The Unidentified Forts of the Burghal Hidage[*]

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As one of the few pre-conquest administrative documents that have survived, the so-called 'Burghal Hidage' has attracted the interest of many of the greatest historians of early medieval England,[1] and recent years have seen a start made in the task of excavating some of the forts which the document lists.[2] Yet of the thirty-three forts recorded in the different manuscripts of the document two have hitherto been unidentified, and another is still uncertain. The list begins with an unlocated fort *Eorpeburnan*; then follow Hastings, Lewes, and other burhs in Sussex, Hampshire, and Wiltshire, where there was a fort which Maitland tentatively identified as Tisbury. The list continues westwards as far as Lydford in Devon, and then turns north and eastwards via burhs in Somerset and northern Wiltshire to Oxford, Wallingford, Buckingham, an unidentified fort called *Sceaftesege*, Eashing (near Godalming), and Southwark (FIG. 21). The inspiration and early development of this ring of fortresses defending Wessex against Danish invasions is now generally regarded as Alfredian. But at least one of the burhs, Buckingham, was built by Edward the Elder, and the document itself is usually ascribed to the years 911–919.[3] A previously unknown text of the Burghal Hidage, which was far less corrupt than any of the other manuscripts, was published in 1939 by Miss A. J. Robertson.[4] Though this version preserved somewhat different forms of the names of the unidentified burhs, its publication did not give rise to any new attempt to locate them. Now that a beginning has been made in the excavation of the forts of this period, it may be of interest to historians and archaeologists alike to re-examine the

[1] F. W. Maitland, *Domesday Book and Beyond* (1896), pp. 187–8, 502–6; Sir Charles Oman, *England Before the Norman Conquest* (7 ed., 1929), pp. 468–70; H. M. Chadwick, *Studies on Anglo-Saxon Institutions* (1905), pp. 204–18; J. H. Tait, *The Mediaeval English Borough* (1936), pp. 15–25; F. M. Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England* (2 ed., 1947), pp. 261–3.

[2] For the report on the excavations at Wareham see *Med. Archaeol.*, III (1959), 120–39. Excavations took place in the summer of 1963 at Lydford, and also at Cricklade to complete the work initiated there in the 1950s by F. T. Wainwright and F. Maddison (see *Wilts. Archaeol. Mag.*, LVI (1955), 162–6).

[3] The best discussion of the date of the document is that of J. H. Tait, *loc. cit.* in note 1.

[4] The Nowell transcript (1562) of Cotton Otho B.xi (*c.* 1025) printed by A. J. Robertson, *Anglo-Saxon Charters* (1939), pp. 246–8, also by R. Flower, 'The text of the Burghal Hidage', *London Mediaeval Studies*, I (1937), 60. The Cotton manuscript was largely destroyed in the fire of 1731, and for this section only the transcript survives (see N. R. Ker, *Catalogue of Mss. Containing Anglo-Saxon* (1957), no. 180). The other mss. of the Burghal Hidage are: John Rylands Latin ms. 155, f. 3v (*c.* 1210;) Liber Rubeus Scaccarii f. 29 (*c.* 1230); BM. Hargrave ms. 313, f. 15v (*c.* 1260); Corpus Christi Cambridge ms. 70, f. 3 (*c.* 1310); Cotton Claudius D.ii, f. 1v (*c.* 1320); Oriel Oxford ms. 46, f. 2v (*c.* 1330).

question of the identification of these burhs, and to discuss briefly some of the consequent problems about the document, and about the date and underlying strategy of the system of forts it describes.

The fort which Maitland suggested was Tisbury appears in the six related thirteenth- and fourteenth-century manuscripts with minor variations as *Tyssanbyrig* or *Tysanbirig*.[5] But the Nowell transcript which represents an earlier
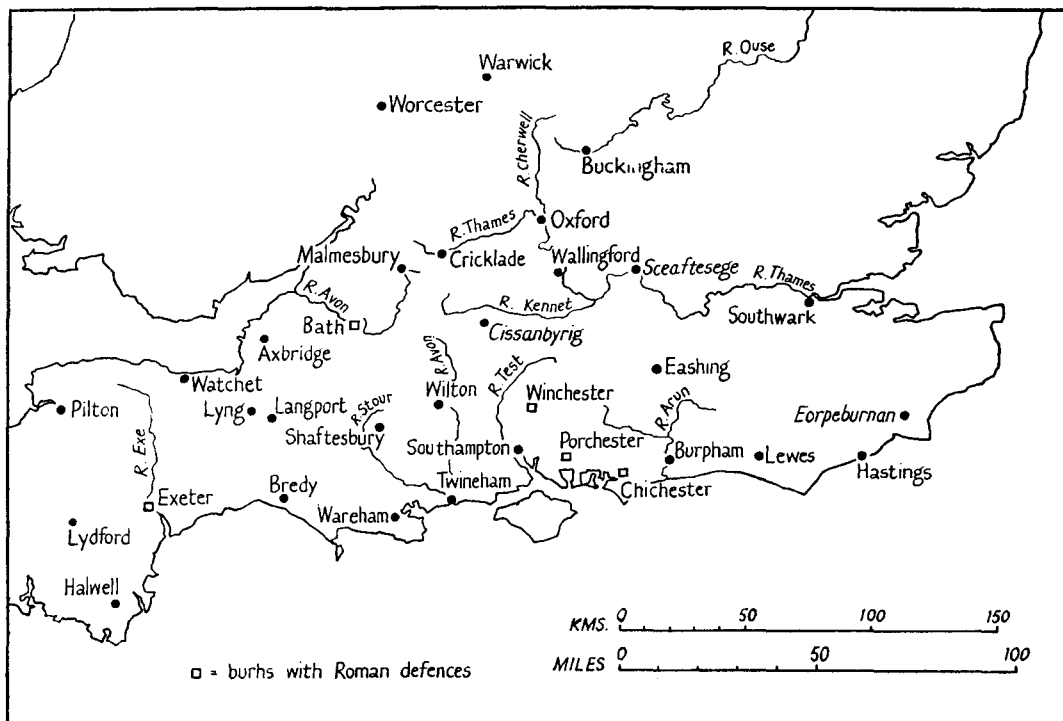

FIG. 21
THE FORTS OF THE BURGHAL HIDAGE (p. 74)

and normally superior manuscript tradition calls the burh *Cissanbyrig* (i.e. 'Cissa's fort'). This form of the name reinforces doubts that Maitland apparently felt about the identification of Tisbury. For although the existence of the Nowell transcript was not then known, he suggested on the advice of W. H. Stevenson two alternatives in Wiltshire, Chisenbury (in Enford parish) and Chislebury camp (in Fovant), since late manuscripts often confuse 'c' and 't'.[6] Maitland's caution may have been based upon the knowledge that no remains of any defences are to be seen at Tisbury, whilst both Chisenbury and Chislebury are important

5 *Tyssanbyrig* Lib. Rub., Hargrave 313; *Tysanbyring* J. Ryl. 155, Cott. Claud. D.ii; *Tysanbirig* Oriel 46; *Tysanbiring* C.C.C. 70.

6 Maitland, *op. cit.* in note 1, pp. 188. 503 n. 2.

hill-forts.[7] Nonetheless Tisbury has been accepted by subsequent historians,[8] including Miss Robertson in her edition of Nowell's transcript of the Burghal Hidage, where she assumed the 'c' to be a mistake for 't': she did not specify whether she thought the mistake to be Nowell's or that of the early eleventh-century manuscript he was copying. But Nowell was a careful transcriber, and hands of the early eleventh century distinguish the two letters clearly. Moreover the seventeenth-century antiquary Gale, who either saw Cotton Otho B.xi or else had access to a manuscript which has not survived, reads *Cissanburing*.[9] The mistake is therefore much more likely to have arisen in the common source of all the six late manuscripts,[10] for in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries many scribes wrote 'c' and 't' identically. If then, as is probable, *Cissanbyrig* is the correct form, the identification of Tisbury must be rejected.

