

# FURTHER NOTES ON DESERTED AND SHRUNKEN MEDIEVAL VILLAGES IN SUSSEX

by G. R. Burleigh

In a recent volume of the *Collections* the writer published a detailed gazetteer of Deserted Medieval Villages in East Sussex (abbreviated hereafter to D.M.V.s), together with some account of the sources used in identifying sites and dating the periods of their depopulation.<sup>1</sup> The purpose of the present essay is to supplement the previous article with a few further notes on sites in East Sussex (one or two not being previously mentioned in print), drawing in part on Dr. P. F. Brandon's unpublished work,<sup>2</sup> as well as with a brief history of the study of D.M.V.s in the county. The latter is a subject of some interest when it is realised the study dates back to the early years of the Sussex Archaeological Society, although until recently no comprehensive survey had been undertaken.<sup>3</sup> This history is partly based on Mr. J. G. Hurst's account of the development of the subject in England.<sup>4</sup> However, the present writer feels Mr. Hurst did not do justice to the early work in Sussex, and an attempt is made to present a fuller picture here.

## THE STUDY OF DESERTED MEDIEVAL VILLAGES IN SUSSEX

The earliest recorded mention of village earthworks in Sussex was in September, 1848 when the Rev. A. Hussey recognised the earthworks of former houses at Kingston-by-Ferring, near the presumed site of the medieval church. The Rev. Hussey began his perambulations in the autumn of 1844 and his 'compilation' was published eight years later.<sup>5</sup> About the year 1850 Hussey noted two further Sussex deserted sites. Of the hamlet of Balmer in the parish of Falmer he wrote the 'ground north-west from the hamlet presents plain marks of former edifices'; while near Piddinghoe he recognised parch marks of buried walls by the 'withered herbage' in hot, dry weather, which he interpreted as evidence for an 'extensive settlement', although he also thought the site could be a Roman villa.<sup>6</sup>

Within a few years of Hussey's observations, the famous Sussex antiquary M. A. Lower, in the company of H. Simmons, E. Turner, and a Mr. Figg, recorded the extensive earthworks of the deserted village of Chinting near Seaford, although Lower suggested the remains were those of an abortive new town of Seaford.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> G. R. Burleigh, "An introduction to deserted medieval villages in east Sussex," *Sussex Archaeological Collections* (abbreviated hereafter to *S.A.C.*), vol. 111 (1973), pp. 45-83.

<sup>2</sup> I am very grateful to Dr. Brandon who gave his permission for me to quote from his unpublished Ph.D. thesis, *The commonlands and wastes of Sussex* (University of London, 1963).

<sup>3</sup> Professor W. G. Hoskins wrote in connection with his pioneer work on deserted villages in Leics. "that such sites had been known for years . . . but they had never been systematically written up" (*Fieldwork in local history* (1967), p. 56). Sussex sites too have long been known but as M. A. Lower wrote in connection with the "lost" sites of Northeye and

Hydneys, "As 'ruinae etiam periere,' few readers will feel deeply interested in the matter." (*The history of Sussex*, vol. 1, 1870, p. 234). One trusts that the attitude of present readers has changed.

<sup>4</sup> M. W. Beresford and J. G. Hurst, *Deserted medieval villages* (1971), pp. 80-84.

<sup>5</sup> A. Hussey, *Notes on the churches in the counties of Kent, Sussex and Surrey* (1852), p. 246.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 209 and 268. For the site at Piddinghoe see below (p. 67), where I suggest the earthworks represent no more than a homestead.

<sup>7</sup> M. A. Lower, "Memorials of the town, parish and cinque port of Seaford, historical and antiquarian," *S.A.C.*, vol. 7 (1854), p. 84.

