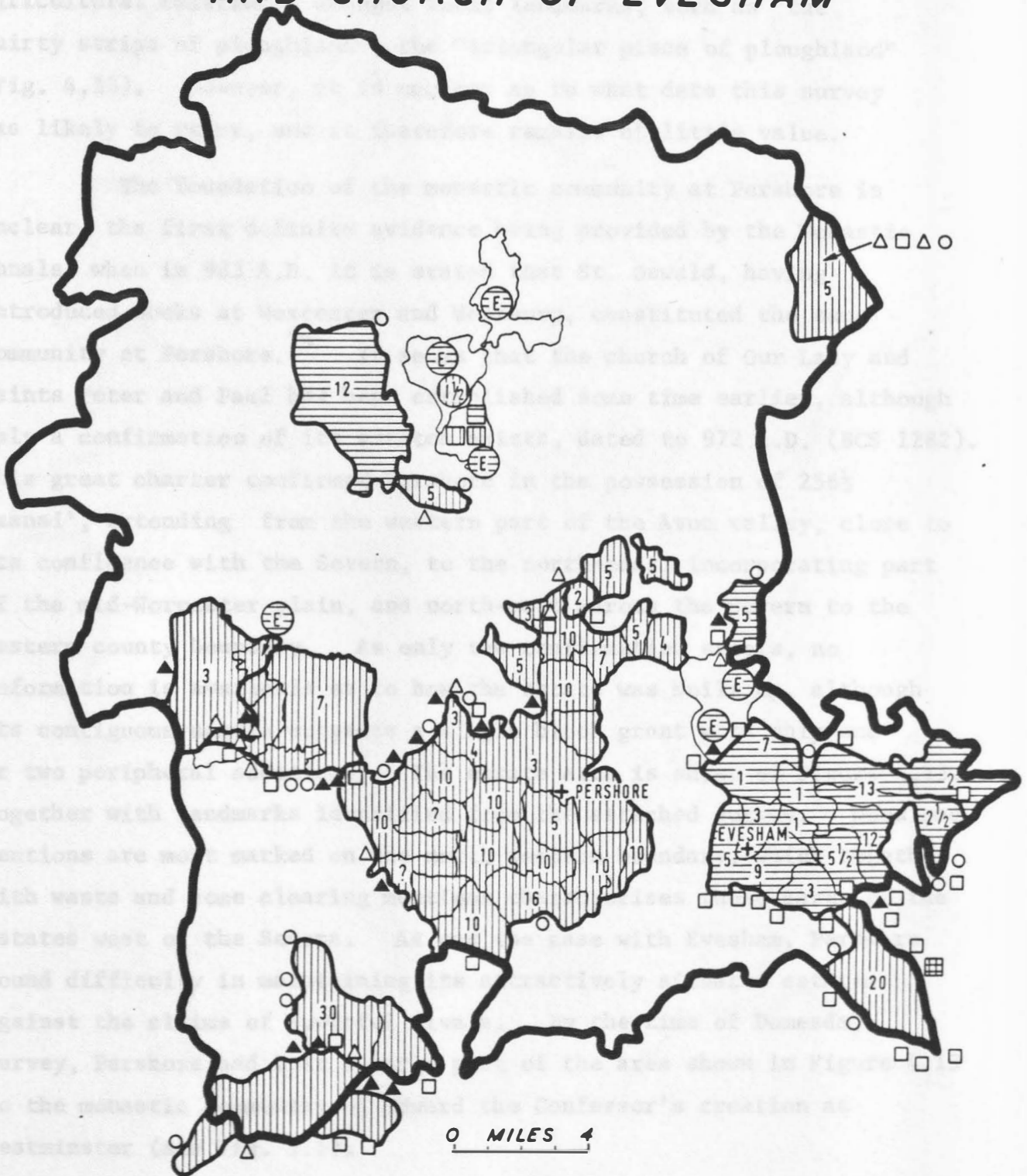
It is noticeable that all these latter estates are found in areas where evidence of Romano-British settlement is very scanty and the place names suggest the largest Saxon contribution to settlement and woodland clearance. Despite the large size of some of these possessions, for example those of Hartlebury, Hanbury and Wolverley, there is no evidence to suggest the areas that formed the Domesday manors were of any great antiquity as territorial units.






Estates of the Churches of Evesham and Pershore






According to the Chronicle of Evesham Abbey, it was founded in 701 A.D. by St. Ecgwine and by 714 A.D. had taken over the possessions of the old monastery at Fladbury and thus accumulated an estate of some 120 mansae.<sup>73</sup> However, the charter by which this gift was confirmed is known to be a forgery, being a late attempt to establish ownership over the large home estate that extended throughout the eastern part of the Avon valley (BCS 125). In Domesday Book the majority of the area is recorded as being held by Evesham Abbey, so it is likely that the bounds described in the Charter survey represent a situation some time in the pre-conquest period, although not necessarily as early as 709 A.D. The estate area is shown on Figure 4.13 and was clearly centred on the Vale of Evesham in the area of the Domesday hundred at Fissesberg (Fig. 5.1), although outlying members existed at Beoley, Hampton Lovett, Upton Warren and Ombersley.

D. C. Cox<sup>74</sup> has erected a convincing argument concerning the development of the central part of the Evesham estates. This compact area, embracing the Domesday manors of Wickhamford, Badsey, Offenham, Littleton and Church Honeybourne lies in the heart of the Vale of Evesham, centred on the drainage basin of the Broadway Brook. Cox demonstrates that it is possible to discern through the confusion created by the charter fabrications, the outlines of a compact but federal estate that he believes formed the original grant to the Church of Evesham in the early eighth century. As with the Cropthorne estate discussed above, the area has many known Romano-British habitation sites, is proximate to pagan burial sites and falls nearly into the region hypothesised on Figure 3.4 as being within the territory of Willersey Iron Age hill fort. Cox also draws a distinction between those possessions north of the Avon at Norton and Lenchwick and those south of the river, along similar lines to that between the two Worcester estates of Cropthorne and Fladbury. The more outlying parts of the Evesham estate, Cox views as having been relatively late additions, probably after the restoration of the church property in the tenth century. There are obvious and significant parallels between this and the development

## ESTATES OF CHURCH OF PERSHORE AND CHURCH OF EVESHAM



-  PERSHORE (972 A.D.)
-  EVESHAM
-  BOUNDARY OF GRANT WITH HIDAGE
-  PARISH BOUNDARY
-  AGRICULTURE

-  LEA
-  WOOD
-  WASTE
-  EXEMPTION FROM DUES
-  SALT FURNACE OR HOUSES AT DROITWICH



of the Worcester estates, although in this case the poorer charter evidence makes the argument harder to sustain. The surveys of the estates surrounding Evesham not unexpectedly demonstrate many agricultural references amongst their landmarks, such as "the thirty strips of ploughland", the "triangular piece of ploughland" (Fig. 4.13). However, it is unclear as to what date this survey was likely to refer, and it therefore remains of little value.

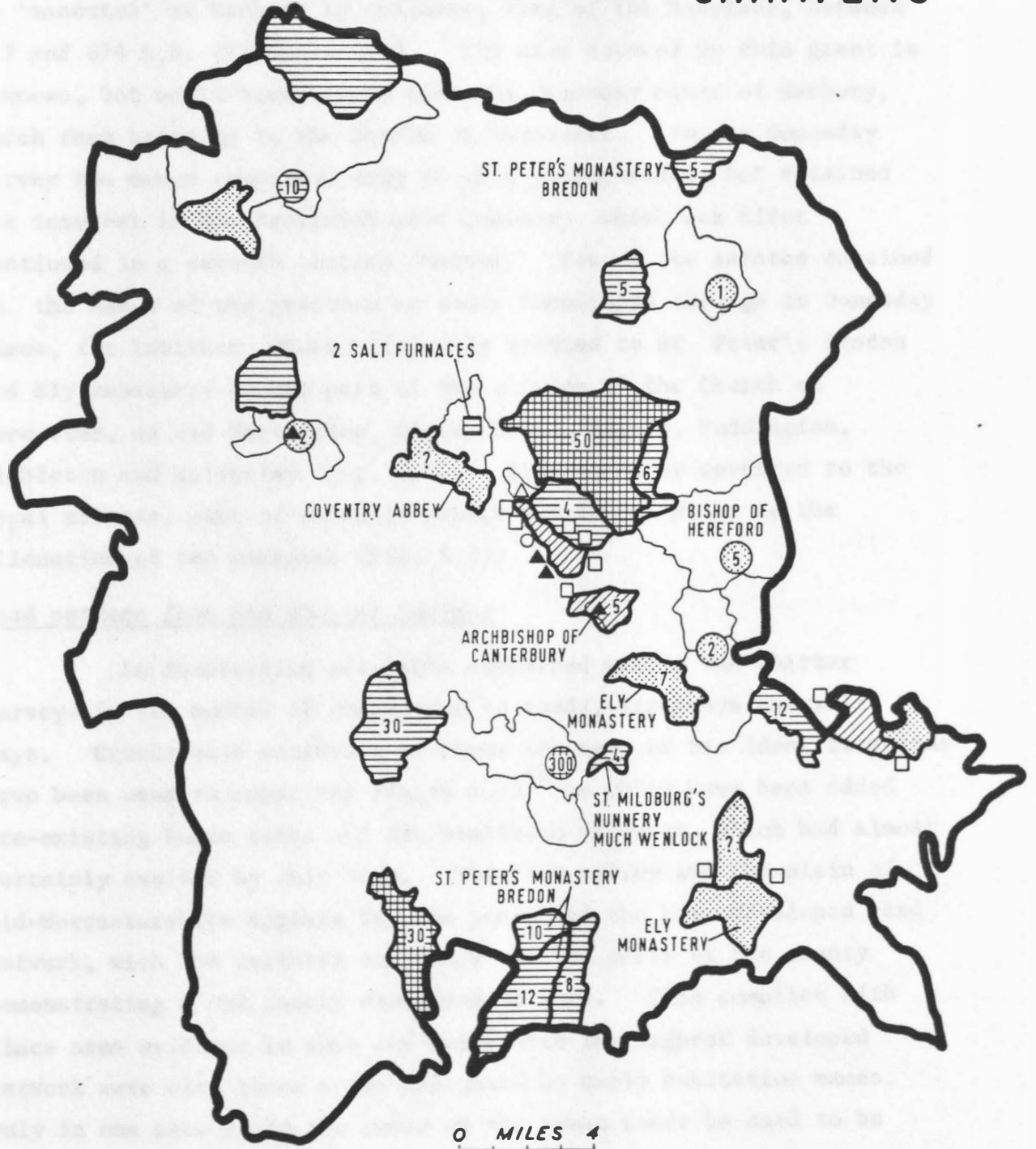
The foundation of the monastic community at Pershore is unclear, the first definite evidence being provided by the Monastic Annals, when in 983 A.D. it is stated that St. Oswald, having introduced monks at Worcester and Westbury, constituted the same community at Pershore.<sup>75</sup> It seems that the church of Our Lady and Saints Peter and Paul had been established some time earlier, although only a confirmation of its estates exists, dated to 972 A.D. (BCS 1282). This great charter confirmed Pershore in the possession of 256½ 'mansi', extending from the western part of the Avon valley, close to its confluence with the Severn, to the north-east, incorporating part of the mid-Worcester plain, and north-west across the Severn to the western county boundary. As only the confirmation exists, no information is available as to how the estate was built up, although its contiguous nature suggests a single block grant with only one or two peripheral additions. The estate area is shown on Figure 4.13, together with landmarks identified from the attached survey. Woodland mentions are most marked on the north western boundary, which together with waste and some clearing mentions characterises those parts of the estates west of the Severn. As was the case with Evesham, Pershore found difficulty in maintaining its attractively situated estates against the claims of powerful rivals. By the time of Domesday survey, Pershore had lost a large part of the area shown in Figure 4.13 to the monastic community of Edward the Confessor's creation at Westminster (see Fig. 5.1).

#### Miscellaneous Grants and Surveys

These are shown on Figure 4.14 and represent a wide range of small grants throughout the pre-conquest period. Some, such as those made to St. Peter's Bredon, later came into the hands of one

FIGURE 4.14

# MISCELLANEOUS GRANTS AND SURVEYS FROM ANGLO-SAXON CHARTERS



- |  |                               |  |                           |
|--|-------------------------------|--|---------------------------|
|  | BEFORE 700 A.D.               |  | GRANT WHERE BOUND UNKNOWN |
|  | 700 - 850 A.D.                |  | AGRICULTURE               |
|  | 850 - 950 A.D.                |  | LEA                       |
|  | 950 - 1066 A.D.               |  | WOOD                      |
|  | BOUNDARY OF GRANT WITH HIDAGE |  | WASTE                     |
|  | PARISH BOUNDARY               |  |                           |

of the major Worcestershire land holders. These provided a difficult class to deal with as most represent isolated charters, often to distant bodies and formed only a small part of widely dispersed estates. The largest grant shown is also the earliest, Abbot Colman being granted 50 'manentes' at Hanbury by Wulfhere, King of the Mercians, between 657 and 674 A.D. (Finberg 195). The area covered by this grant is unknown, but would seem larger than the Domesday manor of Hanbury, which then belonged to the Church of Worcester. In the Domesday Survey the manor comprised only 14 geld paying hides, but retained its interest in the Droitwich salt industry, which was first mentioned in a seventh century charter. Few of the estates remained in the hands of the grantees or their inheritors through to Domesday times, for instance, those originally granted to St. Peter's Bredon and Ely monastery became part of the estates of the Church of Worcester, as did Harvington, Cleeve Prior, Ripple, Huddington, Himbleton and Wolverley (Fig. 6.3). Kidderminster reverted to the Royal estates, part of which it presumably formed prior to the alienation of ten manentes (Fig. 6.1).

#### Road pattern from the Charter Surveys

An interesting sidelight contained within the charter surveys is the number of references to roads, trackways and salt ways. Grundy drew attention to these and many of his identifications have been used in compiling Figure 4.15<sup>76</sup> to which have been added pre-existing Roman roads and the Droitwich saltways, which had almost certainly evolved by this time. The Avon valley and the plain of mid-Worcestershire appears to have possessed the best developed road network, with the northern and south-western parts of the county demonstrating a but poorly developed network. This complies with place name evidence in that the areas with the highest developed network were also those areas dominated by early habitation names. Only in one case could the route of the Roman roads be said to be duplicated, that being the road north from Worcester, which suggests that the pre-Saxon roads remained in use throughout the period. This also seems to apply to pre-existing trackways, as the road pattern through the mid-Worcestershire plain and the Avon valley appears generally north-south, eventually linking, south of the county

FIGURE 4.15

# ROAD NETWORK FROM THE CHARTER SURVEYS



- ==== ROMAN ROAD
- PROJECTED ROMAN ROAD
- ROADS MENTIONED IN CHARTER SURVEYS
- - - - PROJECTED ROADS MENTIONED IN CHARTER SURVEYS
- ..... SALTWAYS

- CHARTER NUMBERS FROM
- CS *Cartularium Saxonicum* ed. W. de G. Birch
  - X *Codex Diplomaticus Arvi Saxonici* ed. J. H. Kemble

boundary, with the Jurassic Way. Similarly the course of 'Hyrc Weg' over Bredon Hill and through Bredon Hill Camp suggests a continuity from the Iron Age times. Droitwich seems to have retained its position, established during Roman times, of being a major route centre forming the focus of a well developed network of saltways. Worcester also appears as a routeway centre, particularly for routes from west of the Severn using the terrace gravels of the Teme valley and the higher ground further north. The name of the more northern of these three routes is instructive, 'Wudu Herepath', (wood highway), particularly if the number of woodland mentions made in the local charters is considered. Thus, judging from Figure 4.15, before the conquest, not only were most parts of the discrete estates linked by roadways, but also most parts of them had access to the market towns of Worcester and Droitwich. Conversely, certain areas of the county, notably the south-west and north-west, appear to have remained relatively isolated, even taking into account the selective nature of charter survival and distribution.

### Summary

Despite the fragmentary evidence for settlement and colonization during the long Saxon period, it has been possible to produce a coherent account of its progress. By the very nature of the evidence, much of the argument rests upon the balance of probabilities as the archaeological record is still very slender and does not lend itself to the establishment of hard facts. Thus, in the century after the withdrawal of the Roman legions the existence of pagan cemeteries in the south-eastern part of the Avon valley argues for an early Saxon presence, which does not find any direct confirmation in the place name evidence. However, when the evidence for the earliest estate units is considered it becomes possible to see how this might have occurred. It is, therefore, the combination of archaeological, place names and charter evidence that holds the key to the understanding of the Anglo-Saxon landscape rather than an individual consideration of the forms of evidence.

Generally, the evidence supports the view that the main Saxon impact upon the county came in the late sixth century after

the battle of Dyrham, although it does not support any 'stage theory' of settlement progress, with Saxon colonizers expanding outwards from primary centres. Rather, it suggests the existence, or creation, of early territorial units, which provided the basic framework for the progress of settlement. The growth and development of the estates of the Church of Worcester provides the best evidence for this and it is possible to identify at least four different types of territorial units within these estates. Firstly, there are those estate units which appear to demonstrate the greatest degree of continuity with the Iron Age and Romano-British periods. Such estates as Cropthorne, Kempsey, Wick Episcopi and the central Fissesberg estates of Evesham are all situated in areas of dense Romano-British occupation. Their estate boundaries show some coincidence with the hypothetical territories of Iron Age Hill forts and they form geographically compact areas often centred on a stream or river basin. Discrete elements are entirely lacking in the earliest period of evidence relating to their existence. Within the boundaries, a federal structure of settlements is apparent, with the central or 'manorial' settlement usually bearing a topographical name element, whilst the dependent settlements bear the tun element that has been associated with land use continuity from Romano-British times. Occasionally, leah and other woodland name elements do appear, depending on the amount of woodland still extant when the Saxons took over these territories and may well represent a purely Saxon contribution to the 'filling-out' of the settlement pattern.

Secondly, there are a group of estate units that have, at their core, areas well settled in Romano-British times, and which may have had some dependency relationship at one time with Iron Age hillforts. However, during the Saxon period discrete areas were added, which, judged from their place name elements, were areas of new Saxon settlement. Thus, in terms of territorial continuity, there is no evidence of great antiquity for the entire estate structure, although there is for parts of it. Such estates are those at Fladbury, Bredon and Ripple. Both the two categories of estate so far discussed have one other feature in common, in that the estate centres have very early associations with Christian



institutions. Early monastic communities existed at Worcester, Evesham, Fladbury and Bredon whilst Kempsey has a minster recorded in the eighth century and at Cropthorne the head of an early Anglo-Saxon cross was embedded in its church wall. The implications for the continuity of Celtic Christianity in a county exhibiting only a very short pagan period are considerable, although archaeological confirmation is still lacking.

The third group of estates were located on the plain of Worcester to the east of the town of Worcester. The charter evidence does not allow a reconstruction of the mode of their formation, save to suggest it was a piecemeal process of acquisition. Thus the estate structures revealed by Domesday Book were almost certainly of Saxon creation, although the individual settlements within them, as judged by the preponderance of ton name elements, may well represent a continuity of land use back to Romano-British times.

The final group of estates were located in the northern parts of the county and, although large in size, were characterised mainly by name elements suggesting Saxon colonizing activity. In Domesday Book they retained a wooded character and there seems little likelihood that the boundaries of these estates were created any earlier than the Saxon period. Such estate units are found at Hanbury, Hartlebury and Wolverley belonging to the Church of Worcester and Beoley and Ombersley belonging to Evesham.

The evidence suggests that elements of both Glanville Jones<sup>77</sup> and T. H. Aston's<sup>78</sup> views on the origin of the discrete estate are applicable to Worcestershire although neither theory is confirmed in total. The discrete element within the estates does not appear a feature inherited from Celtic times as suggested by Jones, but, on the other hand, estates such as Cropthorne do not appear purely Saxon creations as suggested by Aston. Undoubtedly there are estate units within the county that were created in the Saxon period, but there are also others that appear to have a much longer history and certainly were not created by Saxon colonization from primary centres. The most difficult problem that remains is not so much the demonstration of the continuity of territorial units, but the

definition of the relationships that bound the individual unit together over time. Glanville Jones argues for a continuity based upon the transference of Celtic lordship, expressed by the construction of hillforts, to Anglo-Saxon lordship; yet in Worcestershire there is no evidence of Celtic lordship on the local estate scale. Indeed the bonds between hillforts and their territories were very unlikely to have survived the Roman period, when the hillforts were deserted, never to be reoccupied. In this period, the links between the settlements may have been no more than the expression of small marketing areas based upon the pre-existing traditions and the geographical unity given by the occupation of a stream or river basin. The nature of Anglo-Saxon lordship, however, is relatively well known and was of a particularly thorough-going variety. Once established it redefined the relationships between lord and peasant, free and unfree peasantry, central settlement and dependency in a manner that was to the ultimate benefit of the lord himself. Thus, once the estates discussed above had become Church properties, these relationships were redefined to give ultimate benefit to the monastic communities they supported. The demesnes grew and developed in size whilst labour services were exacted in order to operate them. At the same time a different series of relationships would have developed on Royal or lay held estates answering to the needs of those particular lords, although they, too, would have been constrained within the overall concept of Anglo-Saxon lordship. This re-emphasises the importance of comprehending the spatial arrangement of estates and the nature of their lordship for a study of Domesday Book, where the economic and social implications of these arrangements can be studied in some depth.

Whatever interpretation is given to the nature and history of these territorial units, it is undoubtedly true that they formed the basis of the administrative units that were to characterise the county until the present century. The compliance between early estate boundaries and later parishes and rural deaneries has been noted in many parts of the country and is obvious from a study of figures 4.11 to 4.14. The correspondence between the assumed territory of the Dobunni, the sub-kingdom of the Hwicce and the medieval diocese of Worcester also is a powerful argument for



territorial continuity on a large scale. However, the county structure of Worcestershire did not emerge until the tenth century, when it was created out of an amalgamation of the estate units previously discussed. At this time the hidation of Mercia was arranged to produce thirteen shires, an outline of the scheme being preserved within the County Hidage<sup>79</sup> in which Worcestershire is credited with 1200 hides. This figure exactly corresponds with the hidage it is accorded in the Burghal Hidage<sup>80</sup> and approximates very closely with that of Domesday Book (1204 hides). The purpose of this arrangement is revealed by the Burghal Hidage, whereby each burh was assigned sufficient hides from its surrounding territory to support it in terms of men and produce to enable the reconquest of the Daneland to be undertaken. Thus the burh of Worcester is assigned 1200 hides for its support. Undoubtedly these hides were derived from the 'cassati' and 'manentes' contained within the charter grants, although by the tenth century the hide, to all intents and purposes, was a fiscal unit. Both Maitland and Stenton have argued that, in origin, the hide was that area which could support a single household. This argument is based upon a single reference contained within Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English Nation and has little independent support from elsewhere. Indeed, in Worcestershire, all the evidence points to the fact that the hidage was assessed at the level of the estate from the earliest times and subsequently apportioned within the estate to individual settlements. Whilst not disproving Maitland's and Stenton's contention, it does suggest more of a fiscal arrangement than anything else. Certainly, in 1086, there does appear to be a general correspondence between hidage and population and ploughteams (see Chapter 6), but this can only be tested from Domesday data, by which time the hide had undoubtedly become a unit of fiscal assessment.

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PART TWO

DOMESDAY STUDY.

Introduction

Chapter 5: Domesday Book and its analysis

Chapter 6: Domesday Distribution Patterns

Chapter 7: The Statistical Analysis of  
Relationships within Domesday Data

Summary



## INTRODUCTION

The study of Anglo-Saxon Worcestershire has established a basic framework of estate groupings within which Domesday data can be analysed and assessed. This allows some further insight into the nature and origins of Anglo-Saxon institutions and society, which could often only be dimly perceived from the evidence extant for the Anglo-Saxon period itself. At the same time, the analysis of Domesday Book allows the establishment of a framework upon which post-conquest studies of settlement, colonization and economic development can be based. In this sense, Domesday evidence provides the pivot upon which the whole of this study is based. At no time before 1350 is the landscape of Worcestershire so richly illuminated as it is in 1086. At no time is the whole of the county covered by a comparative single source that allows the use of a wide range of techniques to study the spatial variation of human and economic phenomena. In this sense Domesday Book is unique and as such warrants an entire section of this work to itself. The pattern followed is similar to that of the other two parts of this work. The document itself is first assessed as to its advantages and limitation as a form of evidence. There follows an analysis of the distributions of individual Domesday phenomena and finally a chapter where a synthesis of the relationships within Domesday data is attempted in a framework provided by the manorial structure of the county.

## CHAPTER FIVE : DOMESDAY BOOK AND ITS ANALYSIS

The Survey as Documentary Evidence

Much has already been written concerning both the making and interpretation of Domesday Book in general<sup>1</sup>, so here attention will centre on the Worcestershire account which has its own special characteristics. Worcestershire was probably part of the fifth Domesday circuit as designated by Stephenson, which comprised the counties of Gloucestershire, Worcestershire, Herefordshire, Staffordshire, Shropshire and Cheshire.<sup>2</sup> These counties demonstrate some degree of consistency in their treatment in Volume I of Domesday Book, although the only real certainty is that Worcestershire and Herefordshire formed part of the same circuit, as not only are they contiguous in Domesday Book, but significant parts of the Royal estates of Worcestershire appear in the Hereford account. Certainly, the King's commissioners (legati, barones) who took the Worcestershire evidence are known, as they are recorded by Heming<sup>3</sup>, but it remains uncertain if they had charge of the whole of circuit five.

Galbraith notes, with some surprise, that evidence from the hundred juries fails to appear in any of the accounts of circuit five with the exception of one mention in Gloucestershire. Concerning Worcestershire this should hardly excite surprise as such a high proportion of the wealthiest parts of the county lay in hundreds with single ownership. Thus the triple hundred (300 hides) of Oswaldslawe was entirely in the hands of the Church of Worcester, whilst Pershore hundred was divided between the Church of Westminster and Pershore Abbey. In Fissesberg hundred the sole tenant-in-chief was Evesham Abbey (Figs. 5.1, 6.1). Therefore, it is unlikely that the hundred courts, comprised of landowners, could be expected to bear independent witness to the evidence given by the tenants-in-chief, as in these cases they would be comprised of one and the same persons. The commissioners sought confirmation of the evidence set before them not from the hundred, but the county court, as is stated in the description of the liberties of Oswaldslawe, "this the whole county attests".<sup>4</sup>

As to the precise manner in which the Worcestershire evidence was collected, there must always be doubt, but the Domesday Book itself, together with two documents relating to Domesday, do throw some light on the methods of the Domesday commissioners. These Domesday 'satellites' are the so called 'cartula' made before the Domesday commissioners concerning the liberty of Oswaldslawe recorded in Hemings cartulary<sup>5</sup> and Evesham A described by Sawyer as 'a compilation of Domesday information .... arranged in hundreds in preparation for the hundredal enquiry'<sup>6</sup>. As to Heming's cartula, this appears in shortened form in the final Domesday Book and represents a copy of the evidence given by Bishop Wulfstan to the commissioners, as it states that the liberties so described were verified by the county court, "on the initiative of the most holy and wise father in God, the Lord Bishop Wulfstan". Heming further states that "they caused this testimony to be written down in an official royal document, henceforth to stand by royal authority without challenge or dispute", and adds later that this document "is kept in the royal treasury with the surveys of all England". This cartula would thus appear to be part of the official submission of the Bishop of Worcester concerning the Church estates, which in turn was passed on to Winchester as part of the 'original returns' where it was finally abbreviated by the Domesday compiler.

It is thus possible that a large part of the submission to the Domesday commissioners could have been made in writing prior to the inquiry, having been prepared by the monastic servants of Worcester, Evesham, Pershore and Westminster. The Worcester 'cartula' and Evesham 'A' could thus represent surviving parts of these 'original returns' preserved in church cartularies, which were eventually abbreviated either by the commissioners themselves or the Winchester scribe.

Evesham A forms part of the cartulary of Evesham Abbey, preserved in the British Museum<sup>8</sup>, and has been transcribed by Sawyer.<sup>9</sup> The survey is written in a hand belonging to the late twelfth century and its connection with the Domesday survey was first noted by Round<sup>10</sup> who considered it an abstract taken from the Exchequer Domesday.

Judging from internal evidence of Evesham A and by comparison with the Worcestershire account in Domesday, this appears unlikely. Sawyer argues that it had been abstracted from the returns of the tenants-in-chief prior to the hundredal inquiry, and thus uses this evidence as part of his general argument concerning hundredal order and the original returns.<sup>11</sup>

This would appear to be unsubstantiated by Domesday Book itself, which fails to mention the hundred courts in Worcestershire, although references to the county court abound. As previously mentioned this is probably due to the peculiar ownership pattern within the county which meant that in many cases a meeting of the hundred courts would have served little purpose. Of course, this does not rule out the possibility that at some stage the evidence was not collated, or ordered, on a hundredal basis, although the case for a hundredal order within the Worcestershire account would appear to be weakened by the fact that Evesham A does not follow the same order as the Exchequer Domesday. The most likely course of events would seem to be that evidence was initially submitted by the main tenants-in-chief, probably in written form. This was then checked by the Commissioners, possibly against existing hundred rolls in order to check hidage and geld liability. It is from this stage that Evesham A was copied, which would explain why Evesham A is largely concerned with tenants, subtenants, hidage and valuation and not the other details found in the Domesday account. This material was then submitted before the county court where it was checked and additional material added where necessary from the evidence of the juries drawn from each vill, as is suggested by the *Inquisitio Comitatus Cantabrigiensis*. This structure is very different from that usually associated with the collection of general Domesday evidence and somewhat different from that suggested by Sawyer for Worcestershire, but given the peculiarity of Worcestershire's administration and ownership patterns, would appear the most logical way of undertaking the task.

Apart from the light it sheds upon the construction of the Inquiry, Evesham A adds relatively little to the fund of Domesday data for the county. In the majority of cases the hidage and

valuations are identical with those in the Exchequer Domesday and only in the case of Willingwick, a berewick of Bromsgrove, is additional material, in the form of livestock, given.<sup>12</sup> Its main contribution lies in sixteen extra sub-tenants that it lists and in the identification of the subholdings of Powick and Longdon manors. The latter case forms an important addition for the mapping of the data, as it confirms that Longdon possessed holdings in Chaseley, Staunton and Eldersfield, some three miles distant from the main vill. Also Evesham A allows the identification of an estate belonging to Urse d'Abitot at Cochehi which remains unidentified in both the Victoria County History and in the Domesday Gazeteer.<sup>13</sup> In Evesham A this is spelt as Cokehelle, represented by the modern spelling of Cook Hill in Inkberrow, and was erroneously included under Doddingtree Hundred in the Exchequer Domesday.

Thus it can be seen that many of the special characteristics of the Worcestershire account, both in the mode of its construction and within the data it contains, stem from the nature of its land ownership. This estate structure is therefore crucial to the understanding and analysis of the contents of Domesday Book and is a point largely ignored by previous studies of Domesday Worcestershire.

#### Domesday Analysis and Mapping


The main geographic analysis of the Worcestershire Domesday was undertaken by F. J. Monkhouse as part of the Domesday Geography of England edited by H. C. Darby.<sup>14</sup> Monkhouse's account follows the pattern selected for the whole series, thus the mode of analysis was based upon exigencies of a national account rather than the particular idiosyncracies of Worcestershire. It is not the intention of this present study to duplicate the work of Monkhouse, although by the very nature of the study, there is bound to be some overlap. Rather, this study attempts to reassess the Domesday data for the county in a totally different manner; firstly, by grouping the data into estate units; secondly, by recreating Domesday manors as a basis for density mapping, and thirdly, by exploring relationships within the data.

As previously mentioned, the estate structure of Worcestershire, which began to emerge in the late seventh century,

FIGURE 5.1

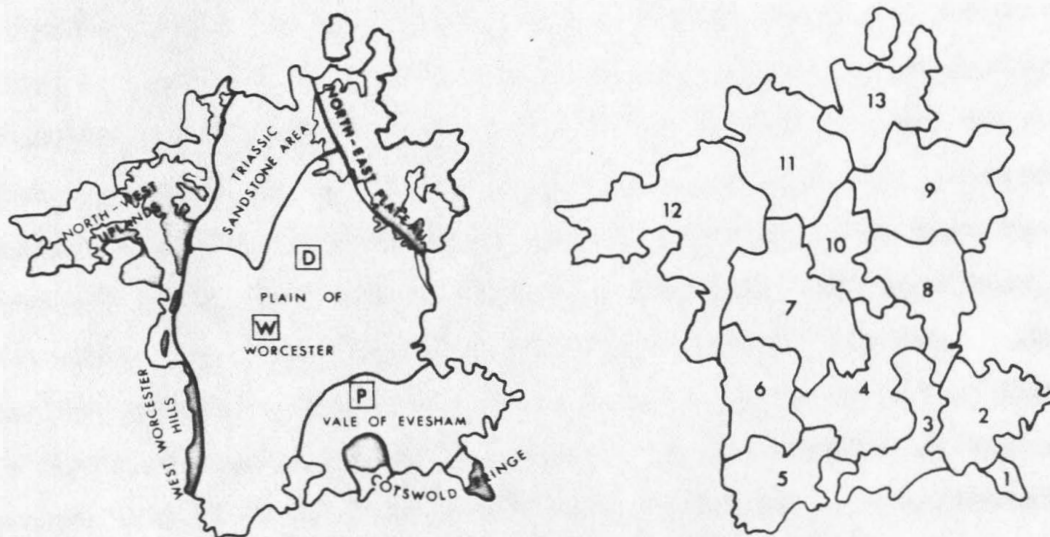
# WORCESTERSHIRE

## Regional Subdivisions

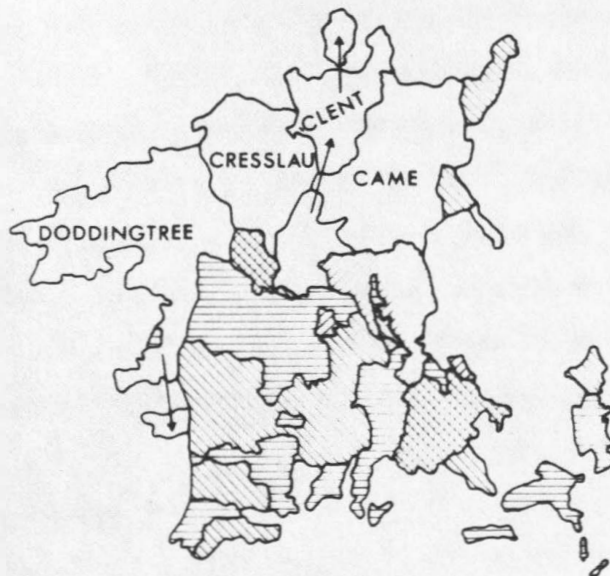
-  LAND ABOVE 400 FEET
- D** DROITWICH
- P** PERSHORE
- W** WORCESTER





## Mapping Areas used by F. Mankhouse

(from *The Domesday Geography of Midland England*, Edited by H.C. Darby.)



0 MILES 10



-  FISHBOROUGH
-  OSWALDSLOW
-  ESCH
-  PERSHORE

Worcestershire Hundreds 1086  
Domesday Survey

(nearly 60 per cent) of the county's area should be ostensibly devoted to the support of monastic communities, suggests that the structure and organisation of these estates could prove a crucial variable when considering the distribution of Domesday data.

One of the most difficult problems in a geographic analysis of Domesday data is to identify areas within which densities may be plotted. Paradoxically, this problem has received virtually no discussion in academic journals on a national basis and very little even at a county level. Although it is possible to reconstruct the Domesday counties, the smallest sub-unit within them that can be recreated is usually the hundred or wapentake, and even here, in many counties, their Domesday dimensions remain unknown. Only a very few counties, where there survives a large number of Anglo-Saxon charters containing boundary surveys, is it possible to recreate the Domesday manorial structure with any confidence. Fortunately, Worcestershire is one such county, as has been demonstrated previously, although, even here, many problems remain in the recreation of Domesday land units. Boundary surveys only exist for ecclesiastical estates, where they are not complete for all church possessions. Thus, no evidence exists for Royal and lay estates, although it is possible to interpolate boundaries where they are contiguous with ecclesiastical possessions. However, as noted in the previous chapter, the correspondence between Anglo-Saxon boundaries and parish boundaries is sufficiently close to allow their use as a framework for Domesday mapping as is illustrated by the distribution maps in Chapter 6. This method of mapping represents an improvement over that employed by Monkhouse in that the greatly increased number of mapping units allows much greater detail, but at the loss of some clarity. Monkhouse employs 13 mapping units covering the modern county area. They appear to be loosely based upon the hundred structure of the county, with subdivisions and alterations made upon the basis of parochial structure, although the *raison d'etre* is never explicitly stated. This has led to some curious anomalies within the choice of mapping area, which must affect the overall densities displayed. These can be seen by comparing Figure 5.1 with Figure 6.1. It would seem that the intention was to create mapping units of roughly equal size, that retained some aspects of the hundred structure, yet

bore some relationship to the physiographic regions of the county. The units selected generally comprise areas of between 16 - 20,000 acres, although area 12 (Fig. 5.1) is much larger, whilst area 1, comprising only a single Domesday manor of Broadway, is much smaller at 4,990 acres. By selecting the modern county boundaries, Monkhouse includes in areas 2 and 3 Domesday manors surveyed under other counties, namely Warwickshire and Gloucestershire and thus owned by landlords different from those in the rest of the mapping area. Thus area 2 includes Bickmarsh, Pebworth and Cow Honeybourne from Warwickshire and Hinton-on-the-Green, Aston Somerville and Childs Wickham from Gloucestershire, whilst area 3 includes Ashton under Hill, Beckford and Kemerton from Gloucestershire. Similarly, in the precise choice of mapping units many problems remain unexplained. For instance, it is unclear how the data relating to Himbleton and Hallow manor has been split, as they appear in the different mapping areas of 7 and 10. This also applies to Longdon manor with its holdings in Eldersfield and Chaseley, split between areas 6 and 5 and Bredon manor in area 3, with its holdings at Pendock and Welland in area 5. Not only have parts of individual Domesday entries been apparently allocated to different mapping areas, but also the logic behind the combination of some parishes is difficult to comprehend. Thus, Rous Lench and Ab Lench, part of the Bishop of Worcester's manor of Fladbury, are not included in area 3 with the main part of the estate, but in area 8, which largely comprised Esch Hundred and was mainly in Royal hands. Other such examples abound, presumably derived in the effort to adjust the hundred boundaries to give compact mapping areas of roughly equal size, rather than utilising the discrete structures of unequal area that actually characterized the Domesday county. The end result is a set of mapping units that are not derived from Domesday Book, obscure the estate structure of the county and form an uneasy compromise between Domesday Hundreds and physiographic areas. However, it should be added in defence of Monkhouse, that these mapping areas were designed for national comparison rather than solely for the analysis of Worcestershire.

The question still remains, however, as to whether the use of nineteenth century parishes as individual mapping units represents



any improvement over those utilised by Monkhouse. Certainly it is possible to ascribe most of the Domesday entries to a single parish, although there are occasional problems where outlying holdings occur. Also, the Domesday entries relating to some vills are so bound together as to make it impossible to isolate them individually. Thus the entries relating to the three Littletons, Offenham and Aldington in the Vale of Evesham are virtually impossible to disentangle and have to be considered together. The patterns that emerge are highly complex, as can be seen in Figures 6.1, 6.15, with nearly 170 mapping units in the study area. They convincingly demonstrate that there was much more local variation within the data than is suggested by Monkhouse's maps, and they do allow considerations regarding ownership and estate structure to be taken into account when analysing the distributions. However, certain critical weaknesses remain. The nineteenth century parish structure is not drawn from Domesday Book and, in a sense, the data is being forced into a framework on a series of assumptions that might not always be acceptable. It assumes, for example, that within complex manorial structures involving several vills, and thus several parishes, the demesne holdings are of necessity all situated at the vill after which the manor is named. In most cases this is manifestly true, but there is no guarantee that it will be so in all cases. Similarly, the densities relating to very small parishes, which once formed parts of larger manorial units, will be considerably overemphasised as against the very large parish/manorial units. In this sense the nineteenth century parish framework may be forcing a comparison for very dissimilar Domesday units, that is, on the one hand, a single vill as against a whole complex manorial structure comprised of a main vill, appurtenant settlements and berewicks. For example a comparison would be made between Wyre Piddle, a single vill-parish of only 381 acres and part of the manor of Fladbury, and Bromsgrove, also a parish, but comprising 11,656 acres and having 18 berewicks in 1086.

The Domesday account of Worcester is, however, organised within a structure which could form the basis of a mapping framework, that is, the manorial structure of the county. This is a difficult and time consuming structure to recreate, but armed with the nineteenth century parish structure and the Anglo-Saxon charter boundaries as

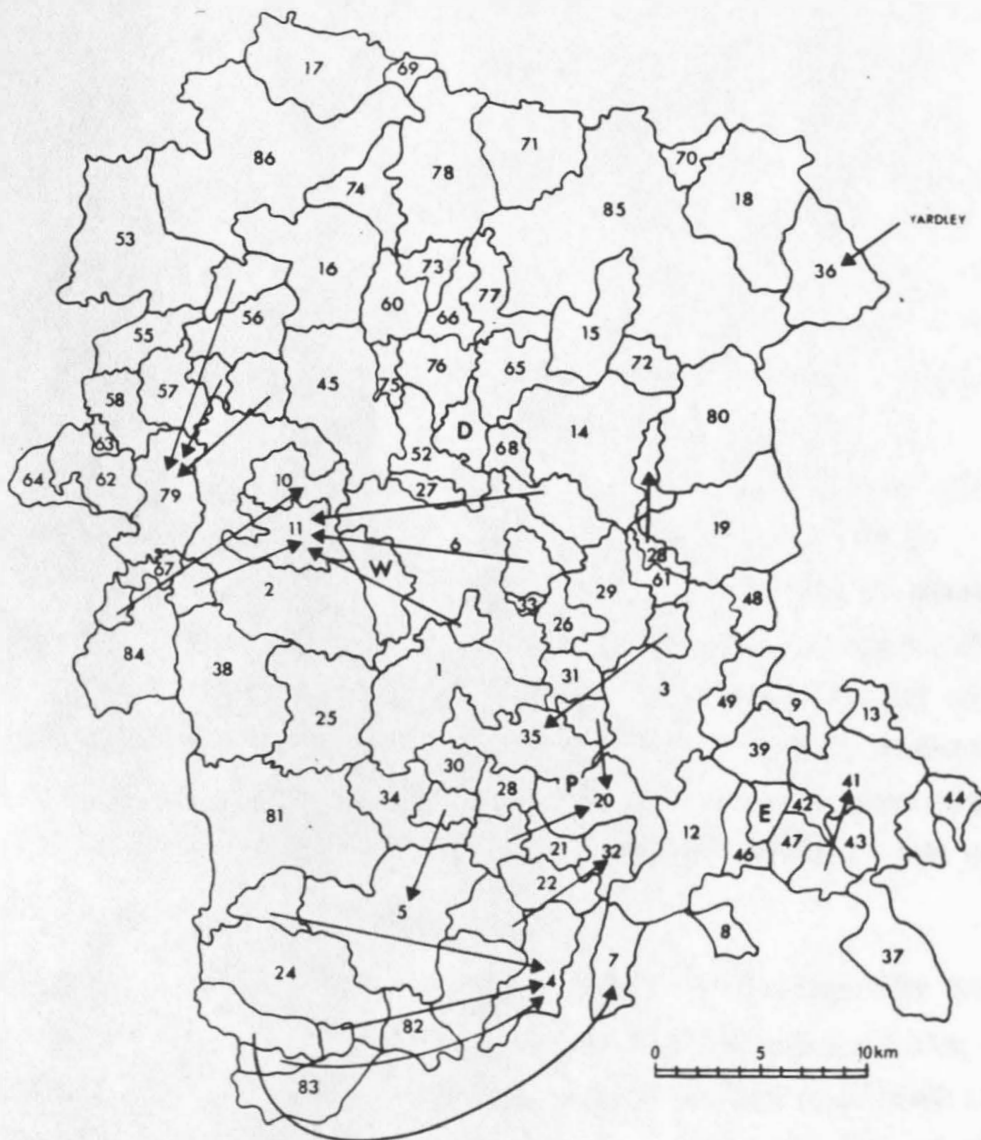
starting points, it is possible to work backwards in time from the pattern of parishes and chapelries described on the Index to the Tithe Survey (1831) sheets. This involves consulting all the manorial genealogies available, many of which can be found in the Victoria County History<sup>15</sup> as well as manorial documentation and Inquisitiones Post Mortem, where extant and relevant. Other useful sources are provided by the Lay Subsidies, particularly that of 1334, the Nomina Villarum and the Valor Ecclesiasticus.<sup>16</sup> The vast collection of material made by the antiquarian Thomas Prattington<sup>17</sup>, now stored in the library of the Society of Antiquaries, also contains information on manorial history as does the earlier survey of the county by T. Habbington.<sup>18</sup> By reviewing and collating information gained from these sources against the Anglo-Saxon charter evidence, together with the pattern of Domesday entries, it is possible to recreate the Domesday manors as shown on Figure 5.2 with some degree of confidence.

Some 86 manorial units are identified on Figure 5.2, which represents almost the midway point between Monkhouse's 13 mapping units and the 170 parish units. Admittedly this does not represent the totality of Domesday manors, as, in some cases, the Domesday entries are so intermingled as to make it impossible to apportion the entries between two or three separate manors. The only solution is to consider all three together in one amalgamated area. A case in point being that of the Littleton and Bretforton previously mentioned. Fortunately these manors are contiguous and all belonged to the Church of Evesham. Another difficulty arises where manors occur at a sub-parochial level in areas of poor documentation. Thus, whilst it is possible to identify the early parish boundary of Rock, it is not possible to identify the seven small manors that constituted its Domesday structure. Happily, these provide rare difficulties and in the vast majority of cases the mapping areas on Figure 5.2 represent as accurate a picture of Domesday manors as can be obtained.

The Domesday manors have been used as the basis for a series of density maps, largely concerning relationships within the data, leading to a construction of Domesday manorial economies. Also included are some density maps, such as population and ploughteams

FIGURE 5.2

# DOMESDAY MANORS



CHURCH OF WORCESTER

- 1 KEMPSEY
- 2 WICK EPISCOPI
- 3 FLADBURY
- 4 BREDON
- 5 RIPPLE
- 6 NORTHWICK
- 7 OVERBURY
- 8 SEDGEBARROW
- 9 HARVINGTON
- 10 GRIMLEY
- 11 HALLOW & HIMBLETON
- 12 CROPTHORNE
- 13 CLEEVE PRIOR
- 14 HAMBURY
- 15 STONE PRIOR
- 16 HARTLEBURY
- 17 WOLVERLEY
- 18 ALVECHURCH
- 19 INKBERROW

CHURCH OF WESTMINSTER

- 20 PERSHORE
- 21 BIRLINGHAM
- 22 ECKINGTON
- 23 BESFORD
- 24 LONGDON
- 25 POWICK
- 26 UPTON SNOOSBURY
- 27 HUSSINGTREE
- 28 DORMSTON
- 29 PIDDLE & NAUNTON
- 30 PIRTON
- 31 PEOPLETON
- 32 COMBERTON
- 33 BROUGHTON HACKETT
- 34 SEVERN STORE

CHURCH OF PERSHORE

- 35 PERSHORE
- 36 BECLEY
- 37 BROADWAY
- 38 LEIGH

CHURCH OF EVESHAM

- 39 NORTON & LENCHWICK
- 40 OLDBERROW
- 41 BRETFORTEIN, LITTLETON
- 42 ALDINGTON
- 43 BADSEY
- 44 HONEYBOURNE
- 45 OMBERSLEY
- 46 HAMPTON
- 47 BENGEWORTH
- 48 ABBOTS MORTON
- 49 CHURCH LENCH

BISHOP OF BAYEUX

- 50 ACTON BEAUCHAMP

- W WORCESTER
- D DROITWICH
- E EVESHAM
- P PERSHORE

LAY ESTATES

- 51 MALESOWEN
- 52 SALWARPE
- 53 ROCK
- 54 BAYTON
- 55 ABBERLEY
- 56 ASTLEY
- 57 REDMARLEY
- 58 SHELSEY B
- 59 EASTHAM
- 60 ELMLEY LOVETT
- 61 KINGTON
- 62 CLIFTON
- 63 SHELSEY WALSH
- 64 LOWER SAPEY
- 65 WYCHBOLD
- 66 ELMBRIDGE
- 67 DODDENHAM
- 68 HADZOR

ROYAL ESTATES

- 69 CHURCHILL
- 70 COFTON HACKETT
- 71 BELBROUGHTON
- 72 BENTLEY P
- 73 RUSHOCK
- 74 STONE
- 75 DOVERDALE
- 76 HAMPTON LOVETT
- 77 UPTON WARREN
- 78 CHADDESLEY COPBET
- 79 MARTLEY
- 80 PECKENHAM
- 81 HANLEY CASTLE
- 82 BUSHLEY
- 83 ELDERSFIELD
- 84 SUCHLEY
- 85 BROMSGROVE TARDESHIGE ELLEN
- 86 RIDDERMINSTER

which provide comparisons with maps based upon parish units and with those produced by Monkhouse and Darby. The advantages of using manors as mapping units has already been stressed, although there are some disadvantages. Firstly, the units are of unequal size, thus large scale ecclesiastical and royal manors comprising several thousand acres are compared with small lay manors of a few hundred acres. However, in terms of economic organisation, this represents the reality of eleventh century England. Also, not all manors form a series of contiguous vills, as some have discrete members, giving some complexity and artificiality to the resultant distribution. Where such discrete parts of manors exist it means that all details relating to the individual parts of the manor are spread evenly throughout the total area. Thus, in the case of woodland or demesne plough teams, which could relate to only one part of the manor, the effect is to reduce their local significance. However, as far as demesne plough teams are concerned, the majority of discrete manors were in ecclesiastical ownership where, usually, it can be demonstrated that a demesne element existed in all the component parts of the manor.

#### The statistical analysis of Domesday data.

In many respects the statistical analysis of Domesday data is still in its infancy. Such is the complexity and size of the source material, that generations of scholars have been employed in outlining the basic parameters of an analysis. Translations of the accounts for each county were first produced on a wide scale by the various authors of the Victoria County Histories, mainly about the turn of the present century. These are currently undergoing revision in a series begun by the late John Morris.<sup>19</sup> However, the all important identification of Domesday place names, which provides the starting point of any Domesday analysis, has now been virtually completed, largely thanks to H. C. Darby and his co-workers.<sup>20</sup> Geographical analysis of the data has subsequently been concerned with the not inconsiderable task of assigning entries to Domesday vills and the portrayal of distributions in the form of maps. Historians from the time of Ellis<sup>21</sup> onwards have tabulated data, usually at the level of individual counties, and have devoted much time to discussions of individual Domesday features, such as

ploughlands or ploughteams, in order to ascertain their composition and nature. Often this approach has been dependent upon comparisons of different documents, for instance the Exon Domesday as against the Exchequer account, or upon the unique reference that apparently gives greater insight into the nature of the phenomena under consideration. Generally, examination of relationships within Domesday data, for instance between ploughteams and population, has been eschewed or expressly denied. Since Maitland's time, this latter analysis has been conducted by the simple expedient of selecting a few Domesday vills, which have the same number of one particular Domesday phenomenon, be it hides, ploughteams, population or value, and then demonstrating that other Domesday data relating to the same vills shows a wide degree of variance. Hence Monkhouse in his account of Worcestershire argues that hidage does not reflect the agricultural realities of the time by producing the following table<sup>22</sup> :-

TABLE 5.2 DOMESDAY HIDES

<u>Place</u>	<u>Hidage</u>	<u>Teams</u>	<u>Male Population</u>
Holt	5	12	36
Hob Lench	5	8	13
North Piddle	5	5	10
Rushock	5	8	19
Suckley	5	29	57

A similar argument is advanced concerning values<sup>23</sup>, using a different set of five vills. Obviously, in a statistical sense, this sample of five drawn from 277 Domesday entries is meaningless and could not be used to prove, or disprove, any relationship between the variables.

Lennard, in a series of papers exploring the economic status of various classes of Domesday population<sup>24</sup>, attempted a more sophisticated analysis of the manner in which population was related to ploughteams. In the case of Villeins he selected from a wide range of Domesday counties only those entries where the ploughteams belonging to Villeins could be clearly identified. He thus extracted data relating to 10,733 Villeins, about 10 per cent of the total mentioned in Domesday

Book. In days prior to the widespread use of computers, this represented a herculean labour, but, upon his own admission, gives a very uneven sample base varying from one percent of Wiltshire's Villeins to over 67 percent of Bedfordshire's. Also, no statistical test was conducted to ascertain if there was any relationship between the two data sets, merely the varying ratios between the two were discussed at a county level. Similarly, Darby maps the ratio of men to ploughteams for the whole of Domesday England, although again there is only an implied assumption that there is a relationship between the two data sets.

Clearly, the one feature that has hampered the statistical analysis of Domesday Book has been an inability to handle the sheer bulk of the data. Even for a single county this can be considerable. For example, Worcestershire, with only 277 entries and an average of about 15 items per entry, has in excess of 4000 separate pieces of data. Multiplied up to a national level the figure runs into millions. However, with the growth in size and accessibility of computer facilities, and the development of statistical packages and custom built programs, it is now possible to handle vast quantities of data and to run simple statistical tests that were not feasible for earlier workers in the field. Problems occur in the encoding of data and in the manner of its storage, but these are more applicable to national, rather than individual county studies of Domesday, and as such have been dealt with elsewhere.<sup>25</sup> What is of more significance for the study of a single Domesday county is the nature of the statistical analysis undertaken. With data nearly 900 years old there are severe limitations upon the statistical techniques that can be usefully applied. The unknown reliability of the data means that multivariate techniques such as factor analysis and cluster analysis must be eliminated as they are likely to produce spurious results. Instead attention has been focussed upon correlation and regression analysis in order to assess relationships within the data. Even here problems exist for, as Figure 7.1 reveals, Domesday data often exhibits a high degree of intercorrelation. This multicollinearity in the data makes it impossible to effectively distinguish the individual effects of the

x's on the y in multiple regression, thus reducing the use of this technique to demonstrating large scale relationships within the data.

In this study, Domesday data is assessed at various levels of aggradation. Firstly, for the purpose of statistical analysis, at the level of each Domesday entry. Secondly, for point mapping techniques, at the level of each vill, although much of this has already be<sup>en</sup> achieved by Monkhouse. Thirdly, for the purpose of density calculations, at the parish level, and, finally, partially for the consideration of densities, but mainly to construct Domesday economics, the data has been aggregated to the level of each Domesday manor. In a sense this latter replaces the regional accounts, based on physiographic areas, found in the Domesday Geographies of England.

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## CHAPTER SIX : AN ANALYSIS OF DOMESDAY DISTRIBUTION PATTERNS

Within this chapter, simple distributions of Domesday data are considered, avoiding wherever possible those distributions already considered by Monkhouse. Here attention will be focussed upon the analysis of those features of the survey not considered by Monkhouse, for example, values, or where the data is analysed in a different framework, that is by estate or parish unit.

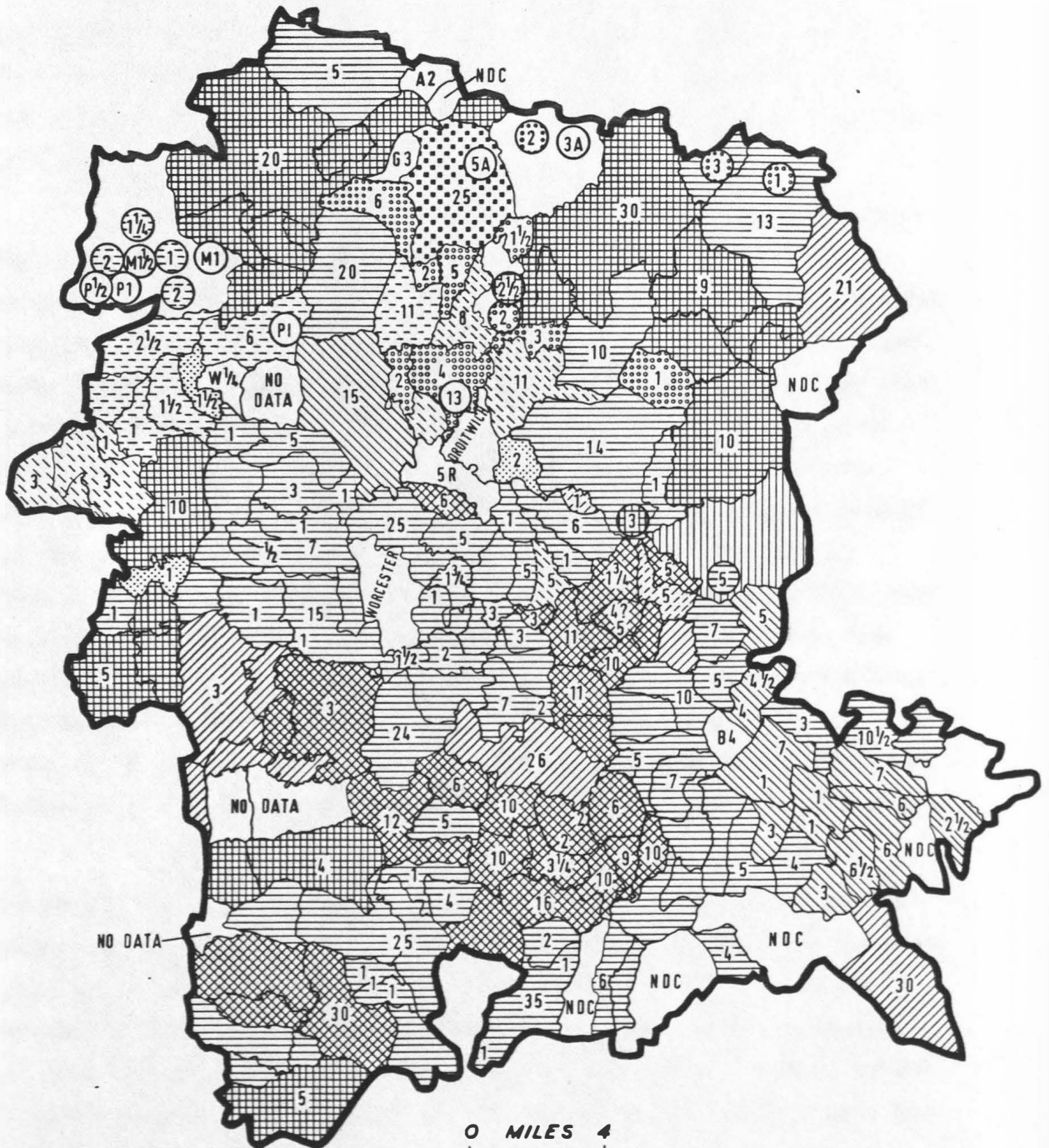
The Domesday County and Ownership pattern

The origins of the Domesday county lie in the complex growth of estates during the Anglo-Saxon period that were discussed in Chapter 4. Hence the configuration of the Domesday county, shown in Figure 5.1, represents, in the south, the discrete pattern of the holdings of the Church of Worcester. As has been pointed out previously, this area is not a feasible unit of study over the total time span of this thesis, and has been reduced to produce a core area that was discernibly part of Worcestershire throughout the whole study period. However, for certain purposes of statistical comparison, the Domesday county has been used in order to retain compatibility within the total data collection unit.

Of more importance than the nature of county boundaries in Domesday studies is the structure of hundreds within them. In Worcestershire the hundred structure appears to represent a degree of order grafted into the chaotic and somewhat artificial arrangement of the county boundaries. Maitland<sup>1</sup> drew attention to the apparent neatness of Worcestershire's hundred arrangement, for it is stated in Domesday that "In ipso comitatu sunt XII hundreda"<sup>2</sup>, which amounted to 1,204 hides. However, this superficial neatness conceals a considerable complexity of distribution and a number of flaws, for Fishborough hundred had to be artificially 'made up' to its round figure by the addition of 15 hides at Worcester city and 20 hides from Doddingtree Hundred. Figure 5.1 illustrates the complexity of the hundred arrangement and by comparison with Figure 6.1 it

FIGURE 6.1

# DOMESDAY ESTATE OWNERSHIP 1086



- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
|  KING WILLIAM          |  OSBERN FITZ RICHARD | L HUGH LASHE                                 |
|  CHURCH OF WORCESTER   |  GILBERT FITZ TUROLD | M RALF DE MORTIMOR                           |
|  BISHOP OF HEREFORD    |  URSE D'ABITOT       | P DROGO FITZ PONZ                            |
|  CHURCH OF WESTMINSTER |  EADGIFU             | R EARL ROGER                                 |
|  CHURCH OF PEASHORE    |  AREA UNKNOWN        | W WULFMAR                                    |
|  CHURCH OF EYESHAM     | A WILLIAM FITZ ANSCULF  | NDC NOT IN COUNTY AT TIME OF DOMESDAY SURVEY |
|  RALF DE TODENI        | B BISHOP OF BAYEAUX   | 35 DOMESDAY HIDAGE                           |
|  ROGER DE LACI         | G CHURCH OF GUTHLAC   |  |

becomes obvious that the hundreds were moulded, with the county boundary, around the pattern of estate ownership. It is thus apparent that the estate and its composite manors were the basic unit of both the county organisation and the manner of Domesday Book's construction. Also it is likely that this particular territorial organisation would have a considerable impact upon further colonization and settlement initiation within the county, particularly in Worcestershire where relatively few tenants-in-chief held the majority of the county area.

As can be seen from table 5.1 ecclesiastical authorities dominated ownership and in areal terms owned the majority of the southern two-thirds of the county (see Fig. 6.1). The Lay estates, comprising the remaining 23% of the county area (27% hidage), were split amongst 14 tenants-in-chief, who thus averaged only just over 18 hides each, although, of course, this figure conceals a great deal of individual variation. Generally, the lay estates were small in comparison with the ecclesiastical and distributed mainly in the north and north-west of the county. Only the sheriff, Urse d'Abitot, possessed a widely distributed estate, and this only because of the amount of land he had managed to purloin from the various churches, an action which earned him the famous curse from the Bishop of Worcester. It was partially from the basis of d'Abitot's estates in Worcestershire that the Beauchamp family were later able to develop their powerful position in the West Midlands.

Thus, from the data of Figure 6.1 it was possible to identify the areal extent of the vast majority of Domesday manors which in turn formed part of the larger estate structure. Evidence from the tenth and early eleventh century leases of the Church of Worcester demonstrated the beginnings, at least, of the operation of the various Church possessions as economic units. Thus, by the time of Domesday survey, many of the Worcestershire manors were not solely individual units, but part of a wider framework, and any distributions drawn from Domesday statistics must take this fact into account. Although by 1086 it was unlikely that any large scale attempt had been made at a total maximisation of returns from

local resources, each manor within a larger estate would have had to accommodate demands placed upon it by a central estate authority and thus have assumed a position somewhere between a self subsistence and specialised agrarian economy.

The neat hundredal arrangement, previously mentioned, is reputed to have contained within it considerable remnants of regular five and ten hide units, which have been discussed by Hollings.<sup>3</sup> These will be discussed separately when Domesday hidage is considered, although, generally, these do not account for any unhidated areas of the county, which probably comprised mainly woodland and waste and were thus the areas in which future colonization and settlement expansion were to be concentrated. As these areas became colonized, then the hidage pattern, and thus the hundred structure, would have changed to accommodate these areas within the geld structure.

### Settlement

Monkhouse estimated the total number of named settlements in Domesday Worcestershire as 264<sup>4</sup>, although this figure remains indefinite due to a number of settlements bearing the same name and to the difficulty of identifying some of the Domesday names. For example, in Rock (see Fig. 2.1) many present place names bear little relation to those of Domesday Book, whilst elsewhere, some names have disappeared since Domesday times, making location on a distribution map difficult. Settlements appear, from Figure 6.2, to have been fairly widely distributed throughout the study area, representing a filling out of the pattern revealed by earlier Anglo-Saxon evidence (Fig. 4.7). However, areas which appeared almost completely unsettled from Anglo-Saxon evidence seem to have progressed very little by the time of the Domesday survey. These areas were located predominantly west of the Severn, south of the Teme confluence, and in the north-east of the county with an extension southward along the eastern county boundary. The former of these areas was dominated in 1086 by Malvern Chase and the marshland area of the Severn valley in the neighbourhood of Longdon, whilst the latter provided the heart of the wooded area of the Royal Forest of Feckenham. Settlements appear most dense south of the Triassic uplands of the

# DOMESDAY SETTLEMENTS



- MANOR
  - SETTLEMENT APPURTENANT TO MAIN ESTATE MANOR
  - ▲ BERWICK
  - W WORCESTER
  - D DROITWICH
  - P PERSHORE
- } BURGESSES MENTIONED

north-east and west of the Severn, an area which includes most of the mid-Worcester plain and the Avon valley.

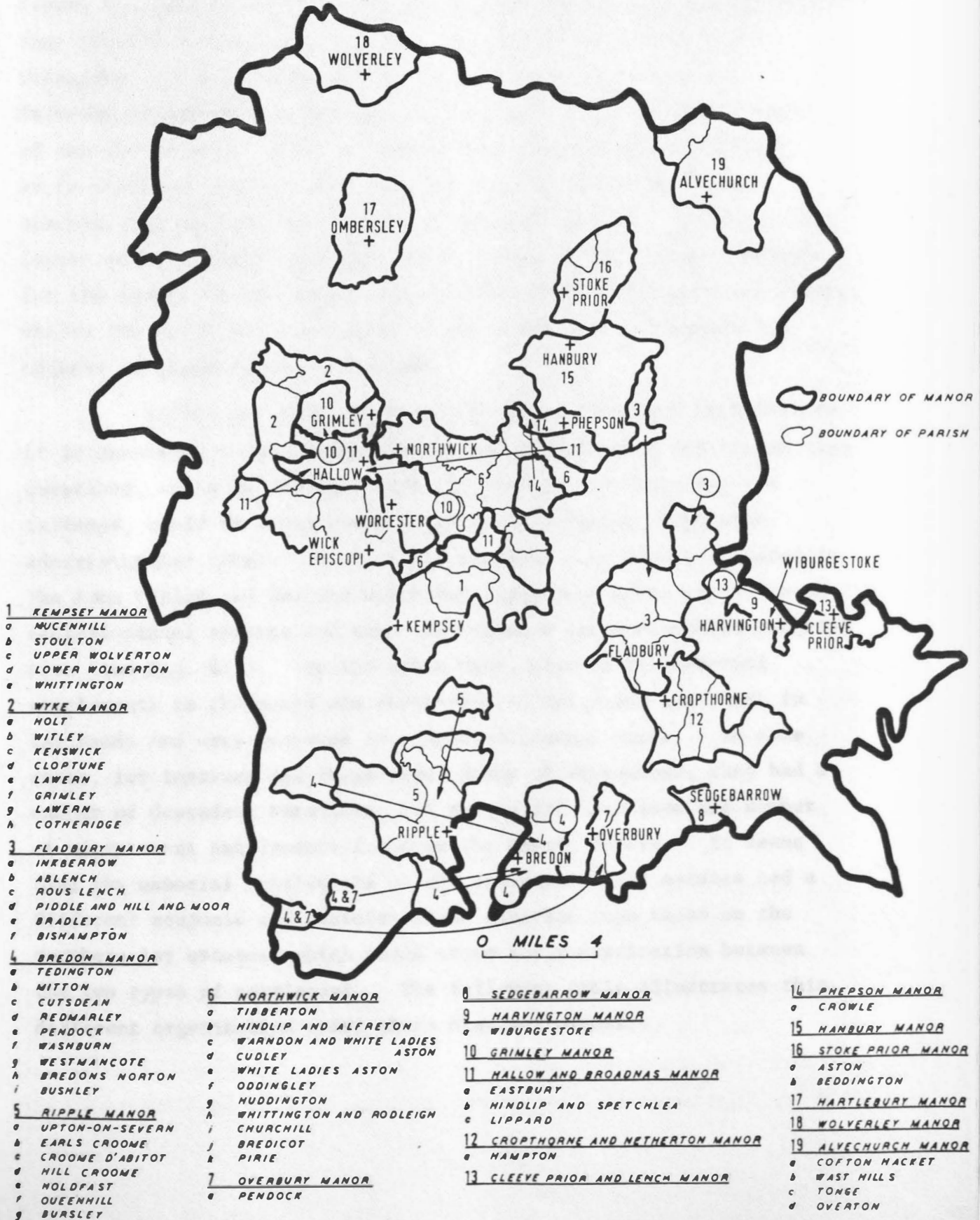
Sawyer<sup>5</sup> has agreed that the low densities of settlement in the north-west of the county, particularly in Doddingtree Hundred, may be due to the failure of Domesday Book to record them, rather than an absence of settlement. Thus the details for these 'missing' settlements would be subsumed under the main named manorial settlement. A similar argument has been used by Finberg<sup>6</sup> in the context of the south-western counties. Certainly, in Worcestershire, much of the settlement in the north-west is likely to have been of a dispersed single farm nature, as in many cases it has remained to the present day. However, supporting evidence for Sawyer's thesis is almost entirely lacking, as no Saxon remains have been discovered in the area and, by and large, the place name elements are relatively late in form. It is true that in certain manors densities of population and ploughteams rise to high levels, a fact previously disguised by the large scale mapping units used by Monkhouse and Darby. Even so, over much of the area west of the Severn, population levels remained low, which does little to support a thesis of a vast increase in settlements over and above those named in the survey.

Previous studies have generally assumed in discussing their distribution that all settlements were of equal size and status, which they manifestly were not, for they not only varied in terms of population size, but also in function, both economically and administratively within the estate framework. The Worcestershire account distinguished three kinds of rural settlement, as well as towns where burgesses were mentioned. The first type embraced the main manorial settlements, that is, those settlements which formed the centre and usually the name of the manor, and which were the basic units comprising the estates. Secondly, were settlements mentioned as being appurtenant to the main manorial settlement, and thirdly, were the group called berewicks. Generally, the first two categories received separate treatment in the survey, although their hidages were usually combined, but herewicks were invariably included within a composite entry for the whole manor. Many of the



FIGURE 6.3

## DOMESDAY MANORS OF THE ESTATES OF THE CHURCH OF WORCESTER



appurtenant villis later became manors in their own right, but generally berewicks remained throughout the Middle Ages within their main manor, for example, those at Bromsgrove and Hartlebury.

The distribution of these three categories is shown on Figure 6.2 and, although they do not appear regionally distinctive, some overall pattern does emerge. Manorial settlements occur throughout the settled area but are most concentrated in the Salwarpe valley and its tributaries together with the upland areas of the north-west. This is an initially surprising distribution, as it would be expected that such settlements would have been concentrated more in the longer settled Avon valley. However, this latter area, together with the mid-Worcester plain, is more notable for the number of settlements appurtenant to the main manorial centre, whilst the north and north-east of the study area illustrate the highest concentration of berewicks.

Before any conclusions can be drawn from this distribution it is necessary to obtain some knowledge of what each settlement type comprised, as it is unlikely that all manorial settlements, for instance, could be categorised together in anything other than administrative terms. Most of the manorial settlements situated in the Avon Valley and the mid-Worcester plain were parts of the large ecclesiastical estates and each controlled a large dependent manorial area (see Fig. 6.3). On the other hand, most of the manorial settlements in the north and north-west of the study area were in lay hands and were operated as single vill/manor units. In some cases, for instance the large royal manor of Bromsgrove, they had a number of dependent berewicks, but rarely did they have the number of appurtenant settlements found on the Church manors. It seems that the manorial settlements on the southern church estates had a different economic and administrative function from those on the northern lay estates, which would argue for a distinction between the two types of settlement. The following table illustrates this different organisation under three distinct owners:-

TABLE 6.1 DOMESDAY SETTLEMENTS ON THREE ESTATES

<u>Ownership</u>	<u>Manorial Settlements</u>		<u>Appurtenant</u>		<u>Berewicks</u>		<u>Total</u>	
	Nos.	%	Nos.	%	Nos.	%	Nos.	%
	Royal Estates	11	22.5	4	8.1	34	69.4	49
Lay Estates	77	98.9	-	-	1	1.1	78	100
Church of Worcester	26	24.8	67	63.8	12	11.4	105	100

The Lay holdings were divided between twelve individuals and, as can be seen from the table, virtually all the settlement appears to have been of the single manorial settlement/manor unit. The implication is that each manor unit was operated independently, which is given further weight by the lack of contiguity between the manors of each individual owner (Fig. 6.1). The Church of Worcester's estates provide very much the opposite picture, the holdings occurring in large blocks, with many appurtenant settlements (63% of all settlements named), all apparently administered from relatively few central manorial settlements. The royal manors fall somewhere between the two extremes, being generally large in areal extent with a single manorial settlement and a number of outlying berewicks (69% of all named settlements). The royal manor of Bromsgrove comprised at least 10,968 acres excluding 7 of its berewicks which lay outside the present county area. Unfortunately, it is not possible to ascertain the exact nature of the berewicks, as Domesday survey fails to distinguish, in its returns, between them and the manorial settlements. The only clue arises from a double entry in the Worcestershire survey, where Woodcote is described under Urse d'Abitot's possessions and as a berewick of Bromsgrove manor. The entry under d'Abitot's possessions states that at Woodcote "there are 1½ hides. There is one Villein and two Bordars with one plough. The wood is half a league, but the King has put it in his forest. It was worth ten shillings T.R.E.; now five shillings."<sup>7</sup> Admittedly this is slight evidence upon which to assume all berewicks were equivalently small, but it is supported by the wooded and underdeveloped nature of the area in which most of them occur (cf. Figs. 6.12 and 6.2).

If this hypothesis is correct, then the manorial settlements would have been of some considerable size, whilst the berewicks remained small. Thus the 18 berewicks of Bromsgrove would have represented only the minor part of the total Bromsgrove entry:-

TABLE 6.2 BROMSGROVE MANOR : DOMESDAY ENTRY

<u>Ploughs</u>		<u>Population</u>						<u>Mills</u>	
Demesne	Peasant	Reeve	Beadle	Priest	Villein	Bordar	Serf	Bond-woman	
2	77	1	1	1	20	92	9	1	3

In the case of the Church of Worcester's estates, some marked differences existed between the manorial settlements and those appurtenant to them, as is illustrated from the following example:-

TABLE 6.3 WICK EPISCOPI MANOR : DOMESDAY ENTRY

	<u>Ploughs</u>		<u>Population</u>				<u>Vivarium</u>	<u>Meadow</u>	<u>Wood</u>	<u>Value</u>
	Lord	Village	Priest	Villein	Bordar	Serf	(acres)		(1086)	
Wick Episcopi (Manorial)	4	12	-	12	12	-	2	60	2Lx1L	£8
Holt(appurtenant)	12	10	-	12	24	-	1	12	-	-
Witley "	1	-	1	-	2	-	-	-	3fx2f	10/-
Kenswick "	2	-	-	-	6	4	-	-	1Lx½L	15/-
Cloptune "	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	-	15/-
Lawern "	1	-	-	-	2	-	-	6	-	7/-
Grimley "	-	1	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	6/-
Lawern "	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	6	-	20/-
Cotheridge "	1	4	-	6	4	-	-	12	3qus.	-

Of the appurtenant settlements only Holt can be said to be of equivalent size to Wick, although the most noticeable feature of the organisation of this manor is the number of ploughs in demesne as against ploughs of the men at the appurtenant members. In this particular case it is likely that the situation arises from the process of subinfeudation that had been carried on from Bishop Oswald's times until 1086, when Urse d'Abitot held all but one of the appurtenant holdings.

Even greater contrasts are observed if the whole of the Church of Worcester's estates are considered:-

TABLE 6.4 ESTATE OF ST. MARY'S, WORCESTER : POPULATION & PLOUGH TEAMS

<u>Nos.of vills</u>	<u>Ploughs</u>				<u>Population</u>				<u>Total Popn. %</u>				
	Demesne		Peasants		Villeins		Bordars		Serfs & Bondwomen		Villeins	Bordars	Serfs
	nos.	ave.	nos.	ave.	nos.	ave.	nos.	ave.	nos.	ave.			
Manorial Settlements 40	81	2.0	397	9.9	414	10.3	270	6.7	184	4.6	47.7	31.1	21.2
Appurtenant 65	117.5	1.8	135	2.1	223	3.4	207	3.2	139	2.1	39.2	36.4	24.4

In this table the recorded number of ploughs and population are listed together with the average number per settlement. In the case of the manorial settlements this average is likely to be a considerable underestimate, as the total of 40 vills is made up of 22 manorial settlements, 6 appurtenant and 12 berewicks, which were impossible to separate in the Domesday account. Even so, apart from the average number of demesne ploughs per vill, the manorial settlements were, on average, much larger, having four times as many peasant ploughs, three times as many Villeins and twice as many Bordars and Serfs as the appurtenant settlements. The overall population percentages were not markedly different, the manorial settlements having a higher percentage of Villeins at the expense of Bordars and Serfs.

As previously mentioned, it is most unlikely that all manorial settlements were the same throughout the study area, a point which can be illustrated by comparison of manorial settlements on the estate of Urse d'Abitot with those of the Church of Worcester:-

TABLE 6.5 ESTATE OF URSE D'ABITOT POPULATION & PLOUGH TEAMS

<u>No.of vills</u>	<u>Ploughs</u>		<u>Population</u>				<u>Total popn. %</u>						
	Demesne nos.ave.	Peasant nos.ave.	Villeins nos.ave.	Bordars nos.ave.	Serfs & Bondwomen nos.ave.	Villeins	Bordars	Serfs					
Manorial Settle- ments 17	22.5	1.3	475	2.8	48	2.8	98	5.7	32	1.9	27	55	18

No appurtenant settlements mentioned.

The settlements in the above table were mainly distributed throughout the north and north-east of the study area (Fig. 6.2) and obviously were not equivalent in size to those on the church estates, even though they possessed equivalent status as heads of manors. All of the d'Abitot manors were let out to tenants and the wide scatter and lack of contiguity of their distribution suggest they were operated as individual units. In population size and plough strength they are more equivalent to the appurtenant settlements on the Church estates rather than to the manorial settlements. Another significant difference is the high proportion of Bordars at the expense of both Villein and Serf classes as compared with the church estates.

From this analysis of Domesday statistics relating to settlement, it is not possible to make any definite conclusions as to the exact nature of individual settlements, for the survey is organised around manors and the settlements within them do not always receive individual attention. However, it is clear that regional variation must be viewed against a background of estate organisation and distribution. As has been previously discussed, the Church of Worcester's estates had been built up over a long period of time, so that by the eleventh century they were being operated as an economic and administrative unit directed towards the feeding and benefit of the monastic community. The settlements within such an estate also became adapted to the administrative and economic needs placed upon them, whereas the lay estates appear to have been operated on a

far more individual basis and were probably more concerned with basic subsistence. These two types of estate organisation were, to some extent, areally distinct, the ecclesiastical authorities holding much of the richer south of the county, whilst the Lay estates were mainly found in the more heavily wooded north, which in itself would inhibit the latter's operation as large units. Thus difference in settlement in Domesday Worcestershire were not only a function of the physical resource base at their disposal, but also a function of the type of organisation within which they were set.

