Godalming

Setting

Godalming lies in the valley of the river Wey. The town itself is almost entirely on the Greensand but the periphery extends on to the alluvium and gravel associated with the river.

The few prehistoric finds from the locality are scattered outside the town. Several of the early find spots cannot now be identified. Finds from the Iron Age and Romano-British period make up the only significant picture of the early settlement of the area. Evidence of an Iron Age and Romano-British settlement has been found in the grounds of Charterhouse School to the north of the town (Holmes 1949; Harrison 1961). Five 1st century cremation groups were associated with the settlement. The Romano-British pottery included direct imitations of contemporary imported pottery of the post-Conquest period and some of the ware has shown direct Gallo-Belgic influence—a relatively rare phenomenon in Surrey. The site has a parallel in another early cemetery at Haslemere and represents a significant phase of the early Romanization of south-west Surrey. Further north, evidence of 1st to 4th century Romano-British settlement was discovered at Binscombe (Clark and Nichols 1960, 43–6; Smith, C. 1977). It is possible that the Binscombe sites in the valley may represent a more attractive alternative or replacement for the original Iron Age settlement on the hill-top at Charterhouse.

History

Godalming is first mentioned c 880 in the will of Alfred in which the manor was bequeathed to his nephew Ethelwald (BCS 553). However the place-name contains the element *-ingas* and probably means 'people of Godhelm' (Gover et al. 1934, 195-6), suggesting an origin in the 7th or 8th century (Dodgson 1966, 29). Strong evidence of late Saxon settlement in the town is provided by the parish church of St Peter and St Paul in the form of pre-Conquest windows in the tower. An even earlier church is said to have stood in Minster Field at Tuesley, south of the present town. The foundations of a pre-Conquest church were discovered there in 1869 and this has been equated with a chapel known to have been in a ruinous state in 1220 (*VCH* **3**, 41). There was also a cemetery associated with the site. It would appear possible that an original Saxon settlement on the hilltop at Tuesley preceded a later Saxon settlement in the valley at Godalming. A similar transition may have occurred at Guildford and Haslemere. At the time of the Domesday Survey (1086), the manor was held by the Crown and was relatively large and wealthy, rated at £30, and comprising several settlements. The hundred court was held at Godalming. William de Warenne held the manor during the 12th century but it was granted to the Bishop of Salisbury in 1221 (*VCH* **3**, 31). The manor remained in his possession until 1541/2 when it became the responsibility of the Crown. In 1601 it passed to Sir George More of Loseley.

Godalming became a market centre during the Middle Ages, receiving the first known grant of a market and an annual fair held by the bishop in 1300 (*VCH* **3**, 30). In the tax returns of 1336 there was no separate figure given for Godalming (Johnson 1932, lxvi) and therefore the 1336 return cannot be used to indicate Godalming's prosperity (see Introduction, p. 3).

The town's economy was based on the woollen industry in the later Middle Ages and during the 16th century Godalming grew into a thriving centre of the cloth trade, one of the most important in south-west Surrey, and remained an industrial rather than a rural centre (Nairn and Pevsner 1971, 254). In 1574/5 Queen Elizabeth granted borough status to the town, together with another grant of a market and an annual fair. This period of growth is illustrated by several fine 16th century buildings in the High Street and Church Street. The cloth trade declined in the 17th century, and Godalming found difficulty in securing a market for its goods and was also badly affected by the plague in 1636/7 (*VCH* **3**, 30). The Hearth Tax Roll of 1664 lists 166 households within the borough (Meekings 1940, cxi), making Godalming at that date the fifth largest of the towns discussed. The cloth trade did not entirely disappear but continued on a diminished scale until c 1850 when the last reference is found to 'Hampshire Kerseys', the name given to the local cloth of the area (*VCH* **2**, 342-9). Tanning was an important local industry, perhaps as early as the 15th century (*VCH* **2**, 330), while paper-making was an active concern by the middle of the 17th century (Powell and Jenkinson 1938, 3).

The bridge across the Wey was owned by the lord of the manor and was only used by the public during the Middle Ages in times of floods. It was improved in 1749 when the Portsmouth Road was turnpiked (*VCH* **3**, 25), placing the town on an important through route. Under an Act of Parliament passed in 1782 (22 George III, cap. 17), the bridges at Godalming, Cobham and Leatherhead were to be rebuilt and maintained by the county. George Gwilt, surveyor to the County and to its Commission of Sewers, was responsible for the reconstruction of all three bridges (Renn 1972a, 165). The improved Portsmouth Road gave some impetus to rebuilding within the town to serve the new traffic. The large and rather incongruous Kings Arms (1753) in the High Street is a fine example of a coaching inn. The Wey Navigation was extended from Guildford to Godalming in 1760 and made possible an increase in the goods carried along the river. However, the opening of the South Western Railway (Portsmouth line) in 1859 was responsible for the town's expansion in modern times.

Topography

The original settlement at Godalming was probably centred upon the church of St Peter and St Paul. The first edition of the OS 1:2500 map of the town, surveyed c 1870, appears to preserve the later medieval layout. The plan consists of three curving streets, the High Street, Church Street and Mill Lane, converging on the market-place. The market-house which preceded the early 19th century town hall on this site is

Fig. 12. Godalming, Map I. Based upon the Ordnance Survey Map with the sanction of the Controller of H.M. Stationery Office, Crown copyright reserved.

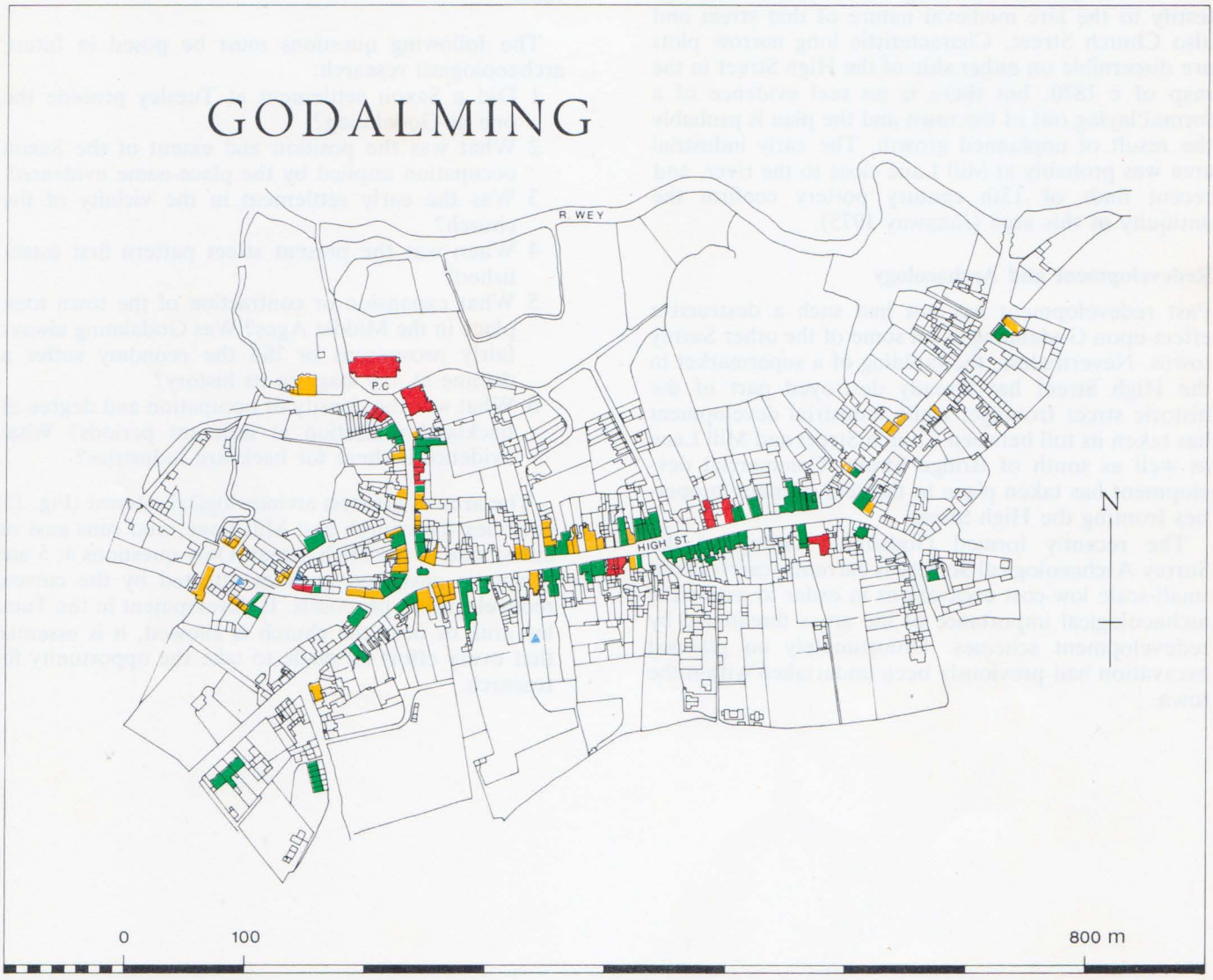


Fig. 13. Godalming, Map II.

thought to have been built in the 15th century (*VCH* **3**, 24). It seems likely that the market-place replaced the church as the focal point of the community soon after the grant of a market in 1330. It is impossible without archaeological investigation to say at what time the High Street became the major communication route. Several surviving 16th century buildings testify to the late medieval nature of that street and also Church Street. Characteristic long narrow plots are discernible on either side of the High Street in the map of c 1870, but there is no real evidence of a formal laying out of the town and the plan is probably the result of unplanned growth. The early industrial area was probably at Mill Lane close to the river, and recent finds of 13th century pottery confirm the antiquity of this area (Janaway 1975).