Not long after in the summer of 1859, Mr. T. Ross of Hastings visited the site of Northeye on Hooe Level, where he identified buildings of the former port by parch marks in the way that Hussey had done a decade previously.<sup>1</sup> While at Northeye Ross sketched the ruins of the thirteenth century chapel. This visit was in turn followed in the early 1860s by the fieldwork of Messrs. Lowe, Lower and Turner who tracked down the likely site of the lost Hydneye on Willingdon Level from field names, and subsequently identified the earthworks which still existed at that time.<sup>2</sup> Thomas Ross appears again in connection with D.M.V.s as the excavator of the medieval chapel at Bulverhythe in 1861. William Durrant Cooper, who noted Ross's excavation and published a plan of the chapel, clearly realised Bulverhythe was once a larger settlement.<sup>3</sup> It was Cooper too who apparently recognised earthworks of a deserted village at Parham in West Sussex about the year 1870.<sup>4</sup>

There followed a break in the recording of Sussex desertions until the end of the century, when Mr. P. M. Johnston remarked on the considerable earthworks at Ford near Arundel, concluding that it 'must have been a place of much greater population and importance in the Middle Ages than today'.<sup>5</sup> The following year (1901) Johnston published a paper on Norden's map of Atherington in which he mentions the destruction of villages by coastal erosion at Atherington, Cudlow, Kingston-by-Ferring, Middleton, and other Sussex sites.<sup>6</sup>

Mr. J. G. Hurst claimed that the eminent Sussex antiquary A. Hadrian Allcroft was the first to describe a Midland D.M.V. in his *Earthwork of England* (1908).<sup>7</sup> However, this distinction must surely go to the earliest county historian of Northants., John Bridges, writing c. 1720.<sup>8</sup> What Hurst does not mention is that Allcroft also suggested three Sussex desertions: Botolphs, Coombes, and Lullington.<sup>9</sup> In 1916 the Rev. W. Budgen published the results of his 1913 excavation on the medieval church of Exceat (including a long parish and manorial history of the lost village), in one of the lengthiest articles on a D.M.V. published anywhere in the country at that time.<sup>10</sup>

Work during the next twenty years or so included the mention of earthworks at several sites in A. H. Allcroft's book *Downland Pathways* (1924);<sup>11</sup> the observation of medieval wells at Middleton in the winter of 1923-4;<sup>12</sup> the observation of medieval remains at Bulverhythe in 1925,<sup>13</sup> and the excavation at the chapel there in 1929;<sup>14</sup> the publication by the Ordnance Survey

<sup>1</sup> E. Turner, "The lost towns of Northeye and Hydneye," *S.A.C.*, vol. 19 (1867), pp. 1-35; G. R. Burleigh, "An introduction to deserted medieval villages in East Sussex," *S.A.C.*, vol. 111 (1973), p. 72.

<sup>2</sup> E. Turner, loc. cit.; G. R. Burleigh, loc. cit., p. 69.

<sup>3</sup> W. D. Cooper, "Notices of Hastings and its municipal rights," *S.A.C.*, vol. 14 (1862), pp. 117-18; G. R. Burleigh, op. cit. (in note 1), p. 65. In fact it was commonly known that Bulverhythe was a decayed port, e.g. see *A survey of the coast of Sussex*, ed. M. A. Lower (1870), p. 5.

<sup>4</sup> W. D. Cooper, "Parham," *S.A.C.*, vol. 25 (1873), p. 3.

<sup>5</sup> P. M. Johnston, "Ford and its church," *S.A.C.*, vol. 43 (1900), pp. 106, 110-12.

<sup>6</sup> P. M. Johnston, "Notes on an early map of Atherington Manor," *S.A.C.*, vol. 44 (1901), pp. 147-66.

<sup>7</sup> M. W. Beresford and J. G. Hurst, op. cit. (in note 4, p. 61), p. 82; A. H. Allcroft, *Earthwork of England* (1908), pp. 551-3.

<sup>8</sup> J. Bridges, *History and Antiquities of Northamptonshire* (ed. of 1791), references quoted by Beresford in M. W. Beresford and J. G. Hurst, op. cit., pp. 49-50.

<sup>9</sup> A. H. Allcroft, op. cit. (in note 7), p. 553.

<sup>10</sup> W. Budgen, "Exceate and its parish church," *S.A.C.*, vol. 58 (1916), pp. 138-71; G. R. Burleigh, op. cit., p. 66.

<sup>11</sup> Allcroft recorded the earthworks at Arlington, Balmer, and Berwick (pp. 61, 118, and 60 respectively), and showed that he was aware of depopulation at Bottolphs (p. 159), Lullington (p. 57), Pyecombe (p. 121), and Warningcamp (p. 217). In addition he mentioned the earthworks at Ford in his work *Waters of Arun* (1930), p. 89.

<sup>12</sup> Note in *S.A.C.*, vol. 66 (1925), pp. 237-8.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 240.

