

SLAVERY IN THE LONDON AREA IN 1086

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SUMMARY

At a time when the abolition of the British slave trade in 1807 is being commemorated, it is appropriate to remember that in the late 11th century, around one-tenth of the population of England were counted as slaves, effectively the chattels of their manorial lords. While the horrors of the transatlantic slave ships and the inhuman treatment meted out on the plantations are probably far worse than anything experienced by slaves in the London area, those who form the subject of this paper were denied many basic freedoms. After a brief review of the pre-Conquest evidence for slavery in the area, the evidence of Domesday Book is used to examine the numbers, distribution, and possible employment of slaves around London. This sole source of hard evidence is timely, as slavery was a disappearing institution by then, after surviving since the prehistoric period. Within a few generations, slavery had gone, although the serfdom which replaced it could be equally harsh and restrictive for a large number of peasant families.

INTRODUCTION

Domesday Book is a source of unique value to local historians, although some might argue that it is uniquely problematic, yielding up its secrets reluctantly in many cases. Even after decades of statistical manipulation, much of what we might want to know about English society and its urban and agrarian economy in the late 11th century is still not apparent in its folios. The aim of this paper is to examine the information on the unfree section of society in the Greater London area (see Fig 1). This includes the whole of historic Middlesex; the Hundreds of Brixton, Wallington, and Kingston in Surrey; the Kentish Hundreds of Greenwich, Bromley, Ruxley, and Lessness; and the Essex Hundreds of Becontree, Chafford, and Waltham. (Domesday Book provides no population data for metropolitan Hertfordshire.) Since the boundary of the former GLC area is

essentially an artificial construct based upon the local authority boundaries of 1963, it is sensible to include here those limited areas of the Hundreds listed above which lie outside its confines, as well as Spelthorne Hundred which transferred from Middlesex to Surrey in 1965. The principal effect of this is to bring Waltham Cross, Thurrock, Loughton, the Dittons, and Woodmansterne into the study area.

For a wide-ranging study of the whole question of slavery in Anglo-Saxon England, setting the institution in its historical and social context, readers are referred to David Pelteret's excellent book (Pelteret 1995). Also invaluable are the county surveys in Darby's *Domesday Geography* volumes (Darby 1952, ch V; 1962, chs III, VII, X).

A word first on terminology: in the Latin text of Domesday Book, the unfree are called *servi*, meaning 'slaves'. The word appears in later accounts of medieval English society as 'serf'. By that time, however, the institution of slavery had disappeared, and these were the lowest category of semi-free peasants, albeit heavily circumscribed in their ability to act independently of their lord's will. In 1086, there were still wholly unfree individuals in England, the last representatives of a tradition which dates back through Anglo-Saxon and Roman times into prehistory. Slavery seems to have disappeared soon after 1086, as the last remaining slaves were freed by their lords, probably for economic as much as religious or ethical reasons. This paper is not concerned with how slaves had been deprived of their freedom, whether through warfare, crime, deliberate submission to obtain food or shelter, or because their ancestors had been regarded as such. In these counties there is no evidence in Domesday Book or other surviving sources which could help to answer this question, such as manumissions, and neither do we have any names for local slaves (Pelteret 1995, ch 5; very