The position of the fort in the list between Wilton and Shaftesbury would seem to correspond to the location of both Tisbury and Chislebury, which are almost exactly between those towns. But Shaftesbury and Wilton are less than 20 miles apart, which is rather closer together than most Burghal-Hidage forts; they effectively block either end of the valley of the river Nadder, so that a fort between them would be superfluous. Moreover it is at this point in the document that the compiler of the list has temporarily abandoned the strictly geographical order of the burhs around the boundaries of Wessex in order to include inland forts, with the result that Wilton (Wilts.), *Cissanbyrig*, and Shaftesbury (Dorset) are recorded before Twineham (Hants).[11] To judge from the map alone one might expect to find *Cissanbyrig* filling the large gap in central and eastern Wiltshire (FIG. 22).

The place-name evidence does not allow us to identify either of Maitland's alternatives with the *Cissanbyrig* of the Burghal Hidage. The early forms of the name Chisenbury (*Chesigeberie* 1086 DB, *Chesing(e)biria* 1202, 1211, *Chisingburi* 1202) show that its middle element is -*inga*- which is absent from the name of the Burghal-Hidage fort.[12] Chislebury is an even less likely candidate, for the only known medieval references to it are in two charters preserved in the thirteenth-century Wilton cartulary, where the fort appears as *cester slæd byrg* and *ceaster blæd byrig*.[13]

7 Unfortunately Chisenbury Trendle (as the fort was called) was levelled to the ground in 1931, in order to comply with safety requirements at Upavon air-field (see *Wilts. Archaeol. Mag.*, XLVI (1932), 1–3). Excavations took place at Wick Farm near Tisbury in 1962 and 1963 in the hope that the small rectangular enclosure might prove to be the Anglo-Saxon burh. The earthworks were shown, however, to be of the late thirteenth or fourteenth century (P. J. Fowler, 'A rectangular earthwork enclosure at Tisbury, Wilts.,' *Antiquity*, XXVII (1963), 290–4).

8 It is, however, notable that Sir Frank Stenton, A. Mawer, and J. E. B. Gover, the editors of *The Place-Names of Wiltshire* (1939, p. 194), did not connect Tisbury with the Burghal-Hidage fort.

9 T. Gale, *Historiae Britannicae Scriptores XV* (1691), 792.

10 A single source is indicated by the mistakes that these mss. make in common, e.g. they omit Wareham and Bredy, and thus mistake the hidage figure for Twineham (A. J. Robertson, *op. cit.* in note 4, p. 247, n. 11).

11 A very similar departure from the geographical order occurs in Somerset, where Axbridge is recorded before the inland forts of Lyng and Langport although it is further north (FIG. 21).

12 *Op. cit.* in note 8, p. 328.

13 W. Birch, *Cartularium Saxonicum* (1885–93), [henceforth cited as *B.C.S.*], no. 588; J. M. Kemble, *Codex Diplomaticus Aevi Saxonici* (1839–48), no. 687. The lack of other medieval forms of this name renders it uncertain which of these difficult forms is correct (*op. cit.* in note 8, p. 215).
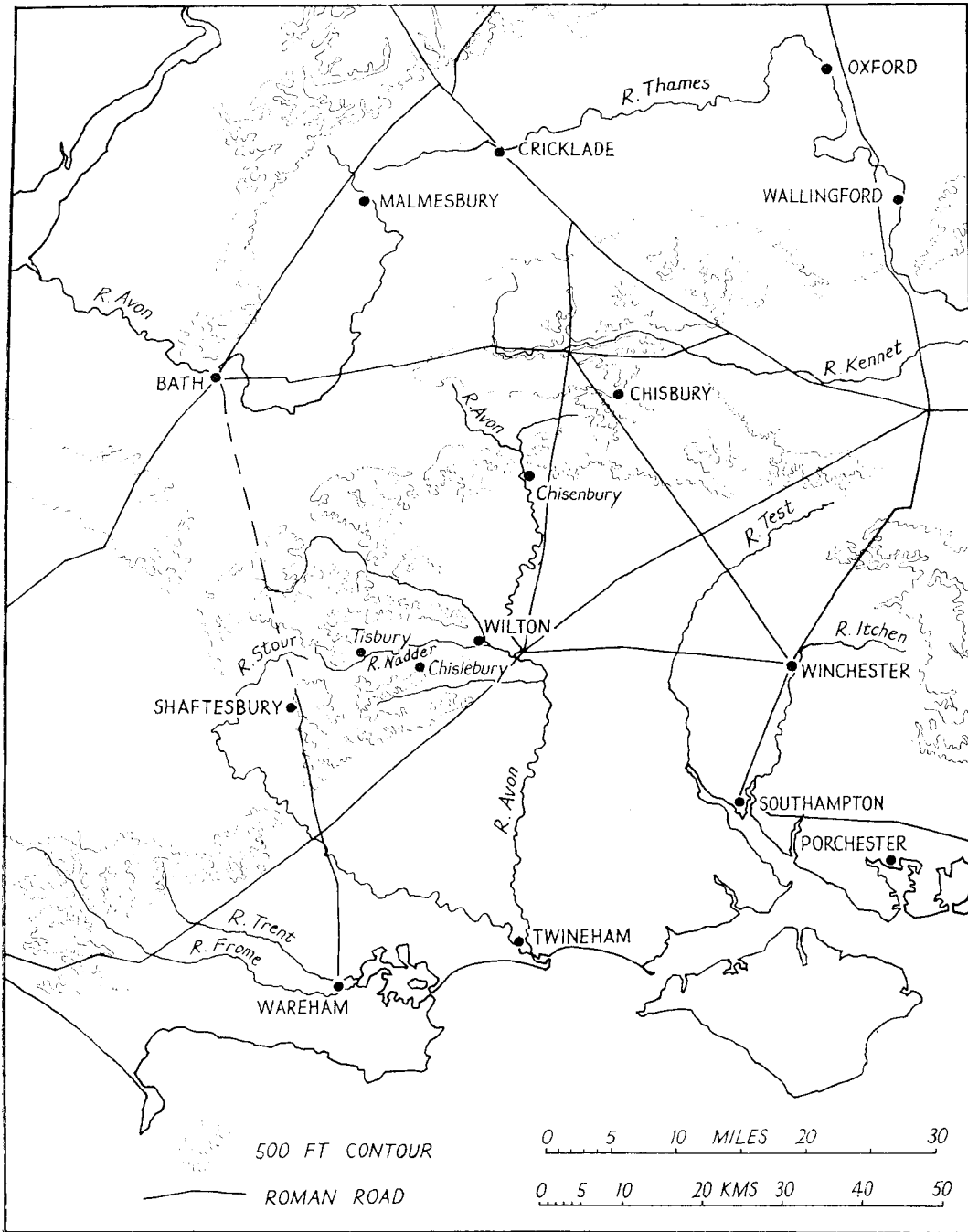
FIG. 22

MAP SHOWING POSITION OF CHISBURY AND THE NEAREST BURHS (p. 76)

