

From the *Transactions* of the
Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society

Villages and Non-Villages in the Medieval Cotswolds

by C. C. Dyer
2002, Vol. 120, 11-35

© The Society and the Author(s)

Villages and Non-Villages in the Medieval Cotswolds

By CHRISTOPHER DYER

Presidential Address delivered at Clifton Cathedral, Bristol, 23 March 2002

The Cotswolds' modern reputation derives from a fashion begun in the late 19th and early 20th centuries to mythologize the region as the embodiment of the ideal qualities of the English countryside, fixed in a remote pre-modern period.¹ Much was (and is) said about clusters of cottages built of honey-coloured stone, hills and valleys crisscrossed by dry stone walls, and quiet and unspoilt stretches of countryside. It was assumed that the villages were unchanging and had a very long ancestry.² And of course in the popular conception of the historic landscape, expanses of sheep pasture are thought to have provided the main agricultural resource of the region.

My purpose in this talk is to present a modern interpretation of the medieval Cotswold settlement pattern, drawing on my own researches and those of many others. This will differ in important respects from the conventional views that I have sketched above. The questions that will be addressed will include: when and how did villages form? What were the different forms of settlement? How did villages and other settlements change?

Village Formation

When we stand back to look at the English rural landscape as a whole, the Cotswolds form part of a very large section of the countryside characterized by nucleated villages and open fields, which stretched from Dorset to Durham.³ We could be more subtle, and identify east Gloucestershire as a landscape of wolds, a name which is also applied to the higher ground of the east midlands and in north-east Lincolnshire and the East Riding of Yorkshire. The name wolds, which means 'woodland', suggests that in an early period, perhaps in the 7th to 9th centuries, the high ground had an extensive tree cover. When we have detailed evidence in 1086 and later, the western part of the region tended to be well wooded, but the eastern Cotswolds came to resemble champion or feldon landscapes, where people lived in compact villages and cultivated extensive corn fields.⁴ In answering the questions posed earlier I will be using entirely Cotswold evidence, but our interpretation should be influenced by analogies with comparable landscapes in other parts of England and indeed on the continental mainland. The area which has been investigated is indicated in Fig. 1.

The villages that we see now are mostly based on settlements which have a medieval origin, and indeed preserve in their plans at least elements of their medieval form. We can distinguish between 'rows', in which the houses are arranged evenly along a main street, and 'clusters' in which the houses crowd together in a more compact and less orderly fashion.⁵ Both types can be shown to have existed in the Middle Ages, because in the case of deserted sites the earthworks

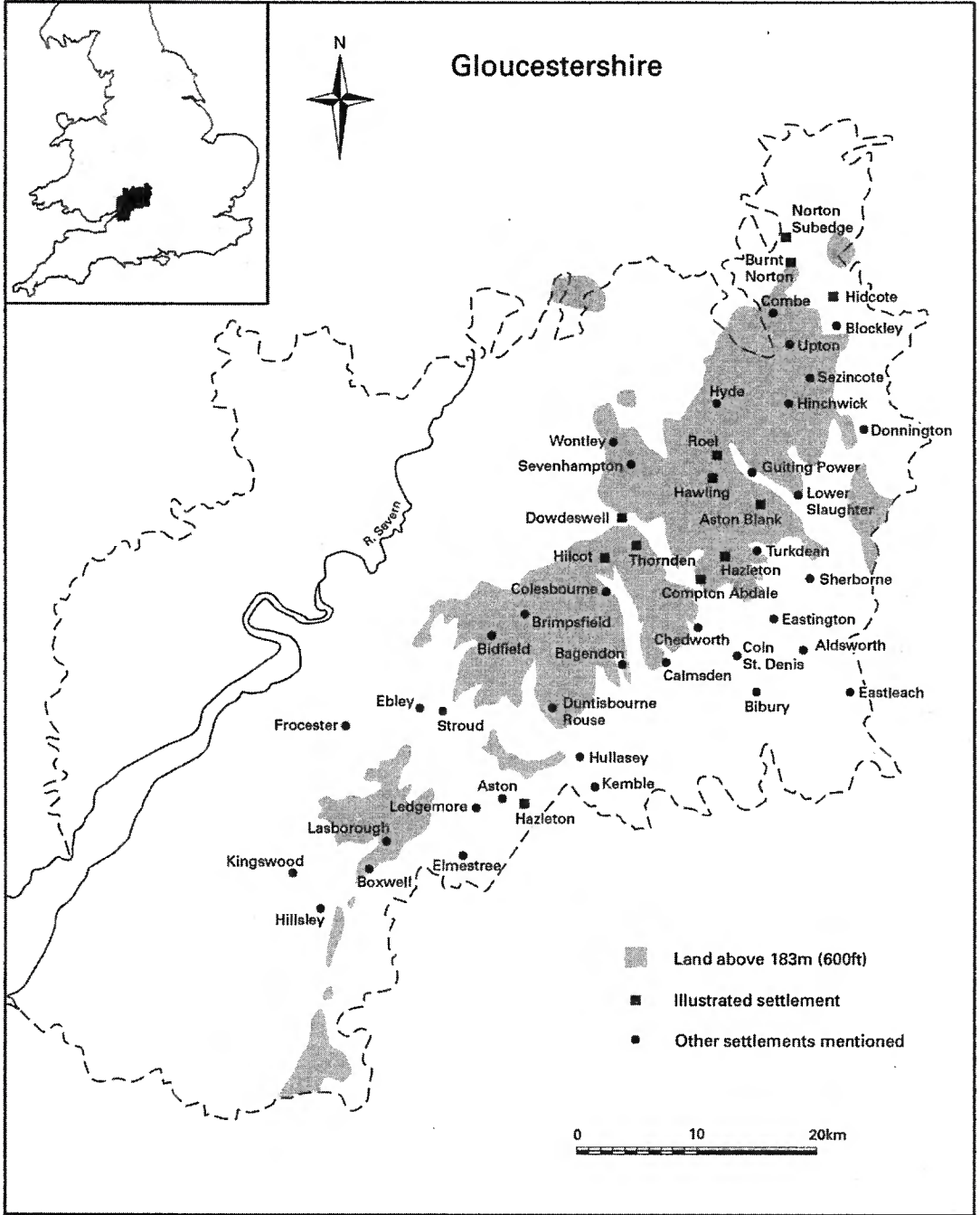


Fig. 1. Map of Gloucestershire, showing the part of the county studied.