Redevelopment and Archaeology

Past redevelopment has not had such a destructive effect upon Godalming as on some of the other Surrey towns. Nevertheless, the building of a supermarket in the High Street has already destroyed part of the historic street frontage, while industrial development has taken its toll between Church Street and Mill Lane as well as south of Bridge Street. Commercial development has taken place to the rear of many properties fronting the High Street.

The recently formed Godalming Group of the Surrey Archaeological Society is currently carrying out small-scale low-cost excavations in order to assess the archaeological importance of the areas threatened by redevelopment schemes. Unfortunately no planned excavation had previously been undertaken within the town.

The largest redevelopment scheme proposed for Godalming is the ring road with associated service roads and parking areas behind the High Street. For much of its course the proposed road will skirt the core of the medieval town, but the area between Mill Lane and Church Street is threatened by a link to this road.

The following questions must be posed in future archaeological research:

1 Did a Saxon settlement at Tuesley precede the one at Godalming?
2 What was the position and extent of the Saxon occupation implied by the place-name evidence?
3 Was the early settlement in the vicinity of the church?
4 When was the present street pattern first established?
5 What expansion or contraction of the town took place in the Middle Ages? Was Godalming always fairly prosperous or did the economy suffer a decline at any stage in its history?
6 What was the density of occupation and degree of backland utilisation at different periods? What evidence is there for backyard industries?

The area of greatest archaeological interest (Fig. 12) encircles the church and Mill Lane, and runs east on either side of the High Street. Only questions 4, 5 and 6 can be answered on sites affected by the current redevelopment proposals. If development in the Tuesley area or near the church is allowed, it is essential that every effort be made to take the opportunity for research.

Guildford

Setting

Guildford lies astride the valley cut through the chalk of the North Downs by the river Wey. The town itself is on chalk, apart from the gravel and alluvium associated with the river.

The few known prehistoric finds from the vicinity have come from outside the town. An interesting group, dating from the Mesolithic to the Iron Age, has been discovered by the river at St Catherine's Hill (OS records), and it has been suggested that there was an early crossing point here.

Little evidence of Romano-British occupation has been found. The trackway on the Hog's Back from Farnham to Guildford may well be an ancient one and there is circumstantial evidence for its use in the Roman period.

History

Guildford was mentioned c 880 in the will of Alfred (BCS 553) as a royal residence, and this is the earliest record to have survived. The place-name has been interpreted as 'the ford where the golden flowers grow' (Gover et al. 1934, 9-11), or simply as 'the golden ford' and points to the town's origin at a natural crossing point on the river.

West of the town on Guildown, the eastern end of the Hog's Back, a 6th century Saxon cemetery was discovered in 1929 and subsequently excavated together with 189 skeletons of later periods down to the 11th century (Lowther 1931). Twelve more skeletons were found in association with a possible 5th century fluted urn closer to the town in Mount Street (Morris 1959, 142). No evidence of a nearby settlement belonging to the period of the early burials has been found; if one existed on the west side of the river, it may have served as a forerunner of the first settlement in Guildford. It is interesting to note the parallel between the cemetery at Guildford and that at Otford, Kent (Philp 1973, 166-73); both lie on a hill-top to the west of an important river crossing and both precede a later settlement in the valley.

The Burghal Hidage, an early 10th century document which contains a list of burhs, or fortifications, of Wessex, mentions a burh at Escingum which has been identified as Eashing (Aldsworth and Hill 1971). It is possible that this burh preceded an urban centre established at Guildford during the 10th century when Athelstan seems to have carried out a reorganisation of towns in Wessex, replacing purely defensive burhs like the one at Eashing with defended commercial centres (Biddle and Hill 1971, 84). The evidence of a Saxon mint at Guildford during the 10th and 11th centuries strongly suggests that the town was an important mercantile centre and possibly had borough status as early as the 10th century. Silver pennies minted here from the time of Edward the Martyr (975-979) to William Rufus (1087-1100) have been found, inscribed with the name of Guildford in a number of different forms including GYLD, GILFO and GILDEFOR (Guildford Corporation 1957, 5).

The manor of Guildford belonged to the Crown at the time of the Norman Conquest and the Norman kings probably began the construction of the castle before the end of the 11th century. The present keep dates to the 12th century replacing an earlier shell keep (Renn 1968b, 197). The castle was much used as a royal residence in the 12th and 13th centuries, especially by Henry III who enlarged the living quarters. The keep was used as a county gaol from the 13th to the 16th century.

The castle had already begun to decay by 1333 and was certainly ruinous by the 17th century. A recent small-scale excavation across the castle ditch (Holling 1974) indicated that it had begun to silt up by the 16th century and had finally been filled in during the 17th century. Parts of the ruinous buildings were dismantled soon after the castle was granted to Francis Carter in 1611 (*VCH* **3**, 554-60).

The first explicit reference to Guildford as a borough was in 1130 (*VCH* **3**, 560) while the second of the two charters of 1257 established it as the county town of Surrey, but the right to hold the town at fee farm was not granted to the inhabitants until 1366. This allowed them to pay an annual sum to the Crown in respect of various tolls etc., which they could then collect themselves instead of them being farmed out to an individual as previously (Guildford Corporation 1957, 7). A charter was granted by Henry VII in 1488 which made the mayor and approved men a corporate body, and in 1603 Guildford received its own Commission of the Peace and became one of the towns where assizes and Surrey quarter sessions met (Dance 1958, xv).

No date is known for the earliest market and there may already have been one before the Conquest. The town was an important market centre for corn, cattle and cloth in the Middle Ages. The presence of Jews in 1187 is an indication of the wealth of Guildford at that date (*VCH* **3**, 560). Before the end of the 13th century the town had three parish churches, those of St Mary, Holy Trinity and St Nicolas. The community on the west bank of the river beside St Nicolas was part of the borough from an unknown date, and may be the holding in Guildford of the Bishop of Salisbury mentioned in a charter of Henry II (*VCH* **3**, 548). The earliest known evidence for the structure of the church is 13th century (*VCH* **3**, 568), while 13th and 14th century pottery has recently been excavated at 35 Bury Fields and sites in Millmead (Blatchford and Monk 1976).

There is evidence for three 13th century chalk undercrofts below the Angel Hotel, the Trustee Savings Bank and 149 High Street (Wood 1950, 82-4). These sites were probably former shop premises (Faulkner 1966, 123-5) and testify to the growth and wealth of Guildford during that century.

A Dominican friary, which was founded by Henry III's wife, Eleanor of Provence, existed by 1275 and was dissolved in 1538. Part of the plan of the friary was recovered in a recent large-scale excavation directed by Humphrey Woods (Woods 1974). St Thomas's Hospital was founded east of the town in 1231 in the angle between the London and Epsom roads and carried on in some form until the 18th century

Fig. 14. Guildford, Map I. Based upon the Ordnance Survey Map with the sanction of the Controller of H.M. Stationery Office, Crown copyright reserved.