<sup>14</sup> Notes in *S.A.C.*, vol. 71 (1930), p. 263 and in *S.A.C.*, vol. 72 (1931), p. 277.

of plans of the Northeye and Barnhorne earthworks;<sup>1</sup> the trial excavation at Hydneye in 1930;<sup>2</sup> the publication of A. A. Evans' book *On Foot in Sussex* (1933) which included a chapter on Cudlow; Winbolt's recording of 'great quantities' of medieval pottery at the shrunken village of Hardham when a road was cut through probable house-sites;<sup>3</sup> W. D. Peckham's article on the lost parishes of Cudlow and Ilesham;<sup>4</sup> and, finally, the unpublished excavations at Northeye by Normandale Preparatory School, Bexhill, in 1938.<sup>5</sup>

During the war Curwen published his observations of medieval burials and rubbish pits at Sutton,<sup>6</sup> and this was followed in 1950 by the excavations of Messrs. N. E. S. Norris and E. F. Hockings at Balsdean.<sup>7</sup> In 1952-54 E. W. Holden and J. G. Hurst were excavating at Hangleton, the first scientific excavations on medieval house sites in a Sussex deserted village.<sup>8</sup> At the same time, in 1952, H. J. Sargent and W. C. Woodhouse dug at the site of Northeye, but unfortunately the results were again not published.<sup>9</sup> From 1953-55 Mr. A. Barr-Hamilton revealed the complex phases of the Saxon and medieval church at Upper Barpham;<sup>10</sup> while in 1957 Holden was at Old Erringham near Shoreham uncovering medieval structures there.<sup>11</sup>

In the early 1950s, the period when deep ploughing was becoming wide-spread, Mr. E. W. Holden did a certain amount of fieldwork on deserted settlements, noting a number of sites particularly in west Sussex, and with Graville planning the earthworks at Cobden (or Muntham as it is sometimes known). In 1958 Dr. G. J. Copley's book *An Archaeology of South-East England* was published which included a distribution map of deserted and shrunken settlements (p. 182), and referred to a number of known and probable sites in the county gazetteer for Sussex (pp. 297-311).<sup>12</sup>

A list of Sussex D.M.V.s appeared in the 8th Annual Report of the Deserted Medieval Village Research Group (1960), a revised version of which was compiled two years later by E. W. Holden.<sup>13</sup> It was in 1962 also that Richard Bradley recorded medieval structures at Racton,<sup>14</sup> while in 1959 Mr. D. J. Pannett had surveyed the earthworks at Balmer, first observed by the Rev. Hussey more than a century previously.

In 1963 Dr. P. F. Brandon completed his unpublished University of London Ph.D. thesis in which he noted a number of Sussex D.M.V.s<sup>15</sup> A. Barr-Hamilton was excavating the church of another probable deserted village in 1965, this time at Lullington.<sup>16</sup> Fieldwork was continued in the 1960s by a handful of workers, particularly Messrs. D. Haselgrove, E. W. Holden, and J.

<sup>1</sup> 1928 revision to Six-Inch sheet LXX N.W.; a plan of the earthworks at Hydneye had already appeared on the 1st. ed. of O.S. Six-Inch sheet LXXX N.W. (1879-80).

<sup>2</sup> Note in *S.A.C.*, vol. 72 (1931), p. 277.

<sup>3</sup> Note in *Sussex Notes and Queries* (abbreviated hereafter to *S.N.Q.*), vol. 6 (1937), p. 148.

<sup>4</sup> W. D. Peckham, "The lost parishes of Cudlow and Ilesham," *S.N.Q.*, vol. 6 (1936), pp. 109-12.

<sup>5</sup> Note by L. Beesley in *The Norman*, 1939 (magazine of Normandale Preparatory School, Bexhill); G. R. Burleigh, op. cit., p. 72.

<sup>6</sup> *S.N.Q.*, 10 (1944-45), p. 67.

<sup>7</sup> N. E. S. Norris and E. F. Hockings, "Excavations at Balsdean chapel, Rottingdean," *S.A.C.*, vol. 91, (1953), pp. 53-68.

<sup>8</sup> E. W. Holden, "Excavations at the deserted medieval village of Hangleton, Part I," *S.A.C.*, vol. 101 (1963), pp. 54-182; Part II by J. G. and D. G. Hurst, *S.A.C.*, vol. 102 (1964), pp. 94-142. In his re-

view of archaeological research in *Deserted medieval villages* (see note 4, p. 61), Mr. Hurst fails to mention under "Excavations 1939-1959," the important excavations at Hangleton (pp. 83-4).