marking streets, houses and boundaries clearly define the plan at the latest stage of its development before the abandonment of the village in the 14th and 15th centuries. Rows can be seen at totally deserted sites such as Upton in Blockley, Roel and Eastington, and some shrunken villages, for example Hawling and Sherborne, originally consisted of very long rows which have been subsequently truncated.⁶ Cluster plans are found at the deserted sites at Hullasey, and at Norton Subedge just to the north of the hills.⁷ The polyfocal village form is represented by Sherborne with its two ends, by Turkdean which is divided between Upper and Lower, and by Chedworth where the straggling settlement has at least four nuclei.⁸ The assumption that the modern village shape reflects that of the Middle Ages is of course a dangerous one. Not only may villages be deserted or shrunken, they can also be rebuilt in modern times on a new plan, and there is some evidence for this at a number of villages, such as Hidcote Bartrim, Hazleton and Lower Slaughter.⁹

English villages are believed to have formed in the centuries around the year 1000, between 850 and 1200. The colourful phrase 'village revolution' has been used to describe this great upheaval in the settlement pattern. People who had previously lived in scattered farms and hamlets abandoned their homes in order to gather in relatively large groups. In the Cotswolds the most direct evidence for this is the discovery through field walking of small concentrated scatters of grass-tempered ware, which is likely to date between the 6th and the 9th centuries, in fields at some distance from later villages, at Hazleton, Hidcote and Roel (Fig. 2).¹⁰ This pottery has also been found occasionally in excavations in villages, at Guiting Power and Upton in Blockley, suggesting that there was some settlement on these sites before 900, but this earliest medieval pottery is absent from excavations in most villages, and from field walking on or around village sites, where the first phase of occupation is often represented by pottery of the 11th and 12th centuries.¹¹

The existence of nucleated villages before the 10th century is sometimes presumed from place-name and written evidence. Place names such as Guiting, Turkdean and Sherborne, which are likely to have formed well before 900, refer to large natural features such as streams and valleys and probably identified a whole territory or estate.¹² Even the names ending in -tun, which described inhabited places, were not necessarily attached to the precise spot where a

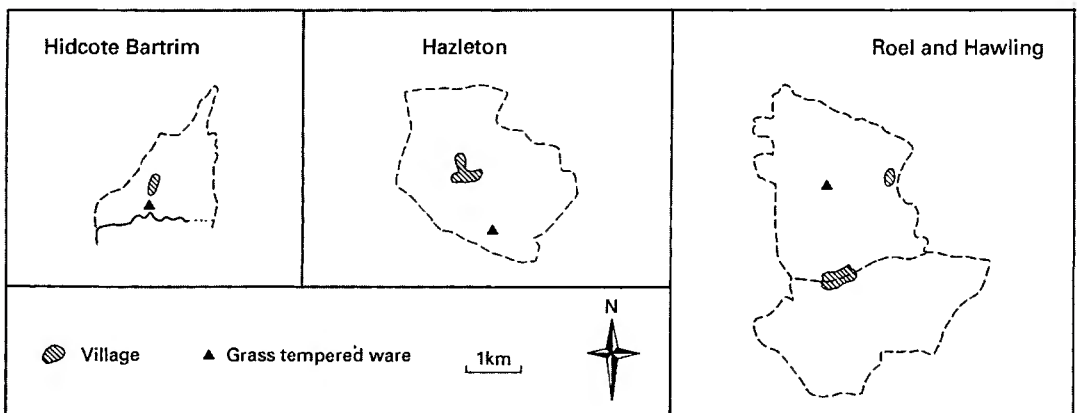


Fig. 2. Plans of three village territories, with medieval/modern villages and find spots of grass-tempered ware of the 6th to the 9th centuries.

medieval or modern village now stands. A -ton name appearing in an early charter or Domesday Book was describing an estate or manor rather than a single centre of habitation. Shipton refers to a part of an estate with a specialized sheep keeping function, while Mickleton is best translated not as 'large village' but as 'large estate'. Bibury sounds like a name which can be pinned down in space and time, as the eponymous 'Beage' is known to have lived in the 8th century, when she is named in a charter, and the 'bury' or fortification was presumably sited in the Coln valley. Bibury church with its pre-Conquest fabric almost certainly marks the site of the minster church which stood in or near to the 'bury'. There is no evidence, however, that at that period a village clustered around the church, and indeed the great estate of Bibury is likely to have included a number of settlements distributed over its 2,600 hectares.¹³

Some place names make reference to hamlets and small units of land holding. Sevenhampton ('seven settlements') shows that at the time when the name was coined settlement was not concentrated into a single nucleus, and indeed that continued to be the case throughout the Middle Ages.¹⁴ Smaller places where hamlets or farmsteads once worked a modest amount of land can be identified interspersed among the villages. Examples include Hyde in Pinnock and Coldicote in Hawling, the first name referring to the land's fiscal assessment of a single hide (when many villages were rated at five hides or more), and the second meaning a minor dwelling in a bleak place.¹⁵

Documents can help us to trace the history of settlements, but the information has to be teased out of them with the help of topographical evidence. A 10th- or 11th-century charter boundary for Daylesford refers to the tun or settlement as a marker. In the case of Hawling's pre-Conquest boundary description, the only hint of the village's existence is a mention of a barn as a boundary point. Yet the separation of Hawling and Roel must have come after the settlements had nucleated, and this process had occurred by the early 11th century, which is the date of the document.¹⁶ Indirect evidence for the formation of villages comes from boundary descriptions of the 10th and 11th centuries, like that of Donnington, which makes reference to cultivated land on the edge of an estate in terms which are characteristic of open fields, with references to acres, furrows and headlands.¹⁷ As we know that in later centuries nucleated villages and extensive open fields were closely linked, the people who worked the arable land which was filling the landscape by the 10th century are likely to have lived in a central village.¹⁸

We do not fully understand the chronology of the village revolution, nor do we know precisely why it occurred, but we can suggest some of the circumstances accompanying the change, as it was clearly part of a general economic and social transformation. I will consider the context of village formation firstly by looking at the precursors of the villages and then by examining changes in administration, lordship, parishes, economy and fields.