### Population

Domesday provides the first chance of assessing population numbers and the consequent impact upon the processes of colonization and settlement evolution. The Worcestershire returns are subject to the usual frustrations of vague references such as that at Besford, where it is stated that there is William the priest, with his men (cum suis hominibus).<sup>8</sup> Also problems exist as to whether the relatively large serf population includes the total number, or, as with other groups, only heads of households, although the general consensus of opinion favours the former.<sup>9</sup> Monkhouse lists a four-fold division of Domesday population, which is shown below<sup>10</sup> :-

TABLE 6.6 DOMESDAY POPULATION - WORCESTERSHIRE

<u>Population Element</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Bordars	1717	39.6
Villeins	1604	36.9
Serfs	704	16.2
Miscellaneous	316	7.3
	4341	100

Not included within the above totals are 136 Bondwomen.

For the study area, the main population groups are shown below, together with the equivalent totals for the Domesday county shown in parenthesis:-

TABLE 6.7 DOMESDAY POPULATION - STUDY AREA AND DOMESDAY COUNTY

<u>POPULATION ELEMENT</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>PERCENTAGE</u>
Bordars	1572 (1843)	38.1 (38.2)
Villeins	1416 (1673)	34.3 (34.6)
Serfs	606 (729)	14.7 (15.1)
Bondwomen	93 (104)	2.2 (2.2)
Cottars	51 (60)	1.2 (1.2)
Miscellaneous	393 (421)	9.5 (8.7)
<hr/>		
Total	4131 (4830)	100.0 (100.0)

That the three totals disagree should excite no surprise as different areas are being considered. That is, as previously explained, Monkhouse uses a modern county area, as against the study area selected for this work and the complex pattern of the Domesday county. Even where the same area is being considered it is still unlikely that any two authorities will agree precisely on totals, owing to the equivocal nature of some Domesday entries and the subjective interpretation they have to be given. Thus Maitland<sup>11</sup>, drawing largely upon the earlier work of Ellis, gives a total of 4,625 for the rural population, whilst Darby arrives at a total of 4,604.<sup>12</sup> With the inclusion of the burgess population, together with the tenants-in-chief and subtenants mentioned in the survey, the total recorded population remains under 5000. The total for the tenants and sub-tenants is again a difficult figure to calculate as it is unclear as to how many were actually resident in the county. One population group that is entirely absent from the survey is that of the monastic communities. Worcestershire possessed three large Benedictine Houses in the eleventh century,



those of Worcester, Evesham and Pershore and judging by the size of their estates they could have supported sizeable monastic communities. Generally it is known that Benedictine communities were considerably reduced during the tenth century but had begun to recover and grow during the eleventh century under the active encouragement of William I. Admittedly it could be argued that, as Pershore lost half of their estates after the conquest to Westminster, their community was suitably reduced. Unfortunately, there is no evidence at all upon which an estimate of their size could be based and they must remain as one of the many unknown features within considerations of Domesday population.

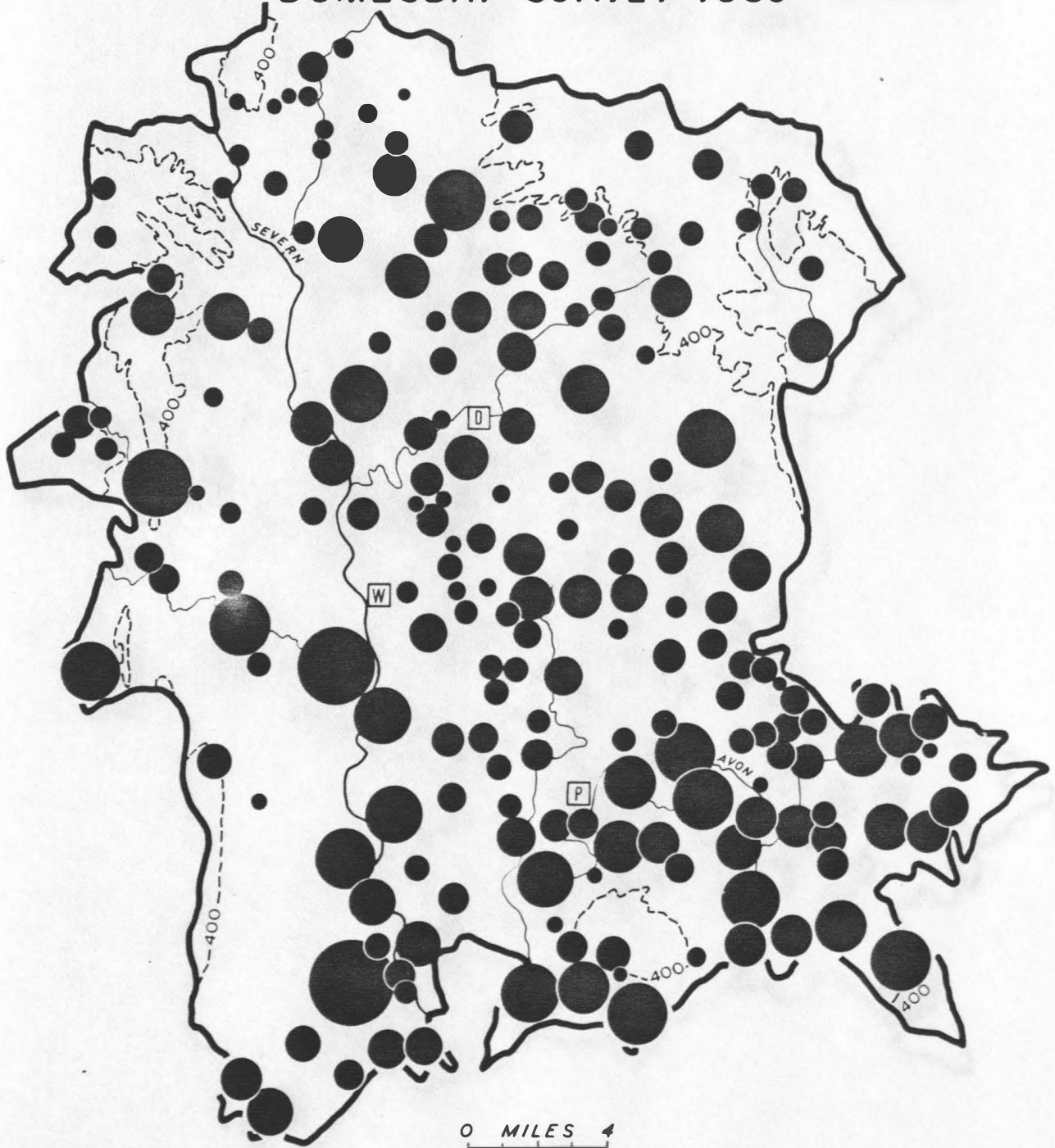
It is clear that Bordars and Villeins made up the vast bulk of the population, whilst a peculiar feature of the Worcestershire survey is the lack of Freeman. Only 8 are mentioned, to which should be added 26 Radmen and possibly 27 Frenchmen, although these latter occupy an ambiguous position as they cannot entirely be assumed to have possessed freeman status. In the return for Upton Snodsbury, two such Frenchmen are referred to as "francigenae servientes", suggesting a form of servile status. The dearth of Freeman could be the result of the failure of the Domesday commissioners to include them, as the situation is common throughout much of the Midland Counties<sup>13</sup>, although in Worcestershire, due to the estate structure, there would be precious little land for them to hold. The impression gained in Worcestershire is that the Domesday statistics represent a realistic assessment of this class, as the relatively late impact of the main Saxon intrusion, together with the evolution of the large church estates, probably meant that Freeman never existed in large numbers. Admittedly, the Conquest brought about a diminution of their numbers, as many of the smaller manors in the north of the county had been previously held by two or three Thegns, but by 1086 had been combined into a discrete estate under a single Norman Lord. If such dispossessed Anglo-Saxon Thegns survived it would seem most likely that they had become depressed into the villein class.

In terms of round numbers it is possible to assess the recorded population of the Domesday county at something under 5000 at the outside and for the study area around 700 less than that. In both cases, this gives a population density of nearly 7 recorded persons per square mile, which is low compared to the highest population densities experienced in the eastern counties of Norfolk or Lincolnshire which averaged over 10 per square mile and rose to over 40 per square mile in favoured areas. In order to ascertain realistic population densities a multiplier would have to be applied to the recorded population. The nature and methods of assessing such a multiplier are approached in the following chapter and to avoid rehearsing the various arguments, the compromise multiplier adopted by Darby of 4.5 is used here, purely to gain a general impression of population size and density. Thus, for the Domesday county a total population of 22,500 is projected at a density of nearly 31 persons per square mile.

Obviously these figures remain very hypothetical and represent only the best estimate available within the constraints of the evidence. Of more significance is the distribution of recorded population within the county which is shown, by vill, on Figure 6.4. Certain problems emerged in the mapping of the population statistics which provide some reservations to the distribution shown. Most arise from difficulties in identifying the location of some named settlements and the composite nature of some entries, both of which have been previously mentioned. Wherever possible, the recorded population has been assigned to the settlements named in the survey, but in all cases, due to composite entries, this was not possible. Also with regard to berewicks, any attempt to give each equal status with the main manorial settlement would be as equally unrealistic as showing the total population at a single vill. Generally a compromise solution has been adopted whereby on Figure 6.4, in the case of composite entries, the totals have been split equally amongst all named settlements, and Figure 6.5 where they are shown only at the main settlement mentioned. Thus, on the latter figure Bromsgrove and Kidderminster in the north appear as large settlements set in a sea of relative isolation,

FIGURE 6.4

**WORCESTERSHIRE  
RECORDED POPULATION BY VILL  
DOMESDAY SURVEY 1086**



RECORDED POPULATION



W WORCESTER  
D DROITWICH  
P PERSHORE

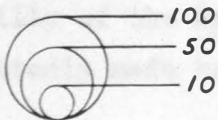
} BURGESSES MENTIONED

FIGURE 6.5

**WORCESTERSHIRE  
RECORDED POPULATION ELEMENTS  
DOMESDAY SURVEY 1086**



RECORDED POPULATION



- VILLEINS
- BORDARS
- SERFS
- MISCELLANEOUS

- W WORCESTER
- D DROITWICH

whilst on the former figure their relative importance appears far more muted. Obviously the reality of the Domesday situation lies somewhere between the two.

The distribution of recorded population (Fig. 6.4) emphasises the continuing significance of the Avon valley where the terrace and drift deposits provided the sites for large vills of 50 or more recorded inhabitants. Thus, the importance of this area in the settlement history of the county is again reaffirmed, with the light, well-drained soils and ample provision of highly valued meadow land allowing the development of large common field villages. Similarly, the fan gravels of the Cotswold sub-edge formed the sites for a series of large vills which extended westward from south of Bredon Hill to Broadway in the east. In many ways this can be viewed as a westward continuation of the pattern of settlement distribution found in the Feldon area of the neighbouring county of Warwickshire.<sup>14</sup> North of the Avon valley, in the Lower Lias and Keuper Marl plain of mid-Worcestershire, were a series of medium sized vills which tended to become more dispersed as the empty areas of the Forest of Feckenham were approached. Thus the change is far more gradual than that observed between the Feldon and Arden areas of Warwickshire, although Worcestershire does not possess an area equivalent to the Lower Lias limestone area north of Stratford-upon-Avon.

The area between the Salwarpe and Stour rivers had a few large settlements (30-50 recorded inhabitants) surrounded by a number of small vills, giving an overall fairly widespread distribution of population. However, some large settlements here are almost certainly overestimated in size on Figure 6.4, in that many represent composite entries where it has been impossible to identify the constituent parts. By reference to Figure 6.12 it can be seen that this northern area retained a considerable woodland cover, and it is likely that the area was dominated by small settlements of up to five recorded inhabitants dispersed throughout a series of woodland clearings. Only the manorial settlements appear comparable with the vills of the Avon valley, although the Droitwich salt trade had undoubtedly made considerable inroads upon the woodland cover and

had promoted a degree of colonization and settlement, as witnessed by the cluster of villas around Droitwich and the saltways radiating from it (Fig. 4.15). Along the Severn valley and to the west of the river, the population appears dominated by few large settlements isolated one from the other by large empty areas. Whilst the wooded nature of this area is confirmed by Figure 6.12, together with references to pig farmers at Hanley Castle, foresters at Pull Court and Bushley, the concentration of population in few villas is overemphasised. The manors they represent covered wide areas and certainly comprised more than the single villa named in Domesday Survey. For example, the largest settlement west of the Severn was Longdon which was sited on the Severn terrace gravels in the south of the county. The survey split the manor into six separate holdings and, although only Longdon was named, it was stated that T.R.E., 18 of the 30 hides were held by 9 individuals. Also, of the total of 116 recorded persons, only 18 were mentioned directly under Longdon and the other 98 were included under the possessions of the 5 tenants<sup>15</sup>, suggesting the existence of more than one settlement within the manor, which is confirmed by Evesham A.<sup>16</sup> The manor of Powick, sited close to the Severn-Teme confluence, presents a similar case, as it possessed five tenants as did Leigh with three tenants. It is clear from a general study of the Worcestershire survey that single villas divided amongst more than one landlord or tenant were almost unknown in Worcestershire, and therefore it seems probable that these entries represent separate settlements. However, even taking this into account, the area west of the Severn, with some exceptions, remained lightly populated with large woodland areas and such settlement as existed was concentrated on the relatively narrow strips of the Severn and Teme terrace belts.

In addition to the consideration of population within the 198 rural villa units shown on Figure 6.4 it is instructive to view the population data in terms of frequency distribution by Domesday entry.

TABLE 6.8 FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION BY DOMESDAY ENTRY

<u>VALUE</u>	<u>ABSOLUTE FREQUENCY</u>	<u>RELATIVE FREQUENCY</u> (percent)	<u>CUMULATIVE FREQUENC</u> (percent)
0	18	7.7	7.7
1	8	3.4	11.2
2	8	3.4	14.6
3	10	4.3	18.9
4	8	3.4	22.3
5	6	2.6	24.9
6	4	1.7	26.6
7	9	3.9	30.5
8	7	3.0	33.5
9	14	6.0	39.5
10	11	4.7	44.2
11	8	3.4	47.6
12	4	1.7	49.4
13	5	2.1	51.5
14	7	3.0	54.5
15	5	2.1	56.7
16	5	2.1	58.8
17	6	2.6	61.4
18	7	3.0	64.4
19	5	2.1	66.5
20	5	2.1	68.7
21	8	3.4	72.1
22	1	.4	72.5
23	4	1.7	74.2
24	4	1.7	76.0
25	4	1.7	77.7
26	3	1.3	79.0
27	1	.4	79.4
28	1	.4	79.3
29	1	.4	80.3
30	2	.9	81.1

TABLE 6.8 (Cont'd)

<u>VALUE</u>	<u>ABSOLUTE FREQUENCY</u>	<u>RELATIVE FREQUENCY</u> (percent)	<u>CUMULATIVE FREQUENCY</u> (percent)
31	2	.9	82.0
32	2	.9	82.8
33	1	.4	83.3
34	4	1.7	85.0
35	3	1.3	86.3
36	3	1.3	87.6
37	2	.9	88.4
38	1	.4	88.8
39	2	.9	89.7
40	2	.9	90.6
41-50	7	3.0	93.6
51-60	8	3.4	97.0
61-70	6	2.6	99.6
128	1	.4	100
<hr/>			
TOTAL	233	100.0	100.0
Mean	17.7	Median	12.8
Standard Error	1.1	Variance	305.3
Standard Deviation	17.5	Range	128.0

As can be seen from the above table the range of entries is large and similar to that of the neighbouring county of Warwickshire (0-145). The mean and median values also comply closely with those of Warwickshire (17.5 and 11.9). However, the main distinction between the two counties is that Worcestershire has few entries which relate to only parts of settlements, whereas Warwickshire has a considerable number of these 'split entries'. Thus, whilst the mean value for Warwickshire is likely to represent an underestimate of the size of settlement units, in Worcestershire the opposite is true, as the upper end of the frequency range is



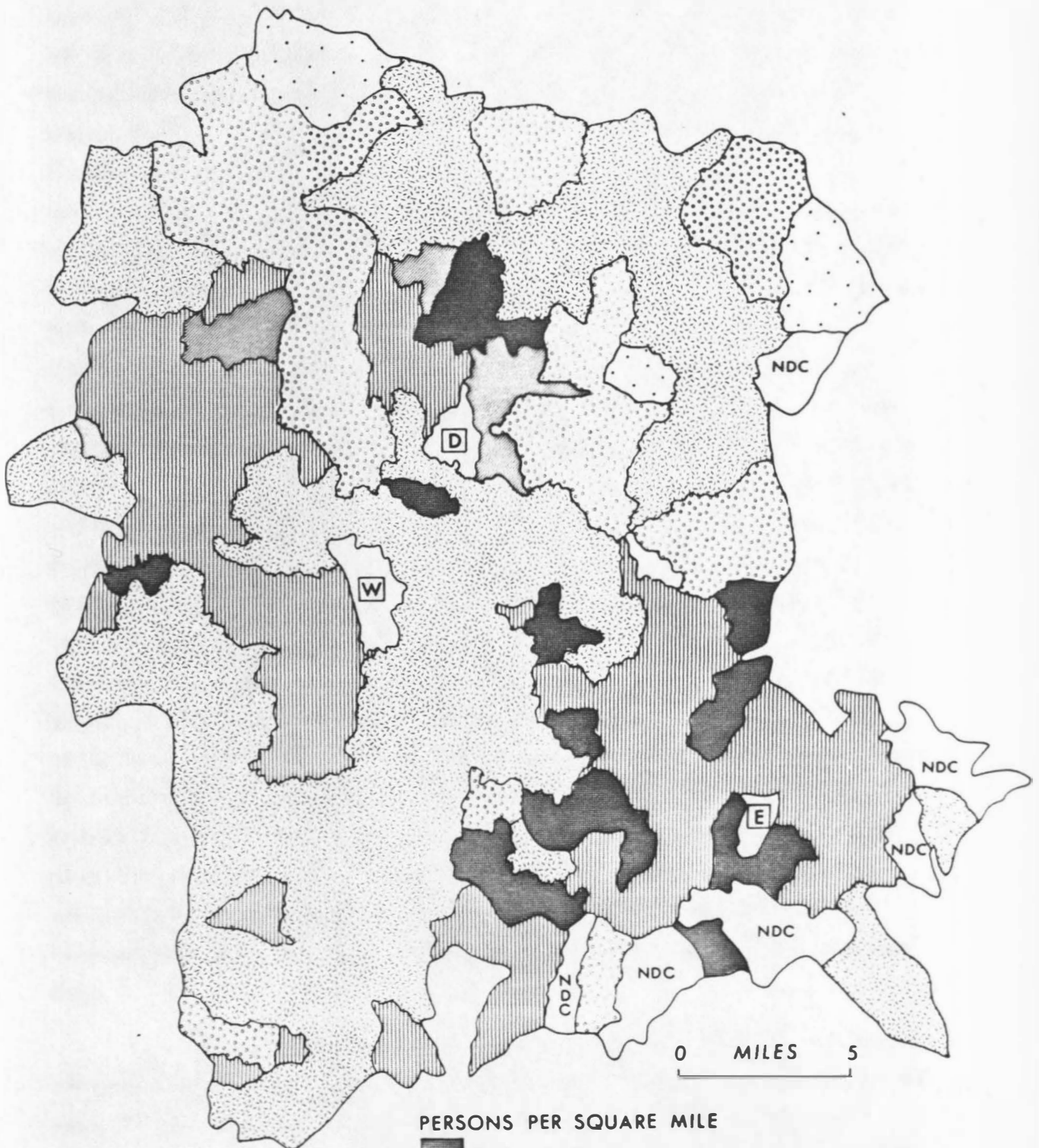
comprised of entries which relate to a number of settlements subsumed under a single entry. That the majority of Worcestershire settlements were small in 1086 is emphasised by the fact that over 70% of all entries have 21 or less recorded population and 90% have less than 40 recorded persons. This compares with the mean value of 147 tenants for the Bishop of Worcester's manors in 1299 and 52 for those of Guy de Beauchamp in 1315.<sup>17</sup> Obviously, in terms of population size, the 'classic' nucleated midland open field village, thought to have dominated much of the Midland area during the thirteenth century, is still a long way from view in the eleventh century.

Population densities have been calculated on a manorial basis and are shown on Figure 6.6. This provides a contrast to Figure 6.4 and to the maps produced by Monkhouse and Darby which were based upon much larger mapping areas.<sup>18</sup> On Figure 6.6 six class intervals have been selected rather than the three adopted by Monkhouse, although it is possible to reconstruct the latter so that the comparison is not lost. Most obviously the use of smaller mapping units demonstrate a greater variability within population densities and provides a much more realistic assessment than merely the contrast between the Vale of Evesham and elsewhere as appears from Monkhouse's map.

Certainly the Vale of Evesham appears as an area of overall high population densities compared with elsewhere in the county, although the manors concerned do extend beyond the confines of the physiographic area of the Vale onto the Marl plain. Also within this area dominated by the Avon valley there is some degree of variation. The manors of Aldington, Bengeworth and Hampton surrounding Evesham and belonging to its church, as well as Abbots Morton and Church Lench to the north, all show higher densities than elsewhere (for identification see Fig. 5.2). Similarly, those manors belonging to Westminster around Pershore, Eckington and Upton Snodsbury in the north have densities significantly above the rest of the Vale estates. More important in terms of a comparison with the densities shown by Monkhouse are the high densities surrounding Droitwich and those to the west of the Severn extending along the

FIGURE 6.6

**WORCESTERSHIRE  
RECORDED PERSONS PER SQUARE MILE  
DOMESDAY 1086**  
[not adjusted for slaves]



PERSONS PER SQUARE MILE

	ABOVE 12.5
	10 - 12.5
	7.5 - 10
	5 - 7.5
	2.5 - 5
	BELOW 2.5

Teme valley. Both disappeared when mapped within the larger units employed by Monkhouse. Around Droitwich the Lay estates of Upton Warren, Elmbridge, Rushock, Wychbold and Hadzor show the highest population densities and, significantly, each manor possessed a sizeable interest in salt manufacture. To the west of the Severn, the manors demonstrating higher population densities extend from the Westminster manor of Powick in the south, through the Worcester manor of Wick, the Royal manor of Martley and the lay held manors of Abberley, Astley, Redmarley and Shelsley Beauchamp. All of these latter form part of the estates of Ralf de Toden. Initially it is difficult to account for the higher population densities shown by these manors, save to point out that they form a contiguous group sandwiched between, and encompassing, the terrace belts of the Severn and Teme. It is tempting to assign the higher densities displayed in all these manors, in a deterministic fashion, to some physiographic cause, such as a more attractive soil type. However, without considering other data contained within Domesday Book, this would provide a dubious line of reasoning, as there are many other variables that could be considered. Other areas of relatively higher densities in the south-west of the county are probably of less significance as in the case of Pendock and Welland, where they form discrete members of Bredon Manor and thus have the effect of lowering the density shown on the site of Bredon, within the Avon valley, and raising those in the outlying parts of the estate. Thus it would appear that the distribution of Domesday population in Worcestershire cannot be solely explained by variation within the physical resource base, but must be viewed within the context of the estate framework, within which they were set, as well as in conjunction with the distribution of other data drawn from Domesday Book.

The recorded population within Domesday Book is, of course, divided into various social groupings which should form an important part of the analysis of population, as it is unlikely that the distribution of each recorded element will necessarily co-vary with the overall distribution of population. However, caution must be exercised in viewing the apparent distinctiveness of these population

groups as specified by Domesday Book. Maitland, Vinogradoff and Kosminsky pointed to the legal distinctions<sup>19</sup>, but of more significance for this study is the economic function that each group performed, which as Titow, Lennard and Hilton have shown, cut across the legal boundaries.<sup>20</sup> Certainly the class structure, in an economic sense, was by no means as clear cut as Domesday Book would have us believe, but, as such distinctions depend on the nature of tenure and services performed, for which Domesday gives little information, there is no possibility of applying a more stringent and meaningful classification.

As can be seen from Table 6.7, three classes of population dominated the population structure of Worcestershire, those being Villeins, Bordars and Serfs, which together comprised 87.1% of the recorded population of the study area and 87.8% of the Domesday county. The fourth group which can be generally classed as miscellaneous included 93 Bondwomen, 51 Cottars, a small group of probable freeman status, that is Frenchmen, Radmen and 8 Freemen, a group of village officials, Reeves, Baliffs, Smiths, Beadles and Millers, some servile Oxmen and Coliberts, 61 Priests, and finally isolated references to Foresters, a Cowman, Huntsman, Beekeeper, Dairymaids and Swineherds.

Initially it is instructive to consider the three main population classes in terms of a frequency distribution by Domesday entry.

TABLE 6.9 FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION CLASS BY DOMESDAY ENTRY

VALUE	ABSOLUTE FREQUENCY			RELATIVE FREQUENCY(%)			CUMULATIVE FREQUENCY(%)		
	Villeins	Bordars	Serfs	Villeins	Bordars	Serfs	Villeins	Bordars	Serfs
0	82	54	102	35.2	23.2	43.8	35.2	23.2	43.8
1	16	11	5	6.9	4.7	2.1	42.1	27.9	45.9
2	12	24	29	5.2	10.3	12.4	47.2	38.2	58.4
3	18	18	13	7.7	7.7	5.6	54.9	45.9	63.9
4	12	20	42	5.2	8.6	18.0	60.1	54.5	82.0
5	8	8	2	3.4	3.4	.9	63.5	57.9	82.8
6	8	9	14	3.4	3.9	6.0	67.0	61.8	88.8
7	11	12	4	4.7	5.2	1.7	71.7	67.0	90.6
8	5	12	10	2.1	5.2	4.3	73.8	72.1	94.8
9	4	7	2	1.7	3.0	.9	75.5	75.1	95.7

TABLE 6.9 (CONT'D)

VALUE	ABSOLUTE FREQUENCY			RELATIVE FREQUENCY(%)			CUMULATIVE FREQUENCY(%)		
	Villeins	Bordars	Serfs	Villeins	Bordars	Serfs	Villeins	Bordars	Serfs
10	7	8	3	3.0	3.4	1.3	78.5	78.5	97.0
11	3	7	1	1.3	3.0	.4	79.8	81.5	97.4
12	11	6	3	4.7	2.6	1.3	84.5	84.1	98.7
13	5	4	-	2.1	1.7	-	86.7	85.8	98.7
14	1	3	2	.4	1.3	.9	87.1	87.1	99.6
15	4	4	-	1.7	1.7	-	88.1	88.8	99.6
16	3	4	1	1.3	1.7	.4	90.1	90.6	100.0
17	1	3	-	.4	1.3	-	90.6	91.8	-
18	2	4	-	.9	1.7	-	91.4	98.6	-
19	1	-	-	.4	-	-	91.8	93.6	-
20	2	-	-	.9	-	-	92.7	93.6	-
21-30	11	12	-	4.7	5.2	-	97.4	98.7	-
31-40	4	2	-	1.7	.9	-	99.1	99.6	-
40-47	3	-	-	1.3	-	-	100.0	99.6	-
92	-	1	-	-	.4	-	-	100	-
TOTAL	233	233		100.0	100.0		100.0	100.0	100.0

	Mean	Median	Standard Error	Standard Deviation	Variance	Range
Villeins	6.1	2.9	.5	8.5	71.6	47
Bordars	6.7	3.9	.6	9.1	82.8	92
Serfs	2.6	1.8	.2	3.2	10.2	16

As previously mentioned, Worcestershire has few 'split' entries and thus it is only at the upper end of the frequency distribution that the individual entry does not represent an identifiable eleventh century vill. Thus, the highest number of Bordars in a single entry is 92, found at Bromsgrove, and represents an amalgamation of the main manorial settlement and 18 berewicks. It is at the lower end of the frequency distribution that a clearer picture of the composition of the

basic Domesday agrarian unit can be gained.

Bordars appear to be not only the most numerous class, but also the most widely distributed, in that they have the smallest percentage of entries where they are not recorded. Conversely, Serfs are the most concentrated, in that they fail to appear in nearly 44% of the entries, and demonstrate by far the smallest range. As can be seen from the cumulative frequencies, nearly 80% of all entries record 10 or less Bordars or Villeins. Admittedly this figure is raised by the proportion of nil entries, but even if only those entries which record either Villeins or Bordars are considered, the equivalent figures are 67% for Villeins and 72% for Bordars. This accords well with the total population frequencies (Table 6.9) where 68% of the entries have 20 or under recorded population, suggesting that a combination of Bordars and Villeins forms the commonest structure of most of the Worcestershire entries. Whilst Bordars tend to be better represented in the lower frequency range, Villeins are slightly better represented in the upper frequencies. For instance, 3.0% of the Villein entries are between 30-47, as against only 0.9% for Bordars. However, these differences are slight and by far the commonest entry in both cases is in the range of 1-5.

Serfs are less numerous and occur in much smaller groupings; 82% of all entries being under 4, which even ignoring the nil entries still amounts to 54% of the total entries. Of greatest significance regarding Serfs is the marked tendency for their occurrence to be in pairs, that is either 2, 4, 6 or 8 being recorded. In fact 73% of all entries where Serfs are mentioned are within these four categories, the largest single category being 4, which has 82% of entries. Thus a strong a priori argument for their economic role as ploughmen can be advanced, which will be subsequently developed when consideration of the distribution of Serfs and demesne plough teams is made.

Although the linear distribution of population elements has been considered, their areal distribution can be shown by a number of methods. One such method is demonstrated by Figure 6.5, where the entries have been amalgamated into vill units and the contribution of each population element is shown in terms of a piegraph.

Obviously this figure is constructed in the same manner as Figure 6.4 and the same limitations, previously discussed, apply to both. A further limitation imposed by the cartographic treatment on Figure 6.5 is that it is difficult to discern any clear pattern of regional contrasts, although there are tendencies for particular groups to be dominant in certain areas. In the vills of the Avon valley and Cotswold sub-edge area there was a tendency towards a higher percentage of Villeins combined with a higher percentage of Serfs than was evident elsewhere. Serfs assumed greatest importance around, and particularly to the south of, Pershore, whilst as one moves progressively north westward the decline in the proportion of Villein and Serf classes is balanced by a concomitant increase in the Bordar and miscellaneous groups. Individual vills demonstrated marked aberrations from the norm, for instance Westmancote in Bredon, whose name was previously discussed with relation to British survival, demonstrated the county's highest proportion of Serfs within its population structure (82%).

Generally, however, regional disparities within the distribution of population elements are demonstrated more clearly by the relevant maps on Figure 6.7. Here the percentage contribution of each of the main population elements has been assessed within Domesday Manors. The resultant distributions have been classified into sextiles and shown in groups of two. Thus the top two sextiles, the median two and bottom two are shown. The three distributions of Slaves, Villeins and Bordars, whilst not totally independent of each other, do produce three distinctive patterns. Certainly this mode of mapping produces far greater areal distinctions in the balance of population elements, than is suggested by Darby's maps of the Midland Counties. In some ways Bordars demonstrated the most distinctive distribution, in that their highest percentage contribution to total population occurs mainly in the north and west of the study area. There would appear to be some *prima facie* case for arguing, as Sally Harvey has done<sup>21</sup>, that Bordars can be associated with the colonizing fringe, in that their distribution would appear to be coincident with the wooded parts of the county. However, it would be rash to conclude that such an association existed without considering the relationship

FIGURE 6.7

# WORCESTERSHIRE DOMESDAY DISTRIBUTIONS

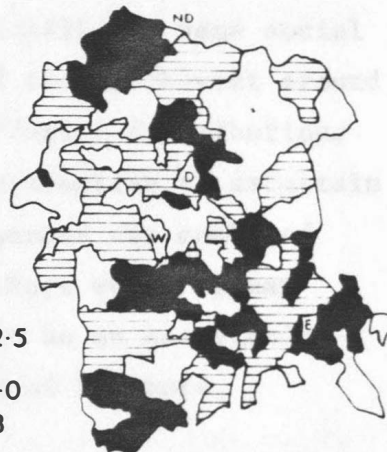
by sextile groupings

Recorded Population per Square Mile

Recorded Population per Plough Tear



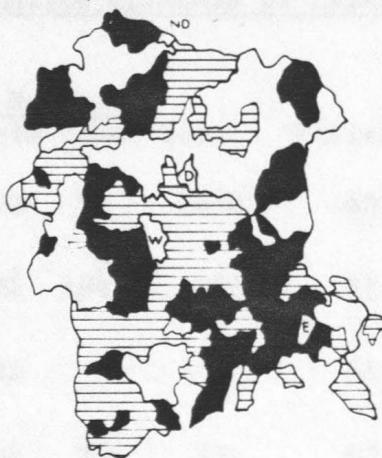
1 : Above 8.5  
2 : 7.0-8.5  
3 : Below 7.0  
Median 8.0



1 : Above 2.5  
2 : 2.0-2.5  
3 : Below 2.0  
Median 2.3

Slaves as a Percentage  
of Total Population

1 : Above 20%  
2 : 10-20%  
3 : Below 10%  
Median 18%

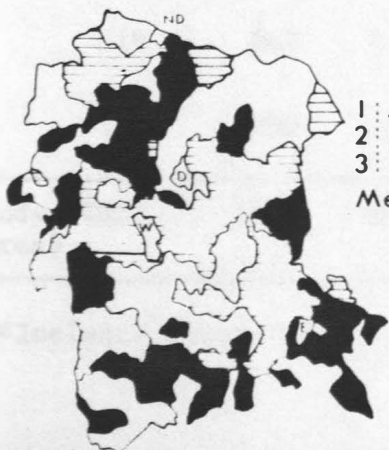


0 MILES 10

Sextiles  
1 ■ UPPER 2  
2 ▨ INTERMEDIATE 2  
3 □ LOWER 2

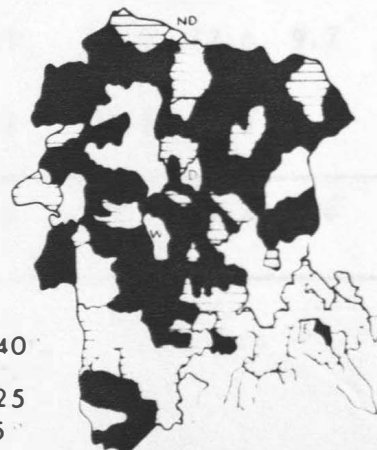
Villeins as a Percentage  
of Total Population

1 : Above 45%  
2 : 30-45%  
3 : Below 30%  
Median 36%



Bordars as a Percentage  
of Total Population

1 : Above 40  
2 : 25-40  
3 : Below 25  
Median 35





between Bordars and other Domesday phenomena, particularly plough teams. Similarly, the manner in which the various population elements are combined will affect and be affected by, the economic structure of the units in which they are placed. Thus, for instance, there is no certainty that the higher percentages of Bordars in some of the manors surrounding Evesham will, of necessity, fulfil the same social and economic functions as those in the manors of the north-west around Rock. Rather than attempting to relate the differing distributions solely to variations in soil type, it is more instructive to ascertain whether the way in which the main population elements are combined is specific to particular estates. Certainly there would appear from the distribution of slaves, for instance, to be an association between them and the main ecclesiastical centres of Pershore, Evesham and Worcester.

Table 6.10 groups the population elements within the main estate structures.

TABLE 6.10 POPULATION ELEMENTS BY ESTATE

<u>Estate</u>	<u>Population Numbers</u>					<u>Population %</u>				
	Villeins	Bordars	Serfs	Misc.	Total	Villeins	Bordars	Serfs	Misc.	Total
Church of * Worcester	637	477	272	92	1478	43.1	32.3	18.4	6.2	100
Church of Westminster	184	252	122	102	660	27.9	38.2	18.5	15.4	100
Church of Pershore	121	113	32	5	271	44.7	41.7	11.8	1.8	100
Church of Evesham	157	115	34	28	334	47.0	34.4	10.2	8.4	100
Other Ecclesiastical Estates	28	47	36	5	116	24.1	40.5	31.1	4.3	100
Lay Estates	318	549	140	108	1115	28.5	49.2	12.6	9.7	100
Royal Estates	190	262	55	51	558	34.1	46.9	9.9	9.1	100
Total(study area)	1635	1815	691	391	4532	36.1	40.1	15.2	8.6	100

\*Includes manors outside the study area.

Of the four large ecclesiastical estates, three have a higher percentage of Villeins than the average for the study area, compensated by lower percentages on the Lay, Royal and other ecclesiastical estates. In the case of Bordars the position is reversed, whilst the percentage of Serfs generally varies in a similar manner to the Villein population. This general distinction can be further illustrated by again considering the differing population structures of the Church of Worcester's estates and those of Urse d'Abitot:-

TABLE 6.11 POPULATION BY VILL

Church of Worcester:-

	Villeins	Bordars	Serfs	Villeins	Bordars	Serfs
Manorial Settlements	414	270	184	47.7%	31.1%	21.2%
Appurtenant	223	207	139	39.2%	36.4%	24.4%

Urse d'Abitot:-

	48	98	32	27%	55%	18%
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The manorial settlements of the Church of Worcester accentuate the tendency toward a higher percentage of Villein population, which accords with the high number of peasant ploughs recorded (see Table 6.10). The appurtenant settlements, on the other hand, were generally smaller in size and had a more evenly balanced population, possibly exhibiting a greater degree of servility. The Lay estates of Urse d'Abitot, as with other Lay estates, exhibit a high proportion of Bordars within their population, which may partly reflect the differing economic and administrative organisation of the estates which was discussed previously, or the policy of a new Norman landlord. The Church of Worcester estates were less likely to be affected in their population structure by the Conquest, as they remained under the same church management from Anglo-Saxon times. However, the estates of Urse were, in a sense, a new creation, or at least a new combination of discrete parts, which had been taken over by an alien Norman Lord

who could have caused some redefinition of the various population classes to have taken place.

It is, however, erroneous to assume that no internal variation occurred within each estate structure, a point which can be illustrated by the following table of the estates of the Church of Worcester. Here manors rather than vills have been selected as the basic statistical unit.

TABLE 6.12 POPULATION STRUCTURE OF THE MANORS OF THE  
CHURCH OF WORCESTER

<u>Manor</u>	<u>Population numbers</u>					<u>Population percentages</u>			
	Villeins	Bordars	Serfs	Mis.	Total	Villeins	Bordars	Serfs	Misc.
Kempsey	19	41	17	3	80	23.7	51.3	21.3	3.7
Wyke Epi.	30	54	4	1	89	33.7	60.7	4.5	1.1
Fladbury	57	32	30	15	134	42.5	23.9	22.4	11.2
Bredon	78	46	39	7	170	45.9	27.1	22.9	4.1
Ripple	57	36	8	3	104	54.8	34.6	7.7	2.9
* Blockley	84	30	20	7	141	59.5	21.3	14.2	5.0
* Tredington	60	38	20	6	124	48.4	30.6	16.1	4.8
Northwick	32	51	20	4	107	29.9	47.7	18.7	3.7
Overbury	15	7	6	3	31	48.4	22.5	19.3	9.7
Sedgebarrow	26	9	8	3	46	36.5	19.6	17.4	6.5
Harvington	12	3	4	1	20	60.0	15.0	20.0	5.0
Grimley	12	22	6	1	41	29.3	53.7	14.6	2.4
Hallow & Broadwas	13	24	4	8	49	26.5	49.0	8.2	16.3
Cropthorne	40	26	24	8	98	40.8	26.5	24.5	8.2
Cleeve Prior	9	5	4	5	23	39.1	21.7	17.4	21.7
Phepson	9	3	4	1	17	52.9	17.6	23.5	5.9
Hanbury	16	18	4	3	41	39.0	43.9	9.8	7.3
Stoke Prior	13	7	4	2	26	50.0	26.9	15.4	7.7
Hartlebury	24	3	12	4	43	55.8	7.0	27.9	9.3
Wolverley	4	5	6	2	17	23.5	29.4	35.3	11.8
Alvechurch	12	7	7	3	29	41.4	24.1	24.1	10.4
* Eardiston and Knighton	15	10	17	1	43	34.9	23.2	39.5	2.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>637</b>	<b>477</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>1478</b>	<b>43.1</b>	<b>32.3</b>	<b>18.4</b>	<b>6.2</b>

\* Not in study area.

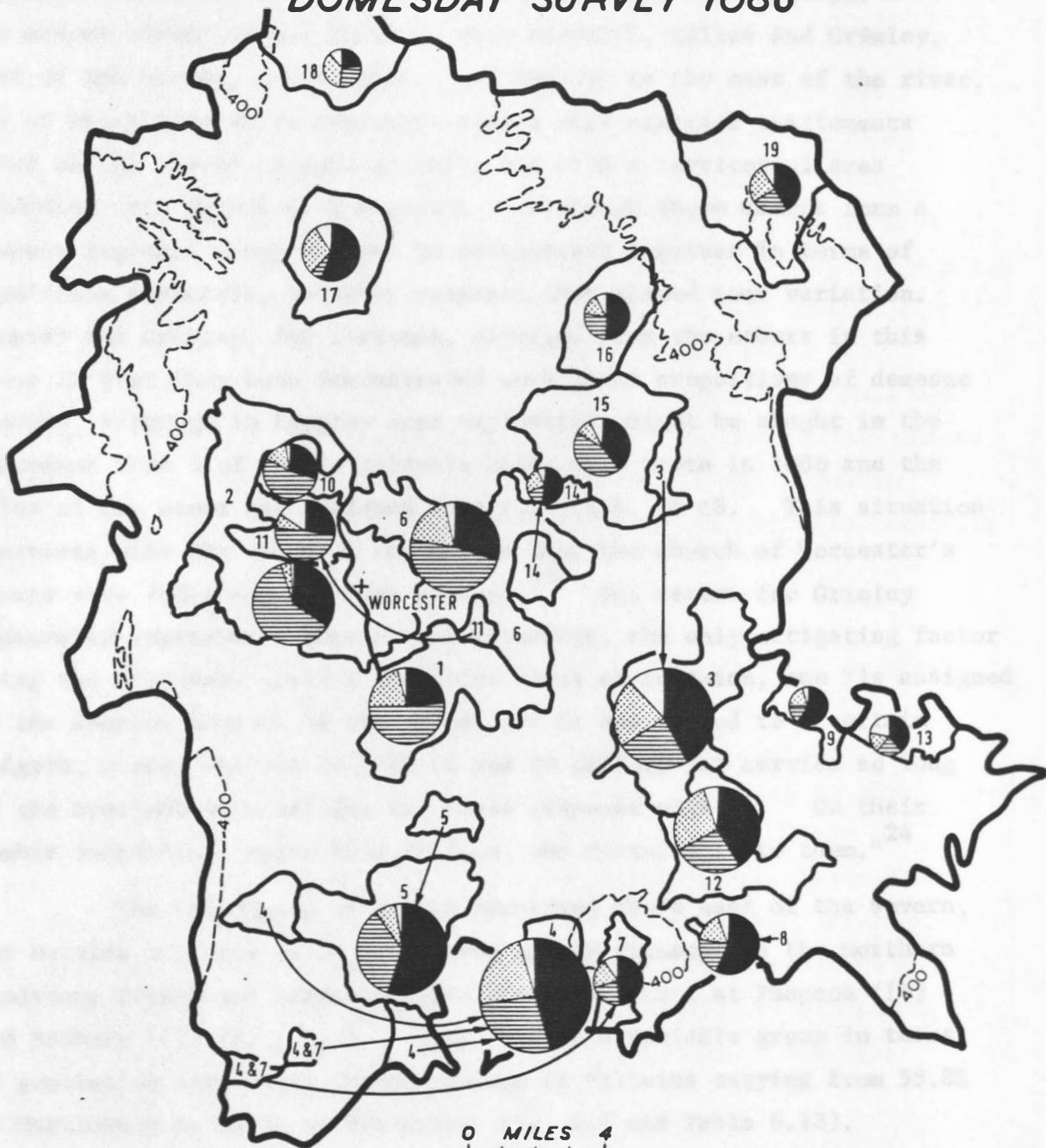
Variations obviously exist between the manors of the estate; for instance, the percentage of Villeins varies from 25% at Wolverley to 60% at Harvington, Bordars between 15% at Harvington to 60% at Wick Episcopi and Serfs between 4.5% at Wick Episcopi to 39.5% at Eardiston and Villeins form the most consistently large proportion. Figure 6.8 shows the population contrasts between the various manors and enables some regional groupings to be discerned. The manors in the south of the county, within the Avon valley, all show a high proportion of Villeins, although they form a diverse range of manors in size and type, varying from the large possessions at Bredon, Cropthorne and Fladbury, each comprising many appurtenant settlements, to the single vill manors of Overbury, Sedgebarrow and Abbots Morton (see Fig. 6.3). In site they possess features in common, all being centred on the terrace and other drift deposits within the early colonized Avon valley. Similarly, all border on either the Severn, Avon or Badsey brook whose alluvial valley bottoms provided large areas for the development of highly prized meadowland. For example, Bredon manor possessed 163 acres of meadow, Fladbury over 154 acres and Ripple 97 acres. Thus, this group of manors, and more particularly the large ones of Bredon, Ripple, Cropthorne and Fladbury provided the main part of the church's wealth and income at the time. Another feature common to this group was the relatively high proportion of Serfs within the population, suggesting the retention of large areas within demesne, which is confirmed by the demesne ploughing strength found on these manors.

Although 7 of the 40 hides at Fladbury are stated as being in demesne, five of the six tenants, together with the manorial settlement of Fladbury, all have demesne teams recorded. Similarly, all eight of the tenants at Bredon and all four at Ripple held demesne ploughteams. Although the proportion of demesne teams is consistently high, the figures could represent, if anything, an underestimate of demesne size, as it is known from later extent that the Church estate generally relied heavily upon ploughing services.<sup>22</sup> Thus, some proportion of the peasant ploughing strength would also have been diverted to the cultivation of the demesne.

The second group of manors to be considered are those that surrounded Worcester city and which impinged on both banks of the Severn (Fig. 6.3). As mentioned previously, those west of the

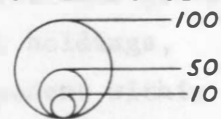
FIGURE 6.8

### ESTATES OF BISHOP OF WORCESTER RECORDED POPULATION ELEMENTS BY MANOR DOMESDAY SURVEY 1086



MANORS		
1 KEMPSEY	8 SEDGEBARROW	15 HANBURY
2 WYKE EPISCOPI	9 HARVINGTON	16 STONE PRIOR
3 FLADBURY	10 GRIMLEY	17 HARTLEBURY
4 BREDON	11 HALLOW AND BROADWAS	18 WOLVERLEY
5 RIPPLE	12 CROPTNORNE	19 ALVECHURCH
6 NORTHWICK	13 CLEEVE PRIOR	
7 OVERBURY	14 PHEPSON	

RECORDED POPULATION



Severn appear to have been the original 'home' estate of the monastic community, whilst those east of the river were largely in the hands of the Bishop. Here the most notable feature on Figure 6.8 and Table 6.12 is the higher proportion of Bordars within the recorded population (49-60%) at the expense of Villein and Serf classes. The manors concerned are those of Wick Episcopi, Hallow and Grimley, west of the Severn, and Northwick and Kempsey to the east of the river, all of which were large composite manors with manorial settlements sited on the Severn terrace gravels, but with a territorial area extending onto Keuper Marl deposits. Although these manors form a compact regional group and can be categorised together in terms of population structure, in other respects they showed some variation. Kempsey and Grimley, for instance, diverged from the others in this group in that they both demonstrated much lower proportions of demesne ploughs, although in Kempsey some explanation might be sought in the statement that 5 of the 24 geldable hides were waste in 1086 and the value of the manor had declined from £16 T.R.E. to £8. This situation contrasts with the claim in the Survey that the Church of Worcester's manors were fully stocked with ploughs.<sup>23</sup> The return for Grimley appears to represent a more normal situation, the only mitigating factor being the statement that, of the three hides at Kenswick, one "is assigned to the demesne support of the monks, but it was leased to a certain Eadgyth, a nun, who was to have it and to perform the service so long as the brethren were willing and could dispense with it. On their number increasing, under King William, she restored it to them."<sup>24</sup>

The third group of manors comprised those east of the Severn, but outside the Avon valley, and were mainly situated on the northern sandstone fringe and extending onto the Keuper Marl at Phepson (14) and Hanbury (15) (Fig. 6.3). They provide a variable group in terms of population structure, the percentage of Villeins varying from 55.8% at Hartlebury to 23.5% at Wolverley (Fig. 6.8 and Table 6.12). However, compared with the Lay estates surrounding them, for this group was sited largely outside the main areas of ecclesiastical holdings, they possessed, on average, a higher Villein and Serf component within their population (Fig. 6.5). The area covered by manors of group 3 was generally far less developed in terms of settlement and population

numbers than was the Avon valley and was far more heavily wooded (Fig. 6.12). All of which suggests a greater degree of individuality of operation, with more emphasis upon peasant farming and pasture as was generally found in less settled areas.<sup>25</sup> Also it was mainly from within this group of manors that the Bishop leased land in the pre-conquest period in order to defray military dues.

Thus, regional distinctions are discernible within the estate of the Church of Worcester which generally comply, to some degree, with similar distinctions throughout the county, although the various manors of the church estates still appeared to have more in common with one another than they did with the Lay estates surrounding them. This had a tendency to blur regional distinctions within the study area and to emphasise the part played by organisation and administration within the large estates and its subsequent impact upon the economic variability between each manor. Thus, the overall effect was to diminish, to some degree, the significance of the physical resource base as a crucial variable in the economy of different manorial units.

### Ploughteams

Ploughteams are usually regarded as the best guide to arable exploitation that is given by Domesday Book and in Worcestershire they assume even greater importance as Ploughlands are not recorded. The analysis of ploughteams will follow the same structure as that of population, in that they will be considered by entry, manor and estate. In the Worcestershire account, ploughteams are distinguished as belonging either to the demesne or to the tenants, and, although this does not provide an infallible guide to the relative strength of demesne agriculture due to the unknown contribution of ploughing services, when coupled with population elements it gives the best indication available in the eleventh century.

TABLE 6.13 FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF PLOUGHTEAMS BY DOMESDAY ENTRY

VALUE	ABSOLUTE FREQUENCY			RELATIVE FREQUENCY(%)			CUMULATIVE FREQUENCY (%)		
	Total	Demesne	Peasant	Total	Demesne	Peasant	Total	Demesne	Peasant
0	24	46	53	10.3	19.7	22.7	10.3	19.7	22.7
.5	2	2	4	.9	.9	1.7	11.2	20.6	24.5
1	21	55	21	9.0	23.6	9.0	20.2	44.2	33.5
1.25	1	1	-	.4	.4	-	20.6	44.6	-
1.5	3	7	3	1.3	3.0	1.3	21.9	47.6	34.8
1.75	1	-	1	.4	-	.4	22.3	-	35.2
2.0	20	71	19	8.6	30.5	8.2	30.9	78.1	43.3
2.5	2	-	1	.9	-	.4	31.8	-	43.8
3	16	20	15	6.9	8.6	6.4	38.6	86.7	50.2
3.5	-	1	2	-	.4	.9	38.6	87.1	51.1
4	16	15	29	6.9	6.4	12.4	45.5	93.6	63.5
4.5	2	-	3	.9	-	1.3	46.4	-	64.8
5	18	8	6	7.7	3.4	2.6	54.1	97.0	67.4
5.5	2	1	1	.9	.4	.4	54.9	97.4	67.8
6	18	1	9	7.7	.4	3.9	62.7	97.9	71.7
6.5	1	1	1	.4	.4	.4	63.1	98.3	72.1
7	7	1	10	3.0	.4	4.3	66.1	98.7	76.4
8	13	1	5	5.6	.4	2.1	71.7	99.1	78.5
9	7	2	2	3.0	.9	.9	74.7	100.0	79.4
9.5	-	-	1	-	-	.4	-	-	79.8
10	9	-	5	3.9	-	2.1	78.5	-	82.0
11	2	-	7	.9	-	3.0	79.4	-	85.0
11.5	-	-	2	-	-	.9	-	-	85.8
12	3	-	6	1.3	-	2.6	80.7	-	88.4
13	3	-	2	1.3	-	.9	82.0	-	89.3
13.5	1	-	-	.4	-	-	82.4	-	-
14	6	-	3	2.6	-	1.3	85.0	-	90.6
15	4	-	1	1.7	-	.4	86.7	-	91.0
16	5	-	1	2.1	-	.4	88.8	-	91.4
17	4	-	1	1.7	-	.4	90.6	-	91.8
18	2	-	2	.9	-	.9	91.4	-	92.7



TABLE 6.13 (Cont'd)

Value	Total	Demesne	Peasant	Total	Demesne	Peasant	Total	Demesne	Peasant
19	2	-	3	.9	-	1.3	92.3	-	94.0
20	1	-	3	.4	-	1.3	92.7	-	95.3
21-30	12	-	7	5.2	-	3.0	97.9	-	98.3
31-40	1	-	1	.4	-	.4	98.3	-	98.7
41-50	2	-	2	.9	-	.9	99.1	-	99.6
53	1	-	-	.4	-	-	99.6	-	-
77	-	-	1	-	-	.4	-	-	100
79	1	-	-	.4	-	-	100	-	-
TOTAL	233	233	233	100	100	100	100	100	100

	Mean	Median	Standard Error	Standard Deviation	Variance	Range
Total Ploughteams	7.6	5.0	.61	9.4	87.8	79
Demesne	1.8	1.8	.10	1.6	2.6	9
Peasant	5.8	3.2	.56	8.6	73.4	77

A slightly larger percentage of entries contain no information regarding ploughteams (10.3%) than did regarding population (7.7%), the difference being provided largely by those entries which relate to urban areas. In both cases there are relatively few entries where there has been an omission within the collection of the statistics. As can be seen from the fact that the median is less than the mean for the total ploughteams, the majority of entries encompass few teams; over 70% being at, or below, 8 in number. Discounting those with nil entries, the most common are 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 8, forming over 58% of all entries which record ploughteams. The impression begins to emerge of a basic agrarian unit within Worcestershire that contained 20 or under recorded population with roughly half as many ploughs. This will be further explored when relationships between different aspects of the Domesday data are considered.

Regarding the manner in which ploughteams are split between those belonging to the demesne and those of the tenants (peasant teams),

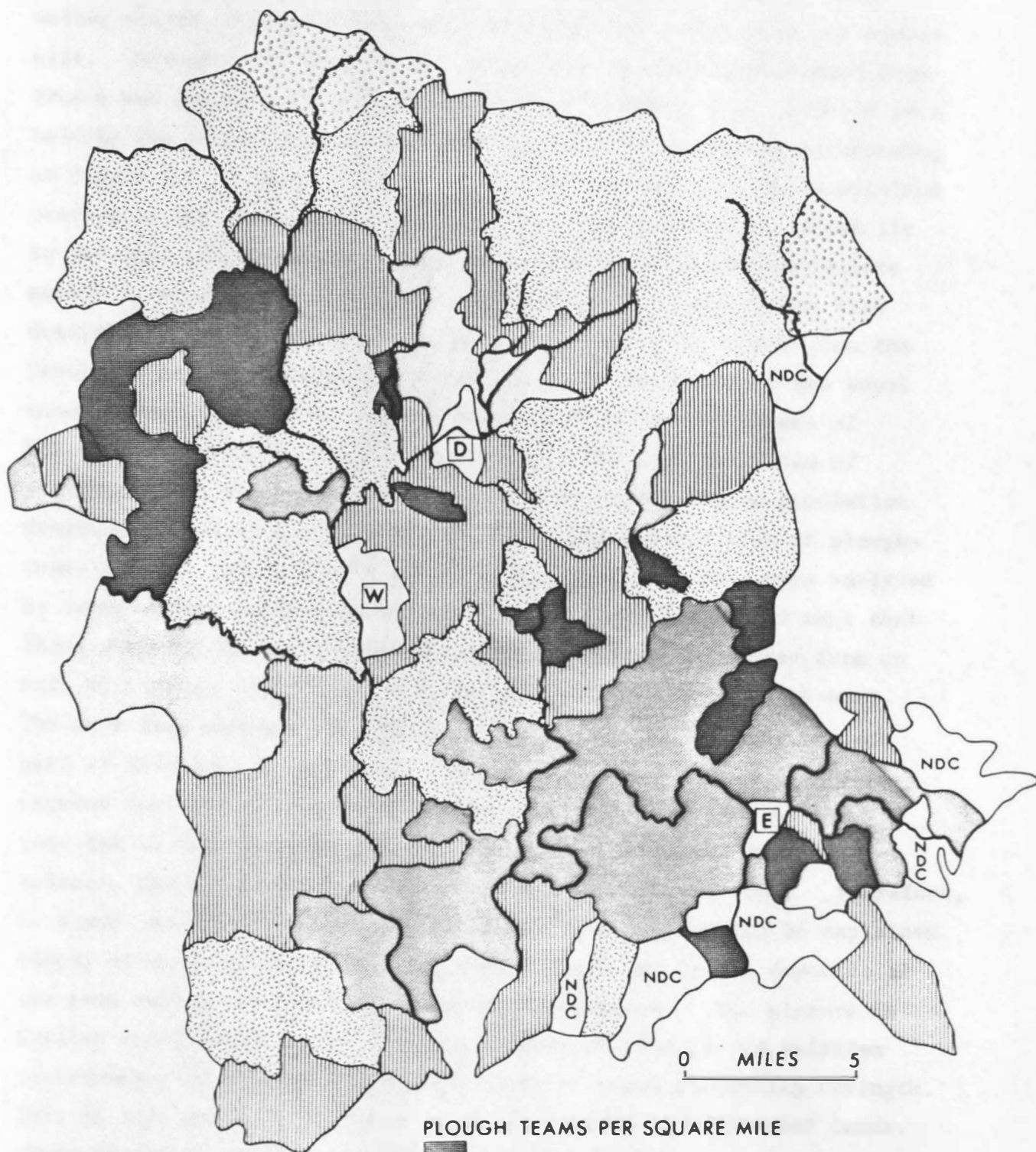
it is perhaps surprising that a lower percentage of entries fail to record demesne teams than peasant teams. Thus, despite the greater number and range of peasant teams, demesne teams were more widespread, suggesting that a demesne element was a feature common to most of the agrarian units, albeit often of small size, if judged by demesne plough strength. Over 80% of all entries record demesne ploughteams, which rises to over 90% if the 10% of entries which fail to record any teams at all are taken into account. As has been suggested the number of demesne teams tends to be small as is revealed by the mean and median number of 1.8. This is further supported by the frequency distribution, where 1 and 2 ploughteams form 67% of all entries where demesne teams are recorded. The unknown element in any assessment of demesne size using ploughteams, is the role played by ploughing services. This could mean that relatively few ploughteams could be retained in demesne where a considerable reliance was being placed upon the ploughing services provided by the ploughteams of the tenants. However, later evidence in Worcestershire suggests that ploughing services were most burdensome and retained longest on the ecclesiastical estates, where the numbers of demesne ploughteams were the highest anyway. It is therefore considered that the relative proportion of demesne teams, coupled with the population structure does provide a reasonable guide to distribution of demesne-based economies within Domesday Worcestershire.

Although the range of peasant teams is much greater than those of demesne teams, by far the largest number of entries record 4 teams or under. Of those entries which record peasant teams, 53% had 4 or under, with the largest number of entries occurring at 4 ploughteams. As 90% of all entries have under 14 recorded peasant teams, it can be seen that most agrarian units were small in scale, the overall pattern being distorted by a relatively few large scale enterprises.






No attempt has been made to plot the distribution of ploughteams by vill as this has been accomplished by Monkhouse. Rather, the density of ploughteams per square mile has been shown by manor on Figure 6.9. However, the same class intervals as those employed by Monkhouse have been retained, in order to facilitate comparison with the map produced in the Domesday Geography of Midland England. As with the population

FIGURE 6.9

**WORCESTERSHIRE  
PLOUGH TEAMS PER SQUARE MILE  
DOMESDAY BOOK 1086**



**PLOUGH TEAMS PER SQUARE MILE**

	4.5 AND OVER
	3.5-4.5
	2.5-3.5
	1-2.5
	UNDER 1

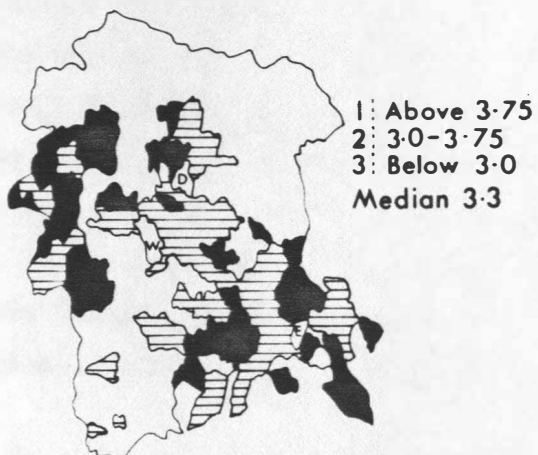
map, the use of the smaller manor unit produces much greater variation and allows the identification of small areas of high density which otherwise would be lost within the larger mapping units. Generally, there is a degree of accord between the two maps, in that the Avon valley records amongst the highest densities of ploughteams per square mile. However, the highest densities shown by Monkhouse extend from Bredon and Overbury through Cropthorne and Fladbury, all of which were held by the Church of Worcester and which do not appear as outstanding on Figure 6.9. This is partly due to the spreading of the Bredon and Overbury teams throughout the discrete parts of the manor, which lie to the west of the Severn. Similarly, Fladbury includes a discrete member at Bradley. Monkhouse's map also fails to record the high densities occurring west of the Severn, extending in an arc from the Severn terraces to those of the Teme and thus encompassing the Royal manor of Martley and its members together with the lay manors of Abberley, Astley and Shelsley Beauchamp. The high densities of ploughteams in this area are also reflected in the higher population densities shown on Figure 6.6. In fact, the distribution of ploughteams is best summarised by Figure 6.10, where they have been analysed by manor within sextile groupings. It is clear from these maps that those close to the median, and significantly above the median, form an axis within the study area, trending from south-east to north-west. The area thus encompassed extends from the Vale of Evesham, through part of the plain of Worcester, taking in the area around Droitwich, crosses the Severn north of Worcester to include the area at the junction of the physiographic regions (Fig. 2.5) of the north-west uplands, the Worcester Plain and the Triassic Sandstone area. Therefore, it seems unlikely that the distribution of ploughteams can be explained simply by an association with the terrace sand and gravel deposits of the Avon valley, as has been advanced by Monkhouse. The picture is further complicated by the distinctive distribution of the relative contribution of peasant and demesne teams to total ploughteam strength. This is also shown on Figure 6.10 as the percentage of peasant teams. Obviously, where the lowest sextiles are shown this represents the highest proportion of demesne teams. Generally peasant teams dominate in areas of the lowest overall densities of ploughteams, although not

FIGURE 6.10

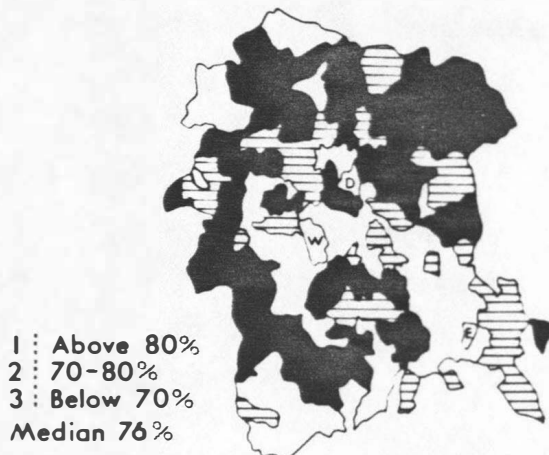
# WORCESTERSHIRE DOMESDAY DISTRIBUTIONS

by sextile groupings

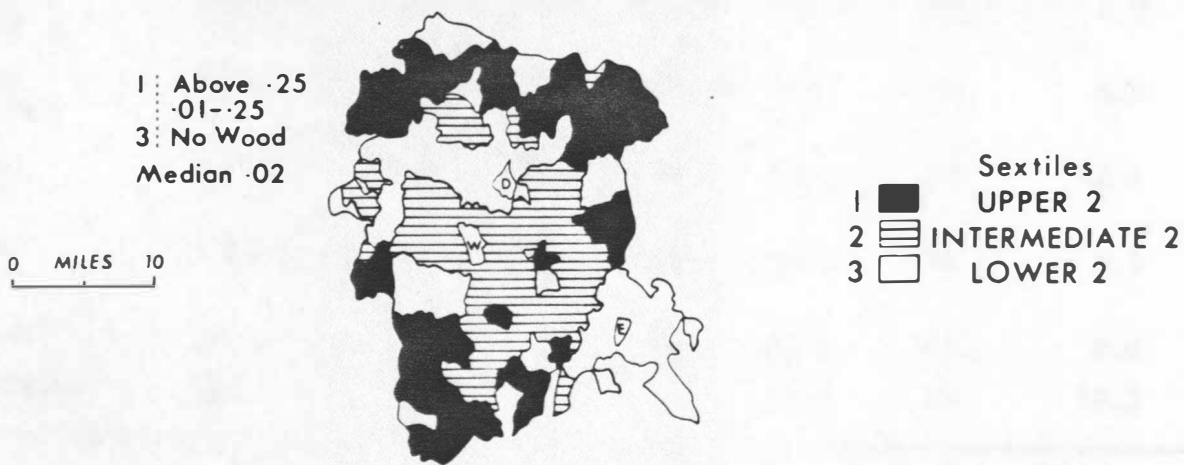
Plough Teams per Square Mile



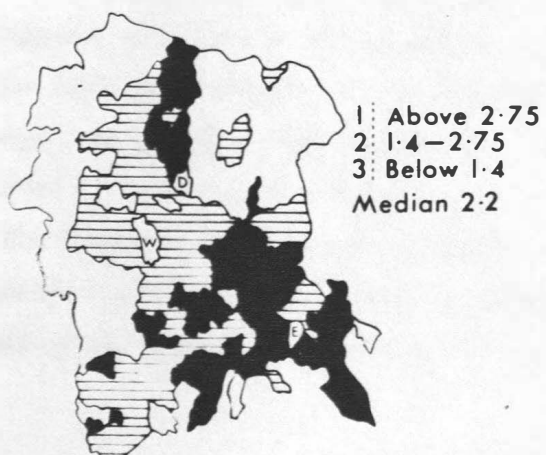
Peasant Teams as a Percentage of Total Teams



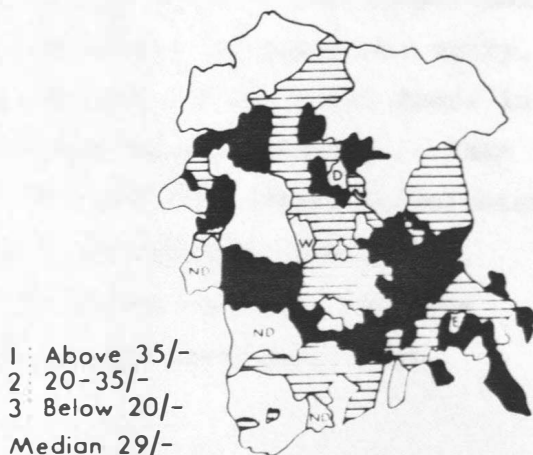
Square Leagues of Woodland per 1000 Acres



Hides per Square Mile



1086 Value in Shillings per Square Mile



exclusively so. For instance, some manors in the north-west of the county, and to the south of Worcester, have high ploughteam densities and a dominance of peasant teams. This general tendency for demesne teams to be more dominant in areas of the highest ploughteam strength suggests that there is a pattern of distinctive Domesday rural economies, which may be specific to certain estates. Thus, the first step is to ascertain whether particular estates show distinctive densities of plough teams and whether this coincides with the way in which their plough strength is distinguished between the demesne and the tenants. The final step will be to couple the ploughteam evidence together with other Domesday data to see if it is possible to isolate particular economies either within estates or specific to certain areas.

TABLE 6.14

PLOUGHTEAMS BY DOMESDAY ESTATE

	<u>Total Teams</u>	<u>Peasant Teams</u>		<u>Demesne Teams</u>		<u>Domesday Entries</u>	
		Nos.	%	Nos.	%	Nos.	Teams per entry
Church of Worcester	540.75	389.25	72.0	151.5	28.0	66	8.2
Church of Westminster	244.25	161	65.9	83.23	34.1	50	4.9
Church of Pershore	124.0	100	80.6	24	19.4	10	12.4
Church of Evesham	133.0	93	69.9	40	30.1	16	8.3
Lay Estates	389.0	305	78.4	84	21.6	65	6.0
Royal Estates	311.5	270.5	86.8	41	13.2	13	17.3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1742.5</b>	<b>1318.75</b>	<b>75.7</b>	<b>423.75</b>	<b>24.3</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>8.7</b>

Certainly there are some major contrasts both in the proportion of demesne to peasant teams and in the average number of teams per entry. At the extremes are the Royal Estates with only 13% of the total teams in demesne, as against the Westminster estates with 34% in demesne. This evidence, together with that of population (Table 6.10), where Westminster has the highest proportion of Serfs and the Royal Estates, the lowest, suggests a different economic operation of these two estates, notwithstanding the unknown contribution of peasant plough services. The

Westminster Estate is a relatively compact one within the Vale of Evesham, comprised of a large number of small scale units, as is demonstrated by the number of entries and their team size on Table 6.14. The Royal estates, on the other hand, are more widespread throughout the county area, although largely sited in the north and west. The average size per entry is nearly four times that of Westminster, as judged by plough teams, although this partially reflects the composite nature of many of the entries relating to Royal manors.

Of the other estates, Pershore and Evesham are areally the most compact and are likely to demonstrate the least internal variability. Pershore, surprisingly for an ecclesiastical estate, has a lower proportion of demesne plough teams which is reflected in the low proportion of Serfs within its population structure. Considering that both Pershore and Westminster manors were, in pre-conquest times, part of the same estate, either they have diverged significantly since the conquest or they represent a long standing difference in the management of parts of the estate. The estates of the Church of Worcester and the Lay estates both cover a wide area within the county and display a considerable degree of internal variation in the balance of demesne to peasant teams. This is illustrated by the following table of the component manors of the Worcester estates.

TABLE 6.15      CHURCH OF WORCESTER : PLOUGHTEAMS PER DOMESDAY MANOR

<u>MANOR</u>	<u>PLOUGHS IN DEMESNE</u>		<u>PLOUGHS OF PEASANTRY</u>		<u>TOTAL</u>
	Number	% of total	Number	% of total	
1. Fladbury	25.5	37.8	42	62.2	67.5
2. Bredon	22	32.4	46	67.6	68
3. Ripple	12	20.0	48	80.0	60
4. Cropthorne	16	42.7	21.5	57.3	37.5
5. Overbury	3	21.4	11	78.6	14
6. Sedgebarrow	2	22.2	7	78.8	9
7. Harrington	2	25.0	6	75.0	8
8. Cleeve Prior	2	33.3	4	66.6	6
9. Kempsey	4	12.9	27	87.1	31

TABLE 6.15 (CONT'D)

MANOR	PLOUGHS IN DEMESNE		PLOUGHS OF PEASANTRY		TOTAL
	Number	% of total	Number	% of total	
10. Northwick	22	40.0	33	60.0	55
11. Wick Episcopi	13	31.7	28	69.3	41
12. Hallow & Broadwas	7	30.8	15.75	69.2	22.75
13. Grimley	4	19.0	17	81.0	21
14. Phepson	4	40.0	6	60.0	10
15. Hanbury	3	11.1	24	88.9	27
16. Stoke Prior	2	12.5	14	87.5	16
17. Hartlebury	4	16	21	84.0	25
18. Wolverley	2	33.3	4	66.6	6
19. Alvechurch	2	12.5	14	87.5	16
TOTAL	151.5	28.0	389.25	72.0	540.75

The manors have been grouped into three geographical areas, along similar lines as that used when considering population. Numbers 1-8 lie in the south of the county within the Avon Valley and Cotswold fringe, whilst 9-13 are situated within the Worcester plain, immediately proximate to Worcester on both sides of the Severn, and 14-19 form the most northern group of manors. Physiographic conditions are broadly similar within each of the groups, although there are marked differences between the groups. This would appear to be reflected in the allocation of ploughteams between the three areas. The southern group, based upon the Avon terraces and their associated sand and gravel deposits, not only has the highest number of ploughteams, (270), forming half the total of the Worcester estates, but also has the highest proportion (31.3%) retained in demesne. The northern group of manors, on the other hand, situated on the more poorly developed and then still heavily wooded soils, display the highest proportion (83%) of peasant teams, apparently reflecting the sensible policy of concentrating demesne in the best yielding land. However, within each geographical grouping, considerable variation does exist. For instance, within the southern group of manors, Ripple together with the three smaller manors of the Cotswold fringe, all demonstrate much higher proportions of peasant teams than characterises the group as a whole.



Similarly, the group of manors proximate to Worcester are split between those immediately surrounding the city, Wick, Northwick and Hallow, which demonstrate high demesne plough strengths, and those more distantly situated at Grimley and Kempsey, which are quite the reverse. The most northerly group of manors has more internal consistency in the high proportion of peasant teams, save for Wolverley where the total plough strength is very small for the total size of the manor.

Thus at least two variables are discernible within the distribution of ploughteams and their allocation between demesne and tenantry. Firstly, there was a recognition, within the constraints of eleventh century agriculture, of the possibilities offered by differing soil types, with a preference for the lighter soils of the Avon and Severn terrace belts. This, in turn, reflects the long history of land use within these areas. Secondly, the hand of seigniorial policy is seen in the decision to retain certain parts of the estates in demesne, whilst other areas are either leased or left largely in the hands of the tenants. This, in turn, partially reflects the perceived agricultural properties, but also reflects tradition, in that those parts of the Church of Worcester's estates that show the greatest demesne element are usually those granted to the church earliest in Anglo-Saxon times.

The impact of seigniorial control can perhaps most clearly be seen in the allocation of plough teams between demesne and the tenants on the lay estates. Overall, the lay estates demonstrate a lower percentage of ploughs in demesne than most ecclesiastical estates, which is consistent with the likely absentee nature of most Norman landlords. Generally, the lay estates were situated in the north and west of the county and, by and large, comprised much smaller manorial units than characterised the ecclesiastical estates. One of the largest of the lay estates held in 1086 was that of Ralf de Todei, the ploughteams of which are shown below:-

TABLE 6.16 ESTATE OF RALF DE TODENI : PLOUGHTEAMS

<u>MANOR</u>	<u>PEASANT PLOUGHTEAMS</u>		<u>DEMESNE PLOUGHTEAMS</u>		<u>TOTAL</u>
	Nos.	%	Nos.	%	
Worsley	7	70	3	30	10
Lindridge	4	50	4	50	8
Rock	0	-	0	-	0
				(2 could be emp:	
Acton	4	50	4	50	8
Moor	2	100	0	0	2
Bayton	12	80	3	20	15
Moor	1	100	0	0	1
Abberley	17	89.5	2	10.5	19
Astley	18.5	78.7	5	21.3	23.5
Redmorley	8	89.9	1	11.1	9
Shelsley Beauchamp	8	80	2	20	10
Eastham	5	71.4	2	28.6	7
Elmsley Lovett	8	80	2	20	10
<hr/>					
TOTAL	94.5	77.1	28	22.9	122.5

Although the manors involved are somewhat smaller in both size and plough strength than those characterising the ecclesiastical estates, they are, in fact, amongst the largest of the lay estates. As can be seen from the above table, the apportionment of the ploughteams generally complies with that for the whole of the lay estates as a group. Only at Acton and Lindridge are sizeable percentages of ploughteams ascribed to the demesne. This estate is also similar to many lay holdings in the high proportion of Bordars that populate the manors. In 1066 the Todení manors appear almost exclusively held by Saxon Thegns who could "betake themselves where they would".<sup>26</sup> That is, presumably, they could commend themselves to whichever lord they chose; a relatively rare feature in the Worcestershire Domesday account. Thus these manors, unlike most ecclesiastical and royal manors, had seen a change in ownership during the conquest and the low proportion of

demesne ploughteams may well reflect a change in management policy. A changeover to a reliance on tenant farming rather than demesne cultivation would more likely be reflected in the allocation of ploughteams than in the social class of the population. This may well provide an explanation for the apparent disparity between a servile population, largely comprised of Bordars, and a greater percentage of peasant ploughteams.

The only other large lay estate that stands comparison with the large ecclesiastical holdings is that of Urse d'Abitot, the sheriff of Worcestershire.

TABLE 6.17 ESTATE OF URSE D'ABITOT : PLOUGHTEAMS

<u>MANOR</u>	<u>PEASANT PLOUGHTEAMS</u>		<u>DEMESNE PLOUGHTEAMS</u>		<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>UNDER PLOUGHING</u>
	Nos.	%	Nos.	%		
Cook Hill	0	-	1	100	1	2
Osmerley	3	75.0	1	25.0	4	-
Cofton Hackett	4	66.6	2	33.3	6	1
Bentley Pauncefoot	3	75.0	1	25.0	4	-
Woodcote	1	100	0	-	1	-
Rushock	6.5	81.2	1.5	18.8	8	-
Stone	6	75.0	2	25.0	8	-
Doverdale	4	66.6	2	33.3	6	-
Heathy Mill	0	-	1	100	1	1
Hampton Lovett	4	80.0	1	20.0	5	4
Horton	0	-	2	100	2	-
Cookesey	4	80.0	1	20.0	5	1
Bellbroughton	6	75.0	2	25.0	8	-
Upton Warren	5	71.4	2	28.6	7	-
Witton	0	-	1	100	1	-
Hampton	2	66.6	1	33.3	3	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>48.5</b>	<b>69.3</b>	<b>21.5</b>	<b>30.7</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>9</b>

Although the manorial units are small in terms of plough strength, the overall allocation of ploughteams compares closely with that of the Church of Evesham. However, on Urse's estate the pattern is somewhat disturbed by underploughing and the internal variation within the estate is much greater than that demonstrated by ecclesiastical estates. A significant feature of the D'Abitot estate is that, with the exception of Bellbroughton, every manor was subinfeudated to a total of seven subtenants. Thus Urse had renounced any direct interest in the management of these manors in return for some form of fixed rent, which meant that there was no discernible overall management policy regarding the estate, as the operation of each manor would be left to the individual subtenant. This would explain the variability found in the ploughteams ascribed to the demesne, and accounts for the relatively higher proportion of teams in demesne vis a vis other lay estates.