But there is a fort in central Wiltshire called Chisbury which Maitland and Stevenson overlooked, and whose name does agree with the *Cissanbyrig* of the Burghal Hidage. The editors of the English Place-Name Society's volume for Wiltshire showed that the modern Chisbury derives from the OE. personal name *Cissa* and OE. *burh*, a fort.[14] Early forms of the name are *Cheseberie* 1086 DB, *Chisseberia* 1166, 1210, and *Chissebur'* 1210, 1249. Chisbury is an early-iron-age hill-fort, partly bivallate, partly trivallate. A short dyke, once thought to be a continuation of Wansdyke, runs south-eastwards from the fort across the valley as a defence for the vill of Great Bedwyn. The reasons for the choice of Chisbury as a burh are evident. The fort is about two miles north of the Roman road from Cunetio (Mildenhall) to Venta Belgarum (Winchester) and is close to several important ancient trackways giving good communications both to the north and south.[15] It is noteworthy that the fort is almost equidistant from the burhs of Cricklade, Oxford, Winchester, and Wilton, and thus fills a large gap between the forts on the northern boundary of Wessex and those towards the south. The reuse of an iron-age hill-fort is paralleled at Pilton and Halwell, the site being chosen no doubt specifically because relatively little work was needed to make it defensible. Moreover Alfred and Edward the Elder must have known the fort well, since the manor of Bedwyn, in which Chisbury lay, belonged to the West Saxon dynasty; in his will Alfred bequeathed Bedwyn to Edward.[16]

The burh of Chisbury has many features typical of other Burghal-Hidage forts, in particular of Eashing. Like Bedwyn, the estate in which the fort of Chisbury was situated, Eashing was a royal estate mentioned in Alfred's will. Both forts were intended to fill a gap between the burhs on the Thames, the northern boundary of Wessex, and those to the south. Moreover, the fact that neither Chisbury nor Eashing ever developed into towns suggests that from the first they were only intended as emergency forts; their sites had been chosen because they could be easily fortified at a time of crisis, Eashing being a position of great natural strength, Chisbury a fort already. Chisbury disappears from history, but Bedwyn, the manor in which it lay, prospered. A fragment of the regulations of a guild at Bedwyn dating from the last quarter of the tenth century has survived. Under Edward the Confessor coins were minted at Bedwyn, a sign that it had acquired 'borough status', and this is confirmed by Domesday Book which records 25 burgesses there.[17] At a later date, though it never obtained chartered privileges, Bedwyn sent members to parliament and was recognized as a borough by prescription. It is possible that the emergence in the

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[14] *Op. cit.* in note 8, p. 334. The thirteenth-century Abingdon Chronicle preserves a legend that Chisbury and the manor of Bedwyn were the seat of power of a late seventh-century *regulus* called Cissa. Despite much unhistorical embroidery, the story may have some basis in fact (see F. M. Stenton, *The Early History of the Abbey of Abingdon* (1913), pp. 17–18; A. and C. Fox, 'Wansdyke reconsidered,' *Archaeol. J.*, cxv (1958), 19–20).

[15] O. G. S. Crawford, 'The Anglo-Saxon bounds of Bedwyn and Burbage,' *Wilts. Archaeol. Mag.*, XLI (1921), 281–301, map.

[16] *Select English Historical Documents* (ed. F. E. Harmer, 1914), p. 17.

[17] DB. i, f. 64b; G. C. Brooke, *English Coins* (1932), pp. 70, 83. The guild regulations are printed by M. Förster, *Der Flussname Themse und seine Sippe* (1941), pp. 791 f., and translated by D. Whitelock, *English Historical Documents c. 500–1042* (1955), p. 559.

eleventh century of the otherwise unexceptional royal manor of Bedwyn as a borough was influenced by the fact that its hill-fort, Chisbury, had served as a burh under Alfred and Edward the Elder.

The unidentified *Sceaftesege* comes between Buckingham and Eashing in the list. Buckingham, however, is exceptional as the only fort that is not in, or on the boundaries of, Wessex, so we should perhaps extend the search for the unidentified burh to the area between Wallingford (which precedes Buckingham) and Eashing. The name *Sceaftesege* hardly varies in the different manuscripts.[18] It is composed of two elements, *Sceaftes-* probably from a personal name *Sceaft*, and *-eg* an island. The *-eg* termination is common in the names of islands in the Thames and its tributaries, and is also used for water-meadows and land on the edge of rivers surrounded by water-courses. It is therefore likely that the fort was in or near the Thames, or one of its tributaries, somewhere below Wallingford. From the OE. *Sceaftesege* one would expect to find the form 'Shaftsey' or something very similar in later records if the name had developed regularly. There is an island in the Thames at Cookham called 'Sashes' (FIG. 23). The name does not now resemble very closely *Sceaftesege*, but a seventeenth-century map calls the island *Shaftsees*,[19] and earlier forms of the name are *Sefteseya* 1220 Book of Fees, *Shaftesya* 1241 Assize Roll, *Shetefley* 1275–6 Rot. Hund.,[20] *Shaseys* 1562, *Shaffseys* 1566, 1611, *Shafseies* 1577, *Shawses* 1609. There is also recorded a *Shaftsey's Eight* which S. Darby describes as a small eyot or island just off Sashes.[21] There can be no doubt that these forms of the name suggest that the modern 'Sashes' derives from an Anglo-Saxon name *Sceaftesege* exactly as we have it in our manuscripts of the Burghal Hidage.

No trace of earthworks can now be seen on Sashes. But any fortifications may well have been concealed when the lock-cut was dug in 1830 and the earth spread over much of the island to a depth of about four feet. Moreover the island probably did not need extensive defences. The burh at Wallingford has a rampart and ditch on three sides, but the river, alone, serves for the fourth. On Sashes a palisade on the bank may have sufficed for at least two sides of the

[18] *Sceaftesige* in the Nowell transcript; the other mss. all have *Sceaftesege*. Gale (*op. cit.* in note 9, p. 748) who may have had access to a different ms., has *Sceaftelege*, but this is probably a misreading of Cotton Claudius D.ii.

[19] British Museum, Maps 187, 1.4. The map is dated *c.* 1580 in the BM. catalogue and *c.* 1560 in a later hand on the map. But the participants to the litigation it illustrates were not then in possession of the lands and rights in dispute: *c.* 1640 seems a more compatible date.

[20] The assize-roll form was found and connected with the Burghal Hidage by Sir Frank and Lady Stenton (see Tait, *op. cit.* in note 1, p. 19, n. 5). Starting from this Mrs. Gelling, who is producing *The Place-Names of Berkshire* for the English Place-Name Society, made the identification with Sashes independently but at much the same time as I did. I am extremely grateful to her for calling my attention to the forms in the *Book of Fees* and *Hundred Rolls*, and for providing in the Appendix a full account of the discovery of the reference to Sashes in the assize roll, and additional reasons for connecting the thirteenth-century forms with Cookham.

[21] The form *Shafseies* (1577) is found on a brass in Cookham church which is now beneath the organ (see *Berks. Archaeol. J.*, XI (1905–6), 19). The remaining forms are printed by S. Darby, *Place- and Field-Names of Cookham* (1899), and *Chapters in the History of Cookham* (1909), *passim*.

burh.[22] As some compensation for the lack of earthworks, the dredging of the lock-cut in 1856 uncovered a quantity of iron weapons dating from the period of the Viking attacks, and in 1860 several iron spear-heads of similar date were
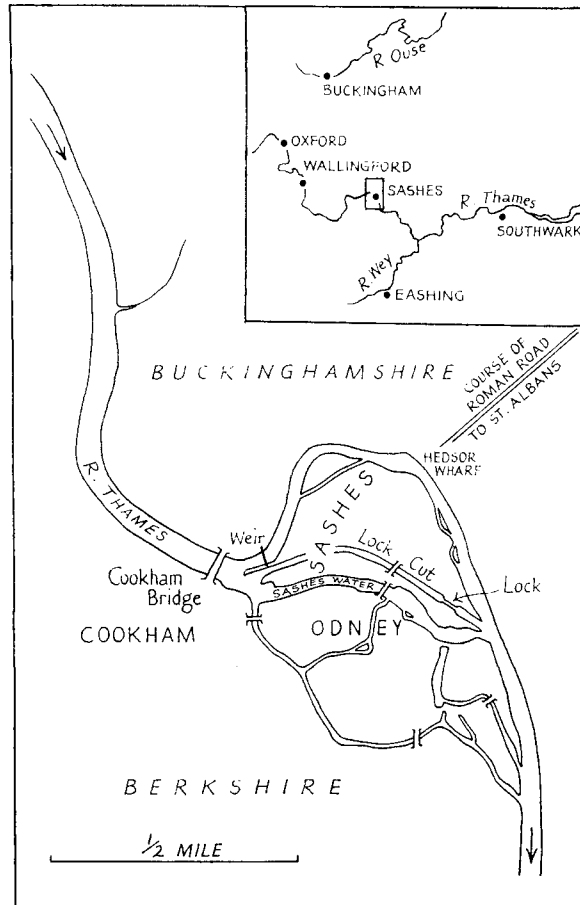

FIG. 23
SKETCH-MAPS SHOWING POSITION AND SITE OF
SCEAFTESEGE (SASHES) (pp. 79 ff.)

found when ballast was being raised from the river. Further dredging operations in 1896 brought up a typical 'Danish' winged axe, and a fine barbed spear-head of the same period was found in 1958 during work on the banks of the island.