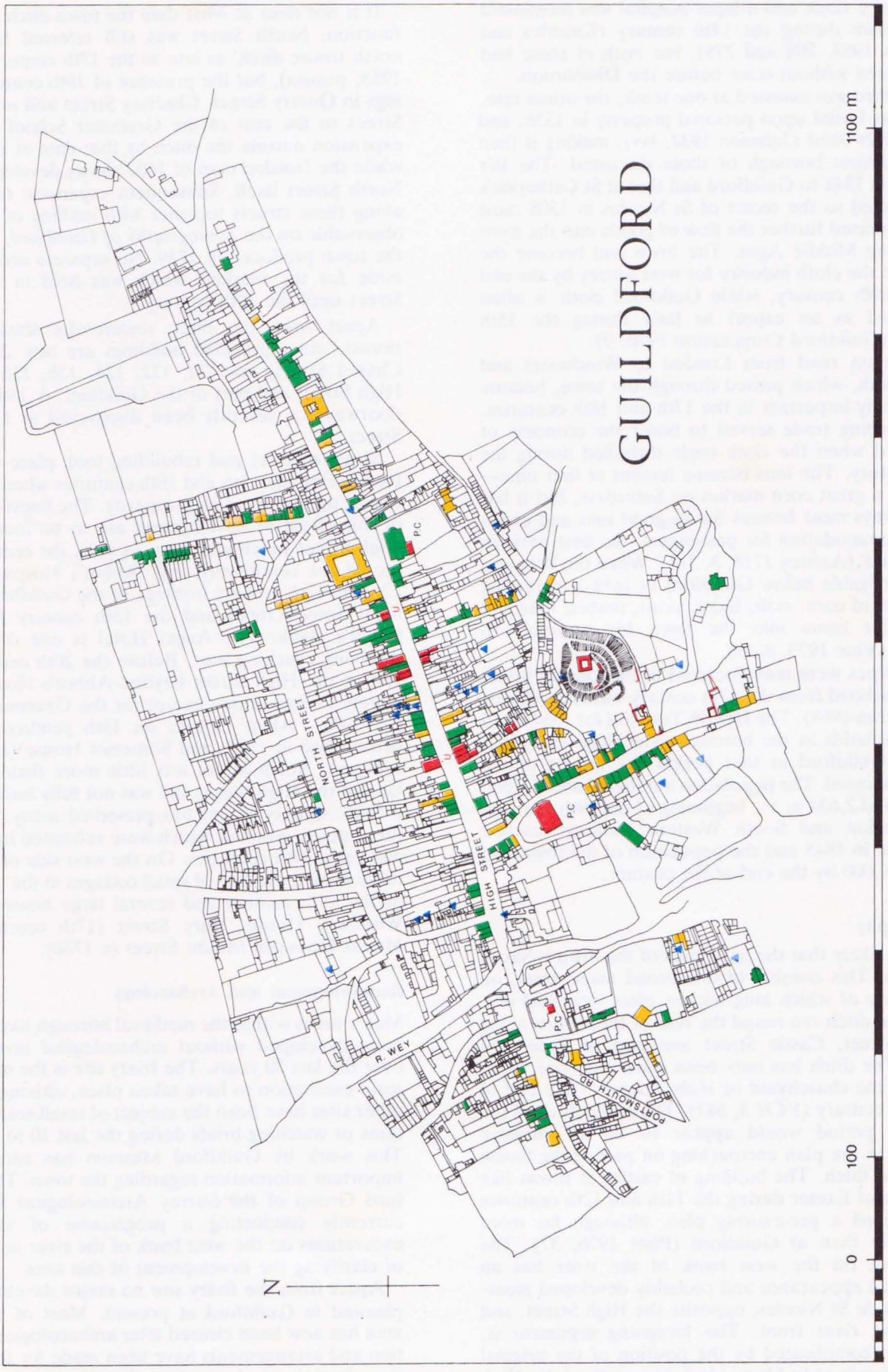


Fig. 15. Guildford, Map II.

(Knowles and Hadcock 1953, 274). A friary 'de Ordine Martyrum' received permission to settle in Guildford c 1260, and a leper hospital was mentioned in the town during the 14th century (Knowles and Hadcock 1953, 208 and 275), but both of these had disappeared without trace before the Dissolution.

Guildford was assessed at one tenth, the urban rate, in the tax levied upon personal property in 1336, and paid £15 2s 9½d (Johnson 1932, lxv), making it then the wealthiest borough of those discussed. The fair granted in 1341 to Guildford and that at St Catherine's Hill granted to the rector of St Nicolas in 1308 must have increased further the flow of goods into the town during the Middle Ages. The town had become the centre of the cloth industry for west Surrey by the end of the 14th century, while Guildford cloth is often mentioned as an export to Italy during the 15th century (Guildford Corporation 1970, 9).

The main road from London to Winchester and Portsmouth, which passed through the town, became increasingly important in the 17th and 18th centuries. The coaching trade served to boost the economy of Guildford when the cloth trade dwindled during the 17th century. The inns became famous at that time—'Here is a great corn market on Saturdays, but it has been always most famous for its good inns and excellent accommodation for passengers, the best perhaps in England' (Aubrey 1718, **3**, 314). When the Wey was made navigable below Guildford in 1651-3 increasing quantities of corn, malt, hides, skins, timber, lime and gunpowder came into the town for transport to London (Vine 1973, 8–19).

Clay pipes were manufactured in the Quarry Street neighbourhood from the 17th century onwards (Kingsford-Curran 1968). The Hearth Tax Roll for 1664 listed 371 households in the borough (Meekings 1940, cx), making Guildford at that period the largest of the towns discussed. The population numbered about 2,500 in 1739 and 2,634 at the beginning of the 19th century. The London and South Western Railway reached Guildford in 1845 and the population of the town had risen to 9,000 by the end of the century.

Topography

It seems likely that the basic plan of the town is Saxon in origin. This consists of one broad main street, on either side of which long narrow plots were laid out. The town ditch ran round the rear of these plots along North Street, Castle Street and part of Sydenham Road. The ditch has only been observed once, however, in the churchyard of Holy Trinity at the end of the 19th century (*VCH* **3**, 547). The castle ditch of the Norman period would appear to be an intrusive element in the plan encroaching on part of the Saxon town and ditch. The building of castles at towns like Oxford and Exeter during the 11th and 12th centuries also altered a pre-existing plan, although far more drastically than at Guildford (Platt 1976, 37). The settlement on the west bank of the river has an unplanned appearance and probably developed piecemeal beside St Nicolas, opposite the High Street, and along the river front. The foregoing argument is, however, complicated by the position of the original parish church of St Mary which lies south of the High Street and seems to conflict with the plot boundaries. It is possible that the earliest settlement was in the vicinity of this church, whose tower may be late Saxon (Holling 1967), and that the laying out of the plots was a later development.

It is not clear at what date the town ditch ceased to function. North Street was still referred to as 'the north towne ditch' as late as the 17th century (Dance 1958, passim), but the presence of 16th century buildings in Quarry Street, Chertsey Street and in the High Street to the east of the Grammar School indicated expansion outside the ditch by that date at the latest, while the Norden map of 1607 shows development on North Street itself. Subsequent expansion took place along these streets together with infilling of the plots observable on the *Ichnography of Guildford,* a map of the town produced in 1739. No separate area was set aside for the market, which was held in the High Street until the 19th century.

Apart from the three undercrofts already mentioned, other pre-1550 buildings are nos. 20 and 21 Chapel Street, nos. 70, 122, 124, 126, 123 and 125 High Street and part of the Guildhall. A 14th century doorway has recently been discovered at 13 Quarry Street.

Much renewal and rebuilding took place in Guildford during the 17th and 18th centuries when the town was at the height of its prosperity. The finest examples of this phase of development are to be found in the High Street which was then, as now, the centre of the life of the community, e.g. Abbot's Hospital (1619–22), the 17th century frontage of the Guildhall, Guildford House (1660) and the 18th century facade of Lloyd's Bank. The Angel Hotel is one of the few surviving coaching inns. Before the 20th century, the rest of the High Street beyond Abbot's Hospital was largely unremarkable except for the Grammar School (1557–86), Allen House, an 18th century mansion demolished in 1963, and Somerset House (early 18th century). North Street was little more than the back lane of the High Street and was not fully built up until c 1800. Quarry Street has preserved many 17th century houses, some of which were refronted in the 18th and early 19th centuries. On the west side of the river there were a number of small cottages at the beginning of the 19th century and several large houses such as Westbury House, Bury Street (17th century), and Mount House in Mount Street (c 1730).

Redevelopment and Archaeology

Major areas within the medieval borough have already been developed without archaeological investigation over the last 30 years. The friary site is the only large-scale excavation to have taken place, although several other sites have been the subject of small-scale excavations or watching briefs during the last 10 to 15 years. This work by Guildford Museum has added much important information regarding the town. The Guildford Group of the Surrey Archaeological Society is currently conducting a programme of small-scale excavations on the west bank of the river in the hope of clarifying the development of this area.

Apart from the friary site no major development is planned in Guildford at present. Most of the friary area has now been cleared after archaeological excavation and arrangements have been made for the proper investigation of the rest of the site before it too is destroyed by redevelopment. Construction work on 73/75 North Street is already in progress and all other known schemes are of a minor nature.

Future archaeological research should be directed towards answering the following questions:

1 What is the relation between the Saxon cemetery at Guildown and the settlement at Guildford?
2 Was the present town planted in the 10th century as suggested by Biddle and Hill?
3 Was the early settlement in the vicinity of St Mary's?
4 What was the date and precise position of the town ditch?
5 What details can be added to our present knowledge of the economic development of the borough?
6 What details can be added to our present knowledge of backyard industries, and the density of occupation and degree of backland utilisation at different periods?
7 What was the date of the earliest settlement around St Nicolas?
8 What was the extent of and nature of the castle and its domestic buildings?
9 Where were the friary 'de Ordine Martyrum' and the leper hospital?

So much archaeological evidence has already been lost in Guildford that it is vital that every effort should be made to take advantage of any opportunities for research that may arise.

Any site within the area of the greatest archaeological interest (Fig. 14) could produce information on at least some of the questions, but if all opportunities are not taken some may never be answered.

Haslemere

Setting

Haslemere lies within the Weald. The town itself is for the most part on the Lower Greensand but extends on to the Atherfield and Wealden Clay. The place-name, meaning 'hazel-pool' (Gover et al. 1934, 204), implies that the original water supply came from pools fed by springs. The High Street is thought to run along the watershed of the Wey and Arun rivers, holding back the last remnants of a pool still in existence in 1859 (Rolston 1956, 2).

The few finds from prehistoric periods were scattered to the north and south-west of Haslemere. A Romano-British cemetery was excavated in 1908 north of the town (Holmes 1949); it consisted of 26 cremations in two separate groups, the first dating to AD 60–80, the second to AD 80–120. A 'pavement of flat stones' was also found in association with the cemetery and has been variously interpreted as a kiln or the bottom of a storage pit. A parallel to this cemetery exists at Charterhouse School (see Godalming, p. 25). In both cases much of the coarse ware was derived from contemporary imported models and directly influenced by Gallo-Belgic work. This type of pottery is relatively uncommon in Surrey and the two cemeteries constitute good evidence concerning the early Romanization of the region.