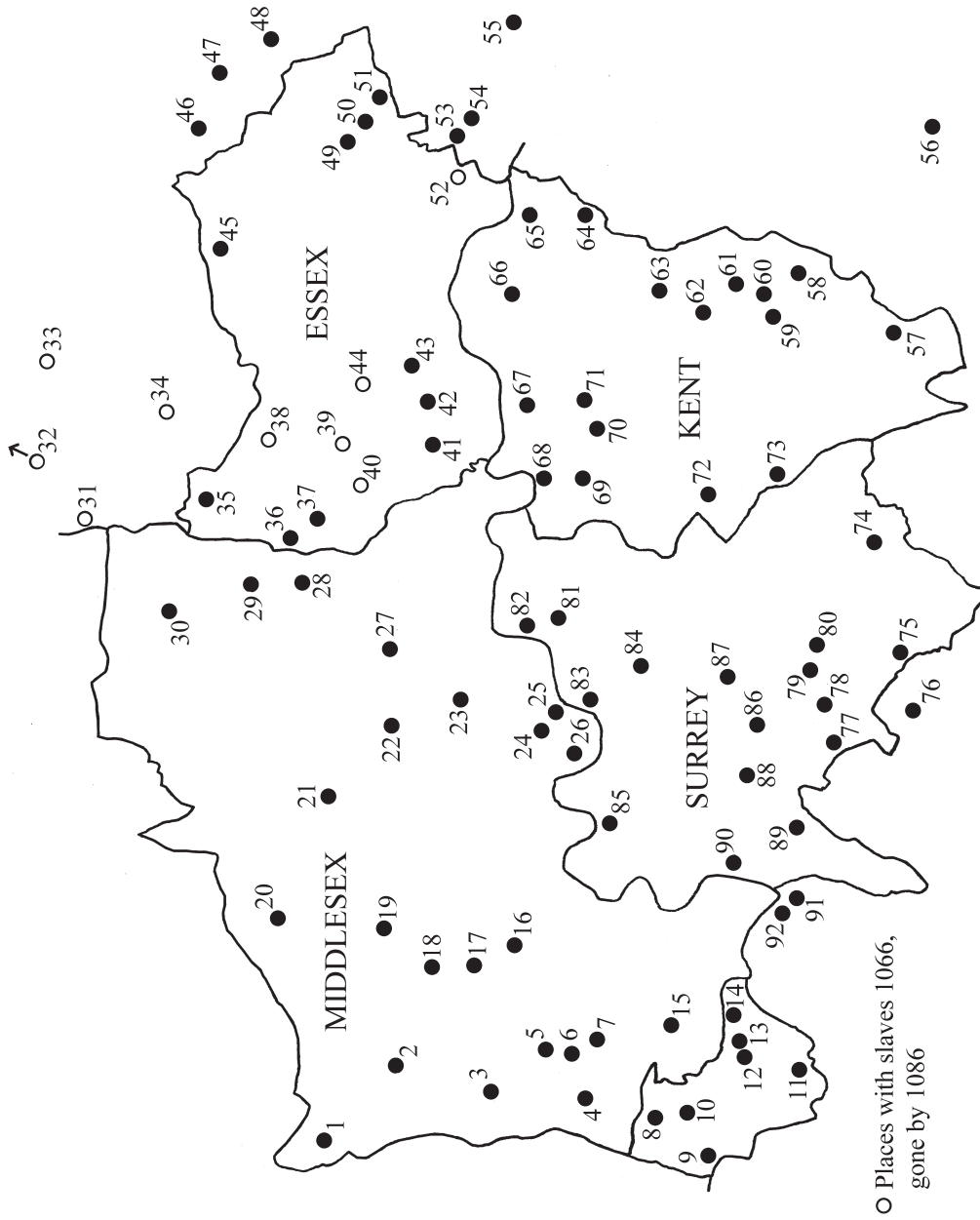


Fig 1. Slaves recorded in the London area in the 11th century

occasionally we have details of slaves' names, *eg* at Hatfield (Herts), *ibid*, 114–15, 180–1).

Old English was replete with words indicative of social status, and the usual word denoting slave was *þeow* (fem. *þeowen*), which is used to gloss Latin *servus*. The word *wealh* has a variety of meanings, from 'foreigner' through 'Welshman/Celt' to 'slave'. The institution of slavery in Anglo-Saxon England was not, apparently, like that which pertained in parts of the Roman Empire, nor in the Americas from the 17th century, where thousands of slaves were used to grow and process cash crops such as sugar and cotton, controlled by a small minority of free men. Rather, it seems from the available evidence to have consisted of relatively small numbers of men, women, and sometimes children, who were attached to the demesne holdings of estates and engaged in a variety of agricultural activities for their owners, who ranged from kings and churches to minor lay lords. The perpetual state of internecine warfare which characterised the post-Roman period must have ensured a steady supply of prisoners who could be enslaved, or, like the Northumbrian thegn Imma captured in battle in AD 679, sold to foreign slave traders (Sherley-Price 1955, 239–40 (ch IV.22)). There was apparently a vigorous slave trade with Ireland centred on Bristol as late as 1100. The Viking era after AD 800 would also have led to the enslavement of many individuals, although

the later Danelaw area was not typified by large numbers of slaves in 1086.

The law codes issued by kings from the 7th century contain passing references to slaves, including penalties for killing them, implying that they enjoyed rights, if not freedom. The so-called Ordinance of the bishops and reeves of the London district (VI Athelstan, of the AD 930s) is the first mention of the institution in the London area, with penalties for stealing slaves and for runaways (Whitelock 1979, 423–7). The use of the plural suggests that it applied to a broad area around the City. Wills are a better source of information on slavery in the area. That of King Alfred implies that some actually chose slavery, for security or to obtain food. The will of Theodred, Bishop of London dates from 942x51 (Whitelock 1930, no. 1). In it he refers to the manumission of slaves on estates at St Osyth and Tillingham in Essex. Men were also to be freed on the demesne land at 'London', *Wunemannedune* (possibly Wimbledon), and Sheen. Fulham, however, was to remain as it was when he acquired it, 'unless one wishes to free any of my men' ('*butan hwe mine manne fre wille*'). Despite the teaching of the Church on the subject of slavery, it is clear that those at the highest level were motivated as much by economic as humanitarian factors, and this was equally true a century and a half later, as Domesday Book shows. The noble, possibly royal,

Key to Fig 1 (opposite)

1. Harefield	21. Hendon	41. West Ham	61. St. Mary Cray	81. Kennington
2. Ruislip	22. Hampstead	42. East Ham	62. St. Pauls Cray	82. Lambeth
3. Colham	23. Lisson	43. Barking	63. Fooks Cray	83. Battersea
4. Harmondsworth	24. Kensington	44. Ilford	64. Crayford	84. Balham
5. Hayes	25. Chelsea	45. Havering	65. Howbury	85. Mortlake
6. Harlington	26. Fulham	46. South Weald	66. Lessness	86. Morden
7. Cranford	27. Tollington	47. Warley	67. Charlton	87. Mitcham
8. Stanwell	28. Tottenham	48. Childerditch	68. Greenwich	88. Malden
9. Staines	29. Edmonton	49. Upminster	69. Lewisham	89. Tolworth
10. West Bedfont	30. Enfield	50. Cranham	70. Lee	90. Kingston
11. Shepperton	31. Waltham Cross	51. Ockendon	71. Eltham	91. Long Ditton
12. Charlton	32. Nazeing	52. Wennington	72. Beckenham	92. Thames Ditton
13. Sunbury	33. Epping	53. Kenningtons	73. West Wickham	
14. Kempton	34. Loughton	54. Aveley	74. Sanderstead	
15. Feltham	35. Chingford	55. Grays/Thurrock	75. Woodmansterne	
16. Hanwell	36. Higham Hill	56. Seal	76. Banstead	
17. Greenford	37. Walthamstow	57. Cudham	77. Cheam	
18. Northolt	38. Woodford	58. Chelsfield	78. Sutton	
19. Harrow	39. Wanstead	59. Orpington	79. Carshalton	
20. Stanmore	40. Leyton	60. Sandlings	80. Wallington	