The landscape in which the villages formed had been exploited for agriculture for a very long time. Romano-British settlements are densely distributed on the Cotswolds, not just the villas which famously cluster around Cirencester, but also the much greater number of scattered farms which lacked the villas' pretensions but between them cultivated large acreages on the hills. Any systematic survey pushes up the number of Roman farmstead sites—for example three or four have been found in the 350 hectares of the parish of Hazleton available for field walking.¹⁹ An even more impressive result of field walking is the thin spread of Romano-British pottery on a high proportion of fields throughout the region, which is likely to be the result of Roman manuring. As manure would have been spread mainly on arable land, this suggests that the area under the plough at some time between the 1st and 4th centuries was as great as in the late 20th century. This is sometimes confirmed by observation from the air of crop marks indicating ditched field boundaries of pre-medieval form. Indeed, the cultivated area may have been even

greater than the pottery scatters and crop marks suggest, because in the small number of remaining fields of permanent pasture are often preserved the lynchets of early cultivation, much of it from the Romano-British period. The extensive areas of such earthworks, such as those at Aldsworth, have been described by the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, but many smaller patches still remain to be listed systematically.²⁰

In the post-Roman period we should not expect to find wholesale depopulation, but there were important changes consequent on the decline of both the urban economy and the centralized imperial administration. Woodland regenerated, for example on the estate that had been managed from the Spoonley Wood Roman villa in Sudeley, and there must have been enough trees for the term 'wold' to be applied to the region when German-speaking migrants arrived.²¹ Place names show that prominent woods once existed (Notgrove), and especially on the western scarp a number of names refer either to woodland (Woodchester) or to clearings in a wooded landscape (Bisley, Cowley and Horsley). Settlement continued after A.D. 400 on some villa sites and in Cirencester.²² In the countryside a British population probably survived and mingled with the migrants, transmitting their words for major landscape features, such as Pen Hill which is a name occurring in both Colesbourne and Salperton, and the names of the rivers Churn, Coln and Windrush.²³

Small settlements dating from some time between 500 and 900 have left their traces in the form of scatters of grass-tempered ware (see Fig. 2). The character of sites of the 6th and 7th centuries can be glimpsed from one which has been excavated at Lechlade.²⁴ It consisted of three timber buildings and six sunken featured structures—as the latter were probably used as outhouses, the hamlet may have accommodated no more than two or three families. These settlements occupied new sites and did not continue directly from Romano-British farmsteads, but they may well have cultivated some of the same land. The use of prehistoric or Romano-British field boundaries in the planning of medieval villages, as at Hawling and Roel, suggests that after *c.* 850 these early land divisions were still visible or even in use.²⁵

Between the 7th and the 9th centuries great estates were being managed for the benefit of lords, including the royalty of the Hwicce and Mercia, aristocrats such as Beage, local minster churches like Withington and Blockley, and the church of Worcester. The peasant population which worked the land provided these lords with their revenues, we suspect mainly by contributing rents in kind. We are aware of a great upheaval in all aspects of life from the late 9th century. The kings of Wessex took over the government of Gloucestershire, strengthened the fortifications of Gloucester and Winchcombe, and eventually created Gloucestershire and its constituent hundreds, after the brief experiment with a separate shire based on Winchcombe.²⁶ The people of the countryside were expected to contribute labour and money for the fortifications and other costs of the wars with the Danes. At this time the great estates were breaking down, and small manors were being granted to lesser aristocrats and churches—places as small as Harford in Naunton, Pegglesworth in Dowdeswell, and Upton, Aston Magna and Ditchford in Blockley appear in charters of the period 890–1060 as separate units of landholding.²⁷ The peasants came under greater pressure from both the State and their lords to contribute labour, produce and cash. The fortified sites took on an urban character, and they grew in this period as centres of consumption, exchange and manufacture. Lesser places of trade were beginning to emerge at Cirencester, where Domesday records a market, and probably at other places which later became towns, such as Stow-on-the-Wold. These early commercial developments had implications for peasants who needed to sell their produce.

Archaeological evidence for a manorial site comes from Lower Slaughter, where a large ditched enclosure probably contained a royal centre of estate administration, and perhaps a residence, functioning between the 7th and 10th centuries.²⁸ As yet none of the following generation

of smaller manorial units has been excavated, but they have made their mark on the village landscapes as their lords founded churches for their households and tenants next to their manor houses. A small church such as Duntisbourne Rouse, built either just before or just after the Norman Conquest, is an example of a church serving a manor formed by subdividing a larger estate. Such private places of worship became the parish churches of later centuries.

When they are first fully recorded in the later Middle Ages different types of field system were associated with dispersed and nucleated settlements. In the Vales of Berkeley and Gloucester and west of the Severn the settlements were often scattered, a number of open fields were associated with each village, and much land lay in enclosures. At Frocester, for example, houses stretched for 2 km along four or five roads and lanes, and ten open fields of unequal area are recorded.²⁹ In contrast on the Cotswolds most of the arable was divided equally between two fields, which together accounted for a high proportion of each village's territory. The likely sequence of events in the development of open fields would be that small hamlets and farms of the 9th century worked separate fields and patches of shared lands in a complex patchwork. In the succeeding period the fields were extended over the former settlement sites as the inhabitants of the dispersed houses grouped in a single large nucleus in the midst of the cultivated land. This must have been encouraged by economic and social changes, and perhaps by a modest population growth. Other factors could have included increased pressure from the State, Church and lords for taxes, tithes and rents, and the beginnings of market demand. The peasants' priority was to produce enough grain, meat and cheese for their own consumption, for payment in rent, and for exchange. The two-course rotation gave them one strategy for maintaining a balance between arable and pasture, and therefore for practising sustainable farming, while providing a sufficient surplus.³⁰

The charter boundary descriptions of *c.* 950–1050, as we have already seen, imply extensive arable fields. The impression of a well-cultivated landscape is confirmed by calculations that can be made from Domesday that eastern Gloucestershire had one of the higher densities of ploughs in England, and this emphasis on arable husbandry continued into the later Middle Ages. The famous Cotswold sheep were kept on some permanent pastures, but the limited area of grazing meant that they obtained much of their feed on the stubbles and fallows of the corn fields. In the 13th to the 16th centuries hay was being carted from the Severn and Thames valleys on to the hills to feed sheep.³¹

As the cultivators of the Cotswolds developed their open fields, they had to give up some individual choice but were assured that community discipline would prevent animals straying into the growing corn, and they would be able to share equipment and draught animals. The central location of the village, in which everyone lived, and the scattered strips in the fields, ensured equality of access to the land (and to the meadows, woods and other facilities).