<sup>9</sup> See *S.A.C.*, 103 (1965), p. 78.

<sup>10</sup> A. Barr-Hamilton, "The excavation of Bargham Church site, Upper Barpham, Angmering, Sussex," *S.A.C.*, vol. 99 (1961), pp. 38-65.

<sup>11</sup> Interim note in *Medieval Archaeology*, vol. 2 (1958), p. 194.

<sup>12</sup> M. W. Beresford had mentioned a number of Sussex sites in the county list published in his pioneer study, *Lost villages of England* (1954), pp. 387-8.

<sup>13</sup> E. W. Holden, "Deserted medieval villages," *S.N.Q.*, vol. 15 (1962), pp. 312-15.

<sup>14</sup> R. Bradley, "The deserted medieval village of Racton," *S.N.Q.*, vol. 16 (1967), pp. 328-29.

<sup>15</sup> See note 2, p. 61.

<sup>16</sup> A. Barr-Hamilton, "Excavations at Lullington Church," *S.A.C.*, vol. 108 (1970), pp. 1-22.



Hopkins, all operating in west Sussex. In the summer of 1969 the present writer commenced his research on Sussex D.M.V.s as an undergraduate at University College, Cardiff. Fieldwork is continuing especially by Messrs. C. Ainsworth, E. W. Holden, and C. F. Tebbutt, and the writer. Tebbutt has recently discussed two new sites in the Weald.<sup>1</sup>

#### FURTHER NOTES ON SELECTED SITES IN EAST SUSSEX

*Balmer. 183 TQ 359102.*

Burleigh, 1973, p. 63.<sup>2</sup> Reference has been made above to the Rev. Hussey's description of the site in the mid-nineteenth century.<sup>3</sup> In 1580 its downland was used by the demesne and tenant flock of Falmer.<sup>4</sup> Apparently the site was reduced to a single farm by the late sixteenth century. Dr. G. J. Copley wrote 'In the Middle Ages a monastery might force villagers to migrate to a new site in order to create sheep pasture (e.g. Balmer, Sussex),' but it is not clear upon what evidence Copley based this statement as far as Balmer is concerned.<sup>5</sup>

*Berwick. 183 TQ 521052. N. B. S.*

1316. 1327: 29, 102s. 5¼d. 1332: 23, 100s. 1¾d. 1334: 109s. 4d. 1524: 8 paid. 1676: 70. 1801: 170.<sup>6</sup>

*Berewice* was a settlement in 1086 but in Domesday Book is probably included in the royal manor of Beddingham or that of Eastbourne. This is yet another example of a shrunken settlement at the scarp-foot of the Downs. It is interesting that nearly every settlement from Beddingham in the west to Alfriston in the east shows at least some evidence of desertion. This group of settlements would repay further study.

The evidence for shrinkage at Berwick is archaeological. A. H. Allcroft seems to be the only person to have recorded the site previously. More than half a century ago he wrote: "... shrink-ing amongst its tall elms, is what is left of the village of Berwick . . . now dwindled to the barest anatomy of a village . . . under the heaving green of its grass fields you may see the steads of a whole multitude of buildings, big and little, that have vanished."<sup>7</sup> Allowing for some romantic exaggeration, unless more was visible in Allcroft's day than now, a visit to the site will confirm Allcroft's observations. In the field called the Tye, which seems to be the Sussex term for village green, and where at one time village fairs and games were held, are still to be seen the earthworks of a number of buildings as well as the possible line of a former street. The field is under grass and appears never to have been ploughed, and the earthworks are fairly well preserved by Sussex standards, comparable with the earthworks at nearby Arlington. In the larger field immediately to the east are possibly further earthworks which, however, appear to have been disturbed by drainage ditches.<sup>8</sup> The Tye was so called in 1721 when it was used for sheep pasture, and the site must have been deserted by that date.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>1</sup> C. F. Tebbutt, "Two newly-discovered medieval sites," *S.A.C.*, 110 (1972), pp. 31-6.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.* (note 1, p. 61). As I shall be making frequent references to this article in the text it has been thought best to use this form of reference.