lady Æpelgifu made a will c.AD 990, which concerns estates in Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire, and Northamptonshire (Sawyer 1968, no. 1532). In it she is concerned in great detail with the slaves on these lands, freeing some and bequeathing others. A total of 70 individuals are freed, including 36 men and 18 women. It is clear that family groups could be counted as slaves, and although they were in a minority, this potentially affects the interpretation of the Domesday evidence (see below). A total of 60 slaves were left unfree, including 39 men and 16 women. In some cases, children were freed, while their parents were left unfree. Æpelgifu's will also reveals that it was not only agricultural workers who could be slaves, since we read of Edwin the priest (in flat contradiction of Church teaching), three women who were required to sing psalters in return for their freedom, a goldsmith, and a miller. In the reign of Edward the Confessor, Ulf freed 30 slaves on his estates at Aston and Oxhey (Herts), the latter just north-west of the London area (Whitelock 1979, 533–4). Another surviving reference to pre-Conquest slavery in London is contained in a lease of an estate at Beddington by Edward the Elder to the church of Winchester in 899x908, which included seven slaves (Darby 1977, 87–91). (Domesday Book indicates that six slaves were present in 1086.)

A serious problem which immediately confronts any study of slavery as depicted in Domesday Book is the extent to which recorded individuals in various categories represent additional household members. It is conventionally assumed that groups such as villeins, bordars, and cottars as enumerated do represent household heads, and must therefore be factored up by some multiplier to obtain the total population (Pelteret 1995, ch VII). By contrast, it is assumed that slaves are counted as individuals, even though there is evidence from the 10th century that whole families could be subject to this unfree status (Maitland 1897, 503–4). (Further confusion arises from the fact that families could apparently include both free and unfree individuals.) In order to avoid the question of what multiplier to use for slaves or other classes of tenant, all the data used here will be left in their recorded form, even if the effect is to over-state the proportion of slaves in the population. Many slaves in 1086 were employed within the lord's household on domestic duties and on tasks associated with demesne farming, notably ploughing, in numbers which suggest that they were counted individually.

On the other hand, this does not preclude them having families of their own, who may or may not have been co-resident. The disappearance of the institution of slavery in the period just after 1086 does not help with this problem, as both families and individuals could have been transformed into bondmen of some kind.

In his seminal study of Domesday Book and its data, Maitland estimated that there were some 25,000 slaves in England in 1086 (excluding the four northernmost counties and much of Lancashire), accounting for just over one-tenth of the enumerated population (Maitland 1897, 51–61). In some counties, slaves are identified with specific sources of wealth, but in the London area they usually appear at the end of the various categories of the population, with no apparent links to specific activities. For example, at Harmondsworth, on the estate of Holy Trinity Rouen, six slaves are listed after the cottars, smallholders with up to five acres of land, who depended for much of their livelihood on work on the demesne or the lands of major tenants (*Domesday Book* (Phillimore edition for each county; hereafter *DB*), vol i, fol 128d). At Kingston upon Thames, the two slaves are mentioned after the church, although that is rather oddly placed after the villeins and bordars (*DB* vol i, fol 30c). Not far from London, at Send in Surrey, the link is explicit, with the 15 slaves who form 27% of the population specifically said to be *in dominio*, along with four ploughs, two mills, and five fisheries (*DB* vol i, fol 36d).

11TH-CENTURY SLAVERY IN THE LONDON AREA

The London area has a lower-than-average proportion of slaves compared to many of the counties in South-East England, as shown below. (The small non-rural population is omitted from the calculations.)

Table 1. Proportion of slaves in selected counties in 1086

County	% Slaves
Buckinghamshire	16.6
Bedfordshire	13.4
Hertfordshire	13.0
Essex	12.9
Berkshire	12.9
Surrey	12.3
Kent	9.9
Greater London	7.4
Middlesex	5.3

London is of course omitted from Domesday Book, although it is not clear whether this had much impact on the level of slavery in rural Middlesex. It is clear that in this group of counties, Middlesex is significantly different from its neighbours with regard to slavery.

Table 2 sets out the principal population groups in Middlesex and the rest of the Metropolitan area in 1086. Data for 1066 are also available for Essex, which belonged to the East Anglian 'Circuit' of Domesday Book, in which much more detail is provided on population and live-stock, showing that the snapshot effect of the main survey can be misleading in its apparent simplicity.

Table 2. London region: principal rural population groups 1086 (%)

County	Villeins	Bordars	Cottars	Slaves
Middlesex	55.3	17.3	22.1	5.3
Surrey	54.2	27.9	8.9	9.0
Kent	67.1	20.3	1.2	11.5
Essex 1066	49.3	33.6	0	17.0
Essex 1086	45.2	48.1	0	6.8
Total 1086	54.4	27.7	10.5	7.4

In so far as they reflect actual population changes over the 20 years since the Conquest, the Essex data indicate clearly that slavery was a fast-declining institution, with a 60% reduction in the number of slaves, many of whom evidently becoming semi-free bordars; the latter group was experiencing dramatic increases at certain places, notably Barking, East and West Ham, Grays/Thurrock and Walthamstow, although Domesday Book offers no explanation for this. In all areas, villeins formed the core of the peasant population, accounting for 50–70% of those enumerated in Domesday Book. Apart from Kentish London, bordars and cottars account for a third of the population, although they are more significant in Middlesex, where the substantial class of cottars increases the proportion to 40%. The latter may be explained by the influence of London. It appears in a variety of counties that urban areas attracted a disproportionate number of bordars/cottars to their hinterlands (Dyer 1985). Many of the cottars in Middlesex may represent freed slaves, whereas those freed in Essex were counted among the bordars. The Domesday folios for Middlesex provide details of the size of holding for the various types of tenant, which show that

there was a wide spectrum of tenure among the villeins especially, ranging from a few acres up to one hide, or more than one hundred acres, representing great variation in the level of prosperity. Many of the 'higher' villeins will have employed labourers from less fortunate groups of tenants, who needed to supplement the meagre income obtained from their small holdings.