[22] The Nowell transcript allots Sashes 1,000 hides, which should mean that the length of wall to be defended was 1,375 yards, enclosing about half the 54 acres of the present island (FIG. 23). In a thousand years the river's course may have changed considerably.

CHATEAU GAILLARD

Études de castellologie européenne — Studien zur Europäischen Burgenforschung — European Castle Studies

Un groupe d'archéologues allemands, anglais, belges, français, néerlandais, réunis aux Andelys, près du Château Gaillard, en 1962, ont décidé de créer un Comité permanent de liaison et d'organiser tous les deux ans un nouveau colloque afin d'étudier les problèmes relatifs aux fortifications et aux habitats du moyen âge.

Le volume contenant le texte des communications présentées au Colloque des Andelys vient de paraître. En voici le sommaire :

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In the absence of any remains of earthworks, these periodic discoveries provide a link between Sashes and the age of the Danish invasions.[23]

With a wide stream on every side Sashes is a strong natural defensive position, ideal as a place of refuge. As far as is known the burh never developed into an urban centre. Cookham was already in existence and was more convenient for trade and administration.[24] But *Sceaftesege* was probably more than a mere place of refuge, for a Roman road from Silchester to St. Albans probably crossed the river at the island.[25] However it would be wrong to exaggerate the strategic importance of a fort at this junction of road and river, since there are many places between Wallingford and Southwark where a Danish army might cross the Thames and it was scarcely possible to build forts to cover them all. The main purpose of the fort on Sashes seems to have been to fill a large gap on the northern frontier of Wessex. It takes its place alongside Chisbury, Eashing and a number of the less important burhs as an emergency fort which needed little more than a palisade to make it defensible. Such forts are a far cry from the great rectangular ramparts of Wallingford or Wareham, or the Roman fortifications of Chichester, Portchester, Winchester, Exeter, and Bath. The Burghal Hidage does not describe a uniform scheme: it is a mixture of old and new, makeshift and permanent. The identification of Sashes and Chisbury serves as a reminder of the critical situation of the kingdom of Wessex under Alfred and in the early years of Edward the Elder.

There is one other fort which has never been identified, namely the first burh in the list. Its name varies considerably in the different manuscripts: *Eorpeburnan*,[26] *Heoreweburan*,[27] and *Heorepeburan*.[28] Of these one should probably prefer *Eorpeburnan* from the Nowell transcript, which preserves throughout the most regular forms of the names of the burhs and was copied from a manuscript two centuries older than any we now possess. Moreover the *-burnan* (OE. 'a stream') termination in the transcript is clearly a better form than the meaningless *-buran* of the other manuscripts. *Eorpe-*, the first element of the name in the transcript, could either be an adjective meaning 'dark' or a personal name, as in Arpinge (Kent) or Erpingham (Norfolk). The forms in the other six manuscripts would seem to derive from a common original which had *Heoreweburan*, probably a mistake for *Heorepeburnan*, the scribe here as elsewhere confusing the Anglo-

[23] Most of the finds are now in Reading Museum. See also *Archaeol. J.*, XVIII (1861), 76. A mile downstream from Sashes a field known as Batlynge Mead (also Bartle Mead) is traditionally the site of a battle between Danes and Anglo-Saxons. But there is no evidence that the tradition is ancient.

[24] In the eighth century the Mercian kings possessed a monastery at Cookham (*B.C.S.* 291). An important meeting of the Witan was held at Cookham in the reign of Æthelred II (D. Whitelock, *Anglo-Saxon Wills* (1930), pp. 44–6). In Domesday Book Cookham has a new market (DB. i, f. 56b).

[25] The road has been traced in Hertfordshire and Buckinghamshire, and farther south from Silchester to the environs of Reading. From St. Albans its course goes through Bedmond, Sarratt Church End, Chalfont St. Giles, and the south-east of Beaconsfield to Hedsor Wharf (FIG. 23). Extensive cultivation over a long period may account for the gap of about 11 miles on the Berkshire side of the river, where the route is not plain (see The Viatores, *Roman Roads in the South-East Midlands*, London, 1964, pp. 136, 147 f.). I owe this information to Mr. D. B. Baker.

[26] Nowell transcript.

[27] Lib. Rub., C.C.C. 70, Oriel 46, Hargrave 313 (this last ms. is almost illegible here, but, as elsewhere, it seems to follow Lib. Rub.).

[28] J. Ryl. 155, Cott. Claud. D. ii.

Saxon runic letter '*ρ*' (=w) with 'p'.[29] The initial *h-* may represent a later but authentic variant spelling.

From its position in the list one would expect to find *Eorpeburnan* somewhere to the east of Hastings. The next estuary along the coast is that of the river Rother. By a remarkable coincidence we have contemporary evidence that an Alfredian burh was constructed on the estuary of the Limen (the old name for the Rother), for in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle under the year 892 we read:

> 'In this year the great Danish army . . . went . . . westward to Boulogne, and they were provided with ships there so that they crossed in one journey, horses and all, and then came up into the estuary of the Limen with 200 ships. That estuary is in East Kent at the east end of that great wood which we call *Andred*. . . . The river of which we spoke before comes out of the wood. They rowed their ships up the river as far as the wood, four miles from the outside of the estuary, and there stormed a fortress. Inside that fortification there were a few peasants, and it was only half made.'[30]

We cannot be certain whether the fort was ever completed, though one may suspect that Alfred would not allow this gap in his defences, which had proved so dangerous, to remain in being for long. Nor can we locate the fort by calculating four miles up the Limen, since the river has changed its course, and historians and geographers have been unable to agree either upon the shape of the coast-line or upon the course of the river in the Anglo-Saxon period.[31] The main stream of the river flowed round the north of the island of Oxney (FIG. 24), and in 893 the Chronicle describes Appledore as 'on the estuary of the Limen' ('on Limene

[29] All six late mss. have *piltone* where Pilton (near Barnstaple) is intended. This mistake must derive from the common source of all six mss., whose own scribes should not therefore be blamed for the mistake. It does not seem, as might first appear likely, that J. Ryl. 155 and its copy Cott. Claud. D. ii have copied *Heorepe-* correctly whilst the other four have all independently mistaken 'p' for a '*ρ*'. J. Ryl. 155 and Cott. Claud. D. ii are very corrupt and frequently confuse 'p' and '*ρ*' (e.g. *Parlingewice* for *paeringewice* (Warwick), *Pyltone* for *ρyltone* (Wilton)), but the remaining four mss. always distinguish 'p' and '*ρ*' carefully and correctly with the single exception of the example cited above for which their source is responsible. F. Liebermann, in his brief comparison of the four mss. known to him, recorded some 15 other mistakes in Cott. Claud. D. ii, where Lib. Rub., Oriel 46, and C.C.C. 70 were correct (*Uber die Leges anglo-normannorum Londiniis collectae* (1904), pp. 9–10).