The precise place at which the village formed in many cases depended on the lord. The manor house and church provided the obvious nucleus around which the villagers would gather. The lord would have made a important contribution to nucleation by housing the slaves near the manorial buildings, and when they were settled on holdings of their own as cottars these would often be sited on a convenient parcel of demesne land near to the manor house. Some villages consisted in their early stages entirely of these settled slaves, such as Castlett in Guiting Power, but this was unusual.³² As Gloucestershire had such a large number of slaves in the late 11th century, and presumably even larger numbers in earlier centuries, the provision of house plots for them must have been a significant stage in the formation of villages.

Lords are sometimes thought to have been entirely responsible for the creation of villages. Villages with planned regular rows of houses adjoining manor houses seem to demonstrate the imposition of manorial discipline, by which tenants were settled where they could be easily

controlled. If it was the case that villages were simply created by their lords, we would expect to find that each village coincided exactly with a manor, but the reality was very complicated, and manor and village often did not coincide. At Blockley, for example, a single manor contained a number of villages. The division of a village between two manors might be reflected in a village plan containing two distinct elements, as can be seen at Aldsworth and Turkdean. At Bibury, however, there were two manors (belonging to the bishop of Worcester and the rector of the church), but this division had no visible impact on the plan of the village.

When we analyse carefully the plans of villages arranged in orderly rows such as Hawling and Roel, we find that the tofts were laid out at different times, without a single unit of measurement. This must make us doubt whether the villages were planned by a single lord at one point in time.³³ If lords had a policy of imposing villages on their tenants, one might expect to find uniformity among the manors of the same estate. The villages under the lordship of Gloucester Abbey, to take one example, were different, and settlements on the monks' valley manors did not resemble closely those on the hills. The peasants who moved into villages in the 10th and 11th centuries were not incomers being granted new holdings by a controlling lord, but were established cultivators already working the land. Judging from a reference *c.* 900 to 'the ceorls' grove' the peasants should not be seen as mere subjects of a lord, but had some rights and a collective organization.³⁴ They were relocating their houses within a landscape in which they already had a considerable stake.

Forms of Settlement—Non-Villages

Some of the complexities of the Cotswold settlement pattern can be appreciated by looking at a variety of places which were not villages.³⁵ In this section four types of dispersed settlement will be discussed: hamlets in the territories of nucleated villages; mills and mill hamlets; sheep-cotes; and granges.

Nucleation was evidently not a comprehensive process. We find in some parishes a scatter of hamlets, some of which survive, but in many cases they are not easily noticed because they have been deserted, or have been replaced by a single modern farm. In some parishes hamlets were especially numerous. In Sevenhampton, in addition to the existing villages of Brockhampton and Upper and Lower Sevenhampton (the latter also known as Clopley), there were hamlets or farmsteads at Whitewell, Nash and Calcombe, now deserted, and at least one deserted hamlet at Old Sennington.³⁶ The four hamlets of Brimpsfield included the site now known as Manless Town which once consisted of at least half a dozen houses and a chapel, and was known in early modern times as Maundlynes or Mauls.³⁷

Withington had a particularly complex range of settlements. The main village is divided into two adjacent parts, Upper End and Brockwell End, each with its own field system, though they both belonged to the same lord, the bishopric of Worcester. There were at least nine other small villages, hamlets and farmsteads, of which Foxcote was under a separate lordship and with its own fields, and others were distinct farms set up on assarts (clearings of new land) on the edge of the woodlands in the south-west of the parish. Upcote and Thornden belonged to the main bishopric manor, and their inhabitants held lands in Withington open fields, but nonetheless both were sited at some distance to the north of the Upper End of Withington.³⁸

Much can be learnt about Thornden from its well-preserved earthwork remains (Fig. 3). The site lies in a small valley ('a valley with thorn bushes' is the meaning of the place name) about 1.7 km to the north of Withington. The valley still contains thorn bushes, but its prominent features now are two pools, fed by a small stream. The northern boundary of the site is a well-defined bank, which is the grassed over remnant of a collapsed stone wall. The earthworks of