History

Haslemere is first mentioned c 1180 as a chapelry of Piperham, belonging to the parish of Chiddingfold, itself part of the manor of Godalming (*VCH* **3**, 45). The chapel of Piperham is commonly identified with St Bartholomew's church which is thought to have contained 13th century features in the old nave and chancel (*VCH* **3**, 48). The Bishop of Winchester granted a licence for the consecration of the chapel in 1363 (*VCH* **3**, 49). It has been suggested that the original settlement was situated there (Gover et al. 1934, 206) and the distance between the present town in the valley and the church on the hilltop at Piperham strengthens this argument. However, it seems possible that an even earlier settlement existed at Haste Hill, south-east of Haslemere (Fig. 18). A small tenement is recorded there during the 14th century (*VCH* **3**, 45) and reference is made to land known as 'Old Haslemere' in 1486 (Rolston 1956, 106–7). Two field names on the tithe map (1842), 'Church Lidden Field' (no. 564) and 'Old Haslemere Field' (no. 559) suggest the site of an original church and cemetery (Swanton and Woods 1914, 36–42). Human bones are reported to have been found in Church Lidden Field at the beginning of the 19th century (*Gent. Mag.* Sept. 1802) and fragments of pottery, glass and flint implements have also been discovered in Little Field adjoining Church Lidden Field. Aubrey recorded the tradition that Haslemere was a place of some importance before its destruction by the Danes, and also mentioned the existence of seven churches on Haste Hill (Aubrey 1718, **4**, 28). He is not always a reliable source of information but all the evidence suggests that early settlement took place on Haste Hill above the present town.

The town was certainly in its present position by the 13th century. The first known record of the place-name appeared in 1221 when a market at Haslemere was granted to the Bishop of Salisbury together with the manor of Godalming. It has been suggested that the appearance of Haslemere as a market centre in 1221 makes a good case for its having been a planted town which, like Reigate, succeeded a much smaller settlement (Beresford 1967, 490). If so, it seems likely that the bishop could have been the initiator of such a new town. Plantation of this kind was a common phenomenon in the 12th and 13th centuries.

Haslemere may have become a borough as early as 1230 when a burgage plot is known to have been granted (Swanton and Woods 1914, 44), and is specifically called 'burgus' in 1377 (*VCH* **3**, 46). It is impossible to estimate the relative wealth of Haslemere in 1336 in comparison with the other Surrey towns because there is no separate tax return for the borough.

In 1394 the market was confirmed by charter, and an annual fair was granted by the Bishop of Salisbury (*VCH* **3**, 46). The woollen industry must have provided the basis of the town's economy during the Middle Ages while the iron industry began on a small scale in the vicinity during the latter part of the 16th century (*VCH* **2**, 271).

Before the end of the 16th century, however, the market and fair had fallen into disuse, and the town appears to have been relatively poor. In 1596 Elizabeth I made a regrant of the market and fair and confirmed the right of the borough to elect two members of Parliament. The town was also considered as a separate manor from Godalming by that date. This grant was politically motivated and aimed at increasing Elizabeth's influence in Parliament. Nevertheless the new market does not appear to have been a very successful one and the market-house was entirely ruinous by 1658 (*VCH* **3**, 46–7). The Hearth Tax Roll of 1664 listed 82 households within the borough (Meekings 1940, cxiii), making Haslemere the smallest town considered, after Blechingley, at that date.

The road from Godalming to Haslemere was turnpiked after 1758, and is on the list of new mail roads for 1769 (Rolston 1956, 60), giving improved communications between the town and the rest of Surrey and providing impetus for growth.

A certain amount of rebuilding took place in the 18th century but little outward expansion of the town itself. Haslemere was among the 46 boroughs whose population stood lowest at the time of the Reform Act of 1832. The South Western Railway (Portsmouth line) reached Haslemere in 1859 and initiated the modern development of the town.

Topography

The first edition of the OS 1:2500 map of Haslemere, surveyed c 1870, appears to preserve the layout of the medieval town. The plan is basically T-shaped. The main street broadens out into a typical funnel-shaped market-place where a market-house stood by 1626 at

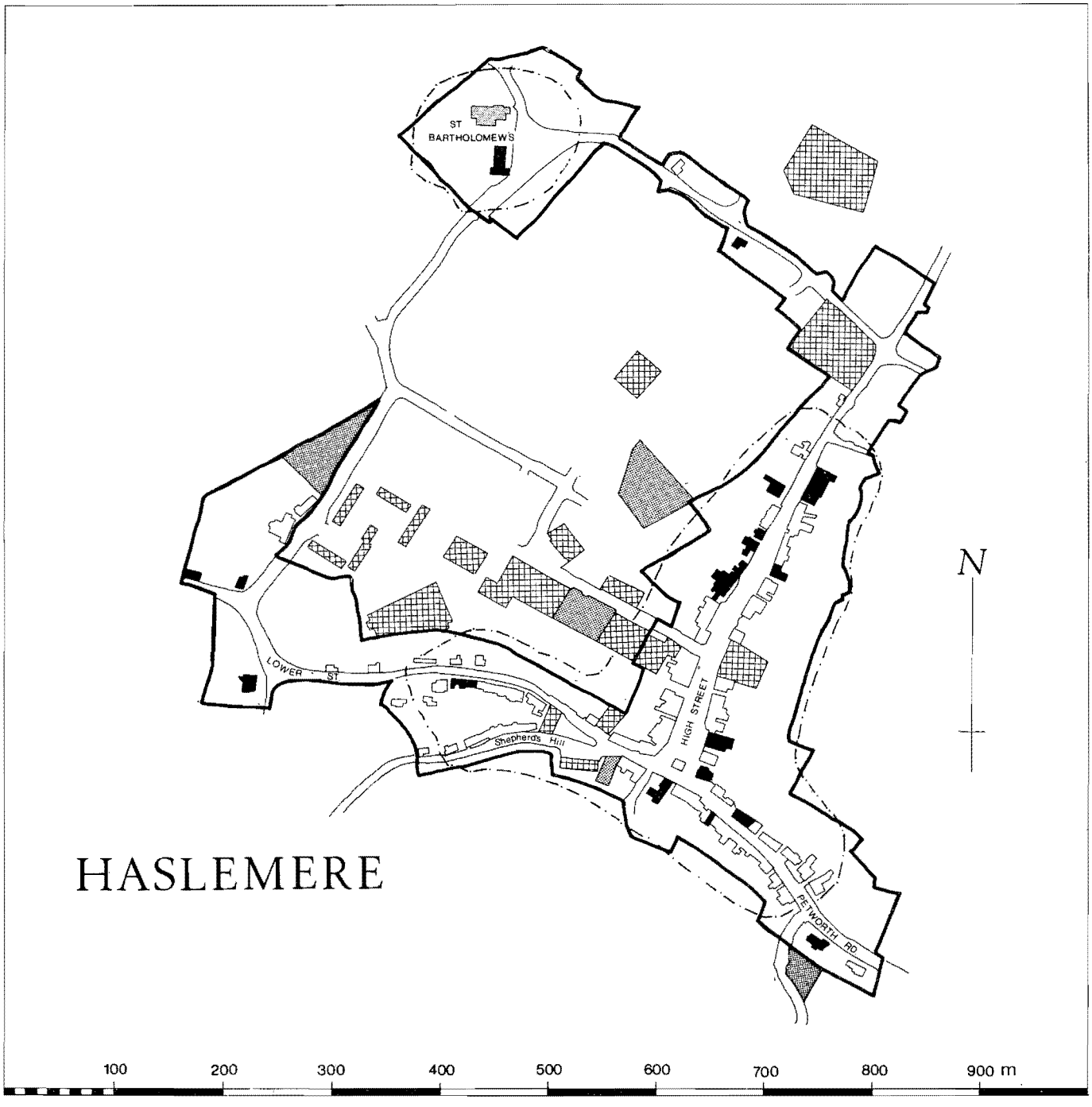


Fig. 16. Haslemere, Map I. Based upon the Ordnance Survey Map with the sanction of the Controller of H.M. Stationery Office, Crown copyright reserved.

