

MIDDLESEX PARISHES AND THEIR ANTIQUITY

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A PARISH which has been recorded in the Domesday Survey of A.D. 1086 may be justly proud of its antiquity, and *a fortiori* when there is documentary evidence of its existence as a separate entity or Vill at an earlier date. This paper, now written by request, contains the subject of a Presidential address given by the writer at the Annual Meeting of the London and Middlesex Archaeological Society in February, 1933.

It is an "attempt to rediscover truths hitherto unappreciated," viz. that amongst the many Manors and Vills in existence in A.D. 1086, thirty-one of them had been mentioned by name in most of the forty-four known Charters relating to Middlesex, granted by Saxon kings and other notables during the eighth, ninth, and tenth centuries, and this information considerably extends their antiquity. The remaining Charters do not materially assist this investigation.

These ancient Middlesex Vills may be thus summarised. Thirty-one had been previously mentioned in Saxon Charters; thirty-four became known by name from the Domesday Survey, and of these, twelve have subsequently become merged in the adjoining areas, and so lost, though their names still linger on. But it is obvious that each of the thirty-four Domesday Vills, even if it is not named in any extant Charter, (though probably it had been in one long lost) must have become a distinct entity in Saxon times at some date anterior to A.D. 1086, or it would not have been included

in the Survey, which gives its annual value in the Confessor's reign, often adding the name of the previous Saxon owner.¹ With the exception of the twelve merged Villis, all the others are to-day continued and represented by mother Parishes.

As this paper is primarily intended to trace the antiquity of thirty-one Parishes into Saxon times, I have given in each case the date of the Charter, the name of its grantor, the object to be obtained, and the Domesday and present place-name. Where a Charter confirms or refers to an earlier but unknown one, an approximate year for it is set down, arrived at from the text of the later Charter. All these particulars will be found set out in No. 1 tabular form below.

In the Domesday Survey 2168 men are returned as employed in some form of agriculture, which is probably about the same number so employed on the fields during the Roman period. Adding 10 per cent. for those not so engaged, the total is, say, 2,400. Multiplying this figure by 3 to include wives and families, the total population is 7,200, or 26 to the square mile.

Having thus traced the antiquity of thirty-one Middlesex parishes into Saxon times with the aid of documentary and Domesday evidence, it will be of further interest to determine how many of them had an earlier existence, as I have shown elsewhere.² Villis mentioned in Saxon charters, like the Domesday record, must have been previously in existence as well-known places with defined bounds, or they could not have been mentioned by name in the charters. For instance, to what earlier date can the settlement of Twickenham be ascribed, for it was existing as a Vill in A.D. 704? Can its settlement date back to the Roman period?

Within the County area there is a considerable amount of evidence of the presence of extensive Romano-British habitation and rural economy. From a rescript early in the fourth century, it is known that *Tributarii* (tillers of the soil paying a land tax) as well as *Coloni* were

established in Britain, and, from a later source, that they were dwelling in the neighbourhood of Londinium. The need of corn supplies for the Empire was then great, the Romans were practical agriculturists, and the agriculturists in the Empire outnumbered, it is said, those who dwelt in the towns.

Besides many rural ways, three important military roads crossed the County, and to this day continue as main arteries. On these we may assume that the ordinary Posting Station was placed at Stanmore (*Sulloniacae*), and at Staines (*Pontes*); probably also at Brentford and Enfield, both rich in Roman remains. Various indications of Romano-British habitation have been brought to light in upwards of twenty-four parishes in Middlesex, consisting of pottery ware, pavements, lamps, burials, finds of coins, etc. In addition, there is the widespread evidence of Roman agrimensorial work, the laying out of settlements, and apportioning fields for open cultivation. Particulars as to all this work are to be found in the writings of Julius Frontinus (an eminent surveyor, one of the most capable Governors sent to Britain), and of other authorities (*Gromatici Veteres*).

This ancient rural delimitation is borne out by surviving landmarks, including mounds, stones, and equal divisions of the land; also from Parish or mother churches situated by the cross survey lines, indicating the sites of ancient wayside chapels, in which rustics, having completed their allotted tasks, performed the customary rites. In forty-seven Middlesex parishes, and in nineteen of the thirty-one Saxon Charter parishes, the mother church marks the site of the ancient village *compitum*, and whenever any evidence of Romano-British life has been found in a parish, this is indicated by the letter R on the tabular form.