There was also some variation in the size of holdings between bordars and cottars. At Staines, for example, 36 bordars held three hides between them, approximately 10 acres apiece, whereas at Tottenham, 12 bordars held 5 acres each (*DB* vol i, fol 128b, c (Staines); 130d (Tottenham)). Also at Staines, 8 cottars held 29 acres, about 3½ acres each, while at Westminster 41 cottars paid 40/- per year for their gardens, although the latter may well have belonged more to the urban than the rural economy (*DB* vol i, fol 128b). Apart from these clear differences between bordars and cottars in terms of size of holding, they probably owed different services and dues to manorial lords, a subject on which Domesday Book is unfortunately silent.

Not only was the proportion of slaves in the population very different between the four counties within the London area, but it also varied widely within their boundaries. Table 3 takes the level of disaggregation one stage to that of the Hundred, although it should be emphasised that these units of administration varied widely in size, for example Ossulston Hundred covered most of the eastern half of Middlesex, while the Hundreds in the Surrey Downs and the Weald were often much larger than their counterparts in the Thames Valley. For this reason, the density of slaves by hundred is shown as well as their proportion in the local population.

In Middlesex, there were no slaves in the small Hounslow Hundred, but adjacent Elthorne and Spelthorne had around 10% of their populations in this class, twice the average for the county as a whole. The remaining two-thirds of the county had relatively few slaves by 1086. This low proportion is matched by Brixton Hundred in Surrey, and by Bromley and Lessness Hundreds in Kent. With the exception of Chingford, none of the Essex estates had a significant proportion of slaves by 1086. Converting the numbers of slaves into a density reveals a rather different pattern, however. North of the Thames, Middlesex and south-west Essex have densities of less than 0.5 slaves per square mile, while north-

Table 3. Slavery by Hundred in the London area in 1086

Hundred	Acres	Slaves	% Population	Slaves/ml²
Ossulston	50554	16	2.1	0.20
Edmonton	31701	14	5.8	0.28
Gore	29185	5	2.3	0.11
Elthorne	36298	42	9.3	0.74
Spelthorne	23385	35	9.9	0.96
Isleworth	9394	0	0	0
MIDDLESEX	180517	112	5.3	0.40
Brixton	31708	30	5.7	0.61
Wallington	38325	61	12.0	1.02
Kingston	15767	22	9.5	0.89
SURREY	85800	113	9.0	0.84
Becontree*	53789	26	3.6	0.31
Chafford	34697	52	11.3	0.96
Waltham	23079	15	8.1	0.42
ESSEX	111565	93	6.8	0.53
Blackheath	17138	21	9.9	0.78
Ruxley	37079	66	16.0	1.14
Lessness	10590	8	5.4	0.48
Bromley	8386	4	4.4	0.31
KENT	73193	99	11.5	0.87
TOTAL	451075	417	7.4	0.59

*Including the Liberty of Havering-atte-Bower

east Surrey and north-west Kent have densities in the 0.75–0.85 range, around 50–70% higher. Broadly speaking, we find that moving further away from London, there is a greater proportion and density of slaves. This is not solely due to the urban:rural dichotomy, as London in 1086 was scarcely larger than the walled City, and the whole of its hinterland was agricultural, albeit already heavily influenced by the demands of the urban market.

The distribution of slaves was far from uniform within each Hundred, many estates having none recorded in Domesday Book, in contrast to those which had more than one-quarter of their population in this category. Broadly speaking, in Middlesex slavery in Ossulston Hundred was geographically restricted to a handful of estates, whereas elsewhere most estates had at least one slave in 1086. The same is true in Surrey, although there is a higher degree of con-

centration in Brixton Hundred. There is less evidence of the geographical concentration of slaves in metropolitan Kent and Essex, although in the latter, only one estate is named in each of Waltham and Havering Hundreds.

SLAVE OWNERSHIP

It has been demonstrated that the geographical distribution of slaves in the London region in 1086 was far from uniform, and this lack of uniformity is repeated when the ownership of slaves is considered. Given that slavery was in decline by the late 11th century, it is the pre-Conquest owners of estates who probably offer more clues as to why this should be so; apart from royal holdings and those of the Church, there was a more or less complete change of tenants-in-chief after 1066. Data on the principal slave-owning tenants-in-chief are set out below

for the periods before and after the Conquest. It is essential to note that landownership was much more fragmented in 1066 than it was 20 years later. The great bulk of those holding estates with slaves at the former date belonged to the category of King's thegns. Some were the men of Earls, others merely local landowners. The repeated occurrence of identical Anglo-Saxon or Anglo-Norse personal names makes it impossible to be sure whether individuals with the same name are identical or different. For example, the same Ascell probably held Beckenham and Howbury in Kent, but we cannot be sure whether the Ascell who held Balham was the same man. Countess Goda, King Edward's sister held widely scattered estates, in this area Harefield and part of Lambeth.

The Crown had relatively few slaves on its estates in the London area in 1066, and many of them were on Harold Godwinson's lands, which he probably held by right of being Earl of Wessex before becoming King in January 1066. The number had halved by 1086, with several

estates having been transferred to religious houses. Given that the Church was opposed in principle to the concept of slavery, and actively encouraged manumission, the fact that church estates had 84 slaves in 1066, increasing to 112 in 1086 — increasing from about one-quarter to one-third of the total — is at first sight surprising. In part, this probably reflects their conservatism as landowners and estate managers. These estates will have been managed by locally-based officials who may have seen more merit in retaining slaves to work the demesne, rather than freeing them in line with the teaching of the Church. Given that the slaves were probably free within a generation or two, the situation in 1066/1086 marks the end of an era, with the majority of church-owned land having few or no slaves. Although Odo, Bishop of Bayeux amassed vast holdings in Kent after 1066, this was not in his role as a churchman, but as the half-brother of William I, and one of the key players in the Conquest. By 1086, however, his star was waning following rebellion against William.