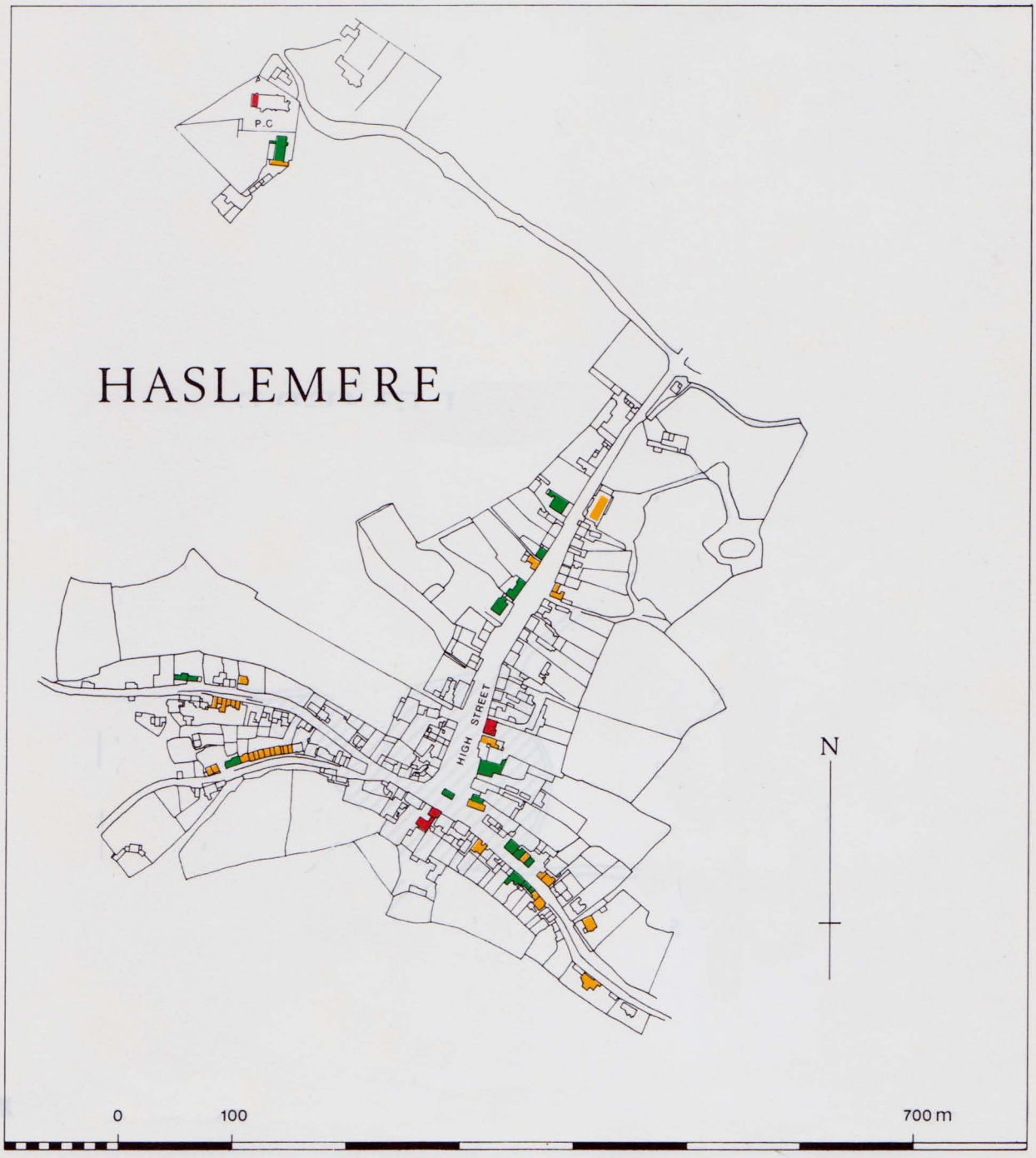
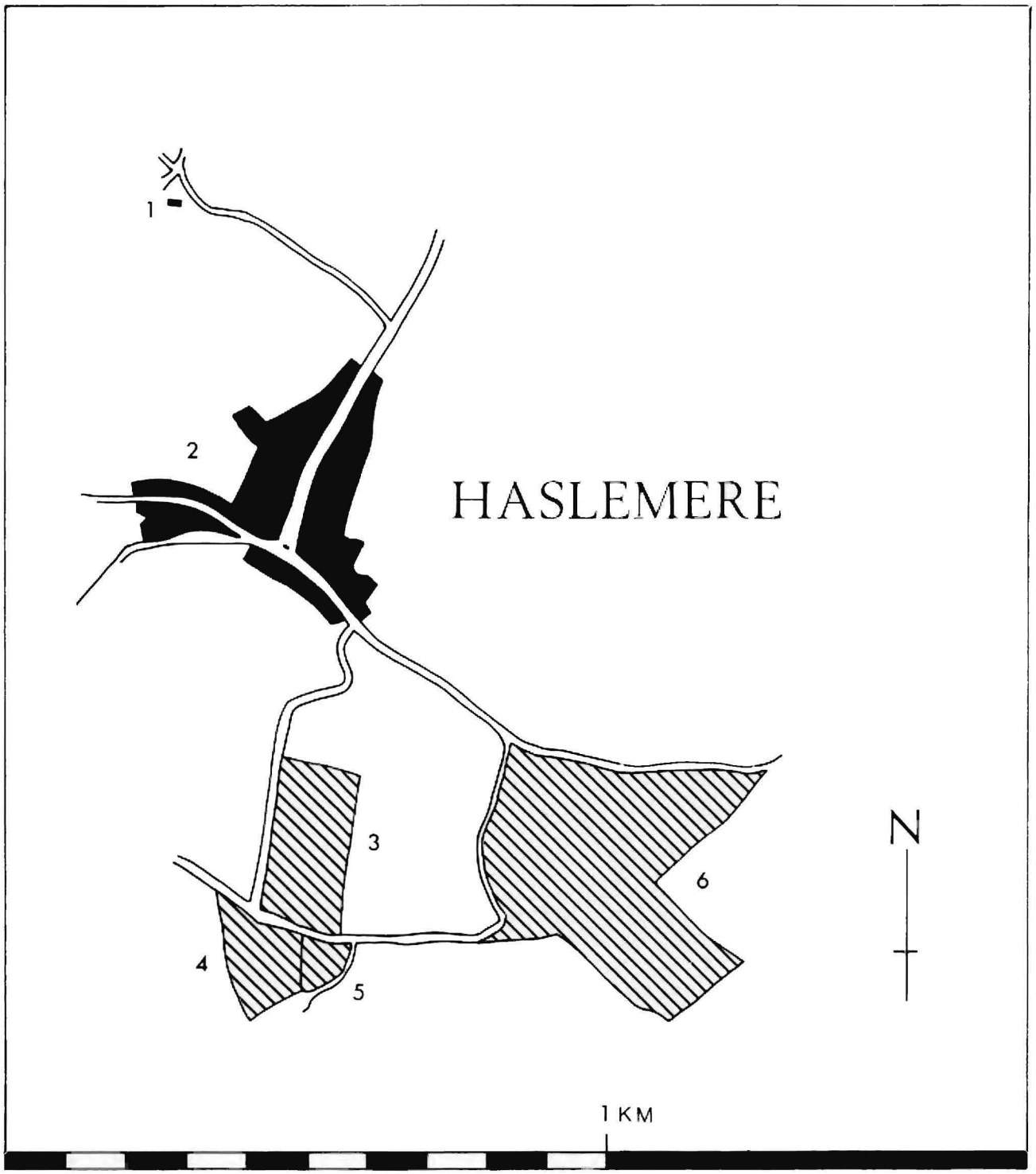


Fig. 17. Haslemere, Map II.



1. St. Bartholomew's
2. Medieval Borough
3. Old Haslemere Field
4. Church Lidden Field
5. Little Field
6. Haste Hill Common

Fig. 18. Map showing relationship of medieval borough of Haslemere and the postulated settlement at Haste Hill.

the latest. From the market, Petworth Road runs eastwards while two streets, Lower Street and Shepherds Hill, run westwards. Regular plots are discernible either side of the High Street and on the south side of the Petworth Road. The plots may well be the result of a formal setting out of the borough which may have taken place at its foundation. Development westwards along Lower Street and Shepherds Hill seems to have been sporadic and belongs to a later phase in the growth of the town.

H. Cote's map of 1775 is little different from the OS map of c 1870 but shows two wells, Pile Well and Town Well, which must have provided much of the town's water supply.

Redevelopment and Archaeology

The town has suffered from piecemeal development in the past and several areas of the historic street frontage have already been destroyed without archaeological investigation. A relief road has been suggested for Haslemere but a route has not been settled. Redevelopment has been planned in West Street, at Pathfields, and at the former Urban District Council offices in Museum Hill. A scheme is anticipated at the corner of Shepherd's Hill and High Street.

The history of Haslemere can be seen to be complex and the following questions should be the subject of future research:

1 What was the extent and importance of the Romano-British occupation?
2 What was the origin and extent of the settlement in the vicinity of Haste Hill? Did it precede a settlement near St Bartholomew's?
3 By what date was the present street pattern established?
4 What was the economic history of the borough during the Middle Ages? To what extent did the community increase or decrease in size? Was Haslemere ever prosperous?
5 What was the density of occupation and degree of backland utilisation at different periods? What evidence is there for backyard industries?

The areas of greatest archaeological interest in the town proper (Fig. 16) lie around St Bartholomew's church and around the inverted T shape of Shepherds Hill—High Street—Petworth Road. The Haslemere Group of the Surrey Archaeological Society is already preparing a programme of research which can probably be undertaken as a series of small-scale, low-cost exercises.

Leatherhead

Setting

Leatherhead lies in the valley cut through the North Downs by the river Mole. The geology consists largely of chalk, with gravel and alluvium by the river.