The organisation of those manors for which Urse was tenant-in-chief is in direct contrast to the very sizeable estate of which he was subtenant. Most of these manors formed those parts of ecclesiastical estates that had been leased from the time of Bishop Oswald onwards and Urse's refusal to relinquish these rich holdings earned him the famous curse from the Bishop of Worcester for despoiling Church property.

TABLE 6.18 ESTATE SUBINFEUDATED TO URSE D'ABITOT : HIDES AND PLOUGHTEAMS

CHURCH MANOR	DOMESDAY ENTRY	HIDAGE	PEASANT PLOUGHTEAMS		DEMESNE PLOUGHTEAMS		TOTAL
			Nos.	%	Nos.	%	
	<u>Church of Worcester</u>						
Kempsey	Mucenhill, Stoulton, Wolverton	7	Unclear		Unclear		7
Wyke Episcopi	Holt	5	10	83.3	2	16.7	12
"	" Witley	1	1	50.0	1	50.0	2
"	" Kenswick	1	0	-	2	100	2
"	" Cloptune	1	0	-	1	100	1
"	" Lowern	1	0	-	1	100	1
	Grimley	1	2	100	0	-	2

TABLE 6.18 (CONT'D)

CHURCH MANOR	DOMESDAY ENTRY	HIDAGE	PEASANT PLOUGHTEAMS		DEMESNE PLOUGHTEAMS		TO
			Nos.	%	Nos.	%	
Fladbury	Ab Lench	5	6	75.0	2	25.0	8
"	Bishops Lench	7	5.5	61.1	3.5	38.9	9
	Piddle, Hill & Moor	5	1	20.0	4	80.0	5
Bredon	Pendock	2	0	-	2	100	2
	Washbourne	3	2	50.0	2	50.0	4
	Westmancote	4	1	25.0	3	75.0	4
Ripple	Holdfast	1	1	50.0	1	50.0	2
Northwick	Hindlip & Alfreton	5	2	50.0	2	50.0	4
	Warndon & White Ladies Aston	1.75	0	-	2	100	2
	Cudley	1	0	-	2	100	2
Cropton	Bengeworth	6	3.5	63.6	2	36.4	5.
Hanbury	Hanbury	2	0	-	1	100	1
	<u>Bishop of Hereford</u>						
	Kyre	2	0	-	1	100	1
	<u>Church of Westminster</u>						
	Birlingham	2.25	0	-	2	100	2
	Eckington	3.75	3	60.0	2	40.0	5
	Besford	5	1	33.3	2	66.6	3
	Longdon	5	3	27.5	5	62.5	8
	Powick	?		Unclear		Unclear	7
	Upton Snodsbury	3.75	1.5	50.0	1.5	50.0	3
	North Piddle	5	3	60.0	2	40.0	5
	Naunton Beauchamp	6.75	2	33.3	4	66.6	6
	Naunton Beauchamp	3.25	0	-	2	100	2
	Grafton Flylord	1.75	0	-	1	100	1
	North Piddle	4	1	33.3	2	66.6	3

TABLE 6.18 (CONT'D)

CHURCH MANOR	DOMESDAY ENTRY	HIDAGE	PEASANT PLOUGHTEAMS		DEMESNE PLOUGHTEAMS		TC
			Nos.	%	Nos.	%	
	Peopleton	1	0	-	0	-	0
	Broughton Hackett	3	1.5	50.0	1.5	50.0	3
	Comberton	2	2	100	0	-	2
	<u>Church of Pershore</u>						
Pershore	Pershore	1.5	1	33.3	2	66.6	3
"	Broughton	1	0	-	0	-	0
	Wadborough	1	0	-	0	-	0
Broadway	Broadway	2.5	0	-	2	100	2
Leigh	Leigh	1	4	66.6	2	33.3	6
"	Bransford	1	4	80.0	1	20.0	5
	Mathon	.75	3	75	1	25.0	4
TOTAL		117.5	65	44.4	67.5	46.1	146.

14 ploughteams uncertain 9.6%

Not only is the above estate much larger than the one of which Urse was tenant-in-chief, (117.5 hides against 41.5), but also, it had a much greater number of ploughteams (146.5 against 70). As this estate was so much richer, it is no surprise that it was here that most of his energy in terms of direct cultivation was directed. The very high figure of 46% of all ploughteams being retained in demesne, meant that there were more teams in demesne than belonged to the peasantry. This large demesne element is further accentuated by comparison with the total ecclesiastical estates of which Urse was a subtenant. Thus, on those lands subinfeudated from the Church of Worcester, Urse had 44% of his ploughteams in demesne as against the mean of 28% for the whole church estate. The equivalent figure for Pershore is 40% of Urse's ploughteams in demesne, against the church estate mean of 19% and this rises, on the Westminster estates, to 50% in Urse's demesnes against 34% on the whole estate. This not only has important

implications in terms of the management of individual manors, but also has an effect upon the ecclesiastical estates themselves. At least three elements are discernible within the economy of these latter estates. Those areas which were retained in demesne for the direct support of the monastic communities, those areas which were largely tilled by peasant cultivators, with little or no demesne, and finally those areas that were leased to lay landlords, which could, and in the case of Urse d'Abitot certainly did, accentuate the demesne element of the estate as a whole.

It is clear, therefore, that in studying the spatial distribution of any Domesday phenomena, a whole range of variables must be taken into account, over and above those relating to the physical endowment of the area studied. Not least amongst these is the very complex pattern of estate ownership and subinfeudation that characterises Domesday tenure. Domesday Book only allows tantalising glimpses into the management policy of individual landlords, but it is felt that by considering the relationships between Domesday data it is possible to contrast, at least in outline, the basic patterns of differing Domesday rural economics. This will be further developed in the next chapter.

### Hidage

The Domesday hidage of Worcestershire has excited the interest of scholars for some time, largely because of the apparent regularity of twelve hundreds comprising just over 1200 hides. However, as Maitland<sup>27</sup> pointed out, the neatness of the overall hundredal arrangement, in fact, marks considerable artificiality in the content of each hundred. Several of these have been artificially 'made up' to a total of 100 hides by the addition of hides from distant parts of the county. Hence Fissesburh Hundred, comprising largely the possessions of the Church of Evesham, could produce a total of a hundred hides only by the addition of 15 hides from Worcester town and 20 hides from Doddingtree Hundred.

The artificiality of the overall hundredal structure, however, need not necessarily mean that the unit upon which it was based, the hide, was also of an artificial nature. The origins of the hide and its nature within Worcestershire have been discussed previously, and it

would appear to be the consensus amongst most Domesday scholars that, by 1086, the hide was an archaic unit that had little significance either areally, or in terms of other Domesday data. However, this does not accord with the prominence given in Domesday Book to hidage, or equivalent measures such as carucates, bovates and the like. Also, the range of tests concerning the significance of Domesday hidage in comparison with other Domesday data has usually been limited to the comparison of a handful of Domesday entries bearing the same hidage. If the hide is to be equated with a unit of taxation, then it is unrealistic to expect a direct correlation with any single aspect of the Domesday data, without taking into consideration all allowances given, such as occurs with 'beneficial hidation'; changes since the previous assessment; as well as the precise means of assessment. Certainly, it is extremely unlikely that any direct compatability will exist between hidation and Domesday valuations, although in Worcestershire, at least, there is evidence to suggest that there is an overall relationship between Domesday data and hidation, albeit a complex one.

The frequency distribution of hides per Domesday entry, shown below, demonstrates a similar pattern to that previously discussed for other Domesday data.

TABLE 6.19 FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF HIDES PER DOMESDAY ENTRY

<u>HIDES</u>	<u>ABSOLUTE FREQUENCY</u>	<u>RELATIVE FREQUENCY</u> (%)	<u>CUMULATIVE FREQUENCY</u> (%)
0	8	3.4	3.4
.1	1	.4	3.9
.25	5	2.1	6.0
.5	7	3.0	9.0
.75	4	1.7	10.7
1.0	51	21.9	32.6
1.25	1	.4	33.0
1.5	7	3.0	36.1
1.75	2	.9	36.9
2.0	20	8.6	45.5



TABLE 6.19 (CONT'D)

<u>HIDES</u>	<u>ABSOLUTE FREQUENCY</u>	<u>RELATIVE FREQUENCY</u> (%)	<u>CUMULATIVE FREQUENCY</u> (%)
2.25	1	.4	45.9
2.5	4	1.7	47.6
2.75	1	.4	48.1
3.0	17	7.3	55.4
3.25	2	.9	56.2
3.50	3	1.3	57.5
3.75	2	.9	58.4
4.0	12	5.2	63.5
4.5	1	.4	63.9
4.75	1	.4	64.4
5.0	22	9.4	73.8
5.25	1	.4	74.2
5.75	1	.4	74.7
6.00	8	3.4	78.1
6.5	1	.4	78.5
6.75	1	.4	79.0
7.0	5	2.1	81.1
7.25	1	.4	81.5
8.0	2	.9	82.4
8.5	1	.4	82.8
8.75	1	.4	83.3
9.0	3	1.3	84.5
10.0	7	3.0	87.6
10.25	1	.4	88.0
10.5	1	.4	88.4
11.0	4	1.7	90.1
11.75	1	.4	90.6
13.0	2	.9	91.4
14.0	1	.4	91.8
15.0	3	1.3	93.1
15.5	1	.4	93.6
19.0	1	.4	94.0

TABLE 6.19 (CONT'D)

<u>HIDES</u>	<u>ABSOLUTE FREQUENCY</u>	<u>RELATIVE FREQUENCY</u> (%)	<u>CUMULATIVE FREQUENCY</u> (%)		
20.0	3	1.3	95.3		
21.0	2	.9	96.1		
24.0	1	.4	96.6		
25.0	3	1.3	97.9		
30.0	2	.9	98.7		
35.0	1	.4	99.1		
40.0	1	.4	99.6		
50.0	1	.4	100		
<hr/>					
TOTAL	233	100.0	100.0		
<hr/>					
Mean	Median	Standard Error	Standard Deviation	Variance	Range
5.1	2.9	.46	6.98	48.7	50.0

Very few entries appear without hidage, and most of those had their hidage subsumed under another total. Also, coincident with other Domesday data, a very high proportion of the entries relate to small units; over 30% comprising 1 hide or less and nearly 74% of entries having 5 hides or less. This corresponds well with both population and ploughteams in that virtually 70% of all entries had under 20 recorded population and 8 ploughteams. However, the mean number of hides (5.1) gives a somewhat artificial picture as it is distorted by a few large entries (5% over 20 hides). Thus there is some discrepancy between the mean value at 5.1 and the median at 2.9 hides, the latter in this case being more representative of the large numbers of small entries.

In a study of Worcestershire's hidation, largely from the *Liber Rubus*, M. Hollings<sup>28</sup> has suggested that there was a significant survival of 5 hide units within the county. However, this is not apparent from the frequency distribution of Domesday hidation. Certainly, 9.4% of all entries occur at 5 hides, but this is far less

than those occurring at 1 hide and little more than those at 2 and 3 hides. In fact, it is only those entries in excess of 25 hides that appear to ascend in 5 or 10 hide units, and here there would seem to be obvious evidence of 'rounding up' of large manor areas. The hidation of Worcestershire appears to be based upon a decimal rather than duodecimal system, unlike the monetary system, and hence some prominence will always occur at the 5 and 10 points on the scale. But the ancient existence of 5 hide units is neither supported by the Domesday evidence nor by the charters and their associated leases. Hollings based her arguments solely on the estates of the Church of Worcester and argued that the high number of entries under 5 hides could be compounded upwards to give more ancient 5 hide units. It is therefore instructive to look at the Domesday allocation of hidage in the Church of Worcester Estate.

TABLE 6.20

DOMESDAY HIDAGE OF CHURCH OF WORCESTER

<u>MANOR</u>	<u>COMPONENT HIDAGE</u>		<u>TOTAL</u>
	DEMESNE	SUBINFEUDATED	
Kempsey	13	7, 2, 2, 5 waste	24
Wyke Episcopi	3.75	5, 1, 1, 1, .75, 1, .5, 1	15
Fladbury	7	5, 5, 7, 5, 1, 10	40
Bredon	10	3, 1, 2, 7, 2, 3, 4, 2, 1	35
Ripple	13	1, 5, 4, 1, 1	25
Blockley	25.5	2, 1.5, 1, 3, 5	38
Tredington			23
Blackwell	2	4	6
Northwick	3.5	5, 1.75, 1, 3.25, 1, 1, 1.5, 3, 3, 1	25
Overbury			6
Sedgeberrow			4
Shipston-on-Stow			2
Harvington			3
Grimley	2	1	3
Hallow	1	2, .5, 3.5, 1.5	7
Crothorne	14	11, 5, 4, 6	50
Cleeve Prior			10.5
Fepson			6

TABLE 6.20 (CONT'D)

MANOR	<u>COMPONENT HIDAGE</u>		<u>TOTAL</u>
	DEMESNE	SUBINFEUDATED	
Hanbury		2, 2 waste	14
Stoke Prior			10
Hartlebury			20
Wolverley			5
Alvechurch			13
Eardiston			15
<hr/>			<hr/>
TOTAL			400

Some regularity within the hidage arrangements is apparent within the total hidage for each manor, although it is most pronounced on the larger manors. The amount of regularity, that is assessment in 5 or 10 hides units, could be increased if the assumption was made that some contiguous small manors represent a later subdivision of once larger units. Hence, Hallow and Grimley together make 10 hides, as do Overbury and Sedgeberrow. However, this largely rests on assumption, as there is no supporting evidence from the charters, or within Domesday itself, that these manors did once comprise larger units. Even if the foregoing argument is accepted as being feasible, the internal subdivision of the manors hidage lends no support to the existence of 5 hide units. Many of these subdivisions are based upon the Oswaldian leases and therefore cannot be described as merely a new organisation consequent upon the conquest. Thus, even in the case of the Church of Worcester's estates, which apparently have the greatest degree of regularity within their hidage arrangements, there is little evidence to support the existence or antiquity of 5 hide units. Rather it must be assumed that those 5 hide units, discovered by Hollings in the Liber Rubus, represent a rearrangement of the ancient fiscal structure in order to accommodate the post-conquest institution of knights fees.

Whether or not any regular arrangement can be discerned within the hidage pattern is only of marginal interest when the significance

and spatial aspects of hidage are being considered. If the hide is viewed as a fiscal measure, then it should bear some relationship to other Domesday data and to area. The former is best tested by statistical means and will be considered in Chapter 7. However, the latter can be analysed by mapping the number of acres per hide throughout the study area. A similar exercise was conducted by June Sheppard upon the Yorkshire Domesday account, where the nineteenth century township units were used to assess the number of acres to each fiscal carucate.<sup>29</sup> Sheppard found a significant spatial variation in the acreage of each fiscal carucate, although she doubted the same method could be employed in the hidated parts of England. However, when a similar study is made of Worcestershire significant results do appear. The first step taken in this study was to assess the hidation by estate in order to ascertain whether there is any prima facie case for the existence of 'beneficial' hidation. 'Beneficial' hidation, or a tax exemption, granted by allowing a deliberate underestimate of hidage, does occur throughout Domesday Book and is usually assumed to have been most prevalent on ecclesiastical and Royal estates. Again, much is assumed regarding this release from taxation, although relatively little is known regarding either its distribution or origin. Worcestershire should provide a good testing ground in that it is well represented by both ecclesiastical and Royal Estates. However, even a cursory glance at Table 6.21 reveals that, far from being lightly assessed, the ecclesiastical estates were amongst the heaviest taxed.

TABLE 6.21                    ACRES PER HIDE BY DOMESDAY ESTATE

<u>ESTATE</u>	<u>HIDAGE</u>	<u>ACREAGE</u>	<u>ACRES PER HIDE</u>
Church of Worcester	400	149,793	374.5
Bishop of Hereford	35.5	11,633	327.7
St. Peter's of Westminster	200	50,147	250.7
St. Mary's Pershore	100	36,515	328.5
Church of Evesham	100	31,259	312.6
Lay Estates	235.75	113,286	405.9
Royal Estates	127.5	76,221	597.8
TOTAL	1198.75	468,854	391.1

If any large scale beneficial hidation existed, then it would appear to have been on the Royal estates, for the ecclesiastical estates appear more heavily assessed than the lay estates. However, it must be remembered that the estates occupied distinct areas of the county and were not intermixed. Thus, the lay and Royal estates were, by and large, in the more wooded and less well stocked north and west of the county, and it is perfectly feasible that they would have been less heavily assessed than the more prosperous ecclesiastical estates. In order to assess the smaller scale variations in hidage, the Domesday manor, rather than the nineteenth century parishes, has been used as the basic mapping unit for the reasons previously explained. Figure 6.11 shows the distribution of acres per hide and the immediate impression formed is of a significant difference between the assessment of the south-eastern part of the county and the north and west. This is not dissimilar to the distribution pattern of population and ploughteams, suggesting there is some relationship between the fiscal measures and the sources of prosperity in terms of the eleventh century economy. It should be pointed out that nowhere in Worcestershire does the hide produce the idealised figure of 120 acres. The range throughout the county is from 138 acres at Besford to over 2000 acres to the hide at Powick. However, this idealised view of the hide concerns agricultural land, thus in small manors such as Besford, if land occupied by dwellings, waste and woodland were to be subtracted, the figure of 120 acres to the hide would probably be closely approached. This represents the exception rather than the rule in Worcestershire, although it must be remembered that the county was still heavily wooded at the time of Domesday, and by comparison with Figure 6.12 it is clear that those areas most heavily wooded demonstrate the highest acreage per hide. This can be further emphasised by reference to Figures 6.7 and 6.10, where the general pattern revealed by the hidage pattern is broadly similar to that of the distribution of population and ploughteams, and therefore the reverse of that of the distribution of woodland. There are, of course, many variations in detail, some of which may be due to the operation of beneficial hidation, but there is sufficient compliance between the distributions to suggest that the fiscal arrangements, as revealed by the hidage structure, were firmly based upon the realities



of the eleventh century economy. In terms of Domesday Book, that is represented by the level of agrarian prosperity as expressed in men and ploughing strength. Thus the hide as a spatial unit, in Worcestershire at least, begins to lose some of the uncertainty that traditionally surrounds it. It appears as a fiscal measure that certainly varies in actual size over relatively short distances, but is related to wealth in terms of men and arable as perceived by the Domesday Commissioners. Woodland, it seems, was either lowly rated or even specifically excluded from hidage calculations, hence the low hidage extant over quite large manors in the north and west of the county.

There are manors which do not fit into the general correspondence between hidage and population and ploughteam distribution. Notably, the two manors of Leigh and Powick, both of which seem considerably underassessed, at only 3 hides each, in Domesday Book and hence record the highest acreage per hide within the county. However, the entries relating to both manors are peculiar and atypical of the county as a whole. In Powick, part of the Westminster estates, there are many subholdings which Evesham A identifies as being at Bransford, Madresfield, Pixham, Cleevelode and Berrow. It is clear that neither in Domesday Book, nor in Evesham A, has the hidage of the tenants land been given. However, a clue to the fact that the total hidage was much greater than 3 hides, is given in Evesham A, where Urse d'Abitot is credited with a holding of 5 hides, probably at Powick Inardi, later to become Beauchamp Court. In the confirmation charter of Pershore Monastery, dated 972 A.D., the hidage of Powick is given as 7 hides and the bounds, although somewhat difficult to solve, suggest a fairly well wooded area. Even with 7 hides, Powick would still have some 900 acres to the hide, placing it within the same category as several other well wooded western manors. However, the Domesday account of Powick fails to mention any woodland at all, suggesting that clearance had proceeded apace since the tenth century and thus even an assessment of 7 hides would have been inadequate.

The neighbouring manor of Leigh presents, in some ways, a more intractable problem. Its hidage in 972 A.D. was the same as that recorded for 1086, and, as with Powick, the bounds are particularly enigmatic, being further complicated by the unclosed nature of the survey.



However, the boundary marks abound in woodland references, which is supported by the Domesday evidence which estimates the woodland as being 3 leagues by 2 leagues. Even so, the assessment of only 3 hides ill fits a manor comprising 6,750 acres and possessing a total recorded Domesday population of 71 with 42 ploughteams. It would seem that a fiscal assessment made of a largely wooded and underdeveloped area in the tenth century had become unrealistic by the eleventh century due to development during the intervening period.

A similar situation pertains in the manors of Shelsley Beauchamp and Abberley, both of which demonstrate a low hidage but high population and ploughteam densities. Admittedly Shelsley does possess some woodland, but the assessment of a single hide is low for a recorded population of 17 with 10 ploughteams. Abberley, with no woodland, is assessed at  $2\frac{1}{2}$  hides, but has a recorded population of 32 with 19 ploughs. Unfortunately there is no charter evidence for these two lay estates and again it would seem a reasonable assumption that the hidage assessment has been made redundant by clearance and settlement subsequent to the tenth century.

Cases of manors which appear to be excessively assessed for hidage are much rarer. The only outstanding one is Chaddesley Corbett, a large manor on the northern boundary of the county. Despite two areas of woodland, one of 2 leagues and the other of 1 league, and its low density of ploughteams, it is still assessed at 25 hides. However, there are aspects of the Domesday entry which go some way to explaining the severity of the assessment. It possessed some extra manorial income derived from houses in Worcester and 5 saltpans in Droitwich, which added to the wealth of the manor, as well as 8 unnamed berewicks within the bounds of the manor itself. At some stage the severity of the assessment appears to have been recognised as it is noted that 10 hides were free from geld, which would increase the acreage per gelded hide to 405, thus bringing it closer to the assessment of the manors in the south of the county.

It would seem that, given the possibility of identifying reasonable Domesday mapping units, it is well worth analysing the hidage of 1086. Throughout Worcestershire the pattern revealed is

comprehensible in terms of other Domesday data and, as the basis of the assessment certainly predated Domesday survey by some considerable time, does allow some estimate of those areas which were advancing in terms of population and cultivation. Admittedly, the origins of the hide remain obscure, for a study of Domesday hidation neither adds nor detracts from Stenton's view of the hide as originally an estimate of sufficient land to support one peasant household. However, there is no doubt that, despite the vicissitudes that the assessment of hidage had undergone between the Anglo-Saxon charters and Domesday Book, it still remained, in the eleventh century, an operable and meaningful system of fiscal assessment. It appears closely aligned to population and ploughteam strengths within the framework of Domesday manorial units. At the same time, woodland, or at least large expanses of it, were specifically excluded, whilst certain extra-manorial sources of income, such as town houses and salt pans, appear to have been included within the assessment. Thus, in Worcestershire, the hide, as an areal unit, does begin to emerge in a much sharper focus than the hazy archaic unit suggested by earlier workers in the field. It is, in the eleventh century at least, primarily a fiscal measure and hence variable in areal extent. It appears closely linked with the tilled area of the manor and the number of men available to undertake such a task, which in the context of the eleventh century economy seems a very reasonable method of attempting to assess the potential, if not actual, wealth of an area. Obviously the antiquity of the system, the vagaries of assessment in the context of large and powerful estate owners and the changes wrought by the introduction of a new Norman administration, all combined to make the system less than perfect, but sufficient remains for us to be able to discern the thoroughness and competence of an Anglo-Saxon administration that had slowly emerged in the county from the seventh century onwards.

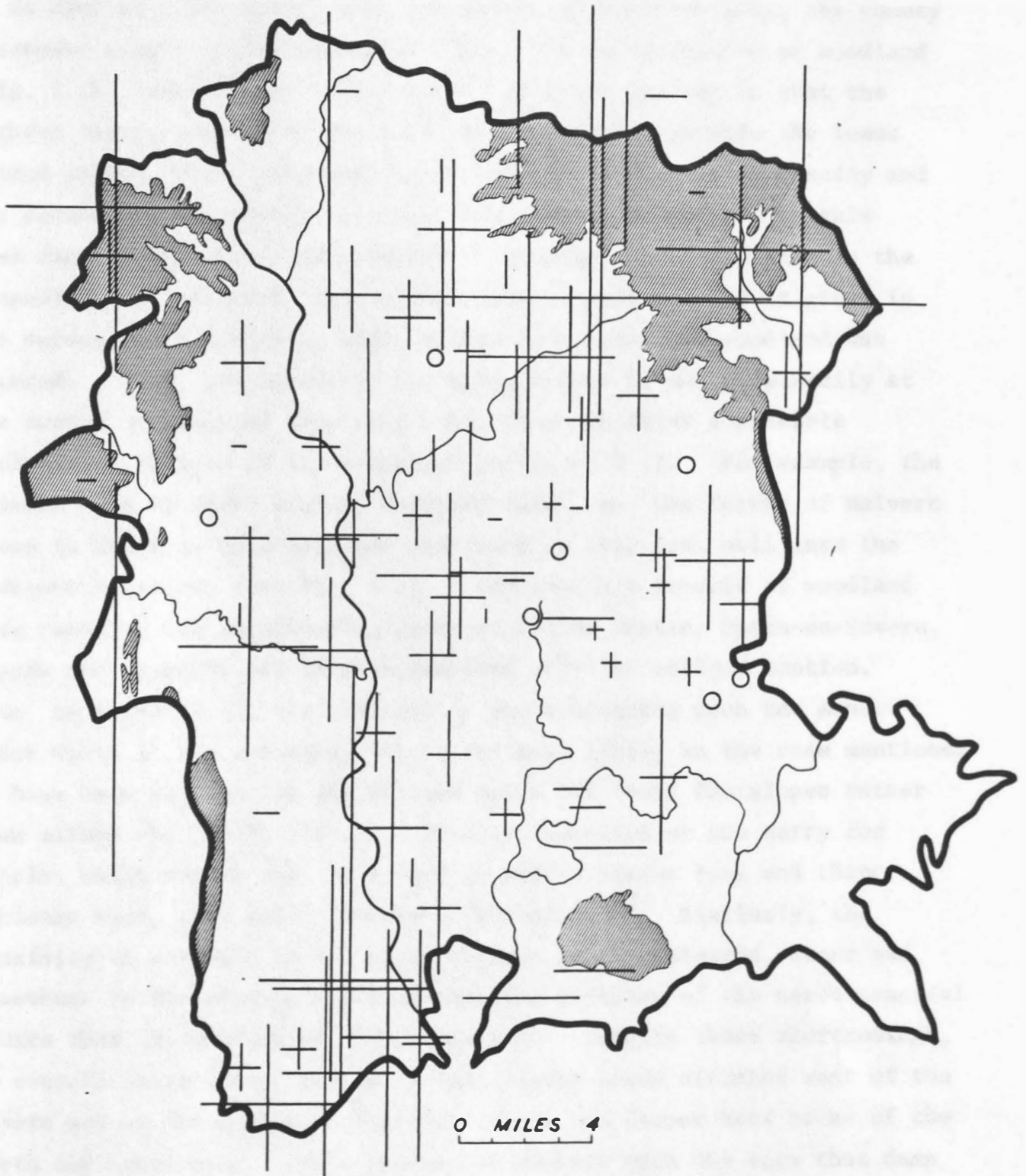
### Woodland and Waste

Woodland has often been viewed as the natural counterpart to settlement in the sense that it provided virtually 'dead' areas within the settlement pattern as well as areas for future settlement expansion. It is clear, however, from the attention paid to woodland in Domesday Book, that by that time, if not before, woodland had become an important, and anything but 'dead' part of the manorial economy. Not only did it

provide fuel, building and fencing materials, but also important grazing ground, particularly for swine, and also was generally accessible to the whole village community. If the manor, as an areal economic unit, is viewed in terms of an idealised Von Thünen land use pattern, then small areas of woodland would have remained close to the central vills to provide specifically for fuel and building materials. It is possible that such small groves existed, although Domesday Book is far more concerned with large tracts of woodland, which appear plentiful in Worcestershire at the time.

The woodland measures for the county were usually assessed in leagues, with a length and breadth measurement being given, although occasionally other measures were used and, from time to time, mention is made of woodland with no clear indication to its extent. The difficulties of translating the Domesday league into an intelligible modern form and attempts at estimating the approximate size of Domesday woodlands have been fully explored by Darby.<sup>30</sup> It seems from the Register of Battle Abbey that the Domesday league comprised twelve quarentenes, or furlongs, and each quarentene was forty perches, thus making the league equivalent to  $1\frac{1}{2}$  modern miles. However, as with most medieval measures, this would have been subject to considerable variation throughout the country and even within the area of a single county. In the case of Worcestershire, Round has suggested that the league might well have comprised only four furlongs, as there was no mention in the survey of any measure greater than three furlongs below the league.<sup>31</sup> This would make the league, in modern terms, about half a mile in length and thus substantially reduce the apparent amount of woodland within the county. However, Round was not quite accurate in his assumption that the largest measure below a league was three furlongs, as mentions of half a league abound. As there are several mentions of two furlongs, but none of four, it would seem more likely that the Worcestershire woodland league contained 8 furlongs, that is roughly one mile. The impression that a league containing 12 furlongs, and equivalent to a mile and a half, is too large is strengthened by Figure 6.12, where the dimensions of the woodland, when drawn to scale, often exceed the area of the manors to which they refer. However, knowledge of the precise nature of these measurements is far too scant to allow any definite conclusions and thus

FIGURE 6.12

**DOMESDAY WOODLAND**

0 MILES 4

— ONE DOMESDAY LEAGUE  
(12 DOMESDAY FURLONGS)  
○ OTHER MENTION OF WOODLAND

the representation of Domesday woodland on Figure 6.12 must be regarded as symbolic rather than strictly accurate.

Even disregarding our imprecise knowledge concerning measurement, it is obvious that, purely from the number of mentions made, the county presented a well wooded aspect in 1086. The distribution of woodland (Fig. 6.12) demonstrates some accord with drift geology in that the lighter terrace and drift soils of the Avon valley provide the least wooded aspect, which enforces the pattern of settlement continuity and its concomitant woodland clearance that had been manifest in this area from prehistoric times onwards. However, problems exist in the composition of woodland distribution maps in that no clue is given in the survey as to precisely where within each manor the woodland was located. Thus, the centre of the cross symbol is not necessarily at the centre of woodland extant in 1086, which provides a possible explanation of some of the anomalies on Figure 6.12. For example, the Malvern area is shown without woodland cover, yet the forest of Malvern Chase is known to have extended over much of this area well into the fourteenth century (see Fig. 9.1). Considerable amounts of woodland were recorded for neighbouring areas at Hanley Castle, Upton-on-Severn, Ripple and Longdon, yet Malvern received only one oblique mention. Thus, on Figure 6.12, the woodland is shown centring upon the manors under which it was recorded, yet it was more likely in the case mentioned to have been situated on the Malvern Hills and their footslopes rather than within the Severn valley. This is supported by the entry for Ripple, which states that "the wood is half a league long and three furlongs wide, (and is) in Malferna (Malvern)".<sup>32</sup> Similarly, the proximity of woodland to the river valleys of the Salwarpe, Stour and elsewhere on the Severn, reflects more the position of the named manorial centre than the precise woodland location. Despite these shortcomings, an overall pattern does emerge of well wooded areas situated west of the Severn and on the northern sandstone fringe and Keuper Marl areas of the north and north east. This apparently accords with the view that damp and intractable clay soils, such as those developed on the Keuper Marls, were the last to be cleared, as early settlers preferred the lighter sand and gravel deposits characterised by their more open vegetation. However, this distinction only partially applies to Worcestershire,

for at least the southern part of the Lower Liassic marls had been cleared of woodland cover by 1086. These latter soils are just as heavy and intractable as Keuper Marl and would have supported a climax vegetation of oak woodland just as dense and difficult to clear as was found on Keuper Marl and probably more dense than that found on the northern sandstone fringe. As Thorpe has pointed out in Warwickshire<sup>33</sup>, the progress of woodland clearance and colonization did not solely depend upon the nature and distribution of soil types, the process being a far more complex one than any such simple correlation would suggest.

Rather than merely analysing the distribution of woodland through the use of linear symbols, as employed by Darby, a different form of mapping technique has been employed on Figure 6.10. This again employs the Domesday manor as the basic mapping unit and attempts to estimate the proportion of manorial area covered by woodland. This is achieved by calculating the amount of woodland in square leagues per thousand acres of manor. Assuming a Domesday league to equal 1.5 miles, a square league represents 960 acres and thus complete woodland coverage would record .96 on Figure 6.10. As this figure is equalled or even exceeded in at least three cases, the argument for a smaller Domesday league in Worcestershire is further strengthened. The advantage of this method of mapping is that an immediate visual impression is gained of the likely areal contribution of woodland to the landscape of each manor. Its disadvantages are that woodland that is referred to in terms other than leagues or furlongs cannot be included, but it is felt that this mapping technique does provide a useful adjunct to Figure 6.12 and does allow comparison with other areal distributions necessary for the description of Domesday economies. Due to the dubious accuracy of the measures, only 3 major groupings are displayed on Figure 6.10, which are:- those manors where woodland formed a very significant landscape feature of over 25% of the total area, those where woodland covered between 0.01 - 0.25% of total area and those where there was little or no woodland at all. The peripheral location of Worcestershire's densest woodland is immediately apparent, forming the core areas of the Royal Forests of Malvern, Wyre, Kinver and Feckenham. In these areas woodland formed such a pronounced feature of the landscape as to have had a decisive impact upon the eleventh century economy, a feature which

will be discussed in greater depth later. Over much of the central Marl plain of Worcester, woodland remained a significant feature of the Domesday landscape, but rarely in such abundance as to form a dominant factor in the land use pattern. In the few cases where woodland exceeds .25, at Pirton, Comberton and Upton Snodsbury, only at Pirton does other Domesday data suggest the operation of a woodland economy. In all cases the manors concerned were parts of large ecclesiastical estates, where small patches of woodland were deliberately retained in areas where clearance had been generally the most thoroughgoing.

Domesday survey does make some more direct reference to the part woodland played in the rural economy of eleventh century Worcestershire. One of the most important uses made of woodland was undoubtedly that of provision of common grazing land for stock, particularly swine. This is evidenced by the fact that the woods at Crowle and Inkberrow were sufficient to provide pannage for 100 swine and that the Bishop of Worcester had rights of pannage in Malvern forest.<sup>34</sup> Similarly, the return for Hanley Castle enumerated 6 porcarii who rendered 60 swine and possessed 4 ploughs, suggesting a mixed arable-pig farming economy.<sup>35</sup> Both entries referring to swine pannage included a linear woodland measure, but there is no agreement between the two, as in both cases 100 swine were mentioned, but at Crowle the wood was half a league, whilst at Inkberrow 2 leagues by 1 league. Thus, no explanation is afforded of the two types of woodland measure that are used throughout Domesday Book. Generally, specific mentions of swine are rare in the Worcestershire survey, although the use of woodland for swine pannage was almost certainly common throughout the study area.

Mentions of wood used for buildings and firing were again comparatively rare and usually only appeared in the context of providing income for the land holder, for instance in the entry previously quoted for Ripple (see footnote 34). Occasionally a reference appeared suggesting usage of woodland by the villagers for these purposes, such as at Whittington and 'Rodleah' where the amount of wood was "sufficient for firing" (*Silva ad ignem tanta*).<sup>36</sup> Similarly, other uses of woodland found mention only 'en passant' and from the viewpoint of renders to the

landlord such as the renders of honey at Malvern and Suckley. Also, woodland as the preserve of wild game, is mentioned only in the context of hunting rights and game enclosures. Hunting had been of considerable importance in pre-conquest Worcestershire, but William I accentuated this aspect of the rural scene by enlarging the Royal Forest, both in Worcestershire and throughout the country. This feature of woodland usage necessitates the definition of the term 'Forest', for, as Darby has pointed out, the term is neither botanical nor geographical, but legal.<sup>37</sup> This is borne out in Worcestershire where the survey states that a number of manors and settlements had been 'taken in' to the Forest, yet it is clear that they were not necessarily well wooded. Also it is unclear from the survey what distinction, if any, there was between those areas taken in to the Forest and those already within it. In all, the survey referred to 21 settlements as having been 'taken in' to the forest, including a number of berewicks such as Willingwick and Woodcote in Bromsgrove manor. However, the survey was not primarily concerned with Royal Forest, and thus its extent and importance received scant mention. Certainly, the Forest areas of Ombersley, Horewell, Wyre, Malvern and Feckenham, in their thirteenth century bounds (Fig. 9.1), possessed, at least in part, a wooded nature at the time of Domesday (Fig. 6.12) and as such provided areas for future exploitation and colonization. However, by a comparison of Figure 6.12 and Figure 9.1, it is apparent that, even by 1086, the woodland area of the Forest of Feckenham was largely to the north of Feckenham itself and that Ombersley and Horewell were already much diminished in their woodland cover.

Much of the attack on woodland in the north of the county must have stemmed from the fuel needs of the salt industry situated at Droitwich. The evaporation methods, using huge lead vats, were wasteful of fuel as they required one cartload of wood for each mitt of salt produced. The wooded manor of Bromsgrove possessed 13 salt pans and 3 salt workers in Droitwich to whom they submitted 300 cartloads of wood in return for 300 mitts of salt.<sup>38</sup> Similarly, Northwick and Tibberton manors, which were later included within the Forests of Ombersley and Feckenham, rendered 100 cartloads of wood in return for 100 mitts of salt. However, attention has already been drawn, by



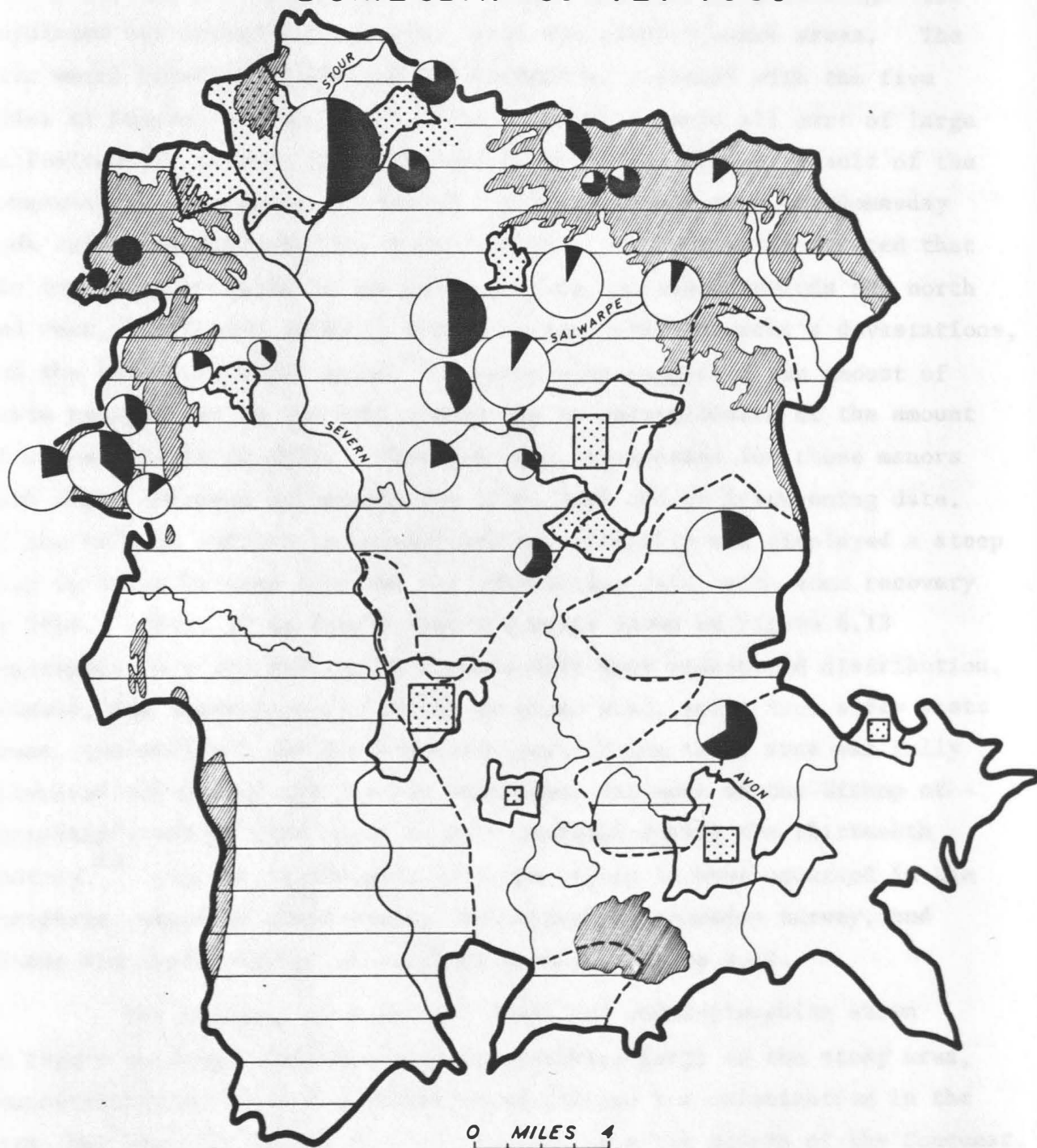
several authors, to the widespread influence on woodland of the Droitwich salt industry, and thus does not need further elaboration.<sup>39</sup> The central point is that extensive woodland clearance must have resulted over considerable areas, both within and outside the county, as it is clear from Domesday entries that many manors rendered wood in return for their salt supply and, as Droitwich supplied salt to a wide area throughout the West Midlands, then its impact in terms of woodland destruction extended well beyond its immediate surrounds. As conservation, in the sense of replanting, was unknown at this period, it is unclear as to what purpose the cleared areas were put, although it is most likely that they would have been cultivated in some manner, either as an extension to the common fields or as small holdings held in severalty.





As previously mentioned, Domesday Book regarded woodland as a source of income, and therefore a taxable commodity; indeed, in some cases, such as at Shell, Evesham A stated that the manor was worth £2 with its woodland and only 15/- without it.<sup>40</sup> Woodland was never viewed by Domesday Book as an underdeveloped area, or as an explanation for a reduction in valuation, as was waste. Geographers, however, in following the course of settlement development, have tended to view both woodland and waste as areas with potential for future exploitation by colonizers and as negative areas within the then extant settlement pattern. Seen from this standpoint, then the use of woodland within the Domesday rural economy can be viewed as another factor in the advance of settlement, for, apart from hunting and game reserves, all uses made of woodland were destructive. Even at the time of Domesday the pressure exerted on woodland was sufficient for moves to have been made for its conservation. By placing largely unwooded areas within his Forest, William I was not only making a legal change to the status of these areas by the imposition of Forest Law, but was also protecting the heart of the wooded area by increasing its periphery. Thus, the settlements taken into the Forest were situated around the north and eastern margins of Feckenham Forest and similarly on the eastern periphery of what later became known as Malvern Chase. This suggests that pressure upon woodland resources from both everyday uses and colonizing activity was already being felt by 1086 and was thus

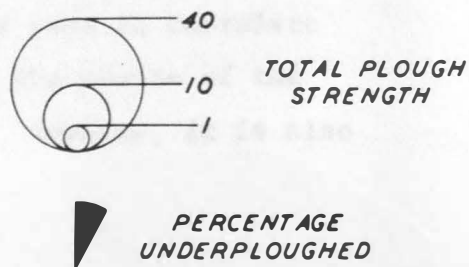
not necessarily a novel feature during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

It is useful to attempt to extract from the Domesday survey some estimate of potential colonization areas, by including together all mentions of under-exploitation and woodland, ignoring for the moment the fact that on certain soils, woodland could represent a maximisation of land use possibilities. Figure 6.13 was constructed to this end, representing areas of woodland, waste and under-ploughing as mentioned in the survey. The areas shown on the map as woodland do not represent, by any means, a dense woodland cover, but rather that woodland formed an important part of land use within these areas. Much land so included was extensively cleared and cultivated, but due to difficulties associated with the location and exact measurement of woodland from the survey, it is impossible to give more than a general impression of its extent. Problems also exist with the definition of waste, as the survey did not refer to peripheral waste areas that most manors probably possessed. Rather the survey seems to have implied that the waste areas were once productive of an income, but, at the time of writing, had declined markedly in value. Also, total dereliction of whole manors appears unlikely in Worcestershire, for, although the whole manor of Kidderminster was declared 'waste', it still possessed a complement of plough teams, population and was ascribed a value. Similarly, where under-ploughing is mentioned, in the form that more ploughs could be employed, then the implication appears to have been directed towards a recovery of the areas concerned, rather than an assessment of opportunities for colonization 'de novo'. In fact, most of the waste mentioned was probably consequent upon the unsettled conditions during the period of the Conquest, the subsequent Mercian revolt of 1069 and Earl Roger's rebellion in 1075. Where areas smaller than whole manors were described as waste, they can only be represented symbolically on Figure 6.13, within the manor to which reference was made. However, Figure 6.13 cannot be taken as any indication of total colonization possibilities, as Domesday Book, by its very nature of a tax document, would only inadequately describe under-exploited areas.

# WOODLAND, WASTE AND UNDERPLOUGHING DOMESDAY SURVEY 1086



-  DOMESDAY WOODLAND
-  WASTE AREA UNCLEAR
-  WASTE AREA PROPORTIONAL TO TOTAL MANOR
-  TOTAL MANOR WASTE



Generally, on Figure 6.13, the distribution of under-ploughing and waste areas was complementary, both being largely concentrated in the north and north-west of the study area. Surprisingly, however, the Avon Valley and the southern part of the Lower Liassic plain, although well populated and extensively cleared, were not without waste areas. The five waste hides at Cropthorne and Netherton, together with the five hides at Kempsey and the single hide at Besford, were all part of large ecclesiastical estates and were almost certainly a direct result of the Conquest, for as previously stated, it was unlikely that the Domesday Book refers specifically to natural waste. Darby has illustrated that the incidence of waste in the West Midlands increases towards the north and west, the former probably resultant upon the Conqueror's devastations, and the latter by Welsh raids.<sup>41</sup> Darby also suggested the amount of waste represented by the 1086 survey was an underestimate of the amount of waste evident in 1070. This can only be assessed for those manors with three recorded valuations for 1066, 1086 and an intervening date. Of the 28 such entries in Worcestershire, virtually all displayed a steep drop in value between 1066 and the intervening date, with some recovery by 1086. Thus, it is likely that the waste shown on Figure 6.13 represents only the relicts of a previously more widespread distribution. However, the impression should not be given that, apart from a few waste areas, the whole of the south eastern part of the study area was fully colonized and beyond any further expansion, for most of the Bishop of Worcester's manors were known to have assarted during the thirteenth century.<sup>42</sup> In the south-east, this was likely to have occurred in the peripheral manorial waste areas, unmentioned by Domesday survey, and within the small patches of woodland shown on Figure 6.12.

The majority of woodland, waste and under-ploughing shown on Figure 6.13 was distributed in the northern parts of the study area, demonstrating not only the future possibilities for colonization in the area, but also its slower rate of recovery from the upsets of the Conquest. It is possible that the northern area was more profoundly affected by devastations, and attempts have been made in the past to correlate declined values, waste and under-ploughing with the course of the Conqueror's armies and with local uprisings.<sup>43</sup> However, it is also

significant that the majority of under-ploughing and waste was recorded on lay estates, suggesting that the disruption caused by the Conquest must have been more far reaching there than on the ecclesiastical estates of the south. On the latter, the manors retained their pre-conquest form, organisation and ownership, whereas the lay estates were not only transferred in ownership to Norman Lords, but also were put into different combinations to form new estates. Thus, it is within the areas west of the Severn and on the north-east plateau fringe that post-conquest colonization was likely to have its greatest impact, for these areas were less developed, due to the nature of their physical resource base and their previous colonization history, and also had been more profoundly affected through the agency of the Norman Conquest.

### Values

The interpretation of values has always been problematic in Domesday studies, as there appears to be no simple association between the values ascribed to manors and their furnishings, in terms of agricultural land, ploughteams or population. It is thus difficult to assess how far the valuations represent any indication of economic well-being, although it has been generally accepted that they were linked in some manner.

H. C. Darby<sup>44</sup> has analysed Domesday valuations against rents (reddit), where mentioned in the survey, and concludes, by and large, that the two cannot be directly equated. He also concludes that, although there is some similarity in the distribution of ploughteams, population and values, that overall there is no consistent relationship between them. However, it is also true to say that nowhere does he conduct any statistical test of such a relationship and his analysis is largely confined to south-eastern counties. Thus considerable doubt remains as to how the Domesday commissioners arrived at the values displayed in the survey, and, to date, probably the most accepted interpretation of Domesday valuation is that first advanced by Maitland, as representing an estimation of the price at which the manor could be put to farm<sup>45</sup>, thus providing some link with later valuation found in the Inquisitiones Post Mortem and manorial extents.

In the Worcestershire survey the normal format used for Domesday valuations was one for 1066 and another for 1086, although some variations did occur. For instance, most manors of the Church of Westminster were only given a single valuation for 1086, presumably reflecting the endowment of a large part of the Church of Pershore's former estates to the Confessor's new foundation at Westminster, just prior to the Conquest. Also, some 28 manors, mainly in lay ownership, as previously mentioned, were given three valuations.

The total valuation for the whole county shows some slight decline over the twenty year period;

Value 1066: £1060-5-0      Value 1086: £991-0-0

although the number of manors valued at the two dates is not exactly comparable. However, this marginal decline is also perceptible in the following table of the valuations of the various estates:-

TABLE 6.22

DOMESDAY VALUATIONS BY ESTATE

<u>ESTATE</u>	<u>VALUE</u>		<u>AVERAGE VALUE PER MANOR</u>		<u>CHANGE 1066 - 1086</u>	
	1066	1086	1066	1086	Amount	Percent
Royal	£53.13.0.*	£147.5.0	£13.4*	£11.3	-	-
Church of Worcester	£273.05	£266.75	£11.87	£11.10	-£6.30	-1.3
Church of Westminster	-	£134.05	-	£5.6	-	-
Church of Pershore	£75.0	£74.25	£12.5	£12.37	-£0.75	-1.0
Church of Evesham	£70.75	£67.0	£5.05	£4.78	-£3.75	-5.3
Ralph Todeñi	£49.35	£56.0	£3.75	£4.3	+£6.65	+13.5
Osborne Richard	£36.75	£33.65	£2.0	£2.6	-£3.1	-8.4
Gilbert Thorold	£13.0	£11.1	£2.2	£1.9	-£2.9	-22.3
Wm. F. Ansculf	£39.3	£23.5	£3.0	£1.8	-£15.8	-40.2
Urse d'Abitot	£12.75	£8.9	£1.6	£1.1	-£3.85	-30.2

\* 'ferm' for only 4 manors.

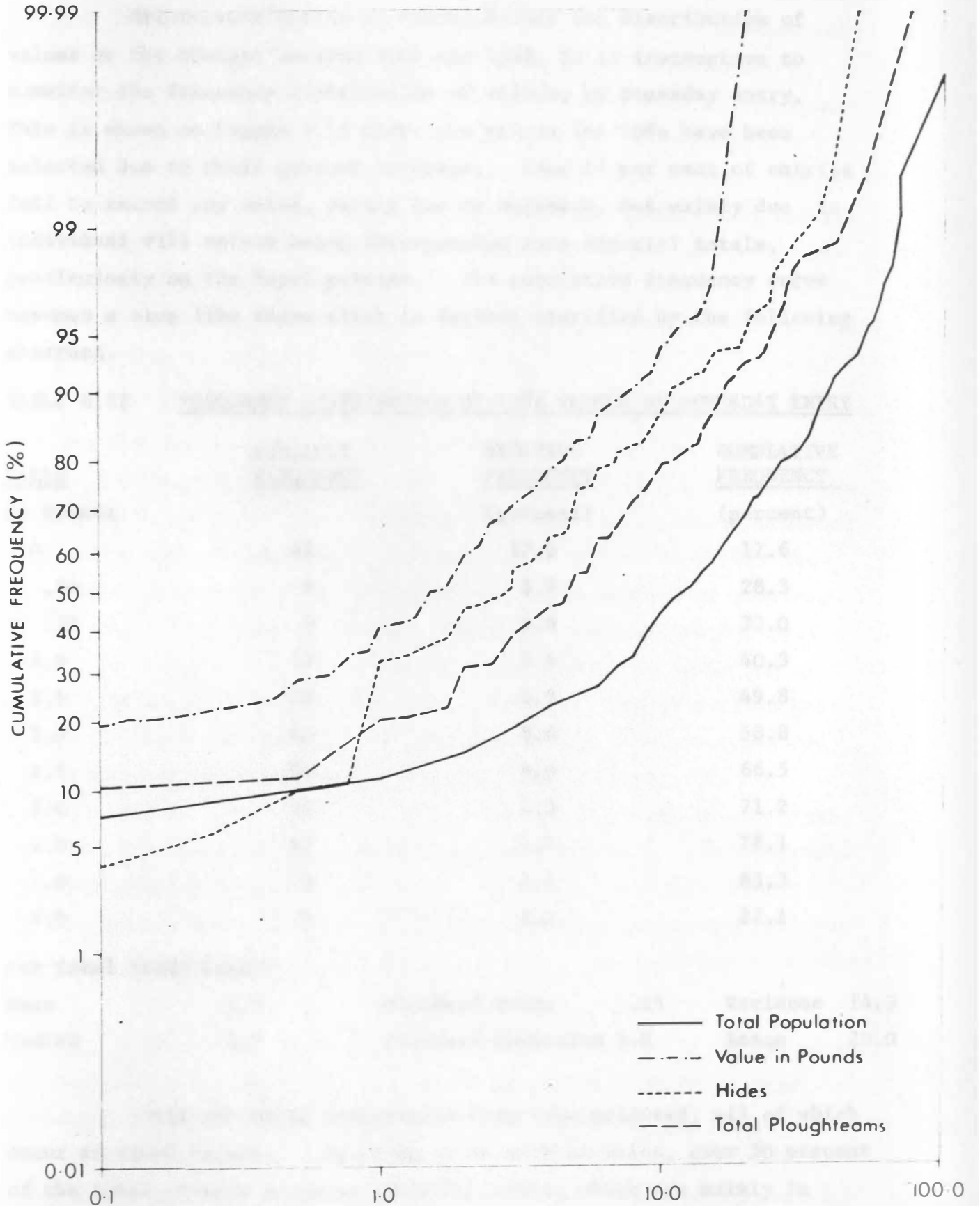
The total decline for the whole county amounts to only some 6.5% between the two dates, although the changes occurring on selected large estates displays a far wider variance. Generally, it was the Lay estates that showed the greatest decline in value, reinforcing the argument that they were the slowest to recover from the Conquest's effects. Compared to the Lay estates, the ecclesiastical ones displayed a considerable degree of stability, the largest decline being 5.3% on Evesham's estate. However, it was a Lay estate, that of Ralph Todei, which was the only one to show any increase in value (13.5%). This estate comprised 13 manors situated predominantly in the north and north-west of the study area (see Fig. 6.1). Individual manors varied in valuation from 2/- at Moor (Rock) to £16 at Elmley Lovett, and the variation in value difference between 1066 and 1086 was from a 60% decline at Lindon (Rock) to a 60% increase at Elmley Lovett. In fact, the overall increase in value of the estate was almost entirely supported by large increases at Abberley (£7 to £10.10.0 - a 50% increase) and Elmley Lovett (£10 to £16 - a 60% increase). Domesday gives no information as to why this augmentation of value had taken place, although it is possible that as this estate was a new creation, other areas might have been added to the two manors, although not mentioned in the survey.

Table 6.22 shows values collected together in estate groupings, but within each group there was a wide divergence in trends of valuations between 1066 and 1086. For example, the total change for the Church of Worcester's estate was only a slight reduction of 1.3%, yet individual manors varied from 100% increment at Earls Croome to 63% deficit at Wolverley. Admittedly, the vast manority of recorded values on this estate showed no change over the period, reflecting the overall low change, but it should be remembered that only total changes in valuation of the whole estate can be deduced from such figures and not changes of its constituent manors. At this general level it seems that the ecclesiastical estates suffered less from the effects of the Conquest and had generally recovered far quicker than the Lay estates. This once more reflects their smaller number of administrative changes consequent upon the Conquest and greater degree of continuity of management. Also, being larger and more wealthy, the ecclesiastical

FIGURE 6.14

### WORCESTERSHIRE 1086

CUMULATIVE FREQUENCY OF PLOUGHTEAMS, HIDES, POPULATION AND VALUE BY DOMESDAY ENTRY





estates were afforded a degree of protection, stability and internal flexibility not available to the small lay estate.

Before considering in detail either the distribution of values or the changes between 1066 and 1086, it is instructive to consider the frequency distribution of values, by Domesday entry. This is shown on Figure 6.14 where the values for 1086 have been selected due to their greater coverage. Some 17 per cent of entries fail to record any value, partly due to omission, but mainly due to individual vill values being incorporated into manorial totals, particularly on the Royal estates. The cumulative frequency curve assumes a step like shape which is further clarified by the following abstract.

TABLE 6.23 FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF 1086 VALUES BY DOMESDAY ENTRY

<u>VALUE</u> In Pounds	<u>ABSOLUTE</u> <u>FREQUENCY</u>	<u>RELATIVE</u> <u>FREQUENCY</u> (percent)	<u>CUMULATIVE</u> <u>FREQUENCY</u> (percent)
0	41	17.6	17.6
.50	9	3.9	28.3
.75	9	3.9	33.0
1.0	13	5.6	40.3
1.5	16	6.9	49.8
2.0	20	8.6	58.8
2.5	14	6.0	66.5
3.0	10	4.3	71.2
4.0	11	4.7	78.1
5.0	8	3.4	83.3
6.0	7	3.0	87.1

For Total Study Area:-

Mean	2.9	Standard Error	.25	Variance	14.3
Median	1.7	Standard Deviation	3.8	Range	20.0

Only the major frequencies have been selected, all of which occur at round figures. Ignoring those with no value, over 50 percent of the total entries occur at these 10 levels, which are mainly in whole or half pounds.

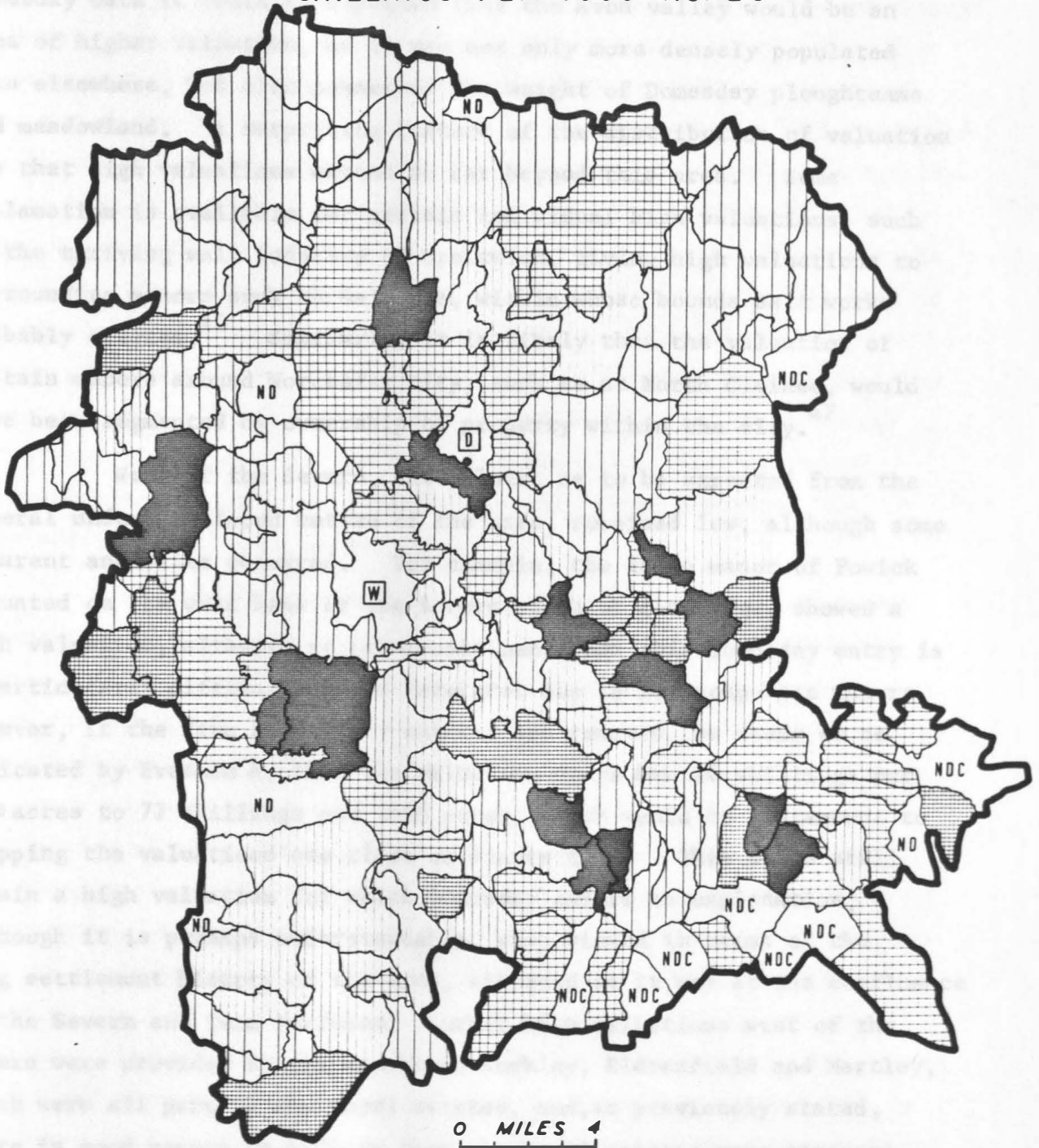
This clearly demonstrates the estimated nature of values in 1086 and suggests that the search for any formula whereby the assets of each manor were totalled to give the value, as occurs in the later manorial extents, would be a fruitless exercise. The regularity within the frequency distribution clearly distinguishes values from other Domesday phenomena, such as ploughteams and population which were almost certainly derived from a straightforward census. It would seem most likely that some overall assessment was made of the general furnishings of the villis, including extra-manorial income, which was then ascribed an estimated, and often 'rounded', value. This point will be further explored when the relationship between values and other Domesday data is considered statistically.

The figures at the end of Table 6.23 refer to the full data set for the whole study area and as can be seen from the mean and median values, suggest small units. 70 per cent of all entries were valued at £3 or less, which complies well with similar frequencies of population and ploughteams. The mean figure (£2.9) is higher than the median due to the high valuation of a small handful of entries, mainly relating to Royal estates. Indeed, it becomes increasingly clear, as values are studied for the county, that the valuation of Royal estates is different from that elsewhere. Royal estates were valued in terms of renders or firms, which most probably represented the actual rents paid annually into the Royal coffers. In Worcestershire, these appear to have been set at a high level, giving the high values for Royal estates shown on Table 6.22. For comparative purposes the Royal estates have been included in the cartographic treatment, although for statistical purposes when comparison is being made with other Domesday data, it has usually been necessary to exclude them.

The variation in values of the component parts of the estates can be discerned from Figure 6.15 which shows the 1086 valuations expressed in terms of shillings per 1000 acres of parish. The 1086 valuations were selected in preference to those of 1066 due to their more complete coverage of the study area. It is difficult to see any distinct areal pattern on Figure 6.15, as, so often, high valuations were juxtaposed with lower ones. Generally, the Avon valley exhibited

FIGURE 6.15

**DOMESDAY VALUES 1086**  
**SHILLINGS PER 1000 ACRES**



SHILLINGS PER 1000 ACRES

	86 SHILLINGS AND ABOVE
	66-85 SHILLINGS
	46-65 SHILLINGS
	26-45 SHILLINGS
	5-26 SHILLINGS
	NOT IN DOMESDAY COUNTY
	NO DATA

WORCESTER  
 DROITWICH

high levels of valuation, which extended northwards from the Cotswold fringe across the terrace and drift deposits of the valley onto the Lower Lias area of the Worcestershire plain. This northward extension, however, trended westward to the Severn valley, reaching Ombersley in the north and skirting Feckenham Forest to the east. From other Domesday data it would be expected that the Avon valley would be an area of higher valuation, as it was not only more densely populated than elsewhere, but also possessed the weight of Domesday ploughteams and meadowland. A surprising feature of the distribution of valuation was that high valuations extend so far beyond this area. Some explanation is available for certain individual high valuations, such as the thriving salt industry of Droitwich, giving high valuations to surrounding manors such as Salwarpe, within whose bounds salt works probably existed.<sup>46</sup> Similarly, it is likely that the valuation of certain manors around Worcester city, such as at North Claines, would have been augmented by ownership of property within the city.<sup>47</sup>

West of the Severn, the values, as to be expected from the general under-developed nature of the area, remained low, although some apparent anomalies occurred. For example, the large manor of Powick situated on the west bank of the Severn south of Worcester, showed a high valuation, although as previously mentioned this Domesday entry is a particularly difficult one to interpret due to its composite nature. However, if the five subsidiary entries are removed, as seems to be indicated by Evesham A, then the valuation drops from 126 shillings per 1000 acres to 77 shillings per 1000 acres, which would be tantamount to dropping the valuations one class on Figure 6.15. This would still remain a high valuation for which Domesday offers no explanation, although it is perhaps understandable, when viewed in terms of the long settlement history of the area, situated as it was at the confluence of the Severn and Teme terraces. Other high valuations west of the Severn were provided by the manors of Suckley, Eldersfield and Martley, which were all part of the Royal estates, and, as previously stated, there is good reason to believe that the Royal estates were assessed differently from elsewhere.

The group of large manors forming the northern fringe of the county exhibited low valuations per acre, extending from the Wyre Forest Old Red Sandstones and Coalmeasures in the west, across the Triassic Sandstones to the Birmingham Plateau fringe and the Ridgeway in the east. This was an area characterised by woodland cover and a relatively low density of settlement, which accord with the low valuations. The one exception was provided by Bromsgrove, which, despite its woodland cover and degree of under-ploughing (Fig. 6.13), retained a high valuation. This immense Royal manor, including Kings Norton and a large area outside the study area, possessed a large stake in the Droitwich salt industry owning 13 saltpans, 6 leaden vats (plumbi) and exchanging 300 cartloads of wood for 300 mitts of salt.<sup>48</sup> This, however, cannot be advanced as a complete explanation for its relatively high valuation, and some account must be taken of its status as a Royal manor. The general low valuations of the north-eastern part of the study area, which formed much of the wooded part of the Forest of Feckenham, did not extend southward into the manor of Feckenham itself, which emphasise the colonized nature of this latter manor.

A clearer indication of the relative distribution of values and their level of compliance with other Domesday phenomena is given by Figure 6.10. Here, the basic unit employed is the manor and the values are expressed in shillings per square mile. The three classifications employed show variation around the median value and as rank order is essentially being considered, comparison with the distribution of other Domesday phenomena is facilitated. The overall distribution of manors displaying values significantly greater than, and close to, the median value of 29 shillings per square mile complies with the distributions of population, ploughteams and, to some extent, hidage, in that the manors form an axis trending from south-east to north-west across the county. Thus it is the north-eastern, far north-western and western manors which demonstrate the lowest values and, by and large, the lowest populations and ploughteams and the highest amount of woodland. Close inspection, however, reveals considerable divergence in the case of individual manors in terms of valuation vis a vis population and ploughteams. This can only be partially explained by structural features within the Domesday survey, such as the distinctive

valuation of Royal estates. The possibility has to be embraced that the valuations of each manor could contain elements not encompassed within the Domesday folios. These 'hidden' elements have been alluded to by Sawyer<sup>49</sup>, who has suggested that livestock could have been incorporated into the valuations, giving a hidden pasture element. It is not possible to test this thesis merely by an 'eyeball' comparison of different distributions and again this is a point which can only be further explored by statistical analysis in Chapter 7. At present, all that can be said is that the high valuations accorded to manors west of the Severn along the Teme valley and at Broadway on the Cotswold edge may possibly be explained by a local specialisation in livestock production.

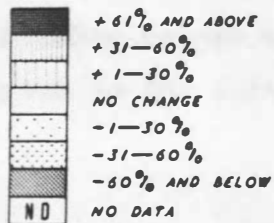
If the analysis of 1086 valuations is fraught with difficulties, then a comparison of the differences in values between 1066 and 1086 is even more complicated. For a start, the two sets of data are not entirely compatible as not every entry records valuations at the two dates. Also, if, as seems clear, the 1086 valuation was estimated, then an estimated value of 20 years previously is likely to be even less accurate, given the vagaries of memory over such a time period. Certainly, throughout the county there is an overall decline, although the biggest single group of entries (29%) show no change. Finn<sup>50</sup> has suggested, based upon the earlier work of Baring<sup>51</sup>, that marked declines in valuation reflect the progress of the conquest and rebellions against William's rule. Whilst this is immediately demonstrable for the northern counties and even for nearby Staffordshire, the complexity of the spatial pattern of decline and increment would not seem to support Finn's thesis in Worcestershire. Both the Mercian revolt of 1069 and Earl Roger's rebellion of 1075 occurred outside the county to the north and west and, whilst the most proximate areas of the county do show some decline in value, and even wasting, it is no more consistent or prominent than elsewhere. Other factors which could have affected values were the removal of woodland from many manors to be placed in the Kings forest. There is ample evidence that woodland was valued, although it is also true that the heaviest wooded areas were generally the lowest valued (Fig. 6.10). However, not all manors showing decline in value had woodland removed,

FIGURE 6.16

# PERCENTAGE CHANGE IN DOMESDAY VALUE 1066-1086



PERCENTAGE CHANGE 1066-1086



**W** WORCESTER  
**D** DROITWICH

although, as previously mentioned, this would not preclude a decline in between the two terminal dates. Thus, probably the most logical way to view the discrepancies between the two valuations is as an index of the powers of recovery of manors from the effects of the Conquest. This, however, would not apply to those showing an increase, as the increment had obviously been over and beyond that of mere recovery. Although those manors showing increases in value do not fit into any single regional pattern, they do fall into four loose groupings. Firstly, there was a fairly widely dispersed group of manors in the south of the county, centring on Evesham, with outliers at Honeybourne, Broadway, Earls Croome and Hill Croome. This group was largely characterised by no change or a slight decline in valuation. The second group was situated to the east of Worcester city, extending from Salwarpe in the north to White Ladies Aston in the south and as far east as Abbots Morton, and again characterised by either slight or no change in value. The third group was areally the most compact, being centred on the large Royal manor of Bromsgrove and extending south and south-west into Tardebigge, Wychbold, Grafton Manor and Cooksey, which provided an area in close proximity to Droitwich and its salt trade. Separated from the third group by an area of heavy decline, the fourth group extended along the western edge of the county from Rock and Abberley to Clifton-on-Teme and Doddenham in the south. A remarkable feature of this northern group was that increase in valuation often coincided with a degree of under-ploughing, suggesting that recovery between 1066 and 1086 had not been complete in all respects. Grafton Manor, Tardebigge and Wychbold were recorded as under-ploughed, admittedly only 5.5%, 7% and 9% of total plough strength (Fig. 6.13), but this is difficult to correlate with the increment to their values. It would be an attractive thesis to suggest that the increase in valuation in these areas represented an advance in colonization, whose progress had continued virtually undisturbed throughout the troubled period of the Conquest. However, contemporary evidence to corroborate or deny this is entirely lacking and continuity of the process of colonization can only be inferred from later documentation. Another possible explanation could be that these particular manors were characterised by a type of economy which was unmentioned in the survey, but included in the valuations.



Such economies could involve such things as the pasturing of livestock, both cattle and swine, which could be consistent with the wooded nature of the terrain (see Fig. 6.12) and the relative paucity of ploughteams.

Returning finally to a further consideration of values within their appropriate estates, it is apparent from Table 6.22 that the manors of the Church of Worcester, the King, and the Church of Pershore were by far the highest valued, averaging £11.9, £13.4 and £12.5 respectively in 1066. This compares with £3.8, which formed the highest average manorial valuation on the Lay estates in 1066, and mainly reflects the type of organisation of the ecclesiastical estates, in that the manors tended to be amalgamations of several well populated settlements. The actual areas covered by these manors were not necessarily markedly different from the northern lay manors, but they were obviously more densely populated by individual settlements. If the valuations are averaged per named vill for the Church of Worcester estates, the valuations become more equivalent to those of the lay manors, as they average £3 per vill in 1066 and £2.9 per vill in 1086, as against the outside limits of £1.1 per manor on Urse d'Abitot's estate to £4.3 per manor on Ralph Toden's estate in 1086.

The above considerations suggest that, although values are a problematic aspect of the Domesday survey, their study does allow some judgement upon the general level of wealth and economic wellbeing of the eleventh century economy. It is, therefore, all the more surprising that they have been so consistently ignored in the county studies of the Domesday geography of England. Certainly the analysis of Worcestershire suggests that there is a considerable degree of consistency between the distribution of values and other data derived from Domesday Book, which allows some statistical assessment to be made in the following chapter as to the nature of such relationships and the light they might shed on how values were derived.

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## CHAPTER 7

## THE STATISTICAL ANALYSIS OF RELATIONSHIPS WITHIN DOMESDAY DATA

Thus far the analysis has concerned individual Domesday phenomena, their nature and distribution within the county. In the course of this analysis it became obvious that a *prima facie* case could be established for the co-variance of many of these data forms. Thus, when plotted on a manorial basis, population and ploughteams reflect broadly similar distributions, as does the incidence of woodland and Bordar population, whilst Villeins and Serfs seem to be more closely associated with demesne ploughteams. Other Domesday phenomena, such as values and hidage, seem to reflect a range of other measures, rather than demonstrating correspondence with only one other phenomena. Given the assumed nature of the eleventh century economy, with its continuing dependency on self sufficiency and small scale regional organisation, the fact that much of the data derived from Domesday Book appears to exhibit covariance should excite no great surprise, yet paradoxically it is a point which has escaped any critical attention in the past. As previously stated, this is partially due to the difficulties of analysing the volume of Domesday data, a situation which has only recently been resolved by the wider availability of computing facilities. But it has also been partially due to the methodology adopted, particularly by historical geographers, for the study of Domesday Book. Generally, each data element has been mapped and analysed separately with little consideration given to its relevance to other Domesday phenomena. Thus, explanation of the resultant spatial patterns has been largely in terms of the physical resources of the area under consideration. This tacit acceptance of what amounts to environmental determinism has even extended to the selection of mapping areas (see Chapter 5) and generally resulted in a regional summary based upon the main physiographic regions of the county concerned.<sup>1</sup> That Domesday distributions fail to comply with patterns of soil types, aspect and relief is amply illustrated by Chapter 6, although it is difficult to achieve any concept of relationships within the data merely by an 'eyeball' comparison of distribution maps. Obviously what is needed is some rigorous means

of comparing different elements within the Domesday data without subjecting them to the assumptions of environmental determinism.

This is easier to state than achieve. The data contained within Domesday Book is nearly 900 years old and was collected, collated and summarised under conditions that are still imperfectly comprehended. The types of statistical analysis that can be usefully employed upon such data is therefore very limited, multicollinearity being only one of the problems that limit the statistical analysis of Domesday data. Generally, this means that the use of most multivariate techniques must be ruled out as they could, and do, produce spurious results. After much trial and error, it was found that correlation and regression analysis suited Domesday data best, allowing statistically significant conclusions to be reached concerning relationships between individual data forms. Correlation is used to establish whether or not significant relationships occur between various pairs of Domesday data, but requires the data forms being compared to be normally distributed. Thus, where the data concerning an element in the record is slight or patchy, as with cottars, no acceptable correlations are possible. The resultant correlation coefficients, when squared, give the percentage amount of total variance that is explained. Hence the highest degree of correlation found in Worcestershire is between population and ploughteams which at 0.89 'explains' 79 percent of the total variance. 'Explanation' here is used in a statistical sense, as a measure of association, not necessarily of cause.

Whilst the study of correlation coefficients allows the establishment of internal relationships within Domesday data, it is regression which quantifies the 'fit' of the two sets of values. As the total data set for the county is being considered, any problems relating to sample size within regression analysis is removed, as are the difficulties associated with the use of regression for predicative purposes, for only the relationship between the variables is being considered here. One problem, however, remains, in that, in 'classical' regression it is necessary to be able to identify a clear dependence of one variable upon another, such that there is a dependent and an independent variable. Clearly, in Domesday data this is not always feasible, for instance, it is not possible to state that the number of

CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS FOR DOMESDAY COUNTY  
OF WORCESTERSHIRE

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
	Hides	Demesne Teams	Peasant Teams	Villeins	Bordars	Cottars	Bond-women	Slaves	Value 1086	Total Teams	Total Population
11 Total Population	.62	.61	.83	.84	.78	.02	.31	.59	.64	.89	1
10 Total Teams	.62	.56	.99	.76	.74	.02	.26	.46	.52	1	
9 Value 1086	.51	.54	.46	.66	.34	.06	.18	.47	1		
8 Slaves	.41	.69	.37	.47	.28	-.03	.37	1			
7 Bond-women	.26	.30	.22	.26	.12	-.03	1				
6 Cottars	-.01	-.03	.03	-.03	-.05	1					
5 Bordars	.43	.33	.74	.44	1						
4 Villeins	.62	.57	.72	1							
3 Peasant Teams	.60	.42	1								
2 Demesne Teams	.44	1									
1 Hides	1										

274 observations

FIGURE 7.1

groupings. Thus it is possible to search for profiles of Domesday economies and their major typological controls. By this means it is possible to replace the unsatisfactory regional summary produced by Monkhouse<sup>3</sup>, where it was assumed that the distribution of Domesday data would comply with the major physiographic regions of the county.

### Correlation Coefficients

Figure 7.1 shows the correlation coefficients for each pair in eleven of the major elements of the Domesday data set. This forms a matrix in which every element is inter-correlated with each other element, although, as previously explained, where one particular element is poorly represented in the record, no acceptable correlations are possible. Thus, in the case of Cottars and Bondwomen, the total numbers are so small as to make their correlations with other elements insignificant. If these two categories are ignored, the general level of inter-correlation is high, ranging from 0.28 (8% of variance explained) to .89 (79% of variance explained). As previously mentioned, the highest level of correlation occurs between ploughteams and population, which confirms the impression gained from the distribution maps shown on Figures 6.7 and 6.10. It was noted from the cumulative frequency analysis that the majority of the Domesday entries refer to small scale units of under 20 recorded persons and 8 ploughteams, which, in the case of Worcestershire, virtually invariably refer to vills, as split entries are rare in the county. Thus, despite the county's long tradition of stock raising, there was a general reliance on arable cultivation throughout the county, suggesting a continuing tradition of self subsistence. This relationship between population and ploughteams seems a fairly obvious one, yet it is a relationship that has received very scant attention in the past. However, even such an apparently straightforward relationship demonstrates considerable variation when ploughteams are distinguished between those belonging to the demesne and those of the men (peasant teams), and population is split between its main component groups of Villeins, Bordars and Serfs. Both Villeins and Bordars, the two largest population subgroups, demonstrate similar high correlations with total ploughteams, although their correlations with peasant and demesne teams begin to diverge.