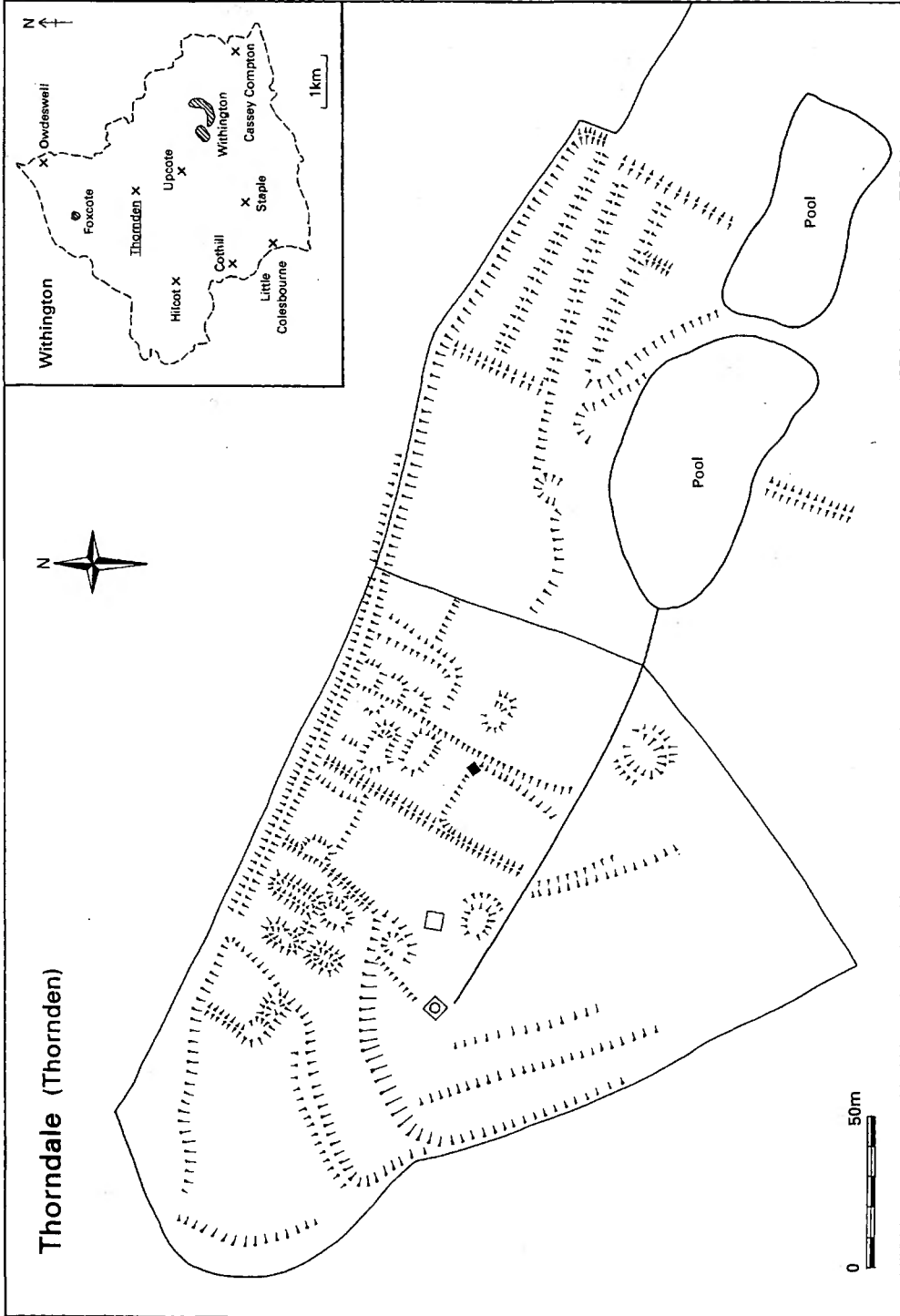


Fig. 3. Earthwork remains of the hamlet of Thornden in Withington.

five or six tofts, marked by banks, some of which were once stone walls, are sited in a row along the north slope of the valley. Building remains, in some cases rectangular platforms, in others well-defined foundation walls, are visible towards the higher end of the tofts. From the west, the first toft contains earthworks of a single building, the second contains the well-preserved remains of four buildings, the third a platform, the fourth two buildings, the fifth probably a single building with three compartments running down the slope, and the sixth, if it is a toft, lacks evidence of buildings. There are pens and paddocks defined by banks to the east of the settlement, and to the south-west some of the toft boundaries seem to take in land to the south of the stream, where there are lynchets suggestive of cultivation.

The history of the site based on the earthworks would begin with possible pre-medieval cultivation represented by some of the lynchets to the south-west. Then a settlement was formed in the Middle Ages, with a coherent plan and a common boundary. The tofts were not, however, of equal width, so the plan may have evolved, with new tofts being laid out at different times or by different people. Near the settlement small enclosures were set out for some agricultural purpose, perhaps for penning sheep. When the settlement declined, one toft seems to have continued to be occupied with a house and buildings, likely to have been a barn and housing for animals. Eventually this last survival was abandoned, and at some point the adjoining Thorndale Farm was built.

This interpretation of the physical remains happily coincides with the evidence of documents. The survey of Withington manor in 1299 lists a number of holdings each of a half-yardland (20 acres or 8 hectares of arable), one of which is said to belong to John Quenward 'of Thornden'. Another tenant was called John de Thorndene, and the next four tenants in the list were called 'de Thornden', making a total of six who apparently lived in the hamlet. One of them, Robert de Thorndone (a variant spelling of the name), also held a messuage, a curtilage and 2 acres, and an acre for 'making and keeping the lord's curtilage'.³⁹ In the later Middle Ages the hamlet, in parallel with many others, went into decline. Nearby Hilcot was reported uninhabited in 1381, but Thornden may have lost its tenants more gradually.⁴⁰ Holdings of a messuage and a half-yardland and a messuage and a yardland are recorded there in 1507 and in 1528. By 1529 William Laurens's composite holding of about 240 acres (100 hectares) appears in the bishopric court rolls, including 'two tofts with a close adjacent and two yardlands called Thorndens', which could be taken to mean that most of the land in the hamlet had fallen into the hands of a single tenant. The use of the word toft implies that the houses had decayed, and the tenant of this land and his successors lived in a house in Withington village.⁴¹

While this evidence gives us a satisfying picture of the hamlet in its later phases, it leaves us uncertain about its origins. It may have been an early settlement, dating back to the 9th century or earlier, the inhabitants of which were omitted from inclusion in Withington village. On the other hand Thornden may have been a new, secondary settlement, formed in the 12th or 13th centuries, perhaps recruiting its tenants from Withington. The pens next to the hamlet are likely to have been made for the lord's sheep, so perhaps they provided the nucleus around which peasants were settled or where they gathered. The enclosed pens may have been the 'curtilage' which Robert de Thorndone was expected to 'keep'. The plan form is a miniature version of many larger 'row' villages in the Cotswolds, and like the villages, the Thornden plots or tofts varied in size, suggesting a piecemeal growth. The row form was well suited to the valley site, but it was not dictated by topography in every case. A linear settlement with regularly spaced houses was evidently a cultural preference. In short, explaining the early history of a small place like Thornden presents us with the same range of problems as does the interpretation of larger villages.

The hamlets and farmsteads in parishes such as Withington and Sevenhampton contrast with parishes further east in the Cotswolds in which almost all of the inhabitants lived in a single village. The dispersed settlements must be connected with the large size of the territories within which the settlements lay, and with the presence of substantial amounts of woodland. The woodland influenced the settlement pattern partly because assarts tended to result in isolated farmsteads in the clearings and partly because large areas of wood had an effect on the whole agrarian economy.

A small-scale example of the influence of woodland on the settlement pattern comes from Norton Subedge on the north slopes of the Cotswolds. The bulk of the population of Norton, amounting to about 20 households in the early 14th century, lived in a nucleated village surrounded by open fields on the clay lowlands below the Cotswold scarp. That village is now totally deserted (Fig. 4). At Burnt Norton, however, on the crest of the Cotswold edge about 2 km south-east of the village, can be seen the earthwork remains of a small settlement which originally contained perhaps two households (Fig. 5). Slight hollows and platforms are visible within a rectangular enclosure, served by a hollow way running down the hill and surrounded by ridge-and-furrow. Burnt Norton stands on the edge of an area of woodland; among the Norton Subedge taxpayers of 1327 was John atte Grove, whose surname suggests that he was living apart from his neighbours and near the wood.⁴² The lord may have established a tenant there to act as woodward, or a tenant may have carved out an assart on the edge of the wood. In view of our perception of earlier settlement patterns, an alternative explanation may be that this was the sole survivor of a number of dispersed hamlets in a pre-village landscape, perhaps when Norton belonged to a large estate based on Mickleton.