Table 4. Slave-ownership by tenant-in-chief 1066 and 1086

A. 1066

	Mx	Sy	Ex	Kt	Total	%
King*	0	13	10	2.5	25.5	7.2
Church	30	29	13	12	84	23.6
Asgar	16	0	0	0	16	4.5
Azor	8	23	0	0	31	8.7
Others	52	37	30	71.5	190.5	53.5
Women	6	3	0	0	9	2.5

* Including Harold, who was not recognised as King by the Normans

B. 1086

	Mx	Sy	Ex	Kt	Total	%
King	0	5	6	0	11	3.1
Church	37	42	21	12	112	31.5
Women	4	0	4	0	8	2.2
Bishop of Bayeux	0	6	0	74	80	22.5
Geoffrey de Mandeville	18	10	0	0	28	7.9
Richard of Tonbridge	0	35	0	0	35	9.8
Robert Gernon	0	0	10	0	10	2.8
Walter fitzOthere	10	3	0	0	13	3.6
Others	43	4	12	0	59	16.6

The principal concentration of slaves in ecclesiastical ownership was that of Westminster Abbey in south and west Middlesex, broadly the territory which had belonged to the minster church of Staines. Other religious houses had scattered holdings with slaves, and all had holdings in the London area which had none at all. Richard of Tonbridge, son of Gilbert de Clare, had very large holdings in south-east Surrey and Kent outside the London area, often with substantial numbers of slaves.

Among pre-Conquest laymen, only Asgar the Staller, with 16 slaves in Middlesex, and Azor, with 31 in Middlesex and Surrey, may be counted as major slave-owners. By 1086, the number of separate holdings had been substantially reduced, and the incoming tenants-in-chief often possessed large regional fiefdoms, for example Geoffrey de Mandeville, the Count of Mortain, and Richard of Tonbridge. None of these men had their main centres of power in the London area, and this is unlikely to have been accidental. King William perceived the City itself as a potential threat to his rule, and preferred to have significant blocks of church land in the immediate vicinity, a phenomenon whose roots went back to the early days of the conversion in the 7th century.

THE ECONOMIC ROLE OF SLAVES

Before considering what roles slaves may have performed on those estates which still possessed them in 1086, we must address the significance of their absolute numbers at any given place, and of the proportion which this represents of the population as a whole. Details of the numbers and percentages of slaves on each Domesday Book holding in the London area will be found in Appendix 1, along with data on demesne ploughs.

Many places had only a solitary slave or a pair of slaves in 1086. Given the evidence from Essex of the decline in the number of slaves between 1066 and 1086, it is reasonable to assume that these individuals (or possibly households, see Introduction) were the last of their kind, and would soon have been absorbed into various semi-free classes of tenant. It is commonly accepted that one of the key roles performed by slaves in the Anglo-Saxon rural economy was the operation of ploughs on the demesne (Pelteret 1995, 194–202). It is also possible, since we have no indication of the gender of slaves in

Domesday Book, that they were household servants of some kind, either as personal maid- or man-servants, as was often the case in the 17th and 18th centuries, or as workers in stables, dairies, or brewhouses. Clearly, this hypothesis would be more tenable in relation to estates where the lord (and lady) were resident for at least part of the year, which was very often not the case after 1066.

Table 5. The numbers of slaves on estates across the London area

Slaves	Mx	Sy	Ex	Kt	Total
1	8	5		2	15
2	9	4		3	16
3	3	5	3	1	12
4	3	1	8	3	15
5		2		3	5
6	5		2	1	8
7-8	3	2			5
>9	1	3		4	8
Total	32	22	13	17	84

Around two-thirds of estates had four slaves or fewer, evenly divided between those with one or two and those with three or four. In Essex, no estates had one or two slaves, but there is a substantial group with four slaves, in seven of which there is an exact ratio of two slaves to each demesne plough (see below). Among the estates with larger numbers of slaves, some have obvious correspondences between their numbers and those of the demesne ploughs, others do not, requiring other explanations of such groups.

Evidence from tracts on pre-Conquest agriculture suggests that each of the heavy ox-ploughs used at that time needed two individuals to operate them: the ploughman and his 'boy' (Garmonsway 1947; the ploughman laments his lack of freedom — late 10th or early 11th century); they were needed to keep the team in an approximately straight line (although the evidence of medieval ridge-and-furrow, with its highly characteristic S-curves shows how difficult this must have been, especially on heavy soils) and to turn up to eight beasts and the plough at the headland at the end of a furrow. From the data in Appendix 1, we find the following position with regard to the ratio between the number of slaves and demesne ploughs in the London area.

Table 6. Ratio of slaves to demesne ploughs

Slaves/Plough	No.
<1	7
1	17
1-2	9
2	23
2-3	8
3	8
>3	11

Domesday fractions are always a problem for the present-day researcher, and it is difficult to be sure whether estates where there is one slave or less per plough represent cases where they were kept for this purpose. Of course, there may be under-recording, although as assets of the demesne, this seems less likely. If recorded slaves represent households rather than individuals, then sufficient manpower could have been available to produce the 'expected' ratio of two per plough team, although that in turn would be undermined by the large number of exact 2:1 ratios (28% of the total; with a further 13% in the 1.5–2.5 range).