Whilst Bordars demonstrate precisely the same correlation coefficient (0.74) for total teams as peasant teams, those for Villeins decline from 0.76 to 0.72, so that Bordars are slightly better correlated with peasant teams than Villeins. This could partly reflect the greater numbers of Bordars in Worcestershire's population, but at the same time is an unusual state of affairs for Domesday, where, as Lennard<sup>4</sup> discovered, it is usually the Villeins who possess the majority of non-demesne ploughteams. As far as demesne teams are concerned, not surprisingly, the level of correlation is much lower, but here the Villeins are far more significantly correlated (0.57) than the Bordars (0.33). However, it is the correlation of demesne teams with Serfs that proves the most significant. Serfs are but poorly correlated with total teams (0.46) and peasant teams (0.37), yet with demesne teams the figures rises to 0.69, which exceeds that for Villeins and Bordars. This, of course, reflects the association of Serf possession with demesne holdings, but the correspondence of Serfs specifically with demesne teams is strengthened by the fact that in over 50 per cent of all entries, Serfs exist in a precise ratio of 2 to every one demesne team. This strongly suggests that Serfs were fulfilling the role of ploughmen on the demesne estates, as it is known that ploughmen usually worked in pairs, one to lead the eight ox ploughteam and the other to guide the plough. If this is so, then it has implications for the still unresolved question as to whether Serfs were recorded merely as heads of households or included all men, women and children. The number, general distribution and association of Serfs with demesne ploughing all point in the direction of their assessment, in Worcestershire, as heads of households in line with other population groups. This finds further support in that Ancillae and Bondwomen were separately recorded in the county.

The correlation coefficients between the three population groups are generally low, although it is clear that Villeins are more highly correlated with Serfs (0.47) than with Bordars. The lowest coefficient produced is that between Bordars and Serfs (0.28) which suggests, together with their respective distributions shown in Figure 6.7, that, although by no means mutually exclusive, it is rare to find

Bordars and Serfs combined together in any number. Thus it is clear that within the relationships between population and ploughteams at least two major tendencies can be noted. Firstly, there is an association of Villeins, Serfs and demesne ploughteams, and secondly, an association of Bordars and peasant teams, suggesting the operation within the county of at least two quite distinctive types of organisation. The preponderance of slave ownership and Villeins, noted earlier in the analysis of ecclesiastical estates, now begins to emerge in much sharper focus as being distinctive from the greater numbers of Bordars found on Lay and Royal Estates.

In previous studies, hidage has been regarded as an archaic fiscal system bearing little relation to the agricultural realities of the eleventh century.<sup>5</sup> Yet, as was seen from the analysis of hides and area (Fig. 6.11) in Chapter 6, the hidage assessment was heaviest in those areas generally best endowed with men and ploughs in 1086. This is confirmed by the correlation coefficients between hides and population and ploughteams. Although, at 0.62 it is not as high as that for population and ploughteams, considering the vagaries associated with any fiscal assessment system, it demonstrates a surprisingly high level of correlation. Indeed, it is noticeable that the same, or very similar, coefficients mark the correlations between hides, on the one hand, and population, ploughteams, peasant teams and Villeins on the other. The coefficient with demesne teams is understandably lower as it is possible that demesne hides did not geld and therefore were not always included within the survey. The correlation with 1086 value is lower (0.51) although still of some significance, suggesting that the two assessments were not based upon entirely different criteria. Thus, from an assessment of the cross correlations between hidage and other Domesday phenomena, it would not seem justifiable to dismiss hidage as being totally unconnected with other Domesday measures as is suggested by Monkhouse.<sup>6</sup>

Values present a very similar case to that of hidage, in that they have been largely ignored in previous studies of the county. The highest correlations are with total population (0.64) and Villeins (0.66) whilst, significantly, demesne teams (0.54) are more highly correlated

than peasant teams (0.46), just as Serfs (0.47) have a higher coefficient than Bordars (0.33). Values would therefore seem to be more related to demesne production rather than peasant production, and associated least of all with the highest proportion of Worcestershire population, the Bordars. The general level of correlation of value with other phenomena is high considering Royal estates have been included in the analysis. As previously stated the renders or farms of Royal estates are not equivalent to the value assessments of other estates. In fact, if the Royal estates are removed from the analysis, a significant rise in the coefficients is found. For example, the correlation coefficient for 1086 value and population rises to 0.81 and to 0.78 for 1086 values and ploughteams. All of this suggests that both hidage assessments and the 1086 valuations are far more sensitive indicators of primary wealth than has previously been suspected.

### Regression Analysis

The study of correlation coefficients has established the existence of internal relationships within the data, now these can be further explored through the agency of regression analysis. The slope of the regression line will give some concept of the nature of the relationship, whilst the spatial clustering of the residuals will allow an assessment of how that relationship changes over space.

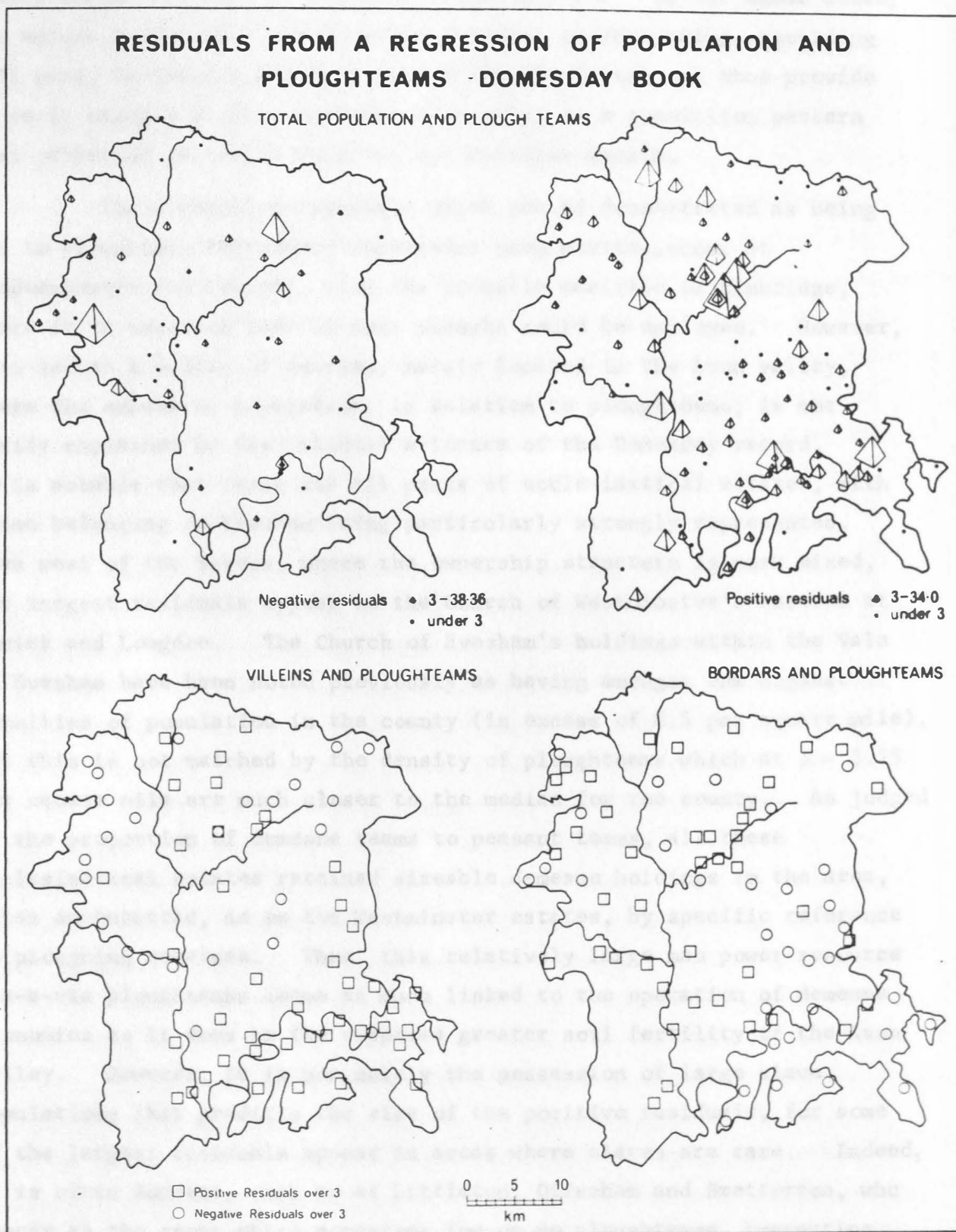
### Population and Ploughteams

The regression line demonstrates a relationship of one ploughteam to every 1.9 recorded population which is slightly more generous in terms of ploughteam allocation than neighbouring Warwickshire (1 to 2.6) and very much more generous than Middlesex where the regression line shows each team supporting 3.1 population. It is unclear as to why Worcestershire should seem so relatively well endowed with ploughteams as compared with population, although it is not uncommon in other western counties such as Shropshire. It could be that Worcestershire was particularly underpopulated, although as we have seen, densities do rise locally to the equivalent of those found in eastern counties. Another possibility is that the population was particularly wealthy, although again this does not find reflection in the values. More likely is that the economic organisation of

Worcestershire was quite distinctive to that found in the eastern counties and generally yielded a much lower level of productivity per peasant household. This would be only partially due to poor agricultural organisation in that, with such a preponderance of ecclesiastical ownership, so much of the produce was removed for the support of monastic communities and church fabric. Hence, there was a greater requirement of ploughteams than just the support of the immediate community. Of course another possibility is that Domesday has omitted large sections of the population. Indeed it has been suggested that Domesday Book fails to record large numbers of Censarii, or rent paying tenants, in the Midland shires.<sup>7</sup> However, the high level of correlation between population and ploughteams suggests that, if this were so, they must have been remarkably evenly distributed or that their numbers were not sufficiently large to affect the overall relationship. In fact the general trends of the inter-relationship between Domesday data in Worcestershire does not support any argument for the omission of Censarii or any other major population group.

The distribution of the residuals derived from a regression of population and ploughteams appears on Figure 7.2 where a distinct regionalisation between positive and negative residuals is apparent. The large positive residuals represent a situation whereby there appears to be 'over population' in relation to the endowment of ploughteams, relative to elsewhere in the county. The distribution of the major positive residuals resolves itself into four groupings, along the Avon valley, around Droitwich and its immediate vicinity, along the Severn valley and around Kidderminster in the north-west of the county. Certain of these residuals can be explained fairly simply by reference to the Domesday record in terms of an excess of population engaged in non-agrarian activities, or by a deficit of ploughteams due to wasting of the manor. Hence, the large positive residual at Pershore is explained by the presence of 28 Burgessers (residual 26.6). Similar urban populations occur at Droitwich, where no ploughteams are recorded, and at Evesham where, instead of Burgesses, 27 Bordars are recorded as servants of the house (servientes curiae). However, the imbalance between population and ploughteams in the Droitwich area extends well beyond the confines of the town into the surrounding manors of

FIGURE 7.2



Elmley Lovett, Wychbold, Witton and Upton Warren. In all these cases, the manors possessed a considerable interest in saltmaking, recording salt pans, Burgessers and even Villeins in Droitwich and thus provide an early example of an industrial distortion to a population pattern that otherwise generally reflects agricultural wealth.

Those positive residuals which can be demonstrated as being due to ploughteam deficiency consequent upon wasting, occur at Kidderminster and Kempsey, with the probable addition of Elmbridge, where it is recorded that 10 more ploughs could be employed. However, this leaves a number of entries, mainly located in the Avon valley, where the excess of population, in relation to ploughteams, is not easily explained by the internal evidence of the Domesday record. It is notable that these are all parts of ecclesiastical estates, with those belonging to Evesham being particularly strongly represented. Even west of the Severn, where the ownership structure is more mixed, the largest residuals appear on the Church of Westminster's estates at Powick and Longdon. The Church of Evesham's holdings within the Vale of Evesham have been noted previously as having amongst the highest densities of population in the county (in excess of 8.5 per square mile), but this is not matched by the density of ploughteams which at 3 - 3.75 per square mile are much closer to the median for the county. As judged by the proportion of demesne teams to peasant teams, all these ecclesiastical estates retained sizeable demesne holdings in the area, often accentuated, as on the Westminster estates, by specific reference to ploughing services. Thus, this relatively large man power resource vis-a-vis ploughteams seems as much linked to the operation of demesne economies as it does to the supposed greater soil fertility of the Avon valley. However, it is not solely the possession of large slave populations that predicts the size of the positive residuals, for some of the largest residuals appear in areas where slaves are rare. Indeed, it is often Bordars, such as at Littleton, Offenham and Bretforton, who appear as the group which possesses few or no ploughteams, suggesting that, on these particular estates, the Bordars were economically far more disadvantaged than elsewhere in the county, and that they were probably closely related in function to those at Evesham, who were specifically recorded as servientes curiae.

It is stated in Domesday Book that on the estates of the Church of Worcester no more ploughs could be employed than were already there<sup>8</sup>, and as no mention is made of underploughing, by implication, the same could be said of other ecclesiastical estates in the Avon valley. Thus there seems to have been little possibility of making farther large scale extensions to arable cultivation in the area, particularly as virtually all these manors record no woodland in 1086. The possibility thus exists that the seeds of population pressure upon resources, compounded by the need to support monastic communities, were already sown in 1086, although it was not to fully manifest itself until the early fourteenth century. Whatever the truth of this, substantial areas exist in the south-eastern part of the county in which population was far above that expected in terms of ploughteams, without any alternative economic support being apparent from the folios.

This evidence also destroys one other hypothesis that has been advanced concerning the overall relationship of population to ploughteams, for, although the demesne areas of the southern ecclesiastical estates have amongst the highest density of ploughteams per square mile, they also demonstrate a greater population per team. So it was not the necessity of monastic support that produced the favourable relationship between ploughteams and population that characterised the Domesday county. This was largely produced by the negative residuals shown on Figure 7.2, which can be seen to have a northern and western distribution in areas more dominated by lay and Royal estates. Certain of these negative residuals are the product of structural features within the organisation of Domesday Book and can be quickly dismissed. Hence the residual shown for Pershore in the Avon valley is undoubtedly produced by the splitting of Pershore between St. Mary's Pershore and Westminster Abbey that occurred after 1066. Thus St. Peter's, Westminster, gained that part of the manor largely encompassing the town, whilst St. Mary's retained the main arable estate, producing a large positive residual in one and a negative in the other. Similarly, the return for Bretforton is split between Wickhamford and Littleton, which again partially accounts for the negative and positive residuals allocated to these places. Elsewhere the negative residuals cannot be so simply explained. The largest residuals appear at Bromsgrove

and Martley, both of which were part of the Royal estates and possess a very high proportion of their ploughteams allocated to the peasantry. This apparent scarcity of demesne teams, set within an overall surplus of ploughteams, vis-a-vis population, is common to most other cases of large residuals, occurring at Hanbury, Stoke Prior, Hartlebury and Leigh on the ecclesiastical estates, and at Abberley, Astley and Lower Sapey, which were in lay hands. The question once again has to be approached as to whether these residuals can be explained by the omission of rent paying tenants from the survey. It has been argued that their omission from Burton Abbey's possessions was due to their non-contribution to demesne cultivation, presumably through services.<sup>9</sup> If this is so, then it seems illogical that their ploughteams should have been included. Also unexplained would be their patchy distribution, on a few Royal and ecclesiastical manors but not on others. Even if all this were acceptable, their presence would surely be felt in the valuations which would certainly reflect the rents they were paying. By reference to Figure 7.3 it can be seen that, although the distribution of negative residuals from a regression of population and value occurs in the same north-western area, the individual residuals are generally quite different. Finally, and in many ways most conclusively, it seems illogical that one particular rent paying group should have been excluded on those very manors where the peasantry seems to be virtually independent of demesne cultivation. Thus, none of the evidence available points to any omission of a sizeable group of rural population and the conclusion must be that the patterns of residuals cannot be explained in this manner.

Generally, the largest negative residuals on Figure 7.2 appear in areas characterised by low population densities (under 7 per square mile) and often high levels of woodland coverage. Thus these areas appear amongst the poorest in the county in terms of population, value and even hidage, yet the peasant population is, paradoxically, amongst the wealthiest in terms of ploughteams. This is particularly true of the Bordar population, which is often the dominant population element upon manors such as Bromsgrove, who appear considerably wealthier than the same social group on the ecclesiastical manors of the Avon valley.



An explanation can be advanced in that, removed from the constraints of demesne production, all levels of society were able to expand their holdings of plough beasts in areas where winter pasturage was more readily available. Also many of these northern areas possessed soils which would require much more working than the lighter well drained terrace soils of the Avon valley. Thus a greater input of ploughing would be required to maintain yields, even at a level of supporting a less dense population.

Many of these points become increasingly clear from the pattern of residuals from regressions of Villeins and Bordars with ploughteams (Fig. 7.2). The pattern of residuals partially reflects the strength of the particular population element within the total population of each place, Bordars being most strongly represented in the north and west against Villeins in the south and east. Thus, the negative residuals of Bordars are partially balanced by positive residuals of Villeins and vice-versa. Overall, Bordars are the more numerous group, yet, surprisingly, it is the pattern of residuals from the regression of Villeins and ploughteams, which shows the greatest compliance with those of total population and ploughteams. The negative residuals from Villeins and ploughteams are, therefore, almost entirely places where Villeins are absent or very poorly represented, whereas the positive residuals occur largely in the Avon valley, repeating the distribution of positive residuals from total ploughteams and population. These residuals can be explained by large Villein populations in association with the demesne cultivation of ecclesiastical estates. Within the Avon valley, only at Wick by Pershore, Evesham and Offenham are there positive residuals produced by Bordar populations and, as previously mentioned, there are good grounds for the belief that these were directly employed as servants by the respective monastic houses.

Obviously, there is a considerable difference in the economic function of the Bordars in the Avon Valley compared with the county as a whole. In the north and west sizeable positive residuals of Bordars and ploughteams are not always matched by equivalent positive residuals of total population and ploughteams. This is most apparent in the proximity of Bromsgrove and to the west of the Severn, near Leigh.

Both these areas are characterised by positive residuals for Bordars but negative ones for Villeins and total population, which suggests either a few enormously wealthy Villeins or, as is more likely, that the ploughteams were mainly owned by the Bordars. However, within the immediate area of Droitwich the imbalance between population and teams, noted at Elmley Lovatt and at Wychbold, is also caused by an excess of Bordar population implying that it was probably they, and not the Villeins, who were primarily employed as saltworkers.

The existence of Bordars in the north and west of the county who apparently owned ploughteams but were not associated with demesne ploughteams makes the suggestion of Sally Harvey<sup>10</sup>, that the term Bordar defined a population group which dwelt on the colonizing margins, an attractive one. This is reinforced by the fact, previously noted, that these areas demonstrate the marginal characteristics of low population densities and often high levels of woodland coverage. The increased area available for cultivation would thus provide larger holdings for individual families and allow the possession of ploughteams to spread downwards throughout the social structure of the population. However, Bordars are widely distributed throughout the county and many are found in association with demesne ploughteams, and in circumstances where their likely share of the total plough strength is small to non-existent. Hence, Bordars exhibit a much wider variance of economic circumstance, as judged by their association with ploughteams, than do Villeins and it would seem rash to attempt any single definition of Bordars even within one county.

From an analysis of the relationships between population, its main component groups and ploughteams it has been possible to confirm and illuminate some of the associations previously noted. Whilst there is an overall strong association between the distribution of population and of ploughteams, the precise nature of that relationship alters over the county area. It has been possible to isolate at least the two extremes of what appear to be distinctive economic organisations. At one extreme are a number of places, mainly located in the Avon valley, where each ploughteam appears to support a greater population than elsewhere. This is commonly associated with a large demesne ploughteam element and a population dominated by Villeins and Serfs set within a

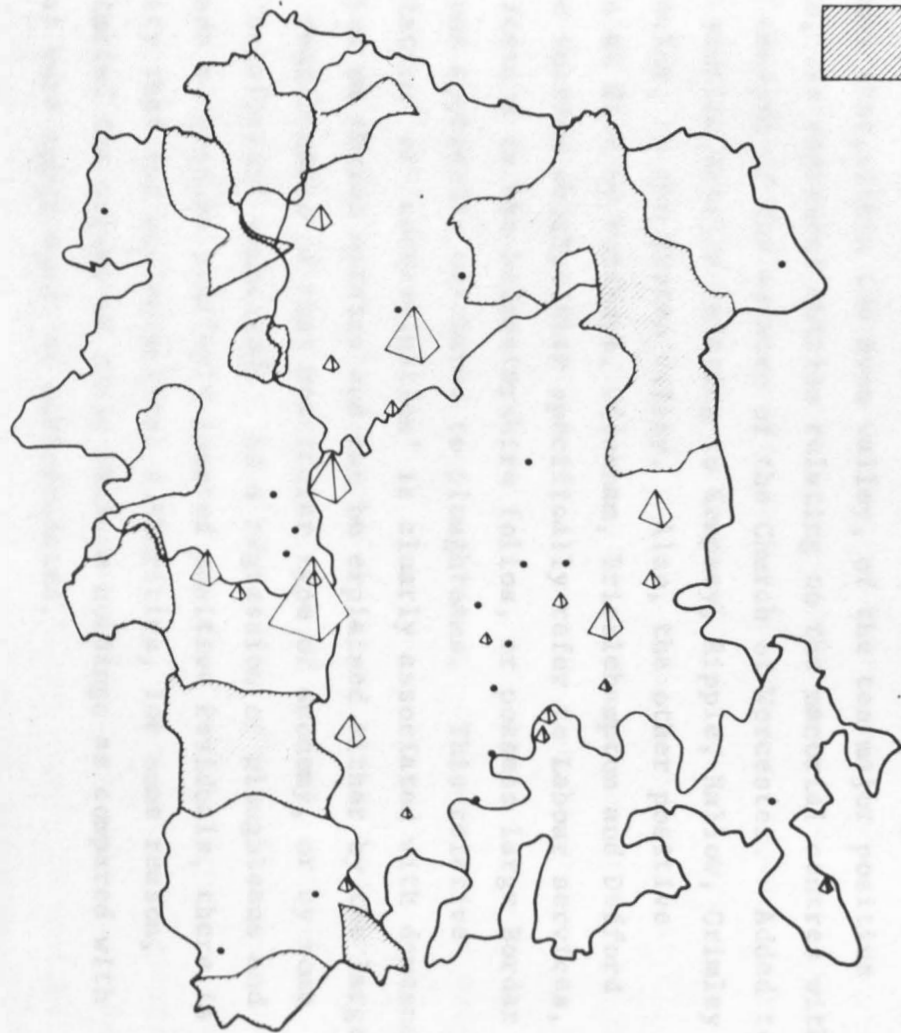
framework of ecclesiastical ownership. At the other extreme is a much reduced demesne ploughteam element associated with low population densities yet relatively large numbers of ploughteams vis a vis the population. Here the association is much more with Bordars and only to a lesser extent with Villeins, suggesting a greater degree of independent peasant cultivation.

#### Population and Value

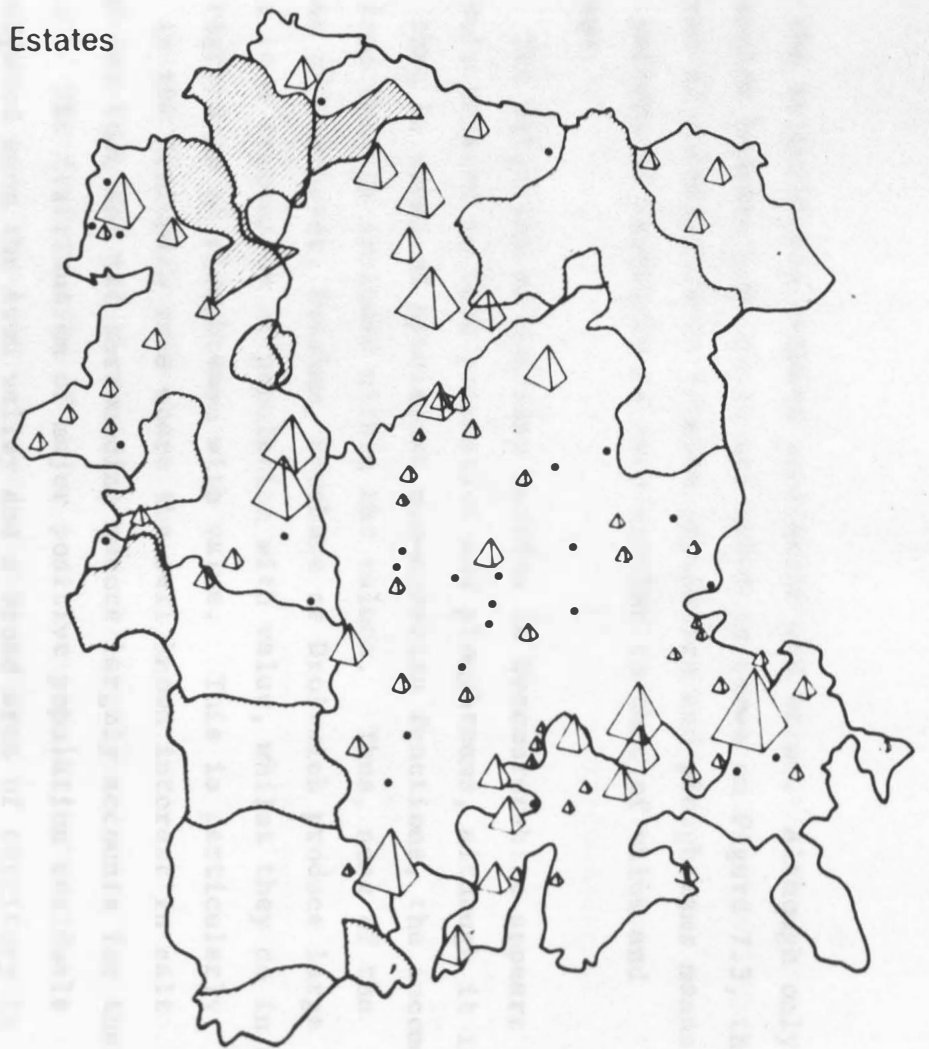
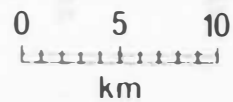
The residuals from this regression are shown on Figure 7.3, where the Royal estates have been removed from the analysis. As previously mentioned, Royal estates in Worcestershire were not valued as such, but were given in terms of a firm or render which considerably distorted the overall relationship between the two variables. Generally, Domesday values have received relatively little attention in the past. Their nature and means of compilation remain obscure and the only conclusion concerning them seems to be that values bear little relationship to other Domesday data. Yet, as Gregory demonstrated for Warwickshire<sup>11</sup>, and as is apparent in Worcestershire, there is a significant relationship between values and population and ploughteams. Moreover, the pattern of residuals displayed on Figure 7.3 is readily comprehensible in terms of similar residual distributions from other Domesday data, in that the Avon valley is again the dominant area of positive residuals. However, correlation between the two variables is lower than for population with ploughteams and thus the residuals are larger. Also, analysis of the residuals is hampered by the comparison of two unlike data forms, in that population could have been derived from a direct count whilst value appears to be an estimate, which displayed a degree of rounding up, or more likely of rounding down, to whole pounds or shillings. The analysis is further complicated by changes in value between 1066 and 1086 and, whilst 1086 values are used for the analysis shown in Figure 7.3, obviously any major changes must be taken into account when studying residuals from the regression. In fact surprisingly few large residuals, either positive or negative, can be associated with value change. Of the positive residuals only those at Kempsey and Wolverley, where the values have been reduced by 50 per cent between 1066 and 1086, could this change be said to have materially

# RESIDUALS FROM A REGRESSION OF POPULATION AND VALUE - DOMESDAY BOOK

 Royal Estates



Negative residuals  $\triangle$  3-41.8  
• under 3



Positive residuals  $\triangle$  3-36.0  
• under 3

affected the relationship between population and value. Although only the regression between population and value is shown on Figure 7.3, the high degree of correspondence between population and ploughteams means that the pattern of residuals is very similar to that of value and ploughteams.

The valuation of Domesday entries in Worcestershire appears to be firmly related to both population and ploughteams, although it is apparent that, in areas of specialist non-agrarian functions, the income derived from them is included within the values. Thus, none of the town areas of Worcester, Evesham, Pershore or Droitwich produce large residuals in a regression of population with value, whilst they do in a similar regression of ploughteams with value. This is particularly apparent in the Droitwich area where the well known interest in salt making of the town and its surrounding manors largely accounts for their valuation. The distribution of major positive population residuals is concentrated upon the Avon valley and a broad area of territory in the northern part of the county extending from Lindon (Rock) in the west to Cofton Hackett in the east and as far south as Elmbridge. It is significant that, within the Avon valley, of the ten major positive residuals, six represent entries relating to the manorial centres with attached demesne of the estates of the Church of Worcester. Added to this are similar entries relating to Kempsey, Ripple, Hallow, Grimley and Wolverley, in the Severn valley. Also, the other positive residuals at Wick by Pershore, Offenham, Bricklehampton and Defford relate to entries which, either specifically refer to Labour services, a rare feature in the Worcestershire folios, or possess large Bordar populations apparently unrelated to ploughteams. This relative 'overpopulation' or 'undervaluation' is clearly associated with demesne cultivation on church estates and can be explained either by the large manpower requirements of that particular type of economy, or by some form of 'beneficial' valuation. As a regression of ploughteams and value tends to produce similarly located positive residuals, there is a possibility that the ecclesiastical authorities, for some reason, underestimated the values of their demesne holdings as compared with those that were appurtenant or subinfeudated.

It is far more difficult to discern any similar underlying association to explain the northern distribution of positive residuals. The individual circumstances recorded in the Domesday folios for each of these entries vary considerably from relatively well developed demesne holdings at Lindon and Brook (in Rock) to underploughing at Belne and Elmbridge and considerable reductions in value between 1066 and 1086 at Osmerley, Rushock and Stone. It is possible that the apparent undervaluation in terms of population and ploughteams in this area does represent some recognition of poor agricultural conditions, as most are situated upon soils that Buchanan describes as having been viewed, historically, amongst the poorest and hungriest in the county.<sup>12</sup>

In many respects, the distribution of negative residuals on Figure 7.3, although few in number and less regionally distinct, provide the most interesting analysis. The residuals represent entries which appear considerably overvalued in terms of their stock of population and ploughteams. In some cases the reason for this is readily evident from the Domesday entry, in terms of an extra-manorial source of income. For example Elmley Lovett had suffered a sixty per cent increase in value possibly due to the possession of a considerable income from salt pans held in Droitwich, whilst Northwick owned many houses in Worcester and received an income from the market there. Similar explanations can be advanced for the smaller residuals at Pershore and Salwarpe. However, this still leaves a number of residuals concentrated in the Teme valley, along the Severn from Hartlebury in the north to Severn Stoke in the south and in the western area of the Worcester plain around Inkberrow, the Lenches and Bishampton, for which no adequate explanation is immediately apparent in the folios. The possibility thus exists for the existence of some 'hidden' source of income, which Sawyer first suggested in terms of 'hidden' pasture valuations.<sup>13</sup> Certainly, within the Teme valley, which Habington states in the seventeenth century was noted for its fine pasture land<sup>14</sup>, there exists a significant concentration of residuals. The largest appears at Powick where the great hams on the alluvial valley floor were described in 1508 as having been "time out of mind of Man our Common to pasture and feed our cattle thereupon."<sup>15</sup> Similarly, at Broadway, where the

Cotswolds impinge, Habington noted particularly fine sheepwalks<sup>16</sup>, and this forms the only sizeable residual in the south-eastern part of the county.

Within the Severn valley, the alluvial pastures have long been associated with the fattening of cattle and could account for the negative residual at Severn Stoke, although no such tradition exists at Hartlebury or Ombersley. In these latter cases, as well as at Inkberrow, woodland is recorded which could have sustained extensive numbers of swine. Indeed at Inkberrow, specific reference is made to a pannage render of 100 swine. In fact the contribution of swine populations to values, which could have been considerable in Worcestershire's extensive woodland, is difficult to discern from Figure 7.3, as most woodland was in Royal hands and thus excluded from the analysis. Thus, this relative over-valuation in terms of population and ploughteams, represented by the negative residuals, could relate to sources of wealth not fully specified, though in some cases hinted at, in the folios.

From this evidence a good case can be made for the importance of livestock as a 'hidden' element in Worcestershire's valuation. This being so, then the contribution of this 'hidden' element can be inferred as a key to understanding the variability in the observed relationship between values and population and ploughteams. Thus, it appears a reasonable inference that those areas which had extended arable cultivation at the expense of livestock would tend to produce the large positive valuation residuals in terms of population and ploughteams, such as those noticed in the demesne holdings in the Avon valley. Conversely, those areas retaining a considerable specialisation in livestock rearing would appear as negative residuals, in the relationship between population and value, whilst the majority of entries, falling closer to the regression line, exhibited some degree of balance between these two major elements of eleventh century agricultural practice.

#### Ploughteams and Hides

The final data to be subjected to regression analysis are that relating to ploughteams and hidage. Ploughteams rather than population were selected as it is felt that they would be instructive in assessing how far hidage reflected the agricultural wealth of the county. However,

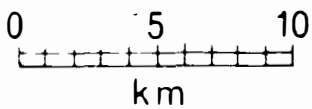
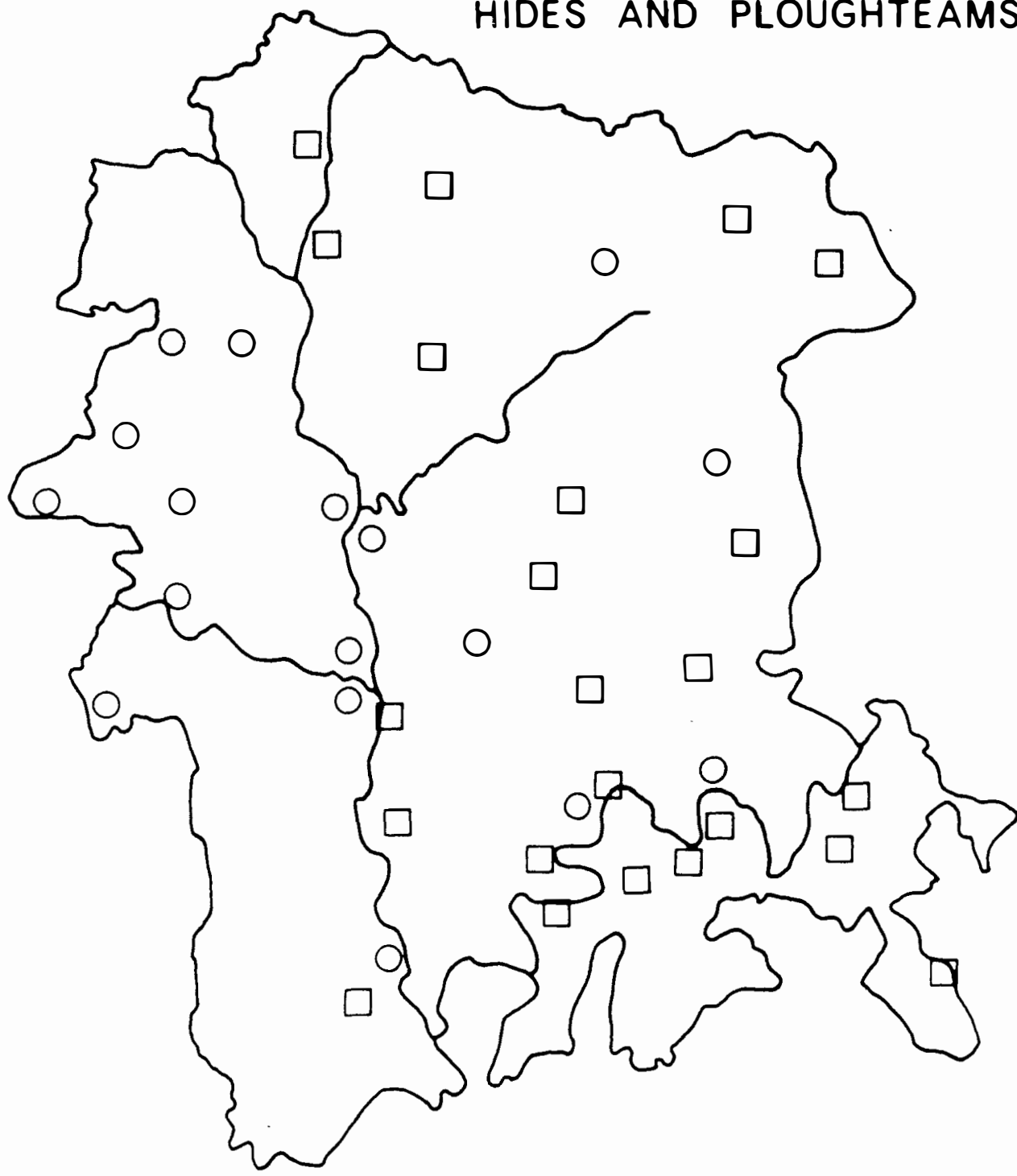
as the correlation between population and ploughteams was so strong the pattern in terms of residuals is very similar between population and hides and ploughteams and hides. Indeed the R value (correlation coefficient) at 0.62 is the same for both population and ploughteams against hides. In many respects, the problems of regressing hides and ploughteams is similar to that pertaining to values, in that the data forms being compared were derived in different manners. One resulting from some form of estimated assessment and the other from a straight census. In this respect, the problems, in the case of hides, are compounded for, of all the data forms in Domesday Book, this was the only one which did not derive directly from the Inquiry itself. Hidage, as was discussed in Chapter 4 and 5, was an ancient system of fiscal assessment that undoubtedly had undergone many changes since its original institution. It could contain within it many forms of tax relief in the form of 'beneficial' hidation as well as artificial arrangements within estates to 'round up' hundred areas. It is therefore surprising that the correlation coefficient with ploughteams and population is as high as to explain nearly 40 per cent of the total variance. Obviously this figure is not nearly as significant as that for the previous regressions and this has to be borne in mind during the following analysis. For this reason, the residuals shown on Figure 7.4, use only those outside one standard deviation from the regression line, that is greater or smaller than  $\pm 4$ .

In Chapter 6 it was seen that, when hides were plotted per acre of Domesday manor, the overall pattern strongly reflected the distribution of both ploughteams and population suggesting that hidage was not simply the archaic fiscal system that it had been described in the past. Certainly, it was still in use at the time of Domesday, as levies of 6 shillings on the hide had been enacted by William I, probably as late as 1086. Also, the pattern of major residuals shown on Figure 7.4 is not inconsistent with other residual patterns, in that it displays a disparity between the south-east and the north-west. However, when the residuals are more closely inspected they reveal many inconsistencies, particularly when judged on an estate basis. For instance the entries relating to the Bishop of Worcester's estates, by and large, display small



FIGURE 7.4

### RESIDUALS FROM A REGRESSION OF HIDES AND PLOUGHTEAMS



- Positive Residuals over 4
- Negative Residuals over 4

positive residuals, save for the demesne holdings which all show larger negative residuals. That is, whilst the estate, overall, shows a slight over-assessment of hidage, the hidage of the demesne areas is considerably under-assessed in terms of their component ploughteams. As demesne hides are recorded for this estate, these residuals are not merely the result of a structural feature of Domesday Book. This appears to represent a clear case of beneficial hidation, for it is noticeable that the only Worcester manors that demonstrate positive residuals are those that were subinfeudated or, as at Kempsey, Cleeve Prior, Hartlebury and Alvechurch, where the demesne element, as judged by the percentage of ploughteams ascribed to it, was very limited. The one exception is the large manor of Cropthorne (50 hides) situated in the heart of the Avon valley, where the ploughteam total was probably affected by the 5 hides of waste that are recorded.

A good example of the operation of this beneficial hidation is the Church of Worcester's 40 hide manor of Fladbury:-

TABLE 7.1

MANOR OF FLADBURY

<u>DOMESDAY ENTRY</u>	<u>HIDES</u>	<u>TENANT</u>	<u>RESIDUAL FROM REGRESSION OF HIDES AND PLOUGHTEAMS</u>
Fladbury	7	Demesne	- 8.1
Inkberrow	5	Bishop of Hereford	+ 2.8
Ablench	5	Urse d'Abitot	+ 0.7
Rouslench	7	" "	+ 2.1
Piddle, Hill, Moor	5	Robert Dispencer	+ 2.3
Bradley	1	Aelfric The Archdeacon	- 0.4
Bishampton	10	Roger de Laci	+ 6.2

With the exception of the single hide at Bradley, which was held by a cleric anyway, it is clear that the subinfeudated parts of the manor were heavily assessed for hidage vis a vis ploughteams as compared with the low assessment for the demesne. The logic behind the hidage arrangements on the Worcester estates at least, would seem to be that the initial assessment was made at a manorial level and that, subsequently, it was reapportioned within the manors to the advantage of the demesne

and the disadvantage of the subinfeudated parts. Precisely why this should occur is unclear, for in most geld levies upon hides, the demesnes of the tenants-in-chief were thought to have been exempt. It is possible that it represents an early attempt to lessen the military burden borne by the Church prior to the post-conquest reorganisation into knights fees.

Something of the same pattern is discernible on the Westminster estates, where the areas with the highest proportion of demesne teams close to Pershore, at Wick, Pensham and Birlingham demonstrate negative residuals, whilst the subinfeudated parts of the estate usually record positive residuals. The exception, on this estate, is provided by the three manors of Bricklehampton, Defford and Eckington, all of which record substantial positive residuals. Only Eckington records either demesne hides or demesne ploughteams and even here only 2 demesne teams are present for 8.75 demesne hides. Uniquely, these three manors record ploughing services, which suggests that a different type of organisation was in force there, than applied elsewhere in the county. It is a possibility that, as these three manors were contiguous, the Villeins and Bordars at Defford and Bricklehampton owed their services to the demesne at Eckington, as no Serfs are recorded on any of the three manors. Whatever the truth of this, obviously their ploughing and hidage arrangements were quite distinctive within Worcestershire, which adds further weight to the supposition that, when the survey includes unusual information, such as ploughing services, it does not do so merely by chance, but for the specific purpose of highlighting atypical arrangements.

The other major inconsistency on the Westminster estates is provided by the manor of Powick, assessed at only 3 hides, and previously discussed in Chapter 6. Obviously Domesday Book omits much of the hidage of this manor, but, even if the figure of 7 hides, given in Evesham A, is taken, this manor is considerably underassessed in terms of its ploughteam strength and still produces sizeable negative residuals. The same pattern of large negative residuals characterises much of the western area between the Teme and Severn valleys. This encompasses manors held by the Church of Evesham at Leigh, those in Lay hands at Rock, Abberley, Astley, Great Whitley, Shelsley Beauchamp and part of the Royal

estate at Suckley, Martley, Hanley Castle and Bromsgrove. All of these manors possess, or are close to, extensive areas of woodland, but, by no means, represent all the wooded areas of the county. The inconsistency between the hidage and ploughteams of these manors gives added weight to the arguments advanced in Chapter 6, that these areas were originally assessed for hidage when extensively wooded, but subsequent expansion of arable cultivation had led to the considerable imbalance between hides and ploughteams apparent in 1086.

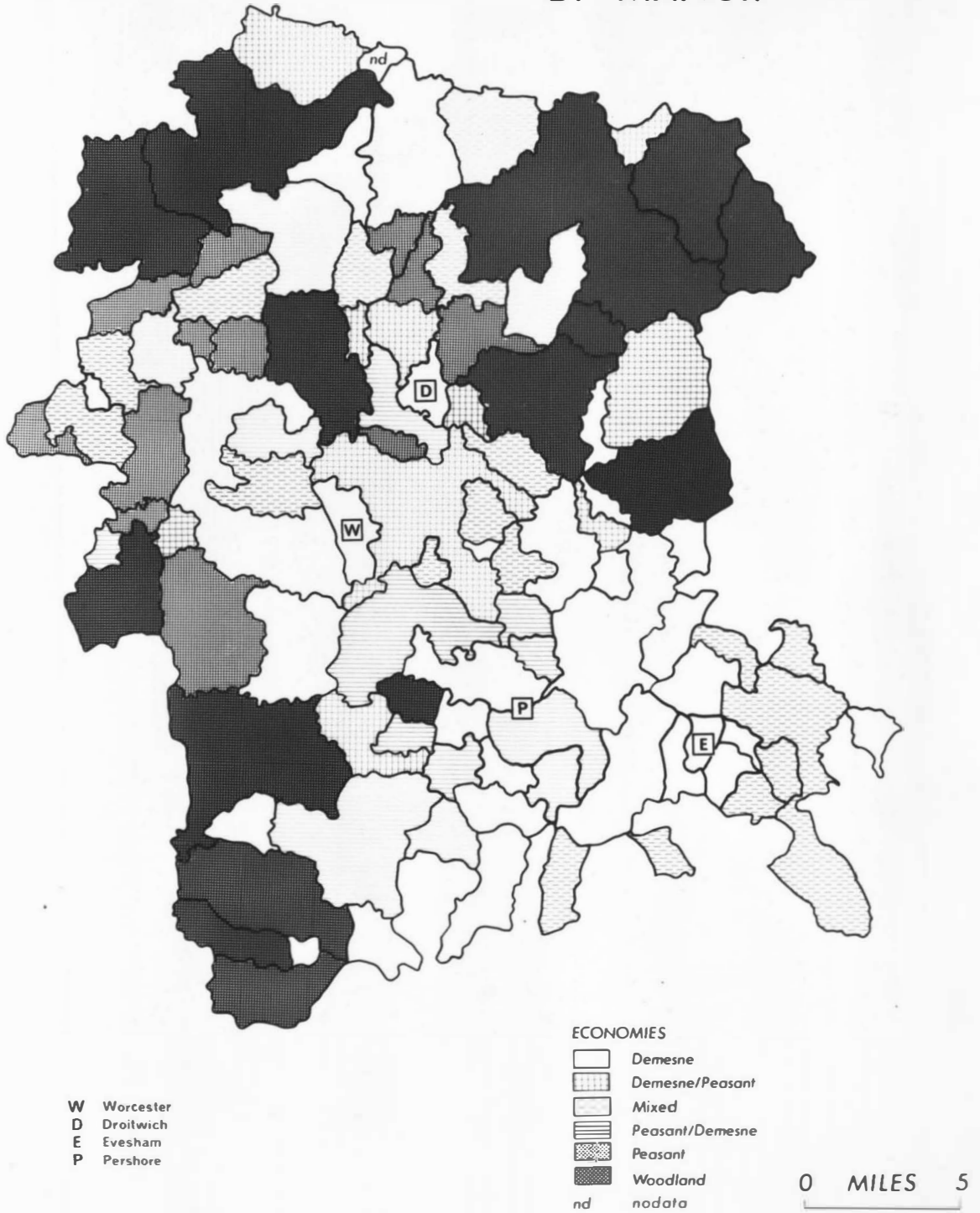
The study of hidage by means of regression analysis has allowed the hypothesis put forward in Chapter 6 to be confirmed and extended. Whilst the hidage assessment does generally reflect the wealth in terms of population and ploughteams, with the exception of the area mentioned above, there are many examples where the assessment has been manipulated internally within the individual manors. Thus the ecclesiastical estates, overall, were relatively heavily assessed, reflecting their high levels of population and ploughteams, but, internally, the hidage had been arranged such that the burden mainly fell outside the demesne areas. Elsewhere, hidage does seem to comply with both population and teams, with wooded areas generally showing the lowest levels of assessment, as befits a system that, in 1086, was still the main national means of raising revenue from the peasantry. Certainly, it must be concluded that the spatial patterns of hidage, difficult though they are to interpret, reward a closer inspection than has been accorded them in past studies of Domesday Book.

#### THE CLASSIFICATION OF DOMESDAY ECONOMIES

The statistical analysis has revealed the importance of certain relationships within the data and that the nature of these relationships does vary spatially. One vital element within this spatial variation has been shown to be the type of estate organisation extant over the areas under consideration, which, in turn, is dependent upon the patterns of ownership. Now a more synthetic approach is adopted, whereby a search is made for an objective classification of areas in an attempt to bring together the element by element study, conducted in Chapter 6, with the results of the correlation and regression analysis. As previously

FIGURE 7.5

## DOMESDAY ECONOMIES BY MANOR



Woodland Economies

As the name suggests, the prime indicator of this type of economy is a high degree of woodland cover. Woodland has been included in the matrix by calculating the density of woodland in square leagues per 1000 acres of manor. This rather crude index gives an approximation as to the area of each manor covered by woodland. Those manors appearing in top sextile of this index have in excess of 25 per cent of their area in woodland cover. Not surprisingly, high woodland coverage finds association with low density of population and ploughteams per square mile (below 5 and 2.5 respectively). More significantly there is a direct association of wooded manors with the highest sextile of Bordar contribution to the total population. Bordars consistently form the largest population group on these manors (in excess of 50 per cent) whilst Serfs rarely appear (below 10 per cent) and Villeins are also poorly represented. 1086 values are in the lowest two sextiles (below 20 shillings per square mile), as is hidage, but the proportion of peasant teams as against demesne teams is amongst the highest (over 80 per cent) and population per ploughteam remains in the median sextiles. These are the basic parameters which identify the manors shown on Figure 7.5 by the darkest cross hatching, and are listed below:-

TABLE 7.2

WOODLAND MANORS

<u>MANOR</u>	<u>TENANT IN CHIEF</u>	<u>DOMESDAY ENTRIES</u>
Rock	Various lay holders	11
Bentley Pauncefoot	Lay (Urse d'Abitot)	1
Kidderminster	Royal	4
Bromsgrove	Royal	4
Hanley Castle	Royal	1
Suckley	Royal	1
Longdon	Church of Westminster	7
Pirton	Church of Westminster	1
Alvechurch	Church of Worcester	2
Beoley	Church of Pershore	1
Inkberrow	Bishop of Hereford	2
Ombersley	Church of Evesham	1

Although relatively few in number, these manors cover a large area of the county, reflecting their individual large acreage. They are located mainly on the periphery of the county with a markedly western and northern distribution and one in areas associated with high terrain and poor soils. However, they by no means represent all the wooded areas within the county, as reference to Figures 6.12 and 6.10 demonstrates. This partially reflects the crudity of the woodland index, but mainly reflects the fact that these manors were selected only where extensive woodland complied with the data elements previously identified from the matrix. Although the ownership of these manors represents all the main types of tenant-in-chief in the county, Royal ownerships dominate both areally and in numbers of manors. Thus, these manors represent the type of organisation that was at the heart of those areas that were placed within the Royal Forest by William I. However, they do not necessarily include the administrative head of each of the Royal Forests. Feckenham, the centre of administration of the extensive Royal Forest of that name, is a notable omission from the list of woodland manors. Although Domesday Book fails to measure the woodland in Feckenham, save to state that it had been put into the Royal Forest (foris est missa), it is clear from the density of population and ploughteams, and the balance of their respective component elements, that Feckenham cannot be considered a woodland economy as defined here. In fact, by 1086, it had already become an important centre of Royal administration containing a sizeable population supported by a large number of ploughteams.

Perhaps the clearest and most significant association found on these woodland manors is that between Bordars and woodland, although it is an association that should not be pressed too far. Sally Harvey's<sup>19</sup> suggestion that all Bordars are related to active colonizing margins has already been discussed and generally rejected due to the wide range of economic circumstances in which Bordars are located. If the alternative hypothesis of the origin of the term Bordar is accepted, that is deriving from the Norman French for a cabin-dweller, then it does possibly give some insight into the nature of settlements in these areas. That is, they were small groupings of less substantial buildings than characterised other villas in the county and were surrounded by arable holdings deemed

insufficient to support Villeins. However, the ploughteam possession of many Bordars in these areas were substantial compared with those people of similar status in the south of the county, which may partially reflect the greater difficulty of working the soils in these areas. Certainly the small proportion of demesne ploughteams within these manors suggests that the population was far more independent of the necessity of providing services and, indeed, possibly relatively independent of common field cultivation. These particular areas have never been associated with 'champion' husbandry and their landscape, to this day, often reflects the small irregular fields usually deemed representative of early enclosure. It is possible that these areas were always characterised by the type of infield-outfield structure envisaged by Dodgshon<sup>20</sup>, whereby the small customary holdings in the infield were complemented by more freely held and larger possessions in the outfield area. This would explain the paradox of a low status population in association with substantial ploughteam possession.

The relative lack of demesne ploughteams and their associated Serf and Villein populations does not occur equally across all the woodland manors. Rock, in the far north-west of the county, comprised 11 small manors in Domesday Book and was one of the few areas where it was not possible to recreate the individual manorial boundaries. Within this group of manors, four, at Brook Farm, Worsley, Lindon and Alton, possessed between 1.5 and 4 demesne ploughteams, representing 30 to 50 percent of the total plough strength. Although small, these demesnes were obviously significant compared with the total manor size and represent an unusual combination of demesne and woodland. Pirton also provides something of an exception, not least from its location, being situated in the south and being contiguous with the demesne holdings of Westminster and Pershore. It possessed a significant proportion of Serfs (23 per cent) in its population, yet, at the same time, complied with other woodland manors having over 25 per cent of its area wooded and 59 per cent of its population recorded as Bordars. However, it is a small manor (1690 acres), where a block of residual woodland would have made a large local impact.



Attention so far has been concentrated mainly on population and ploughteams, rather than activities specifically associated with woodland. The role that woodland played within the economy of these manors is difficult to gauge, as much of the woodland had been placed within Royal Forest. However, it is clear that it did not preclude arable cultivation, as is witnessed by the numbers of ploughteams, but undoubtedly specific woodland activities such as hunting, maintenance of haies and pig farming would have engaged a proportion of the population. The Domesday folios make only oblique reference to these activities, such as the existence of pig farmers at Hanley Castle or swine renders at Inkberrow, but the proximity of so much woodland must have had a greater impact on the local economy than these few references suggest. Generally, these manors demonstrate low values per square mile, yet woodland was not totally without value, as is revealed by a few references where woodland had been removed from the manor or where it was being used for fuel in the salt industry. However, in the analysis of residuals from the regression of value with population and ploughteams, many of these wooded areas demonstrated negative residuals, suggesting a contribution to the values from something other than the stock of men and teams. This 'hidden' element may well have been provided by those pig rearing activities to which the folios make only passing reference.

As judged by widespread reference to woodland in pre-conquest place names and in the Saxon charter bounds, conditions found in these manors once pertained over a much wider area of the county. Indeed the fact that it was felt necessary to place so much of the county's woodland under Royal protection suggests that even by 1086 it was becoming a threatened commodity. The residual nature of these woodland economies is amply demonstrated by their peripheral location within the county and, although Royal protection was to afford them some stay of execution, they were bound to come under increasing pressure with the population expansion of the post-conquest period. Thus, in many ways, Domesday Book provides the only opportunity of glimpsing the operation of these particular economies.

Peasant Economies

One of the problems found in identifying woodland economies was the manner in which Domesday Book records woodland, in that it was not possible to derive an entirely satisfactory comparative index of woodland cover. Thus the manors identified above must be regarded as the minimum numbers of such economies, which in many ways grade imperceptibly into the peasant economies now being considered. That these latter economies display many of the same qualities as the woodland ones is seen from their location on Figure 7.5, where they are found in close proximity to one another. As the name suggests, these peasant economies have been identified by the very high proportions of peasant ploughteams and the concomitant very low, or even non-existent, proportion of demesne ploughteams. These are accompanied by high population and ploughteam densities (above 8.5 and 3.75 per square mile respectively) and often high population per ploughteam (above 2.5). Villeins dominate the population structure (above 45 per cent), whilst Serfs are rarely present. The manors so identified are smaller in size than the woodland manors and are located mainly in the west and north of the county.

TABLE 7.3

PEASANT ECONOMY MANORS

<u>MANOR</u>	<u>TENANT-IN-CHIEF</u>	<u>DOMESDAY ENTRIES</u>
Rushock	Lay (Urse d'Abitot)	1
Wychbold	Lay (Osbern Fitz Richard)	1
Elmbridge	Lay ( " " " )	1
Lower Sapey	Lay ( " " " )	1
Abberley	Lay (Ralf de Toden)	1
Doddenham	Lay (Filbert Fitz Turol)	1
Martley	Royal	3
Leigh	Church of Pershore	3
Hussingtree	Church of Westminster	2

As can be seen from the above Table, the majority of these manors were in lay hands and have only a single Domesday entry relating to the manor. This is in contrast to the woodland manors, many of which were

compound manors having more than one entry. The only peasant economy manors in this category are Martley and Leigh which possessed discrete holdings (see Fig. 5.2) and were respectively parts of Royal and ecclesiastical estates.

The main identifying feature of these manors is the relative lack of demesne ploughteams, coupled with a predominantly Villein population. This is not to say that demesne cultivation did not exist, but it usually has only a rather muted presence. For example at Lower Sapey nothing is recorded in demesne but 9 beasts (animalia) and, elsewhere, the proportion of ploughteams in demesne is consistently within the lowest sextile for the county. Although the possibility that peasant ploughing services could compensate for the lack of demesne teams has to be considered, there is no evidence to suggest that such services were demanded and the general relationship of the data suggests that the bulk of the cultivation was directly carried out by the tenants. Generally these manors are well equipped with both population and ploughteams and, therefore, do not appear under-developed to any significant degree. Indeed in terms of population, that group of manors immediately surrounding Droitwich appear particularly well developed. It was noted in the study of population, ploughteams and values that the residuals evident in these manors were undoubtedly due to their involvement in the salt industry and possibly explains why Elmbridge, of all these manors, displays a high proportion of Bordars within its population structure. Thus, in the manors of Rushock, Wychbold and Elmbridge, the salt industry not only accounts for their high population, but possibly also explains the lack of seigniorial interest in arable cultivation.

The other manors in this group are entirely in the west of the county and are largely those which produced large negative residuals in the regression of hides and ploughteams. Thus their low hidage did not reflect their stock of ploughteams or men. A possible explanation was advanced in terms of woodland clearance subsequent to the hidage assessment, which could have been made in the tenth century when these manors were still extensively wooded. Indeed, the general distribution of this particular group of manors is largely contiguous with those manors displaying woodland economies and it is possible that they represent a further stage in the

colonizing process characterised by freedom from the restrictions of demesne cultivation. Although both Royal and ecclesiastical ownership are represented, these small scale manors were predominantly held by minor lay owners, which undoubtedly would have had the effect of freeing the population for many of the constraints that were imposed elsewhere by the operation of large-scale estates.

### Demesne Economies

The manors identified within this group represent the opposite end of the economic spectrum to those manors already considered, in that here, demesne ploughteams, (over 30 per cent of total plough strength), are much more prominent. Associated with these, both Serfs and Villeins, as proportions of total population, appear in the highest sextiles, as do value and hides per square mile, and population per ploughteam. The connection between demesne ploughteams and slaves is particularly notable as, in the majority of cases, a ratio of two slaves to one ploughteam is apparent.

TABLE 7.4

DEMESNE ECONOMY MANORS

<u>MANOR</u>	<u>TENANT-IN-CHIEF</u>	<u>Domesday Entries</u>
Fladbury	Church of Worcester	6
Wick Episcopi	" " "	10
Crothorne	" " "	3
Bredon	" " "	6
Piddle and Naunton	Church of Westminster	5
Dormston	" " "	2
Broughton Hackett	" " "	1
Powick	" " "	5
Besford	" " "	3
Birlingham	" " "	3
Eckington	" " "	3
Abbots Morton	Church of Evesham	2
Bengeworth	" " "	1
Hampton	" " "	1
Church Lench	" " "	4

TABLE 7.4 (CONTINUED)

Norton and Linchwick	Church of Evesham	1
Aldington	" " "	1
Pershore Holy Cross	Church of Pershore	4
Bushley	Royal	2
Stone	Lay (Urse d'Abitot)	2
Shelsley Walsh	Lay (Osbern Fitz Richard)	1

As Table 7.4 demonstrates, ecclesiastical authorities dominate the ownership structure, and the majority of manors represented are compound ones with several Domesday entries often relating to discrete parts of the manor. Their distribution, displayed on Figure 7.5, reveals a concentration around the main religious houses of Worcester, Evesham and Pershore, representing the earliest Saxon grants of home estates. Even some of the more outlying manors are similarly associated with early Saxon monastic foundations, such as St. Peter's, Bredon, and at Fladbury. Similarly, they are predominantly, although not exclusively, associated with the richer terrace soils of the Avon valley.

Generally, the density of ploughteams is such as to suggest a well developed arable economy, although, due to the labour intensive nature of demesne cultivation, each plough is supporting a higher number of persons than is found elsewhere in the county. Occasionally the primacy of arable cultivation is challenged, as at Powick, where an analysis of values and population has suggested the possibility of large-scale live-stock farming. Complications exist in the analysis of these particular manors as they, more than any others, possess discrete members distant from the main centre and are often quite heavily subinfeudated. However, it is noticeable that, when the component elements of each manor are studied, both the discrete elements and those subinfeudated parts remain underpinned by the same strong demesne element. For example, Urse d'Abitot, who was by far the largest subtenant of the Church estates, retained a slightly higher proportion of ploughs in demesne than characterises the whole Church estates. Thus, despite the complicated and fragmented structure of these demesne economy manors, they display a remarkable degree of internal consistency.

This is not to suggest that demesne cultivation existed to the total exclusion of any form of peasant cultivation. The peasantry possessed considerable numbers of ploughteams on these manors, although as judged by the high population per team, either they were utilising their ploughteams more efficiently than elsewhere, or the size of their holdings were much smaller. Added to this are the references to ploughing services, which only occur on the demesne manors of the Westminster estates. As previously stated, this complies with later evidence in that it was on the ecclesiastical estates that ploughing services were heaviest and retained longest. Thus it is probable that the already strong demesne element, as represented by the proportion of demesne ploughteams, provides only a minimum estimate of the scale of demesne production. Most of these manors located within the Avon valley produced positive residuals in the regression of population and ploughteams with value. This suggests that there was no hidden element in the valuation, such as could be produced by livestock, which again emphasises the likely arable nature of the economy.

Although a strong demesne element is discernible both on those parts of the manors directly controlled by the ecclesiastical authorities and on those parts subinfeudated by them, there is one way in which they were treated differentially. In terms of hidage, the directly controlled demesnes were beneficially treated as against the subinfeudated areas. Both these features probably represent a long tradition on these particular manors and reflect the survival of these estates virtually unchanged in structure and organisation throughout the conquest period.

### Mixed Economies

These form the largest group of manors, but are the most difficult to identify, as much of the data tends to fall within the median sextile ranges. On Figure 7.5, three groupings have been identified; the Demesne-Peasant economies, where the balance appears to be in favour of the demesne; the Peasant-Demesne economies where the reverse is true and, finally a genuinely mixed economy, where neither element appears particularly dominant. Obviously these are not hard and fast subdivisions, but rather tendencies in the data, often based on fairly fine distinctions.

Generally, throughout all three categories the population structure and proportion of demesne to peasant owned teams is close to the median for the county, suggesting a duality to the economy, without undue preponderance within either sector. Thus, despite the difficulties of identifying distinguishing features within these economies, paradoxically they provide the norm for the county, in that the entries relating to these manors tend to fall closest to the regression lines in the statistical analysis. This type of economy, demonstrating a coexistence of seigneurial interest in the demesne and peasant cultivation, as well as a coexistence of arable and livestock production are all set within a simple manorial and vill structure that is very much the traditional picture that has been painted of the West Midlands in the early Middle Ages. It is surprising, therefore, that so much of the county significantly diverges from this norm, although similar basic elements are present on most manors, albeit in varying balances.

These various types of mixed economy manors were present in all parts of the county, save for the more densely wooded periphery, but they were most concentrated in the central areas of the Marl plain of Worcester. The following categories demonstrate some of the variability within this group:-

#### Demesne-Peasant Economies

Although most data elements appear within the median sextiles, there is a tendency for the proportion of demesne teams to appear within the upper sextile. However, unlike the demesne economies previously discussed, demesne teams are not associated with a predominantly Villein and Serf population. Rather it is Bordars who predominate, which complies with the more northerly distribution of these manors.

TABLE 7.5

#### DEMESNE - PEASANT MANORS

<u>MANOR</u>	<u>TENANT-IN-CHIEF</u>	<u>DOMESDAY ENTRIE</u>
Cofton Hackett	Lay (Urse d'Abitot)	1
Hampton Lovett	Lay ( " " )	3
Doverdale	Lay ( " " )	1
Hadzor	Lay (Gilbert Fitz Turoid)	1
Kington	Lay (Roger de Loci)	1

TABLE 7.5 (CONTINUED)

Northwick	Church of Worcester	11
Wolverley	" " "	1
Severn Stoke	Church of Westminster	3
Feckenham	Royal	2

The majority of these manors are small and in lay hands. Obviously, the unknown element of ploughing services could have had a crucial impact upon the proportion of resources devoted to demesne cultivation, although, if they had have been employed, they could only have enhanced the existing demesne element. In a sense, the last four manors on Table 7.5 were somewhat different than the others in terms of their size and internal variation. This is particularly true of the large Worcester manor of Northwick, which extends over a large area of the Marl plain east of Worcester and contains a very diverse and well balanced population. As with most ecclesiastically owned manors, it possesses demesne elements, but is extensively subinfeudated and does not possess the well developed central demesne that characterises the Avon valley manors of the Church of Worcester. Feckenham, on the other hand, possessed a greater demesne element than most Royal manors and does have a Villein dominated population structure, which befits its role as a centre of Royal Forest administrations. As is the case with Wolverley, there is a suspicion that woodland, although not mentioned in Domesday Book, probably had an important local role within the economy. Finally, Severn Stoke also displays some idiosyncrasy in that it produced a large negative residual in the regression of population and value, suggesting the possibility of livestock pasturing on the alluvial valley floor of the Severn.

#### Peasant-Demesne Manors

Again the distinctions between this group and the other mixed economies are very fine, but, generally, there is a tendency for peasant ploughteams to be more dominant, suggesting a more muted demesne element.



TABLE 7.6

PEASANT-DEMESNE MANORS

<u>MANOR</u>	<u>TENANT-IN-CHIEF</u>	<u>DOMESDAY ENTRIES</u>
Chaddesley Corbett	Lay (Eadgifu)	2
Great Whitley (Redmarley)	Lay (Ralf de Todeu)	2
Salwarpe	Lay (Earl Roger)	2
Hartlebury	Church of Worcester	1
Grimley	" " "	2
Kempsey	" " "	5
Stoke Prior	" " "	1
Peopleton	Church of Westminster	3
Comberton	" " "	3
Pershore	" " "	6

As can be seen from the numbers of Domesday entries per manor, these tend to be large manors and predominantly ecclesiastically owned. The component population groups demonstrate some variation as Bordars are best represented at Great Whitley, Grimley, Kempsey and Peopleton, whilst Villeins, accompanied by Serfs, are more prominent at Hartlebury, Comberton and Stoke Prior. Salwarpe and Chaddesley Corbett have an evenly balanced population, whilst that at Pershore is dominated by 28 Burgessers. In most of these manors, with the exception of Comberton, Pershore and Peopleton, woodland was a significant influence, which partially accounts for the strong Bordar presence. As far as the ecclesiastical authorities were concerned these seem to have been the manors on which they were more prepared to rely as income from tenants' cultivation than upon the direct exploitation of large demesnes. However, again the composition of ploughing services could have made a considerable difference. Generally, these manors demonstrate some uncultivated aspect and, with the possible exceptions of Pershore and Comberton, suggest that there remained considerable opportunity for the further expansion of arable cultivation. Salwarpe and Stoke Prior possessed an additional aspect to their economy in their proximity to, and participation within, the Droitwich salt industry.

Mixed Economies

The final group of manors are those which fit rather unconformably between the previous two. It is difficult to perceive any major distinguishing feature in that the vast majority of their individual data elements fall within the median range.

TABLE 7.7

MIXED ECONOMY MANORS

<u>MANOR</u>	<u>TENANT-IN-CHIEF</u>	<u>DOMESDAY ENTRIES</u>
Elmley Lovett	Lay (Ralf de Toden)	1
Astley	Lay ( " " " )	3
Shelsley Beauchamp	Lay ( " " " )	1
Upton Warren	Lay (Urse d'Abitot)	2
Clifton-on-Teme	Lay (Osbern Fitz Richard)	2
Belbroughton	Lay (William Fitz Anseulf)	2
Hallow and Hambleton	Church of Worcester	8
Sedgebarrow	" " "	1
Harvington	" " "	1
Cleeve Prior	" " "	1
Overbury	" " "	1
Upton Snodsbury	Church of Westminster	2
Broadway	Church of Pershore	1
Badsey	Church of Evesham	1
Bretforton and Littleton	" " "	3

Of all the main types of tenants-in-chief, only the Royal estates are unrepresented. This mixed economy type of manor is found throughout the county area (Figure 7.5), but has a significant concentration at the eastern end of the Vale of Evesham and along the Cotswold edge. These manors were owned by the churches of either Evesham or Worcester, and demonstrate high populations and ploughteam densities. However, in those manors abutting onto the Cotswolds, notably Broadway, it has been shown that the existence of extensive sheep flocks is a distinct possibility. All those ecclesiastically owned manors fit into a general pattern, whereby the amount retained in demesne seems to decline with distance from the religious house. Of the other manors in this group, only Astley and Shelsley Beauchamp demonstrate any marked feature, in that they also record high densities of population and ploughteams.

Notes and References

1. The regional summary forms a marked feature of the Domesday Geography series, whereby the main physical geographic areas are used to interpret the distribution of ploughteams, population and wealth.
2. K. A. Kermack & J. B. S. Haldane 'Organic Correlation and Allometry' Biometrika 37, 1950, 30-41.
3. F. J. Monkhouse Worcestershire, in the Domesday Geography of Midland England (ed. H. C. Darby).
4. R. Lennard The economic position of the Domesday Villani Economic Journal 1946, 56, 244-261.
5. F. J. Monkhouse op. cit.
6. F. J. Monkhouse ibid.
7. The argument concerning the omission of censarii, or rent paying Villeins, from Domesday Book rests solely on the evidence of the Burton cartulary, where, in 1114 A.D., a number of such tenants are mentioned who do not appear in 1086. It has been argued that the 28 year difference between the two surveys was too short a time for such major changes to have occurred. Yet, equally large changes had occurred in population structures in the twenty years between 1066 and 1086, particularly in East Anglia. Thus, without further evidence, it would appear rash to question the whole of the Domesday population figures for the Midland shires based upon such slender evidence. Further reference to the Burton cartulary can be found in:-
  - F. H. Baring Domesday Book and the Burton cartulary. English Historical Review 11, 1896, 98-102.
  - P. H. Sawyer The wealth of England in the eleventh century. Transactions of the Royal Historical Society 5 1965, 145-164.
  - J. F. R. Walmsley The censarii of Burton Abbey and Domesday population North Staffordshire Journal of Field Studies, 8, 1968, 73-80.

8. Domesday Book The Records Commisioners, 1785, Folio 174a.
9. F. Baring,  
P. H. Sawyer &  
J. Walmsley op. cit.
10. S. P. J. Harvey Evidence for settlement study : Domesday Book, in  
Medieval Settlement Continuity and Change  
P. H. Sawyer (ed.) Edward Arnold, London, 1976.
11. S. Gregory On geographical myths and statistical fables,  
Transactions of Institute of British Geographers  
New Series 1, 4, 1976, 385-400.
12. K. M. Buchanan Worcester in Land of Britain Part 68, (Geographical  
Publications, London), 1944.
13. P. H. Sawyer Review of Domesday Geographies of South-east and  
Northern England, Economic History Review  
2nd Series 16, 1, 1963.
14. T. Habington Survey of the County of Worcester 1606-47  
Worcestershire Historical Society, Worcester,  
1895-9.
15. R. C. Gant A History of Worcestershire Agriculture  
The Worcester Press, Worcester, 1939, 60.
16. T. Habington op. cit., 1895-9.
17. F. J. Monkhouse op.cit.
18. See Chapter 5, Domesday analysis and mapping.
19. S. P. J. Harvey op. cit.
20. R. A. Dodgshon Infield-outfield and the territorial expansion of  
the English township. Journal of Historical  
Geography 1, 1975, 327-31.

SUMMARY

As many of the findings of the study of Domesday Worcester have been effectively summarised in Chapter 7, attention here will be focussed on more general issues, rather than on itemised account of the Domesday geography of the county. At the outset of Part II, it was argued that the Domesday account of Worcestershire was constructed on the basis of the estate structure that had developed during the Saxon period. It is, therefore, no surprise that the nature of that structure, its ownership and subinfeudation proved an important feature within the explanation of the distribution patterns of Domesday phenomena. Initially, the main distinction between this study and that undertaken by Monkhouse was in the basic mapping units employed. The use, in this study, of mapping units based upon the Domesday manorial structure, has allowed ownership and estate organisation to be taken into account in explaining the resultant distributions. Also, the use of smaller mapping units revealed a greater degree of variability than is apparent from Monkhouse's account. Thus, it was discovered that significantly high densities of both population and ploughteams existed locally in the north and west of the county which previously had been assigned only general low densities by Monkhouse.

In addition, a study was made of hidage and valuation which had been largely ignored by Monkhouse. In both cases, it was found that they produced significant distributions that largely complied with the distribution in terms of other Domesday phenomena. When these two aspects of Domesday data were subjected to correlation and regression analysis, certain important points were demonstrated. In the case of hidage, a significant relationship with population and ploughteams emerged, suggesting that, as a fiscal measure, the hide was still a credible unit in the eleventh century. Even so, the hidage and valuation of manors, did show signs of manipulation, in that the demesne areas were often underassessed vis a vis those parts of the estate that were subinfeudated. This supports the conclusions arising from Chapter 4, that hidage was originally assessed at the manorial level and then apportioned out amongst the constituent parts, although no evidence could be found for the existence

of five hide units. Also, hidage in conjunction with ploughteams was found to be a good indication of late Saxon colonization, in that certain areas within the county displayed an imbalance between their population and ploughteam strength and their hidage, which had probably been assessed in the tenth century. Insight was also gained into the nature of Domesday valuations, in that they too seemed to have been based upon population and ploughteam strength. However, it was possible to demonstrate that extra-manorial income was included, such as that arising from interests in the salt industry or houses and markets in neighbouring towns. In other areas, it appears a distinct possibility that income derived from livestock farming was also included, particularly where there was some specialisation in either sheep, cattle or pig rearing.

Throughout the analysis of distribution patterns and relationships within the data, it was clear that the structure of the estates and their ownership formed a vital factor in explaining the variation displayed. This was most clearly seen in the discussion of Domesday economies, where the pattern of Saxon estate formation, identified in Chapter 4, could be seen reflected in the nature of the Domesday economies. Thus, those estates which had been identified as being of early formation and demonstrated the greatest possibility of continuity from Iron Age times, were invariably found to be demesne economies, dominated by Villein and Serf populations. On the other hand, those estates which seem to have resulted from Saxon settlement, show a greater independence from demesne cultivation with high proportions of Bordars in their population, often possessing considerable numbers of ploughteams. The possibility therefore arises that the distinctions between the Domesday economies, that have been identified, represent a very long tradition within the economic and social organisation of the county extending as far back as the early Saxon period, if not even earlier.

PART III

POST-CONQUEST SETTLEMENT STUDIES

Introduction

Chapter 8 Settlement, Population and Wealth,  
1087 - 1349.

Chapter 9 Woodland clearance and the process  
of colonization.

Chapter 10 The progress of the manorial economies,  
1087 - 1349.

Summary

## INTRODUCTION

The analysis of Domesday Book has allowed the formulation of patterns of settlement, ownership and related economic and social features, which can form the basis upon which the study of population growth and colonization in the post-conquest period can be established. Particularly useful in this respect is the definition of Domesday economies outlined in Chapter 7, for these form a regional summation of many of the relationships that have been discovered within the Domesday data. Against this background Part III of this work seeks to assess the impact of population growth, the establishment of new settlements and the processes which governed them. The organisation of Part III follows that of the previous parts of this work, in that, in Chapter 8, the evidence is discussed, which is coupled with an examination of the progress of settlement and the distribution of population and wealth. Chapter 9 looks more closely at the processes involved in the clearance of woodland and the establishment of new settlements, whilst Chapter 10 uses evidence at a manorial level, to assess the local impact of the county-wide trends that have been identified, and to provide some appraisal of the progress of the manorial economies that were identified from Domesday Book.



CHAPTER 8  
SETTLEMENT, POPULATION AND WEALTH, 1084-1349.

After the dearth of evidence prior to the Domesday Book, the post-Conquest period ushers in a relative abundance of documentary material, much of it difficult to handle for the purposes of historical geography. This is because the historical geographer seeks to interpret the data in a spatial manner, when often such is not explicit within the documentary material. This applies to virtually the whole range of manorial documentation, which dominates the late middle ages, as well as to much of the central exchequer documents, such as subsidy lists. In Worcestershire the available material is dominated by the records of the estates of the Church of Worcester, and for the day-to-day administration of the manors it is to these documents, largely collected in the library of the Dean and Chapter of Worcester, that attention must be focussed. This gives an obvious bias to any results as the sample selected is neither representative, nor randomly distributed. Although, as has been seen, these estates were fairly widely distributed throughout the county (see Fig. 6.3), their operation and management were obviously not representative of the small Lay estates in the north of the county, nor, necessarily, of the Royal Estates. On a more general scale, the Lay Subsidies provide a greater regional coverage as well as a greater degree of continuity, but what is gained in breadth is unfortunately lost in depth. Problems also exist in the degree of comparability between different subsidy assessments.

Finally, for the particular process of assarting and woodland clearance it is possible to use the Rolls of the Justices in Eyre for Feckenham, which can be discussed on a wider scale as a sample illustration of the type of processes being undertaken, though they are, strictly speaking, only significant in demonstrating the disafforestation of one particular Royal Forest.

Each of this range of documentation merits a fuller treatment, in order that an assessment can be made of its various limitations and usefulness to a work of this nature. It is vital that any conclusions made from these sources, now to be discussed in greater detail, should

be assessed against the shortcomings inherent in the data source.

### 1. Taxation lists: Lay Subsidies and Ecclesiastical Taxations

The series of Subsidies that came into existence in the later Middle Ages represented a new concept in taxation, one that attempted to assess personal property or 'moveable' goods, as they were then known. These goods included livestock, grain, household goods and other transferable possessions, but excluded houses and land. The amount of tax demanded of an individual was some fixed proportion of the assessed value of these goods, usually one-sixth, one-tenth or one-fifteenth. The system thus possessed a considerable degree of elasticity as the amount of tax due could vary both with the rate of taxation and with the total amount at which the 'moveables' were assessed. This form of taxation remained in existence from the late thirteenth century until 1332, with the base of its assessment remaining the individual property holder, whose goods were assessed by juries of fellow villagers under the direction of chief taxers appointed by the central government. In 1334 an attempt was made to eradicate previous corrupt practices by introducing a new form of tax assessment, which took the form of a collective agreement with the people of each township or borough for a set sum of money. Although this new system was not inherently inelastic, as a new assessment could always be made, in actuality it proved to be so, as, once established, it formed the basis for most further taxation in the subsequent two centuries.