[30] *Two of the Saxon Chronicles Parallel* (ed. J. Earle and C. Plummer, 1892), i, 84: translation from D. Whitelock, *op. cit.* in note 17, p. 184. As considerable importance attaches to the topographical details of this annal, I have departed from Professor Whitelock's translation to render literally *weald* as 'the wood' (rather than 'the Weald'), and *fram þæm muþan utanweardum* as 'from the outside of the estuary' (rather than 'from the mouth of the estuary'). The sense is unchanged. The 'A', 'E', and 'F' versions of the Chronicle preserve a different version of the last sentence, with *fænne* ('fen', 'marsh') instead of *fæstenne* ('fortification'), so that the passage reads: '. . . stormed a fortress in the fen; inside were a few peasants, . . .'. This reading is syntactically better since there is otherwise a superfluous preposition *on*. It is surprising to find 'A' and 'F' agreeing with 'E' against the combined reading of 'B', 'C', and 'D'. This suggests either that *fænne* was the reading of the original archetype of the Chronicle, or that 'E's archetype ('e') read *fæstenne* with 'B', 'C'. and 'D', but was corrected when it was at St. Augustine's, Canterbury, by the compiler of 'F' who, perhaps from local knowledge, preferred the reading of 'A' (*fænne*).

[31] Much of the geological evidence is discussed by W. Lewis and W. G. Balchin, 'Past sea-levels at Dungeness,' *Geog. J.*, xcvi (1940), 258–85. For a summary of the conflicting views see J. A. Steers, *The Coastline of England and Wales* (1948), pp. 318–31. The problem has been vitiated by the belief that the Rhee Wall, which runs from Appledore to Old Romney, is a Roman work. But the name (from *æt þære e* 'at the stream') does not occur in early records and is not found until the late thirteenth century. Nowhere does the wall form the boundary of any parish, hundred, or manor; its whole course is part of the port liberty of the Cinque Port of New Romney. The Rhee Wall is not an ancient work, but the filled-in artificial channel built for the Rother in the mid thirteenth century in order to preserve the port of Romney.

muþan'); but Appledore can scarcely have been 'at the outside of the estuary' since there are charters of the eighth and ninth centuries that not only show that many of the marsh estates were already in existence, but also suggest that the river may have had more than one outlet to the sea—one in the region of Hythe, another near Romney.[32] Nonetheless the account of the Danish host rowing their ships up the river 'as far as the wood' indicates that the fort was at the edge of the marsh,[33] and in the shire of Kent;[34] very probably it was close to Appledore,
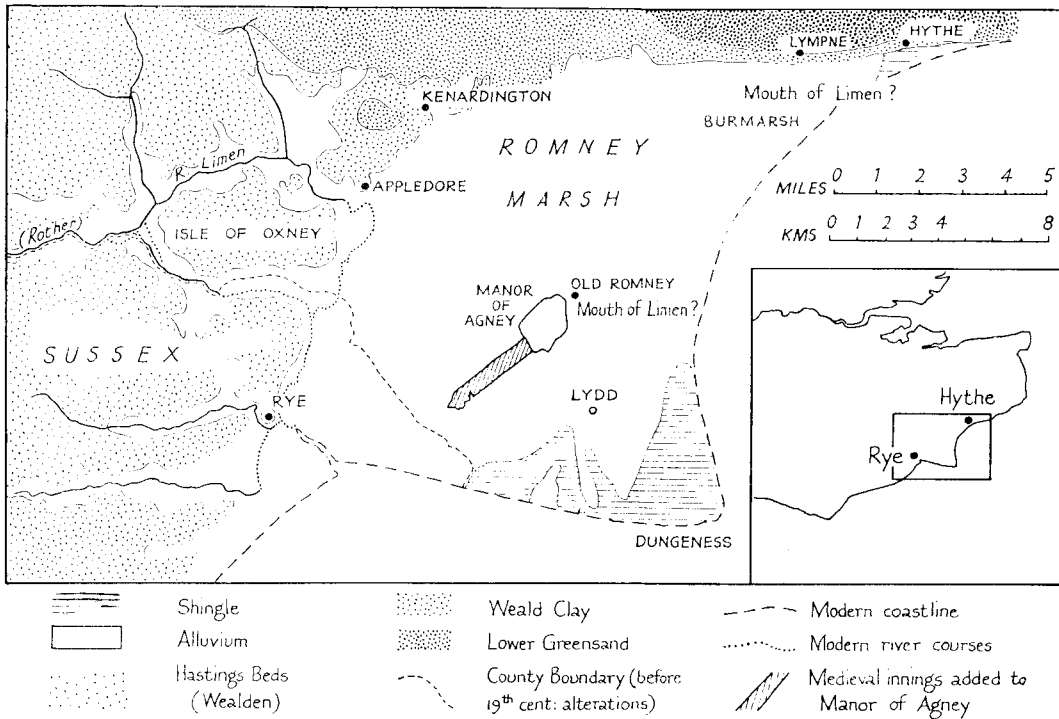

FIG. 24
SKETCH-MAPS SHOWING NEIGHBOURHOOD OF *EORPEBURNAN* (pp. 82 ff.)

where the river leaves the wealden soils for the flat expanse of the marsh alluvium. The fort has not survived. Traces of earthworks, now very largely destroyed

[32] *B.C.S.* 148, 1336, 396; *B.C.S.* 160, 214, 638.

[33] If the 'A', 'E', and 'F' versions of the Chronicle are correct, the fort was just in the marsh (see note 30).

[34] A charter printed by Birch (*B.C.S.* 837) as a charter of Eadbald of Kent in *c.* 616–18, which speaks of 'suþsaxa lond' forming the east boundary of an estate at Burmarsh (FIG. 24) has recently been taken as an indication that the Kent-Sussex border may at a very early date have been considerably to the east of the present one (P. Reaney, 'Survey of Kent place-names,' *Archaeol. Cantiana*, LXIII (1959), 67–9). But the charter cannot be a genuine charter of Eadbald; its formulae suggest that it may belong to Aethelbald of Wessex (855–60). 'Suþsaxa lond' probably means not Sussex but an estate belonging to South Saxons, for in *B.C.S.* 160 (A.D. 741), which survives in a contemporary ms., the 'terminos Suthsaxoniae' are close to and probably identical with the modern boundary. See also the dubious *B.C.S.* 208. Grants of land in the marsh are only made by the rulers of Kent.

by ploughing, at Kenardington some two miles from Appledore have indeed been taken by many Kentish antiquarians as the site of the half-built burh of 892. But neither the surviving remains, nor the plan of the earthwork drawn by the eighteenth-century historian of Kent, Hasted,[35] nor its situation facing away from the marsh at the foot of a wide valley, suggest a military work. The earth-work may rather have been connected with drainage and protection against floods.

Since we cannot locate the half-made fort of 892 precisely, and therefore have no place-name evidence, it is not possible to prove its identity with the first fort of the Burghal Hidage. There would scarcely be room for another burh between the fort on the estuary of the Limen and that at Hastings, but if the burh attacked by the Danes in 892 was never completed, *Eorpeburnan* may represent its replacement or else a burh farther to the east.