The area is rich in prehistoric and Romano-British settlement. A large Iron Age occupation site which lasted into the beginning of the Romano-British period has been found south-west of the town at Hawks Hill, in the parish of Fetcham (Hastings 1965; Lowther 1958, 42). Evidence of a Romano-British site has recently been discovered east of Hawks Hill on the left bank of the river Mole (Elmore 1976) and suggests a possible continuity of occupation with a shift of position comparable to the relationship of Binscombe to Charterhouse (see Godalming, p. 25). Only a Roman coin and some pottery have been discovered in the town itself (OS records). A Celtic field system has been detected on Fetcham Downs while more Celtic fields have been found close to Stane Street on both Leatherhead and Mickleham Downs. Celtic fields represent the first imposition of a regular cultivation pattern on the landscape of this country and may have originated as early as the Middle Bronze Age. They are small rectangular fields and may be found in association with Romano-British as well as with prehistoric sites (Bowen 1962, 14).

History

The first known reference to Leatherhead is in the will of Alfred c 880 (BCS 553) in which land at 'Leodridan' was bequeathed to his son, Edward. The place-name, which probably means 'the public ford' (Ekwall 1951), suggests that an important river crossing gave rise to the early settlement at Leatherhead.

Leatherhead lies between two Saxon cemeteries. On the west bank of the river, a 6th to 7th century cemetery has been excavated at Hawks Hill at various times between 1758 and 1933 (Morris 1959, 140), while 5th to 6th century material has also been found lower down the hill and closer to Leatherhead (Lowther 1959, 71). To the east of Leatherhead evidence of another possible Saxon cemetery was discovered in 1927 in the grounds of a factory (Lowther 1959, 72). The early, probably Saxon, church at Fetcham (Renn 1968a, 56) suggests the probability of a late Saxon settlement, close to the Hawks Hill cemetery, which may be a continuation of the earlier occupation. The relation between Leatherhead and the two cemeteries is unknown. A church is mentioned in the Domesday Survey (1086) and it is worth noting that parts of the present parish church may be late Saxon (Renn 1967, 23).

Current documentary research by John Blair is already clarifying the early history of Leatherhead and a preliminary account of his findings has recently been published (Blair 1976). In the Domesday Survey there were four estates with separate holdings in the parish of Leatherhead of which Pachesham to the north-west and Thorncroft to the south-west of the town were the most important. The third estate was later amalgamated with lands at Pachesham to form the medieval manor of Pachesham Parva, while the church together with forty acres belonged to Osbern de Ow, of the manor of Ewell. A fifth estate, Mynchin, was first mentioned in the 12th century and had the smallest holding in Leatherhead (*VCH* **3**, 297). Blair suggests that the origins of Leatherhead town are closely connected with the early estate of Thorncroft.

Leatherhead became a place of importance, and documentary evidence suggests that the county court was at one time held there. Its later removal to Guildford is referred to in a complaint made in 1259 'comitatus qui semper solebat fereri apud Leddrede' (*VCH* **3**, 294). The early importance of the town may be due to the fact that it is geographically the centre of the county and much closer to London than Guildford, while deforestation by the resident lords at the beginning of the 13th century would have made the area less intractable (Renn 1971, 153). Leatherhead may also have been on the main road from London to Winchester during the Middle Ages. Reference was made to the King's Way from Leatherhead to Guildford in 1345 (Giuseppi 1958, no. 970). Although the road appears on the Gough map of the highways of Britain, c 1360, the plan is too schematic to indicate the precise route of the road.

A market and an annual fair were granted to Leatherhead by Henry III in 1248 and regranted to Robert Darcy, lord of Pachesham, in 1331 (*VCH* **3**, 295; Blair 1976, 7). In the tax returns of 1336 Leatherhead, which was assessed at one-fifteenth, the rural rate of taxation, was the richest of the towns discussed after Guildford (Johnson 1932, lxvii). Pachesham and not Thorncroft appears to have gained the major interest in the growing community in the 14th century. Excavation has confirmed that the manor house which lay north of the town at the Mounts, Pachesham, was abandoned soon after Robert Darcy had died leaving no male heir (Lowther 1947). What effect this had upon Leatherhead is not known. Later, in 1392, the town was almost completely destroyed by a fire (Lumby 1886, 271).

The market ceased to function during the 16th century (Aubrey 1718, **2**, 251), while Evelyn described the town as an obscure place when a county election was held there at the end of the 17th century (*VCH* **3**, 294). In the Hearth Tax Roll of 1664 Leatherhead was one of the smallest towns in Surrey with only 122 households (Meekings.1940, ciii).

The present line of the London-Guildford road via Leatherhead was a result of the 1756 Turnpike Act (Smith, G. H. 1963, 209) which must have increased the flow of traffic through the town, and a certain amount of rebuilding on a modest scale took place during the 18th century. George Gwilt, surveyor to the County and to its Commission of Sewers, rebuilt the bridge in 1782/3 and it has been suggested that he reused the piers of the medieval bridge (Renn 1972a).

The community still depended largely on agriculture at the beginning of the 19th century, while industries such as brick and tile making were on a small scale. The London and South Western Railway reached the town in 1859.

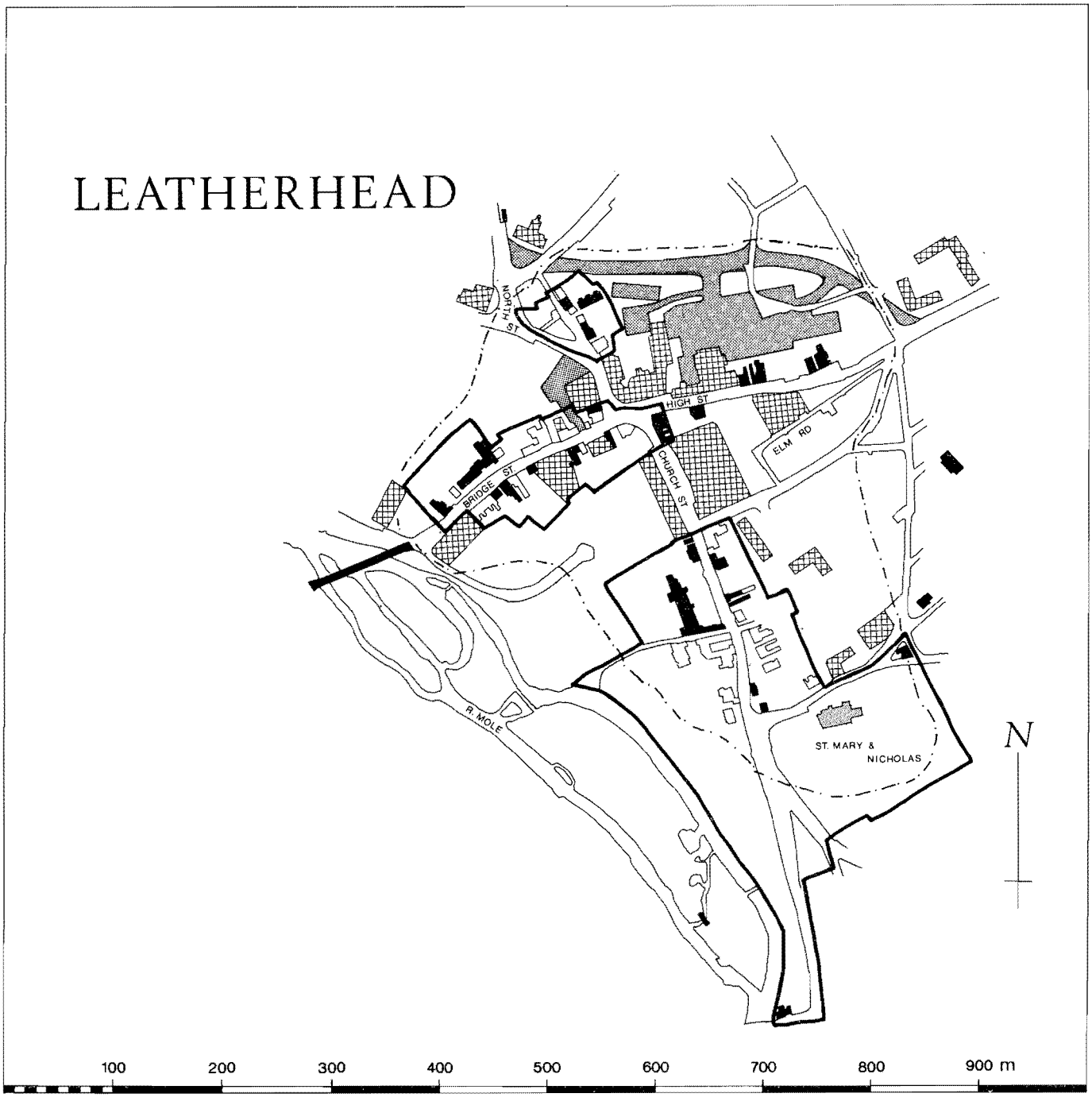


Fig. 19. Leatherhead, Map I. Based upon the Ordnance Survey Map with the sanction of the Controller of H.M. Stationery Office, Crown copyright reserved.

Fig. 20. Leatherhead, Map II.

Topography

The town plan is the most involved of those considered in this survey. It is thought that the later medieval street pattern, which appears on Gwilt's survey of 1782–3 and on the first edition of the OS 1:2500 map, has been superimposed on an earlier plan (Renn 1972b). The original layout may have been based on a projection of the present Elm Road which follows a long straight tenement boundary until it rejoins the line of the modern road near the top of Hawks Hill. Church Walk runs at right angles to Elm Road and would have provided the major line of communication to the south. The common field strips run parallel with Elm Road while ignoring the present High Street. If Elm Road were the original High Street, there would have been a river crossing south of the present bridge which is quite possible since various fords of the river Mole are known to have existed in that region. The relatively isolated position of the church may be another indication of an earlier settlement in the vicinity.