Sidelights are thrown on the continuance of Roman rural administration during Saxon times from—

- (1) the similarity of the allotment system in open field cultivation;

- (2) the decimal method of assessment placed upon the Vills which is to be found in upwards of thirty-seven instances, and in twelve of the Vills under consideration;
- (3) the Roman *decuria*, a squad of ten workers with one of the number as *decurio*, or head man. This is known to have been in operation in Britain, and is in affinity with the Saxon tything, and the frank-pledge, both having the same group number with one as foreman.

Before concluding this paper, a peep into the dim past of prehistoric times may not be amiss, since in no less than thirty parishes of Middlesex, stone implements have been found, and various articles of the Bronze Age in fifteen, and it is worthy of notice that in the thirty-one Saxon Charter parishes, stone implements have been discovered in eleven of them, and bronze articles in twelve,³ while in six parishes specimens of both kinds have been found.

It is almost impossible now to determine whether any continuity of village life of a permanent nature has existed in these parishes from that remote age to the present time, though it is stated that factories for fashioning stone implements have been found in Acton and Edmonton.

Herodian mentions that the British, having enclosed an *ample space with felled trees*, here they make themselves huts and lodge their cattle, though not for long continuance. Caesar describes their huts as mean habitations constructed for the most part of reeds and wood. The description "ample space" has much the same meaning as the Saxon "ton," a home of settlers in a *defined locality*, with the further significance that the homestead with the collection of husbandmen's cottages was protected by a *fence or hedge* within which the *cattle of the vill might also be herded*.

It is just possible that a few British enclosures of this description, being upon the lines of the Roman Survey of the County area, may have been adopted by the *Agrimensores* (field measurers), otherwise the *contributi* (natives) mostly exchanged their scattered plots for regular allotments in the cultivated common fields of the new Romano-British settlements.

NOTES.

¹ "A Vill was a tract of territory defined by well-known marks and bounds, and bore a distinctive name. It contained an organised community and was an administrative and fiscal unit of a Hundred."

² *Middlesex in British, Roman and Saxon times*, Methuen.

³ Both these are marked P in the Table I.

MIDDLESEX.

No. 1.

THIRTY-ONE MANORS AND VILLS MENTIONED IN SAXON CHARTERS.

Present name of Parish.	The Prehistoric age B.C.	Roman period 70-410 A.D.	In Saxon Times A.D.		Domesday name of Parish.
Westminster	—	R	Prior to 693	<i>The VIIIth Century.</i> Agelric: Bp of Dorchester. Grant of land at Battersea to St. Peters.	Villa ubi sedet acclesia St. Petri.
Twickenham	P	R	704	Westminster Charter. Charter by Coenred King of Mercia and Suebred King of E. Saxons.	Within Gestelesworde.
Brentford	P	R	705	Grant of land in. B. 111.* Letter of Wadhre Bp as to a meeting to settle a dispute between Wessex and Essex. B. 115.	Part of Hanewelle.
Hampton	P	R	709	Charter by Coenred King of Mercia and Offa King of E. Anglia. Grant of land in. B. 125.	Hamntone.
Littleton	—	R	709	<i>Idem.</i>	Within Stanes.
Acton	P	R	716	Charter by Ethelbald King of Mercia. B. 134.	Within Fuleham.
Hamptonwick	—	—	716	<i>Idem.</i>	Hamntone.
Harrow	—	R	767	Charter by Offa King of Mercia. Grant of land at. B. 201.	Herges.
Chelsea	P	R	788-9	Offa King of Mercia holds Synods of the Church at. C.D.153.†	Chelched.
Feltham	P	R	788	<i>Circa.</i> Offa King of Mercia. Recital in Charter by King Edgar. A.D. 969. B. 1263 and 1228.	Feltenham.
Staines (Pontes)	P	R	788	<i>Idem.</i>	Stanes.
Ashford	P	—	788	<i>Idem.</i>	Exeforde.
Hayes	P	R	790	Charter by Offa King of Mercia. Grant of land in. B. 265.	Hesa.

* B. signifies *Cartularium Saxonium*, Birch, 1893.† C.D. signifies *Codex Dip. Aevi Saxonium*, Kemble, 1840.