It is tempting to suggest that *Eorpeburnan* should be connected with the stream-name *Eorþburnan* which occurs in the version of a charter of Offa to Christchurch Priory in Canterbury, found in a fifteenth-century Canterbury cartulary.[36] Unfortunately this form is likely to be a late corruption, since the charter survives in what may quite possibly be a contemporary (late eighth-century) manuscript,[37] and there the stream is called *Heoratburnan* (OE. *heorot* 'hart'+*burnan*). We have some indication of the location of the stream since the estate granted is said to be 'inter torrentem heoratburnan et haganan treae'. *Haganan treae* has been identified by Wallenberg as Agney in Romney Marsh,[38] and the identification is confirmed by the fact that the monks of Canterbury not only modernized the name in some of their cartularies to 'Aghne . . . treou', but also derived their possession of the manor of Agney from this charter. *Heoratburnan* must, therefore, have been a stream in Romney Marsh which formed at some stage in its course a bound of the manor of Agney (FIG. 24). The stream was, therefore, in the same locality as the half-completed fort of 892. But it is difficult to believe that a stream-name *Heoratburnan* could have become *Eorpeburnan* by the time of the Otho manuscript of the Burghal Hidage (*c.* 1025). Any attempt to identify

35 E. Hasted, *History of Kent*, III (1790), p. 117.

36 *Eorthburnan* in a charter-list, which has not survived, printed by W. Dugdale, *Monasticon Anglicanum*, I (1655), 19; *Eortburnan* in Lambeth ms. 303, f. 112v, Canterbury mss. 156, 157, 158, and in Corpus Christi Oxford ms. 256, f. 82. These charter-lists are all related to each other, and should be dated *c.* 1400 (see E. G. Box in *Archaeol. Cantiana*, XLIV (1932), 103 f.).

37 *B.C.S.* 247. Facsimile in Ordnance Survey, *Facsimiles of Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts*, III (1878–94), pl. 5. Mr. N. R. Ker was kind enough to give me this opinion on the hand of *B.C.S.* 247. C. E. Wright ('Sir E. Dering: a seventeenth-century antiquary and his Saxon charters,' in *The Cultures of North-West Europe: H. M. Chadwick Memorial Studies* (ed. Sir C. Fox and B. Dickens, 1950), p. 392) considers it an 'early ninth century hand'. This is a charter of Offa in the year 785 to a thegn Ealdbeorht and his sister Selethryth, who was soon, if not already, abbess of Lyminge (i.e. it is not a charter to Christchurch). The formulae are found in other authentic charters of the period, and the witnesses are consistent with the date. It is likely that the lands granted in this charter became possessions of the abbey of Lyminge. The later history of the abbey is obscure, but its estates had passed to Canterbury before the Norman conquest. The Canterbury monks would seem to have simply copied the charter (which referred to lands which had since come into their possession) into their cartularies as a charter of Offa to Christchurch. That the Canterbury version is not an authentic independent document is proved by the retention in the fuller cartularies of the formula 'quamdiu (tibi) vita comes fuerit' (e.g. Lambeth ms. 1212, f. 310=*B.C.S.* 263). A grant to a religious community would not refer to 'as long as you live'.

38 K. Wallenberg, *Kentish Place-Names* (1931), p. 65.

the first burh in the list with the stream in this charter would, therefore, involve two dangerous assumptions for which there is no evidence:

    1. That the brief fifteenth-century charter-list which calls the stream *Eorþburnan* preserves a form of the name which either superseded or is more reliable than that in the contemporary or nearly contemporary manuscript of the charter.[39]

    2. That the Otho manuscript of the Burghal Hidage, which we have previously found reliable, preserved a corrupt form of the name of the fort, reading *Eorpeburnan* in mistake for *Eorþeburnan*.[40]

If it was certain that the stream in the charter and the first burh in the Burghal Hidage referred to the same place, a hypothesis might be found to fit the manuscript difficulties, but it would scarcely be legitimate to build an identification upon such conjectures where no such certainty exists.

We must, therefore, leave *Eorpeburnan* unidentified, though this does not affect the possibility that it may well have been the fort on the edge of Romney Marsh that was half-completed when attacked by the Danes in 892. But as long as there remains the alternative that the first burh in the document was in Sussex, it is possible that the Kentish boroughs were treated in a separate text.[41] Kent had been incorporated into the West Saxon kingdom since 825, but until 860 it had been part of a sub-kingdom under a West Saxon prince, so that traces of older separate Kentish arrangements may have survived. If on the other hand *Eorpeburnan* was the half-built burh of 892, we should have to explain why the list begins with this comparatively unimportant burh in Romney Marsh and omits other Kentish forts. Kent had frequently borne the brunt of Viking assaults, and the walls at Canterbury and Rochester had long been valued as a defence against their raids.[42] It is difficult to see any military reason for their omission,

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    39 The earlier Canterbury cartularies preserve very different forms of the name from those of the fifteenth century: *Neorthburnan* Corpus Christi Camb. ms. 189, f. 199 (*c.* 1130) printed by R. Twysden, *Historiae Anglicanae Scriptores X* (1652), cols. 2219–20; Canterbury Reg. 'P', f. 21 (*c.* 1200). *Northburnan* Lambeth ms. 1212, f. 310 (*c.* 1300) (=*B.C.S.* 263); Cant. Reg. 'C', f. 94 (*c.* 1330). *Northburnan* W. Somner, *The Antiquities of Canterbury* (2 ed., 1703), appendix p. 37 (a lost charter-list of *c.* 1400). It is likely that the stream was already unknown to the Canterbury monks by the twelfth century. The development of the name may have been *Heoratburnan*, *Heortburnan, *Eortburnan*, *Neortburnan (from *at then eortburnan*). From this the Canterbury cartularists may have altered 't' to 'th' under the influence of 'north'. There is a village in Kent near Deal called Northbourne. But it belonged to St. Augustine's and is more than 20 miles from Agney. It cannot, therefore, be the place referred to in the charter of 785, but it may account for the mistake by the Canterbury cartularists.

    40 There is no doubt that Nowell transcribed *Eorpeburnan* correctly from the Otho B. xi since that is also the reading of H. Wanley (*Thesaurus Linguarum Septentrionalium*, II (1705), 219) and of T. Gale (*op. cit.* in note 9, p. 792). Confusion of 'p' and 'þ', though common later, is unlikely in a manuscript of the early eleventh century. Otho B. xi seems to have been a good ms. in good condition.

    41 Kent was assessed not by the hide but by the sulung, and this might account for its garrison duty being assigned to a separate document. However, there is some evidence that under West Saxon rule the hide and sulung were not differentiated for administrative purposes. Charters of the tenth century, instead of 'aratrum', use the normal words for hide, 'mansa' and 'cassatus', for the Kentish sulung (see *B.C.S.* 741, 753, 780, 791, 869, 874, 880, 1295, and also J. M. Kemble, *op. cit.* in note 13, nos. 688, 769). In the twelfth century by the time of the earliest Pipe Rolls the sulung was assessed for danegeld at the same rate as the hide.

    42 As early as 804 the abbey of Lyminge was granted land in Canterbury 'ad necessitatis refugium' (*B.C.S.* 317). The walls at Rochester are mentioned in a number of eighth- and ninth-century charters (*B.C.S.* 196, 242, 486), and in 885 Rochester successfully withstood a Danish siege (D. Whitelock, *op. cit.* in note 17, p. 181).

but the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle sometimes refers to Romney Marsh in a manner to suggest that the marsh could occasionally be regarded as an area distinct from Kent, so it is conceivable that its fort could be included along with those of Sussex whilst the other Kentish burhs were treated elsewhere.[43] An alternative explanation would be to adopt the suggestion of H. M. Chadwick that the surviving manuscripts derive from a version of the document that was defective at the beginning. The last fort in the list is Southwark, so that if the Burghal Hidage began with London, which had been refortified as early as 886,[44] and continued with forts in Kent, it would describe a complete ring of forts defending southern England (FIG. 21).

It is to be hoped that this discussion of the problem of the unlocated *Eorpeburnan* may clear the way for its eventual precise identification, and hence for the elimination of some of the hypotheses that have been raised to explain the omission of important Kentish burhs.