The present town plan probably originated in the 13th century. Pottery of that date has been found in the High Street (Lowther 1961, 131), which appears to have been the main east-west communication route during the Middle Ages. An area in North Street resembles an in-filled market-place which was probably the site of the 13th century market. Several long narrow plots are discernible along Bridge Street/ High Street and Church Street. However, they do not form a significant group and suggest that Leatherhead was a small unplanned settlement in the later Middle Ages, a picture confirmed by Elias Allen's map of the town in 1629 (Blair 1976, 1). The awkward staggered junction of North Street and Church Street may be due to the survival of an early building of importance —perhaps a market-house on the corner of North Street and the High Street.

Redevelopment and Archaeology

Many of the buildings fronting North Street, Bridge Street, High Street and Church Street have already been destroyed within the last 50 years without archaeological investigation.

A redevelopment scheme comprising a relief road with shops and offices would involve the removal of nos. 15–31 High Street and development of the area to the north of it. Two further proposals would affect Bridge Street and an area close to the bridge itself. Development is anticipated in the area between Bridge Street and Emlyn Lane and between Elm Road and the Crescent in the long term but no proposals have yet been made.

The following problems should be the subject of future archaeological research:

1 What was the relation between the Saxon cemeteries and the settlement at Leatherhead?
2 What was the origin and extent of the earliest settlement on the east side of the river?
3 Was the early settlement in the vicinity of the church?
4 By what date did the present street pattern become established?
5 What was the economic history of the medieval town? Why was Leatherhead prosperous in the 14th century? How can the subsequent decline of the town be explained?
6 What was the density of occupation and degree of backland utilisation at different periods? What evidence is there for backyard industries?
7 Where was the site of the earliest bridge?

The whole central area of the town forms the area of greatest archaeological interest (Fig. 19) and the area between the High Street and the church is particularly important for answering questions 2 to 6. Every effort should be made to take advantage of any opportunities for archaeological investigation that arise there. Where excavation is either impracticable or impossible site watching should be organised when construction work is in progress.

Reigate

Setting

Reigate lies on Lower Greensand above a minor stream south of the chalk of the North Downs. South of the High Street water is found quite near the surface as a result of clay beds present in the sand.

Recent excavations within the town have produced some Mesolithic material and finds from all prehistoric periods have come from the surrounding area. Certain evidence of Romano-British occupation is limited to finds of Roman tiles and pottery from Doods Farm (*Arch.J.* **6** (1849), 188; Hooper 1945, 16–7; OS records).

History

The earliest mention of Reigate to have survived dates to c 1170 (Gover et al. 1934, 304), but the manor was recorded in the Domesday Survey (1086) under the name of Cherchefelle, and appears to have been comparatively wealthy, being rated at £40. It seems likely that a pre-Conquest settlement was centred on the parish church of St Mary Magdalene, about half a kilometre east of the medieval town centre, but the parish probably contained several small hamlets rather than one nucleated settlement. No church is mentioned at Cherchefelle in Domesday but a fragment, possibly part of a decorated Saxon cross, may indicate the earlier Christian use of the site.

The manor was granted to William de Warenne when he was created Earl of Surrey c 1090, and a castle was probably built here soon afterwards. It is impossible to assess the physical growth or appearance of the castle which was already ruinous by the 16th century (Lambarde 1730, 306); what remained was destroyed under the Commonwealth (*VCH* **3**, 321). The presence of the powerful de Warenne family was responsible for the emergence of Reigate, which appears to have been founded as a new town during the latter half of the 12th century (Beresford 1967, 491), below the castle to the west of the old settlement at Cherchefelle. This view is now supported by the archaeological investigations undertaken in the town: pottery of the late 12th century onwards is common but none of an earlier date has yet been identified.

Reigate had a market before 1276 and was called a borough in 1291 (*VCH* **3**, 234). Like Blechingley, it was a mesne borough. Apparently Reigate never received a charter from the Crown and this may reflect the status of the founder, generally thought to have been the illegitimate half-brother of Henry II, Hamelin Plantagenet, who took the name de Warenne after marrying a de Warenne heiress in 1163. Towards the end of the 13th century the Earl of Surrey granted an annual fair to the town and a new grant of a market was made in 1313. An Augustinian priory was founded before 1240 by William de Warenne. In common with many other houses of the same order it began as a hospital but, by 1334, had become a purely religious institution (*VCH* **2**, 105–6). Three chantry chapels, dedicated to St Thomas à Becket, the Holy Cross and St Lawrence, existed in the town during the Middle Ages. The proximity of stone quarries may have contributed to the growth of the town (*VCH* **3**, 234); Hooper 1945, 74–9). In the tax returns of 1336 Reigate was assessed at the urban rate and was then the fifth wealthiest town discussed, paying £4 7s 0¾d (Johnson 1932, lxvi).

In 1347 Reigate manor passed to the FitzAlans, Earls of Arundel, who were absentee landlords. This change probably contributed to the economic decline of the town which took place during the 14th century and may have continued into the 15th century. A picture of decline is revealed by the results of recent excavations in the town and a change of prosperity can be noticed between the reeves' accounts of 1300 and 1447 (Hooper 1945, 37).

A late 15th century stone undercroft in West Street may be an indication of returning prosperity towards the end of the Middle Ages. The market was certainly still in existence during the 16th century (*VCH* **3**, 230) while a market and cattle fair was granted or re-granted to the burgesses in 1678–9 (*VCH* **3**, 234). There is documentary evidence of subdivision and overcrowding of some of the tenements in the town in the 17th and 18th centuries (Hooper 1945, 130 and passim).

After the Dissolution, the priory was granted to Lord Howard of Effingham and this brought an important family once again into residence in the town. Oatmeal milling was an active concern in the 17th century and probably increased in importance when Sir John Parsons, who purchased the priory in 1677, became one of the victuallers to the navy in the same year (Hooper 1945, 101–2). Surrey quarter sessions (Easter sessions) were held in Reigate in the same century (Jenkinson 1931, 28).

The Hearth Tax Roll of 1664 listed 154 households within the borough (Meekings 1940, xcv) making Reigate then the sixth largest of the towns studied in this report. Bryant's survey of 1785 (SRO Acc.318) shows that considerable renewal of the town centre took place towards the end of the 18th century. Reigate's position on turnpike roads had increased its prosperity during this period (Hooper 1945, 85–94).

In 1801 the population of Reigate Borough numbered only 923 (Reigate Foreign, the rest of the parish, had a population of 1,323). Local industry continued on a small scale and included stone quarrying, tanning, brewing and the extraction (by tunnelling within the area of the town) of fine sand for glass-making and building. The London and Brighton Railway reached Redhill in 1841 and the Reading, Guildford and Reigate Railway opened a station at Reigate in 1849, after which Reigate expanded rapidly towards the newly founded town of Redhill.

Topography

Bryant's survey of 1785 and the first edition of the OS 1:2500 map of the town (c 1870) appear to preserve the medieval street pattern. High Street and Bell Street formed the nucleus of the town, both streets being lined by houses on narrow plots. There is no indication that the original town layout was the result