The reformation of the Exchequer in 1290 gave rise to a far more efficient means of collecting and assessing tax with a resultant increase in the number of records that remain extant. A one-fifteenth was granted in 1290, which could possibly form the starting point for Worcestershire's surviving tax records.<sup>1</sup> The next innovation in taxation was the institution of separate ratings for rural and town areas. A higher rating was deemed necessary for the towns, as much of the burgesser's property was in the form of cash or goods supplied, but not paid for, which made it difficult for the assessors to make an accurate assessment. The actual places selected for such a higher rate are more problematic, as they do not necessarily bear any relationship to the possession of a borough charter. The decision seems to

have been left to the local assessors and may well reflect, as Willard suggests<sup>2</sup>, an unsought for recognition of economic advance. Also subjected to higher rates of taxation were areas of ancient demesne, which had the foundations for a differential rate laid down in the twelfth century, from which time they had been paying tallage. In Worcestershire, Bromsgrove, Droitwich, Worcester and Evesham were usually assessed as boroughs, whilst the royal manors of Feckenham, Suckley and Martley appeared as ancient demesne.

It seems unlikely, from evidence of the Particulars of the Account<sup>3</sup>, that the amount an individual was taxed was a true reflection of his total wealth, for the goods assessed often appear at a valuation well below the current market price, and in rural areas it appears that only those moveable goods over and above those defined as necessary for the normal needs of subsistence were assessed.<sup>4</sup> Although this prohibits any assessment of total individual wealth, it does not preclude a comparison of various vill and borough totals throughout a county area, working on the assumption that the level of assessment would be fairly standard throughout the area supervised by one main exchequer official. Thus, from those tax rolls prior to 1334 it is possible to make a comparison of both tax paying population and amount of tax payable by each vill and borough.

The Lay Subsidy of 1334, however, cannot be used for estimates of tax paying population, as the assessors set down a fixed sum for each vill and left the villagers to apportion it amongst themselves. This subsidy is of considerable use, as it was a new survey, apparently rigorously undertaken and thus avoiding many of the previous corrupt practices. It therefore constitutes a reasonably accurate assessment of the tax paying ability of the individual vills and has been used as an indication of the distribution of wealth by several authors - notably Glasscock (East Anglia)<sup>5</sup>, Hoskins (Devon)<sup>6</sup> and Smith (Leicestershire).<sup>7</sup>

Another range of taxation documents used are the clerical subsidies, which are of particular relevance in Worcestershire, as the Church formed the major landholder, owning some seven-twelfths of the county at the time of Domesday Survey. Obviously the exemption or inclusion of their property is vital to an understanding of the

distribution of wealth and population within the county. Generally, the clergy were not normally assessed under the Lay Subsidies, as they made separate grants at a higher rate of taxation, an example of which used in this study being the Pope Nicholas taxation of 1292. However, the situation is complicated by the fact that a part of the clergy's wealth was included within the Lay Subsidies. Clerical income can be divided roughly into two categories:- (a) Spiritualities, comprised of tithes and oblations from the populace, together with income from lands held by franklmoine tenure and glebe lands; and (b) Temporalities, comprising income from other lands, possessions, manors and markets. Between 1290 and 1334 Parliamentary taxes were never levied on the spiritualities, although temporalities were taxed on some occasions, but usually only if they were not annexed to the spiritualities. Specific clerical taxes, such as the Pope Nicholas taxation, included the greater part of the temporalities as well as the spiritualities, giving some degree of overlap with the Lay Subsidies. Thus the Lay Subsidy of 1291 should be considered in conjunction with the Pope Nicholas taxation of 1292 and not as a separate entity, if any overall assessment is to be made. Generally, the split between temporalities, which were assessed by Parliament, and the spiritualities, included by separate assessment, holds good, although there are other complications with reference to specific taxations.<sup>8</sup> The other main complication to be considered vis-a-vis clerical taxation is the position of the Bishop of Worcester who 'compounded' instead of paying tax on his personal goods, that is he paid a fine agreed between himself and the monarch for the privilege of not having his goods assessed. As regards Lay landholders, the only general exemption applied to land held in demesne of the monarch or royal family. This, itself, was not liable to taxation, although tenants of such land were assessed.

Most of these subsidies show points in common as far as limitations for a study of population and wealth are concerned. More specific problems relating to individual taxations within Worcestershire will be considered later when discussing the results of each analysis. As regards general problems of the use of these documents, one of the most difficult to overcome is in estimating the number and wealth of the people who evaded the taxer's net. This would vary from one

taxation to another and is virtually impossible to compute, although it seems likely that evasion tended to increase until 1334, when a novel form of taxation had the advantage of an unprepared population. Similarly, the 1377 Poll tax, the detailed returns of which are unfortunately not preserved for Worcestershire, probably had a more limited amount of evasion. Russell<sup>9</sup> evaluated the degree of evasion by testing for a random distribution of the terminal groat and concluded that the amount of evasion was insignificant and cites the apparent thoroughness of the survey<sup>10</sup> as supplementary evidence. However, this view has been criticised recently by Postan<sup>11</sup> and Titow<sup>12</sup> who regard the amount of evasion as running at the higher and far more significant level of 25% for all errors, exemptions and evasion as against Russell's 5%. These figures are at best rough estimations and refer essentially to the national total, whereas a considerable degree of regional variation could be expected. Thus, the total figure for Worcestershire can only be assumed as a guide to the total taxable population of over 14 years of age, and as such can be used as a useful check on totals from other subsidies.

Similarly, it is impossible to make any accurate quantitative assessment of the amount of levy lost through corruption by the Exchequer tax collectors. Evidence shows that heavy fines were imposed in the period 1290-1332 on some of these officials. One example exists for Worcestershire when, during the assessment of the 1332 Subsidy, Martin Husintree, Peopleton and Pinvin were omitted from the collector's roll and the money embezzled by the collector. More important is the level of exemption pertaining to each subsidy through a person's inability to reach the taxable minimum. This latter varied with each subsidy but never dropped below 6 shillings in urban areas or 10 shillings in rural areas. Often there seems to have been a customary minimum in various localities, where nobody below a certain valuation of goods was taxed, although the valuation is usually several shillings higher than that ordered by the Exchequer. The impossibility of estimating the size of this group makes the subsidies virtually worthless for computing total population, the one exception being provided by the 1377 Poll tax.

These severe limitations to the subsidies as a source do not completely prohibit their use for studies of the distribution of population and wealth, for it is reasonable to assume that within the area of a single county the same conditions of valuation, exemption and error would pertain. Thus, it is possible to compare the level of taxed population of individual units within that county under the same subsidy. However, it is not possible to make direct comparisons of different subsidies owing to the differing bases for each assessment. Notwithstanding, some comparison is possible by using the relative intensities of regional distribution within each of the subsidies. This involves the use of a modified rank order analysis, similar, although not precisely akin, to that adopted by Buckatzsch.<sup>13</sup>

## 2. Manorial Documentation

Manorial documents are vital to studies of rural economy and have been extensively used by historians for this purpose. They fall into three main categories: Accounts, Surveys and Court Rolls.

The Accounts record all items of manorial income and expenditure both in cash and kind. However, they are exclusively concerned with the landlord's holdings and only obliquely give information as to the peasant economy.<sup>14</sup> Whilst providing much detail on produce, sales, profits and losses, they provide very little information set in a spatial context and land use can only be inferred from them, although they are vital for the calculation of yields. In a work of this nature, concerned with colonization, they are only of limited use, mainly in conjunction with other sources.

Of more use is the second category of manorial documents, the Surveys, which give accounts of both demesne and tenant holdings. Often they also include valuations ('Extents')<sup>15</sup>, which allows some cross reference to subsidies, although, of course, they are not directly comparable as the valuations are based upon different criteria. The surveys present a number of limitations in their usage in that they present a static picture necessitating a good run of consecutive surveys in order to gain any impression of change over time. This immobility of viewpoint is accentuated by the traditional approach

that was adopted to the compilation of these documents. For example, whilst they generally give a detailed account of tenancies, obligations and services, it is never explicitly stated whether or not they were ever carried out. It is clear from many of the thirteenth century extents that, in fact, many of the services had been commuted, but precisely what number and with what degree of permanence remains a matter for conjecture. Similarly, the tenances remain based on the traditional hide, virgate and half virgate pattern, with little information offered as to the degree or number of sub-tenancies that might have been in existence at that time.

The Surveys do, however, allow some assessment of demesne land use, albeit often not very specific, and provide some description of the estate area. They also allow some assessment to be made of population, both quantitatively and socially. J. C. Russell used a wide ranging areal sample of Extents in his study of British medieval population<sup>16</sup>, but there are severe limitations on such use for population studies. As with the Domesday Survey, these documents were essentially concerned with tenancies and the dues owed from them to the Lord of the Manor; they were not essentially concerned with people. Thus, they reflected a traditional picture and were not concerned with changes that did not affect the basic obligation units. Considerable undermention, therefore, must be expected, as landless classes were omitted, as were, as previously mentioned, any sub-tenancies. Again they can most usefully be utilised as a necessary foil to the subsidies, providing detail and allowing certain checks and cross-references, but without any direct comparison.

The Inquisitiones Post Mortem (IPM) provide a useful addition to the surveys, being generally very similar in nature.<sup>17</sup> They represent the results of the royal official's investigations into the lands of the tenants-in-chief upon the death of the tenant. In some cases the jurors of the hundred returned only the most summary of accounts, but in many cases a full survey of demesne and tenant land is given, comparable to the best of the Extents. In Worcestershire the I.P.M. are of particular value, as they deal almost exclusively with Lay estates and thus provide a very useful comparison to the Extents, which, with few exceptions, are confined to the Ecclesiastical estates.

The third major form of manorial documentation is the Court Rolls, which provide a mine of heterogeneous information on all aspects of peasant life.<sup>18</sup> However, they have generally proved to be of less use to historical geographers, as the information that is provided does not readily lend itself to a spatial and statistical treatment. Also, the very range of information included, combined with the numbers that have survived, makes them virtually a study in their own right. Moreover, as with most other manorial documents, they are most rewarding when studied in conjunction with other documents appertaining to the same area.

In this work the Accounts and Surveys that have been used are those concerned with the Estates of the Church of Worcester, which have been collected in the Red Book of Worcester.<sup>19</sup> Each manor covered by the Extents has three surveys, one, the so-called 'Domesday', thought to date from about 1182, a second called the 'Alia Extenta', thought to date from about 1282, and a third, dated about 1299. These provide varying detail of twelfth and thirteenth century conditions, generally the most detail is provided by the 1299 survey. To some extent complementary to these, are the Inquisitiones Post Mortem for Worcester shire<sup>20</sup>, the best series being that for the Beauchamp Estates, which provide a useful Lay counterbalance to the Church Estates of Worcester. The earliest detailed Beauchamp inquisition is that of William, who died in 1298, and gives details of both the original Worcester estates and those acquired when he became Earl of Warwick.<sup>21</sup>

A wide variety of other source material has also been utilised as supplementary to the above and for specific features of Worcestershire's colonization, for example, Forest Eyres and the Rolls Series for evidence of assarting. These sources, however, will be more fully discussed when dealing with the specific evidence they reveal.

#### The Advance of Settlement.

In the past it has been taken as axiomatic that the increase in population demonstrable between 1086 and 1300 was accompanied by a concomitant expansion of settlement into those areas still clothed with woodland or undercolonized in 1086. Recently this view has come under



attack, with the argument being advanced that the population increase in the post-conquest period was largely accommodated in settlements already in existence in 1086. A notable contributor to this debate has been P. H. Sawyer<sup>22</sup>, who argues that Domesday Book fails to record many small settlements, particularly in the north-western areas of Worcestershire. This hypothesis was examined in Part II of this work and was not found to be totally acceptable. Also, elsewhere in the West Midlands the expansion of settlement into the wooded areas of Arden in Warwickshire has been attested by the works of Harley<sup>23</sup> and Roberts.<sup>24</sup> Worcestershire possessed extensive woodlands in 1086, which had largely been cleared by 1349 and it seems unlikely that such a process could have been undertaken without some increase in the number of settlements in the county. However, it is probable that, in the past, the contribution of these 'new' settlement areas to overall population increase has been overemphasised at the expense of the 'older' settled areas.

One of the main problems in identifying settlements created after 1086 lies in the nature of the documentation. The great increase in the amount of documentation available after the twelfth century, both at a national and local level, means that a great number of small settlements and farmsteads appear in such manuscripts as tax lists for the first time, whilst this provides some sort of terminus a quo, it does not necessarily mean that these settlements could not already have been in existence for some centuries. Merely, it might reflect the relative abundance of documentation compared with the situation in the eleventh century or earlier. Whilst it has been possible, in many parts of the country, to calculate the number of assarts, additions to common fields, land transfers and changes in production and yields, any information concerning the creation of new settlements, the addition of houses to old settlements and the morphology of both, is almost entirely absent from documentation prior to 1349. In the past some studies have been conducted where much later evidence is employed, such as nineteenth century maps and early regional descriptions, which have then been projected backwards in time. Apart from the obvious limitations this imposes in terms of scholarship, there is the further point that, due to extensive rebuilding in the late sixteenth and early

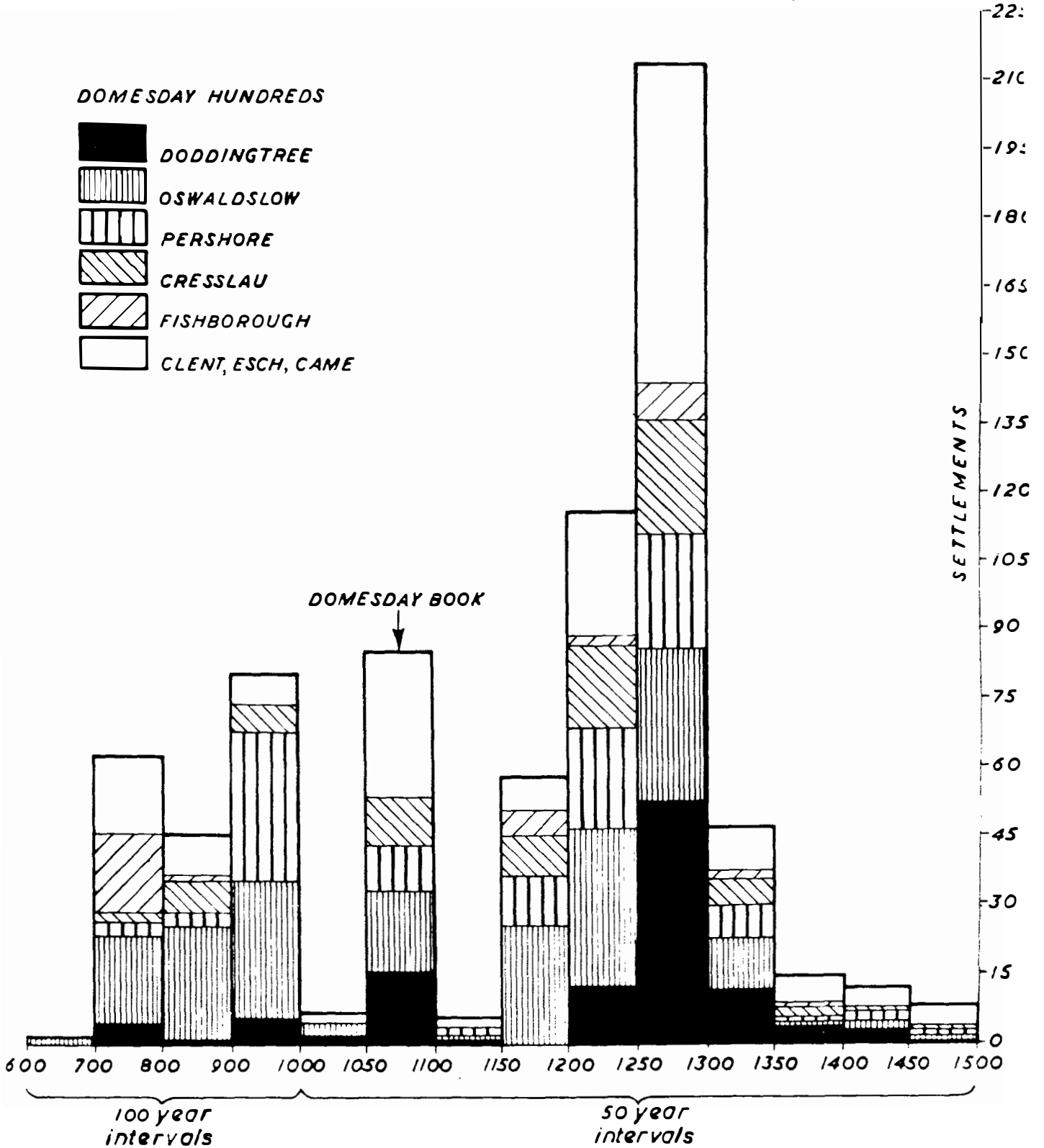
seventeenth centuries, there is no guarantee that the pattern revealed will approximate to that of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Such work that has been undertaken upon excavation of deserted medieval villages shows the tendency for individual houses to be moved and altered in their position within the croft at fairly regular intervals.<sup>25</sup> Although it should be stated that the position of the crofts seems to have remained relatively permanent. The study of medieval village morphology is still largely in its infancy and awaits much further evidence from excavation. Attempts at reconstruction of medieval colonization have therefore tended only to show the general pattern, without being able to demonstrate precise locational changes. B. K. Roberts, by use of land charters, has shown in some detail the impact of colonization in one Warwickshire parish<sup>26</sup>, but even here, despite the utilisation of a wide range of both contemporary and later sources, many problems and limitations exist in locating the precise impact upon the settlement geography.

In order to gain some generalised impression of settlement creation throughout the study area, each settlement has been classified by first date of documentary mention prior to 1500. As previously mentioned this can only give a tentative guide to the likely date of creation, as there is no guarantee that a small, newly created settlement would achieve documentary recognition within a short time of its foundation. Also, periods of sparse documentation will appear under-represented in the number of settlements first mentioned in that period. Bearing in mind these limitations, it is possible to gain a general impression of the progress of colonization, although the dating must be regarded as imprecise.

A cumulative frequency diagram was constructed of the dates of first mention of all settlements named in the Place Names Society volume<sup>27</sup>, from which it was possible to construct the histogram Figure 8.1. The shading specifies the Domesday hundred within which the settlement is found, allowing a rough guide to the locations (see Fig. 5.1). The two cardinal dating points on Figure 8.1 are represented, in documentary terms, by Domesday Book in 1086 and the first main Subsidy roll (Lechemere roll) which has been tentatively dated to 1275. The Domesday survey does not emerge as strongly as might be

FIGURE 8.1

SETTLEMENTS BY DATE OF EARLIEST MENTION



expected, largely because of the number of settlements previously mentioned in the Saxon charters. The existence of the comprehensive list of Worcestershire settlements contained within the Lechemere Roll makes a large contribution to the high number of settlements first mentioned in the period 1250-1300 (213).

Accepting these two documentary sources as significant as far as Figure 8.1 is concerned, then the breakdown of first mentions is as follows:-

TABLE 8.1 SETTLEMENTS BY DATE OF FIRST MENTION BEFORE 1500

<u>First Mention</u>	<u>Nos. of Settlements</u>	<u>Percentage of Total</u>
By 1086	285	37.5
1087 - 1300	394	51.8
1301 - 1500	82	10.7
Total	761	100

The period 1087-1300, therefore, appears as an important period of colonization, over half of the settlements in the study area being first mentioned in this period. Even accepting the limitations previously mentioned, which undoubtedly would move a number of settlements into an earlier time period, this still complies with the argument advanced by Postan, Miller, Titow et alia, that this period was one of considerable colonization. The falling off after 1300 is even more accentuated when it is realised that 47 settlements out of the 82, in the period 1301-1500, were first mentioned before 1350. This again complies with the trends postulated by Postan and Titow, as, allowing due time for settlements to be recorded, it suggests that the colonizing forces were coming to an end by the late thirteenth century.

As the considerations so far have only been general ones, it is possible to undertake a further breakdown of the figures on an areal basis, that is by hundreds. In Figure 8.1 each bar is broken down into its constituent Domesday hundreds, whose location are shown on Figure 5.1.

The following table gives more precise figures:-

<u>Domesday Hundred</u>	<u>Date of Mention</u>	<u>Nos. of Settlements</u>	<u>% of Settlements in Hundred</u>	<u>% of Total Settlements</u>
Oswaldslow	Before 1086	97	47.0 )	12.7
	1087 - 1300	94	45.7 )	12.4
	1301 - 1500	15	7.3 )	2.0
Persnore	Before 1086	48	40.3 )	6.3
	1087 - 1300	61	51.3 )	8.0
	1301 - 1500	10	8.4 )	1.3
Fishborough	Before 1086	18	50.0 )	2.4
	1087 - 1300	15	41.7 )	2.0
	1301 - 1500	3	8.3 )	0.4
Doddingtree	Before 1086	30	25.6 )	3.9
	1087 - 1300	67	57.3 )	8.8
	1301 - 1500	20	17.1 )	2.6
Clent, Esch & Came	Before 1086	67	34.4 )	8.8
	1087 - 1300	105	53.8 )	13.8
	1301 - 1500	23	11.8 )	3.0
Cresslau	Before 1086	25	28.4 )	3.3
	1087 - 1300	52	59.1 )	6.8
	1301 - 1500	11	12.5 )	1.4
Totals		761		99.9

For the sake of convenience the three small hundreds of Clent, Esch and Came have been combined throughout, to form a geographically contiguous area in the North East of the county.

The hundreds fall into two main groups, those with a high percentage of their settlements first mentioned prior to 1086, and those with the higher percentage occurring between 1087 and 1300. Oswaldslow, Pershore and Fishborough have respectively 47%, 40.3% and 50% of their settlements mentioned before 1086, compared with 25%, 34% and 28% for the other hundreds. The position is reversed in the period 1087-1300, the larger number of settlements and percentage being first mentioned in the hundreds of Doddingtree, Clent, Esch and Came, and Cresslau. This trend is further accentuated by considering the number of settlements occurring in the respective hundreds as a percentage of settlements in the whole county mentioned at that date.

TABLE 8.3                    PERCENTAGE OF SETTLEMENTS FIRST MENTIONED  
BEFORE 1500 BY HUNDREDS

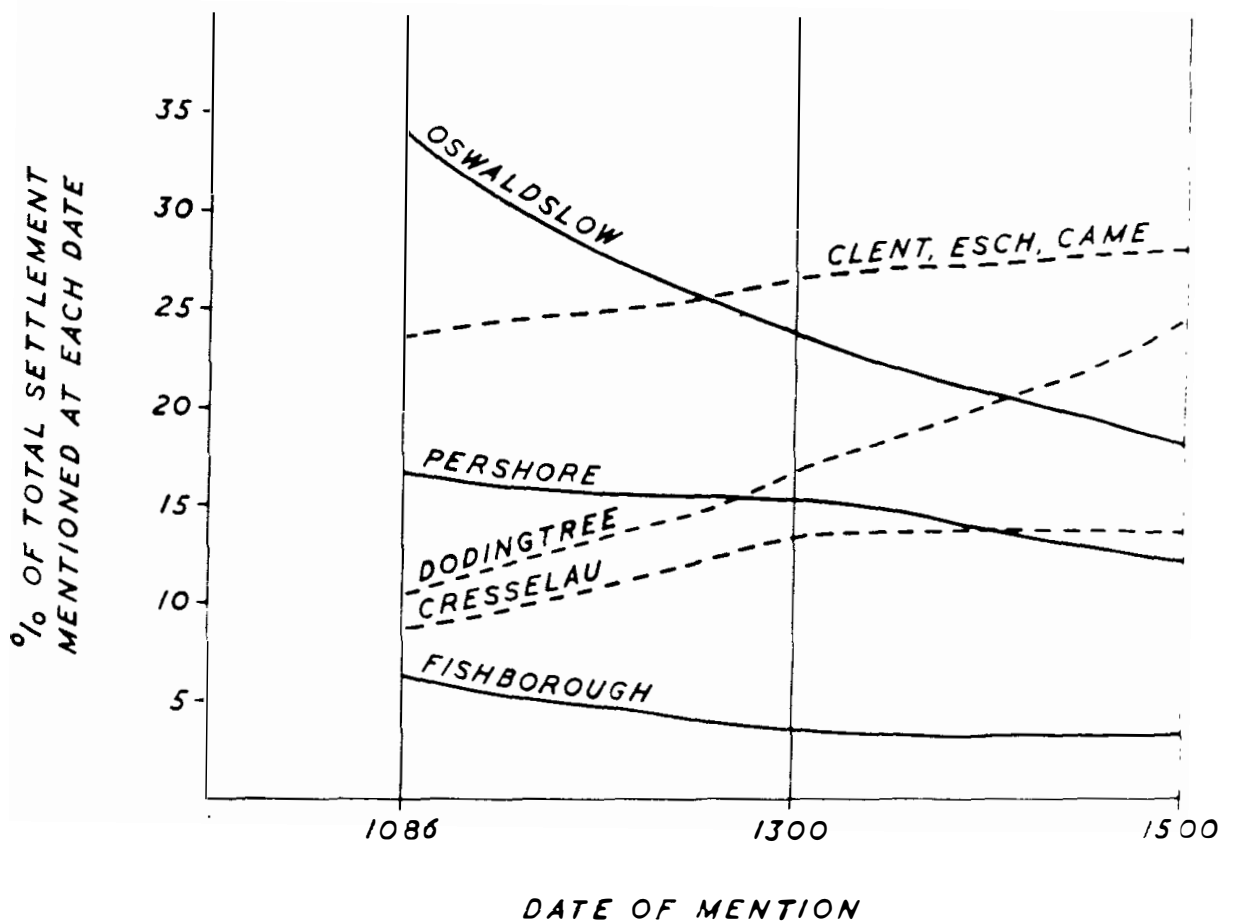
<u>Hundred</u>	<u>Percentage of Settlements Mentioned</u>		
	By 1086	1087 - 1300	1301 - 1500
Oswaldslow	34.0	23.8	18.2
Pershore	16.8	15.4	12.2
Fishborough	6.3	3.8	3.7
Doddingtree	10.5	17.0	24.4
Clent, Esch, Came	25.5	26.7	28.0
Cresslau	8.8	13.2	13.4
Totals	99.9	99.9	99.9

The above table is shown in graphic form on Figure 8.2.

This method has obvious limitations, particularly with respect to dating, but it does show a significant trend. The early impact of colonization was obviously most felt in the three hundreds of Oswaldslow, Pershore and Fishborough, and, although colonization continued in these three hundreds, its influence declined relative to the rest of the county. In the other hundreds, the percentage of new mentions increases over the three time periods, suggesting that increasingly with the passage of time, it was only in these areas that settlement opportunities existed.

FIGURE 8.2

**INDEX OF SETTLEMENT INITIATIONS BY DATE OF MENTION  
1086 - 1500**



Of course, in all such considerations it must be borne in mind that only total numbers of first mention of settlements are being considered, and as each hundred varied considerably in area, the relative density of settlement distribution cannot be adequately deduced from the foregoing table and figures. It is, therefore, more important, at this stage, to view such conclusions that are made as representing overall trends, which later can be explored in detail by sample studies set in a regional context. However, the division of the Domesday hundreds into two major groups is significant on two levels, both geographically and in terms of organisation and ownership. In geographic terms, the three southern hundreds of Oswaldslow, Pershore and Fishborough comprised 663 hides in an area dominated by the long settled Avon and Severn valleys. On the other hand, the remaining hundreds form a contiguous area of 540 hides in the northern half of the county, which was still dominated by a woodland landscape at the time of the Domesday Book. In terms of organisation and ownership, the distinction lies in that the three southern hundreds were dominated by ecclesiastical estates, many of which were classified as demesne economies in 1086, whilst the northern ones were mainly in lay and royal hands and were more dominantly peasant and woodland economies. Oswaldslow consisted, at the time of Domesday, of 16 manors, assessed at 300 hides, all belonging to the Church of Worcester. Pershore, assessed at 298 hides, consisted of 5 manors belonging to the Pershore Abbey and 21 manors belonging to the Abbey of Evesham. Fishborough was assessed at 65 hides and consisted of 11 manors held by the Church of Evesham. In the other hundreds ownership was more mixed, but had only a small amount of ecclesiastical ownership.

On this macro-scale the trends are such as would be expected, both from the previous findings in this study, and from complementary studies in the neighbouring county of Warwickshire. Based solely on hundred units, a prima facie case exists for the continuation into Worcestershire of the Feldon/Arden distinction that occurs in Warwickshire. In this latter county, the large nucleated settlements of Feldon, south of the Avon, were fully developed by the time of Domesday Book, whilst the Arden forest area to the north of the river



was colonized and cleared mainly in the post-conquest period before 1300, and became characterised by a more dispersed settlement pattern dominated by holding in severalty. However, even in Warwickshire, this pattern has been shown to be a generalisation, with many exceptions occurring<sup>28</sup>, and similarly in Worcestershire such a simple bi-partite division is unlikely to accord closely with reality. So far, only hundred units have been used, which can only give, at best, a rough guide to variations in the locational aspects of colonization. Such large units, particularly when comprised of discrete parts, can hide many local variations in settlement and colonization history. Also settlements have only been dealt with in quantitative terms, not qualitative. Thus, the main manorial settlements surrounded by their communally held fields and often with extensive demesnes, have been discussed in the same terms as the isolated farmhouses surrounded by their holdings in severalty and based upon clearance by an individual or group of individuals related by family ties.

The difficulties of identifying differing settlement forms that may have originated during various colonizing periods are immense and cannot be fully achieved at anything but a general level. Evidence for settlement morphology can only be obtained at a relatively late date and there are considerable dangers in making assumptions based on evidence several centuries later than the period of study. Certain general tendencies, however, do emerge. One feature of settlement within the post-conquest period that has been identified on a national scale is that of the moated farmhouse or homestead. F. V. Emery<sup>29</sup> has shown that this type of isolated settlement feature, comprising usually the farmstead and its outbuildings, surrounded by a moat, largely dates from the post-conquest expansion of colonization in the period before 1300. Although the literature on this settlement form is increasing, precise dating still remains problematic due to the relatively small number of excavations of such sites that have been undertaken.<sup>30</sup>

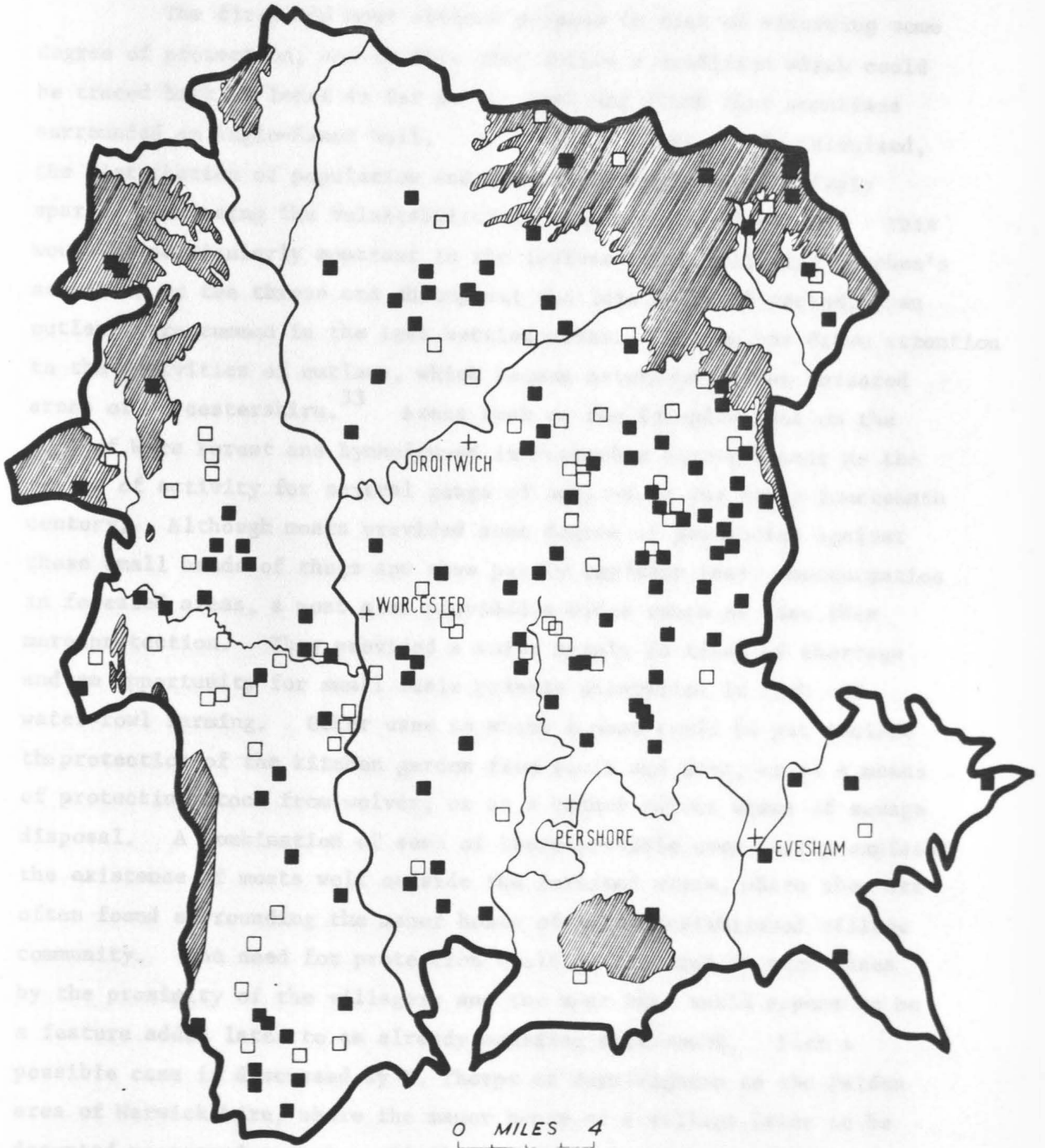
However, the single moated farmstead is widely regarded as symptomatic of the type of colonization undertaken in this post-conquest period.<sup>31</sup> Whereas, in the Anglo-Saxon period, much colonization is

assumed to have been undertaken on a communal basis, in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the emphasis undoubtedly shifts to a more individually based clearance and settlement. As Harley has shown in Warwickshire<sup>32</sup>, this change was bound up with an alteration in the social structure of the population and a movement away from the emphasis on demesne farming in the newly colonized areas. This movement contrasts markedly with the increase of direct demesne cultivation and the rise of the 'high farming landlords' upon the large estates in the older colonized areas.

The distribution of moated homesteads is shown on Figure 8.3 where the number of sites undoubtedly represents an under-estimate, as their numbers are constantly being augmented by archaeological discovery. The distribution is an interesting one in that it complies, in some respects, with those areas dominated by woodland in the eleventh century, although there is no absolute correlation. The densest distribution occurs on the Marl plain of Worcester, particularly in the vicinity of the manors of Feckenham and Inkberrow. Both retained woodland in the eleventh century although Feckenham, despite being the administrative centre of the Royal Forest, was not the location of the densest woodlands. A significant comparison can be made between this figure and that showing the location of assarts within Feckenham Forest (Fig. 9.2). Some correspondence between the two distributions is discernible, although it is not possible to forge any closer link between them due to the inexactitude of the location of the assarts. To some extent the distribution displayed on Figure 8.3 is geologically conditioned. The necessity of an impervious lining for the moat gave those areas developed on the Lower Liassic and Keuper Marls a decided advantage over the sandstone areas to the north, where moats are conspicuously absent. However, there is no good physiographical reason why moats should not have been developed south of the Avon river, yet few appear to have done so, suggesting that there is definite connection between this phenomena and post-conquest colonization. Of course, the possibility must be considered that the settlement is much older than its surrounding moat which was merely a response to fashion, or some particularly lawless period in local history. This problem can only be fully resolved by excavation, although it is instructive to briefly

FIGURE 8.3

### DISTRIBUTION OF MOATED SITES



- MOATED SITE
- POSSIBLE MOATED SITE

review the likely purposes of a moat in order to assess their role within a colonization movement.

The first and most obvious purpose is that of affording some degree of protection, and in this they follow a tradition which could be traced back at least as far as the bank and ditch that sometimes surrounded an Anglo-Saxon hall. In forested areas, newly colonized, the distribution of population and settlement would be relatively sparse, increasing the vulnerability of the isolated homestead. This would be particularly apparent in the lawless times following Stephen's accession to the throne and throughout the late medieval period, when outlaws were common in the less settled areas. Hilton has drawn attention to the activities of outlaws, which became notorious in the forested areas of Worcestershire.<sup>33</sup> Areas such as the Trimley Pass on the edge of Wyre Forest and Lynholtwood in Feckenham Forest appear as the centre of activity for several gangs of outlaws in the early fourteenth century. Although moats provided some degree of protection against these small bands of thugs and thus partly explains their concentration in forested areas, a moat also provided a wider range of uses than mere protection. They provided a water supply in times of shortage and an opportunity for small scale private enterprise in fish and water-fowl farming. Other uses to which a moat could be put include the protection of the kitchen garden from stock and deer, or as a means of protecting stock from wolves, or as a rather odious means of sewage disposal. A combination of some of these possible uses partly explains the existence of moats well outside the forested areas, where they are often found surrounding the manor house of a long established village community. The need for protection would be obviated in such cases by the proximity of the villagers and the moat here would appear to be a feature added later to an already existing settlement. Such a possible case is discussed by H. Thorpe at Wormleighton in the Feldon area of Warwickshire, where the manor house of a village, later to be deserted, possessed a moat. Similarly, those in Worcestershire, situated in the long settled Avon valley and associated with a nucleated village, such as at South Littleton and Childswickham, would hardly seem to depend upon protection as their motive, or to be associated with the post-conquest colonization movement. It would seem,

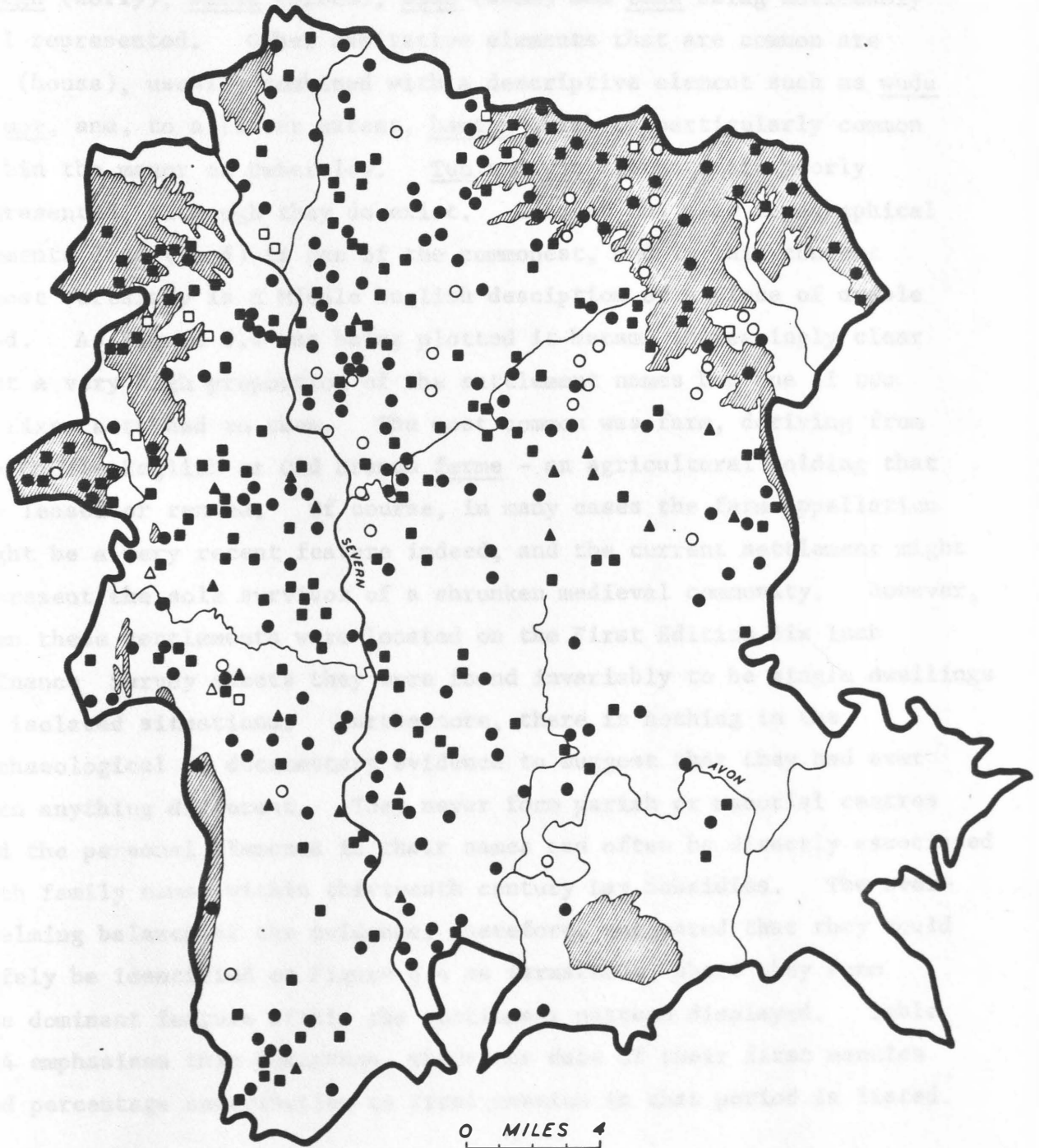
therefore, that the addition of a moat may in some regards have become a useful addition to manorial property and as the same time fashionable.

It is, therefore, not possible, given present archaeological knowledge, to precisely formulate the role of the moat within the post-conquest settlement advance. A remarkable feature of moated sites is the number which now do not contain any settlement, which points to the relative impermanence of many settlement features within our landscape and the surprising amount of settlement mobility that has occurred over time.

It is possible to achieve some refinement in the classification of both the type of settlement created in the period after 1087 and in its location. So far the movement has only been discussed in terms of aggregate numbers, with the smallest area used being the hundred. Figure 8.4 locates each of the settlements first mentioned between 1087-1500, a simple temporal subdivision being adopted between those mentioned prior to 1350 and those subsequently. The distribution revealed is more complex than that apparent from just hundred considerations. The relative absence of settlements is far more apparent in the Avon valley and the Cotswold fringe, just as the distribution of settlement first mentioned in the period 1087-1500 is more concentrated west of the Severn and north of a line running eastward from Worcester. Generally, the incidence of settlements first mentioned between 1087-1350 increases northward and westward, although certain gaps occur in the distribution, particularly in those areas characterised by late mention. Some of these are explicable in terms of woodland land use through to the present day, for example, in the northern part of Rock, on the north western boundary of the study area. This area remains to the present day well wooded, and still forms part of the Forest of Wyre. Also, in Malvern, which lies west of the Severn on the south western boundary of the county, the area remains characterised by a sparse settlement distribution to the present day. Similarly, Beoley in the north-eastern corner of the county, once part of the Forest of Feckenham, also remains to the present as a large parish with very little settlement. Thus, the relative absence of settlement in these particular areas can be explained by the continuing protection afforded by the existence and maintenance of woodland cover throughout the period under consideration, the forests

FIGURE 8.4

## SETTLEMENTS BY DATE OF MENTION 1087-1500



1087-1350

- FARM
- ▲ GREEN
- OTHER SETTLEMENTS

1351-1500

- FARM
- △ GREEN
- OTHER SETTLEMENTS

being in these cases those of Feckenham, Malvern Chase and Wyre.

The place name elements of the settlements displayed on Figure 8.4 show a wide variety of form with nearly all the most common elements identified in Chapter 4 being represented. However, there is a considerable preponderance of woodland forms, with ac (oak), holegn (holly), birce (birch), wudu (wood) and leah being noticeably well represented. Other habitative elements that are common are hus (house), usually combined with a descriptive element such as wudu or mor, and, to a lesser extent, hamtun which is particularly common within the manor of Ombersley. Tun and wic elements are poorly represented, although they do exist. Amongst the many topographical elements lond (land) is one of the commonest, and in this context almost certainly is a Middle English description of a piece of arable land. As Figure 8.4 was being plotted it became increasingly clear that a very high proportion of the settlement names had one of two suffixes attached to them. The most common was farm, deriving from the Middle English or Old French ferme - an agricultural holding that was leased or rented. Of course, in many cases the farm appellation might be a very recent feature indeed, and the current settlement might represent the sole survivor of a shrunken medieval community. However, when these settlements were located on the First Edition Six Inch Ordnance Survey sheets they were found invariably to be single dwellings in isolated situations. Furthermore, there is nothing in the archaeological or documentary evidence to suggest that they had ever been anything different. They never form parish or manorial centres and the personal elements in their names can often be directly associated with family names within thirteenth century Lay Subsidies. The overwhelming balance of the evidence, therefore, suggested that they could safely be identified on Figure 8.4 as farmsteads, where they form the dominant feature within the settlement pattern displayed. Table 8.4 emphasises this dominance, where the date of their first mention and percentage contribution to first mention in that period is listed.

TABLE 8.4 ISOLATED FARMSTEADS BY DATE OF FIRST MENTION

<u>Hundred</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Nos. of Farmsteads</u>	<u>% Farmsteads</u>	<u>% Total Settlement Mentions of Hundred At that date</u>
Oswaldslow	Before 1086	11	17.1	11.3
"	1087 - 1350	45	70.3	47.8
"	After 1351	8 (64)	12.5	58.3
Pershore	Before 1086	6	17.1	12.5
"	1087 - 1350	21	60.0	34.4
"	After 1351	8 (35)	22.9	80.0
Fishborough	Before 1086	0	-	-
"	1087 - 1350	3	60.0	20.0
"	After 1351	2 (5)	40.0	66.6
Doddingtree	Before 1086	6	11.1	20.0
"	1087 - 1350	40	74.1	59.7
"	After 1351	8 (54)	14.8	40.0
Cresslau	Before 1086	6	18.1	24.0
"	1087 - 1350	20	60.6	38.4
"	After 1351	7 (33)	21.2	63.6
Clent, Esch, Came	Before 1086	5	8.1	7.4
	1087 - 1350	43	70.5	40.9
	After 1351	13 (61)	21.3	56.5

As a feature in settlement initiation, the isolated farmstead was most significant in the period 1087-1350 both numerically and proportionally. Their distribution, as can be seen from the accompanying table, is general throughout the hundreds, the emphasis appearing after 1087 in all areas. Although the farmsteads exhibit a similarity of occurrence between the hundreds, the distribution of many farmsteads was regionally distinct within each hundred, as is illustrated by Figure 8.4.

The second and less common suffix is that of grene (green) usually taken to be a reference to a village green or a green road. This name element is never found in Worcestershire in a pre-conquest context, nor in any period prior to the thirteenth century. Indeed in



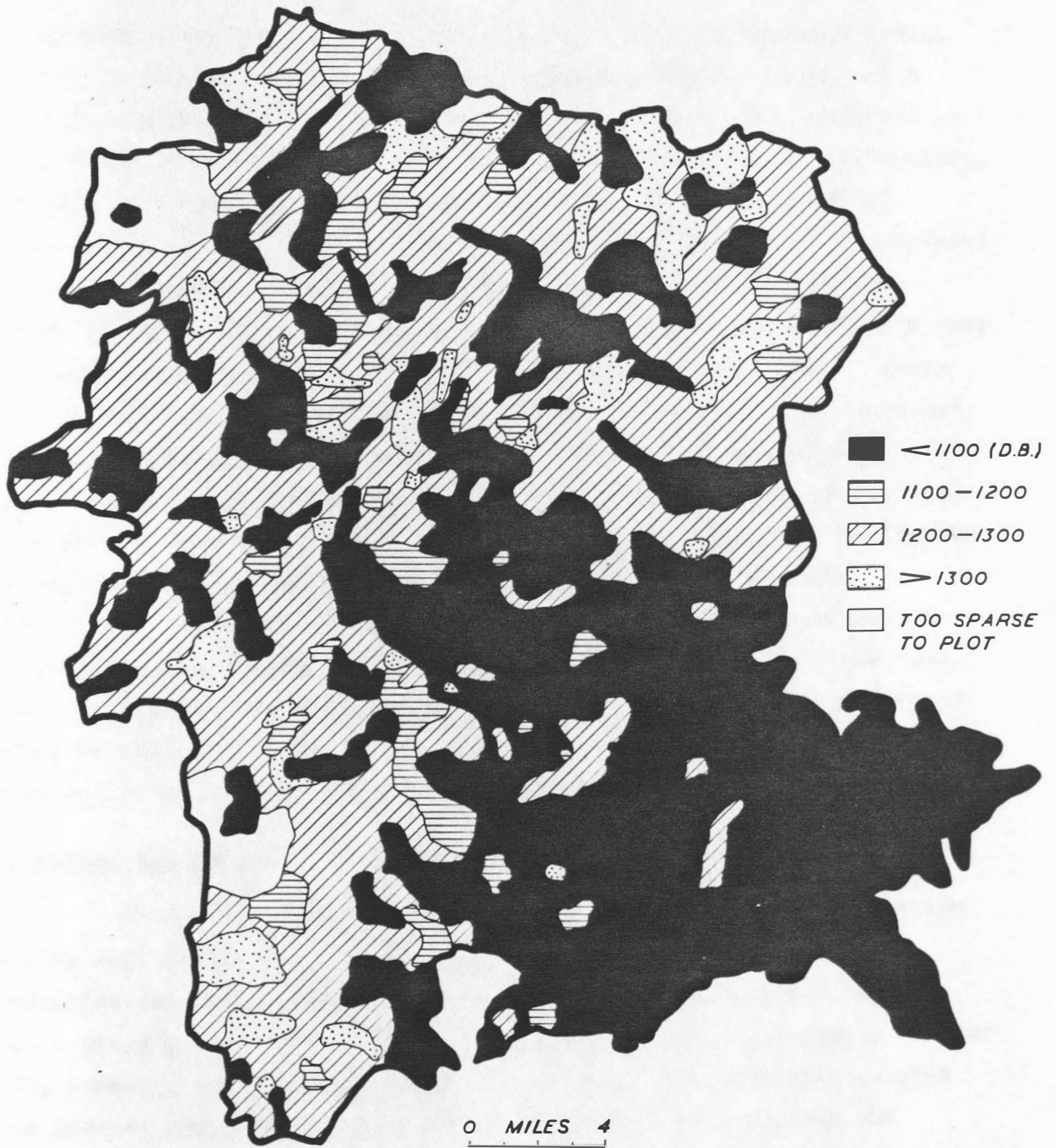
many cases the green element in the name does not appear until some centuries after the settlement is first mentioned, although that first mention is nowhere earlier than the thirteenth century. In this context, the green element does not have any implications for the early morphology of green villages that have been extensively studied by H. Thorpe<sup>34</sup>, for the green element in the name often does not refer to a village green. In Worcestershire, the use of this name element seems to imply post-conquest settlement expansion, and, as can be seen from Figure 8.4, its distribution is coincident with the other settlements identified.

The other settlements shown on Figure 8.4 display no evidence to suggest that they were originally isolated farmsteads, although the chances are that many of them were. Also, the possibility exists that some of them predate the conquest, but, because of their likely small size, escaped direct mention. This might well be the case for those with tun elements in their names, as generally this has been discovered to be an early name element. However, it is also true that only in very rare instances do these settlements form parish or manorial centres. In such cases, for example Newland, the name itself is suggestive of late clearance.

In an attempt to provide a graphic summation of the progress of settlement in the county, Figure 8.5 has been prepared. The method employed was essentially based upon date of first mention of individual settlements, which were then circumscribed by an isolining technique, giving due consideration to the survival of woodland, undrained marsh and the like at the end of each of the settlement periods identified. In a sense, it forms the summation of the 'clearance maps' that have appeared throughout the early parts of this work. There are obvious limitations to the method employed, not least amongst which is the reliance upon date of first mention of settlement. This has the effect of reducing the earliest settled areas (prior to 1100 A.D.) to the advantage of those areas apparently settled later. Also the isolining technique is, at best, a crude device that can only allow a generalised impression. However, there is a surprising degree of accord between the patterns described on Figure 8.5 and the generalised Domesday distribution shown on Figures 6.7 and 6.10. The accord with the distributions of

FIGURE 8.5

*SETTLEMENT BY DATE OF MENTION*



population and ploughteams exercises no great surprise, but more instructive is the similarity with hidage and ownership distributions (Fig. 6.1), which re-emphasises the points made in Chapter 4 concerning the significance and longevity of estate units. In the past it would have been fashionable to seek explanation for Figure 8.5 in terms of the physical environment. That is, that the 'core' settlement areas, situated on the terrace deposits of the Severn and Avon valley, were gradually expanded outwards onto the less attractive soils developed as a wide range of geological formations throughout the rest of the country. This type of reasoning has not been found acceptable throughout the earlier parts of this work and does not appear applicable to the patterns produced on Figure 8.5. The processes involved extended over long periods of time, and were far more complicated than those implied by ever widening concentric rings based upon a few valley based sites. Those areas ascribed to a settlement period before 1100 on Figure 8.5 are not only discontinuous but also developed on a wide range of different soil types, encompassing many of the heavier and least tractable of the clay soils in the county. A crucial factor within the process of settlement initiation, that has emerged throughout this work, has been the establishment and continuity of territorial units and the exercise of seigniorial power within these units. This is not to argue that soil types, topography and water supply had no role to play, it is merely to emphasise that they provide only one set of variables that were not necessarily the most crucial in the explanation of settlement progress.

#### Population and wealth

In all the previous discussion of settlement and colonization in this work it has not been possible to demonstrate any quantified population increase, although it has generally been assumed to have been a trigger mechanism in the establishment of new settlements. After 1086, however, using Domesday Book as the base, it is possible to gain some general impression of population development by employing the various tax lists extant in the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries.

Estimation of population in the late medieval period is fraught with dangers, particularly in giving the appearance of a degree of

accuracy which is generally not justified by the data.<sup>35</sup> Only two sources lend themselves to any degree of statistical treatment on a national or even a county scale during this period. These are the survey of population provided by Domesday Book and the Poll Tax of 1377. Between these two widely spaced dates other evidence, such as Inquisitiones Post Mortem, Extents, Hundred Penny payments, can only be used as supporting evidence on a very local scale.<sup>36</sup> Thus, whilst it is generally agreed that population did rise throughout the two centuries after the Conquest, there is very little agreement upon estimates of the actual numbers involved. The already widely publicised arguments concerning the use of multipliers are not of major concern in this work<sup>37</sup>, but some indication of the outside limits of total county population numbers is useful in providing a framework against which colonization and sample studies can be viewed.

Accepting the two sets of multipliers and their concomitant justification, provided by J. C. Russell and M. M. Postan, as the two outside limits, it is possible to calculate the approximate development of the population of Worcestershire for the period 1086-1377. Russell provides the lowest estimates, as he calculates the family size as remaining constant at 3.5 throughout the period, thus extending the tenancies recorded in Domesday Book by this multiplier. However, in order to calculate the total population from the 1377 Poll Tax it is necessary to estimate the percentage of the population represented by the under fourteen age group as well as the extent of evasion. As by 1377 the Black Death had already taken a considerable toll of the population, in order to derive a hypothetical maximum figure for the pre-plague population of the early fourteenth century, it is necessary to assess the aggregate mortality of all the pre-1377 plagues. Russell's estimates for the 1377 Poll Tax are successively, 33.3% for the under fourteen age group, 5% for evasion and 40% for plague mortalities. As most historians today would accept these figures as being too low, it can be assumed that by using Russell's estimates, a minimum population estimate will be obtained.

If Russell's assumptions are taken for the county area of Worcestershire<sup>38</sup>, the total rural population in 1086, using a 3.5 multiplier,

is estimated at 15,449. Adding the estimate of the borough population of 1,550 persons, a total county population of 16,999 is obtained.<sup>39</sup> For the same area in 1377, Russell gives the total taxed population of rural Worcestershire as 14,542, which, together with the taxed borough population of 1,557, becomes, after necessary adjustments for the under 14 age group and evasion, 24,148. On the other hand, using the multipliers suggested by Postan<sup>40</sup>, the respective figures for 1086 and 1377 would be 23,620 and 30,056. In order to gain an intermediate, pre-plague maximum and minimum estimate, the two assumptions used have been Russell's estimate of a 40% population decline between 1348-1377 and Postan's, of a 50% decline. The two maximum and minimum estimates are laid out in the following table:-

	<u>1086</u>	<u>c.1300</u>	<u>1377</u>	<u>1086:1300</u>	<u>1086:1377</u>	Annual average 1086-1300 rate of increase
Russell's multiplier	16,999	40,247	24,148	1:2.37	1:1.42	1.1%
Postan's multiplier	23,620	60,112	30,056	1:2.54	1:1.27	1.2%

By both estimations, Worcestershire's population growth in the period was one of the lowest in the nation, yet it should be remembered that an average annual growth rate of 0.85% is sufficient to bring about a doubling of the population within a century.

In terms of overall densities throughout the county the population estimates would result in the following:-

	<u>1086</u>	<u>c.1300</u>	<u>1377</u>
Russell multiplier	31.1 acres	13.1	21.9
Postan multiplier	21.8 acres	8.6	17.1

Russell multiplier	28.3	11.9	19.9
Postan multiplier	20.3	7.9	15.9

If these figures can be accepted as guidelines, then it would appear that the agricultural resources of Worcestershire were coming under some degree of pressure by 1300. Titow estimates the minimum subsistence need per person, under a two field system of agriculture, would be 3 acres, and 2.5 acres under a three field system. Considering that the highest figure that has been produced by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries for the proportion of arable area to total area in the county is 45.4% in 1876, and subtracting from this the area covered by the Forests of Feckenham, Wyre and Malvern during the Middle Ages, it can be seen that, by the most generous estimate, the available acreage would be approaching the minimum needed for subsistence. For example, assuming that as much as 40% of the total county area was in arable cultivation in 1300, then the average acreage available per head of rural population would have been 4.7 acres using Russell's multipliers and 3.1 acres using Postan's. These figures do not take into account either the borough populations or the fact that many demesne holdings in the thirteenth century were not catering directly for the subsistence needs of the peasantry.

Admittedly, these figures are fairly notional ones and are only included to give a framework for the further consideration of colonization. Postan has warned of the 'lure of aggregates'<sup>41</sup> and there is a great danger of reading too much into figures derived from so many hypothetical multipliers. The indications of a general trend, however, are clear; that is, that the population during this period was rising at a rate sufficient to power the type of colonization movement previously discussed. So far, in dealing with county totals it has been assumed that population increased evenly throughout the study area, but this would not necessarily have occurred. Indeed, from the evidence for settlement initiation in the period 1086-1300 it would appear superficially to have been concentrated in the northern and western parts of the study area. This could have occurred either by migration from the well settled districts of the Avon valley and the Vale of Evesham or by a differential population growth induced by greater opportunity for younger marriage age in the newly colonized areas, or a combination of both. However, in the absence of available data, this latter point must remain one of conjecture.

Harley, in a study of the Warwickshire Hundred Rolls<sup>42</sup>, noted an apparent contrast in population development from 1086 to 1279 between two hundreds straddling the Avon. The more rapid increase occurred in the northern hundred and can conveniently be linked with the colonization occurring there during the same period. However, as Harley has pointed out in a supplementary note to this paper<sup>43</sup>, the population gradient between these two areas may be less sharp than at first envisaged, due to the probable existence of unrecorded undersettles on many of the villein holdings. Certainly, the development of the newly colonized areas of the Warwickshire Arden was significantly different from that of the longer settled Feldon, as B. K. Roberts has shown in his study of charter evidence for Tanworth.<sup>44</sup> However, the precise impact upon the population development of the two regions remains unclear. Worcestershire, as is to be expected, exhibited some degree of similarity to the patterns observed in Warwickshire, but unfortunately does not possess the same documentation. The Hundred Rolls are not extant for Worcestershire and for regional population development over the whole study area the only sources available are the less detailed and somewhat intractable Subsidy Rolls.

Mention has already been made of some of the difficulties and limitations imposed by the use of Subsidy Rolls, but in the absence of more detailed information they do provide a framework within which regional contrasts can be framed. The earliest taxation record for Worcestershire is the Lechmere Roll, which has been variously dated between 1275-1285, but is more likely, judged on the fullness of the roll and the rate of taxation, to have been the subsidy granted in 1275.<sup>45</sup> The doubt as to the exact dating of this subsidy affects certain aspects of its administration rather than the data available to the historical geographer. For instance, if the subsidy is dated to 1275 it would be before the Exchequer standardised taxation on moveable goods, although by this time taxation was slowly becoming standardised. The taxable minimum would also probably have been different, being set at 6/8 in 1275 as against 10 shillings later. The Lechmere Roll does have the advantage of including taxation of most clerical possessions, with the exception of the Cistercians, but was, however, almost

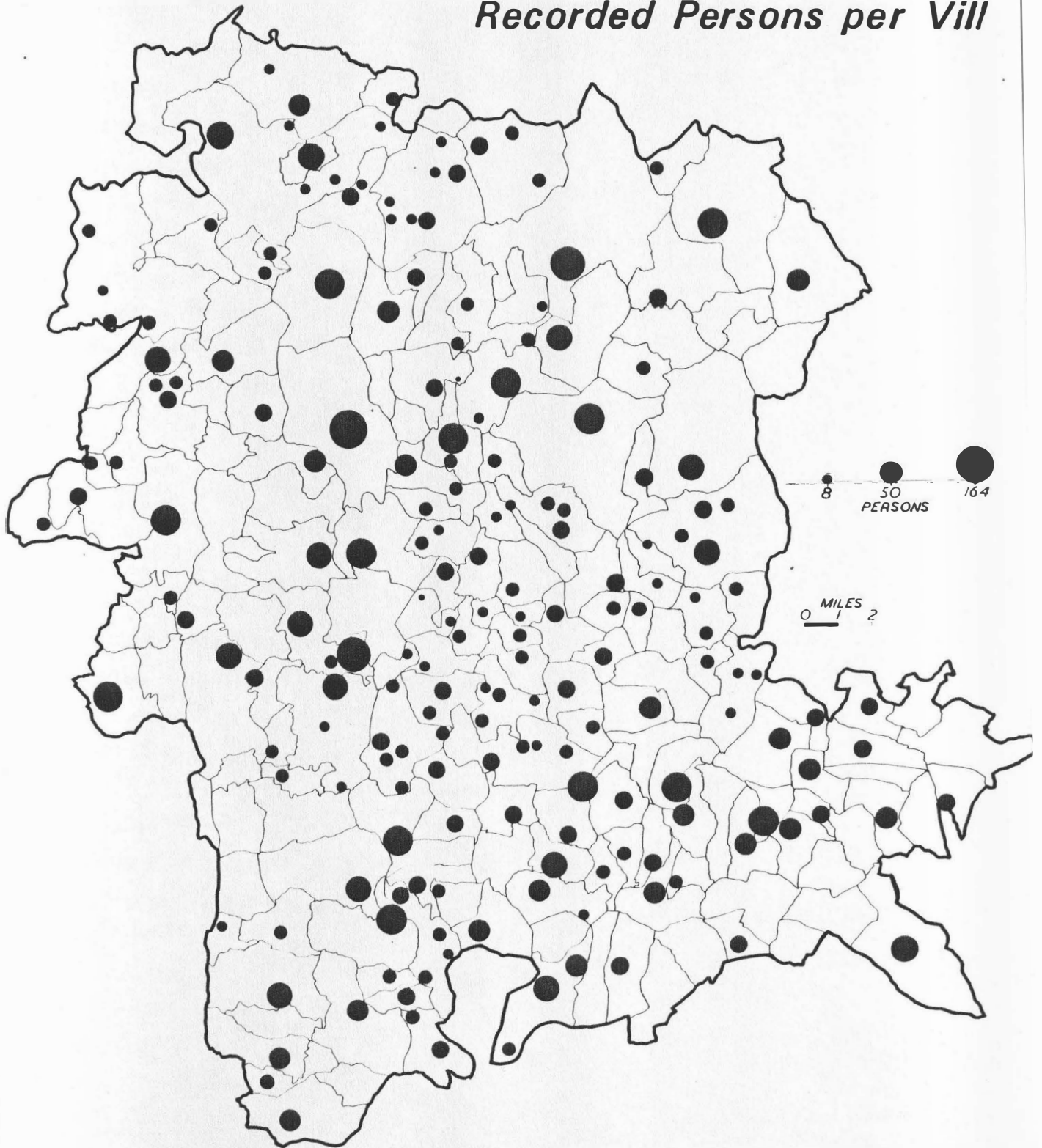
certainly limited to the temporalities, as the spiritualities would have been subject to other forms of taxation. All the main Benedictine orders, who possessed so much land in Worcestershire, were included, and only some small orders, who possessed little in the county, were excluded. Thus, subject to the limitations appertaining to taxation records, such as avoidance and corruption, it does reflect the distribution of wealth and the tax paying population of the study area in the latter part of the thirteenth century.

Due to an inability to estimate the size of the population below the taxable minimum, no idea can be gained as to total population. It is only possible to compare the distribution of tax paying population throughout the manors of the study area, which reflects more upon the possession of moveable goods than upon actual population numbers. The emphasis must therefore lie with relative wealth, the well stocked manors and vills contrasting with the poorer. Certainly, the Lechmere Roll provides a very full taxation record, netting more money and taxing more people than any subsequent taxation during the period under review. The amount collected amounted to £1211-17-10 from the 220 places returning tax, which compares with the next highest Lay Subsidy returning £381-9-1 from 148 places in 1349.

With regard to the distribution of wealth throughout the taxed population, it is apparent from the Lechmere Roll that there was little change from the situation revealed in the Domesday survey. Despite the growth in population, the continued process of colonization and the rise of a money economy, wealth was still concentrated in relatively few hands. The ecclesiastical orders still retained the major part of both land and taxable wealth, as they had in 1086. The main ecclesiastical estates were taxed in 53 Worcestershire vills, that is; Church of Worcester (Bishop and Priory) in 29, Evesham 12, Pershore 4, Gt. Malvern 3 and Little Malvern 5. The nearest contender amongst the laity was the Beauchamp family, who paid tax in 8 vills. The drop in scale of wealth was then considerable down to Peter of Saltmarsh and Robert of Ombersley, who each returned tax in 4 places. Also, the scale of tax involved is entirely different between the church and the laity. Whilst the Bishop of Worcester paid an average of 48 shillings in each vill and the Abbot



**1275 SUBSIDY**  
*Recorded Persons per Vill*



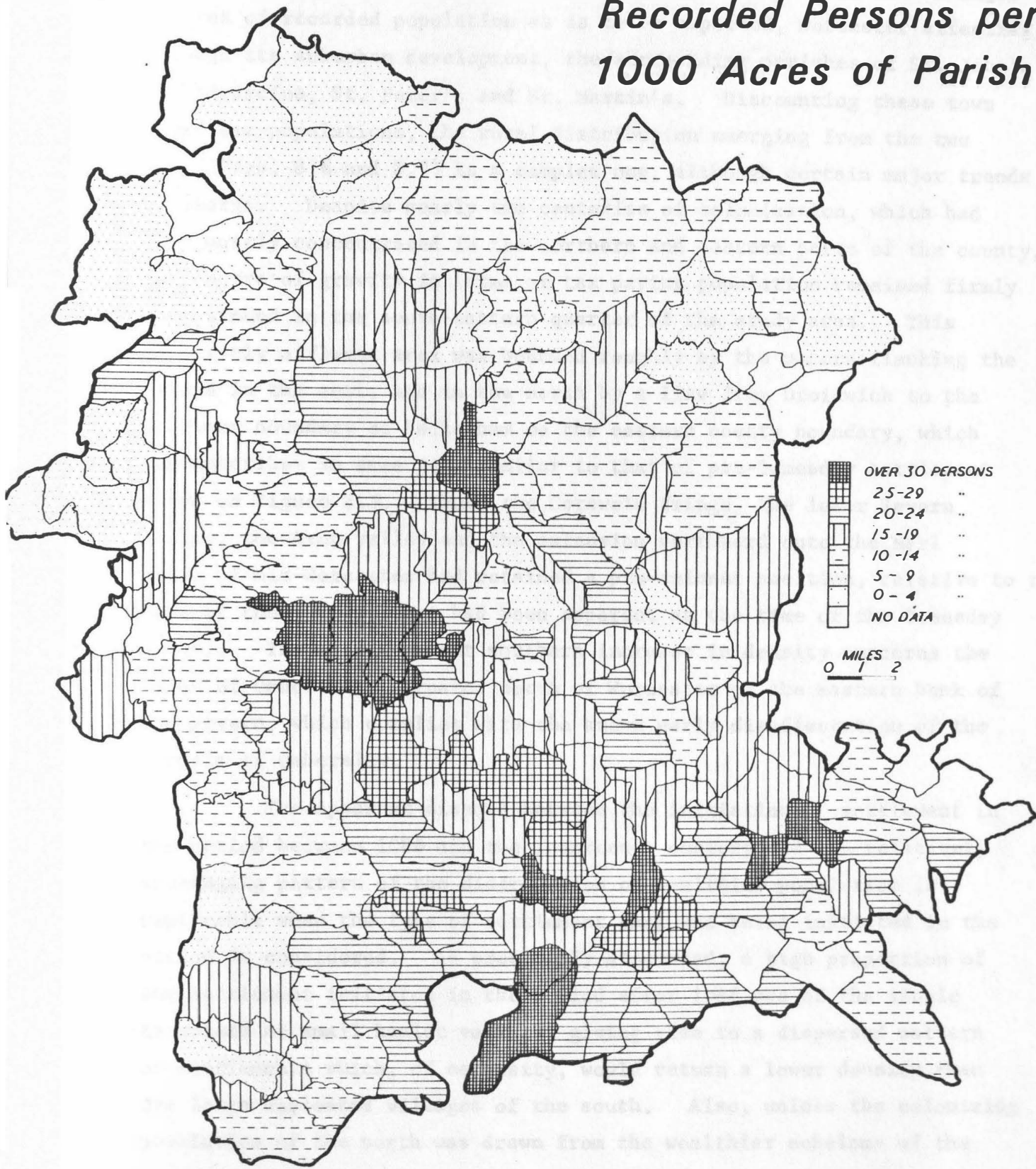
of Evesham 55 shillings, Richard of Ombersley and Peter of Saltmarsh paid an average of only 16 shillings each. The pattern of the large ecclesiastical estates, contrasting with the small, more scattered Lay estates, is thus very little altered from that reviewed in the previous chapter when considering Domesday values.

The distribution, by vill, of recorded tax paying population is shown on Figure 8.6, where the recorded population is superimposed upon an outline of parish boundaries. Initially the pattern appears one of vills with large tax paying populations surrounding a central area of relatively small ones. It is for this reason the parish boundaries are included, for it will be noted that the average parish size, particularly in the north east of the study area, is large compared with that of the south east, and it is apparent that in both the north and west the returns for many small vills had been subsumed under a single manor headquarters settlement. An example is that of Bromsgrove, which at the time of Domesday possessed 18 berewicks, and was later divided into 10 yields, yet in 1275 all the taxed population was recorded under the one centre of Bromsgrove. The same is true of most other manors save in the south eastern quarter of the county, where, almost without exception, the symbols represent a single tax paying vill. This is reinforced by Figure 8.67, which represents the recorded population expressed as a density per 1,000 acres of parish. The use of parish boundaries and their degree of accord with the manorial units of the medieval period does raise some problems. The parish boundaries used in these figures are those of the early nineteenth century as taken from the First Edition One Inch Ordnance Survey and the Tithe Edition, thus avoiding the boundary changes of the late nineteenth century. As previously discussed when dealing with Anglo-Saxon charter evidence and the emergence of Estates, there is good reason to believe that the parish boundary structure of Worcestershire was of some considerable antiquity. However, it must be borne in mind when considering all such density maps, that the exact degree of compliance with medieval boundaries remains unknown and thus no precision of density figures can be totally guaranteed. Despite this, Worcestershire does present a better case for the use of parish boundaries than many other counties (see Chapter 4).

FIGURE 8.7

# 1275 SUBSIDY

## *Recorded Persons per 1000 Acres of Parish*

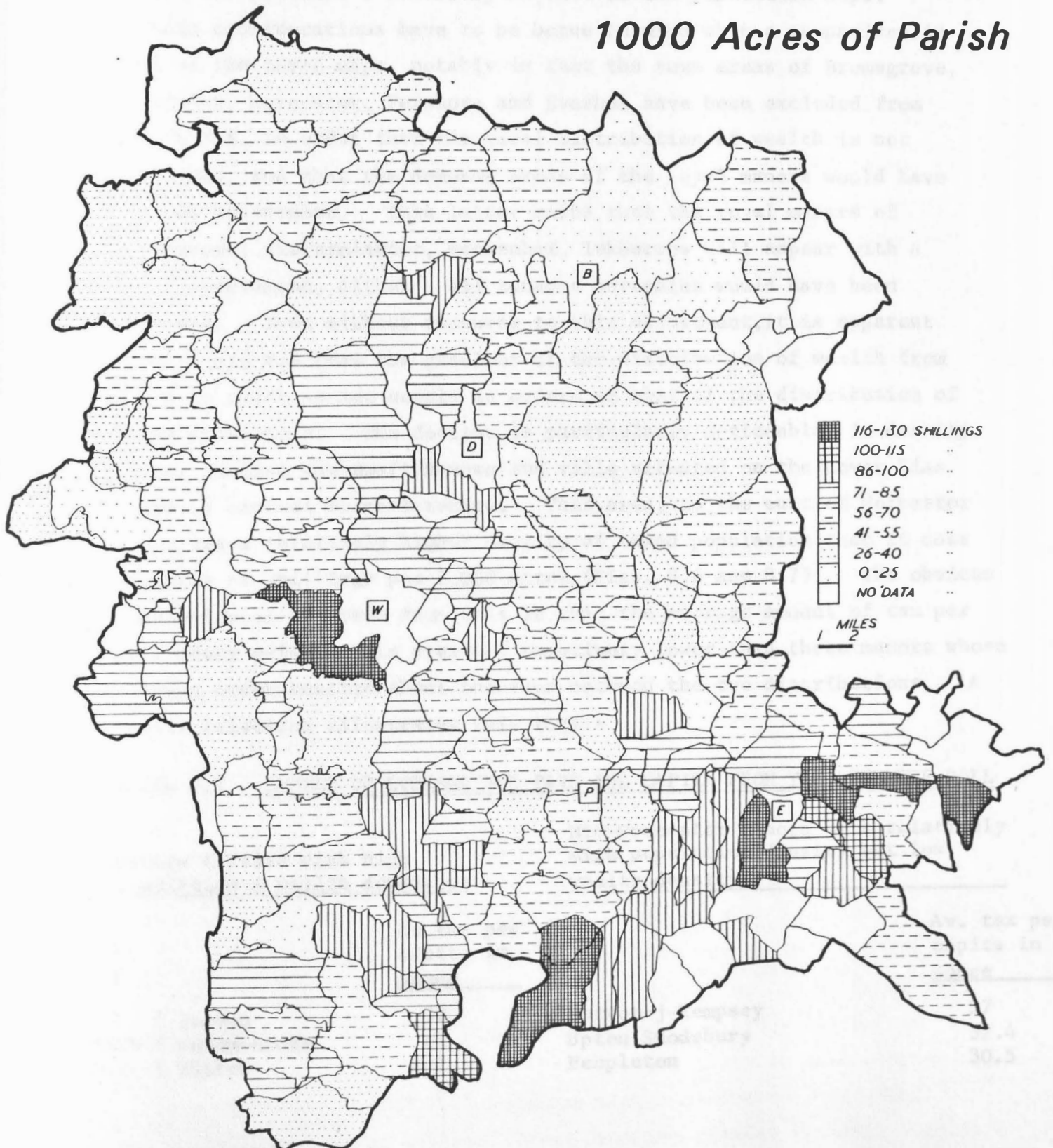


The pattern emerging from Figure 8.7 acts as a corrective to the agglomerated impression of Figure 8.6. The large units in the north and west on Figure 8.6 are put into perspective vis-a-vis the area which they cover. Worcester, Evesham and Droitwich stand out as major centres of recorded population as is to be expected, Worcester affecting, through its suburban development, the surrounding parishes of St. John's in Bedwardine, St. Peter's and St. Martin's. Discounting these town based tax populations, the rural distribution emerging from the two maps (Figs. 8.6 and 8.7) is a complex one, although certain major trends do emerge. Despite nearly two centuries of colonization, which had been mostly concentrated in the northern and western parts of the county, the centre of gravity in terms of tax paying population remained firmly established in the south-eastern quarter of the study area. This relatively affluent area was bounded roughly by the manors flanking the Severn in the west, and in the north by a line from Droitwich to the northern boundary of Feckenham on the eastern county boundary, which circumscribes an area very similar to that of pre-Domesday settlement shown on Figure 8.5. Thus, the Cotswold fringe, the lower Severn valley, the Avon valley and the extension northward onto the Marl plain of mid-Worcester had retained a pre-eminent position, relative to the rest of the county, that had been apparent at the time of the Domesday survey. The only apparent northern increase in density concerns the manor of Ombersley, situated north of Worcester on the eastern bank of the Severn, which complies with the known early disaffestation of the Forests of Ombersley.

The apparent discord between the initiation of settlement in the period between 1086 and the fourteenth century and the relatively unchanging pattern of the distribution of wealthier population is explicable when the type of settlement that was being initiated in the period is considered. As previously discussed, a high proportion of the settlement initiated in the period after 1086 was of the single farmstead or small hamlet variety, giving rise to a dispersed pattern of settlements which, of necessity, would return a lower density than the large nucleated villages of the south. Also, unless the colonizing population of the north was drawn from the wealthier echelons of the

FIGURE 8.8

**1275 SUBSIDY**  
**Shillings per**  
**1000 Acres of Parish**



peasant population, there is good reason to believe a good proportion of them would have escaped taxation.