One result of the identification of *Sceaftesege* is that Buckingham stands out as the only burh in the main part of the document that is not on or south of the Thames. Its inclusion implies that the document as we have it cannot be dated before the autumn of 914 when Edward the Elder had two burhs built there, one on either side of the river Ouse.[45] But it is difficult to suppose that the whole document can have been drawn up for the first time at this date. Though Edward may have added a few burhs to the scheme of defence for Wessex, his and Aethelflaed's main work was to extend the system into the midlands. Yet none of the eight burhs that they are known to have built between 907 and 913 are included in the Burghal Hidage as we should expect in a composition of the year 914 or later.[46] Buckingham is thus something of an anomaly in the list. It does not belong to the defence of the south, but to the system of burhs planned by Edward and Aethelflaed to provide bases and a source of ready troops for rapid campaigns across Watling Street against the Danelaw.

43 A-S. Chronicle *sub anno* 796 (for 798) '. . . Cenwulf . . . ravaged the people of Kent, and of the Marsh' (D. Whitelock, *op. cit.* in note 17, p. 168). Compare 838 (for 841) (*ibid.*, p. 173). Professor Whitelock kindly drew my attention to the relevance of these annals to the argument. Aethelweard translates: '. . . Cantiam vastavit . . . et provinciam quae dicitur Merscuuari' (*The Chronicle of Aethelweard* (ed. A. Campbell, 1962), p. 27). It seems likely that what is referred to in these annals is the 'regio Merscuariorum' of charters and the 'Limowartlest' of Domesday Book (*B.C.S.* 335 [BM. Cott. Augustus II.10, an interpolated text of a genuine charter], DB. i, f. 4). This is the modern Shepway Lathe. But estates in the marsh were for the most part dependent upon manors in the interior of Kent; it seems unlikely that the marsh region could ever be included with Sussex rather than Kent.

44 The Chronicle refers to London as a burh after Alfred had occupied it in this year (D. Whitelock, *op. cit.* in note 17, p. 183).

45 A-S. Chron. *sub anno* (D. Whitelock, *op. cit.* in note 17, p. 195).

46 Chester (907); *Bremesbyrig* (910); Hertford (two), Witham, *Scergeat*, and Bridgnorth (912); Tamworth and Stafford (913), in A-S. Chron. *sub annis* (*ibid.*, pp. 192–4). Professor Whitelock has pointed out to me that the Chronicle's annal for 911, which records that on the death of ealdormann Aethelred Edward took over 'London and Oxford and all the lands which belonged to them', might account for the anomalies in the Burghal Hidage. It is possible that Hertford could have been included in the area dependent upon London, and therefore, like London, omitted from the document. Buckingham on the other hand may have been in the area belonging to Oxford, and therefore have been included. We should need to know more about the extent of the regions dependent upon London and Oxford. In 1097 the Chronicle records that 'many shires' owed labour at London for building a wall round the Tower, repairing the bridge, and for work on the king's hall at Westminster (Earle and Plummer, *op. cit.* in note 30, p. 234). We know nothing of an area 'belonging to Oxford' other than Oxfordshire itself.

There is ample evidence that the system of garrisoned burhs defending Wessex and its dependencies south of the Thames against Danish attack had been begun in Alfred's reign. It is likely that the existing Roman walls at Exeter, Bath, Winchester, Portchester, Chichester, Rochester, and Canterbury formed the basis of the scheme.[47] But the fact that by 892 Alfred was already building a fort in or near Romney Marsh suggests that similar new burhs had already been built in Wessex. Asser writing in 893 could complain that Alfred's orders for the restoration of old defences and buildings of new ones had been too slowly carried out, or even ignored;[48] but, as Sir Frank Stenton has pointed out, the history of the campaigns after 892 implies that 'a new defensive system based on permanent garrisons had come into being'.[49] Thus in 893 the burh of Exeter successfully withstood a Danish siege; in the same year an army was raised from 'every burh east of the river Parret, and both east and west of Selwood'; in cooperation with troops from English Mercia and from Wales this burghal army chased and eventually defeated a separate Danish force. In 894 the 'burhwara' of Chichester routed the army which in the previous year had besieged Exeter. If, therefore, the fortification of many of these burhs, and the provision of garrisons for them, should be ascribed to the years preceding 892, it is possible that an early draft of the Burghal Hidage which describes such a garrison system was made at this time, and that a few burhs, completed later, were added to the document in the reign of Edward the Elder.[50]

The six thirteenth- and fourteenth-century manuscripts preserve a different ending to the document from that in the Nowell transcript. Instead of the long explanation of how the number of men needed to guard a length of wall was calculated, these manuscripts add up the total number of hides assigned to all the West Saxon burhs, and finally give the hidage figures for two burhs outside Wessex, namely Worcester and Warwick.[51] It is interesting to notice that Warwick like Buckingham was built in the autumn of 914,[52] but being one of Aethelflaed's burhs it could not be included in the main part of the document, which only contained forts repaired or built by the kings of Wessex. Warwick was therefore added as an appendix. We do not know why Worcester was included with

[47] Perhaps we should add Dover, one of the Kentish Saxon-Shore forts, which had a mint in Aethelstan's reign (see *Anglo-Saxon Coins: Historical Studies presented to Sir Frank Stenton* (ed. R. H. M. Dolley, 1961), p. 144). Aethelstan in his Laws issued at Grately provided that there should be at least one moneyer in every borough (F. Liebermann, *Die Gesetze der Angelsachsen*, 1 (1903), p. 158).

[48] Asser's *Life of King Alfred* (ed. W. H. Stevenson, 1904), p. 77.

[49] F. M. Stenton, *op cit.* in note 1, p. 263.

[50] Sir Frank Stenton (*ibid.*, p. 262) has suggested that the charter (*B.C.S.* 613), whereby in 904 Edward the Elder obtained Portchester in exchange for Bishop's Waltham, indicates that the system of defence was not completed before Edward's reign. The charter makes no reference to the defence of the Roman fort, but we cannot be certain whether the acquisition of the estate by Edward was a preliminary to the use of the fort as a burh, or whether in the emergency the garrison had been installed while the estate was still episcopal property.

[51] The appendix has hitherto been understood to include anomalously Essex, and assign 30(oo) hides to it. But this reading is found only in the most corrupt ms., Cott. Claud. D. ii (see note 29). All the other 5 mss. have 'pestsexum' or 'peastsexum' where Cott. Claud. D. ii has 'Astsexum'. Thus in C.C.C. 70 the passage reads: 'þ' is calles xxvii hid ' 7 hund seofantig þe hyrað to þan. 7 xxx to Westsexum. This should be rendered: 'That is all 27,000 hides and seventy which belong to it; and 30,000 (hides belong) to the West Saxons.'

[52] A-S. Chron. (Mercian Register) *sub anno* (D. Whitelock, *op. cit.* in note 17, p. 194).

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Warwick here. Ealdormann Aethelred of Mercia and his wife Aethelflaed had made arrangements with Bishop Werferth for fortifying Worcester sometime between the years 889 and 899.[53] It is clear that this appendix does not represent a systematic attempt to include all the burhs built by the rulers of English Mercia any more than the inclusion of Buckingham brings the main part of the document thoroughly up to date. Rather we seem to have here the whims of individual scribes and copyists. It is possible that Buckingham, Worcester, and Warwick are minor additions made in the winter of 914–15 to an earlier document. Had they been much later we should expect to hear of the new burhs built in 915 and after, rather than of Buckingham and Warwick.