My second type of isolated settlement is the water mill built away from a village in order to take advantage of the best flow of water and most convenient site for building dams and leats. Aston Blank or Cold Aston contained two separate villages between the late 12th and early 14th centuries, Aston itself and Little Aston in the valley of the Windrush.⁴³ On the bank of the river opposite Little Aston stood a mill, and, although it belonged to the manor of Lower Slaughter, the miller was a prominent figure in the Little Aston community. The mill which served the manor of Aston Blank lay about 300 m from the main village, in a stream valley (Fig. 6). It may be mentioned in Domesday and is certainly recorded in the early 14th century.⁴⁴ Although it was abandoned in the later Middle Ages, the earthworks of dams, a leat and hollow way are clearly visible, together with the remains of the mill itself, which consist of the turf-covered foundations of a substantial building almost 30 m long, with three compartments. The south end would have contained the water wheel and machinery, but the other two rooms presumably were used as the mill house.

Mills which were sited at a little distance from their village are not uncommon—an example can be seen at Windrush.⁴⁵ Mills which were associated with hamlets, and which may have served as a nucleus around which settlement formed on the edge of parishes, as at Little Aston, stood on the junction of Stowell and Chedworth parishes, where the hamlet was called Gothurst, and also at Coate mill between Eastleach Martin and Eastleach Turville. A third case is at Syreford on the eastern edge of Whittington parish.⁴⁶

Like mills, sheepcotes were sometimes built at a distance from villages, often by the lords of manors, and these are my third type of 'non-village' settlement. At Manless Town in Brimpsfield and at Hilcot in Withington (Fig. 7), they were built over the remains of peasant houses, after the village had been abandoned and the fields converted to sheep pasture.⁴⁷ On upland pastures, like those at Kinton Hill and Chalk Hill in Temple Guiting, and at Elmont in Beckford (on Bredon Hill, an outlier of the Cotswolds) they can be regarded as settlements, because the groups of buildings include apparent dwellings. The documents show that they were occupied



Fig. 4. Aerial photograph of the earthworks of the deserted village of Norton Subedge, from the north-east. The moated site to the south is the site of the manor house, and the hollow ways, boundary banks and ditches define rectangular and triangular tofts where at least 15 peasant houses stood (the recorded population in 1327 was *c.* 20). Photograph taken in 1955. Crown Copyright/MOD.

seasonally by shepherds, dairy maids and other workers, who looked after the sheep grazing the uplands in the summer. Shepherds would have lived there temporarily again in the winter when they were tending and feeding the flocks which were kept indoors.⁴⁸ A few of these buildings became permanent farms when the pastures were leased out separately, though this is difficult to demonstrate from material evidence as the construction of modern farm buildings tends to remove traces of the earlier structures.⁴⁹

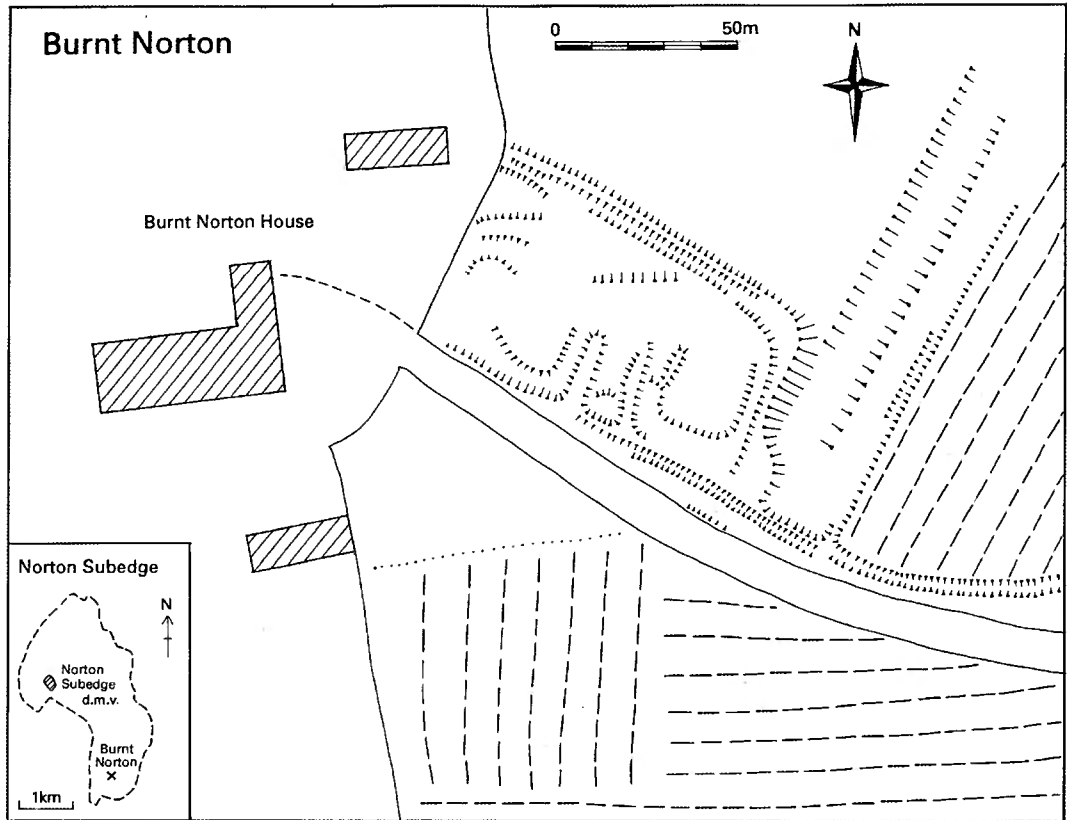


Fig. 5. Earthworks marking the site of a small settlement at Burnt Norton in Weston Subedge parish (once in the township of Norton Subedge).