In assessing the wealth returned by the Lechmere Roll, Figure 8.8 provides a necessary adjunct to the population maps. Certain considerations have to be borne in mind when a comparison is made of the three maps, notably in that the town areas of Bromsgrove, Droitwich, Worcester, Pershore and Evesham have been excluded from Figure 8.8, in order that the rural distribution of wealth is not disturbed, and that the demesne areas of the royal manors would have escaped assessment. This latter means that the royal manors of Bromsgrove, Kidderminster, Feckenham, Inkberrow will appear with a lower assessment, although all tenants moveables would have been assessed. Even without recourse to this adjustment, it is apparent from Figure 8.8 that the gradient of the distribution of wealth from south to north is not nearly as severe as that of the distribution of taxed population. The decline is particularly noticeable, in density terms, amongst the small manors and vills situated on the Lower Lias plain of central Worcestershire. This area, to the east of Worcester city, has a relatively higher density of taxed population than it does in terms of shillings per 1,000 acres (Figs. 8.6 and 8.7). The obvious conclusion to be drawn from this is that the average amount of tax per head being paid in this area was relatively lower than those manors whose ranking order remains about the same between the two distributions. A sample selection illustrates this fact:-

TABLE 8.7 SAMPLE OF AVERAGE TAX PAID PER CAPITA FROM THE LECHMERE ROLL

<u>Manors &amp; Vills with high population &amp; wealth densities</u>	<u>Av. tax per capita in pence</u>	<u>Mid-Worcester Manors with relatively high population density but low wealth density</u>	<u>Av. tax per capita in pence</u>
( Bredon	62	Norton-j-Kempsey	37
Bredon ( Westmancote	65	Upton Snodsbury	32.4
Manor ( Mitton	109	Peopleton	30.5



TABLE 8.7 (CONT'D)

	Salwarpe	51.4	Naunton Beauchamp	35
St. John's	( Wick Episcopi	57	Himbleton	42
Bedwardine	( Upper Wick	45		
	( Crowneast	48.3		
	( Bushley	72.9	Dunhampstead	35.4
			Grafton Flyford	31.0

Those vills and manors recorded in the right hand column are exclusively drawn from the plain area to the east of Worcester city, whereas those on the left have a wider distribution and were selected primarily for their equal rankings on Figure 8.8 and Figure 8.7.

Average payments per capita can be misleading on a general scale, for the tax returns show a wide variation in the structure of individual's payment, although it is difficult to see any general pattern in the structure of assessment, and it is evident that it varied with the social fabric of each manor. Some peculiarities do exist within the taxation, for instance at two places groups of people were noted who paid nothing: At Castlemorton, where of the 93 individuals assessed, 21 (22%) were recorded as paying nothing, and in a similar position, at Longdon, were 10 of the 47 recorded tax population (21%). It is impossible to tell whether these represent a group of tenants too poor to be assessed or whether they were simply people in arrears.

The total recorded tax population for the study area mounts to 5,967, but the relationship of this figure to actual population is impossible to compute owing to the unknown relationship between taxed and untaxed population. As Willard has pointed out, it is not only paupers who were not assessed, for it is possible that a man might possess a cow, an ox, a pig, household goods, farming utensils, together with a reasonable quantity of grain, and still not be included with those who held enough personal property to be taxed.<sup>46</sup> R. H. Hilton, in a description of the principalia of a fairly wealthy peasant in Wolverley in 1346, points to the low valuation given to much of the farming equipment. The most valuable single item was a cart worth 7d.<sup>47</sup> However, it is apparent, even from the limited evidence available

for the late thirteenth century, that many peasants were desperately short of personal goods. An Inquiry of 1271, reported in the Evesham Abbey cartulary, revealed the plight of one tenant, whose only moveable property was a cow worth 5 shillings, and that of his son, a broken down horse, bought for 1/6 and sold for 8d.<sup>48</sup> It is, therefore, very probable that a high percentage of the peasantry escaped taxation both in 1275 and in later subsidies, making this range of documents little use for population assessment. However, if one views the subsidies as some indication of the general conditions of wealth, both in men and goods, of the manors and vills, then in Worcestershire the regional distinctions revealed in 1086 may have become slightly blurred with the passage of two centuries, but basically remained the same. The early colonized centres of the great ecclesiastical estates, situated in the south-eastern parts of the county, retained their leading position as the best stocked and populated manors.

Clerical possessions always form a difficult problem when assessing wealth from Lay Subsidies, for as has been previously discussed, only certain parts of their possessions (temporalities) were generally included. However, the clergy were subjected to their own forms of taxation, of which the Pope Nicholas IV taxation is the next chronological tax considered in this study.

By the end of the thirteenth century many precedents had been established for the assessment of clerical possessions, but the whole process had been subject to considerable controversy and friction between the church and the monarchy.<sup>49</sup> In 1258 Evesham's possessions had been assessed by its proctors at 1,000 marks, and Worcester £214-5-0, under the basis of the Norwich Taxation of 1254, but even by 1282 a number of monasteries in the diocese of Worcester were still in arrears.<sup>50</sup> Thus, in 1289, after receiving a promise from Edward I that he would take the cross and set out on a crusade within three years, Pope Nicholas IV consented to order a tenth for six years to be collected by ecclesiastical persons according to the assessment method and form ordained by the Holy See. More importantly, because of previous diverse valuations, the Pope agreed that the tenths should be taken 'iuxta verum valor'.<sup>51</sup> This implied a completely new valuation to be



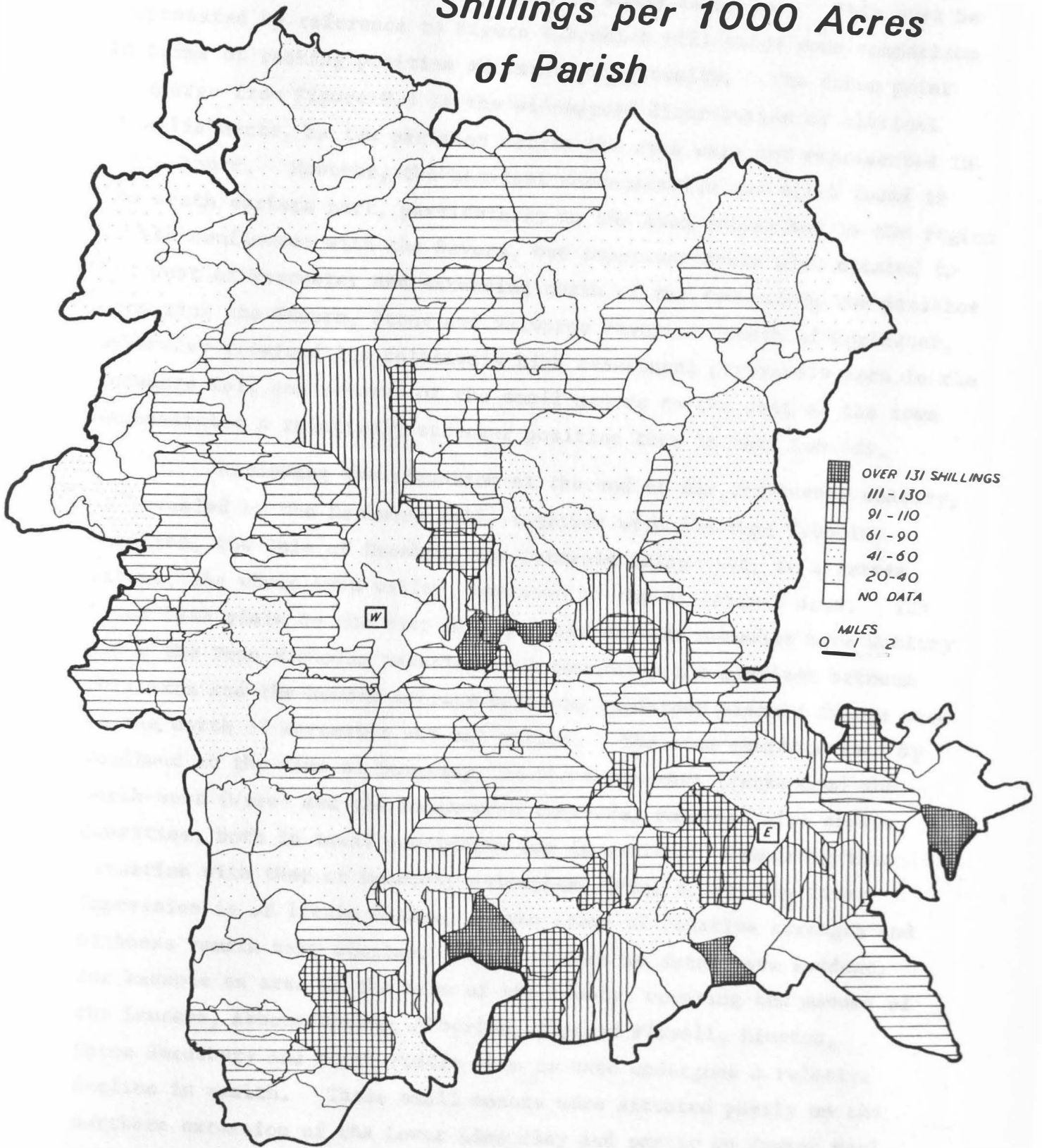
based upon the manorial account rolls, with certain deductions for working and other expenses. Such things as wages, food for customary tenants, provender for the stock, together with certain allowances on the 'stauram expensum' would therefore be deducted from the total. The results appeared much more like a manorial extent valuation than the income-expenditure structure of the manorial account rolls. Demesne arable, meadow and pasture were reckoned as being worth so much a carucate or acre per annum, at the current rental of the manor, and all rents, mills, profits of woods and fisheries, together with fines and perquisites, were valued. Labour services appear to be included only when they had been commuted for money payment. The only moveables that appear in the taxation were the flocks and herds, and these were only valued in terms of yearly increase and sales of milk and cheese. The resultant wool and hides were exempt, as they were subject to tax by the Customs. Thus, the eventual valuation was very similar in many respects to that found in the Extents, although far less detailed, added to which, in the case of Worcestershire, the returns are of a very brief nature, entirely lacking in detail.<sup>52</sup> R. Graham has shown that the valuations bear little relation to the known value of many clerical possessions and she suggests, as with Domesday valuations, they should be regarded more as the estimated return if the particular estate were put at farm.<sup>53</sup> The valuation cannot, therefore, be considered as any estimate of income of clerical bodies, as this was known to be well above any of the Pope Nicholas valuations. The above concerns only temporalities, although spiritualities, that is, tithes and oblations from the people, together with income from glebe lands, were also assessed.

The basis of the assessment was very different from that involved in the Lechmere Roll and the resulting distribution of wealth must therefore be considered as essentially complementary to the distributions shown on Figures 8.6 to 8.8, rather than in any way comparative. The importance of clerical ownership in the study area has already been stressed, and Figure 8.9 emphasises this point. Although the Lechmere Roll did include some assessment of clerical wealth, Figure 8.9 adds another dimension to its consideration, as the

FIGURE 8.9

# 1292 POPE NICHOLAS TAX

## Shillings per 1000 Acres of Parish



distribution is shown in the same form, wealth being expressed in terms of shillings per 1,000 acres. Where clerical interests were small, such as in the north eastern and north western parts of the study area, the resultant distribution of wealth is bound to be low. This must be compensated by reference to Figure 8.8, which will allow some comparison in terms of ranking position as regards lay wealth. The first point to emerge from Figure 8.9 is the widespread distribution of clerical establishments, as few parishes within the area were not represented in some manner. However, the heaviest concentration was still found in the south eastern part, particularly in the Avon valley and in the region of its confluence with the Severn, but important areas also existed to the west of Worcester and extending north of the town along the parishes bordering the Severn, Stour and Salwarpe rivers. North of Worcester, Ombersley retained its relatively high assessment previously seen in the Lechmere Roll and several of the small manors to the east of the town demonstrated a relatively stronger position than in that Subsidy.

Reviewing the situation at the end of the thirteenth century, as revealed by the Lechmere Roll, together with the Pope Nicholas Taxation, the Vale of Evesham, the Cotswold fringe and, to a lesser extent, the whole Avon valley, appeared as the wealthiest area. The Lower Lias plain to the east of Worcester appears somewhat more wealthy under the Pope Nicholas taxation, but generally the gradient between this area and the Severn terrace belt and sandstone plateau fringe area to the north of Worcester was not marked. The area characterised by woodland at the time of Domesday, in the north-east (Feckenham) the north-west (Wyre) and the south-west (Malvern) remained with sparse densities, both in taxed population and in wealth. Comparing this situation with that of Domesday valuations (Fig. 6.15), the first impression is of little change, as the areas of relative strength and weakness remain very similar. Some changes in detail are evident, for example an area in the east of the county, covering the manors of the Lenches, Abboçs Morton, Abberton, Flyford Flavell, Kington, Upton Snodsbury and North Piddle seem to have undergone a relative decline in wealth. These small manors were situated partly on the northern extension of the Lower Lias clay and partly on Keuper Marl, making it unlikely that an explanation could be sought in simply

geological terms. Although the contrast between 1086 and the end of the thirteenth century is most marked here, it does appear part of a wider trend throughout the small manors situated on the plain of Worcester. However, Droitwich and its immediate surrounds retained its position of relative affluence, no doubt due to the continuing effect of the salt industry, whilst, in contrast, the surrounding woodland areas remained relatively poor. Thus, in overall terms, as revealed by the two taxation rolls, the areal distribution of wealth in the study area had not changed significantly from 1086, despite the many changes that had probably occurred in the economy of the area. To assess the changes that had occurred at the manorial and estate level reference will have to be made to such manorial documentation that is available and will be described subsequently in this work.

The next taxation that remains extant for the study area is the Lay Subsidy of 1327, which represent a levy of a twentieth of moveables granted in order to defray expenses accruing from the Scottish wars. The revenue from this subsidy shows a large drop from the earlier 1275 subsidy, of some 59% in total for the county, which has been interpreted by F. J. Eld<sup>54</sup>, as being representative of a general drop in national income consequent upon the impoverishment caused by continuous war and a number of crop failures between 1312-22. There are, however, many mitigating factors inherent in the taxation itself. Firstly, the degree of evasion was likely to have been considerable at this time, as levies had become almost an annual feature, eight subsidies having been granted in the previous 20 years. Secondly, corruption of tax officials was increasing at this time, as is evidenced by the accusation made in 1324 by the jurors of the county of Worcester, that the local collectors were not assessing their neighbours at the true value of their goods and even omitting altogether certain people.<sup>55</sup> Thirdly, a considerable portion of clerical possessions were excluded from the 1327 Subsidy, as the church had paid a tenth earlier that year.

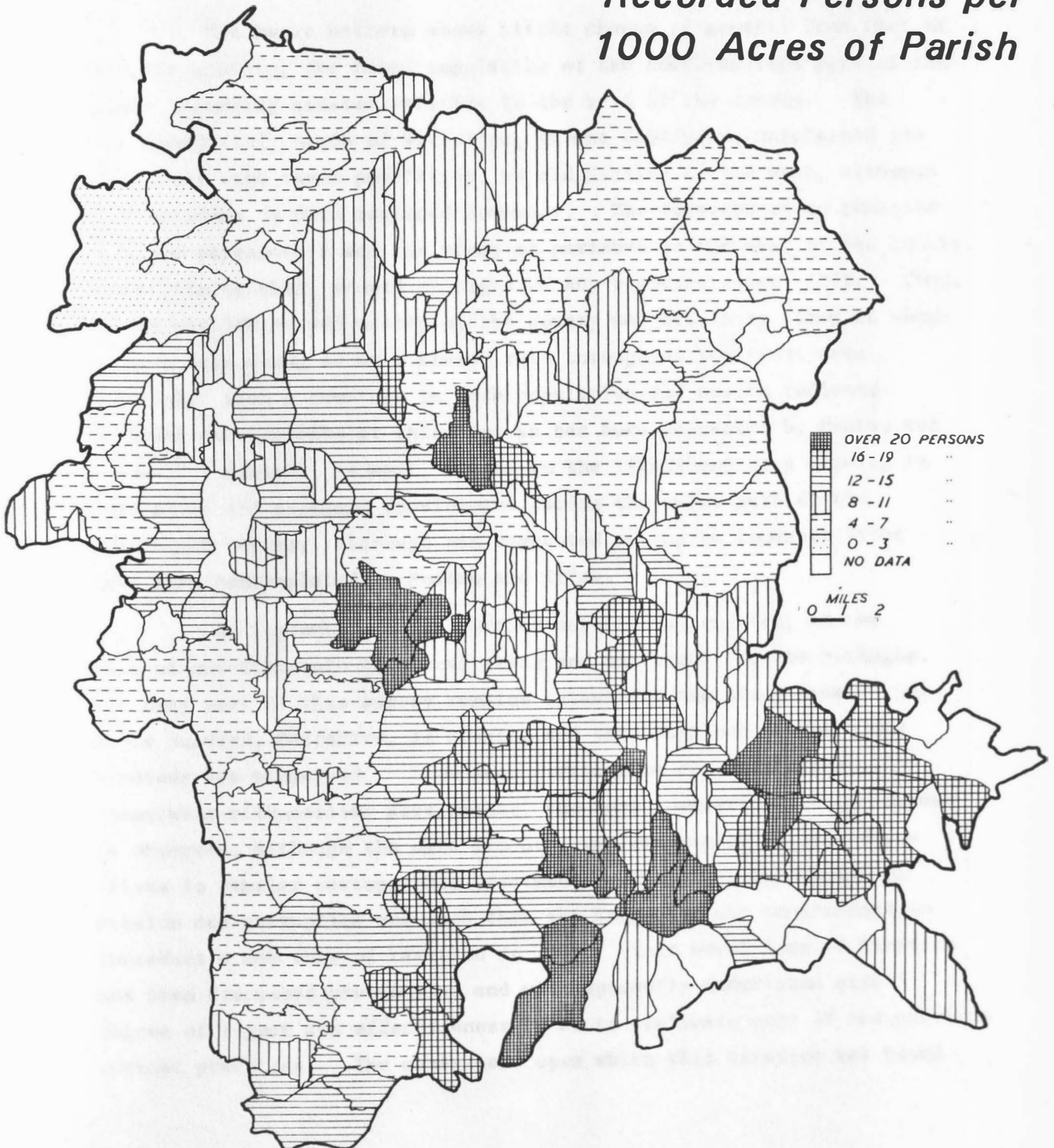
Despite the shortcomings of this taxation, it is important in that it is the only other subsidy which provides a list of tax paying population within the study period. This total also shows a decline from the earlier figure, although the two are not directly comparable,

as the taxable minimum was different, being 6/8 in 1275 and 10 shillings in 1327. However, the subsidy does reveal other symptoms of a general decline in wealth, as only 145 places were recorded as making returns, averaging £1-18-0, compared with 220 returns averaging £5-10-0 in 1275. One of the reasons for the decline in the number of places mentioned was the degree of amalgamation that occurred in 1327, for example, the return for Kempsey includes 11 other settlements, Kidderminster 5 and Chaddesley Corbett 6. F. J. Eld considers this to indicate a decline in population from 1275 such that it was no longer feasible, in 1327, to tax many settlements as separate units.<sup>56</sup> However, in some cases those settlements combined together in 1327 were taxed once again as separate units in 1334, a case in point being the Littletons (North, Middle and South) suggesting more factors were at work than just population change. A good deal of the amalgamation was probably due to administrative changes in the actual assessment, for the convenience of perhaps a more lax tax collector, although it is possible that these changes may well have been forced upon the assessor through a combination of evasion and declining population, for many of the smaller settlements do not appear in any subsequent taxations. Those settlements, such as Bromsgrove, which in 1275 had subsumed a considerable number of other smaller settlements, retained the same structure in 1327, as no new settlement names appear. In cases where the assessment has been combined with a place outside the study area, as occurs with Castlemorton and Chacely, and Birtsmorton and Staunton, the total has simply been halved on Figure 8.10.

The number of recorded persons per vill in 1327 can be somewhat misleading, as it is obvious that many of the larger tax paying vills in the north and west were composite assessments covering a large area. Where it is explicitly stated that the taxed population for a number of vills is included under the one total, those vills have been shown on the maps as joined by a thin line to the main mentioned settlement. This amalgamation occurs throughout the study area, but does seem concentrated to the east and south east of Worcester town, an area mentioned previously in connection with the 1275 and 1292 taxations as one of apparent declining wealth. The taxed population is shown in terms of density on Figure 8.10, the borough areas of

FIGURE 8.10

**1327 SUBSIDY**  
*Recorded Persons per  
1000 Acres of Parish*



Worcester, Droitwich and Evesham being included. The fact that they do not appear as particularly outstanding on either map is indicative of the relatively low number of people this taxation netted, for, as R. H. Hilton has shown with regard to Gloucester, the greater part of the borough inhabitants did not contribute towards this taxation at all.<sup>57</sup>

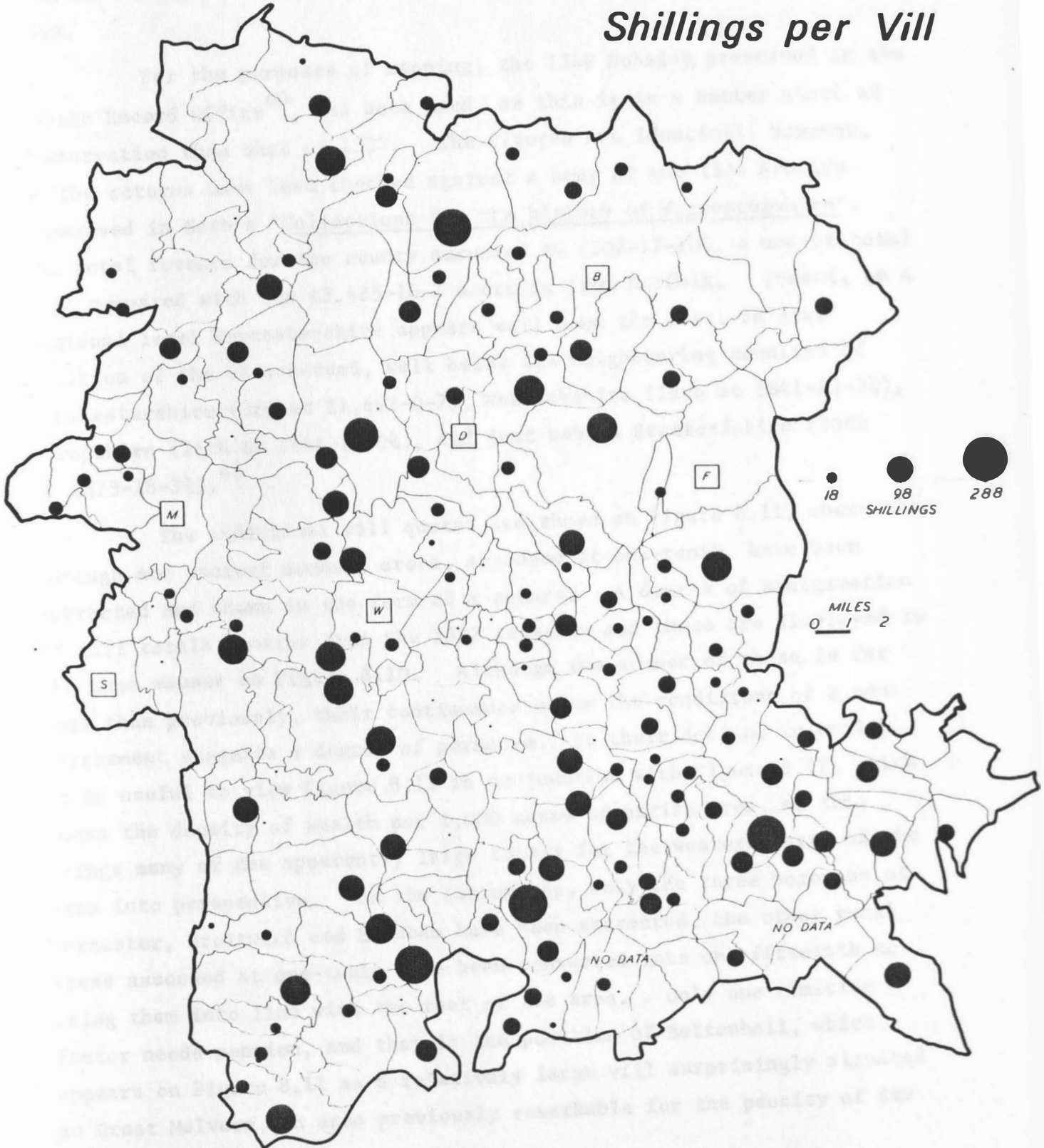
The basic pattern shows little change in general from that of 1275, it anything the taxed population of the south-eastern part of the county appearing greater relative to the rest of the county. The area immediately north of Worcester, around Ombersley, maintained its relatively high taxed population, as did Martley to the west, although Suckley seems to have declined somewhat. The forested areas remained with low assessments and the group of parishes in the east of the county, around the Lenches, showed no signs of any recovery since 1275. Thus, if the population and wealth of the county was declining, then it seems to have been doing so at a steady rate throughout the study area. Certainly, such a downturn in both population and wealth reflects national developments at this time as has been suggested by Postan and Titow.<sup>58</sup> Russell, as well, admits to the likelihood of a slowing in population and economic development during the early part of the fourteenth century, although his suggested dating is somewhat later than that contemplated by Postan and Titow.<sup>59</sup>

In September 1332 a further subsidy was granted, at the rate of one-fifteenth for rural areas and one-tenth for the boroughs, but only part of this survey remains extant for the study area. One whole hundred, Halfshire, is missing and only portions of the other hundreds are preserved. From such portions as remain and are comparable with earlier assessments, the same downward trend in revenue is observed, although the data are not complete enough to lend themselves to similar cartographic treatment. Moreover, the amount of evasion and corruption was such that the Exchequer was constrained to introduce a new form of taxation in 1334. This novel form of taxation has been discussed previously, and was apparently undertaken with a degree of rigour and effectiveness so as to eradicate many of the previous corrupt practices. The assessment upon which this taxation was based



FIGURE 8.11

# 1349 SUBSIDY Shillings per Vill





remained in existence for nearly two centuries, which allows any gaps in the record of 1334 to be filled in from later taxations. As mentioned previously, although the taxed population is not included in this subsidy, it does allow a reasonable estimate of the distribution of wealth at a crucial time just before the decimation caused by the Black Death of 1349.

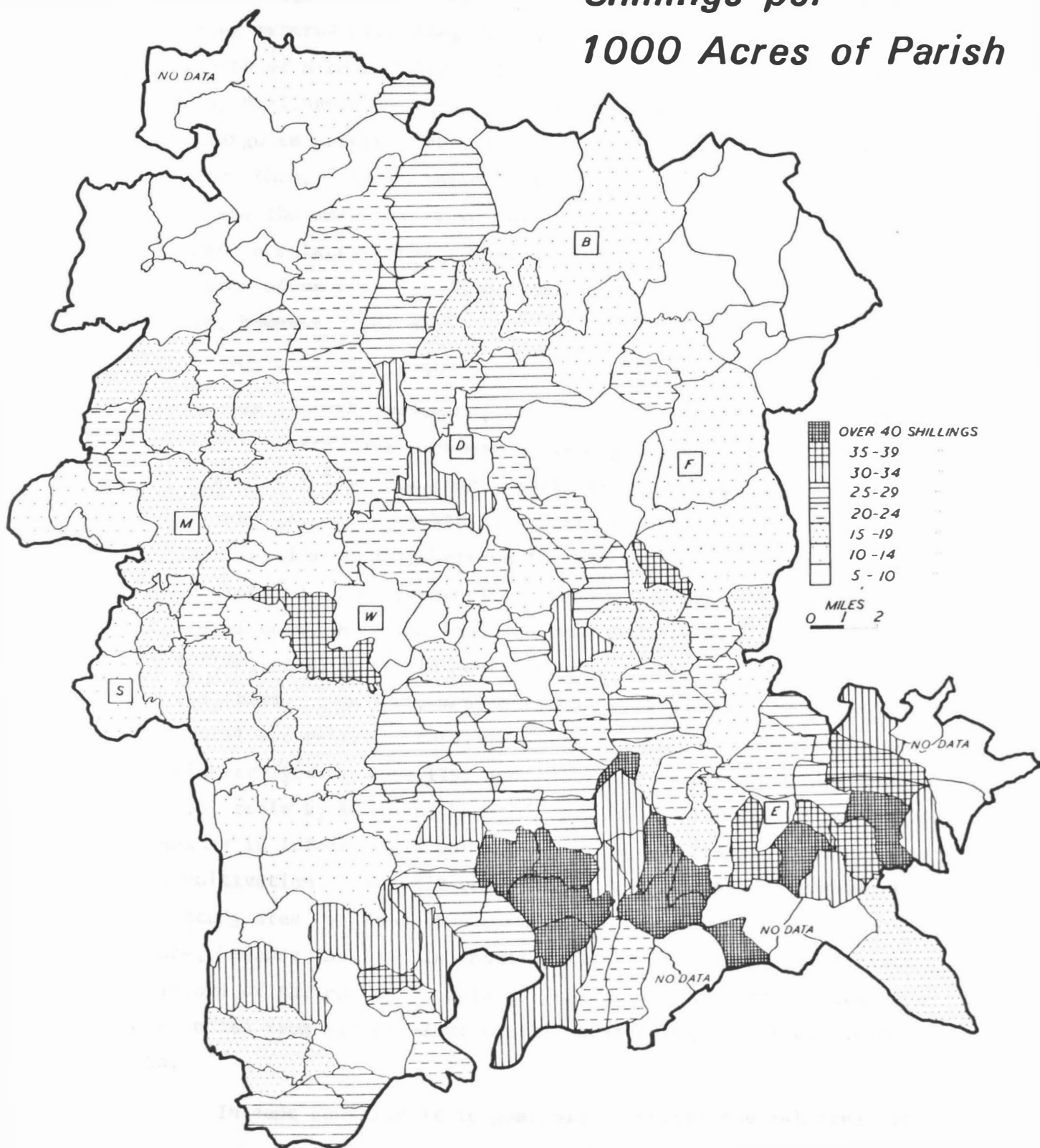
For the purposes of mapping, the 1349 Subsidy, preserved in the Public Record Office<sup>60</sup>, has been used, as this is in a better state of preservation than that of 1334. The figures are identical, however, as the returns have been checked against a copy of the 1334 Subsidy preserved in Nash's 'Collections for the history of Worcestershire'. The total revenue for the county amounted to £502-17-10½, a modest total when compared with the £3,485-16-7 accruing from Norfolk. Indeed, on a national level Worcestershire appears well down the list, in 31st position of the 42 assessed, well below its neighbouring counties of Gloucestershire (3rd at £1,642-0-7), Warwickshire (19th at £841-13-3¾), Shropshire (26th at £644-12-0¼), and just behind Staffordshire (30th at £575-18-3¾).<sup>61</sup>

The individual vill quotas are shown on Figure 8.11, where the borough and ancient demesne areas, assessed at one-tenth, have been extracted and shown in the form of a square. A degree of amalgamation of vill totals remains from the 1327 taxation and these are displayed in the same manner as Figure 8.10. Although the number of these is far less than previously, their continuance under the conditions of a new assessment suggests a degree of permanency to their decline in wealth. It is useful to view Figure 8.11 in conjunction with Figure 8.12, which shows the density of wealth per 1,000 acres of parish area, as this brings many of the apparently large totals for the western parts of the area into perspective. On the latter map, only the three boroughs of Worcester, Droitwich and Evesham have been extracted, the other rural areas assessed at one-tenth have been converted into one-fifteenths to bring them into line with the rest of the area. Only one limiting factor needs mention, and that is the position of Battenhall, which appears on Figure 8.11 as a relatively large vill surprisingly situated in Great Malvern, an area previously remarkable for the paucity of its

FIGURE 8.12

# 1349 SUBSIDY

*Shillings per  
1000 Acres of Parish*



returns. The exact location of Battenhall is unknown and, although Mawer and Stenton place it within the Malvern area<sup>62</sup>, it could possibly have been linked with Battenhall in Worcester, where there was a convent of that name. The relative affluence of the south-eastern part of the study area is again reinforced, even during the period of supposedly diminishing returns preceding the Black Death. A group of parishes to the north of Bredon Hill, running down to the Avon terrace belt and comprising Birlingham, Bredon's Norton, Eckington, Defford and Elmley Castle emerge as particularly affluent areas compared with those surrounding them. Again those areas of forest retain their lowly position and the small villis to the east of Worcester continue to demonstrate a relatively poor condition. A slight increase in the distribution of wealth throughout much of the area west of the Severn is, however, apparent.

The final taxation considered in this study is the Nonarum Inquisitiones of 1342, which relates to a grant made by Parliament to Edward III to defray war expenses by granting one-ninth of the value of corn, wool and lambs produced in the realm during 1341. The jurors used, as a guide, the Pope Nicholas Taxation of 1292 and were required to explain any discrepancy between the two. Certain discrepancies could be expected, for the clerical incomes of 1292 included more than the tithe of corn, wool and lambs to which the Nonarum Inquisitiones is equivalent, including, in addition, the spiritualities and other connected items. However, many discrepancies did occur due to changed agricultural and economic conditions, this often being a contraction in arable acreages between 1292 and 1341. This has been discussed on a national scale by A. R. H. Baker<sup>63</sup>, but in Worcestershire the discrepancy in totals would not appear to be the result of land going out of cultivation. In only one case is this specifically mentioned in the study area, at Rous Lench, where the jurors state that there is not more, because the land is uncultivated owing to the multifarious oppressions of the poor.<sup>64</sup> This is instructive in that it occurs in an area noted from all previous taxations as being one of declining wealth.

In some counties it is possible to assess the relative values

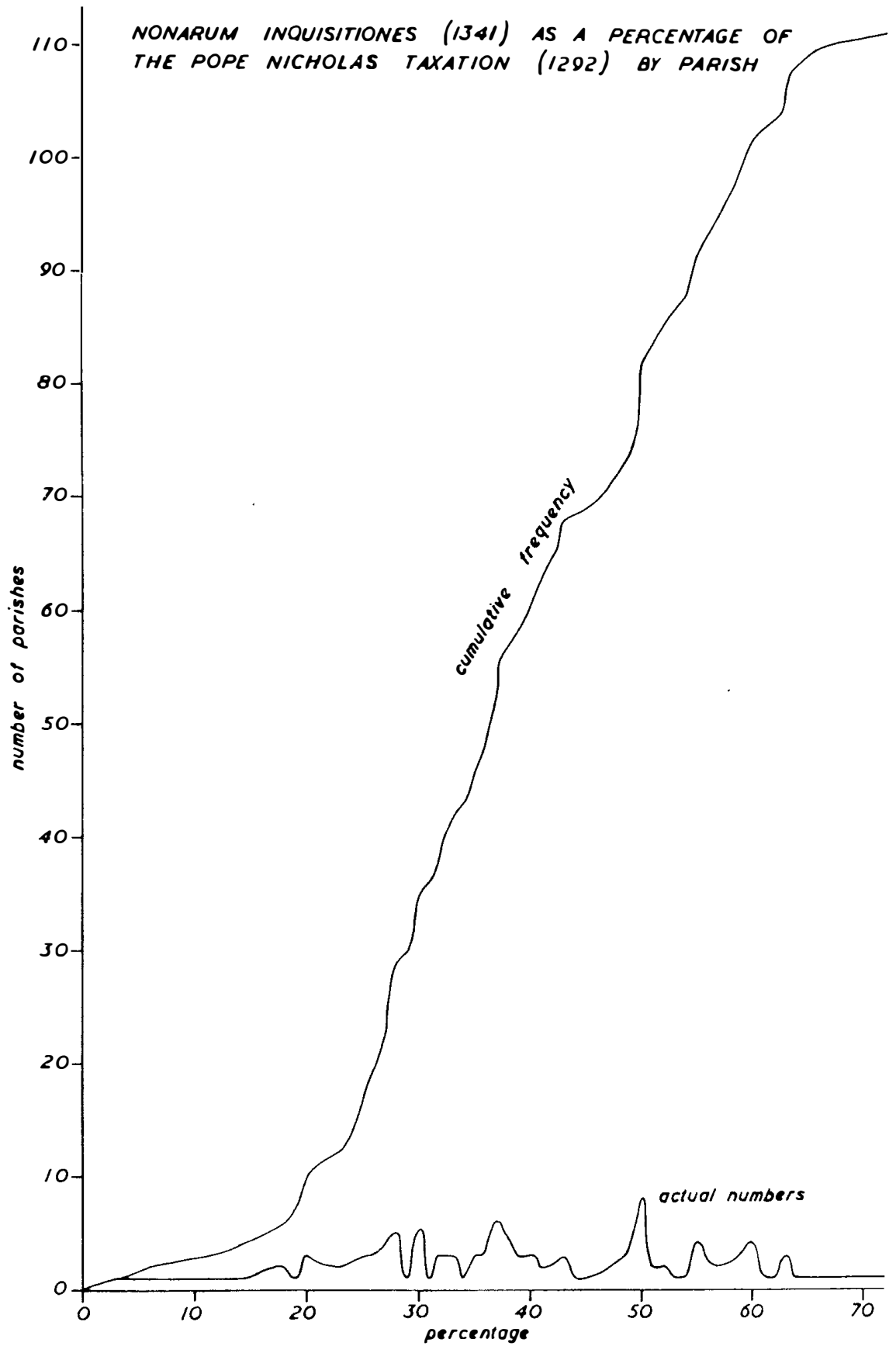
of the corn, wool and lambs, but in Worcestershire this approach is invalidated by the combining of all items into a single total value. However, the fact that the assessors used the 1291 Pope Nicholas Taxation as a base does allow a degree of comparison between the two, which is not usually possible between such taxations. Caution must still be exercised in any conclusions from such a comparison, as many factors enter into the differences between the two totals, all of which cannot be assigned to changing economic or agrarian conditions. The two taxations were essentially based on different criteria, although all aspects of the Nonarum were subsumed within the Pope Nicholas Taxation. Of all parishes for which the Nonarum was returned, five were untaxed in 1292, Oddingley because it was below taxation, Churchill by Worcester and Pedmore for no assigned reason, and the two Worcester parishes of St. Martins and St. Peters because their value consisted entirely of oblations and charities.

The decline in revenue between the two taxations was considerable, as over £1,154 was gathered from the study area in 1292 compared with just over £497 in 1341, representing a decline of 56.9%. When the two are compared on a parish basis (Fig. 8.13), it can be seen that the vast majority of parishes in 1341 returned between 20% and 60% of the 1292 figure, a point emphasised by the following table:-

TABLE 8.8 PERCENTAGE DECLINE IN VALUE BETWEEN 1292 AND 1341 TAXATIONS

<u>1341 as % of 1292 Taxation</u>	<u>Nos. of Parishes</u>	<u>% of Parishes</u>
Below 20%	10	8.5
21 - 30%	25	21.4
31 - 40%	26	22.2
41 - 50%	21	17.9
51 - 60%	21	17.9
Above 61%	14	12.0
	117	99.9%
Total		

FIGURE 8.13



The lowest percentage returns occurred in the following parishes:-<sup>65</sup>

Abbots Morton	Kington	White Ladies Aston	
Astley	Madresfield	Witley	
Bredicot	Martin Hussintree	Witton St. Mary	) 2 parishes
Bredon	Spetchley	Witton St. Peter	) of
Hill Croome	Tardebigge		) Droitwich

These are, areally, fairly widespread but were situated entirely outside the Avon valley and Vale of Evesham area, only Bredon seeming out of place in such a list, as the decline in its taxation was catastrophic, without any apparent explanation.

Those parishes paying in excess of 60% of the 1292 total were:

Broadway	Feckenham	Huddington
Bromsgrove	Flyford Flavell	The Littletons
Clifton-on-Teme	Hanley Castle	Little Malvern
Eckington	Himbleton	Upton Snodsbury

These again form a puzzling distribution with no clear pattern emerging, as the distribution is a wide one, extending from Bromsgrove on the northern border, Broadway on the south, Feckenham in the east to Clifton-on-Teme in the west. Huddington, the only parish to return more in 1341 than 1292, had such an exalted position owing to its underassessment in 1292.<sup>66</sup> However, a straight comparison in terms of percentage is not valid owing to the differences between the two taxations, as it is impossible to assess the exact amount of property that was valued in 1292, but not in 1341. A more effective method is provided by a comparison of each parish's percentage contribution to the study area total at each date. As the two taxations were based on identical areal units, it is possible to compute the percentage each parish contributed and compare these at the two dates, thus giving an indication of the parish's change in ranking order. This method retains a degree of autonomy for each taxation, as essentially what is being compared is not the taxation, but the ranking order within each taxation.

Generally, changes in percentage contribution were small, the majority occurring between + .3% and -.3% change, as can be seen from the following :-

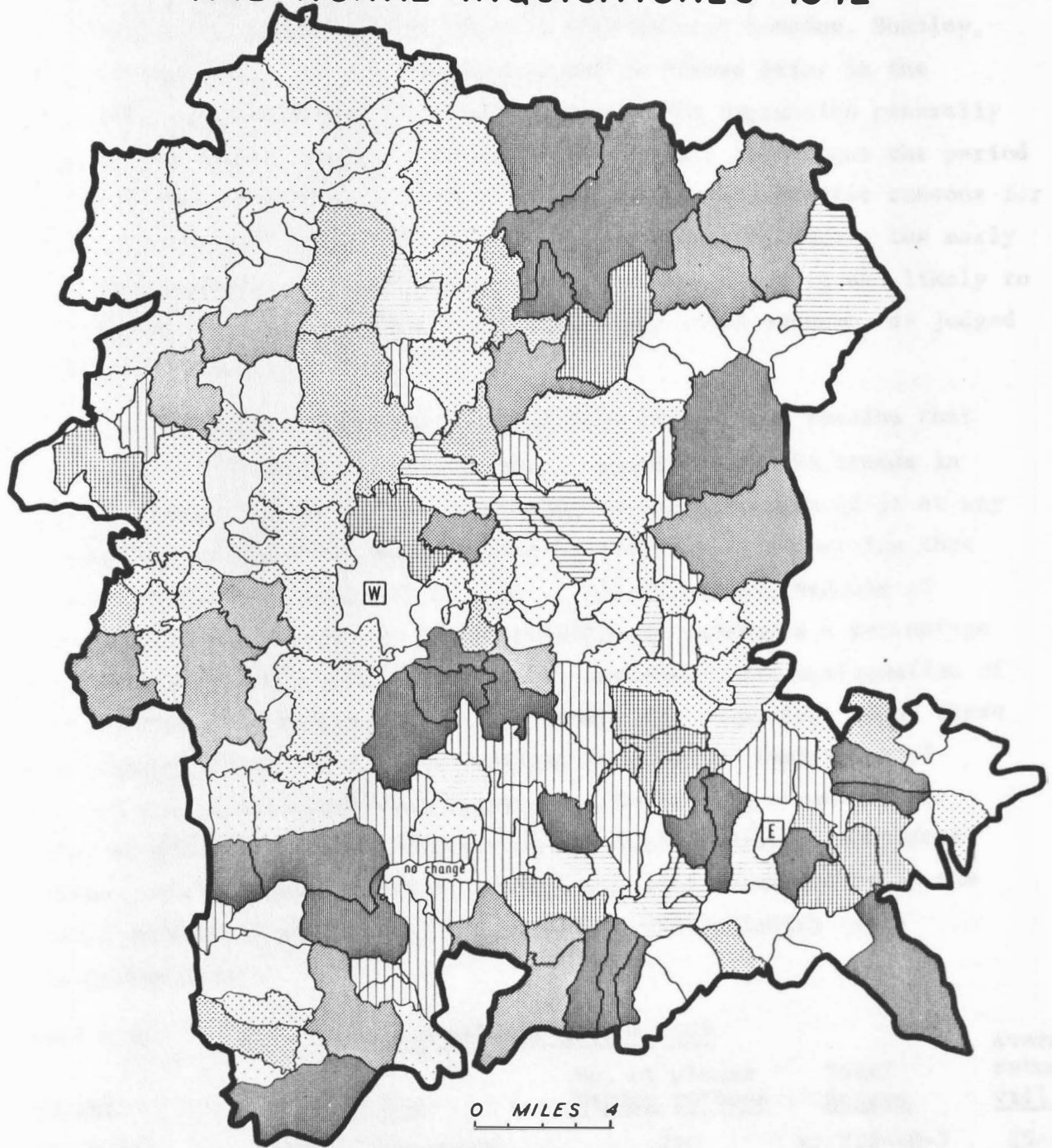
TABLE 8.9      CHANGE IN PARISH PERCENTAGE CONTRIBUTION TO  
1292 AND 1341 TAXATIONS

<u>Change in Percentage</u> <u>Contribution 1292-1341</u>	<u>No. of parishes</u>	<u>% total parishes</u>
+ .21 - .30%	8	7.0
+ .11 - .20%	12	10.5
+ .01 - .10%	13	11.4
no change	1	.8
- .01 - .10	18	15.9
- .11 - .20	23	20.2
- .21 - .30	12	10.5
Total	87	76.3%

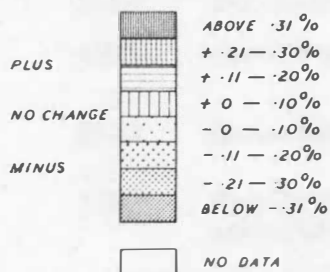
The two outstanding changes occurred at Bredon, as previously mentioned, with a drop of 2.14%, which is equivalent to dropping, that parish's ranking order from near the top to the bottom, whilst, in the other direction Bromsgrove rose 1.78%. Neither of these is adequately explained in the Nonae returns. The percentage change by parish is shown on Figure 8.14, which does not represent the wealth of the parishes concerned, merely their relative ranking position in 1341 as compared with 1292. Those parishes maintaining and improving their relative position in the wealth hierarchy were situated mainly in the south-east, centring on the Avon valley and Vale of Evesham area, with some extension westward to Upton-on-Severn and Hanley Castle on the west bank terraces of the Severn. Outside this area, parishes showing positive figures were more isolated, Feckenham in the west, Bromsgrove and Belbroughton in the north, and Clifton-on-Teme and Shelsley Beauchamp in the west. Those areas demonstrating negative changes were more widespread, although many show only small changes in the 0.01 and 0.20 classes, forming some 36% of all

FIGURE 8.14

**PERCENTAGE CHANGE IN PARISH CONTRIBUTION  
BETWEEN POPE NICHOLAS TAXATION 1292  
AND NONAE INQUISITIONES 1342**



**CHANGE IN PERCENTAGE CONTRIBUTION**



**W WORCESTER**

**E EVESHAM**



parishes recorded in the two taxations. The distribution extends throughout most of the north and west of the study area with smaller, more isolated groups, located immediately to the east of Worcester, on the eastern border around Abbots Morton and the Lenches, and in a discontinuous line along the Cotswold fringe on the southern border. This latter area extending from west to east through Longdon, Bushley, Bredon, Sedgebarrow, Church Honeybourne and to Cleeve Prior in the south-east, is perhaps the most surprising, as the impression generally gained of the area was one of maintenance of wealth throughout the period covered by the subsidies. It is difficult to ascribe precise reasons for this, although they might well be sought in a downturn, during the early fourteenth century, of sheep production in an area where it was likely to have assumed considerable importance within the local economy, as judged by the 1292 taxation returns.

The general impression gained from Figure 8.14 remains that emphasised by all other subsidies, that, regardless of the trends in amount of wealth in the period, the relative concentration of it at any one time lay in the south eastern part of the county, a position that had been apparent as early as in 1086. Unfortunately, because of differing taxation units, it is not possible to undertake a percentage contribution analysis upon other subsidy returns. The amalgamation of vills for taxation purposes after 1275 makes any comparison along these lines meaningless. It is only possible to gain an impression of temporal change by considering Figures 8.5 to 8.13 as a consecutive series of distributions. Considering the whole series of subsidies together, certain general points emerge, the most prominent being the overall decline in wealth over the period. The following table illustrates this :-

TABLE 8.10

TAXATION RETURNS 1275 - 1349

<u>Subsidy</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Tax</u>	<u>No. of places Making returns</u>	<u>Total Return</u>	<u>Average return p vill</u>
Lechmere Roll	1275	One-tenth	220	£1,211-10-7	£5-10-0
Pope Nicholas	1292	One-tenth	114(parishes)	£1,154-10-8	£10-2-5
Lay Subsidy	1327	One-twentieth	145	£275-9-7	£1-18-0
Nonae Inquisitiones	1341	One-ninth	120	£497-6-5	£4-2-10
Lay Subsidy	1349	One-tenth & one-fifteenth	148	£381-9-1	£2-7-7

In terms of total taxable value for the study area this represents:-

1275	£12,115-5-10
1292	£11,545-6-8
1327	£5,509-15-0
1341	£4,476-0-9
1349	£5,393-19-5

As the 1349 taxation is the exact equivalent of 1334, the totals represent a steady decline over the time period. Despite the difficulties of tax comparability and increasing evasion and corruption, all trends point to a decline in wealth throughout the study area. Not only does the total taxable valuation decline, but also the degree of amalgamation of tax units increases as the taxed population declines. The decline in Lay valuations between 1275 and 1349, when the latter taxation is known to have been free of much of the previous evasion and corrupt practices shows a decline of 56%, which is in accordance with a similar decline in clerical valuation between 1292 and 1341 or 60%. F. J. Eld<sup>67</sup> made a comparison of the same 53 tax paying vills in 3 subsidies

Date	Tax population
1275	1171
1327	1118
1332	885

which represents a decline of 20% over the period. This may not have any direct significance in terms of total population, but almost certainly means that an increasing number of people were considered to be below the taxable minimum in terms of possessions.

Most economic historians now accept that the early part of the fourteenth, if not the later years of the thirteenth, century were ones of economic recession, characterised by Postan's "withdrawal after the honeymoon of high yields of the thirteenth century".<sup>68</sup> The Worcestershire subsidy evidence complies with this trend, although within each subsidy as well as over all, a regional distribution of wealth, with a concentration in the south-eastern part of the area remains. The

general similarity between the distribution in the early fourteenth century and that of Domesday valuation is marked, which is surprising considering the colonizing activity that had taken place in the north and western parts of the area between the two dates. One explanation could be sought in terms of Postan's argument of withdrawal from the marginal lands, in that the areas brought into cultivation in the north and west had only been done so under conditions of extreme population pressure. The marginal nature of such land for tillage purposes would quickly result in soil exhaustion and withdrawal back to the intrinsically more fertile areas of the south-east. However, in Worcestershire, such an argument finds no supporting evidence, nor would it appear tenable on physiographic grounds. There is no reason to believe that the soils of the sandstone plateau fringe and the Keuper Marl areas are any less fertile than either the Lower and Middle Lias clays or the terrace deposits of the Avon valley. Indeed, modern land use would seem to indicate that in the long run, the opposite might be true.<sup>69</sup> A more plausible explanation can be advanced in two ways. Firstly, that the colonizing movement in the north resulted in a different type of settlement, at once more dispersed and more individually orientated as it was based on holdings in severality rather than communally. This gave rise to a lower population density and a more mixed type of agrarian economy, which probably would not have required the same degree of investment in such things as plough teams and other moveable goods. Secondly, the degree of capital investment already in existence in 1086 in the nucleated settlements of the common field manors, which formed the centre of most ecclesiastical estates, would have been sufficient to maintain a regional differential throughout the period. This alone would not necessarily have affected any decline in per capita income and wealth in these southern areas. However, population expansion from 1086 would have been considerable in these areas due to the natural increase of an already sizeable rural community, and it is clear that in a period of declining wealth and returns the effects on the wealth of the peasantry could have been considerable. The first evidence of impoverishment of parts of the southern area occurs late, in 1341, where some of the southern border parishes failed to maintain the differential in wealth vis-a-vis the rest of the study area.

The foregoing has been concerned only with general considerations over the whole study area, and any explanation for changes on the micro-scale of individual manors or vills must depend on a study of manorial documentation associated with the various estates that are considered later in this work.

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CHAPTER 9  
WOODLAND CLEARANCE  
AND THE PROCESSES OF COLONIZATION

1087 - 1349

In the previous chapter it has been demonstrated that the post-conquest period was characterised by both settlement advance and population increase. However, the marked regional contrast in the location of 'new' settlements was not matched by the distribution of wealth and tax paying population, which remained very similar to those of Domesday times. Indeed, in some respect the gradient of wealth between the south-east and the north-west of the county became steeper. Similarly, on an individual basis, wealth became increasingly concentrated into fewer hands, with the ecclesiastical authorities being the main beneficiaries. The conflict between these two features is probably more apparent than real, for it was seen that the majority of the new settlement in this period comprised isolated farmsteads, whose overall contribution to both population and wealth was probably small.

The analysis of the place names pertaining to settlements first mentioned after 1086 suggested an association with woodland, a feature supported by the distribution shown on Figure 8.4. However, it is instructive if the distribution of these settlements is compared with the estate ownership at the time of Domesday Book, to which end Table 9.1 has been prepared.

TABLE 9.1 SETTLEMENTS FIRST MENTIONED 1087-1350 BY DOMESDAY ESTATE

<u>ESTATE</u>	<u>NUMBER OF SETTLEMENTS</u>	<u>PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL</u>	<u>ESTATE AREA AS A PERCENT OF TOTAL COUNTY</u>
Church of Worcester	139	44.1	32.2
Church of Westminster	17	5.4	10.6
Church of Pershore	17	5.4	7.1
Church of Evesham	15	4.8	6.7
Lay Estates	78	24.8	27.0
Royal Estates	49	15.5	16.4
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

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Despite the concentration of settlement first mentioned in this period in the north and western parts of the county (Fig. 8.4), it was predominantly located on the estates of the Church of Worcester. As can be seen from Table 9.1 their percentage of the total numbers of settlements far exceeded the estate area as a percentage of the total county. It is, therefore, not surprising that the Church of Worcester increased its share of the wealth in the post-conquest period, for it was able to command the lion's share of the new rents that were being generated. This adds further weight to the evidence for post-conquest settlement creation, in that the Worcester estates are best served by pre-conquest documentation and it is thus least likely that settlements established here in the pre-conquest period could have escaped mention until the post-conquest period. Of course, these 'new' settlements were not distributed evenly throughout the Domesday manorial structure of the Church's estates. They were largely concentrated on the more western and northern manors, which retained sizeable amounts of woodland in 1086. Thus the six Domesday manors of Kempsey, Wick Episcopi, Hanbury, Hartlebury, Wolverley and Inkberrow provided 56 per cent of the new mentions, whilst the five manors in the Avon valley, of Overbury, Sedgebarrow, Harvington, Cropthorne and Cleeve Prior, provided only 2 per cent. It must be remembered that the comparison being made is based upon Domesday manors and many of these were heavily subinfeudated and became increasingly divorced from the Church in the post-conquest period, thus perhaps over-emphasising the Church contribution as against that of the laity. Whilst this is a distinct possibility on the manors of Wick Episcopi and Kempsey, large parts of which were subinfeudated to Urse d'Abitot and eventually fell into the hands of the Beauchamps, it is not true of Hartlebury or Hanbury, which remained entirely in church hands. Thus, there seems little doubt that the Church of Worcester played an active role in encouraging and developing new settlement in their estates in this period.

Surprisingly, the Royal Estates, which at the time of Domesday Book were amongst the most wooded parts of the county, show a lower number of new mentions of settlement. Again there is marked distinction in the distribution of these settlements between those areas, such as

Feckenham, which were the centres of Forest administration and show a small contribution of new settlements (6%), and those more peripherally located within the Royal Forests, such as Bromsgrove and Tardebigge, which possess the major share (37%). The Lay Estates, after the Church of Worcester, have the greatest number of new settlement mentions, although the percentage of the total is noticeably lower than the area of the estates as a percentage of the county total. Again the distribution between Domesday manors is variable, although there is a general correlation with Domesday woodland. Thus, Rock, Astley, Elmley Lovett, Clifton, Wychbold, Belbroughton, Stone and Chaddesley Corbett, although forming only 33.3 percent of the Domesday Lay Estates have 87 percent of the new mentions of settlement. Only in the case of Stone does Domesday Book make no mention of woodland, although the amount at Wychbold appears small (1 'lewede') and at Astley there is an enigmatic entry of woodland which renders nothing.

There is a general correlation between the location of new settlement mentions and Domesday woodland, although it is impossible to prove an absolute coincidence due to imprecise location and record of woodland in Domesday Book. The link between the two is further strengthened by the fact that 38 percent of new settlement mentions were found on those manors defined as woodland economies in Chapter 7. These manors, it will be remembered, represented only a small part of the total wooded area of the county. Also, 66.6 percent of new mentions are to be found within the bounds of Royal Forest as defined on Figure 9. Thus, whatever contribution the establishment of new settlements might have made in housing the growing population of the county in the post-conquest period, its impact upon the woodland was dramatic in that, by 1350, it had almost completely decimated the once extensive Domesday woodlands.

Although it has been possible to evaluate the colonizing movement of the eleventh to thirteenth centuries in general terms, the actual processes involved are far more intangible. Extension of the common fields at the expense of manorial waste and woodland was likely to have been a continuous process stretching back well beyond the Conquest into the Anglo-Saxon period. Duby points to this as

one of the most important aspects of post-conquest colonization in its role of extending arable land,<sup>1</sup> but it is a process that can rarely be glimpsed in the documents. Its existence is often shown by field names such as 'intake' or 'stubbing', but the extent and date of such additions to common fields remain unknowable. Undoubtedly the process occurred throughout Worcestershire, although the amount of room for expansion in the south-eastern part was likely to have been fairly limited, as the area appears to have been already well stocked and exploited at the time of Domesday. In other areas, however, this process would have played an important part in the outward spread of the fields from the manorial centres into the woodland and waste within which they were set in 1086. Without any documentary evidence it is impossible to give any substantive estimate as to the progress of this particular type of communal action, but, by the early fourteenth century, with heavy population pressure on resources, it is certain that within the old established settlement areas, virtually all available land had been brought into cultivation.

More discernible from documentary evidence is the type of individualistic colonization that resulted in the dispersed settlement pattern usually associated with holdings in severalty. B. K. Roberts, in a study of land charters, was able to follow the progress of this type of colonization in some detail within the parish of Tanworth in Arden, Warwickshire.<sup>2</sup> He was able to isolate four main features of colonization in that area:-

1. As a result of the granting of Land Charters by the Earl of Warwick after 1180, the development of small enclosed fields held in severalty and usually associated with a dispersed pattern of farm settlements. Some of these grants were block grants of 15-60 acres, but the majority were relatively small being between 2-15 acres.
2. The rapid rise of a class of small landholders who became wealthy freemen, and were able to create large compact holdings by buying out smaller freeholders.
3. The intensification of the pattern of dispersed settlement as cottages and single farms spread throughout the area, but often concentrated in a particular favoured spot, such as at a crossroads, or where a small patch of wasteland was available as rough grazing.

4. The development between 1250-1300 of a vigorous land market, allowing increased opportunity for the engrossing of holdings.

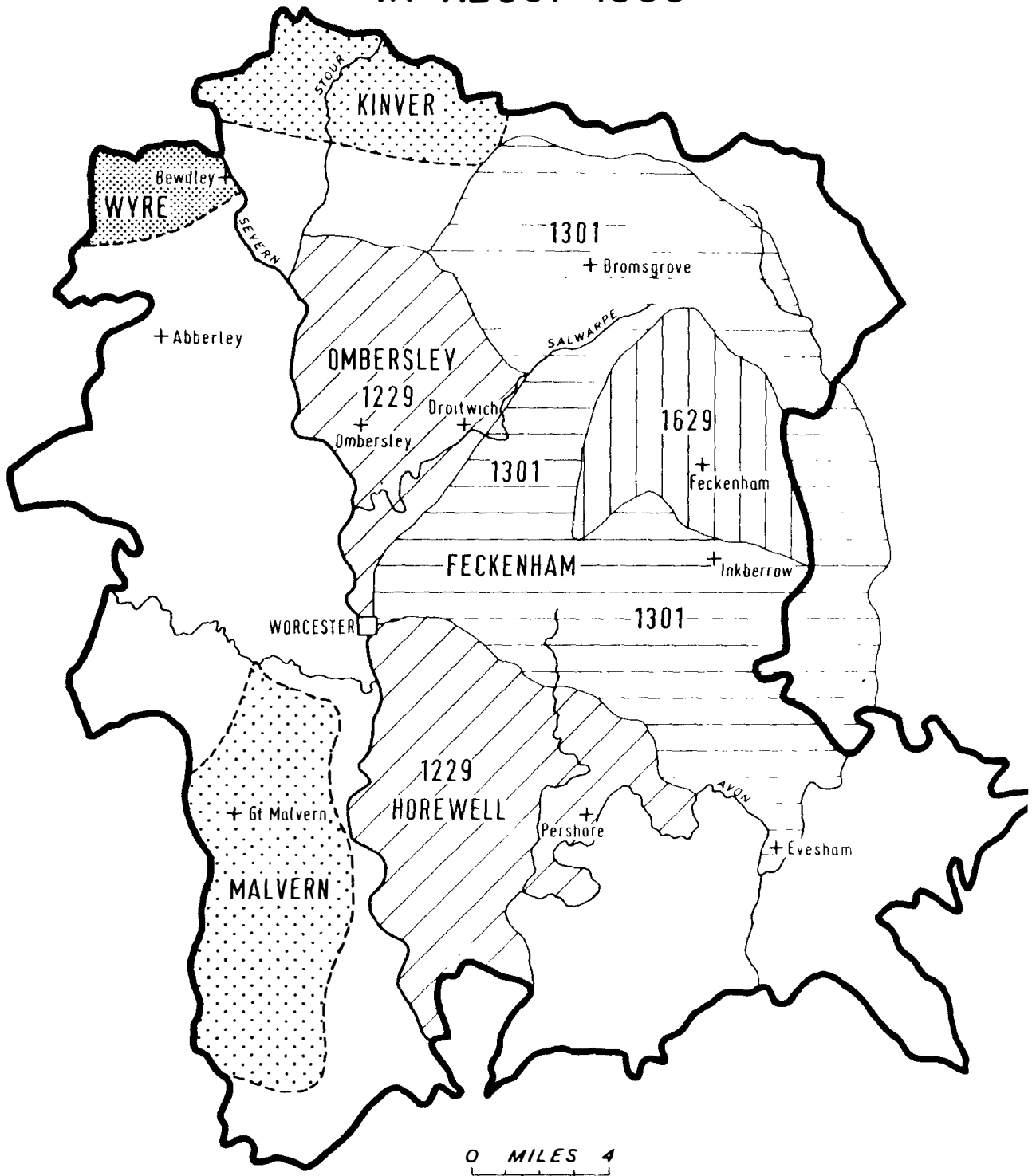
Due to the lack of equivalent documentation it is not possible to study the progress of colonization in such detail for the study area, although it is likely that many of the processes noted by Roberts occurred in Worcestershire. However, the significant difference between Arden and Worcestershire lies in the fact that the vast majority of the latter's woodland lay within the bounds of the Royal Forest. This means that less was left to individual seigniorial enterprise through the granting of land charters and more emphasis was placed upon the granting of assarts, although the resultant effects were often very similar. At the outset, it is necessary to re-emphasise the distinction between the terms 'forest' and 'woodland'. 'Forest' was a legal term, not a botanical one, and referred essentially to the type of administration applying to an area and the preservation of certain rights such as hunting, game protection as well as a general protection of the vert. Thus territory afforested, in the medieval sense, was not necessarily woodland, for it could contain a whole range of land usage from moorland, wastes and pastures, right through to agricultural land and habitation centres. Woodland, on the other hand, is a more explicitly botanical term referring to stands of trees and underwood. Worcestershire exemplifies this distinction well, for, while at the time of Domesday only some parts of the county were well wooded, during the early thirteenth century the vast majority of the county area was declared Forest. In fact the paradox is complete, in that whilst William I and his 'hunter-king' successors expanded the 'Forest', the woodland area was constantly shrinking due to the attack of colonization and clearance. It was not until the reign of Henry III, in the early thirteenth century, that enough pressure could be brought to bear on the monarchy to reduce the area under Forest Law in Worcestershire.<sup>3</sup>

The extent of the Royal Forest area during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries is shown in Figure 9.1, and comprised 5 major forests covering virtually the whole area north of the Avon. A comparison with the Domesday woodland cover, Figure 6.12, quickly establishes that not only was a large proportion of this area cultivated



FIGURE 9.1

### EXTENT OF THE FOREST IN ABOUT 1300



----- APPROXIMATE BOUNDARY  
1229 etc DATE OF DISAFFORESTATION

and thus not available for further colonization, but also that the central areas of the Forest retained a high proportion of woodland in 1086. Of the 5 forests, Ombersley and Horewell were disafforested early (1229), Malvern became a private Chase, Wyre formed only the northern tip of a large Shropshire forest, and only Feckenham retained a reasonable degree of documentation which allows a study of the processes of clearance. Thus, it is upon this latter that most attention will be concentrated.

### Wyre Forest

Only a relatively small part of the study area, around Bewdley and part of Rock, appear to have been included within this forest in the post-conquest period, although at one time there is reason to believe it may have extended southwards along the west bank of the Severn as far south as Worcester. Its bounds are somewhat indefinite in Worcestershire and are shown by a dotted line on Figure 9.1. The main Shropshire part of the Forest, around the manors of Cleobury and Kinlet seem to have descended to the Mortimore family during the thirteenth century, although the Bewdley part appears to have remained in Royal hands until Elizabethan times.<sup>4</sup> After the perambulation of 1300, its area within Worcestershire seems to have been reduced to a three to four mile wide stretch immediately to the west and north-west of Bewdley. Reference to the distribution of Domesday woodland, Figure 6.12, shows that the shallow acid soils of the Carboniferous in this area were well wooded at the time, with a sporadically developed settlement distribution. Undoubtedly, colonization occurred in this area subsequent to the conquest, as can be seen from Figure 8.4, although the area of Wyre Forest, delimited on Figure 9.1, only covers the northern-most area of Rock and part of the Royal manor of Kidderminster. In fact, first mentions of settlement in the post-conquest period are far more common on the immediate periphery of this boundary, suggesting that in this period the Forest bounds shrank back to recognise the clearance that had been undertaken. Any settlement progress, however, was limited, as is attested by the sporadic and dispersed nature of present day settlement and the continuing wooded nature of the area. A survey

made of the coppices of Bewdley in 1650<sup>5</sup> shows the development of a number of small closes varying in size from 2 perches up to 7 acres, usually with a small cottage attached, and with the cleared land either devoted to arable or pasture. Also, at that time, some 700 timber trees were mentioned as being in privately owned coppices, although the majority of the timbered coppices remained held by the Crown. However, the process of colonization remains indistinct in this area as the vast majority of the small incursions into the wooded area went unrecorded.

### Kinver Forest

As with Wyre, only a small part of this forest extended into Worcestershire, the majority being concentrated around Kinver in Staffordshire and, once again, there is some doubt as to its exact extent within Worcestershire. At the time of Domesday, two furlongs of wood at Churchill seem to have been part of Kinver Forest<sup>6</sup>, as well as the woodland of Kidderminster. However, this latter reference is ambiguous as all that was stated was "The King has put the wood of this manor into his forest"<sup>7</sup> which could have meant Feckenham, but, as all the wastes of Kidderminster were recorded in 1300 as having been part of Kinver Forest it is reasonable to assume that the reference was to Kinver. The forest appears to have reached its greatest extent in the mid-twelfth century and to have included at that time parts of Broom, Yieldingtree, Chaddesley Corbett, Churchill, Hurcot, the wastes of Kidderminster and parts of Wolverley.<sup>8</sup> In the perambulation of 1300, the usual complaint was voiced that the larger part had only been afforested after 1154, which does not comply with the Domesday evidence, in that many places so mentioned by the perambulation were already included in the forest in 1086. After 1300 the southern boundary of the forest shrank back to the Staffordshire/Worcestershire county boundary leaving the whole Worcestershire part disafforested, although most of the Worcestershire manors continued to enjoy rights of common.<sup>9</sup> Although by no means a complete cover, extensive woodland did exist on this Triassic Sandstone area at the time of Domesday, but the process of its clearance can only be glimpsed occasionally. For example, in 1248 the Prior of Worcester was granted the right to assart 4 acres at Wolverley, 'within the metes of the forest of Kenefore'.<sup>10</sup>

At its maximum extent, Kinver Forest appears to have encompassed parts, at least, of the Royal manor of Kidderminster, the Church of Worcester's manor of Wolverley and the lay held manors of Stone, Chaddesley Corbett and Belbroughton. All of these, as previously mentioned, have large numbers of settlements first mentioned in the period 1087-1350 and these would seem to be the result of the clearance of Kinver Forest and to have produced the retreat of the Forest bounds to the county boundary. However, the precise process by which this occurred remained largely undocumented.

### Malvern Forest

At its maximum extent this forest, or more correctly Chase, extended over the whole area south of the Teme and west of the Severn. On the southern boundary of the county it merged with the timbered area of Corse Wood and probably extended at one time west of the county boundary on the Shropshire side of the Malvern Hills. Its extent in 1086 is hard to gauge from the Domesday account, although at this time it appears to have been a Royal Forest. Certainly it included the royal manor of Hanley and at least part of Upton, as woodland in the area is vaguely stated as having been 'in the forest of Malvern'. Figure 6.12 illustrates the wooded nature of the area in 1086, although Upton was a relatively well stocked manor at the time. Early in the twelfth century, William of Malmesbury described the area as a wilderness, which provided the then newly established Priory of Great Malvern with the seclusion they demanded.<sup>11</sup> However, the progress of clearance and colonization in the area tends to be obscured by the controversy that raged between the Earls of Gloucester and the Bishops of Hereford after the forest had become a private Chase.<sup>12</sup> Despite Leland's claim, in the sixteenth century, that the 'Chase of Malvern is bigger than Wire or Feckingham and occupieth a great part of Malvern Hills, Great Malverne and Little Malverne also is set in the Close of Malverne. Malverne Chase, I hear say, is in length, in some places, twenty miles,'<sup>13</sup> it is clear that a considerable amount of clearance had been undertaken in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The Priory of Great Malvern had been granted the woods at Baldenhall, Newland and Woodsfield to clear as the Priory wished, whilst in 1154

the Crown had received the sum of £88-16-0 for assarts which Smith estimates to represent the clearance of some 2,500 acres, tantamount to a quarter of the whole Chase.<sup>14</sup> The Churches of Worcester and Westminster also made inroads into the forest area in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, as the Bishop of Worcester was allowed to extend his existing assart at Welland Mill in 1196 and Westminster Abbey made assarts at Castlemorton and Birtsmorton in 1241.<sup>15</sup> Similar depredations of the timber would have been undertaken by the potters at Hanley and Great Malvern, the various tan houses and the charcoal burners, although this latter numbered only two in 1276.<sup>16</sup> Place names such as Assarts Common also indicate the process of clearance and the results of clearance can be seen in the large number of commons that exist in the area, which respectively from south to north, are Castlemorton Common, Assarts and Little Malvern commons, Welland Common, Hook Common, Hanley Common, Great Malvern Common and Link Common. The heath-like appearance of these areas represents the degradation that occurred when the original oak and birch woodland was replaced with thorn, scrub, bracken and rank grass subsequent to clearance. The particular soils developed on the drift-covered Keuper Marl were not appropriate for tillage and clearance was probably linked more with grazing than any extension of arable. Game appears to have been preserved by the creation of parks, particularly at Cowleigh, Blackmore, Hanley Castle and Farley Park, as well as in the more thickly wooded areas of the Earl's wood, and south of Blackmore park in the woods called Clepes and Faults. These areas seem to have been preserved with some assiduity throughout the period, for when the Chase returned to Royal hands in Tudor times, there remained a thousand head of deer. As compared with Feckenham, this area remained lightly settled and colonized throughout the study period, no doubt largely due to the fact that the soils of the Malvern Hills, combined with the fissured nature of the underlying rocks, led to conditions of excessive aridity making tillage impractical. Also, the character of the Malvern gravel deposits, upon which the commons were developed, is very variable as patches of acid silty loam alternate with patches of gravel, generally providing a less fertile soil with a tendency towards drainage impudence and lime and phosphate deficiencies.<sup>17</sup> In 1944, Buchanan

noted that 1/20th of the area identified as the Malvern Plain remained as a rough grazing area mainly situated on the commons.<sup>18</sup>

### Ombersley and Horewell Forests

These forests were contiguous with that of Feckenham, being located north and south of Worcester on the western boundary of Feckenham Forest (Fig. 9.1). In 1086, the southern area of Horewell had already been extensively cleared and settled, whilst Ombersley in the north retained more woodland cover. The bounds of the two forests are given in the disafforestation order of 13 Henry 3 (1229), and are shown on Figure 9.1.<sup>19</sup> In the disafforestation it was stated that "all men within the said bounds may enclose, impark, take, sell or assart their woods without view or denial of the foresters", although it would appear that there was by this time only a limited amount of woodland left. Certainly the King had been subjected to some pressure to disafforest these areas as the Bishop of Worcester, within whose property most of the forests lay, had paid 700 marks eleven years earlier for a perambulation. The main purpose of creating these two forests seems to have been in an attempt to protect the core area of woodland in Feckenham, and its early disafforestation provides a recognition that the two areas had been predominantly colonized and cultivated. Some evidence remains for later assarting in Ombersley (see Fig. 9.2), but generally the two forests were disafforested early, without much evidence remaining of the processes of clearance.

Two interesting features of the areas covered by these two Forests are the high density of settlements first mentioned between 1087 - 1350, and the ownership of the manors. Together, the two Forests encompass 27.3 percent of all settlements mentioned in this period, which is slightly greater than for the much larger area of Feckenham Forest (Fig. 9.1). Secondly, the manors concerned were predominantly ecclesiastically owned, in the case of Ombersley by Evesham Abbey and in Horewell, by the large Church of Worcester's manor at Kempsey. Undoubtedly these two features are linked, as is the considerable pressure that was placed upon the Royal authorities to disafforest the area. It is, therefore, no surprise that one of

the largest and earliest of the Royal grants of rights to clear 161½ acres of woodland in the late twelfth century was to the Bishop of Worcester's manor of Kempsey (Fig. 9.2). Almost certainly, the early disafforestation and the amount of 'new' settlement in these areas was a direct result of their predominantly ecclesiastical ownership.

### Forest of Feckenham

This provides the largest and best documented area of forest in the county, enabling a study of the process of its clearance throughout the late twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Being administered as a Royal Forest throughout the period from 1086 to the first major disafforestation in 1301 means that the progress of clearance can be followed in the thirteenth century from the three Forest Eyres<sup>20</sup> as well as the Pipe Rolls, Close Rolls, Charter Rolls and more infrequently the Fine Rolls. Only one detailed perambulation exists being associated with the 1301 disafforestation, and is shown on Figure 9.1. This represents the maximum extent of the Forest during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, although during this time its size was prone to a number of vicissitudes in the legal sense.<sup>22</sup> The forest charter of 1301, drastically reduced the area to a core around Feckenham, shown on Figure 9.1, which was finally completely disafforested in 1629, although effectively the forest, as an administrative unit, ceased to be of significance after 1301. Thus, at its greatest extent, the forest comprised part or the whole of 51 manors in Worcestershire and 8 manors in Warwickshire, forming, in all, an area of about 184 square miles. After the 1301 disafforestation the area was reduced to about 34 square miles centring on the Royal manor of Feckenham.

References to the existence of the Forest in the Domesday Survey are limited and mainly concern the removal of woodland in various manors into the King's forest. These occur at Oddingley, Shell, Churchill, Hindlip, Huddington, Cudley, Warnden, Pirie, Bredicot, Himbleton and White Ladies Aston, which form part of the group of small manors to the east of Worcester. Also Feckenham, Hanbury and Holloway were mentioned as being within the forest. Thus it would seem that by

1086 the forest already extended to the gates of Worcester and the claims made in 1301 by many manors that they were afforested in 1154 were incorrect as they were already part of the forest in 1086.<sup>23</sup> Again, the correspondence between Domesday woodland and forest area is by no means marked, as within the forest bounds there were many areas of well developed settlement and cultivation. As previously discussed, by the Anglo-Saxon period considerable inroads had been made upon the damp oak and beech forest that characterised the Keuper and Lower Lias marls. The importance of superficial deposits in providing drier sites with an efficient water supply in the siting of settlements has already be<sup>en</sup> alluded to, and, as is apparent from Domesday, ploughing strength, clearance and the establishment of tillage on the claylands had already proceeded apace by 1086. For instance, in the heart of the forest, Feckenham, Inkberrow and Hanbury record 25, 17 and 26 ploughs respectively, which, admittedly, is low in density terms compared with the manors of the Vale of Evesham, but does represent a significant degree of tillage. Reference to Figure 7.5 demonstrates that, at its maximum extent, the Forest covered a wide range of Domesday economies from demesne based arable economies in the south, through mixed economies in the west to predominantly woodland economies in the north. Thus, the range of social groupings of Domesday population extended from the Villein and Serf combinations in the south to the Bordar dominated population structure characterised by the Royal manor of Bromsgrove. Similarly, manorial ownership was dominated by ecclesiastical authorities over much of the south and east, where the Church of Worcester held most of the land, by various lay owners in the north-west around Droitwich and finally a wedge of Royal estates extending northwards from the centre at Feckenham to the immense Royal manors of Bromsgrove and Tardebigge. The extent of Domesday woodland can be judged from Figure 6.12, where the major areas recording woodland were as follows:-

Bromsgrove 4 leagues

Alvechurch 4 square leagues

Himbleton (Phepson)  $\frac{1}{2}$  league by 1 furlong

Hanbury 1 league by  $\frac{1}{2}$  league

Stoke Prior  $1\frac{1}{2}$  leagues



Woodcote  $\frac{1}{2}$  league

Warndon and White Ladies Aston 2 furlongs by 2 furlongs

Oddingley 2 furlongs by 2 furlongs

As is apparent from Figure 6.12, woodland existed elsewhere within the forest area, but the above represents the main measures, which were specifically stated to have been 'in the King's Forest'. As the forest covered such a wide area it is no surprise that it enclosed a wide variety of land usage in 1086, extending, as it did, from the favoured Avon terrace deposits in the south through the Marl plain of central Worcestershire to the Triassic Sandstone fringe area in the north. Thus, the southern area around Evesham would have provided manors with well developed demesnes and common fields and only isolated patches of woodland, such as that surviving at Fladbury. This would also have been true of many of the manors on the southern and eastern boundaries, whilst at the centre appeared the manors that provided both Royal and Episcopal administrative functions and thus possessed well developed structures of population and agriculture. Around this central area was an area of woodland by then largely uncleared, particularly on the north and eastern sides. Elsewhere many of the smaller manors had made considerable inroads into the woodland and had developed demesnes and common fields making the survival of woodland more variable.