Present name of Parish:	The Prehistoric age B.C.	Roman period 70-410 A.D.	In Saxon Times A.D.		Domesday name of Parish.
Edmonton	P	—	793	<i>The VIIIth Century (continued.)</i> <i>Circa.</i> Charter by Offa King of Mercia. Grant to St. Albans. Dugd. <i>Monas.</i> ii. 217.	Adelmetone.
Enfield	P	R	793	<i>Idem.</i>	Enefelde.
Stammore (<i>Sulloniacae</i>)	—	R	793	At a Synod at Chelsea Offa gave it to St. Albans. B. 267.	Stammere.
Wembley	—	—	825	<i>The IXth Century.</i> Wulfred Archb. as to land in Wembalea. B. 384.	Within Herges.
Harlington	P	R	831	Charter by Wiglaf King of Mercia. Reference to. B. 400.	Herdingtone.
Greenford	—	R	845	Werhard priest exchanges land in with Weremberht a theyn. B. 448.	Greneford.
Fulham	—	R	880	Danish army winter at. Mentioned in "The Chronicle."	Fuleham.
Laleham	—	R	905	<i>The Xth Century.</i> <i>Circa.</i> Wulnodus Abbot purchases from King Edward (Elder) A.D. 901-25. Confirmed by Edward the Confessor. C.D.812.	Leleham.
W. Drayton	P	R	924	King Athelstan confirms grant of land at. B. 737.	Draitone.
Neasden cum Willesden	—	R	924	<i>Idem.</i>	Wellesdon.
S. Newington	—	—	951	Theodret Bp Lond. refers to in his testament. B. 1008.	Newtone.
Hanwell	P	R	959	Archb. Dunstan. Recital of his grants. B. 1050.	Hanewelle.
Sunbury	P	R	959	<i>Idem.</i>	Suneberie.
Shepperton	—	R	959	<i>Idem.</i>	Scepertune.
Paddington	—	—	959	<i>Idem.</i>	—
Hendon	—	R	959	<i>Idem.</i>	Handone.
Hampstead	—	R	978	Charter by King Edgar. Grant of land in. B. 1309.	Hamestede.
Kingsbury	P	—	996	Aelfric. Grant of land at to St. Albans. C.D.716.	Cingesberie.

In A.D. 704 the County area is described as Provincia Middlesaxon.
 " " 959 " " " " " " Mediterranei Saxones.
 " " 996 " " " " " " Middel Saxones.
 " " 1066 the County was governed by three Chief men: Edward the King greets William the Bishop, Leofwin the Earl, and Aelfret the Sheriff friendly. C.D.855.

No. 2.

TWENTY-TWO DOMESDAY MANORS AND VILLS NOT MENTIONED
IN EXTANT SAXON CHARTERS.

Bedfont	..	..	..	..	Bedefunde.
Cowley	..	..	..	..	Covelie.
Cranford	..	..	..	..	Cranforde.
Haggerston	..	..	..	..	Hergotestane.
Hanworth	..	..	..	..	Haneworde.
Harefield	..	..	..	..	Herefelle.
Harmondsworth	..	..	..	..	Hermodesworde.
Hillingdon	..	..	..	..	Hillendone.
Holborn	..	..	..	..	Holeburne.
Hoxton	..	..	..	..	Hochestane.
Ickenham	..	..	..	..	Ticheham.
Isleworth	..	..	..	..	Gistelesworde.
Islington	..	..	..	..	Isendone.
Kensington	..	..	..	..	Chenesitun.
Northolt	..	..	..	..	Northala.
Mimms	..	..	..	..	Mimes.
Ruislip	..	..	..	..	Rislepe.
St. Pancras	..	..	..	..	St. Pancratius.
Stanwell	..	..	..	..	Stanwelle.
Stepney	..	..	..	..	Stebenhede.
Tottenham	..	..	..	..	Toteham.
Twyford	..	..	..	..	Tueverde.

No. 3.

TWELVE DOMESDAY AND FIVE CHARTER VILLS SUBSEQUENTLY
MERGED IN ADJOINING PLACES.

Domesday.					
Charlton	..	..	..	..	Cerdentone.
Colham.	Also in Charter A.D. 831	..	..	..	Coleham
Dawley	..	..	..	..	Dallega.
Ebury	..	..	..	..	Eia.
Hatton	..	..	..	..	Haitone
Harlesden	..	..	..	..	Herulvestane.
Kempton	..	..	..	..	Chenetone.
Lisson Grove	..	..	..	..	Lilestone.
Rugmere	..	..	..	..	Rugemere.
Tottenham	..	..	..	..	Totehele.
Tollington	..	..	..	..	Tolentone.
Tyburne	..	..	..	..	Tiburne.
Saxon.					
Botwell	..	..	..	..	Botewaelle.
Halliford	..	..	..	..	Halgeförd.
Preston	..	..	..	..	Preostantum.
Roxeth	..	..	..	..	Hroces Seath.
Yedding	..	..	..	..	Geddings.