An upland centre for flock management has recently been identified at Compton Abdale, a parish of about 800 hectares in which settlement was concentrated in the central village. The site lies 2 km south of the village, on the sloping side of the Coln valley (Fig. 8). The earthworks form a neat rectangle, 160 by 100 m, defined by perimeter banks (originally stone walls), ditches, lynchets and scarps, which begins on the bank of the river and stretches up the side of the valley. The rectangle lies within a larger enclosure about 300 m across. The earthworks belong to a number of phases, which are difficult to disentangle. The latest development on the site was the digging of a ditch or leat, designed to take water from the river and through the earthworks after they had gone out of use. This feature apparently served as a park boundary in the early 18th century and it may have been constructed near to that date.⁵⁰ Within the original rectangular enclosure the most prominent feature is a large sheepcote, terraced into the hill slope on the north-east side. The building was divided into three compartments, with a total length of 66 m and a width of 8 m. It could have held a flock of 500 sheep.⁵¹ Below this was a series of terraces, on the first of which can be seen the foundations of a building, a rectangular yard-like depression and two platforms. On the next, above the leat, there are two more small platforms and well-defined foundations of a small house. Below the leat is another sheepcote, which may have gone

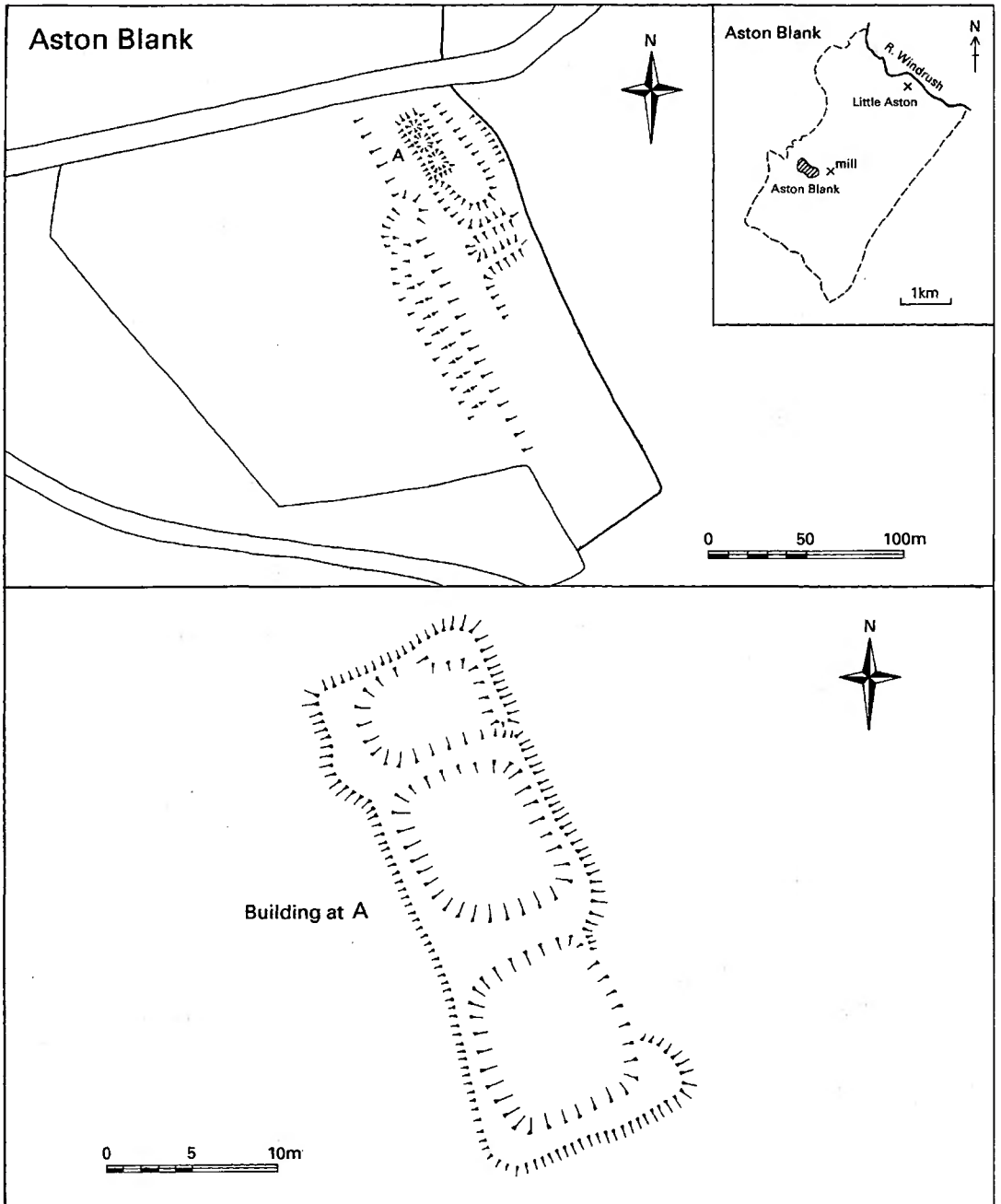


Fig. 6. Earthworks of the mill site at Aston Blank.



Fig. 7. Aerial photograph of earthworks at Hilcot in Withington, from the north-east. The site lies in a pasture field sloping down to the brook. The most prominent features are the foundations of the walls of a sheepcote containing two compartments. This overlies the toft boundaries and remains of peasant houses of a hamlet of no more than six houses, which lay alongside the curving hollow way which runs down the slope roughly parallel to a modern wall and track. The hamlet is known to have been uninhabited in 1381. Photograph taken in 1964. Cambridge University.

out of use during the life of the site, and it again is associated with some rectangular depressions, and two buildings, of which the larger one to the south-east is especially prominent.

This complex of buildings was designed for managing the flocks which grazed on the nearby pasture and meadow, and on the open fields on the south side of the village. The sheep could have been kept indoors in the winter, and the smaller buildings were likely to have been used