The post-conquest clearance of woodland was probably of a two pronged nature: firstly, the reduction of the large areas of woodland still remaining in 1086, and, secondly, a 'clearing-up' operation on the smaller areas of woodland that existed on the peripheries of the small manors throughout the marl plain of Worcestershire. Added to this was the reinstatement, if not the clearance, of those areas recorded as either waste or underploughed in the Domesday Survey. As H. C. Darby has emphasised, the impetus to clearance came not only from a desire to increase the cultivated or pasture lands, but also from a demand for timber itself.<sup>24</sup> The toll exacted by the demands for building and domestic purposes as well as for industry must have been considerable, over a number of years. Medieval peasant houses were relatively flimsy structures which would

require fairly constant renewal, as well as being expensive in their use of timber. In a period of expanding population and colonization the consequent demand for timber both for building and as a domestic fuel could be expected to have increased markedly. Payments of woodpenny and woodsilver were common throughout most forest manors and no doubt if the depredations were limited to underwood (subboscum) the damage to the woodland could be minimised, but building would have demanded more than just underwood, and must have resulted in a considerable amount of felling. As for industrial purposes, the salt industry of Droitwich was already making considerable demands upon the surrounding woodland by 1086 and continued to do so throughout the subsequent two centuries. An extent of Hanbury dated about 1182 states "Et operarii si plusquam unam quadrigam de Bosco adduxerit at Wychium, ante Natale Domini reddit IIII<sup>d</sup>",<sup>25</sup> pointing to a continuous demand for wood. The existence of charcoal burners within the forest is also attested by The Forest Proceedings, although their numbers were listed as only 4.<sup>26</sup> Similarly, references were made to both illegal timber sales to Droitwich as well as legal ones,<sup>27</sup> although no quantitative assessments are possible. Although the motives for clearance might have been diverse the results were generally similar, in that the arable, pasture and rough grazing land would have been extended, as it is unlikely that replanting or conservation policies were carried out in any scientific or extensive manner.

The various motives for clearance were working, therefore, in a single direction, the destruction of natural woodland and a resultant change in land use, but the methods and agencies by which this end was achieved were different. As the Forest was administered through the Exchequer by the King, authority for clearance within the Forest rested ultimately with him. Most of the documentation reflects the efforts of the Crown to retain its rights in the Forest area, to regulate woodland clearance and, if possible, to profit from activities within the forest, which, of course, was exactly the opposite in effect to the motives of the local landholders in a period of expanding population and the rise of a money economy. The administration of the Royal Forest of Feckenham has been extensively studied by West<sup>28</sup> and is thus not a subject of study here. In this work attention has been

focussed upon clearance activity to which end the three Forest Eyres for 1262, 1270 and 1280 housed in the Public Record Office, together with the relevant volumes of the Rolls Series have been used. These sources have also been extensively used by West in his study.

The main processes through which forest clearance was undertaken were threefold:-

- 1) Royal Grants.
- 2) Grants of Private Woods.
- 3) De Facto recognition of assarts and purprestures illegally made.

### Royal Grants

These generally were in the form of grants of liberty to make assarts in bulk, usually comprising several acres in a particular wood or manor. Such areas were then 'quit of Regard' and not subject to any of the usual fines. These appear in the various Rolls Series, mainly the Calendar of Close Rolls, Charter Rolls and Patent Rolls, and were granted mainly during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The largest single grant was that made to the Bishop of Worcester "de sexcentis et quatuordecim acris de essartis mensuratis per perticam continentem in longitudine viginti quinque pedes et dimidiam per manupedem".<sup>29</sup> These 614 acres were distributed amongst 13 manors, namely:-

Ripple	112 acres	Hanbury	34½ acres
Kempsey	161½ acres	Alvechurch	6½ acres
Northwick	34 acres	Wolverley	18½ acres
Welland	34 acres	Stoke	43 acres
Upton	113 acres	Tibberton	1½ acres
Fladbury	13½ acres	Henbury in Salt Marsh	38 acres
Hartlebury	4 acres		
		Total	614 acres

The original charter would seem to have been granted during the reign of Richard I, between 1190 - 1230. Many of the manors concerned lay outside the area of Feckenham forest, those at Welland, Upton and Ripple presumably being associated with Malvern,

whilst those at Wolverley with Kinver, and Kempsey with Horewell Forest. An interesting feature of this grant is the mensuration that is contained within the above grant. Measurements were not standardised in this period and varied both nationally and over quite small areas. Generally, forest measurements were larger than those normal for agricultural land. The forest perch often measured up to 28 feet against the normal  $16\frac{1}{2}$  feet<sup>30</sup>, which would appear to be confirmed in this grant with the perch set at  $25\frac{1}{2}$  feet. This means that the forest area, although still containing 160 perches, would provide a much larger area than the statute acre, thus considerably raising the area within the grants of assarts.

Although much of this block grant lay outside Feckenham forest the total acreage is shown on Figure 9.2, which allows an impression to be gained of its size in relation to other methods of assarting, within Feckenham. Other Royal grants, continuing throughout the thirteenth century, were smaller in size and more specifically related to Feckenham. They were all made to landholders of some standing, either lay or ecclesiastical, namely:-

Bishop and Priory of Worcester

1190-1230	614 acres on 13 manors (see above)
1199-1216	$29\frac{1}{2}$ acres at Fladbury <sup>31</sup>
1248	Himbleton $3\frac{1}{2}$ acres, Stone $\frac{1}{2}$ acre, Tibberton 7 acres, Lippard $21\frac{3}{4}$ acres, in Feckenham and Wolverley 4 acres in Kinver Forest. <sup>32</sup>

A further grant of 40 acres was made at Sanden (Alvechurch) although the precise date of the grant is not made clear.<sup>33</sup>

Bordesley Abbey

1225	Fined £100 "pro essarto illo in pace tenendo quod fecit in foresta nostra de Fekeham tempore quo J. Marshall fuit Justiciarius forestae nostrae Angl." and fined 15 marks for 40 acres assarted in Feckenham Forest.
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whilst those at Wolverley with Kinver, and Kempsey with Horewell Forest. An interesting feature of this grant is the mensuration that is contained within the above grant. Measurements were not standardised in this period and varied both nationally and over quite small areas. Generally, forest measurements were larger than those normal for agricultural land. The forest perch often measured up to 28 feet against the normal  $16\frac{1}{2}$  feet<sup>30</sup>, which would appear to be confirmed in this grant with the perch set at  $25\frac{1}{2}$  feet. This means that the forest area, although still containing 160 perches, would provide a much larger area than the statute acre, thus considerably raising the area within the grants of assarts.

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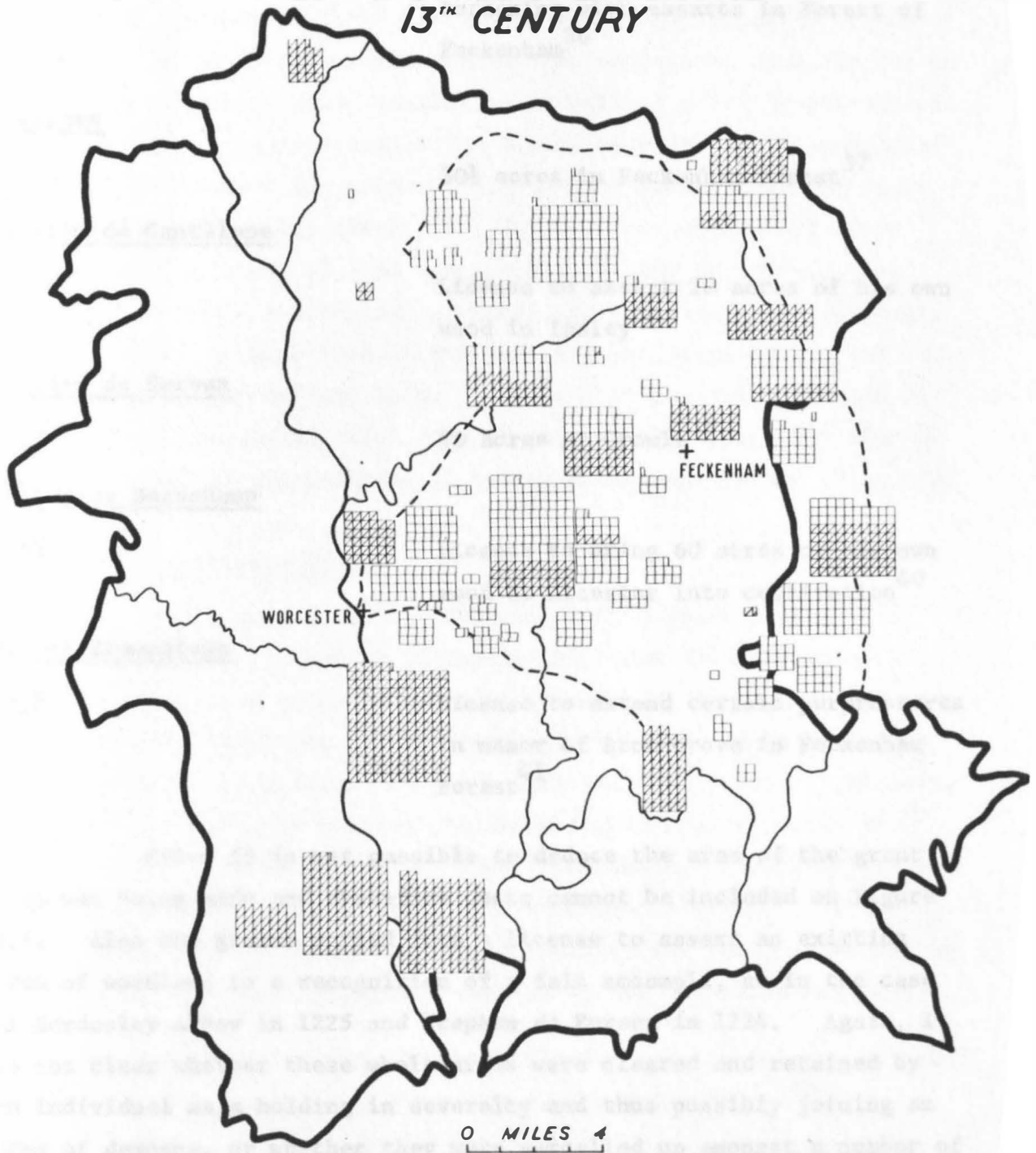
A further grant of 40 acres was made at Sanden (Alvechurch) although the precise date of the grant is not made clear.<sup>33</sup>

#### Bordesley Abbey

1225	Fined £100 "pro essarto illo in pace tenendo quod fecit in foresta nostra de Fekeham tempore quo J. Marshall fuit Justiciarius forestae nostrae Angl." and fined 15 marks for 40 acres assarted in Feckenham Forest. <sup>34</sup>
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FIGURE 9.2

### ASSARTS IN THE FORESTS OF WORCESTERSHIRE 13<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY



- PERAMBULATION OF FECKENHAM FOREST 1301
- ▨ 1 ACRE AMERCEMENT
- ▩ 1 ACRE ROYAL GRANT

Bordesley Abbey (Continued)

- 1266 A certain purpresture at Knotteshill  
(25 acres)<sup>35</sup>
- 1136 Foundation Charter granting land at  
Bordesley with assarts in Forest of  
Feckenham<sup>36</sup>

Templars

- 1240 30 $\frac{3}{4}$  acres in Feckenham Forest<sup>37</sup>

William de Cantilupe

- 1215 License to assart 20 acres of his own  
wood in Ipsley<sup>38</sup>

Stephen de Eureux

- 1224 40 acres at Crowle<sup>39</sup>

Walter de Beauchamp

- 1291 License to bring 60 acres of his own  
wood at Alcester into cultivation<sup>40</sup>

Men of Bromsgrove

- 1252 License to extend certain purprestures  
in manor of Bromsgrove in Feckenham  
Forest<sup>41</sup>

Often it is not possible to deduce the area of the grant that was being made and therefore these cannot be included on Figure 9.2. Also the grants varied from a license to assart an existing area of woodland to a recognition of a fait accompli, as in the case of Bordesley Abbey in 1225 and Stephen de Eureux in 1224. Again, it is not clear whether these whole areas were cleared and retained by an individual as a holding in severalty and thus possibly joining an area of demesne, or whether they were parcelled up amongst a number of tenants. Only in the case of a grant to the Templars is this made explicit, where the 30 $\frac{3}{4}$  acres of the Royal Grant were apportioned amongst 14 tenants, with holdings varying from  $\frac{1}{2}$  acre up to 12 acres,

although this latter was held by two tenants.<sup>42</sup> Certainly, these Royal Grants occur at a time when large estate holders were beginning to show increased interest in the direct farming of their estates and the profit level that could be accrued from them. During the age of the so called 'high farming landlords' interest in extending cultivation of their estates would have been high as market prices for grain and foodstuffs continued to rise consequent upon the demand produced by a rising rural population as well as a rising non-agrarian population.<sup>43</sup> The interest of the Bishop of Worcester in extending his lands throughout the manors of his estate during this period is apparent from the Liber Rubeus.<sup>44</sup> Whatever the outcome of these block grants in terms of land use and tenure, the process is thus distinctive from the nibbling, piecemeal type of clearance, although, in some cases, such as that of the Templars and possibly the Men of Bromsgrove, it may include this. However, it remains different in that it was under seigneurial control and should be properly viewed to the context of the policies of estate management during the period.

## 2. Grants of Private Woods

The main purpose of obtaining such a grant was to gain immunity from the provisions of Forest Law, thus areas could be emparked or cleared without liability to fines. It is apparent from the Domesday Survey that private woods already existed in Feckenham, although it is not possible to gauge their exact extent. Certainly, the Forest Proceedings between 1262-1280 record some 89 woods in private hands, not including the area of the manor of Inkberrow, for which the Earl of Pembroke had gained immunity in 1230.<sup>45</sup> The ecclesiastical authorities had gained immunity for their woods during the first half of the thirteenth century in the following manner:-

Bordesley Abbey	paying 100 marks in 1230 for the custody of woods in Holloway, Tunstall and Tardebigge <sup>46</sup>
Evesham Abbey	having its woods quit of regard and view in 1236 <sup>47</sup>
Studley Priory	similarly in 1241 <sup>48</sup>
Worcester Priory	gained permission in 1256 for its woods to be kept by its own foresters <sup>49</sup> , although it is recorded in



Worcester Priory  
(continued)

the Annales Monasticum that the Priory had paid a fee of 64 marks in total for custody of all their woods in Kinver and Feckenham in the same year.<sup>50</sup> However, assarts made in the Bishop's woods still appear to have been presented at the Forest Eyres.

The 89 private woods that appear in the Forest Eyres of 1262, 1270 and 1280 existed in 53 places. The locations given are, however, not precise and no indication is given as to their age. The location of the woods is shown on Figure 9.3, although this, by the nature of the mentions, is not precise, for instance, 6 woods are mentioned at Woodcote (in Bromsgrove) and 6 at Coughton. Of the 53 places recorded 32 (60%) were also recorded as places where assarting had taken place in the same period (see Fig. 9.2). It is possible that these two processes were exclusive, but judged by the experience of Worcester Priory estates where custody was granted, but assarts still appear, it may well be that there was some overlap. There is, of course, no certainty of a correlation between the granting of a private wood and its immediate clearance, all that was entailed in such a grant was immunity from fines for clearance. However, the number of such woods and the obvious assiduity with which they were sought, suggests that clearance was probably the main motive. In some cases it is possible that the opposite motivation may have operated, in that, with increasing encroachment upon the wooded area, some landholders may have felt it necessary to protect game more efficiently under their own custody. However, as game was already protected under Forest Law, this former would appear a more unlikely possibility motivation.

### 3. Piecemeal Assarting and Purprestures.

In terms of the number of people involved this was undoubtedly the most prominent process of clearance and, in terms of colonization, probably generated more settlement than any other. The continuous, nibbling nature of this process is evident from the Forest Eyres of the thirteenth century, within which a distinction was made

FIGURE 9.3



between assarts and purprestures, the former implying a wasting of the wood, followed by cultivation, whilst the latter could be any form of encroachment, although it usually involved enclosure by a hedge or ditch. Purprestures generally were very small in size, often only a few square feet and often represented enlargements to crofts. The courts usually ordered the enclosure and any buildings to be dismantled, but often did allow them to stand upon payment of a small fine. In subsequent Eyres they were assessed as to the crops grown on them. Both assarts and purprestures were generally small averaging under 5 acres throughout the period, as shown below:-

TABLE 9.2 ASSARTS AND PURPRESTURES FROM THE FOREST EYRES

<u>Date of Eyre</u>	<u>Number of assarts and Purprestures</u>			<u>Acreage</u>			<u>Averag Acreag</u>
	<u>Old</u>	<u>New</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Old</u>	<u>New</u>	<u>Total</u>	
1262	-	-	74	-	-	286½	3.8
1270	81	79	160	337½	79	416½	2.6
1280	116	59	175	529½	43	572½	3.2

From all sources, the total amount of assarts in this category comprises 803½ acres and 183 perches. In the four Regards in the Forest Rolls<sup>51</sup>, 350 assarts were presented, involving 310 people, although some persons were recorded as holding more than one assart. Although the size varies considerably from a fraction of an acre to an exceptionally large assart at Crowle of 73 acres, generally the majority were small. In fact, of all assarts presented 45.5% were under 1 acre in size, 86.9% were 5 acres or under in size and only 5.7% were over 10 acres.

The ecclesiastical authorities appear most frequently as forest offenders in terms of assarts:-

The Bishop of Worcester	had	assarts	at	6	places	totalling	47	acres	(5.8%)
The Priory of Worcester	"	"	"	4	"	"	19	acres	(2.4%)
The Abbey of Evesham	"	"	"	6	"	"	30	acres	(3.7%)
							1	perch	
St. Wulfstan's Hospital	"	"	"	5	"	"	11	acres	(1.4%)

As can be seen from the figures in parentheses these formed only a small percentage of the total area assarted by this illegal process of encroachment comprising just over 13% of the total area. This total is surprisingly small compared with the relative size of their estates, but is compensated by their role as recipients of Royal grants and private woods. By far the most extensive process was small scale encroachment by individual colonizers or groups of individuals, for example, 25 acres of assart at Bromsgrove was recorded as being held by 21 people.<sup>52</sup>

Other evidence for assarting exists in the manorial extents of the Bishop of Worcester's estates that are collected in the Red Book of Worcester. Only rarely is any indication of the size of the assart given, although the implication, in most cases, is that they were very small. The total number of assarts mentioned is as follows:-

<u>Bradley</u>	1299	11 of 24 Customary tenants are recorded as holding assarts. 4 more have 'pluribus placeis terre'.
<u>Welland</u>	1299	21 of 29 tenancies are recorded as holding 'novam terram' plus one 'novum assartum', (Prior of Little Malvern) The usual pattern of holding was 1 message with 1 newland.
<u>Kempsey</u>	1299	Of 24 free tenants, 1 had 2 acres of assart land and 1 had an 'assart de sectagio'
	1182	Randulf holds 32½ acres of free assart from Bishop Simon in Norton. Petrus Clericus holds 20 acres of free assart in Stofords Will de Lantonii holds 20 acres of free assart in Kempsey
<u>Wick</u>	1182	12 tenants hold 1 assart each
<u>Northwick</u>	1299	2 free tenants hold an assart each
<u>Hanbury</u>	1299	14 free tenants hold 22 assarts and 1 purpresture 10 tenants at Blickley hold 1 assart each
<u>Hartlebury</u>	1299	6 half virgators hold 4 assarts at rents of 5/6, 4/-, 2d, 15d. 2 quarter virgators hold 2 assarts

Alvechurch 1299 24 free tenants hold 1 assart each  
 1 tenant at Sanden holds 1 piece of new assart land  
 1 assart at Sanden is in the hands of the Bishop  
 31 assarts are recorded amongst 52 Customary tenants and  
 4 assarts are in the hands of the Bishop.

Not all these manors occur in Feckenham Forest, Kempsey being in Horewell, disafforested early in the century, but still showing signs of assarting, and Welland was associated with Malvern. Assarts were not restricted to any class of peasantry, in Alvechurch for instance they were distributed throughout the free and customary tenants, although the bigger holdings such as those of 20 acres and 32½ acres at Kempsey were limited to freeholders.

The distribution of the total measurable assarts, both of Royal Grants and amercements is shown on Figure 9.2. It is apparent that the spread of colonization in the thirteenth century was not even throughout the forest area. It was mainly concentrated in the outer areas, which were disafforested in 1301, the central areas remaining intact. This is partially mitigated by the fact that no assarts for Inkberrow are recorded as immunity for that manor was granted early in the thirteenth century. The progress of assarting appears to have been grouped in a ring around the forest core, particularly on the Bishops manor of Hanbury and around Wychbold in Dodderhill. Elsewhere the Church of Worcester manors again figured prominently, notably at Crowle, Tibberton, Himbleton, Hindlip, Huddington and Warndon. Another group was centred on the Royal estates to the north of the forest centre around Bromsgrove and at the head of the Arrow valley, mainly in Alvechurch. A further peripheral group lower down the Arrow valley, at Alcester, Arrow and Weethley completes the circle on the western side, across the county boundary. The southern edge illustrates less clearance with more isolated occurrences around the Lenches and at Fladbury. This concurs to some considerable degree with the pattern of settlements first mentioned between 1087-1350 (Fig. 8.4) where Hanbury and Wychbold of the Bishops Manors and Bromsgrove and Alvechurch of the Royal Estates were the most prominently represented.

The grants of private woods (Fig. 9.3) illustrates much the same distribution in that the core areas of woodland remained virtually untouched. There was, however, a slight change in emphasis in that the northern area was far less well endowed with private woods than elsewhere. The main concentrations were in the Lower Arrow valley, to the east and in the west and south west of the forest area, and in the Lenches, the vast majority being located in the areas disafforested in 1301. The same manors of the Church of Worcester estates, particularly Crowle, again feature strongly in the distribution of private woods. Apart from the blanket custody given to Worcester Priory in 1256, The Priory and the Bishop of Worcester were recorded as being granted free custody of private woods in 13 places between 1262 and 1280. The largest lay landholder's grants of custody was that of the Beauchamp family with 5 grants in the same period, thus reflecting the relative size of their various possessions throughout the study area.

The Church of Worcester was the largest single body undertaking clearance within the study area, receiving  $732\frac{3}{4}$  acres in Royal grants of the total  $960\frac{1}{4}$  given before 1301 (76%) although not all of this was in Feckenham Forest. Within this latter area the Church received  $197\frac{1}{4}$  acres out of a total of  $424\frac{3}{4}$  acres (46%). The large scale nature of these grants partially explains the relatively low total of amercements made by the Church, only 66 acres out of a total  $803\frac{1}{2}$  acres (8.2%). However, certain other ecclesiastical authorities, notably the Abbey of Evesham, Bordesley Abbey and the Templars, together with some of the more important lay landholders, notably the Beauchamp family, William de Cantelupe, the Boterils, the Corbetts, the Pauncefoots, and the Hackets, also played a significant role and were credited with assarted areas large enough to distinguish them from the multitude of small scale clearers, but not large enough to be compared with Worcester Church. The impact of the lay manorial landlords was on a much more local scale than that of Worcester Church, although the motives for clearance were probably similar being an attempt to increase the profitability and revenue from their estates. It is unclear whether this clearance led to any major increase in

demesne areas or whether the majority of the areas were let out to tenants, but in a period of increasing interest in estate management and direct farming by the landlord the chances are that at least a part was devoted to an increase in demesne acreage.

The vast majority of illegal clearance (ameracements) was undertaken by small scale peasant farmers, carving out small areas of waste or woodland upon which they may have developed a small cottage or an extension to an existing croft or a small close to supplement whatever holding they had in the communal fields. This 'grass roots' colonizing movement resulted in a landscape of small irregular fields that has characterised the old woodland areas of Worcestershire to this day. Contemporary sources, however, are less useful in supplying a description of the type of landscape produced, although the general impressions suggest this type of development. For example, the extent of Hanbury in 1299<sup>53</sup> suggests a development very different from that of the large nucleated vill surrounded by its open, common fields that characterised the Avon Valley. The 481½ acres of arable land of the demesne was split amongst 9 separate holdings at Hanbury, one at Goosehill and one at Brickley, with such names as Swynland-Stockinge suggesting a recent intake. One entry points to the significance of woodland within the local economy:- "Et habet ibidem i boscum versus Blische(legh) infra forestam, et i boscum supra Goshulle de veteribus truncis et sub bosco, in quibus possunt sustineri otiosa animalia et porci, in estate et in autumpno cum suit custodibus sine numero ubi omnes homines de propria communium habent cum suis animalibus, tam villani quam liberi, pannagium pessone ad porcos agistandum valet communibus annis iis pannagium stipule estimatur communitis secundum majus et minus ad xx<sup>d</sup> per annum."<sup>54</sup> Despite the run-down nature of this wood it obviously served a vital function in providing grazing for the village livestock and thus widescale clearance and enclosure of wooded areas in many ways could have been detrimental to the local agrarian economy. Another feature of evidence for clearance in the Hanbury extent is that some tenants recorded as holding an assart in free tenure, also appear amongst the customary tenants as half virgators. Their newly won holdings were thus held by different tenure from their normal position within the structure of manorial tenure and to this

extent lay outside the restrictions of customary tenure. This would suggest a degree of seigniorial connivance, if not encouragement.

At Hartlebury, another of the Bishop of Worcester's forest manors, the demesne arable in the 1299 extent, was split into 26 holdings, totalling 246 acres, varying in size between  $39\frac{1}{2}$  acres and  $\frac{1}{4}$  acre. At Alvechurch the demesne was in 12 holdings totalling  $164\frac{1}{2}$  acres, varying between 23 acres and 3 acres. The total impression gained, together with the number of small holdings, often mentioned as 'placeis' is one where the existence of a number of small closes was already significant within the manorial structure.

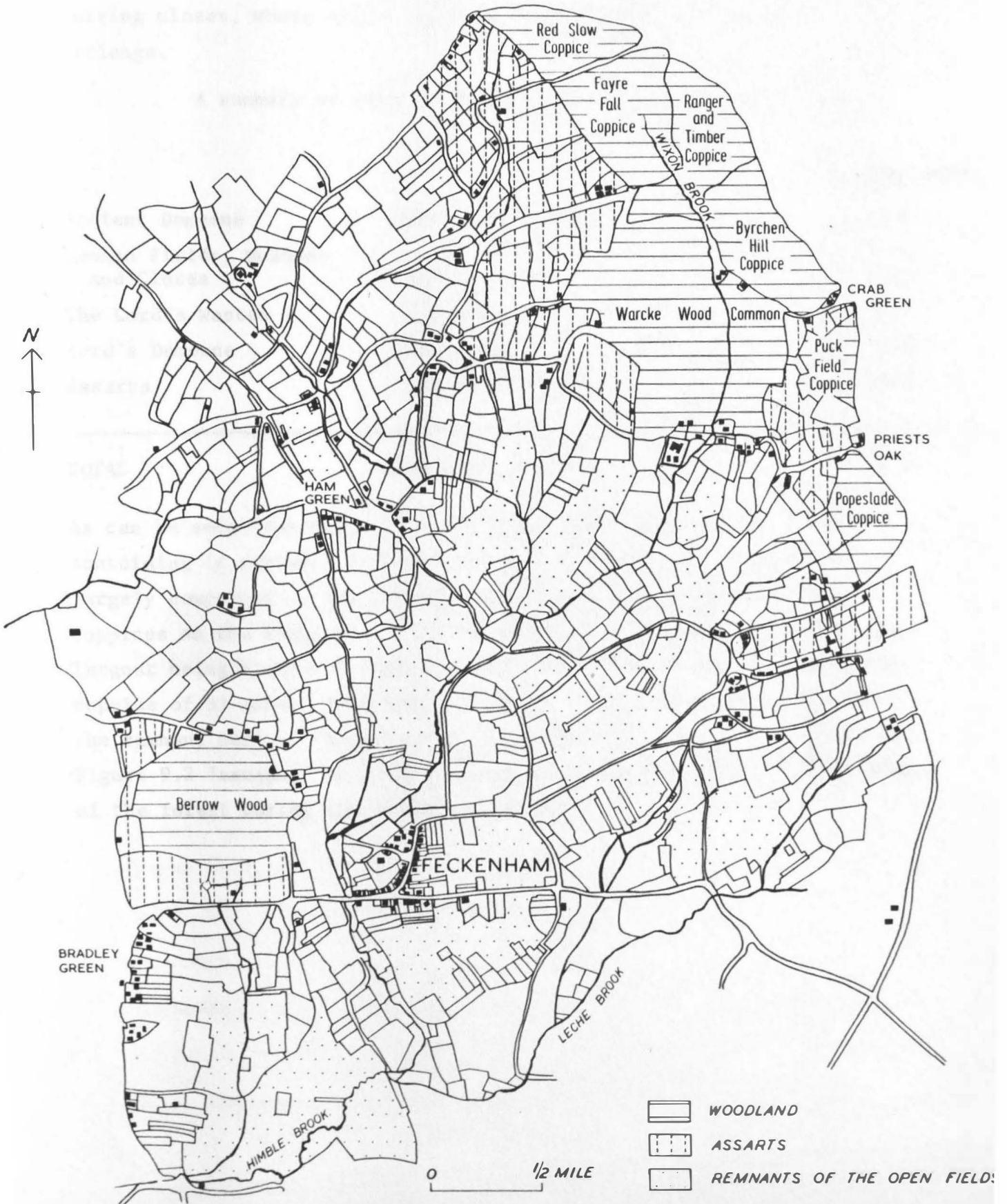
Unfortunately contemporary maps do not exist, the earliest being the excellent Blagrave map of Feckenham drawn in 1744, but copied from an earlier survey of 1591.<sup>55</sup> Although this is of much later date than the period under discussion, the results of the type of colonization under discussion are still apparent. The field and settlement pattern illustrated on this map is shown on Figure 9.4. The remnant cores of areas of open field areas are still visible, surrounding the old established settlement area of Feckenham, but around these are a great number of small enclosed fields, often with hedges and trees as boundaries. On the periphery of the manor, mainly in the north-east and east are the remaining areas of woodland, the remnants of the Forest of Feckenham. By 1591, these are hedged about by small irregular shaped assarts, often associated with a small cottage, that had slowly encroached upon the wooded area. It is apparent from close inspection of the map that those areas shown as assarts, which are in close proximity to the existing woodland, represent only a small part of what was once the totally assarted area. Surrounding the assarted area are many similar sized closes with the same irregular shapes that probably represent earlier assarting, although in 1591 they were recorded as part of the Ancient Demesne. Two processes seem to have been in operation from the evidence provided by the map: -

(1) A considerable degree of assarting over much of the northern area of the manor, with concomitant development of settlement, often on very small areas of land. This dispersed settlement occasionally clusters around favoured areas, such as crossroads. Of all the settlement shown on the map, only 22% is in the central manorial



FIGURE 9.4

**FECKENHAM IN 1591**  
 (EXTRACTED FROM THE BLAGRAVE MAP OF 1744)



village of Feckenham, 78% being distributed throughout the rest of the area.

(2) A breakdown of the open fields with small closes impinging onto their area. These are often in the form of long, narrow, curving closes, whose shape suggests their origin as a group of furlongs.

A summary of some of the major land uses is shown below: -

		<u>% total area</u>
Ancient Demesne	2898 acres 2 roods	39.8
Common Fields, Meadows and Closes	1517 acres	20.8
The Lord's Wastes	675 acres	9.3
Lord's Demesne	1458 acres	20.0
Assarts	732 acres 4 roods	10.0
<hr/>		
TOTAL	7285 acres 5 roods	99.9

As can be seen from Figure 9.4, 13 other small assarts were mentioned containing 16 cottages and dwelling houses, whilst the demesne was largely comprised of the 3 parks surrounding Feckenham Lodge and 6 coppices on the Ridgeway. The surviving woodland was in 8 units, the largest being Warkewood Common of 304 acres and the smallest Puckfield coppice of 33 acres, totalling 909 acres. This woodland represents the remnant core of the Forest of Feckenham that, from the evidence of Figure 9.2 'escaped' the depredations that occurred in the 'middle ring' of the forest during the thirteenth century.

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## CHAPTER 10

## THE PROGRESS OF THE MANORIAL ECONOMIES 1087-1349

In the previous two chapters, the progress of settlement and the destruction of woodland in the post-conquest period has proved to be part of the same process. Undoubtedly the feature that bound them together was seigniorial policy, seen most clearly on the estates of the Church of Worcester. It has been possible to identify where these processes were occurring and, to some extent, to comprehend the landscape changes that were brought about. It has not been possible, thus far, to illuminate the changes in the manorial economies that population increase and woodland destruction must have brought in train. In Chapter 7 it was possible, by analysing the relationships that existed within the Domesday data, to identify distinctive manorial economies. Unfortunately no equivalent source material, such as the Hundred Rolls of 1279, exists which would allow a county-wide comparison with Domesday Book. Recourse, therefore, has to be made to documentation at the manorial level, which is far from satisfactory for the purpose. The areas for which this documentation survives are very limited and occurs at different dates, making comparison between areas virtually impossible to achieve. The structure and purpose of the documentation is very different from Domesday Book, which again makes temporal comparison difficult. Obviously it is not possible to adopt the same techniques of analysis that were employed in Chapter 7, as the small sample frame and the different dates and style of documents surviving at the manorial level would make the exercise statistically meaningless. All that is possible is to make a comparison between a simple analysis of the data derived from selected manorial documents with the general conclusions made in Chapter 7.

Unfortunately, the existence of data at a manorial level is limited to the larger estates and that which has been selected for analysis in this study comprises the manorial extents of the Bishop of Worcester's manors, collected in the Red Book of Worcester<sup>1</sup>, the extents of the Priory of Worcester's manors<sup>2</sup> and those extents relating to the Worcestershire holdings of Guy Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, found in the

Inquisitiones Post Mortem.<sup>3</sup> Most of these documents are relatively late in date, the earliest being the so called 'Domesday' Extent for the Bishop of Worcester's manors, dated about 1132, followed by the Priory extents of 1240 and two other Episcopal extents of 1282 (Alia Extenta) and 1299. The Inquisitiones are mainly early fourteenth century in date, those referring to the Beauchamp Estates being between 1315-16. The evidence is thus mainly clustered towards the end of the study period, the twelfth and thirteenth centuries being very under-represented.

The manors involved, together with the economic designation accorded them in Chapter 7, is shown on Table 10.1.

TABLE 10.1                    THE DOMESDAY ECONOMIES OF SELECTED MANORS

<u>MANOR</u>	<u>'DOMESDAY ECONOMY'</u>
<u>Bishop of Worcester (1132-1299)</u>	
Bredon	Demesne
Kempsey	Mixed (Peasant/Demesne)
Hartlebury	Mixed (Peasant/Demesne)
Hanbury	Woodland
Northwick and Whitestones	Mixed (Demesne/Peasant)
Wick Episcopi	Demesne
Ripple	Mixed (Peasant/Demesne)
Alvechurch	Woodland
<u>Priory of Worcester (1240)</u>	
Cropthorne	Demesne
Cleeve Prior	Mixed
Phepson	Mixed
Grinley	Mixed (Peasant/Demesne)
Hallow	Mixed
Harvington	Mixed
Overbury	Mixed
Stoke Prior	Mixed (Peasant/Demesne)
Wolverley	Mixed (Demesne/Peasant)
Sedgebarrow	Mixed

TABLE 10.1 (CONTINUED)

Guy de Beauchamp (1315-16)

Abberley	Peasant
Elmley Castle	1086 part of Cropthorne - demesne
Sherrifs Lench	1086 part of Church Lench - demesne
Naunton Beauchamp	Demesne
Salwarpe	Mixed (Peasant/Demesne)
Woodborough	1086 part of Pershore - demesne
Pirton	1086 part of Northwick - mixed (Demesne/Peas)
Little Inkberrow	1086 part of Inkberrow - Woodland
Comberton	Mixed (Peasant/Demesne)

One problem becomes immediately apparent, which is that many of the Beauchamp estates were only parts of larger Domesday manors, which at the time of Domesday were subinfeudated to Urse d'Abitot, thus again hampering comparison. Also, the above manors do not represent a true cross section of all types of Domesday economy. Being predominantly ecclesiastical manors, demesne and mixed economies are over represented, although at least one example is available from all the classes identified in Chapter 7.

Due to the different dates and styles of the manorial documentation it is not possible to analyse them by type of Domesday economy. Instead, each estate grouping will be considered separately, but for the same purposes. Thus, initially, the three groups of estates will be analysed as to their tenancy structure in order to ascertain what relationship exists between growth in tenancies and growth in population since 1086. Also the type of tenancies will be analysed and comparison made with Domesday Book. Secondly, the values given to the manors will be assessed against Domesday valuation and finally the internal valuations will be discussed in order to assess the contribution of demesne, rents and the like to total valuations. By this means it is hoped to illuminate, on a local scale, some of the general processes noted in the previous two chapters.



### Tenancies

As with all medieval documentation, the nature of manorial extents provides severe limitations upon their use as a source for population estimates. Undoubtedly they provided the cornerstone of estate administration during the period but they were not essentially concerned with the population existing on a particular estate area. They were exclusively concerned with tenancies and not with the manner in which these may or may not have become subdivided, nor with the niceties of social and economic distinctions within the population. In some ways this situation could be deemed comparable to the Domesday Survey, although the passage of two centuries had produced a situation in which the boundaries between economic servility and legal freedom had become even more blurred than in 1086. The range of different forms of tenancy was great, not only between different manors, but also within individual manorial areas. Problems therefore exist in reducing the different forms of tenancies existent to some kind of mean, whereby they can be compared. Also the relationship of tenancies to total or actual population remains a particularly thorny problem, for the existence and status of the landless and the sub-tenants remains unknown. Obviously some relationship exists between the number of tenancies and actual population, but it is a relationship that was unlikely to remain constant over time, for the latter could expand at a far greater rate than the conservative attitude towards the former would allow. However, the extents do allow a comparison between the type and number of tenancies upon differing constituent parts of the same estates at various dates as well as between different estates. Also, some limited cross check is possible against the general assessments that have been made from the subsidy returns, although this estate material is in no manner a normal sample which could be taken as entirely representative of the whole county area.

The total population estimates for the study area have been discussed previously and two estimates were arrived at as to the likely size of the pre-plague population. Using Russell's multiplier, population between 1086 and 1300 would have increased by 237% over the Domesday figure, giving an annual average increase of 1.1%. Postan's multiplier gave 254% and 1.2% per annum respectively. In the former case, population would have doubled every 65 years and in the latter

every 60 years.

In the case of the Bishop of Worcester estates the 'Domesday' Extent of 1182 provides a useful mid-point assessment of the number of tenancies between 1086 and the 1299 Extent. The number of tenancies, that is named tenants, for the dates concerned are listed below.

TABLE 10.2 TENANCIES ON THE BISHOP OF WORCESTER'S MANORS

<u>Manor</u>	<u>1086 - 1299</u>			<u>Percentage increase</u>		
	<u>1086</u>	<u>1182</u>	<u>1299</u>	<u>1086:1182</u>	<u>1182:1299</u>	<u>1086:1299</u>
Bredon	54	72	109	100:133	100:151	100:202
Kempsey	66	80	187	100:121	100:233	100:283
Hartlebury	42	65	138	100:155	100:212	100:328
Hanbury	41	53	107	100:129	100:202	100:261
Northwick and Whitestone	48	207	225	-	100:109	-
	(no burgesses)	(incl.)	(incl)			
		(burgesses)	(burgesses)			
Wick Episcopi	80	105	153	100:131	100:146	100:191
Ripple	66	85	110	100:129	100:129	100:166
Alvechurch	26	43	228	100:165	100:530	100:877

The rate of increase on these estates is variable but is not completely out of accord with either of the estimates of increase for the whole period. One significant feature is the more rapid increase between 1182 and 1299 as compared with that between 1086 and 1182, although Russell projects a double maxima rise in the form of an 'S' shape curve over the period on a national scale. The above evidence suggests only a slow increase during the twelfth century followed by an accelerated rise in the thirteenth. This accords with the period of maximum clearance in the Forest of Feckenham, which is glimpsed only irregularly in the twelfth century but increases markedly in the thirteenth. This would suggest that the period of greatest population increase coincided with the period of greatest colonization advance, although normally some time lag would be expected, allowing for

increasing population pressure on existing resources before being reflected in expansion into new areas. This, however, is assuming that the small sample provided by the extents of the Bishop's manors could be directly correlated with population, whereas they, in fact, are concerned with tenancies. Such expansion in tenancies would presumably also have been subject to a time lag before population increase could set in motion their expansion.

On the Priory Estates, the other half of the Church of Worcester possessions, the extents only give the figures for 1240, which are compared with Domesday below:-

TABLE 10.3 TENANCIES OF THE ESTATES OF THE PRIORY OF WORCESTER

1086 - 1240

<u>Manor</u>	<u>Domesday</u>	<u>Extent 1240</u>	<u>Ratio 1086:1240</u>
Crophorne	44	73	100:166
Cleeve Prior	22	30	100:136
Phepson	8	22	100:275
Grimley	37	88	100:238
Hallow	32	62	100:194
Harvington	20	40	100:200
Overbury	30	50	100:166
Stoke Prior	25	73	100:292
Wolverley	15	68	100:453
Sedgebarrow	20	25	100:125

The average rise over the period 1086 to 1240 emerges as 100:224.5, a somewhat higher figure than that for the Bishop's manors between 1086:1132, which is 100:137.6, although lower than the 100:329 for the same manors 1086-1299. It also provides a somewhat lower rise than both estimates made for the 1086:pre-plague population for the whole county which were 100:237 and 100:254 respectively.

A third test sample which can be drawn from equivalent sources are for the Beauchamp Estates, whose extents are recorded in the Inquisitiones Post Mortem for the early fourteenth century. The dates vary between 1315 and 1316 but all extents were drawn up upon the death of Guy de Beauchamp, Fifth Earl of Warwick.

TABLE 10.4 TENANCIES OF GUY DE BEAUCHAMP'S ESTATE 1086 - 1315-16

<u>Manor</u>	<u>1086</u>	<u>1315-16</u>	<u>1086:1315-16</u>
Abberley	15	80	100:533
Elmley Castle	30	84	100:280
Comberton	22	49	100:223
Sherrifs Lench	12	19	100:158
Naunton Beauchamp	18	33	100:183
Salwarpe	17	88	100:518
Wadborough	15	73	100:487
Pirton	13	22	100:169
Little Inkberrow	7	20	100:286

Although there is once again internal variation within the estate, the average size of 100:315 compares with that of the Bishop of Worcester's estate in being higher than the estimates for the whole study area.

Overall, the differential between the three estates in terms of average number of tenancies is maintained as can be seen below:-

<u>Estate</u>	<u>Average number of tenancies per manor</u>				
	<u>1086</u>	<u>1182</u>	<u>1240</u>	<u>1299</u>	<u>1315-16</u>
Bishop of Worcester	52.9	71.9	-	147.4	-
Priory of Worcester	25.3	-	53.1	-	-
Guy de Beauchamp	15.2	-	-	-	52.0

The Bishop's manor of Northwick and Whitestone is excluded as Burgess figures are not available at 1086 which would cause distortion in the later figures. However, the Bishop's manors remain larger in tenancies throughout the period, although the greatest percentage expansion is to be found on the Beauchamp estates. The difference in dates makes the above figures difficult to compare, although they do allow general trends to be ascertained. It is more instructive to consider the internal variation within each estate before attempting any overall summary.

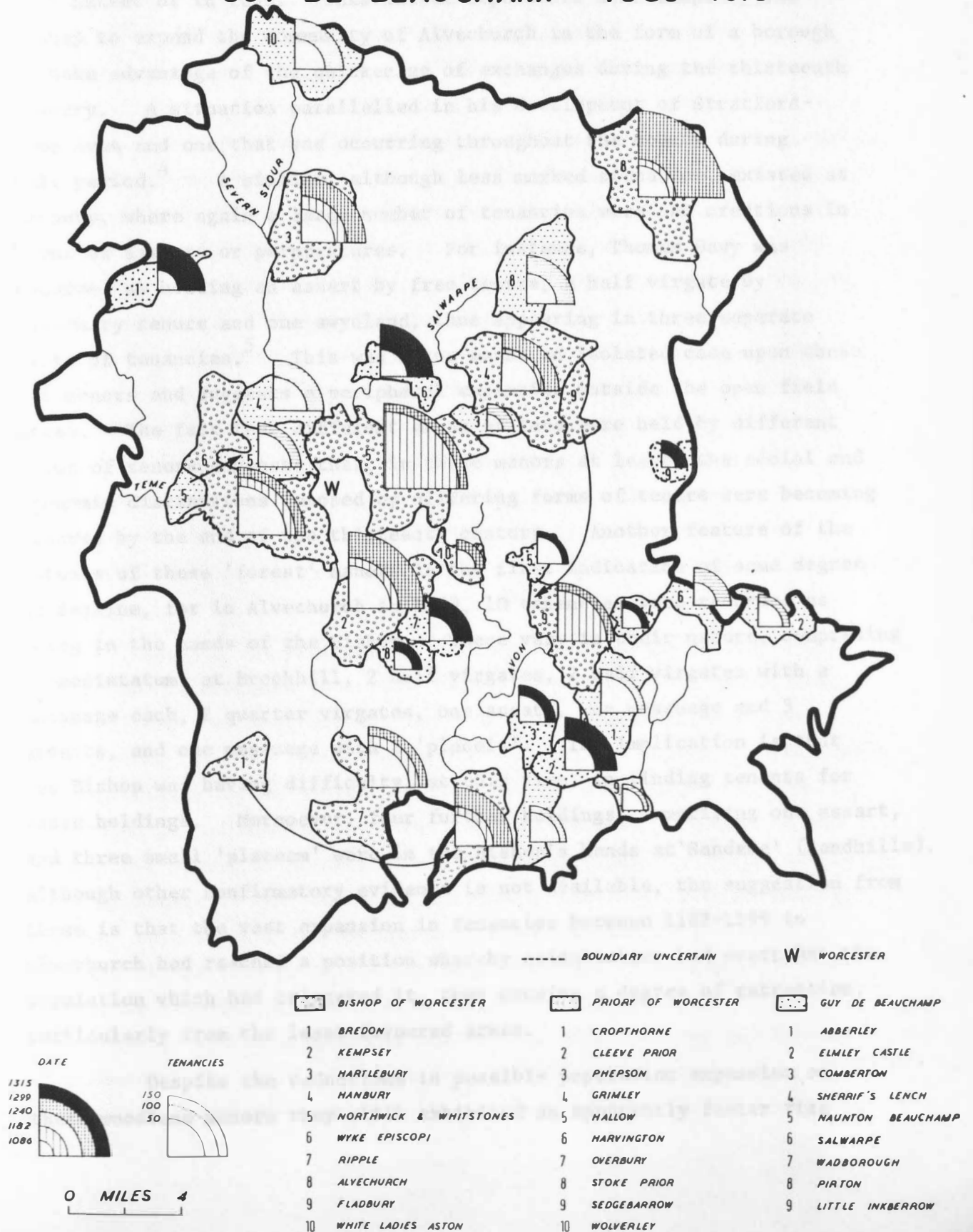
## Estates of the Bishop of Worcester

The ten manors situated within the study area were distributed fairly widely throughout that area, although only one manor, that of Wick Episcopi, was west of the Severn. The extents only refer to those parts of the manors that remained in the Bishop's hands and tenancies were not listed for those parts that were at farm. For instance, in Bredon, 9 knights held between one and two hides each at Conderton, Washbourne, Westmancote, Redmarley, Pendock, Norton, Kinsham, Morton and Mitton, whose tenants were presumably excluded from the extent. In fact, the extent only specifically mentions tenancies at Bredon, Norton, Hardwick and Welland. This can create problems with Domesday comparisons if separate entries are not available for those places at that date. Generally, however, there is a fair degree of accord between those areas alienated in 1086 and those in 1299. Also, between the 1182 and 1296 extents there appears to have been relatively little alteration in terms of alienation.

A comparison of the constituent manors at 1086, 1182 and 1299 is shown on Figure 10.1, where it is apparent that the southern manors have not expanded as fast as those in the north. This rapid expansion, occurring largely between 1182-1299, occurred on the two woodland manors of the Bishop's estate: Hanbury and Alvechurch in Feckenham Forest. As previously discussed both Hanbury and Alvechurch were areas of extensive clearance during the thirteenth century (see Fig. 9.2) and this was duly reflected in the rise in tenancies during the period. This rise can be illustrated most spectacularly in the case of Alvechurch, where in 1086 its tenancies were only half the average for the 10 manors (26 as against 52.9), a situation barely improved by 1182 (43 against 41.9), but by 1299, after considerable expansion had taken place, it had a total of 228 tenancies as against the average of 147. Closer inspection of the Alvechurch extent, however, does reveal some extenuating circumstances in the sense that there are a far greater number of tenancies than tenants. Of the total of 228 tenancies, 62 were held by persons occupying another form of tenancy, thus reducing the likely relationship between tenancies and population. In many cases this represents both free and customary

FIGURE 10.1

**GROWTH OF TENANCIES ON THE ESTATES OF THE BISHOP OF WORCESTER, PRIORY OF WORCESTER & GUY DE BEAUCHAMP 1086-1315**



tenants possessing assarts in addition to some other holding, although there were a number of tenants possessing merely an assart. The 1299 totals were also enlarged by the addition of 61 burgage tenements, of which 21 possessed other holdings, which do not appear in either the 1182 Extent or in 1086. This latter represents an attempt by the Bishop to expand the community of Alvechurch in the form of a borough to take advantage of the quickening of exchanges during the thirteenth century. A situation paralleled in his development of Stratford-upon-Avon and one that was occurring throughout the county during this period.<sup>4</sup> A similar, although less marked situation existed at Hanbury, where again a large number of tenancies were new creations in terms of assarts or purprestures. For instance, Thomas Davy was recorded as holding an assart by free tenure, a half virgate by customary tenure and one swynland, thus appearing in three separate lists of tenancies.<sup>5</sup> This was by no means an isolated case upon these two manors and suggests a peripheral expansion outside the open field areas. The fact that different areas of land were held by different forms of tenure suggests that, in these manors at least, the social and economic distinctions imposed by differing forms of tenure were becoming blurred by the end of the thirteenth century. Another feature of the extents of these 'forest' manors is the first indication of some degree of decline, for in Alvechurch in 1299, 10 tenancies were recorded as being in the hands of the Bishop. These vary in their nature, comprising a 'medietatum' at Brookhill, 2 half virgates, 2 half virgates with a messuage each, 2 quarter virgates, one assart, one messuage and 3 assarts, and one messuage with 2 'placeis'. The implication is that the Bishop was having difficulty, at this time, in finding tenants for these holdings. Moreover, four further holdings, comprising one assart, and three small 'placeam' were in the Bishop's hands at 'Sandene' (Sandhills). Although other confirmatory evidence is not available, the suggestion from these is that the vast expansion in tenancies between 1182-1299 in Alvechurch had reached a position whereby colonization had overtaken the population which had triggered it, thus causing a degree of retraction, particularly from the least favoured areas.

Despite the reductions in possible population expansion on these woodland manors they still exhibited an apparently faster rise

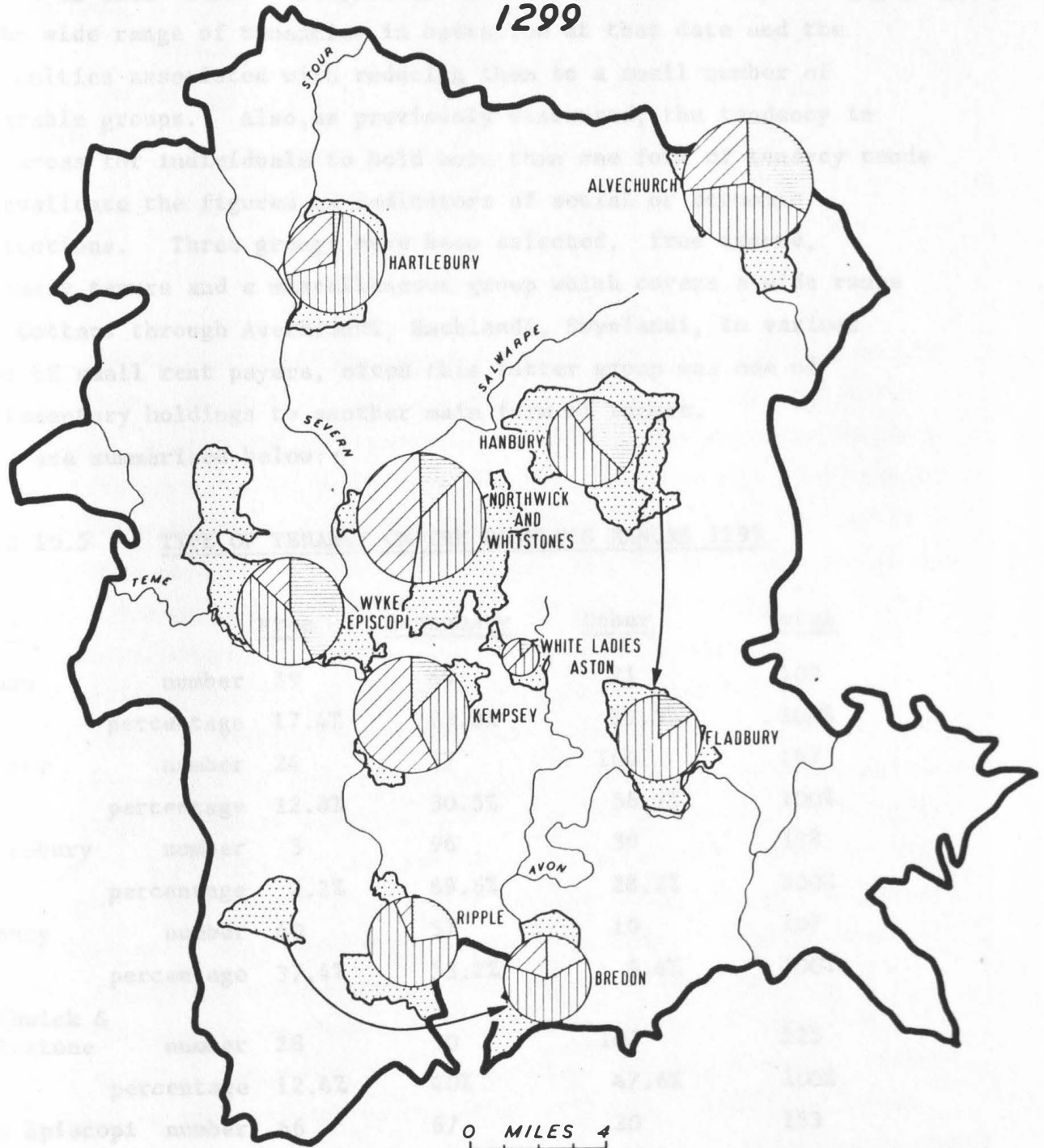
than the demesne and mixed economy manors of the south. On these latter, the number of multiple tenancies held by a single individual was reduced and the number of tenancies held by more than one person was increased. For instance, at Kempsey in 1249, 16 forelands were held by 34 Cottagers, and amongst the Swinlands, 16 forelands were held by 27 people. This suggests the likelihood of a number of sub-tenancies, which may well have been underestimated in any relationship between tenancies and population in this area. This could result in a lowering of the apparent differential of expansion between these woodland manors in the north and those in the south of the estate. Expansion in areal terms certainly had occurred on the southern manors, for assarts were recorded appurtenant to Bredon, although these were exclusively within Malvern Forest at Welland. Also they were recorded at Kempsey and Wick Episcopi, although in both cases these were large manors that had included within their perview a wide range of land uses in 1086. Generally, it is the areal expansion of the cultivated area in terms of tenancies, in contrast to the more stable conditions of the south, that distinguishes the woodland manors of the north. This expansion was, no doubt, accompanied by population expansion, as is suggested by the expansion of tenancies, but it still would appear to have resulted in a far lower density of population than that characterising the south.

Despite the problems of relating tenancies to population, it is clear from Figure 10.1 that there is a considerable coincidence, on the Bishop's estate, between those manors exhibiting the greater rise in tenancies and those displaying the greatest number of settlements first mentioned in the period. Thus Hanbury, Alvechurch, Hartlebury, Wick Episcopi and Kempsey show the greatest increase in tenancies and account for nearly 50 percent of new settlement mentions on the entire Domesday estate of the Church of Worcester. Not all of these manors, however, were defined as woodland manors at the time of Domesday, although all of them possessed Domesday woodland. The population and ploughteam structure was such as to suggest a different set of relationships as being extant at Hartlebury, Wick Episcopi and Kempsey than those of the woodland economies of Hanbury and Alvechurch. It is instructive therefore to analyse the various forms of tenancy extant on



FIGURE 10.2

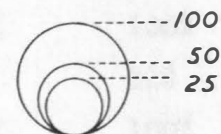
## CLASS OF TENANCIES ON THE ESTATES OF THE BISHOP OF WORCESTER 1299



CLASS OF TENANCIES



NUMBER OF TENANCIES



 MANOR AREA

the Bishop's estates in 1299 in order to ascertain whether these differences had been maintained. Figure 10.2 shows a comparison of tenancy forms extant on the various manors in 1299, drawn from the extents of that date. Comparison is difficult to achieve because of the wide range of tenancies in operation at that date and the difficulties associated with reducing them to a small number of comparable groups. Also, as previously discussed, the tendency in some areas for individuals to hold more than one form of tenancy tends to invalidate the figures as indicators of social or economic distinctions. Three groups have been selected, free tenure, customary tenure and a miscellaneous group which covers a wide range from Cottars through Averklandi, Enchlandi, Swynlandi, to various types of small rent payers, often this latter group was one of supplementary holdings to another main form of tenure. These are summarised below:-

TABLE 10.5 TYPE OF TENANCY ON THE BISHOP'S MANORS 1299

<u>Manor</u>		<u>Free</u>	<u>Customary</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Total</u>
1. Bredon	number	19	69	21	109
	percentage	17.4%	63.3%	19.3%	100%
2. Kempsey	number	24	57	106	187
	percentage	12.8%	30.5%	56.7%	100%
3. Hartlebury	number	3	96	39	138
	percentage	2.2%	69.6%	28.2%	100%
4. Hanbury	number	40	57	10	107
	percentage	37.4%	53.2%	9.4%	100%
5. Northwick & Whitestone	number	28	90	107	225
	percentage	12.4%	40%	47.6%	100%
6. Wick Episcopi	number	66	67	20	153
	percentage	43.1%	43.8%	13.1%	100%
7. Ripple	number	25	78	7	110
	percentage	22.7%	70.9%	6.4%	100%
8. Alvechurch	number	75	92	61	228
	percentage	32.9%	40.3%	26.8%	100%

TABLE 10.5 (CONTINUED)

		<u>Free</u>	<u>Customary</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Total</u>
9.	Fladbury & Throckmorton				
	number	15	85	0	100
	percentage	15%	85%	0%	100%
10.	White Ladies Aston				
	number	2	8	6	16
	percentage	12.5%	50%	37.5%	100%

Generally, customary tenure remained the standard form on the Bishop's estate, as, on all manors, it formed a high, and in most cases the dominant, proportion of tenancies. Although the services required from the Customers was given in considerable detail in the 1299 Extent, the money price of their sale was also included, but it is impossible to assess what proportion of these services were in fact commuted in any one year. The proportion comprising free tenures was higher on three manors than elsewhere; those of Hanbury (37.4%), Alvechurch (32.9%) and Wick Episcopi (43.1%) as compared with the average for the ten manors of 20.0%. Although the Alvechurch figures are confused by double mentions, the number of free tenancies is, if anything, underestimated as the 61 burgage tenements were included under the miscellaneous category. Conversely at Wick Episcopi, as judged by the 'Domesday' Extent of 1192, it is probable that the free tenancies include those burgage tenements held in Worcester, thus exaggerating the proportion of free tenures vis-a-vis Alvechurch and Hanbury. The highest proportion of free tenancies thus occurs on those manors which exhibited the greatest degree of woodland clearance and generation of new settlement. This would appear to lend support to the views of Harley<sup>7</sup> and Hilton<sup>8</sup> that the social and economic bonds of feudal society were considerably loosened in areas of post-conquest colonization allowing the development of a greater degree of freedom. Indeed, the extents of both Hanbury and Alvechurch seem to hint at the evolution of an entirely different tenurial structure to that characterising the more southern manors.

The fact that so many individuals held more than one kind of tenancy, often appearing as free holders of assarts, customers in the main village lands and rent payers of swynlands and the like suggests the development of the kind of infield-outfield structure outlined by Dodgshon.<sup>9</sup> In this kind of structure the central village lands, or the infield, remain communally operated by customary tenants whilst the outer parts of the manor, the outfield, which had largely been won from waste and woodland in the post-conquest period, was characterised by a wide range of tenancies, mostly free or rent paying by nature and held largely in severalty. This would form the basis of the distinctive landscapes, noted by Leland, of the champion south-east and the enclosed north and west. An interesting speculation is that this type of tenurial infield-outfield structure could have extended back to pre-conquest times. One of the distinguishing features of woodland manors as defined from Domesday evidence (Chapter 7) was the high proportion of Bordars within their population, who seem to possess ploughteams and were relatively independent of demesne production. It is possible that they largely occupied these outfield areas which were greatly augmented by subsequent clearance. One thing is certain, the woodland economies, as such, were irrevocably destroyed by clearance in the post-conquest period and their once extensive Bordar populations transmuted into some other form of tenancy.

On the mixed and demesne economy manors at Domesday, the subsequent development is less clear. Certainly both the growth of tenancies and the proportion of free tenancies is lower. However, there is good evidence to suggest the existence of sub-tenancies which would increase the apparently lower growth rate. Any woodland that remained at Domesday times was undoubtedly cleared, particularly at Kempsey and Wick Episcopi, although in the former case this was mainly by large Royal grant direct to the Bishop, which probably accounts for the low proportion of free tenancies. At Wick Episcopi, however, 23 settlements were first mentioned between 1086 - 1350, which were probably the result of woodland clearance and partially explains the high proportion of free tenancies. Elsewhere, little enough woodland existed in 1086 and judging by the ploughteam densities it is unlikely

that much extension of the cultivated area was possible. The Villein-Serf combination that characterised these demesne economies at Domesday was probably not substantially altered, as customary tenants remain dominant in 1299. The Serf were probably accommodated in one of the cottager types of tenancy that appear in the extents.

#### The Estates of the Priory of Worcester

Apart from the ten main manors listed previously and shown on Figures 10.1 and 10.3, the Priory also possessed smaller holdings at Wick, Lippard, (Worcester-St.-Martins) Henwick (St. Johns in Bedwardine), Tibberton, Crowle, Dunhampstead, Himbleton and Lench. These comprised only parts of manors with only one or two tenants, and are not comparable with The Priory's main manorial possessions or with those of the Bishop or Guy de Beauchamp. Therefore, for the purpose of this analysis, they have been excluded. As can be seen from Figure 10.1 and from Table 10.3, the greatest expansion in tenancies between 1086 - 1240 occurred on four manors. The average ratio for the period 1086:1240 for the estate was 100:224 which was exceeded at Wolverley (453), Stoke Prior (292), Phepson (275) and Grimley (238). The first three of these were situated in 'Forest' areas, Wolverley being part of Kinver Forest and the other two within the bounds of Feckenham Forest. Grimley had been relatively well wooded, judged by Domesday evidence, although not part of any Forest. In this respect the pattern confirms that discussed previously for the Bishop's manors, but is also subjected to the same limitations in its significance for population development. Elsewhere on the estate the growth between 1086 and 1240 remains relatively slow, again confirming developments between 1086 and 1192 on the Bishop's estate.

The social structure of the tenants illustrates a less confused pattern than those of the Bishop's estate, partly due to the lower level of detail offered by the 1240 extents compared with those of 1299. The accompanying table, (also Fig. 10.3) lists the tenancies in the same categories as discussed previously:-

FIGURE 10.3

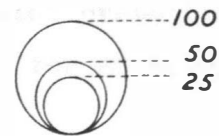
**CLASS OF TENANCIES ON THE  
ESTATES OF THE PRIORY OF WORCESTER  
1240**



CLASS OF TENANCIES

-  FREE
-  CUSTOMARY
-  MISCELLANEOUS

NUMBER OF TENANCIES



 MANOR AREA

TABLE 10.6 TYPE OF TENANCIES ON THE ESTATE OF THE PRIORY OF WORCESTER 1240

<u>Manor</u>		<u>Free Tenure</u>	<u>Customary</u>	<u>Miscellaneous</u>	<u>Total</u>
1. Overbury	number	4	27	19	50
	percentage	8%	54%	38%	100%
2. Harvington	number	3	27	10	40
	percentage	7.5%	67.5%	25%	100%
3. Grimley	number	8	67	13	88
	percentage	9.1%	76.1%	14.8%	100%
4. Hallow	number	6	38	18	62
	percentage	9.7%	61.3%	29%	100%
5. Phepson	number	-	22	-	22
	percentage	-	100%	-	100%
6. Sedgebarrow	number	-	14	11	25
	percentage	-	56%	44%	100%
7. Cropthorne	number	10	51	12	73
	percentage	13.7%	69.9%	16.4%	100%
8. Cleeve	number	10	15	5	30
	percentage	33.3%	50.0%	16.7%	100%
9. Wolverley	number	7	61	-	68
	percentage	10.3%	89.7%	-	100%
10. Stoke Prior	number	2	71	-	73
	percentage	2.7%	97.3%	-	100%

The emphasis on customary tenure was even more marked on this estate than on the Bishop's, and the very low number of freeholders approximates more to the position in 1086 than to that of the Bishop's estates in 1299. The percentage of free tenancies for the 10 manors was only 9.4% and variance from this average does not coincide with areas of recent colonization. Only at Cleeve, a small manor in the Avon valley (Fig. 10.3) did free tenancies assume any significant proportion. However, there are some extenuating circumstances, for at Grimley the

demesne was let out to 48 tenants, "In Dominico Curia cum pertinentis, et quondam duae carucatae terrae, quarum una posita est in villenagio et alia tradita est villanus ad firmam". Similarly at Hallow, "Curia cum pertinentis et duae carucatae terrae de dominico cum pratis et proventibus et herietibus et villanagio tradite sunt villanis ad firmam pro c quartemus frumentii".<sup>9</sup> Also the 3 virgates of demesne at Phepson were rented to the villeins, thus, in all the above cases the distinction between villein and free tenure must have been a very arbitrary one. Similarly, at Wolverley, the extent states that the curia and pertinencies, together with 2 ploughlands of the demesne "quae aliquando positae ad firmam solvebant annuatim 4 libras" although it is not made clear if it refers to the Villeins. Generally, however, the emphasis on customary tenure remained paramount and compared to the Bishop's Estate expansion in the number of tenancies seems to have had relatively little impact. This could reflect the earlier date of the extents, in that although colonization was undoubtedly under way at this time, it had not developed to its full extent. Certainly, the differences between the two estates might well have given substance to the charge that Bishop Gifford had allowed his estates to 'go to seed' and thus lowered the value of Church property, a charge he may well have attempted to refute by the detailed extents of 1299.

At the time of Domesday Book, none of these manors were defined as woodland economies due to the strong demesne element that existed, despite the wooded nature of Wolverley and Grimley. By 1240 relatively little change appears to have taken place in the tenancy structure with customary tenancies being the dominant feature. This probably reflects the conservative attitude of the Priory officials who were essentially concerned with the support of the monastic community at Worcester rather than necessarily maximising returns from their manors. One significant change that had occurred was the widespread leasing of demesnes, although it is unclear at precisely what point in time this change occurred. Such clearance and colonization that had occurred on the more wooded manors by 1240 does not appear to have resulted in the same loosening of feudal bonds as was evident on some of the Bishop's manors by 1299.



The Beauchamp Estate

A significant feature of this particular grouping of manors is that many of them had undergone a change in ownership, from ecclesiastical authorities since 1086. As previously stated, this can make comparisons with Domesday Book difficult as, in some cases, the manors previously formed only part of a larger Domesday manor. However, the average rise in tenancies was larger than for the previous two estates, although the Inquisitiones Post Mortem from which the data is drawn is of a later date, 1315-16. The mean rise in tenancies for the estate between 1086:1315 is 100:315, with three manors significantly above this average (Fig. 10.1). These are Abberley (583), Salwarpe (518) and Wadborough (487), of which the first two had always been in lay ownership, whilst Wadborough formed part of the Church of Pershore's possessions. In none of the cases does Domesday mention extensive woodland, making it unlikely that the rise in tenancies can be related directly to colonization through the agency of woodland clearance. Only Little Inkberrow formed part of a Domesday woodland economy and the rise in tenancies over the period is very similar to that of Elmley Castle, which formed part of the demesne economy of the Church of Worcester's manor of Cropthorne. It is possible that the rise of tenancies at Salwarpe could be related to the continued expansion of the salt trade in neighbouring Droitwich, although the Inquisitiones make no mention of it. It seems most likely that the greater rise in tenancies revealed on the Domesday demesne economy manors of the Beauchamp estates than was apparent on those of the Bishop or Priory of Worcester, is largely due to differing seigniorial policy. On the Beauchamp estate less regard may have been given to the customary nature of tenure, thus population rise was accommodated by the creation of new tenancies through subdivision of the old, which were accorded the status of free, rent paying tenants. Whereas, on the Bishop's and Priory manors the same process was evident, but merely resulted in a class of sub-tenants who failed to find mention in the extents. The outcome of such a hypothesis would be to eradicate the apparent differential in population increase between those areas of post-conquest clearance and those areas already cleared by 1086. This supports the findings of the analysis of Lay Subsidies and finds some confirmation in the types of tenancy extant

on the Beauchamp estate in 1315-16.

TABLE 10.7 TYPES OF TENANCY ON THE ESTATE OF GUY DE BEAUCHAMP 1315-16

<u>Manor</u>	<u>Free</u>	<u>Customary</u>	<u>Miscellaneous</u>	<u>Total</u>
1. Abberley	20	60	-	80
number				
percentage	25%	75%	-	100%
2. Elmley Castle	45	18	21	84
	53.5%	21.5%	25%	100%
3. Comberton	39	8	2	49
	79.5%	16.4%	4.1%	100%
4. Sherrifs Lench	1	11	7	19
	5.3%	57.9%	36.8%	100%
5. Naunton Beauchamp	3	23	7	33
	9.1%	69.7%	21.2%	100%
6. Salwarpe	42	40	6	88
	47.7%	45.5%	6.8%	100%
7. Wadborough	41	21	11	73
	56.2%	28.8%	15.1%	100%
8. Pirton	22	-	-	22
	100%	-	-	100%
9. Little Inkberrow	5	14	1	20
	25%	70%	5%	100%

Generally, the types of tenancy, shown on Figure 10.4., were more limited than those on the other two estates, being restricted to those of free tenure, villeinage and cottagers. The outstanding feature is the high proportion of free tenancies, averaging 44.6% per manor and thus forming the most numerous single class. It is noticeable that the highest percentages occur on those manors which had been in ecclesiastical ownership in 1086, namely Elmley Castle, Comberton, Wadborough and Pirton, suggesting a major change in seigniorial policy.

FIGURE 10.4

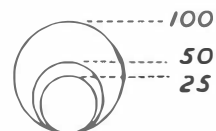
**CLASS OF TENANCIES ON THE  
ESTATES OF GUY DE BEAUCHAMP  
1315-16**



CLASS OF TENANCIES

-  FREE
-  CUSTOMARY
-  MISCELLANEOUS

NUMBER OF TENANCIES



 MANOR AREA

This is further evidenced by the mention at Wadborough that the customary tenants were also copyholders, suggesting that commutation of services had proceeded much farther on these estates than those of the Bishop or Priory. However, these Inquisitiones are of a later date than the Extents previously considered and it is therefore possible that commutation had gone further in a period of diminishing returns, waning population growth and a resultant decline in seigniorial interest in direct cultivation.

### Valuations

Within the Extents, information is given concerning the demesne possessions and their valuations, the value of rents, the nature and value of works, as well as income from communal fines and, finally, issue of the hundred and court. This allows a comparison to be made between the proportions of total value derived from various aspects of each manor within an estate and also, but less effectively, a comparison between different estates. Unfortunately, the Extents of Worcester Priory, 1240, only give valuations of rents, which reduces their usefulness, particularly as customary tenure played such a large role on that estate in 1240. The comparison of estate structures and valuations, therefore, has to be concentrated upon the Bishop of Worcester's manors in 1282 and 1299 and the Beauchamp manors at 1315-16. The difference in dates makes comparisons between the two estates difficult, although in no way invalidates internal variations.

### Estates of the Bishop of Worcester

As previously noted in terms of tenancies, these tended to be large and apparently well stocked manors, a feature reflected in their valuations. It is possible to compare total manorial valuations at three dates, using the Red Book of Worcester, but due to the vagaries of medieval accounting, particularly in addition, some adjustment to the totals is often necessary both in the 1282 and 1299 Extents where checks can be made.

TABLE 10.8 VALUATIONS OF THE MANORS OF THE BISHOP OF WORCESTER  
1086 - 1302

<u>Manor</u>	<u>Extent Valuations</u>					
	<u>Domesday</u>	<u>1282</u>	<u>1299</u>	<u>% of 1282</u>	<u>1302-3</u>	<u>% of 1282</u>
Ripple	£10	£62-7-7½	£68-13-1¼	110	£36-6-5	58.2
Alvechurch	£5	£55-18-7½	£52-14-5½	94.3	£43-7-8	77.6
Hanbury	£7	£34-8-10½	£36-7-7½	106	£10-17-9½	31.6
Kempsey	£16	£70-8-8	£78-16-7¾	112	£37-18-9	53.9
Wick Episcopi	£8	£57-2-1	£51-4-10½	89.7	£47-10-9½	83.3
Northwick & Whitstones	£16-10	£81-17-10½	£86-1-0½	105	£34-4-11½	41.8
Bredon	£10	£64-1-6	£79-14-1¾	124	£21-9-8¼	33.5
White Ladies Aston	£2	£9-18-1½	£10-13-3½	108	-	
Wasthills	-	£5-3-5	£4-9-11¼	87.0	-	
Fladbury & Throckmorton	£10	£61-9-8	£84-17-6	138	£18-5-8¾	29.7
Hartlebury	£16	£43-17-10	£46-5-4¼	105	£34-1-10¾	77.7

As only the totals are given in the Red Book for 1302-3 it is impossible to assess exactly what they comprised, and, as the totals are significantly lower than the two previous, it might well be that they include little more than an assessment of rental value. Between 1282 and 1299 only the same classes of information and their concomitant valuations have been compared. This has meant the omission from the Alia Extenta (1212) totals the valuation of the grange and stock accounts.

The Domesday value given is the higher valuation of either 1066 or 1086 and is included as a guide, rather than as a valuation capable of any direction comparison. Indeed, a major problem in the comparison of monetary values over time is the unknown level of inflation, which could cause quite violent changes in the real value of money over relatively short periods of time. It is, however, possible to compare ranking orders of the various manors at different dates, which are set out below.

TABLE 10.9 THE BISHOP'S MANORS, RANKING ORDER OF VALUES 1086-1302

<u>Manor</u>	<u>Domesday</u>	<u>1282</u>	<u>1299</u>	<u>1302</u>	<u>Total of Ranks</u>
Northwick & Whitestones	1	1	1	5	8
Kempsey	2	2	4	3	11
Bredon	4	3	3	7	17
Ripple	4	4	5	4	17
Fladbury & Throckmorton	4	5	2	8	19
Wick Episcopi	7	6	7	1	21
Alvechurch	9	7	6	2	24
Hartlebury	2	8	8	6	24
Hanbury	8	9	9	9	35
White Ladies Aston	10	10	10	-	-
Wasthills	-	11	11	-	-

The order in which the manors appear is derived by summing the ranking orders at each date. The ranking orders show a reasonable degree of correlation. Between 1086 and 1282 the two ranking orders have a correlation coefficient of .77, whilst 1282 and 1299 have a coefficient as high as .92, which would be expected bearing in mind the proximity of the two extents in date. However, between 1299 and 1302 a correlation coefficient of only .05 is evident, suggesting that these valuations are probably based on a totally different assessment from the previous three.

In general terms, there was a levelling out of valuations between Domesday and the end of the thirteenth century, as the variations between the Episcopal manors apparent in 1086 are far more muted in 1299. As can be seen from Table 10.8, the more northern 'woodland' manors, such as Hanbury and Alvechurch, were valued only at between 30%-50% of the bigger southern manors in 1086, but by 1282 Alvechurch had risen in relative value to nearly 68% of the highest valued manor of Northwick and Whitestones, although Hanbury's progress had been far slower, forming only 42% of the highest valuation. Overall, the ranking orders show remarkably little change over the period, as the centre of wealth of the Bishop's estate remained firmly entrenched in the southern 'demesne' manors, within, and fringing upon,

the Avon and Severn valleys. Despite the colonizing efforts made on the 'woodland' manors, as witnessed by the growth of tenancies and the recorded assarts, the capital invested in terms of manpower, and the attributes of soil type in the southern manors, was sufficient to maintain a differential in value, even if at a lower level, between the latter manors and their 'woodland' counterparts.

More revealing than total values are the internal variations within the composition of each manor's valuations. At the time of Domesday it is impossible to subdivide the valuations, but the Extents of 1282 and 1299 give a reasonably complete breakdown of the sources of manorial valuation. It is possible to group these values into four main categories; those emanating from the demesne; those from rents; those from works and customs; and, finally, a miscellaneous group comprising essentially the pleas and perquisites of the court. As with all such categorising attempts, some arbitrary decisions have to be made, for instance the rental of both corn and fulling mills is usually recorded under the demesne returns on the Extents, but as most appear to have been at rent at the end of the thirteenth century, they have been included under the rental values for purposes of this study. The demesne values are largely confined to those values ascribed to the various categories of agricultural land within the demesne, together with the value given to bartons, granges, court closes and dovecotes. Also included is any sale of underwood or the like which arises directly from the demesne possessions. The other groups are largely self-explanatory, although occasional problems do occur, as between what comprises a customary payment and what comprises a rent.