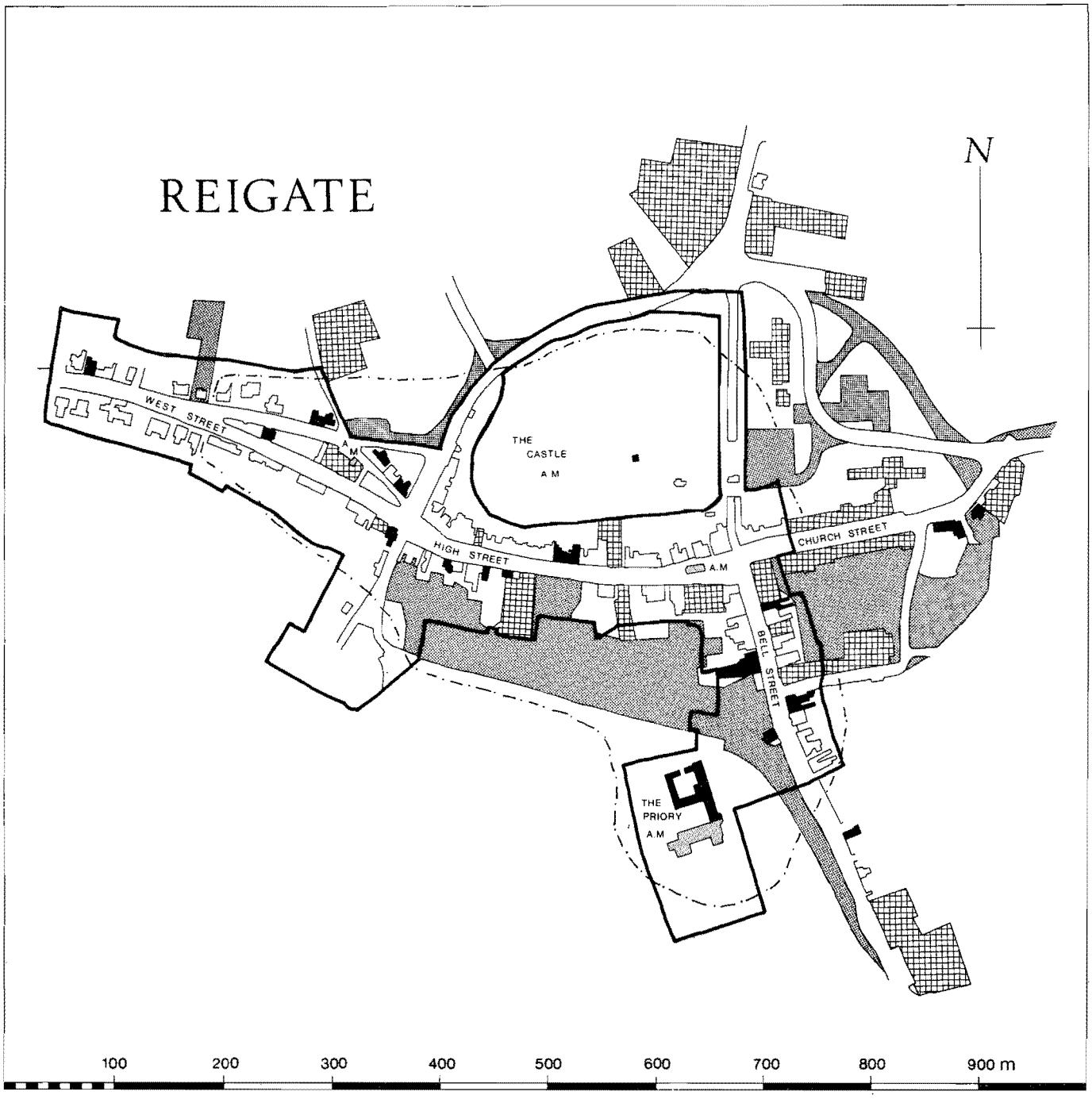


Fig. 21. Reigate, Map I. Based upon the Ordnance Survey Map with the sanction of the Controller of H.M. Stationery Office, Crown copyright reserved.

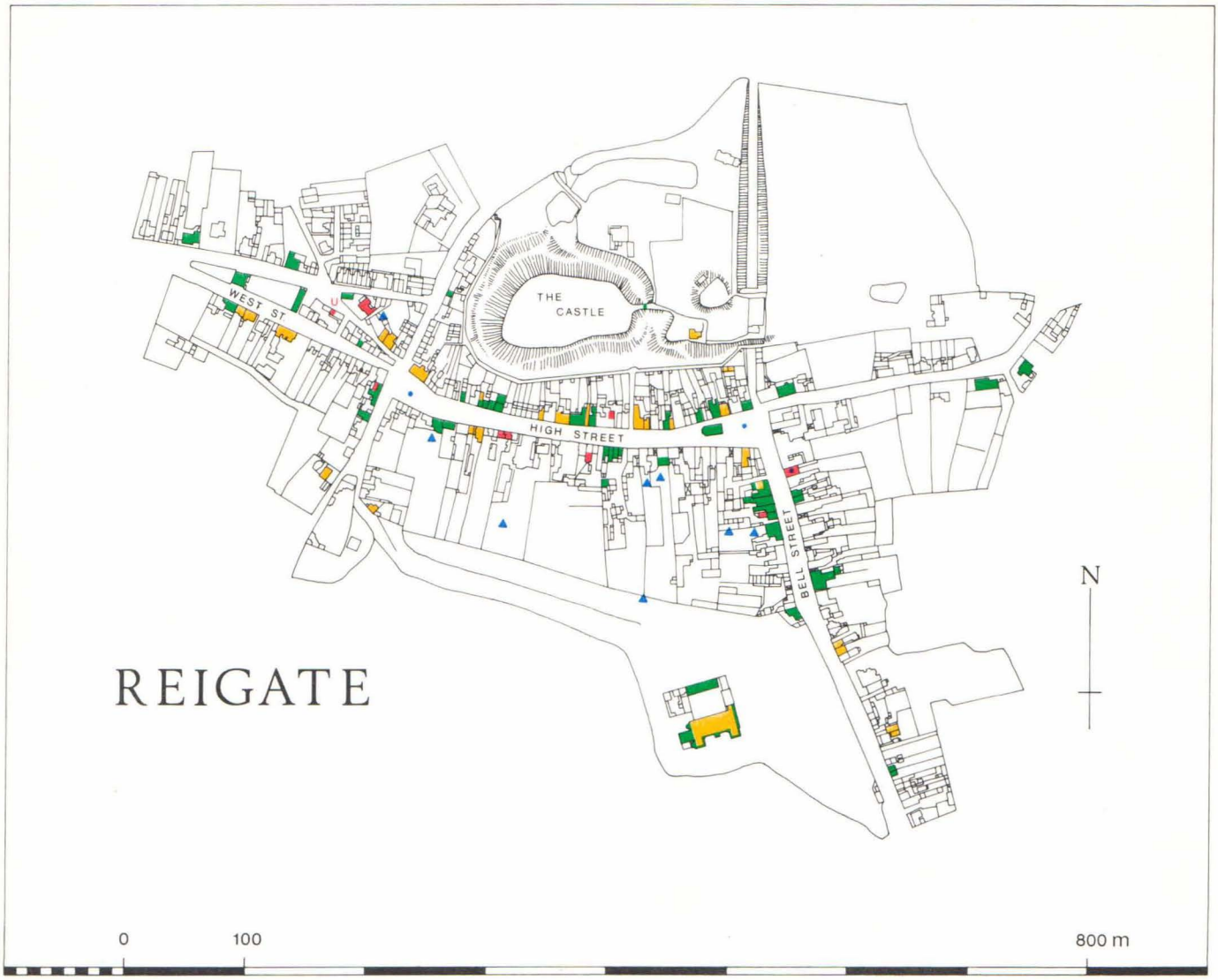


Fig. 22. Reigate, Map II.

of deliberate planning.

The High Street is funnel-shaped at either end, suggesting the sites of two small market-places, both of which contained chantry chapels. If there was a market-place at the west end of the High Street it would have been reduced in size by the chapel of the Holy Cross and other encroachments, such as East Island which was removed in 1806 for highway improvement (Hooper 1945, 88), and probably moved or expanded into the larger triangular space between West Street and Upper West Street. This area contains the 15th century stone undercroft already noted which was probably part of the market-house, and one of the town's two late 15th century houses. Hooper's view (1945, 76–7) that the undercroft was not part of the early market-hall appears to have been based on a misinterpretation of Bryant's survey. In the 16th century the deconsecrated chapel of St Thomas at the east end of the High Street was converted into a new market-hall and sessions house and by the end of the same century the market in West Street was referred to as the Old Market Place (*VCH* **3**, 230). The 16th century market-hall was itself replaced in 1728/9 by the building today known as the Old Town Hall.

Steady rebuilding seems to have taken place from the late medieval period. There are buildings erected before 1550 at 10 Slipshoe Street and 51 High Street, while 6 Slipshoe Street and 49 Bell Street belong to the last half of the 16th century. 71A Bell Street and houses in West Street date from c 1600, the latter possibly indicating expansion of the town at that time. 4A High Street is of the same date, probably a surviving fragment of the Queen's Arms inn.

Several buildings can be dated to the 17th century, and in the 18th century a number of modest but fashionable brick houses were erected. The derelict buildings shown on Bryant's survey and also referred to by Fanny Burney (Hooper 1945, 153) were being replaced by new houses. The 18th century coaching inns, the Swan and the White Hart, were demolished in the 1930s.

In the 17th century a certain amount of expansion took place along Church Street but by the end of the century this was blocked by the substantial gentlemen's estates at Reigate Lodge, Great and Little Doods. There seems to have been little pressure for new building in the 18th century, only for renewal. Early in the 19th century expansion took place southwards from Bell Street towards Cockshot Hill and less noticeably along London Road towards Reigate Hill.

Redevelopment and Archaeology

A major redevelopment programme has been proposed which would include a ring road, car parks and commercial development. In 1972 the Reigate Archaeological Coordination Committee (now the Reigate and Banstead Archaeological Coordination Committee) was formed to organise an archaeological reaction to this situation. Several small-scale excavations have been undertaken in the town, supported by small grants from the Department of the Environment and the local authority in 1974. The standing buildings are gradually being recorded.

The main archaeological questions that require an answer are as follows:

1 Was there a substantial settlement near the church before the late 12th century and was it suppressed totally when the new town was planted?
2 What was the sequence of structures on the castle site and what were their cultural parallels?
3 What were the extent and nature of the priory buildings? (It should be noted that very little is known about the smaller Augustinian houses, what their accommodation comprised and how it was disposed.)
4 What was the nature, extent and density of the street frontage occupation during the medieval period?
5 What was the density of occupation and degree of backland utilisation at different periods? What evidence is there for backyard industries?

Sites affected by redevelopment proposals will not provide the answers to questions 1, 2 and 3, apart from a peripheral examination of the castle site (particularly in the area of a possible barbican to the north-west of the castle) in advance of roadworks on London Road. Advantage should be taken, however, of any *ad hoc* opportunities that do arise.

Redevelopment may allow work on question 4, and answers to question 5 are already emerging from the small-scale excavations being undertaken. The results that have been obtained show that low cost excavation can be worth while and every encouragement, including financial, should be given for these to continue.