The problems multiply when there are in excess of three slaves per demesne plough. In some cases Domesday Book provides evidence of other demesne assets which may have been operated by 'surplus' slaves. At Mortlake, for example, where 10 of the 16 slaves are accounted for by demesne ploughing, there were two very valuable mills assessed at 100/-, which might account for the rest (*DB* vol i, fols 30d, 31a). Conversely, there seems to be no reason why 18 slaves were to be found at Woodmansterne on the dip-slope of the North Downs; 14 are surplus to the requirements of demesne ploughing, but only a mill worth 20/- and a small amount of woodland are recorded. Apart from employment in domestic roles, one possibility is that some were engaged in quarrying (*DB* vol i, fol 35a; there is a reference to quarrying at Limpsfield, about 9 miles away, although there the 10 slaves were accounted for by the 5 demesne ploughs (*DB* vol i, fol 34a)). At Carshalton, the mill on the Wandle was worth 35/- and its operators may have been among the manor's slaves (*DB* vol i, fol 36b). An anonymous holding in Wallington Hundred had six cottagers, three slaves and only one demesne plough; it had belonged to Alford in 1066 and was held in 1086 by Hamo

the sheriff from Chertsey Abbey (*DB* vol i, fol 32a). This looks like some kind of demesne farm, accounted separately from another holding. At Thames Ditton, the population comprised four bordars and four slaves, with one and a half demesne ploughs (*DB* vol i, fol 33a–b). Walter fitzOthere's anonymous holding in Kingston Hundred, although assessed at two hides, had only three slaves, working one demesne plough and a fishery (*DB* vol i, fol 36a).

Charlton in south-west Middlesex is interesting on several grounds. Its name means 'village of the *ceorlas* or churls', a grade of free tenant often noted in Anglo-Saxon law codes (Gover *et al* 1942, 22; Finberg 1964, 144–60). In 1086, however, it had six slaves who made up three-quarters of the population; there was only one demesne plough, and no indication of how the other four were employed. Charlton was held by two brothers in 1066 and by the minor Norman lord Roger of Raimes in 1086. It is possible that some of these slaves were used on the much larger Staines estate, which was probably regarded as the parent estate for smaller settlements in this area, and which had only twelve slaves for thirteen demesne ploughs. Northolt had substantial woodland, as did Greenford, indicating the possibility that some or all of the woodwards were unfree. Colham near Uxbridge was a substantial estate, with two 'surplus' slaves in 1086. It had two and a half mills on the Colne worth 46/-, another indication that some millers may have been unfree (*cf* Mortlake, above; *DB* vol i, fol 129a).

In south-west Essex, none of the Domesday Book estates with slaves had numbers in excess of those which could be accounted for by their use as demesne ploughmen. We know that there had been a significant reduction in their numbers since 1066, and, in some cases, this can be related to the change in the number of demesne ploughs. For example, at Rainham in 1066, there were eleven slaves and eight ploughs, in 1086 four slaves and four ploughs. At East Ham, in contrast, the number of slaves had been reduced from nineteen to three, with no change in the number of plough teams on the demesne (*DB* vol ii, fols 24b, 66b, 91a (Rainham); fols 64 a, b (East Ham)).

In metropolitan Kent, West Wickham, St Pauls Cray, Eltham and Sandlings all had 'excess slaves' in 1086, the first two of which had mills of little apparent worth (*DB* vol i, fols 6d, 7a (Sandlings)). Otherwise, there is no evidence

to show how the slaves were employed. In all four counties surrounding London, it seems probable that demesne ploughing was the principal employment of the remaining slaves in 1086. Where there were fewer than two slaves per plough team, it is impossible to decide whether this was because (a) those recorded are heads of families, rather than individuals, in which case both ploughmen and boys would have been available, or (b) those working the plough were a combination of those not yet freed and those who already belonged to the ranks of the landless, but semi-free, such as cottars or bordars. Slaves not so employed may have been millers, or associated with manorial woodland in some way, but may equally have been male or female servants used in and around the manorial complex on duties ranging from personal service to dairying, brewing, and stable work.

A broad measure of the relationship between slaves and demesne ploughs is provided by taking the notional 2:1 ratio for the various counties in the London area, to see what surpluses and shortfalls occur. Metropolitan Surrey (+28) and Kent (+26) both appear to have significantly more slaves in this respect, even though at the level of individual estates there are often shortfalls. In Middlesex (-12) and south-west Essex (-25), the reverse is true. In the case of the latter Domesday Book provides clear evidence of declining slave numbers, as they were freed and transferred to the ranks of bordars, and this seems to have taken place in Middlesex, where slaves were transformed into virtually-landless cottars.

Woodmansterne, Thames Ditton, and Charlton are local examples of estates where there is a disproportionate number of slaves in relation to the total population in 1086. Other examples occur in Surrey at Thorncroft near Leatherhead, Hambledon near Godalming, and Tatsfield and Tillingdon on the Downs close to the border with Kent, all with at least 40% of the enumerated population being slaves. This phenomenon also occurs in Buckinghamshire, a county with a much higher proportion of slaves than the London area. Ten estates have 40% or more recorded as slaves, often quite small places, some of which may have functioned as demesne farms, integrated economically, but not necessarily tenurially, with their neighbours (Bailey 1995). One example of the latter is Ivinghoe Aston, with four slaves in a population of six, compare Ivinghoe, with

only six slaves out of thirty-eight. In the London area, the following places exceed the average proportion of slaves in their county by more than one standard deviation: Woodmansterne, Thames Ditton, and an anonymous holding in Kingston Hundred (Surrey); Charlton, with Kensington and Colham almost reaching the threshold (Middlesex); Higham Hill, Upminster (one holding), Warley (one holding), and Chingford (both holdings) (Essex); Cudham, St Mary Cray, St Pauls Cray, West Wickham, and Sandlings (Kent). These are not necessarily places where the numbers of slaves are in excess of the ratio of two per demesne plough, but further research is needed into slavery across 11th-century England before we can be sure precisely what lies behind such anomalies and their geographical distribution.