The total valuations for 1282 and 1299, together with a subdivision as to source, is shown for each of the Bishop's manors by means of divided, proportional half circles on Figure 10.5. This can be further expanded by reference to the following tables:-

TABLE 10.10

VALUE OF BISHOP'S MANORS IN 1299

<u>Manor</u>		<u>Demesne</u>	<u>Rent</u>	<u>Works</u>	<u>Miscellaneous</u>	<u>Total</u>
Northwick & Whitestones	AMOUNT	£14-18-8½	£46-10-0	£16-12-10½	£7-19-5½	£86-1-0½
	PERCENTAGE	17.4%	54.0%	19.3%	9.3%	100
Kempsey		£19-10-9¾	£30-12-2	£19-15-10	£8-17-10	£78-16-7¾
		24.8%	38.8%	25.1%	11.3%	100
Ripple		£15-16-8	£33-12-4½	£8-10-9¾	£10-13-3	£68-13-1¼
		23.1%	48.9%	12.5%	15.5%	100
Fladbury		£17-11-1	£32-13-3	£11-13-8	£5-2-3	£67-0-3
		26.2%	48.7%	17.4%	7.7%	100
Throckmorton		£6-1-2	£3-0-0	£4-18-0	£3-18-1	£17-17-3
		33.9%	16.8%	27.4%	21.9%	100
Wick Episcopi		£6-7-7	£29-7-11	£7-18-4	£7-11-0½	£51-4-10½
		12.4%	57.4%	15.5%	14.7%	100
Alvechurch		£5-10-2	£30-15-9½	£11-8-6	£5-0-0	£52-14-5½
		10.4%	58.4%	21.7%	9.5%	100
Hartlebury		£9-8-3¼	£23-13-9	£7-19-4	£5-4-0	£46-5-4¼
		20.3%	51.2%	17.3%	11.2%	100
Hanbury		£9-18-7½	£15-4-6¼	£5-17-0	£5-7-5½	£36-7-7¼
		27.3%	41.8%	16.1%	14.8%	100
White Ladies Aston		£6-19-5½	£1-11-4	£2-2-4	-	£10-13-3½
		65.4%	14.7%	19.9%	-	100
Wasthills		-	-	-	-	£4-9-11¼
Hopwood (1340)		£2-7-5½	£2-4-10	3/9	6/9	£5-2-9½
		46.2%	43.6%	3.6%	3.6%	100

For 1282 the valuations show some changes, but, overall demonstrate a similar pattern:-



TABLE 10.11 VALUE OF BISHOP'S MANORS IN 1282

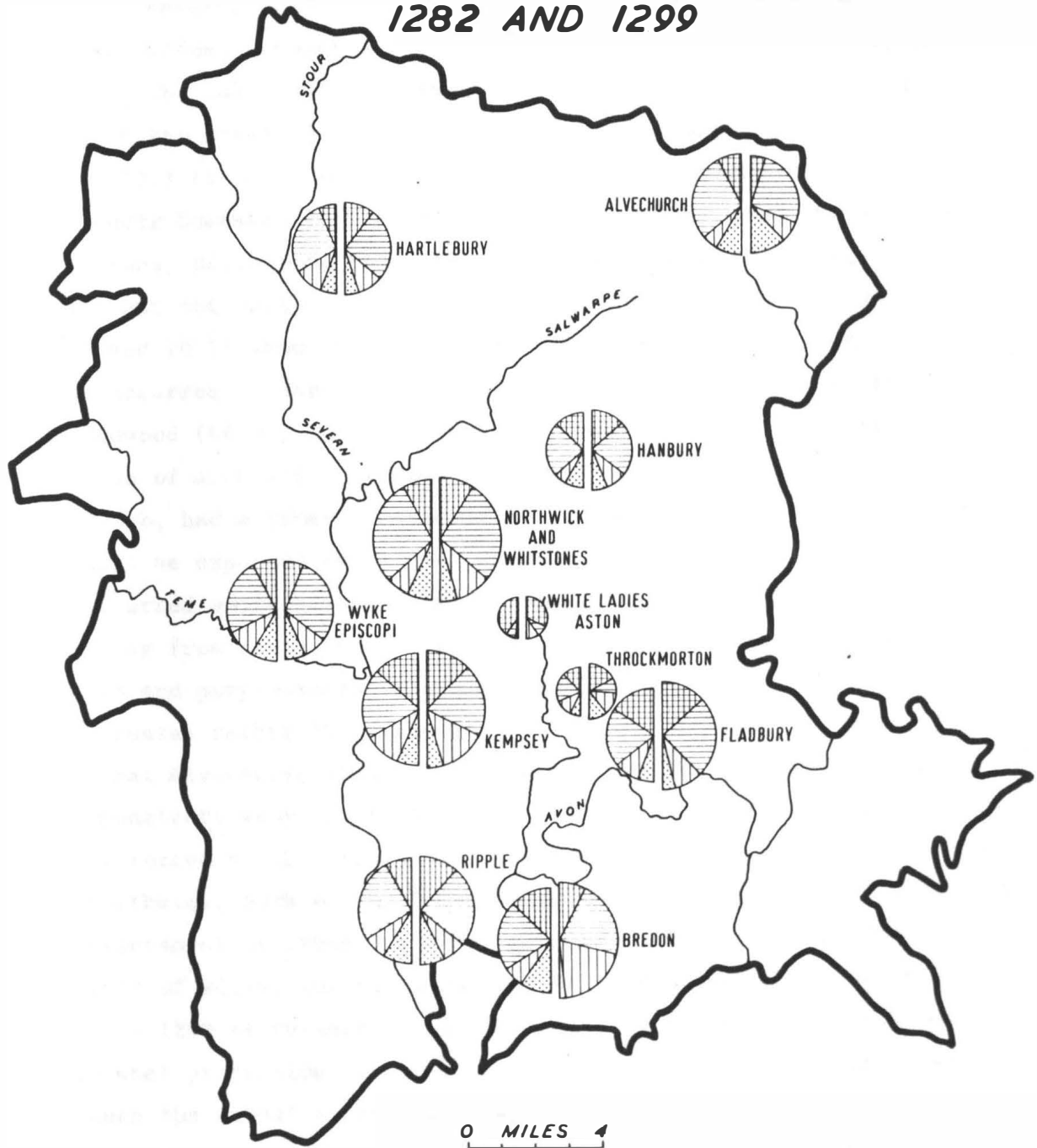
<u>Manor</u>		<u>Demesne</u>	<u>Rent</u>	<u>Works</u>	<u>Miscellaneous</u>	<u>Total</u>
Northwick & Whitestones	AMOUNT	£13-13-6	£47-7-10½	£9-19-2	£10-17-4	£81-17-10
	PERCENTAGE	16.7%	57.9%	13.2%	13.2%	100
Kempsey		£19-0-7½	£27-16-0	£14-8-0½	£9-4-0	£70-8-8
		27.0%	39.5%	20.4%	13.1%	100
Ripple		£10-2-10	£32-7-9½	£8-7-8	£11-9-4	£62-7-7½
		16.3%	51.9%	13.5%	18.3%	100
Fladbury		£16-3-4	£19-15-9½	£8-10-7	£5-0-0	£49-9-8½
		32.7%	40.0%	17.2%	10.1%	100
Throckmorton		£3-18-2½	£4-10-0	£2-11-9	£1-0-0	£11-19-11½
		32.6%	37.5%	21.6%	8.3%	100
Wyke Episcopi		£8-10-9	£28-14-8½	£10-16-7½	£9-0-0	£57-2-1
		14.9%	50.3%	19.0%	15.8%	100
Alvechurch		£8-11-6	£31-19-3	£6-7-10½	£9-0-0	£55-18-7½
		15.3%	57.1%	11.4%		100
Hartlebury		£5-12-10	£23-18-2	£9-6-10	£5-0-0	£43-17-10
		12.8%	54.5%	21.3%	11.4%	100
Hanbury		£8-13-9	£16-17-9½	£3-4-0	£5-13-4	£34-8-10½
		25.2%	49.0%	9.3%	16.5%	100
White Ladies Aston		£7-13-9½	£1-14-4	-	10/0	£9-18-1½
		77.6%	17.3%	-	5.1%	100
Wasthills		-	-	-	-	£5-3-5

The Arithmetic Mean and Standard Deviations for the percentage values for each manor are as follows:-



	<u>1299</u>			
	<u>Demesne</u>	<u>Rent</u>	<u>Works</u>	<u>Miscellaneous</u>
Arithmetic Mean	27.9	43.1	7.8	10.9
Standard Deviation	15.9	14.8	6.4	5.99
	<u>1282</u>			
Arithmetic Mean	27.1	45.5	14.5	12.8
Standard Deviation	19.2	12.3	6.8	4.1

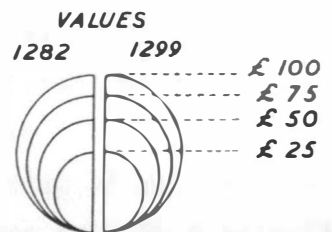
FIGURE 10.5

**EXTENT VALUES OF THE ESTATES OF THE BISHOP OF WORCESTER 1282 AND 1299**



 *DEMESNE LANDS*  
 *RENTS*

 *WORKS AND CUSTOMS*  
 *MISCELLANEOUS (PLEAS AND PERQUISITES OF COURT ETC.)*



In both 1282 and 1299 the highest contribution to total value came from rents, the distribution between the various categories, between the two dates, remaining fairly constant. The above figures, of course, refer only to those parts of the manors upon which the Bishop retained demesne holdings. Associated with many of the large manors, such as Bredon, Kempsey and Fladbury, were areas leased to various knights, the value of which land could not be included. As far as possible the areas of the estates shown on the maps of tenancies (Figs. 10.1 to 10.5) exclude these areas, thus making them smaller than their Domesday equivalents. As can be seen from the Standard Deviations, deviations from the mean values for each category do exist, but not on a very wide scale. Figure 10.5 and Tables 10.10 and 10.11 show that the highest percentage value of the demesne lands occurred at Throckmorton (33.9%), White Ladies Aston (65.4%) and Hopwood (46.2%) in 1340. All of these were small manors, both in terms of area and in terms of valuation and, in the case of the first two, had a greater emphasis on customary tenure than on rents. It would be expected that those manors upon which extensive assarting had occurred would have a higher proportion of their valuation emanating from rents, as it is clear from the 1299 extent that the assarts and purprestures of Hanbury and Alvechurch were subject to a money rental rather than customary service. In general terms it is true that Alvechurch (58.4%), Hartlebury (54.2%) and Hanbury (49.0%) do demonstrate above average rent contributions, although the figures are distorted by the importance of burgage tenements at Wyke Episcopi and Northwick, both of which possessed extensive holdings in Worcester. Any assessment of rents vis-a-vis customary tenure is complicated by the sale of works, for it is unclear as to what extent the sale of works in 1299 represents a commutation. No evidence is forthcoming as to what proportion of services was in fact sold in any one year, although the actual ascribing of money values to each work suggests that it was common practice to sell a significant percentage of them. On the other hand, the fullness of detail in describing the nature of the works would also suggest a continuing interest in the maintenance of at least part of them. The tradition of the sale of works was a long one in Worcestershire, as evidence for their sale exists as early as the beginning of the twelfth century.<sup>10</sup> However, differing landlords seem to have adopted distinctive

attitudes towards commutation during the period of high farming, although there does appear to have been a general tendency towards the reinstatement of at least some services.<sup>11</sup> It is unclear from the extents as to how the Bishop's Estates were managed during this period, although the movement towards money rents on the 'woodland' manors of Alvechurch and Hanbury apparently had not been reversed by the end of the thirteenth century. Extension of the cultivated area, as has been seen, was not limited solely to these 'woodland' manors, for evidence, previously cited, demonstrated expansion on the demesne and mixed economy manors of Wick Episcopi and Kempsey, where the assarts, which were largely in the form of block grants, seem to have been mainly additions to the demesne and thus not directly rent yielding. M. Hollings in the Introduction to the Red Book argues for a decline in the value of rents during the late thirteenth century on the Bishop's estates, but in terms of absolute amounts this would not appear to be the case, as can be seen from Table 10.12

TABLE 10.12                    RENTS FROM BISHOP'S MANORS 1268 - 1299

<u>Manor</u>	<u>1268</u>	<u>1282</u>	<u>1299</u>
Northwick & Whitestones	£38-2-6	£47-7-10½	£46-10-0
Kempsey	£27-16-11	£27-16-0	£30-12-2
Ripple	£33-9-4½	£32-7-9½	£33-12-4½
Fladbury	£12-2-7	£19-15-9½	£32-12-4½
Wyke Episcopi	£18-3-1	£28-14-8½	£29-7-11
White Ladies Aston	£1-13-8	£1-14-4	£1-11-4

Over the 30 year period the changes were relatively small, and, although there is no evidence for large increases in revenue, neither is there evidence to suggest large scale decline, unless the period was marked, as has been suggested by Hollings, by a decline in the real value of money. This latter point is more one of conjecture and remains difficult to establish on a national scale, let alone within a single county. It is certain, however, that in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries the Bishops were concerned to increase the revenue emanating from their estates. Bishop Reynold's Register<sup>12</sup> reports the appointment of Robert de Clyderhow for the express purpose or reorganising estate management and increasing revenue from rents by

abolishing villeinage, thus allowing a great fixity of tenure. The stewards were bidden to substitute rents for day work and to transform those lands in villeinage to money rent. Suggestions were also made for the improvement of wastes and for the letting of the more distant parts of the demesne. Although this comes at a date somewhat later than the 'high farming' period on other ecclesiastical estates<sup>13</sup>, it is probable that the increased interest in the estate dates from at least as early as 1282 as suggested by the estimations of stock quantities contained within the 'Alia Extenta'. However, the process of commutation and the development of copyhold tenure was obviously a gradual one, and the impression gained from the Extents of 1282 and 1299 was that the estates were only just beginning the transition, despite the fact that the impact of colonization upon the woodland manors had already allowed a greater development of money rents and a breach with the tradition of customary tenure.

It is instructive to analyse further the demesne holdings as described within the Extents, as these are given in some detail and allow some estimation of the demesne agrarian economy of the particular manor. In the 1299 Extent, the acreage and value of all arable land of the demesne is given, accompanied by a brief description of the units of which it was comprised. Similarly, with meadow holdings, but pasture is often not specified in areal terms beyond vague descriptions, although values are usually appended. It is thus possible to analyse the demesne holdings in terms of acreage and value, the latter often providing the better guide as it allows some assessment of pasture within the demesne economy. Figure 10.6 illustrates this by means of two divided, proportional half circles; one representing acreage and the other value. As can be seen, arable land dominates the acreage pattern, but plays a far less significant role in terms of value. Where there is a marked discrepancy in circle size, this indicates a high value being placed upon the agricultural land, such as at Bredon. In general terms a far higher value is placed upon meadow land than upon arable, the former being valued usually at four times the rate of the latter, which, judged by the meadow acreages, reflects its relative scarcity. The accompanying table sets out the demesne sizes both in acreages and value for the Bishop's estates:-

FIGURE 10.6

**ACREAGE AND VALUE OF DEMESNE LANDS ON THE ESTATES OF THE BISHOP OF WORCESTER 1299**

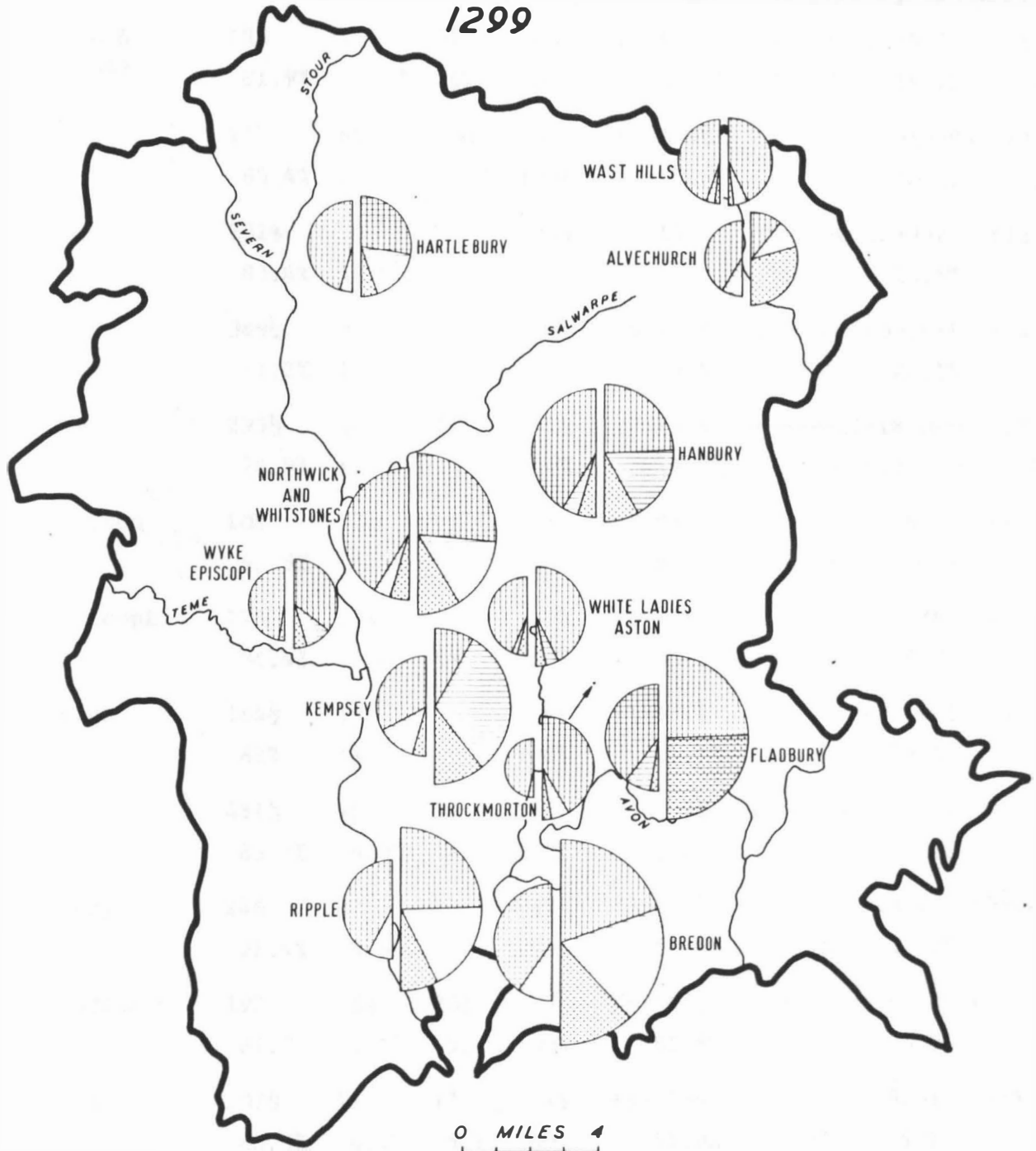


TABLE 10.13

DEMESNE VALUE AND ACREAGES, BISHOP'S ESTATE 1299

<u>MANOR</u>	<u>ACREAGE</u>				<u>VALUE</u>			
	<u>Arable</u>	<u>Meadow</u>	<u>Pasture</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Arable</u>	<u>Meadow</u>	<u>Pasture</u>	<u>Total</u>
Northwick & Whitestones	482 81.9%	45½ 7.7%	61 10.4%	588½ 100%	£7-13-0½ 33.2%	£4-1-8 28.4%	£2-9-0 18.4%	£14-3-8½ 100%
Kempsey	217 65.4%	84½ 25.4%	30½ 9.2%	332 100%	£2-7-8¼ 17.5%	£8-9-0 62.0%	£2-15-9½ 20.5%	£13-12-5¾ 100%
Ripple	282½ 83.4%	56 16.6%	- -	338½ 100%	£7-15-0 49%	£5-12-6 35.5%	£2-9-2 15.5%	£15-16-2 100%
Bredon	389½ 81.2%	90 18.3%	- -	479½ 100%	£9-15-9 39.5%	£9-0-0 36.3%	£5-18-11 24.2%	£24-14-8 100%
Fladbury	295½ 78.9%	60 16.0%	19 5.1%	374½ 100%	£7-13-9 49.3%	£7-18-0 50.7%		£15-11-9 100%
Throckmorton	101 93.5%	7 6.5%	- -	108 100%	£5-0-6 83%	£1-0-8 17%		£6-1-2 100%
Wyke Episcopi	176 94.4%	10½ 5.6%	- -	186½ 100%	£3-1-5 70.1%	£1-17-6 20.0%	8/8 9.9%	£5-7-7 100%
Alvechurch	164½ 82%	36 18%	- -	200½ 100%	£1-1-4½ 21.7%	18/7½ 18.9%	£2-18-5 59.4%	£4-18-5 100%
Hanbury	481½ 83.3%	46½ 8.0%	50 8.7%	578 100%	£5-7-7½ 49.1%	£3-16-0 34.6%	£1-15-8 16.3%	£10-19-3½ 100%
Hartlebury	246 91.4%	23 8.6%	- -	269 100%	£3-2-4¼ 54.6%	£1-18-4 33.5%	13/7 11.9%	£5-16-3¼ 100%
White Ladies Aston	192 87.7	6½ 3.0%	20½ 9.3%	219 100%	£4-16-0 85.8%	9/7 8.7%	6/1½ 5.5%	£5-11-10½ 100%
Wasthills	207½ 88.5%	15 6.4%	12 5.1%	234½ 100%	£3-13-8 81.9%	8/0 8.9%	8/3½ 9.2	£4-9-11¼ 100%
Hopwood (1340)	85 92.4%	7 7.6%	- -	92 100%	16/3½ 35.4%	£1-8-0 60.3%	2/0 4.3%	£2-6-3½ 100%
PERCENTAGE AVERAGE	84.9%	11.4%	7.9%		53.1%	31.5%	17.7%	
		(from 6)				(from 11)		

Even without the inclusion of pasture in the acreage figures, the size of demesne holdings is impressive, for even on small manors such as White Ladies Aston and Washhills, the demesne acreage exceeds 200 acres, which contrasts markedly with the many small holders possessing only  $\frac{1}{4}$  virgates or under 10 acres. Undoubtedly, the demesne had been extended on most of the manors through the agency of block grants of assarts during the thirteenth century, a process, as has been seen, which was by no means limited to the 'woodland' manors. As is to be expected, arable land figured prominently upon all manors, averaging, in terms of acreage mentioned, 84.9% of the demesne lands. Also the variation from this mean is smaller than in any other category, the two outside limits being at Kempsey, with 65.4%, and Wyke Episcopi, with 94.4%. Admittedly, the acreage percentages are distorted by the inclusion of pasture estimates on only 6 manors, but the wide distribution and significance of arable land is supported by its average contribution of over half of the total demesne values. Meadowland, although present upon each manor, is far less equally distributed and was obviously in much shorter supply. The acreages vary from  $6\frac{1}{2}$  acres at White Ladies Aston (3% of demesne lands) up to 90 acres at Bredon (18.8%) and  $84\frac{1}{2}$  acres at Kempsey (25.4%). Generally, it is the larger, old established manors that possess the largest acreages of valuable meadow land, which is in turn reflected in the demesne valuations. Traditionally, meadow land, during the medieval period, was associated with the alluvial deposits of the valley bottoms, and therefore it is no surprise that those manors abutting the Severn and Avon (particularly Kempsey, Bredon, Ripple and Fladbury) demonstrate large acreages of meadowland. Acreages of pasture are only recorded for 6 manors, the highest being Northwick (61 acres) and Hanbury (50 acres), and thus it has to be to the values that attention must be turned in order to assess their position within the demesne economy. The existence of pasture is recorded on all manors, although included within its valuation is often woodland and parks, as they usually provided pasture for the demesne stock. The variation in percentage value of the total demesne or pasture is wide, from 59.4% at Alvechurch to only 5.5% at White Ladies Aston and 4.3% at Hopwood in 1340.



The Extent of Alvechurch is an interesting one in that it reflects many of the distinctions observable between a late colonized 'woodland' manor and the 'demesne' manors of the south. The demesne arable holdings were dispersed amongst 12 separate holdings averaging 13.75 acres, the largest being 31 acres and the smallest 3 acres. This is in contrast to holdings concentrated within 2 or 3 large open fields that were more usual on the southern manors. Similarly, the 36 acres of meadow were divided amongst 7 holdings, with values varying from 4d per acre to 12d. The pasture was situated almost entirely in and around the park which could "sustain 120 animals, and the value of each acre would be 4d per beast, per annum, if it were not for the deer".<sup>14</sup> Thus, the pasture at Alvechurch was assessed by its ability to support stock which comprised 3 mares and their issue, 30 oxen, 36 cows, 20 'animals' and 3 pigs with their issue. The total value per annum was £2-9-8, including the mast, nuts and twigs of the park; a total which was stated as being small because of the deer "which eat the grass for the major part".<sup>15</sup>

A similar pattern was exhibited on all the 'woodland' manors of Westhills, Hopwood, Hartlebury and Hanbury. At Hartlebury the 246 acres of demesne arable was divided amongst 26 separate holdings, whilst at Hanbury it was split between Hanbury itself and two small communities at Goosehill Green and Brickley, comprising 48½ acres in all, divided between 11 holdings. Meadow and pasture exhibit the same piecemeal tendency after being mentioned as 'separate' (seperablis) holdings. Thus, on these manors a very different pattern of demesne holding was apparent, for not only were the forest traditions of park, wood, pasture, deer and mast still strong, but the very structure of the agrarian framework in terms of the numerous small fields was very different from the southern manors. The impression that emerges is that of a relatively late colonized area lacking the basic ingredients of the open field Midland manor as described by Gray<sup>16</sup> and supporting, at a much earlier date, Leland's distinction between the 'champion' south and enclosed north of the county.

The Extents also allow an analysis of the differential values per acre ascribed to the demesne lands throughout the estates. The

values account for each alternate year for arable land on the assumption that the other year will be fallow. Pasture is far harder to assess, because acreages are often not given and the values often recorded per beast. The variations are set out below:-

TABLE 10.14 VALUE OF DEMESNE LANDS PER ACRE - BISHOP OF WORCESTER'S ESTATE 1299

<u>MANOR</u>	<u>ARABLE</u>		<u>MEADOW</u>		<u>PASTURE</u>	
	<u>Value per acre</u>	<u>Average</u>	<u>Value per acre</u>	<u>Average</u>	<u>Value per acre</u>	<u>Average</u>
Northwick & Whitestones	6d - 2d	3.8d	24d - 12d	21.5d	6d - 10d	9.6d
Kempsey	6d - 2½d	2.6d	24d	24d	4½d - 24d	16.1d
Ripple	6d	6.6d	24d	24d	-	-
Fladbury	6d	6.2d	24d	24d	24d	24d
Bredon	6d	6.0d	24d	24d	-	-
Wyke Episcopi	6d - 2d	4.2d	24d	24d	-	-
Alvechurch	2d - 1d	1.6d	12d - 4d	6.2d	-	-
Hartlebury	6d - 4d	3.0d	24d - 16d	20.0d	-	-
Hanbury	4d - 2d	2.7d	20d - 16d	19.6d	8d - 2d	3.3d
White Ladies						
Aston	6d	6d	18d	18d	3d - 4d	3.6d
Wasthills	6d - 1d	4.3d	12d - 3d	6.4d	3d	3d
Hopwood (1340)	3d - 1d	2.3d	60d - 15d	48d	-	-

The uniformly high value of land within the Avon valley manors, at Fladbury and Bredon, and at Ripple in the lower Severn valley close to the Avon confluence, is significant both in terms of the relative values compared with other manors and with the lack of variation of valuation within the manor. In the mid-Severn manors of Kempsey, Wyke Episcopi and Northwick, the values for arable land are more variable, perhaps representing a lowering of value on those lands furthest from the riverine terrace deposits, although this is impossible to establish from the information contained in the extents. Meadowland, however, remains highly valued at 24d per acre. It is the group of manors that were located on the northern part of the Keuper Marl plain of Worcester and

within the sandstone fringe (Hanbury, Hartlebury, Alvechurch, Wasthills and Hopwood) that the value of arable land exhibits the greatest variation and the lowest overall value per acre. It would be over simplistic to ascribe these variations solely to physical geography, although variations in soil type obviously played an important part. As has been previously mentioned, the soils developed on the Keuper Marls are not necessarily any less manageable or less fertile than those on the Liassic Clays of the south. Many other factors could have contributed to the differential in values, for instance, a variability in the size of acre, as the 'forest acre' was known to be larger than the statute acre. This latter, however, was probably insignificant in that it could only widen the differential between the northern and southern manors. On the former manors, much of the land would have been won from woodland and waste within the previous century, and it is clear from the valuations that the emphasis upon arable farming there was far less than on the older manors of the south. As these values were almost certainly linked to yields, it is likely that a differing type of agrarian economy was in operation in the north, probably giving more emphasis to pasture, wood and holding in severalty. The main investment in grain production remained in the south amongst those earlier established 'demesne' manors bordering the Severn and Avon rivers, a situation reflected in both their structures of tenancies and the values ascribed to the demesne lands.

#### Estates of Guy de Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick.

The information for this estate is taken from the Inquisitiones Post Mortem<sup>17</sup> and for a later date, of 1315-16, than the previously considered Extents. Although the information is less detailed the construction of the Inquisitiones was along very similar lines to the Extents, thus allowing some degree of comparison.

The total values for the Beauchamp manors in 1315 are shown on Figure 10.7 and are listed with their Domesday equivalents below: -

TABLE 10.15 VALUE OF THE BEAUCHAMP ESTATE IN 1086 AND 1315-16

<u>MANOR</u>	<u>1086 VALUE</u>	<u>1315 VALUE</u>	<u>PERCENT OF TOTAL</u>
Elmley Castle	+	£48-16-1½	18.5%
Wadborough	£2-0-0*	£45-3-8	17.1%
Salwarpe	£6-0-0	£38-11-1¼	14.6%
Stoulton	£5-0-0†	£35-5-3¾	13.4%
Abberley	£10-10-0	£23-1-11	8.7%
Comberton	£3-10-0	£20-18-11¾	7.9%
Naunton Beauchamp	£4-0-0	£18-1-4	6.8%
Sheriffs Lench	£2-2-0	£11-10-4	4.3%
Lawern	£1-6-0††	£11-4-8½	4.2%
Pirton	£2-10-0	£10-1-9¼	3.8%

+ Part of Cropthorne manor

\* Only part value

† Included with Wolverton & Mucenhill

†† 2 holdings



Any direct comparison between the Domesday values and those of the fourteenth century would be unrealistic in any case, but is particularly complicated in this case due to the difficulties of isolating equivalent areal units at the two dates. In 1086, many of the manors had not emerged as separate units and were still part larger units, thus making their valuation a 'hidden' one. Also, at that time, these manors seem to have suffered far more during the upheavals of the Conquest and consequently were slower to recover than the Bishop of Worcester's manors, thus depressing the valuations.



The 1315 valuations, together with the number of tenancies, demonstrate that the Beauchamp Estate was comprised of smaller, less wealthy manors than those of the Bishop, although the overall distribution of the constituent parts is not dissimilar to those of the Bishop. As with the Bishop's manors, it is those 'demesne' manors situated in the Avon valley area, Elmley Castle and Wadborough, which record the highest values, although both Salwarpe and Abberley

FIGURE 10.7

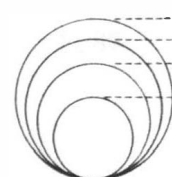
**VALUES OF GUY DE BEAUCHAMP'S ESTATE  
FROM THE INQUISITIONES POST MORTEM  
1315-16**



 DEMESNE LANDS  
 RENTS

 WORKS AND CUSTOMS  
 MISCELLANEOUS  
 (PLEAS AND PERQUISITES  
 OF COURT ETC.)

VALUES



----- £100  
 ----- £75  
 ----- £50  
 ----- £25

appear highly placed in comparison to the manors of the mid-Worcester plain area. In the case of Salwarpe this could be explained by the brine springs and the general wealth accruing to the Droitwich salt trade. Abberley, on the far western boundary of the county, also received a high valuation in 1086, but appears to have been subject to some vicissitudes in the 20 years subsequent to the Conquest, having been valued at £7, TRE, £4 afterwards and £10-10-0 in 1086. By 1315, Abberley's valuation was more moderate compared with the other manors, but was still on a par with the smaller Avon valley manors, such as Comberton.

The same pattern of analysis of the constituent parts of the valuations has been followed for these estates as for those of the Bishop of Worcester, and is illustrated on Figure 10.7 and in the table below:-

TABLE 10.16 VALUES OF THE MANORS OF GUY DE BEAUCHAMP 1315-16

<u>MANOR</u>	<u>DEMESNE</u>	<u>RENTS</u>	<u>WORKS</u>	<u>MISCELLANEOUS</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Elmley Castle	£16-6-11 33.5%	£12-16-10½ 26.3%	£13-16-10 28.4%	£5-15-6 11.8%	£48-16-1½ 100%
Wadborough	£10-4-11¼ 22.7%	£9-18-6½ 22.0%	£20-4-9¼ 44.8%	£4-15-5 10.5%	£45-15-5 100%
Salwarpe	£5-3-2 13.4%	£16-16-7¼ 43.7%	£10-14-8 27.8%	£5-16-8 15.1%	£38-11-1¼ 100%
Stoulton	£7-8-3¼ 21.0%	£9-11-7 27.2%	£17-5-5 49.0%	£1-0-0 2.8%	£35-5-3¼ 100%
Abberley	£3-14-8 16.2%	£16-6-0 70.0%	£1-1-3 4.6%	£2-0-0 8.6%	£23-1-11 100%
Comberton	£6-12-0 31.5%	£10-7-9¾ 49.6%	£2-14-6 13.0%	£1-4-8 5.9%	£20-18-11¾ 100%
Naunton Beauchamp	£6-10-6 36.1%	£2-14-2 15.0%	£6-1-0½ 33.5%	£2-15-7½ 15.4%	£18-1-4 100%
Sheriffs Lench	£4-13-4 40.5%	£6-6-10 55.1%	3/8 1.6%	6/6 2.8%	£11-10-4 100%

None of the Beauchamp manors impinge upon the main area for which assarts were recorded (see Fig. 9.2), although the north western manor of Abberley was situated in an area characterised by a considerable amount of twelfth and thirteenth century colonization as witnessed by place name evidence. Abberley, in the composition of its valuation, is distinctive from the other parts of the estate in that 70% of the value was ascribed to rents as against the mean value of only 35%. This accords with its Domesday status as a 'peasant' economy and suggests that relatively little change had occurred in its basic structure in the intervening period. A similar pattern is noticeable at Sheriffs Lench, which, similar to Abberley, was more remote from the rest of the estate. As has been previously mentioned, the Lenches remained throughout the medieval period as a somewhat remote area, despite their proximity to the wealthy Vale of Evesham. It may well be that in those manors which were judged peripheral to the main estates, the interests of the overall estate economy were best served by allowing money rents coupled with the employment of famuli upon such demesne as existed.

However, throughout the Beauchamp estate the variance within the distribution of values is so large as to make any pattern difficult to perceive. Certainly there does not seem to be the same degree of central control that characterised the Bishop's estates, although this may merely reflect the lower quality of the extant evidence. The dating of the Inquisitiones Post Mortem to 1315-16, a period when a major famine was sweeping through Europe, might be thought to have affected the valuations, yet there is no sign of famine on these estates. No large parts of any manor were declared 'in manus dominus', nor is there any evidence to suggest the valuations were severely reduced from any previous year.

The Inquisitiones, as with the Extents, allow some analysis of the demesne agricultural possessions, which are shown on Figure 10.8 and further expanded in the following table:-

FIGURE 10.8

**ACREAGE AND VALUE OF DEMESNE LANDS  
ON THE ESTATE OF GUY DE BEAUCHAMP  
1315-16**

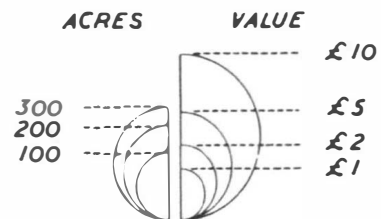
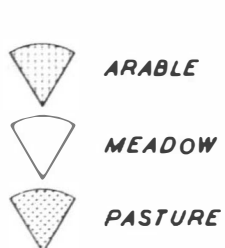




TABLE 10.17 DEMESNE ACREAGE AND VALUE OF THE MANORS OF GUY DE BEAUCHAMP1315-16

<u>MANOR</u>	<u>ACREAGE (ACRES)</u>				<u>VALUE</u>			
	<u>Arable</u>	<u>Meadow</u>	<u>Pastures</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Arable</u>	<u>Meadow</u>	<u>Pasture</u>	<u>Total</u>
Elmley Castle	305	60	-	365	£5-9-7	£6-18-0	£2-3-0	£14-10-7
	83.6%		-	100%	37.7%	47.5%	14.8%	100%
Wadborough*	257½	16	-	273½	£4-16-10	£1-12-0	4/8	£5-13-6
	94.1%	5.9%	-	100%	72.5%	24.0%	3.5%	100%
Salwarpe	150	25	-	175	£2-1-8	£1-17-6	19/-	£3-18-2
	85.7%	14.3%	-	100%	42.4%	38.2%	19.4%	100%
Abberley	200	6	-	206	£2-0-0	6/-	£1-6-8	£13-12-8
	97.1%	2.9%	-	100%	55.0%	8.3%	36.7%	100%
Comberton	220	16	-	236	£4-11-8	£1-4-0	9/8	£6-4-4
	93.2%	6.8%	-	100%	73.1%	19.2%	7.7%	100%
Naunton Beauchamp	210	9	-	219	£5-5-0	18/6	2/-	£6-5-6
	95.9%	4.1%	-	100%	83.7%	14.7%	1.6%	100%
Sheriffs Lench	106	5½	-	111½	£2-8-8	11/-	15/-	£3-14-8
	95.1%	4.9%	-	100%	63.5%	14.3%	22.2%	100%
Lawern	242	4	4	250	£4-1-4½	12/-	£1-4-8	£5-18-0½
	96.8%	1.6%	1.6%	100%	65.5%	10.1%	24.4%	100%
Pirton	322	8	2	332	£5-7-4	16/-	3/4	£6-6-8
	97.0%	2.4%	0.6%	100%	83.4%	12.4%	4.2%	100%

\* Includes Stoulton

	<u>Percentage Acreage</u>		
	<u>Arable</u>	<u>Meadow</u>	<u>Total</u>
Arithmetic Mean	223.6 acres	16.6 acres	240.8 acres
Variance	4724.7 "	310.1 "	5957.0 "
Standard Deviation	68.7 "	17.6 "	77.2 "
Standard Error	22.9 "	5.8 "	25.7 "

Percent Value

	<u>Arable</u>	<u>Meadow</u>	<u>Pasture</u>
Arithmetic Mean	64.1%	20.9%	14.9%
Variance	270.2%	181.1%	139.0%
Standard Deviation	16.4%	13.4%	11.8%
Standard Error	5.5%	4.5%	3.9%

The demesnes of the Beauchamp estate were somewhat smaller than those of the Bishop of Worcester, averaging 240 acres as against the Bishop's average of 307 acres. Also, the allocation of Arable, Meadow and Pasture was less well distributed, in terms of value, than on the Bishop's estates, the Beauchamp estates having a greater dependance on arable farming. Only at Elmley Castle and Salwarpe does the combined value of meadow and pasture exceed that of arable land. In the former case this is readily explicable by the location of the manor on the north facing slope of Bredon Hill, the land rising sharply behind the Castle and remaining to this day an area of woodland and rough grazing. The northern extension of this manor ran along a tributary of the Avon and presumably provided the site for the meadow land. Therefore, it is not surprising, in terms of physical geography, that Elmley Castle demonstrates a more varied demesne agriculture than the rest of the estate. Similarly, Salwarpe manor, as its name implies, bordered on the river Salwarpe, the valley bottom of which provides the type of location favoured during the Middle Ages for meadow land. However, the relatively high pasture value was derived from the existence of a park which in summer sustained 10 cows and in winter 16 foals, as well as an unspecified number of swine.<sup>18</sup> A park also existed at Abberley, where the pasture was worth 20/- per annum, but no mention was made of any livestock.

Taken as a whole, the Worcestershire demesne holdings of Guy de Beauchamp do not show the same amount of variation as those of the Bishop of Worcester, the emphasis being placed on arable land and hence predominantly cereal production. This remains despite the later date of the evidence, which one might have thought would begin to show that declining yields on the more marginal areas had begun to presage a change to a more mixed type of economy.

TABLE 10.18 VALUE OF DEMESNE LANDS PER ACRE GUY DE BEAUCHAMP 1315-16

<u>MANOR</u>	<u>ARABLE</u>		<u>MEADOW</u>		<u>PASTURE</u>	
	<u>Value per acre</u>	<u>Average per acre</u>	<u>Value per acre</u>	<u>Average per acre</u>	<u>Value per acre</u>	<u>Average per acre</u>
Elmley Castle	6d - 3d	4.3d	30d - 18d	27.6d	-	-
Wadborough & Stoulton	5d - 4d	4.5d	30d - 18d	24.0d	-	-
Salwarpe	4d - 3d	3.3d	24d	24.0d	-	-
Abberley	2d	2.0d	12d	12.0d	-	-
Comberton	5d	5.0d	18d	18.0d	-	-
Naunton Beauchamp	6d	6.0d	24d	24.0d	-	-
Sheriffs Lench	6d - 4d	5.5d	24d	24.0d	-	-
Lawern	6d - 2d	4.1d	36d	36.0d	-	-
Pirton	4d	4.0d	24d	24.0d	8d	8.0d
Little Inkberrow	4d	4.0d	24d	24.0d	-	-

The value of demesne lands per acre, per annum, listed in the table above show a very similar pattern to those of the Bishop of Worcester's estates some 25 years earlier. The average value per acre of arable on the Beauchamp estates is marginally higher at 4.3d per acre, as compared with 4.1d on the Bishop's estates, whilst meadow land compares 23.7d against 23.6d. There is less variation in values on the Beauchamp estates, the widest range being at Lawern (6d - 2d per acre), whereas on the Bishop's estates arable land was more varied in its valuation on a greater number of manors. Meadowland proved steadier in its valuation; 2/- per acre being the common valuation to both estates, more or less regardless of location of the manor within the county. The lowest values on the Beauchamp estate were found at Abberley, which probably reflects the lower quality of the soils developed from the Silurian and Carboniferous measures in the area. The slopes of Abberley hill remain well wooded at the present time, although much of this represents secondary growth woodland, the main economic value of which is as rough grazing, which represents a situation probably not markedly different from that of medieval times. At Abberley, meadowland was in short supply (6 acres) and was also lower valued, again suggesting

a lower quality due to the intermittent nature of the streams emanating from the limestone hills, which are often known to fail completely during a dry summer.

As has been previously mentioned, the values ascribed to land were probably in some way linked with yields, which in turn would reflect varying soil fertility. The highest valued arable land (6d per acre) was found at Elmley Castle, Naunton Beauchamp and Lawern, but a better guide is the average value per acre, as this gives some indication of the relative apportionment of the arable acres between different values on each manor. In this case it is Naunton Beauchamp (6.0d), Sheriffs Lench (5.5d) and Comberton (5.0d) which stand out above the other manors of the estate. Of these three, Naunton Beauchamp and Comberton, with 210 and 220 acres of arable land, are close to the average size (223.6 acres) for the estate, but Sheriffs Lench, with only 106 acres, is much smaller. Comberton lay just to the north of Bredon Hill and possesses a greater variety of soils, due to the existence of outwash sands and gravels overlying the Lower Lias clays of the area. Soils of the Pershore and Evesham series are well developed here, and their arable potential has been fully realised in the modern development of market gardening. Both Sheriffs Lench and Naunton Beauchamp, however, were situated on the periphery of the Marl plain and in this respect were little different from much of the rest of the estate. However, superficial deposits of glacial sand and gravel abound throughout this area, and these can make important differences to soil development over relatively short distances. Sheriffs Lench, for instance, was situated on one of the larger deposits of glacial sand and gravel, which may account for the higher value of its arable land. Apart from Salwarpe (3.3d) and Abberley (2.0d), the two northern manors previously discussed, the rest of the estate demonstrated a very low variance from the mean value per acre, varying only between 4.0d to 4.5d per acre.

The value of meadowland closely approximates to the common average of 2/- per acre valuation, varying only markedly at Abberley (12.0d) and Lawern (36.0d), but the acreages in these two cases were so small (6 acres and 4 acres) as to make any assessment of possible causes impossible. Only at Comberton (16 acres) and Elmley Castle (60 acres) did meadowland

reach the size common on the Bishop's manors, or such a size where it could play a significant role in the agrarian economy of the manor concerned.

Thus, on the evidence of the Inquisitiones, both meadowland and pasture were but poorly developed within the demesne economy of the Beauchamp estates, and the estate continued to depend heavily on arable farming, as compared with the more varied economy evident on the Bishop's estates some 25 years earlier.

#### The Estates of the Priory of Worcester

As previously mentioned, the information contained in the Registrum for 1240 does not allow the detailed treatment of values and demesne economy as was possible for the Bishop's estates and those of Guy Beauchamp. The majority of the tenures on the Priory estates were customary ones and therefore rents were relatively small, also any details of the demesne economy were omitted, only vill valuations being included.

TABLE 10.19 RENTS OF THE PRIORY OF WORCESTER'S MANORS, 1240

<u>MANOR</u>	<u>MILLS</u>	<u>FREEMEN</u>	<u>SOCCAGE</u>	<u>'FISFE'</u>	<u>TENE - MENTS</u>	<u>COTTARI</u>	<u>FOR - LANDI</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Overbury	£3-6-8 (57%)	£1-12-8 (28%)	13/3 (11%)	4/9 (4%)	-	-	-	£5-17-4
Cleeve & Lench	£2-0-0 (34%)	£3-13-6 (63%)	-	3/4 (3%)	-	-	-	£5-16-10
Stoke	£3-16-0 (80%)	13/0 (14%)	-	6/1 (6%)	-	-	-	£4-15-1
Wolverley	£2-13-4 (59%)	£1-8-11 (32%)	5/4 (6%)	-	-	3/0 (3%)	-	£4-10-7
Grimley	£1-4-0 (27%)	£1-11-5 (35%)	£1-6-5 (30%)	7/0 (8%)	-	-	-	£4-8-10
Crothorne	£1-15-0 (41%)	£1-14-11 (41%)	10/2 (13%)	4/3 (5%)	-	-	-	£4-4-4

TABLE 10.19 (CONTINUED)

<u>Manor</u>	<u>Mills</u>	<u>Freemen</u>	<u>Soccage</u>	<u>'Fisfe'</u>	<u>Tene- ments</u>	<u>Cottari</u>	<u>For- landi</u>	<u>Total</u>
Hallow	-	£1-6-8 (33%)	13/1 (16%)	-	9/0 (11%)	-	£1-12-9 (40%)	£4-1-6
Harvington	-	£1-10-4 (55%)	-	2/6 (5%)	-	£1-2-0 (40%)	-	£2-14-10
Phepson	-	-	-	-	-	-	11/5½	11/5½

As can be seen from the table, a high proportion of the total rents came from the mills, together with free and soccage rents, again emphasising the customary nature of most tenure. This represents a situation probably not dissimilar from that extant at the time of Domesday. W. H. Hale, in his introduction to the Register of Worcester Priory<sup>19</sup>, points to the similarities between the Domesday 'valet' and the total rents of the Priory manors in 1240 and concludes that the two values represent an equivalent evaluation. Supporting evidence for this, however, is non-existent, and the correlation may well be fortuitous. At Hallow, Harvington and Phepson the pattern of rent apportionment is different from the other manors, large proportions being derived from money payments by tenants normally bound by customary service, yet there is no indication in the Domesday survey of any early commutation, nor do the values differ any more markedly than other manors between 1086 and 1240.

Another distinguishing feature of the Priory manors is the number of demesnes that were leased out to tenants for a fixed money payment. By 1240 the Priory preferred the surety of a fixed income to the possibility of fluctuating returns from direct cultivation, although on other monastic estates, such as Winchester, the period of 'high farming' had already commenced.<sup>20</sup> Such leasing of the demesne was not a new feature on the Priory estates, for at Tibberton it is stated that it had been let to the villeins with all appurtenances 'ab antiquo'<sup>21</sup>, the rent amounting to 102/-. The following table lists the demesne sizes:-

TABLE 10.20 DEMESNE HOLDINGS OF THE PRIORY OF WORCESTER

Grimley	2 carucates	Harvington	2 carucates
Hallow	2 "	Crophthorne	4 "
Henwick	1 "	Netherton	2 "
Lippard	3 "	Overbury	3 "
Himbleton	2 "	Wolverley	2 "
Phepson	4 virgates	Stoke	3 "
Sedgebarrow	2 carucates $\frac{1}{2}$ virgate		

Assuming the carucate to contain 6 virgates (vide Harvington "duae carucatae terrae sc. xii Virgatae terrae"),<sup>22</sup> this would approximate to 180 acres to the carucate, thus giving a range of demesne size from 120 acres at Phepson to 720 acres at Crophthorne. This gives a slightly larger range than the demesne of the Bishop's estates in 1299 which were from 588 $\frac{1}{2}$  acres to 100 acres. However, the acreage estimations on the Priory estate have to be viewed with caution, as it is quite probable that the size of both carucate and virgate would have varied over the extent of the estate.

Five of the demesnes were at farm, usually for rent in kind, which presumably supported the monastic community, thus providing a major difference between the operation of this estate as compared with either those of the Bishop or Guy de Beauchamp. These Priory manors seem to have been either comparatively small, such as Tibberton and Phepson, or situated in the northern and western parts of the county, such as at Wolverley, Grimley and Hallow. Only Cleeve Prior lies close to the Avon valley and here the rental to the villeins was quite high, being 40 marks (£26-13-4). All of these leases were stated as being "tradito ab antiquo", which suggests they were leased at a time when an attempt was being made to concentrate demesne production on the more profitable south-eastern manors, making it a more attractive proposition for the Priory to exchange meagre and fluctuating returns for a fixed income. It is noticeable that the customary rent for the demesne of 100 quarters of wheat, 100 qu. of oats, 118 qu. of rye and 17 $\frac{1}{2}$  qu. of barley, payable at Grimley, was doubled under the new assise,

and at Hallow the demesne rent was again double that for Grimley. It is only on the latter manor that the demesne holdings exceed those in villeinage as on the 12 main manors the demesne contained only about two-thirds of the land in villeinage.



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22. ibid., 60a.

## SUMMARY

Despite the misgivings expressed by some authorities concerning the scale and significance of post-conquest colonization, it has been possible to demonstrate that in Worcestershire such a colonization movement had an important impact upon settlement patterns and the destruction of Domesday woodland. The location of settlement created in this period, together with the location of assarting, show a marked accord with that of Domesday woodland and more particularly with Domesday woodland economies. The immediate result was a diminution of the county's woodland cover and a destruction of the basis of the Royal Forest, such that, by 1350, much of the Forest remained as little more than a legal anachronism. Although the bulk of the settlements created in this period seem to have been isolated farmsteads, it was not the result of a colonization movement conducted by a free peasantry. Both the majority of assarts granted and the settlements created, were on the estates of rich and powerful landlords, notably the Bishop of Worcester. In fact the whole movement bears the stamp of seigniorial authority and had the effect of concentrating wealth into even fewer hands than had been the case at the time of Domesday Book. The increase in income derived from new rents and from extensions to demesnes had the effect of maintaining the gradients of wealth, on both an areal and personal level, that had been current in 1086. This led to a paradoxical situation, whereby the majority of new settlement and expansion of tenancies occurred in the wooded north and west of the county, whilst the bulk of the tax paying population and wealth remained in the south and east. A study of relevant manorial documentation suggested that the most likely explanation was that, in the areas characterised by extensive Domesday woodland, population increase could be accommodated by the creation of new tenancies at the expense of the woodland and waste, but in the more densely settled south-east it resulted in the creation of sub-tenancies, many of which escape mention in the documentation.

Although this post-conquest colonization might not have involved the large proportion of the population increase it was once thought to have, it did produce a distinctive tenurial and social structure. By the late thirteenth century, the old 'woodland' manors were

characterised by a tenurial structure in which an individual held land in different parts of the manor by a multiplicity of tenancies. Thus the tenants holdings in the main village lands were held by customary villein tenure, which could still involve service on the lords demesne, but in the outer area of the manor the tenure of assarts and other newly cleared land was often free and always by payment of rent. This must have had the effect of considerably loosening the feudal bonds, for no longer could individuals be neatly classified as free, villein or slave. By and large, this process is not so evident on those manors defined as demesne or mixed economies at the time of Domesday Book, although there was some increase in free tenancies and slaves had disappeared. However, it is noticeable that, although these processes had a general currency throughout the county, they did not occur everywhere with the same force. Thus the experience of the Bishop of Worcester's estates is distinctive from that of either the Priory of Worcester or of Guy de Beauchamp. This may partly reflect the different dates of the manorial documentation, but, generally, the development of the estates seem to reflect the policies adopted by the various seigniorial authorities. Thus, the leasing of demesne and the retention of customary forms of tenure found on the Priory estates is not evident on either the Bishop of Worcester of the Beauchamp possessions. Similarly, the creation of new tenancies on what had been Domesday demesne manors, as occurs on the Beauchamp estates, is not reflected on either of the Church of Worcester's estates. Seigneurial policy, therefore, seems just as significant in the post-conquest period as it had appeared in the analysis of Domesday data.

## CHAPTER ELEVEN

CONCLUSION

At the outset, the concept of continuity was introduced as a significant theme which was to run through this work. Thus, in the conclusion, it forms a useful framework within which the multiple threads initially can be pulled together. As far as the archaeological evidence for settlement in the prehistoric period is concerned, settlement continuity was expressed in terms of the occupance of the terrace gravel sites in the Avon and Severn valleys from Neolithic to Bronze Age times. The time span, however, is so enormous and the archaeological material so slight that few firm conclusions can be drawn from such a corpus of evidence. The general settlement situation at the end of the Bronze Age was summarised on the clearance map (Fig.3.2), although this only represents the state of archaeological knowledge when constructed. Recently there have been hints that such a distribution, largely confined, as it is, to the terrace belts, represents a drastic underestimate of the level of settlement in the county at that date. Firstly, air photography has revealed a number of barrow sites and cursuses, tentatively dated to the Bronze Age and earlier, which suggest a degree of cultural sophistication hitherto unsuspected, and obviously argues for much greater population densities. Secondly, recent work by Shotton<sup>1</sup> on the Severn-Avon alluvial deposits has argued for widespread woodland clearance throughout the two river basins by the end of the Bronze Age. However, the location of such clearance and their associated settlements remain unknown and must await further archaeological investigation. To date, all that can be concluded is that the terrace deposits of the Avon and Severn valleys demonstrate signs of early occupance that forms the first hesitant beginnings of a very long settlement history. Archaeological evidence for the pre-Roman Iron Age, Roman and Anglo-Saxon periods confirms the continuing significance of these terrace deposits within the developing settlement pattern, but also provides evidence that their role should not be overestimated. In the past, the interpretation of the archaeological distributions depended almost entirely upon the role played by the physical resource base. Thus, the river valleys were seen as early corridors of movement for trade

and migration of peoples and thus provided successive waves of invaders with areas of light, free draining soils that were easier to clear than the surrounding damp claylands. Botanically, there is little to support the thesis that the terraces were ever characterised by a less dense vegetational growth than other soil types in the county, and the concept of successive waves of invading peoples superimposing their culture over existing population groups is no longer acceptable. Yet it remains true, throughout the period embraced by this thesis, that the settlements developed in the Avon and Severn valleys were amongst the largest, richest and administratively most important in the county. What the original attraction of the terrace sites was, can only be a matter of speculation, but the use of river valleys for early communication is of obvious significance, as is the role of their terraces as the sites of attractive ecotones, regardless of the soils that were developed on them. Whatever the truth of this, it is certain that some level of settlement and associated cultivation has existed on these sites since Neolithic times.

As was discussed in the Introduction, continuity in terms of the occupation of a single settlement site can only rarely be demonstrated. Thus, whilst a general level of continuity of settlement is apparent in the Severn and Avon valleys this does not imply that the sites of the nucleated villages and towns that currently dominate their settlement pattern will all show continuous occupation since the Neolithic times. On the contrary, the majority of habitation sites that have been excavated had been abandoned at some time in their history. Certainly it is possible to demonstrate that the major town sites of Worcester, Droitwich, Pershore and Evesham, together with some of the larger villages such as Fladbury, Cropthorne and Bredon have a settlement record extending back to the pre-Roman Iron Age, if not beyond. However, settlement continuity in these cases becomes an almost meaningless concept, for the size of the current sites of these settlements is large enough to have supported a quite dispersed settlement pattern of individual farmsteads in earlier periods. It has perhaps been one of the main weaknesses of past studies of settlement in that they have sought to explain continuity in terms of current morphological characteristics of villages, hamlets and farms. Thus, the nucleated villages which are such a characteristic feature

of south-eastern Worcestershire were explained as a direct import by Anglo-Saxon peoples to replace the dispersed farmsteads and hamlets of the Romano-British period. Not only is this extremely unlikely in terms of the probable size of early Saxon populations, but also finds no support in the archaeological, place name or documentary record. The most common Saxon place name element was found to be -tun and there seems no good reason why this should not be accepted at its face value as meaning a farm. Also, the frequency analysis of Domesday data revealed that nearly 70 per cent of all Domesday entries related to vills of under 20 recorded population and 50 per cent to vills of under 12 recorded persons. Even assuming a multiplier of 5 to give an estimate of true population, this would still only give populations varying between 60 to 100 persons. Although not entirely comparable, this is obviously quite distinct from the mean number of tenancies on the Bishop of Worcester's manors in 1299, which at 147 recorded tenancies would give an estimated mean population of 735. The large nucleated village, surrounded by its common fields, would, therefore, seem more likely to be a product of post-conquest population expansion than, necessarily, an Anglo-Saxon introduction.

Concepts of settlement continuity have, therefore, to be framed within circumstances whereby settlement sites could be a relatively mobile feature within the landscape. Individual settlements were being created and destroyed at all periods of the county's history. A more stable feature of the landscape was undoubtedly provided by the cultivated areas rather than the individual settlements that were dependent upon them. Even during the earliest times of Mesolithic or Neolithic shifting agriculture, it is probable that the changes wrought to the soils of cleared areas would be sufficient to prevent the regeneration of climax woodland. As sedentary agriculture was established, the fields so painstakingly won from woodland and waste were unlikely to be allowed to degenerate back into scrubland on any large scale, due to the necessity of providing food. Admittedly, the structure, size and organisation of the cultivated area would change over time to meet the changing technological, social and economic circumstances within which the population found itself, but the location of these activities would express a lengthy and continuous

tradition. The ecotones provided by the terrace deposits within the river valleys, together with the sand and gravel cappings overlying the Marl plain of central Worcestershire are, therefore, most likely to reveal the longest history of man's impact upon the landscape.

However, Domesday Book clearly reveals that not all settlements were related to the cultivated area in the same manner. Settlements varied in size, status and function, some being defined as 'manorial', some appurtenant and others as berewicks, and all were set within a structure of manors and estates. The administrative centres of these manors often exhibited a greater size and distinctive economic function than the settlements that were connected to them. It is, therefore, quite possible that these 'manorial' settlements could also exhibit a greater degree of site continuity and it is noticeable that of the seven major administrative settlements within the Severn and Avon valleys, five have Celtic elements within their basically Saxon place names, as well as providing archaeological evidence of very early occupation.

Once the idea of an estate or territorial unit is introduced, then the concept of continuity becomes considerably broadened to embrace a territory within which a whole series of complex relationships of a social, economic and administrative kind are expressed. In Worcestershire, it has been demonstrated that the foundation upon which the Domesday economy was based, and indeed upon which Domesday Book was constructed, was the Saxon estate structure that is first discernible in the documentation during the late seventh and eighth centuries A.D. Glanville Jones has argued for an even greater antiquity of these territorial units extending back to at least the pre-Roman Iron Age. However, in Worcestershire, this is a thesis difficult to substantiate, on any large scale, for a number of reasons. Firstly, although there is some superficial accord between the dependency areas of Iron Age hillforts, as defined by Thiessen's polygons, and the structure of Anglo-Saxon estates, the hypothetical nature of the former does not allow any realistic connection to be made between the two. Secondly, archaeological excavation has not, as yet, established any direct link between the Iron Age habitation sites of the Avon valley and the Cotswold hillforts and, certainly, not any link of the lord-bond community type



that is envisaged by Glanville Jones. Thirdly, the peripheral and highland location of the hillforts vis-a-vis Worcestershire meant that, once abandoned, the centre of any postulated administrative or economic influence would have moved to the river valleys, which had always demonstrated a denser level of human occupation. Thus, in the Roman period, the relationship between settlements was far more likely to have been based upon marketing areas and the necessity of supplying towns such as Worcester and Droitwich with foodstuffs than upon any concept of lordship. Fourthly, and perhaps most significantly, there was not a single format of early Anglo-Saxon estate in Worcestershire. Analysis of the charters and place name elements revealed at least four distinctive types of estate unit, some of which were undoubtedly of Saxon creation. The best cases for territorial continuity can be made for those estates that centre on the terrace gravels of the Avon and Severn rivers at Cropthorne, Evesham, Wick Episcopi and Kempsey. All of these have a geographical unity, being centred on stream basins, and demonstrate very similar distributions of place name elements. The main 'manorial' settlement often bears a topographical name element, whilst the dependant settlements have high proportions of tun elements, with some late 'clearance' elements (leah) on the periphery. It was suggested in Chapter 4, that the tun element could represent, in many instances, Anglo-Saxon recognition of Romano-British farming areas and, indeed, Romano-British and even Iron Age habitation sites have been identified within all of these estates. In some cases, notably Cropthorne and Evesham, the charter bounds identify pagan burial sites, suggesting an Anglo-Saxon presence prior to 577 A.D. Another feature of these estates is their very early association with Christianity, which might well indicate continuity between the Celtic and Saxon church. Also, they are compact estates that do not show any discrete qualities which it is argued, in Worcestershire, was a Saxon rather than an earlier creation.

The second group of estates, had, at their core, areas that demonstrate a long settlement history, early Saxon place name elements and often early Christian associations. However, the discrete elements that were attached to those core areas demonstrate none of these qualities, as they were often well wooded and characterised by name elements

suggesting Saxon colonizing activities. These discrete parts of the estate appear to have been acquired in a piecemeal fashion throughout the Saxon period and thus the total estate area cannot be described as demonstrating any of the qualities of pre-Saxon territorial continuity, although parts of the estate undoubtedly have long settlement histories. Examples of such estates are those at Bredon, Ripple and possibly Northwick and Whitstones. The third group, found largely on the Marl plain of Worcester, has many similarities with the previous group, in that their Domesday form seems entirely the result of piecemeal acquisition by the Church authorities during the Saxon period. The final group are large compact territorial units situated in the north and west of the county which, from their place names and Domesday evidence, appear to be almost entirely the result of Saxon colonization. Such estates are represented by the Domesday woodland manors of Hanbury and Wolverley. In all these cases, continuity, in terms of lordship, cannot be demonstrated until Saxon times, when they became part of the ecclesiastical estates that dominated the county's ownership structure. From that time forward the influence exerted by these powerful authorities was to prove a decisive feature of their subsequent development.

The other element that is coupled with rural settlement in the title of this work is that of colonization, which, in a sense, can be defined as the process by which settlement is created. In the past, this has been explained in Worcestershire as largely operating through the influence of physical geography in a stage-like process. Thus the primary settlement sites were deemed as those situated on the light, free draining soils provided by terrace deposits and subsequent expansion was conducted in a series of stages, as less and less attractive soil types were being exploited under the influence of a growing population. Thus a series of clone-colonizations, as envisaged by Bylund<sup>2</sup>, were brought into existence. Obviously, there is some element of truth in this view, in that the terrace areas were amongst the earliest to be exploited by man, whilst the poorer, hungrier soils of the north-western fringe were amongst the last to be cleared and cultivated. However, as the processes of colonization that have been discussed in this work have revealed, this is far too simplistic a view. Once communities

had developed a sense of territory and this became expressed, at whatever date, in territorial units with an element of seigniorial control, then an important set of constraints was placed upon further colonizing activity. Woodland became a protected commodity and unfettered clearance and settlement creation was not allowed. The results of the analysis of Domesday data suggests that some form of woodland protection may well have operated in the late Saxon period, particularly on the Royal Estates, culminating in the creation of extensive Royal Forests. The subsequent clearance of the wooded parts of these Forest areas is the point at which the colonization process can be most clearly studied and can be seen to have been affected at all stages by seigniorial interest. Indeed, the whole process of woodland clearance in the post-conquest period can be viewed as the outcome of a conflict of seigniorial interests. On the one hand the Royal authorities strove to maintain, through the agency of Forest Law, their hunting and game preserves, whilst powerful local magnates sought to extend the profitability of their estates by increased rents and additions to the cultivated area. By the thirteenth century, such was the pressure exerted on Royal authorities by population growth and, no doubt, political influence, that clearance was allowed to proceed. It is no surprise that the first beneficiaries of this relaxation were the major estate owners, prominently the Bishop of Worcester, who seized the opportunity to extend the areas of demesne through the agency of block grants, to reserve for themselves jurisdiction of private woodlands and to encourage the development of new tenancies on their woodland manors. The role that is left for the peasant colonizer, apart from the backbreaking job of actual clearance, is extremely limited, and was probably restricted to a small scale nibbling process, that even then was under the overall control of some seigniorial authority. By extension, the argument can be taken back over time, for if seigniorial control over territories can be shown to have existed early in the Saxon period and possibly, in some places, as far back as the Iron Age, then there is no reason why the process of colonization should not always have been controlled to some degree. Thus, the influence exerted by the physical resource base becomes only one of a number of factors that affected the progress of woodland clearance and

the creation of new settlements.

Thus far, settlement, colonization and the territorial units within which they were framed, have been considered in isolation, but it is evident that they cannot be entirely divorced from their social and economic milieu. Unfortunately, evidence in the early part of this study is extremely limited and, with the current state of archaeological knowledge, provides some intriguing pointers, but little substantial fact. Thus, the coincidence noted between the likely bounds of the Dobunni, the Saxon Kingdom of the Hwicce, and the medieval diocese of Worcester can give rise to considerable speculation regarding the cultural and economic affinities of the populations concerned, which, as yet, receives no support from any archaeological evidence within the area. Probably of more significance, in the pre-conquest periods, is the evidence that is accumulating of economic activities whose market areas extended well beyond the county area. The Iron Age potters at Malvern, producing their distinctive duck-stamped ware, appear to have traded widely throughout the lower Severn basin. This was extended during the Roman period, when Severn ware has been discovered as far north as Hadrians Wall. Recent, but as yet unpublished, excavation at Droitwich has demonstrated a thriving pre-Roman Iron Age interest in salt manufacture and it is now thought possible that the wide necked jars found throughout the hillforts of the south-west were for storing and transporting salt rather than grain. It is, therefore, no surprise that the Roman road network centres on Droitwich, rather than Worcester and the possibility can now be entertained that the widespread network of saltways, revealed from the Anglo-Saxon charters, may be of Iron Age rather than Saxon origin. The long history of stock raising suggested by the number of stock enclosures revealed from air photography and the evidence now being assembled at Droitwich may eventually demonstrate that the Avon and Severn valley communities were engaged in a well developed industry of stock raising and meat preservation at a very early period, which could account for the apparent wealth of some of the Romano-British habitation sites.

However, little evidence for the social and economic structure of the study area is available before Domesday Book, which is why the

latter provides the fulcrum for this study. Previous studies of the Domesday geography of the county have tended to emphasise the importance of the physical resource base in explaining the distributions constructed from Domesday data and, indeed, the selection of areas for calculating densities seems to reflect more the physical geography of the county, rather than the administrative and economic framework that was extant in 1086. By utilising information from the Anglo-Saxon charters it has been possible to reconstruct the Domesday manorial framework, which formed the areal basis for the subsequent analysis. Coupled with the statistical analysis of relationships within the data, this has produced a picture of Domesday Worcestershire that is entirely distinctive from that which emerges from Monkhouse's study.<sup>3</sup> It is not the intention here to itemise all the features that emerge from the extensive analysis of Domesday Book, but rather to highlight those themes which have formed the subject of this chapter.

By 1086, it is clear that Worcestershire had evolved a complex and diversified rural economy. Certain features of the social and economic structure are common throughout the county area, for instance the existence of Villeins and Bondars and both peasant and demesne ploughteams on most manors. However, the relative proportion of these, and the manner in which they are related with other Domesday phenomena, is often quite distinctive from one manor to another and between estates. Thus, those estates which have been identified as demonstrating the best case for territorial continuity from pre-Saxon times, are those which exhibit the greatest degree of servility and the best developed demesnes, and are, almost exclusively, in the possession of ecclesiastical authorities. Their location was centred on the main river valleys and reflects, in general terms, a pattern that has been evident from Bronze Age times. At the other extreme, the woodland economies, characterised by high levels of Bondar population who were relatively independent of demesne cultivation, are found largely on manors that emerged late in the Saxon period, where place name evidence suggests Saxon colonization was at its most pronounced level. Between these two extremes are a considerable number of manors whose economy demonstrates a mixture of demesne and peasant elements in a variety of combinations. The pattern that emerges is far closer to that derived from the evolution of settlement

and territorial units than it is to the distribution of various soil types within the county. Obviously, there is some accord between the density of population and ploughteams and the physical properties of soils, with the Vale of Evesham and the terraces of the river valleys generally showing the greatest densities. However, nowhere is the relationship as direct, or as simple, as has been suggested in the past. For example, even within the Vale of Evesham there are marked distinctions between the population and economic structure of different manors. Thus, the Church of Worcester manors demonstrate a combination of Villeins, Serfs and high proportions of demesne ploughteams, whilst, on some of the Evesham estates, Bordars replace Serfs and the proportion of demesne ploughs is much diminished. Also, certain of the outer estate areas, such as Broadway and Cleeve Prior, reveal, through a regression analysis of values and ploughteams, the possibility of specialisation in livestock production. The distinction between the Evesham and Worcester estates in this area may partially reflect the loss of their estates by Evesham Abbey during the tenth century, whilst the Worcester estates had remained in church possession since the seventh century. Similarly, elsewhere in the Avon valley, those manors in the possession of Westminster Abbey also demonstrate a lower level of demesne ploughteams and slave populations, although this may have been compensated by the exaction of ploughing services, of which Domesday Book does make mention. The general point that does emerge is the operation of seigniorial policy of which much has already been written. This defined the purpose and the nature of production on the various manors, for instance, in some cases, the lord was prepared to accept income derived mainly from rents, be it in money or in kind, allowing some degree of independence of peasant production. Elsewhere, the purpose of production was the support of monastic communities through the operation of relatively large scale demesne production. This does not mean that all the possessions of a single individual or institution were operated in the same manner. The Church of Worcester's manors, for example, embrace the whole range of Domesday economies, although certain traits are evident throughout their estates. For instance, even on the woodland manors there is a stronger demesne component on the Church of Worcester's possessions than on

those belonging to the King, although, in both cases, it is relatively small.

Perhaps one of the most interesting associations revealed by the Domesday analysis is that between Bordars and woodland, but even here considerable variation exists when the Bordar population is considered in relation to peasant ploughteams. On the woodland and peasant manors, Bordars often appear, not only to possess an independence from demesne production, but also to be well endowed with peasant ploughteams. However, these economic circumstances are obviously very distinctive from those of Bordars in the vicinity of Droitwich, or on the Vale estates of the Church of Evesham, where their ploughteam possession is virtually non-existent, and they were respectively engaged in the salt industry or were servientes curiae.

In many respects contrasts within the patterns of Domesday economies and the influence of seigniorial control were not only continued in the post-conquest period, but were even further accentuated. Whilst it has been noted that post-conquest colonization was most evident on the woodland manors, the gradient of wealth and tax paying population between them and the demesne economies remained basically the same as it had been at Domesday. Thus, the impact of population increase which undoubtedly affected both types of economy equally, led to an accentuation of the features of the economic organisation that were already extant in 1086. On the woodland manors, the relative independence of the largely Bordar population led to the creation of numbers of free tenancies at the expense of the woodland area. This, in turn, increased the dispersed nature of settlement that probably characterised these areas in 1086 and led, in some cases, to the creation of a type of tenurial infield-outfield structure. Thus, whilst the basis of the woodland economies were destroyed, the economic and social features that underpinned it were strengthened. On the demesne economies, increased population and what little further colonization was possible led, if anything, to an increase in demesne areas and increasing sub-division of holdings and subsequent impoverishment of the poorest groups. It is no surprise that it was these latter areas that were to suffer the worst effects in terms of depopulation and desertion in the changed

economic climate of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, whilst the less densely settled and more independent areas of the north and west proved more adaptable.<sup>4</sup>

It is still noticeable, in the post-conquest period, that the processes operating had a differential effect on areas of different estate ownership. Thus the experience of the estates of the Bishop and Priory of Worcester is different from those belonging to Guy de Beauchamp, illustrating the continued influence of seigniorial control. Throughout this work, the processes that have affected the patterns of settlement and colonization identified, are generally processes that have been identified elsewhere, but it is their differential impact, producing distinctive economic, social and landscape changes over very small distances that ultimately provides the justification for this type of area study.



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APPENDIXAvon-Severn Research Project - Sites Revealed from Air Photographs

- Sources : (1) Avon-Severn Research Committee  
 (2) Air photographs collected in Archaeological Department,  
 Birmingham Museum.

The site numbers refer to Figures 3.7, 3.8 and 3.9.

A. AVON VALLEY

<u>Site Number</u>	<u>Grid Reference</u>	<u>Area</u>	<u>Description</u>
1.	SP892365	North Twyning	1 Rectangular enclosure with rounded corners. 3 strong enclosure ditches joining at one point.
2.	SP945358	Kinsham	Large enclosure divided into 3 parts. Rounded ends and possible hutments. Drove Road.
3.	SP952358	S.Bredon Hill	Rectangular enclosure divided into 3. Possible hutments. Adjacent ditches and circular hutment.
4.	SP945354	"	Square end, rounded corners, hutments. Drove Road and signs of field system. Circular barrow ring and grave mark.
5.	SP952351	"	Large 'D' shaped end. Small attached end fronting on Carrant Brook (Roman Pottery 2-4 century).
6.	SP955352	"	Complex of enclosure ditches, 3 with rounded corners.
7.	SP955355	"	2 circular barrow ditches and 1 small hut. 1 rectangular encl. with rounded corners.
8.	SP946348	"	2 side ditches with rounded corners. 1 stray ditch. (Roman pottery 3-4 century).
9.	SP962353	"	As above.
10.	SP965360	"	2 rectangular encls. parallel with each other, rounded corners. Stray ditches and possible field boundary.

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|-----|---------------------|----------------|--|
| 11. | SP959367            | Overbury       | Double ditched enclosure with possible circular hut in N.W. corner. Single ditch square enclosure.   |
| 12. | SP951371            | Kemerton       | Double ditched rectangular enclosure. Sign of 2 single ditched enclosures to W.  |
| 13. | SP987368            | Grafton        | Square and round cornered end with hutments attached. Possibly superimposed on 2 smaller barrow ditches (1 with central grave). Pit with 3 rectangular enclosures with rounded corners on Carrant Brook. |
| 14. | SP980361-<br>995373 | Ashton-u-Hill  | Complex of enclosures and hutments with stray ditch linking sites. Square cornered type to east and double and single ditches to west. Pit alignment at right angles to Carrant Brook.                   |
| 15. | SP000373            | "              | Large square enclosure with huts or pens inside. 1 rounded corner (Dobunnic coins nearby, Roman pottery 3-4 century and Iron Age sherd).   |
| 16. | SP933400            | Eckington      | Substantial double ditched, each with abutting external ditches and internal hut and partition. (Iron Age pottery sherd).  |
| 17. | SP943417            | Nafford        | 1 square enclosure with entrance showing hutments immediately inside. Stray external ditches.  |
| 18. | SP992424            | Bricklehampton | Complex site with abutting enclosures. Mainly square type with rounded corner  |
| 19. | SP996414            | Netherton      | 2 rounded corner enclosures showing only 1 corner.   |
| 20. | SP082375            | Broadway       | Circular barrow ditch or hut. No central mark or entrance.   |
| 21. | SP089379            | "              | One side and corner of rectangular round cornered enclosure.   |
| 22. | SP091374            | "              | Stray ditches.   |
| 23. | SP063480            | Harvington     | 2 rectangular round cornered enclosures superimposed on each other. 1 entrance to main rectangular enclosure and 2 external circular huts and entrances.   |
| 24. | SP935414            | Eckington      | Part of rectangular enclosure with rounded corners and entrance.   |
| 25. | SP964462            | Wick           | Square enclosure with rounded corners and wide outer and narrow inner ditch.   |

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|-----|----------|----------------------------------|--|
| 26. | SP967465 | Wick                             | Complicated series of overlapping rectangular enclosures and some partially obscured smaller features.   |
| 27. | SP009469 | Charlton                         | 2 rounded regular enclosures with over 50 pits, some of which in 2 lines joining at right angles.  |
| 28. | SP019457 | "                                | Rectangular enclosure with 1 curved side and entrance.   |
| 29. | SP007469 | "                                | Elongated rectangular enclosure (NNE-SSW). Circular marks symmetrically placed over N. end. 1 other rectangular enclosure.   |
| 30. | SP988470 | Fladbury                         | Small conjoined rectangular enclosure.   |
| 31. | SP033415 | Hinton-on-the-Green              | 2 series of small conjoined enclosures separated by a drove road (?).  |
| 32. | SP008417 | Charlton                         | Series of small conjoined square enclosures partially obscured.  |
| 33. | SP084376 | Broadway                         | Roughly circular enclosure.  |
| 34. | SP054477 | Norton and Lenchwick             | Part of elongated enclosure. Elliptical (NNE-SSW).   |
| 35. | SP062483 | Harvington                       | 2 regular circular marks.  |
| 36. | SP066484 | "                                | 6 overlapping rectangular enclosures of different sizes. 2 viable entrances.   |
| 37. | SP966512 | Naunton<br>Beauchamp             | Double ditched enclosure.  |
|     | B.       | <u>SEVERN VALLEY</u>             |  |
| 38. | SP837607 | Grimley<br>J.R.S. 1956<br>p.130- | Rectangular enclosure, double ditched. (2nd century Roman pottery).  |
| 39. | SP835610 | Grimley                          | 2 square enclosures, smaller of which has rounded corners. Stray ditches. Round barrow ditch with central mark. Stray ditch cuts across it.  |
| 40. | SP834606 | "                                | 2 rectangular enclosures, one with double ditches on 2 sides. Stray ditches leading off from corner. 2 parallel ditch marks with possible circular hut within. 2 ditches meeting in form of a cross.                   |
| 41. | SP829612 | "                                | 1 sizeable 'D' shaped enclosure with another of similar shape within. 1 rectangular enclosure with rounded corners, with parallel ditch on one side and stray ditch. 1 small rectangular enclosure and parallel ditch. |

42.	SP830625	Holt	Square double ditched enclosure with entrance. 2 side of another. 2 circular possible barrow ditches. Stray ditch marks.
43.	885581	Hallow	Square enclosure.
44.	820595	Grimley-Hallow	Stray irregular ditch marks 3 sides rectangular enclosure. Number of pit
45.	869599	North Claines	Complex of superimposed rectangular enclosures of different sizes. Circular mark at corner of one which crossed by 3 others. Stray ditch mark
46.	829640	Ombersley	3 small rectangular enclosures with circular hut sites within largest.
47.		Kempsey	Rectangular double ditched enclosure, rounded corners and entrance. Stray ditches (possible field boundaries). 1 rectangular single ditched enclosure.
48.		Leigh	1 small 'D' shaped enclosure.
49.	730714	Rock	1 small rectangular enclosure.
50.	810699	Astley	1 circular and 2 rectangular enclosures, 1 with curving side.
51.	795730	Stourport	3 sides of rectangular enclosure. Stray ditches.
52.	795740	Blackstone	Part of double ditched rectangular enclosure. Entrance.
53.	855815	Wolverley	Rectangular enclosure with rounded corners.
54.	855813	"	Small rectangular enclosure.
55.	806648	Shrawley	3 circular barrow ring ditches (?).

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