In the year 914 the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle records how a Danish army raiding in Wales and Archenfield was brought to terms by an English force from Hereford, Gloucester, and 'the nearest boroughs'. Edward the Elder did not trust the promises that the Danes made to leave his dominions, and he therefore 'stationed men against them on the south side of the Severn estuary, from Cornwall in the west as far as Avonmouth in the east'.[54] Of the details of these arrangements we know nothing; they appear to have been an emergency scheme to meet a local danger. But it may well be that Edward's concern to tighten up the defences of the coast of Somerset and Devon was the occasion for ordering a redraft of the Burghal Hidage. Edward's precautions in the south-west reached a successful conclusion when, in the autumn, the Danish force left the island of Steepholme where they had taken refuge, and departed for Dyfed and Ireland. Edward is stated to have then, before Martinmas (11 Nov.), gone to Buckingham, and to have built the two burhs there in four weeks. While Edward was thus engaged in the west country and at Buckingham, his sister Aethelflaed had 'in the early autumn' built the burh at Warwick. Scribes, copying the Burghal Hidage while these events were taking place or were at least still fresh in the mind, might well add the new burhs of Buckingham and Warwick to the document. But they were not really concerned to bring the document up to date, for by 914 the Burghal Hidage was becoming something of an anachronism. Though the existing versions of the document may belong to the year 914, this should not be allowed to obscure the fact that by then the war had entered a new phase, and the defensive ring of forts protecting Wessex had already served its purpose.

53 F. E. Harmer, *op. cit.* in note 16, pp. 22–3.

54 'Se cyng haefde funden þaet him mon saet wiþ on suþ healfe Saefern muþan, westan from Wealum, east oþ Afenemuþan' (Earle and Plummer, *op. cit.* in note 30, p. 98).

APPENDIX

THIRTEENTH-CENTURY REFERENCES TO SHAFTSEY

By MARGARET GELLING

The first clue to the whereabouts of *Sceaftesige* was found in 1924, when Lady Stenton, transcribing material from the Assize Rolls for the use of the English Place-Name Society, recorded a note of the entry on Assize Roll 37 m 16d A.D. 1241, which made it clear that *Sceaftesige* was in the vicinity of Cookham. The slip of paper bearing this note was subsequently believed lost in the bombing of University College, London, but it was actually safe, and came to light when the English Place-Name Society's material for Berkshire was being edited. Further 13th-century references were found, one in the surname of Gilbert *de Sefteseya*, who lived in Cookham in 1220,[55] and one of 1275–6 to a weir *apud Shetefley in manerio de Cogham*,[56] and it was clear that these provided a link between the name in the Burghal Hidage and the field-names Sashes and Shaftsey's Eight cited by Darby (see p. 79, note 21).

The entry on the Assize Roll, which dates from 1241, is as follows:

Assisa venit recognitura si Therricus filius Willelmi le Muner Alicia uxor eius Reginaldus forestarius Johannes seruiens ipsius Reginaldi. Thomas Swere. Galfridus Molendinarius de Brineneya. Adam frilforde Ricardus de Hurnley et Robertus de Cocdone iniuste etc. disseisiuerunt Henricum de Mora et Matillidem uxorem eius de libero tenemento suo in Shaftesya post primam transfretacionem etc. Et unde queruntur quod disseisiuerunt eos de quadam Insula que continet in se quatuor perticatas in Latitudine. et. vi. in Longitudine.

Et Terricus et omnes alii preter Galfridum Molendinarium veniunt. Qui non fuit attachiatus eo quod non fuit inventus. Et ideo capiatur assisa uersus eum per defaltam. Et alii nichil dicunt quare assisa remaneat.

Juratores dicunt. quod Terricus et omnes alii disseisiuerunt predictos Henricum et Matillidem sicut breve dicit. Et ideo consideratum est[57] quod ipsi recuperaverunt seisinam suam per visum recognitorum. Et Terricus et alii. in misericordia. Plegii Terrici et Alicie Alexander de Ho. et Rogerus de Wodemancote. Plegii Thome. Alexander de Ho et Adam de Benefelde. Plegii Ade frilforde. Robertus de Cockdone et Ricardus de Graua. Plegii Ricardi de Hurl'. Adam faber et Alexander de Ho. Plegii Roberti de[58] Cockdone. Alexander de Ho. et Willelmus de Maydehuthe Plegii Reginaldi forestarii et Johannis. Radulfus Blund' et Gilbertus de Mora.

This is concerned with a case of novel disseisin in which Terricus and Alice, the son and widow of William the Miller, and seven other people, are accused of having disseised Henry *de Mora* and his wife of a free tenement in *Shaftesya*. The land in question is said to be an island four perches broad and six perches long, and these dimensions, 22 by 33 yards, suggest that the quarrel concerns a small piece of land, perhaps cut off by a rivulet, within the larger island known as Shaftsey. Terricus and the others are said to be in mercy, and their sureties include Alexander *de Ho*, Roger *de Wodemancote*, William of Maidenhead and Adam of Binfield. The surnames, both of the accused and the sureties, confirm the connexion with Cookham. Robert *de Cocdone* is one of the accused, and his name is to be associated with *Cockden Grove* in a survey of Cookham in 1609. There are numerous references in medieval records to places in Cookham called *La Ho* and *Wodemancotes*; and Hurley, Maidenhead and Binfield are near-by parishes. The surnames *de Laho*, *de Cocdun'*, *de Benefeld'*, *de Wdemenechot'* and *de Mora* occur with that of *de Sefteseya* in the list of tenants at Cookham given in the Book of Fees in 1220, and *de Mora*, the surname of the people alleged to have been disseised, should be connected with Moor Hall in Cookham.

[55] *Book of Fees*, P.R.O. 1920–31, vol. I, 303.
[56] *Rotuli Hundredorum*, 1812–18, vol. I, 14. The spelling *Shetefley* has been checked with the MS.
[57] (In margin) misericordia.
[58] (In margin) Dampna xii.d.

A slip of parchment sewn on to the Assize Roll at this point contains the following text:

> Postea coram domino Rege apud Windesoram conuictum est tam per sacramentum juratorum illius assise quam aliorum de nouo impositorum[59] quod predictos Terricus et alii non disseisiuerunt predictos Henricum et Matillidem de predicta Insula Sed dicunt quod Willelmus Molendinarius quondam vir ipsius Alicie ante mortem suam diuertit cursum aque iuxta Insulam illam Ita quod per Impetum cursus illius aque cecidit magna pars terre illius Insule istius quod in parte diminuta est - - - quia conuictum est similiter quod quidam Willelmus Terri fixit septem palos in illa parte aque que - - - erespectat[59] ad manerium domini Regis de Cokam ad nocumentum liberi tenementi ipsius Alicie post quandam juratam[59] inde[59] inter eos captam consideratum est quod pali prosternantur. Et Willelmus in misericordia finem fecit per dimidiam marcam. et satisfacit eidem Alicie de tribus solidis pro dampnis suis. Et x juratores in misericordia pro falso dicto suo finem fecerunt - - - xx solidis et inrotulantur in rotulo domini Regis.

This states that the case subsequently came before the King's Court, where the original judgment was reversed. Evidence was given that a large part of the island in dispute had been washed away when William the Miller, former husband of Alice and father of Terricus, diverted the course of the river. Mention is also made of stakes stuck into the river by a certain William Terri, which are said to have caused damage to Alice's tenement. These stakes were apparently destroyed, but such activities deserve comment, as rumours have appeared in print[60] of 'pile dwellings' on the Berkshire and Buckinghamshire banks of the river in the immediate area.

As to the meaning of the name 'Shaftsey': it is either 'island belonging to a man named *Sceaft*' or 'island of the pole'. Genitival compounds with a significant word are not very common, but they do occur, and there is no way of telling whether *sceaft* is a common noun or a personal name in this instance.

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[59] The slip of parchment has suffered from rubbing, and is very difficult to read. The words indicated can only be seen faintly under an ultra-violet lamp, and the readings given are not certain. Several short words are illegible.

[60] *Berks. Archaeol. J.*, III (1893–4), 28–9, and *Buckinghamshire (South)* (R. Commission Hist. Mon., 1912), p. 194.