CONCLUSION

This paper has sought to show that although slavery was an institution in decline at the end of the Anglo-Saxon era, it was nevertheless a reality for hundreds of men and women, and possibly their children, in the London area. The reasons why these people had not yet obtained their freedom, or perhaps semi-freedom would be a more accurate description, cannot be known at this remove. They may have been members of families which had been slaves for generations, or may equally have been enslaved by the penal system in relatively recent times. Conflict at various levels was endemic in the 11th century, and capture in battle had always been a common source of slaves. The 1050s and 1060s had seen struggles between the English state and its neighbours in Wales and Scandinavia, and it is even possible that some of the slaves recorded in Domesday Book represent those on the losing side at the Battle of Hastings and in the various rebellions which took place against the less-than-emollient rule of William I. The opposition of the Church to slavery did not stop many of its religious houses and bishops from keeping slaves at the end of the 11th century, although in many cases the leading figures may not have been aware of the extent of enslavement on their estates.

The decline and ending of slavery in England seems more likely to have been for economic than ethical or religious reasons. The cost of keeping men and women as chattels employed on and around the demesne of estates across the

London area appears to have outweighed their manumission and transformation into semi-free peasants of the cottar and bordar classes. The latter, given what might be described as smallholdings to provide for themselves and their families, while at the same time obliged to work on the demesne, or for wealthier peasants,

in order to achieve subsistence level, continued to be known as serfs in later medieval parlance. In truth their condition may at times have been worse than that of the slaves of Domesday London, for the lot of landless agricultural labourers remained harsh until their final disappearance in the early 20th century.

APPENDIX 1: GREATER LONDON: POPULATION, SLAVES & OWNERSHIP 1066–1086

PLACE	POP	SLAVES	%S	Demesne Plough	S:DP	OWNER 1066	OWNER 1086
SURREY							
Brixton Hund.							
Balham	3	1	33.3	1	1	Askell ex Harold	Orlateile
Battersea	69	8	11.6	3	2.7	Harold	Westminster
Kennington	8	1	12.5	1	1	Theoderic ex KE	Theoderic the Goldsmith
Lambeth 1	42	3	7.1	2	1.5	Goda, KE sister	Lambeth Church
Lambeth 2	18	1	5.6	1	1	Waltham Holy X ex Harold	Mortain
Mortlake	110	16	14.5	5	3.2	Canterbury	Canterbury
Wallington Hund.							
Anonymous	10	3	30.0	1	3	Alfward	Chertsey
Beddington 1	27	1	3.7	1	1	Wulf ex KE	Miles Crispin
Beddington 2	35	5	14.3	1	2.5	Azor ex KE	Richard of Tonbridge
Carshalton	32	10	31.2	2	5	5 free men ex KE	Mandeville
Cheam	42	5	11.9	2	2.5	Canterbury	Canterbury
Cuddington	28	4	14.3	2	2	Earl Leofwin	Bayeux
Mitcham	10	2	20.0	1	2	Brictric ex KE	Bayeux
Morden	14	1	7.1	3	0.3	Westminster	Westminster
Sanderstead	26	4	15.4	1	4	Winchester Abbey	Winchester Abbey
Sutton	27	2	7.4	2	1	Chertsey	Chertsey
Wallington	32	3	9.4	1	3	King	King
Woodmansterne	31	18	58.1	2	9	Azor ex KE	Richard of Tonbridge
Kingston Hund.							
Anonymous	3	3	100.0	1	3	???	Walter fitzOthere
Kingston	105	5	4.8	3	0.7	King	King
Long Ditton	12	1	8.3	1	1	Aelmer ex KE	Richard of Tonbridge
Malden	25	3	12.0	1	3	Harding ex KE	Richard of Tonbridge
Thames Ditton	8	4	50.0	1.5	2.7	Leofgar ex Harold	Bayeux
Tolworth 1	22	7	31.8	2	3.5	Alwin ex KE	Richard of Tonbridge

PLACE	POP	SLAVES	%S	Demesne Plough	S:DP	OWNER 1066	OWNER 1086
Tolworth 2	9	2	22.2	1	2	Edmer	Richard of Tonbridge
	748	113	15.1	42.5	2.7		
MIDDLESEX							
Edmonton Hund.							
Edmonton	87	4	4.6	4	1	Asgar the Constable	Mandeville
Enfield	114	6	5.3	4	1.5	Asgar the Constable	Mandeville
Tottenham	66	4	6.1	2	2	Waltheof	Countess Judith
Elthorne Hund.							
Colham	30	8	26.7	3	2.7	Wigot	Earl Roger
Cranford	14	3	21.4	1	3	Thurstan, KE thegn	William fitzAnsculf
Greenford	26	6	23.1	1	6	Westminster	Westminster
Greenford	5	1	20.0	1	1	Canon of St.P/ Asgar's man	Mandeville
Hanwell	17	2	11.8	1	2	Westminster	Westminster
Harefield	25	3	12.0	2	1.5	Countess Goda	Richard fitzGilbert
Harlington	28	1	3.6	2	0.5	Wigot	Earl Roger
Harmondsworth	44	6	13.6	3	2	Harold	Holy Trinity Rouen
Hayes	108	2	1.9	2	1	Canterbury	Canterbury
Northolt	32	6	18.8	2	3	Asgar the Constable	Mandeville
Ruislip	53	4	7.5	3	1.3	Wulfward Wight, KE thegn	Arnulf of Hesdin
Gore Hund.							
Harrow	117	2	1.7	4	0.5	Leofwin	Canterbury
Hendon	46	1	2.2	3	0.3	Westminster	Westminster
Stanmore	14	2	14.3	1	2	Algar, Harold m	Roger of Raismes
Ossulston Hund.							
Anonymous	5	1	20.0	1	1	2 freemen of KE	Mandeville
Chelsea	12	3	25.0	2	1.5	Wulfwen, KE man [sic]	Edward of Salisbury
Fulham 3	40	2	5.0	2	1	Canons of St. Pauls	Canons of St. Pauls
Hampstead	7	1	14.3	1	1	Westminster	Westminster
Kensington	26	7	26.9	4	1.7	Edwin, KE thegn	Aubrey de Vere
Lisson	8	1	12.5	2	0.5	Edward s Swein, KE man	Edeva
Tollington	9	1	11.1	1	1	Edwin, KE man	Ranulf bro Ilger
Spelthorne Hund.							
Charlton	8	6	75.0	1	6	2 bros [Stigand/ Leofwin m]	Roger of Raismes
Feltham	21	2	9.5	1	2	2 thegns ex Harold/ King	Mortain
Kempton	19	2	10.5	1	2	Wulfward Wight, KE thegn	Mortain
Shepperton	25	2	8.0	1	2	Westminster	Westminster