<sup>3</sup> *Supra*, p. 61 and note 5, p. 61.

<sup>4</sup> *Sussex Record Society* (abbreviated hereafter to *S.R.S.*), vol. 34 (1928), p. 146; *S.A.T.* (manuscripts held by Sussex Archaeological Trust, Barbican House, Lewes), M.119; P. F. Brandon, *op. cit.* (in note 2, p. 61), p. 361.

<sup>5</sup> G. J. Copley, *An archaeology of South-East England* (1958), p. 196.

<sup>6</sup> For an explanation of the system of abbreviations used here the reader is referred to G. R. Burleigh, *op. cit.* (in note 1, p. 61), pp. 60-61.

<sup>7</sup> A. H. Allcroft, *Downland pathways* (1924), pp. 59-60.

<sup>8</sup> A building appears in the extreme north-west corner of this field on Yeakell's and Gardner's map of Sussex, 1778-83 (West Sussex Record Office, P.M. 48).

<sup>9</sup> G. M. Cooper, "Berwick parochial records," *S.A.C.*, vol. 6 (1853), p. 241.

*Birling.* 183 TV 557969. N. (*Not visited*).

1296: 10, 160s. 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. 1316. 1332: 16, 66s. 8d. 1334: 87s.  $\frac{1}{4}$ d.

Now a farm in Eastdean. The site is mentioned in the writer's B.A. thesis.<sup>1</sup> There was a medieval chapel here, and from 1267 a weekly market was held on Tuesdays, and a yearly fair on the vigil, feast and morrow of SS. Simon and Jude (27th-29th October).<sup>2</sup> It is possible that Eastdean and Friston were assessed with Birling for the fourteenth century subsidies noted above.

*Bishopstone.* 183 TQ 472010. C. S.

1086: 39. 1316. 1327: 12, 15s. 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. 1332: 8s. 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. 1334: 22s. 0d. 1603: 80.

Burleigh, 1973, p. 79. The number of landholders was reduced from 21 in 1591 to 14 in 1685, of whom only four held land at Bishopstone itself and the remainder at Norton (TQ 471019).<sup>3</sup>

*Charlston.* 183 TQ 521007. (*Not visited*).

In Westdean. A small Domesday vill with six villeins, eight bordars, and three serfs, but only a farm by 1500.<sup>4</sup> In 1296 the manor was assessed under the vill of Exceat for 26s. 8d.

*Charleston.* 183 TQ 491069. (*Not visited*).

In West Firle. Burleigh, 1973, p. 79. Another small Domesday vill with three villeins and three bordars which was merely a farm by 1614.<sup>5</sup> It may always have been small.

*Chinting.* 183 TV 506986. III. C.

1296 (with Sutton): 48, 195s. 4 $\frac{1}{4}$ d. 1316. 1327: 21, 57s. 6d. 1332: 20, 49s. 8 $\frac{1}{4}$ d. 1334: 58s. 6d.

Now a farm in Seaford. There was a medieval chapel here. Although not mentioned in my previous article, the site was discussed in my unpublished Cardiff dissertation.<sup>6</sup> Chinting retained its own common fields in the fifteenth century,<sup>7</sup> but a subsidy of 1590 shows only four persons assessed here and within the liberty of Seaford,<sup>8</sup> and it seems fairly certain that by this date Chinting was no more than a farm. Dr. Brandon too concluded that Chinting was probably a large farm by the early seventeenth century.<sup>9</sup> In my previous article it was suggested the earthworks of "Poyning's Town" were those of an abortive new town of Seaford (following the idea of M. A. Lower),<sup>10</sup> but they are more likely to represent the site of the medieval village of Chinting.

*Endlewick.* 183 TQ 547061.

In Wilmington. Burleigh, 1971, p. 30. There is enough documentary evidence to show that a manor of this name existed from the late thirteenth century if not earlier. The name occurs in connection with a bailiwick including 24 manors which, even as late as 1862, paid "Endleweek Rents."<sup>11</sup> Cooper said that a piece of land on Moor's Hill showed "appearances of a mansion once having stood there," and Stenton and Mawer maintained that the "remains of banks of a habitation-site were still visible."<sup>12</sup> Dr. Copley followed the latter authors in saying

<sup>1</sup> G. R. Burleigh, *Deserted medieval villages in East Sussex*, unpubl. thesis, Dept. of Archaeology, University College, Cardiff, 1971. I refer to this in the text hereafter as Burleigh, 1971.