PLACE	POP	SLAVES	%S	Demesne Plough	S:DP	OWNER 1066	OWNER 1086
Staines	82	12	14.6	13	0.9	Westminster	Westminster
Stanwell	49	8	16.3	3	2.7	Azor, housecarl	Walter fitzOthere
Sunbury	22	1	4.5	1	1	Westminster	Westminster
West Bedfont	11	2	18.2	1	2	Brictrmer*/2 freemen+	Walter fitzOthere
	1170	112	9.6	64	1.75		
						*Harold's man/+ Azor's m	
ESSEX							
Becontree Hund.							
Barking	236	6	2.5	3	2	Barking	Barking
East Ham	67	3	4.5	3	1	Leofred freeman	Robert Gernon
Havering	87	6	6.9	2	3	Harold	King
Higham Hill	17	4	23.9	2	2	Haldane freeman	Peter de Valognes
Walthamstow	65	4	6.2	2	2	Waltheof	Countess Judith
West Ham	130	3	2.3	4	0.7	Alstan freeman	Robert Gernon
Chafford Hund.							
Aveley 1	20	1	5.0	1	1	Swein	John son of Waleran
Childerditch 1	10	1	10.0	1.5	0.7	Harold	Sheriff of Surrey
Childerditch 2	5	1	20.0	1	1	Alwen	Swein of Essex
Cranham	27	4	14.8	3	1.3	Aelfric	Bishop of London
Grays/Thurrock 1	70	8	11.4	5	1.6	Harold	Count of Eu
Grays/Thurrock 2	21	2	9.5	2	1	Aelmer	William Peverel
Kenningtons	9	1	11.1	1	1	3 freemen	William Warenne
North Ockendon	19	4	21.0	2	2	Harold	Westminster
Ockendon	19	4	21.0	2	2	Harold	Westminster
Rainham	25	4	16.0	2	2	Leofstan the reeve	Walter of Douai
South Weald	19	3	15.8	2	1.5	Waltham Holy X	Waltham Holy X
Upminster 1	13	3	23.1	2	1.5	Waltham Holy X	Waltham Holy X
Upminster 2	19	4	21.0	2	2	Swein Swart	Walter of Douai
Warley 1	9	2	22.2	2	1	Gyrth	Bishop of London
Warley 2	24	5	20.8	2	2.5	Barking	Barking
Warley 3	12	1	8.3	2	0.5	Goderic	Swein of Essex
Waltham Hund.							
Chingford 1	18	4	22.2	2	2	Canons of St Paul	Canons of St. Paul
Chingford 2	17	4	23.5	2	2	1 freeman	Robert Gernon
	958	82	8.6	52.5	1.6		
KENT							
Blackheath Hund.							
Charlton	15	2	13.3	1	2	Godwin/Alfward brothers	Bayeux
Eltham	63	9	14.3	2	4.5	Alfwold	Bayeux
Greenwich	34	5	14.7	2	2.5	Harold/Brictsi	Bayeux
Lee	15	2	13.3	2	1	Alwin	Bayeux

PLACE	POP	SLAVES	%S	Demesne Plough	S:DP	OWNER 1066	OWNER 1086
Lewisham	62	3	4.8	2	1.5	St. Peter Ghent	St. Peter Ghent
Bromley Hund.							
Beckenham	34	4	11.8	2	2	Askill	Bayeux
Lessness Hund.							
Crayford	34	5	14.7	2	2.5	Canterbury	Canterbury
Howbury	8	1	12.5	1	1	Askill	Bayeux
Lessness	65	2	3.1	1	2	Azor	Bayeux
Ruxley Hund.							
Chelsfield	28	4	14.3	2	2	Toki	Bayeux
Cudham	32	11	34.4	4	2.7	??	Bayeux
Foots Cray	13	1	7.7	1	1	Godwin Foot	Bayeux
Orpington	80	4	5.0	3	1.3	Canterbury	Canterbury
Sandlings	29	9	31.0	2	4.5	Bondi ex Archbishop	Bayeux
Seal	55	10	18.2	3	3.3	Brictsi Cild ex KE	Bayeux
St Mary Cray	21	6	28.6	2	3	Toli	Bayeux
St Paul Cray	17	5	29.4	1	5	Alwin from Alnoth Cild	Bayeux
West Wickham	37	13	35.1	2	6.5	Gordric son of Karl	Bayeux
	642	96	15.0	35	2.7		

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