<sup>2</sup> *Cal. Charter Rolls*, 51 Henry III (1906), p. 74.

<sup>3</sup> B. M. Add. MS. 33184; P. F. Brandon, op. cit. (in note 2, p. 61), pp. 363-4.

<sup>4</sup> P. F. Brandon, op. cit. (note 2, p. 61), p. 366.

<sup>5</sup> S.A.T. G4/77; P. F. Brandon, op. cit. (note 2, p. 61), p. 356.

<sup>6</sup> See note 1.

<sup>7</sup> East Sussex Record Office (abbreviated hereafter to E.S.R.O.), Add. MS. 660, f. 53.

<sup>8</sup> M. A. Lower, "Further memorials of Seaford," *S.A.C.*, vol. 17 (1865), pp. 141-63.

<sup>9</sup> P. F. Brandon, op. cit. (note 2, p. 61), p. 364.

<sup>10</sup> G. R. Burleigh, op. cit. (note 1, p. 61), pp. 73-74.

<sup>11</sup> *S.A.C.*, 14 (1862), p. 263.

<sup>12</sup> G. M. Cooper, "Illustrations of Wilmington priory and church," *S.A.C.*, vol. 4 (1851), p. 64; A. Mawer and F. M. Stenton, *The place names of Sussex* (1930), part 2, p. 48.

earthworks survived, and suggested they could represent a deserted hamlet.<sup>1</sup> There is no real evidence that Endlewick was ever more than a manor.

*Exceat. 183 TV 523988.*

Burleigh, 1973, p. 66. In 1404 one John Wolf acquired five tenements here. This would suggest enclosure was already underway in the parish. Although "common fields" are mentioned in 1521 they were not occupied by small proprietors, for by 1428 only one householder was resident in the parish, although there were two houses inhabited in 1460.<sup>2</sup> In 1528 (when Exceat parish formally united to Westdean) it was said that "from time unremembered Excete parish chrrch is laid even with the ground and the site desecrated" (the church was said to be in ruins by 1460 in fact), "and that owing to the small number of inhabitants, there is no prospect of rebuilding it . . ." Roger Blythe was the head of the only household then resident in the parish.<sup>3</sup>

*Hydneye. 183 TQ 609028.*

Burleigh, 1973, p. 69. The medieval church referred to under Hydneye in my previous article is in fact the chapel of St. Mary-of-the-Sea at Bulverhythe. Hydneye did not possess a church.

*Itford. 183 TQ 434055. (Not visited).*

In Beddingham. "This was a small Domesday vill," with four villeins and two serfs, "and had common fields in the fourteenth century, but it was a farm by the 16th century."<sup>4</sup>

*Lullington. 183 TQ 528031.*

Burleigh, 1973, pp. 70-71. As mentioned above, Hadrian Allcroft suggested Lullington could be a deserted village, and he referred to the reduced size of the church, remarking that only the one house of the men who built the church remained, "and the tell-tale pottery which litters the surrounding fields."<sup>5</sup> All the tenants' arable lay in tenantry. It was a very small manor with 200 acres of arable, 50 acres of meadow, and 500 acres of sheepdown. The demesne farm was in severalty from the early fifteenth century, and, according to Dr. Brandon, the church was sited in the midst of the common fields.<sup>6</sup>

*Newtimber. 182 TQ 271134.*

Burleigh, 1973, p. 71. In my earlier paper I said the date of desertion of this village was uncertain, though it was suggested depopulation may have occurred between 1603 and 1621 on the evidence of the ecclesiastical returns for the former year and of the Lay Subsidy in the latter year. As was emphasized in that paper, seventeenth century subsidies are notorious for the amount of evasion. It would seem a terrier of 1675 mentions a "tennants laine" suggesting a common field system still in operation.<sup>7</sup> Thus the 12 houses recorded by the Hearth Tax and the 47 parishioners of the 1676 religious census could indicate a nucleated village survived into the later seventeenth century or after. The emparkment here apparently took place after 1675, and this could be the clue to the depopulation of a nucleated village by the church.

<sup>1</sup> G. J. Copley, *op. cit.* (note 5, p. 64), p. 310; since writing this I have visited the Moor's Hill area in Wilmington parish, but have been unable to locate any earthworks. Large parts of the area have long been ploughed and it seems likely the earthworks no longer exist.

<sup>2</sup> S.A.T. M.108 and M.116; P. F. Brandon, *op. cit.* (note 2, p. 61), p. 365.

<sup>3</sup> *S.R.S.*, vol. 52 (1952), p. 24. At the time it was also suggested that "In future all parishioners of

Excett shall be parishioners of Westden . . . till Excet church is rebuilt"

<sup>4</sup> P.R.O. C. 135/47; P. F. Brandon, *op. cit.* (note 2, p. 61), p. 356.

<sup>5</sup> A. H. Allcroft, *op. cit.* (note 7, p. 62), p. 57.

<sup>6</sup> P.R.O. SC6/1025/2, et seq.; P. F. Brandon, *op. cit.* (in note 2, p. 61), p. 365.

<sup>7</sup> P. F. Brandon, *op. cit.* (note 2, p. 61), p. 353.



*Pangdean.* 182 TQ 294117.

Burleigh, 1973, pp. 72-3. A charter of c. 1095 mentions the "church of *Pingedan*." Dr. Brandon believed Pangdean to be a hamlet with its own fields.<sup>1</sup>

*Piddinghoe.* 183 TQ 431033.

The Lydds. Burleigh, 1971, p. 60. As mentioned above, the Rev. Hussey recognised earthworks here as early as c. 1850, which he thought were of an "extensive settlement."<sup>2</sup> The site has been observed by more recent fieldworkers, and both Professor Beresford and Dr. Copley record the site as a possible deserted village or hamlet.<sup>3</sup> The site has really nothing of the character of a nucleated settlement, consisting of a massive embanked platform, at least 100m. N-S x 70m. E-W, and associated with a sunken track to the W, part of the old Lewes to Newhaven road, and strip lynchets to the N and NE. Within the platform, at its N end, are slight irregularities and disturbances on the ground, possibly indicating the site of buildings. The Lydds is most probably a medieval homestead site, although there is no positive evidence for its date.

*Pyecombe.* 182 TQ 293126.

Burleigh, 1973, p. 75. The Victoria County History contains the following entry for this village: "The medieval village may have been . . . near the point where the church now stands . . . Pyecombe, however, appears to have declined towards the end of the medieval period, and there is some indication that after the fifteenth century the village was revived a quarter of a mile westwards of the earlier site."<sup>4</sup> However, the evidence of the parish registers is not to be denied, and it may still be claimed migration took place in 1603 as the result of a visitation of the plague.

*Southerham.* 183 TQ 427094. (*Not visited*).

Now a farm in South Malling. Dr. Brandon recorded that there were six small customary landholders and cottagers here at one time.<sup>5</sup> Lower said that there was chapel here "which had long been occupied as a cottage and was destroyed upwards of 30 years since."<sup>6</sup>

*South Heighton.* 183 TQ 451028.

1296 (with Denton and East Blatchington): 32, 237s. 11¼d. 1327: 15, 33s. 4¼d. 1332: 14, 12s. 2¾d. 1334: 36s. 0d.

Burleigh, 1973, p. 79. In 1086 there were two villeins and three bordars here. The whole parish was in common fields, and there were 12 small landholders in 1623, but only four by 1753.<sup>7</sup> The church was badly damaged by lightning in 1769, and the parishioners were apparently so few and poor that the structure was not repaired, and a century later was a total ruin.<sup>8</sup>

*Sutton.* 183 TV 494997.

Burleigh, 1973, p. 75. In 1382, when the manor of Sutton-Sandore was held by Michelham Priory, it comprised the demesne farm with pasture for 1000 sheep, several shepherds, and six customary tenants each holding one wist of land.<sup>9</sup> By January 1404 it was found that there were "many notable defects in the chancel of the church, houses, buildings and closes" belonging to

<sup>1</sup> P. F. Brandon, op. cit. (note 2, p. 61), p. 361; Victoria County History, *Sussex*, vol. 7 (1940), p. 214 considers church of *Pingedan* should be identified with Pyecombe church.

<sup>2</sup> A. Hussey, op. cit. (note 5, p. 61), p. 268.

<sup>3</sup> M. W. Beresford, op. cit. (note 12, p. 63), p. 388; G. J. Copley, op. cit. (in note 5, p. 64), p. 305. Other workers too have been aware of this site, e.g. A. H. Allcroft, op. cit. (in note 7, p. 64), p. 18. I wish to thank Mr. E. W. Holden, F.S.A., for making available to me his notes on The Lydds.

<sup>4</sup> V.C.H., *Sussex*, vol. 7 (1940), p. 212.

<sup>5</sup> S.A.T. G/45/15; P. F. Brandon, op. cit. (note 2, p. 61), p. 355.

<sup>6</sup> M. A. Lower, op. cit. (note 3, p. 61), vol. 2, p. 173.

<sup>7</sup> S.R.S., vol. 34 (1928), p. 223; S.A.T. Woolgar MSS.; P. F. Brandon, op. cit. (note 2, p. 61), p. 363.

<sup>8</sup> M. A. Lower, op. cit. (note 3, p. 61), vol. 2.

<sup>9</sup> S.A.T. M.369.

Sutton prebend.<sup>1</sup> Sutton vicarage was united with Seaford vicarage on 4th June, 1509, together with the parishioners of Sutton, "if any." It was represented to Robert Sherburne, Bishop of Chichester, "that the parish church of Sutton next Seforde is utterly destroyed, and that the vicarage of ancient ordination has no parishioners, save for a few neatherds, and has long been void; the cure of the few inhabitants has been undertaken, time out of memory, by the Vicar of the neighbouring parish of Seford . . . Once a year . . . the Vicar shall say Mass in the chapel there, where the church once stood."<sup>2</sup> The last part of this quotation suggests perhaps that although the church was already largely in ruins, the chancel was maintained for services. Dr. Brandon wrote that by 1589 most of the estate was held as two moities and Sutton survived only as a large farm.<sup>3</sup>

*Tilton. 183 TQ 495067.*

Burleigh, 1973, p. 79. In Alciston. There were two Domesday estates each with two villeins; later Battle Abbey and Bayham Abbey had land here. The hamlet had its own common fields. In the reign of Edward I Battle Abbey had six tenants in the common field who had commons on the downs with the tenants of Bayham Abbey. "The Black Death seems to have been responsible for the virtual extinction of the common fields there for in 1433 all the land not in the lord's own hand, apart from an odd acre or two, was farmed by a single tenant."<sup>4</sup>

*Winton. 183 TQ 520038. S. (Not visited).*

In Alfriston. A single cottar is recorded here in 1086, but in the later middle ages there were 25 tenements, and in 1625 12 landholders still occupied the fields. Tenant land was almost all in common fields.<sup>5</sup>

## CONCLUSION

The purpose of this essay has been to give a brief account of the development of the study of Sussex D.M.V.s, and to add a few further remarks relating to known and suspected sites in East Sussex, both shrunken and deserted. For the material in this article, it will be obvious how much the writer's own work has relied on that of other researchers, particularly on the work of Dr. P. F. Brandon.

My two papers have simply presented the basic evidence, using a limited number of sources, for a large number of sites. The need now as stressed in my earlier article, is for local workers to study individual sites in much greater depth, using all the manuscript material available, coupled with a more thorough examination of local topography. A few more sites will probably come to light as a result of detailed archaeological fieldwork; it is only recently that the earthworks at Buckham and Buxted were recognised for instance. The documentary sources will provide a fuller picture, confirming periods of desertion and providing reasons for depopulation where these are not already known. Some of the more tentative sites will undoubtedly be rejected after a more complete examination of the evidence.

Ideally it would be of tremendous assistance to scholarship if a programme of excavations could study a few selected sites over a number of years. Failing that, all threatened sites should see at least small "rescue" excavations as and when necessary.

<sup>1</sup> S.R.S., vol. 8 (1908), p.81.

<sup>2</sup> S.R.S., vol. 52 (1952), pp. 46-7.

<sup>3</sup> P. F. Brandon, op. cit. (note 2, p. 61), p. 364; cf., map of Sutton-Sandore manor in 1624 (E.S.R.O. Seaford MS. 688) and G. R. Burleigh, op. cit. (note 1, p. 61), p. 75.

<sup>4</sup> P. F. Brandon, "Arable farming in a Sussex scarp-foot parish during the late middle ages," S.A.C., 100 (1962), p. 63.

<sup>5</sup> S.A.T. G/23/34; P. F. Brandon, op. cit. (in note 2, p. 61), p. 357.