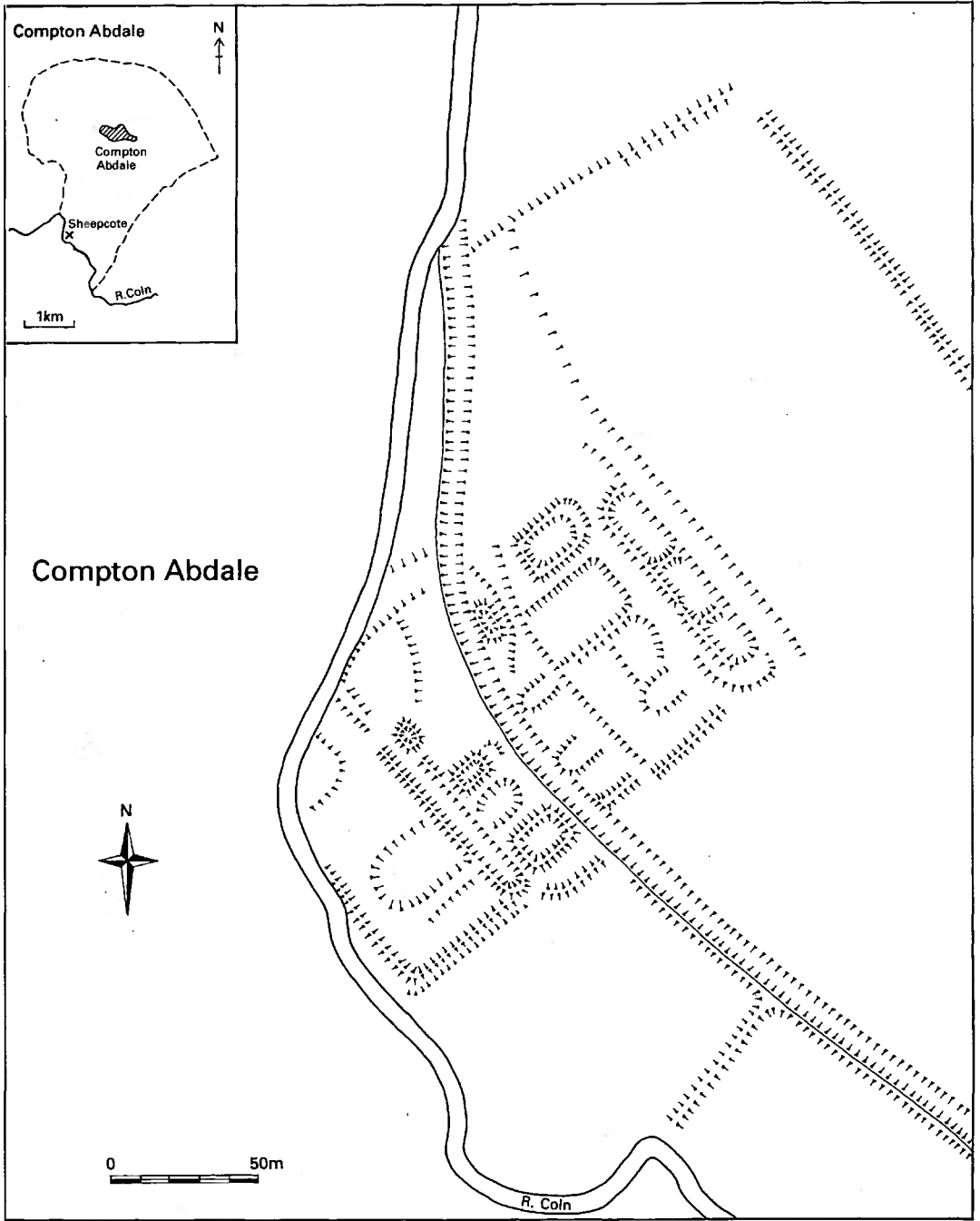


Fig. 8. Earthworks marking the site of a sheepcote and associated buildings in Compton Abdale.

to house shepherds and to store hay and fodder, tar and medicines, redde for marking, and equipment such as vessels for the dairy. Sheepskins would also have accumulated through the year for eventual sale. The advantage of the riverside location lay in the ease with which hay could have been carted for storage in readiness for the winter, and the flocks could have been washed here. These structures would have been built for the lords of Compton, the archbishops of York. Although this estate is poorly documented, by analogy with other large church estates the flocks of its lowland manors (Churchdown, Hucclecote, Bishop's Norton, Shurdington and Great Witcombe, all in the Vale) would have been driven on to the hills in the summer, and in June all of the animals gathered at one place for washing and shearing.⁵² On other estates important officials supervised this occasion and met a wool merchant to fix the price and seal the bargain for the sale of the whole clip. Such events could well have taken place at this site, and some of the buildings may have been used to accommodate visitors. A possible explanation of the substantial building on the east side of the earthworks, just to the south-west of the modern leat, is that this was a dwelling for a farmer, who would have taken over the sheep pasture in the 15th and 16th centuries, and who found it convenient to live at the centre of his operations. Such isolated farmers' houses were also being built at the end of the Middle Ages on pastures which had replaced villages and their fields, for example at Little Aston in Aston Blank. Here the farm house which is still in use, sited on the edge of the former village street, contains late medieval fabric.⁵³

Another recently discovered sheepcote site was not in a remote place on the hills, but belongs to my fourth category of non-village settlements, the monastic grange. The site lies to the south of the house and farm buildings of Hazleton in Rodmarton, which was a possession from the 12th to the 16th centuries of Kingswood Abbey, a Cistercian house founded in the woodlands of the western Cotswolds. Fig. 9 shows two adjacent buildings set at right angles, one 35 by 7 m, the other 40 by 9 m; the larger structure, to the east, appears to have been added at a later date. Both buildings were apparently occupied at the same time, and were capable between them of housing about 650 sheep. They are associated with rectangular enclosures and hollows, presumably yards, and a small rectangular building, which could have provided accommodation for shepherds or storage space. The smaller sheepcote was built into the edge of a terraced road, which ran for 400 m to the south of the site, along which a series of banks defined small fields or pens. This complex of structures for managing sheep stood as an outlier to the south of buildings now incorporated in a modern farmyard, which includes the remains of a medieval barn and a large cruck-framed building.⁵⁴

In its early days the settlement of Hazleton must have been developing as a nucleated village, as eight peasants and 17 slaves are recorded there in 1086. After its transfer (in a complicated series of transactions) to the monks of Kingswood in the mid 12th century the peasants seem to disappear—they may have been moved to Culkerton, another Kingswood property nearby—and in 1240 the grange, which cultivated a large area of arable as well as keeping livestock, had a staff of 17, but these seem to have been living-in servants rather than tenants.⁵⁵ The abbey evidently ran into debt as the Hazleton grange, and another property near Tetbury, were leased on advantageous terms in 1318 to the Florentine bankers, the Peruzzi, who seem to have used the premises for a large-scale wool dealing business. Later the grange was farmed to English lessees.⁵⁶ As we are ignorant of the precise date of the sheepcotes, we do not know if they were built during the time when the grange was run by the abbey, or during its phase of management by the Italians, or when it was in the hands of farmers in the late 14th century or later.

Hazleton in Rodmarton must stand here as an example of a once considerable scatter of granges and isolated monastic properties across the Cotswolds. In addition to the eight granges belonging to Kingswood, mainly in the vicinity of Wotton-under-Edge and Tetbury, a grange

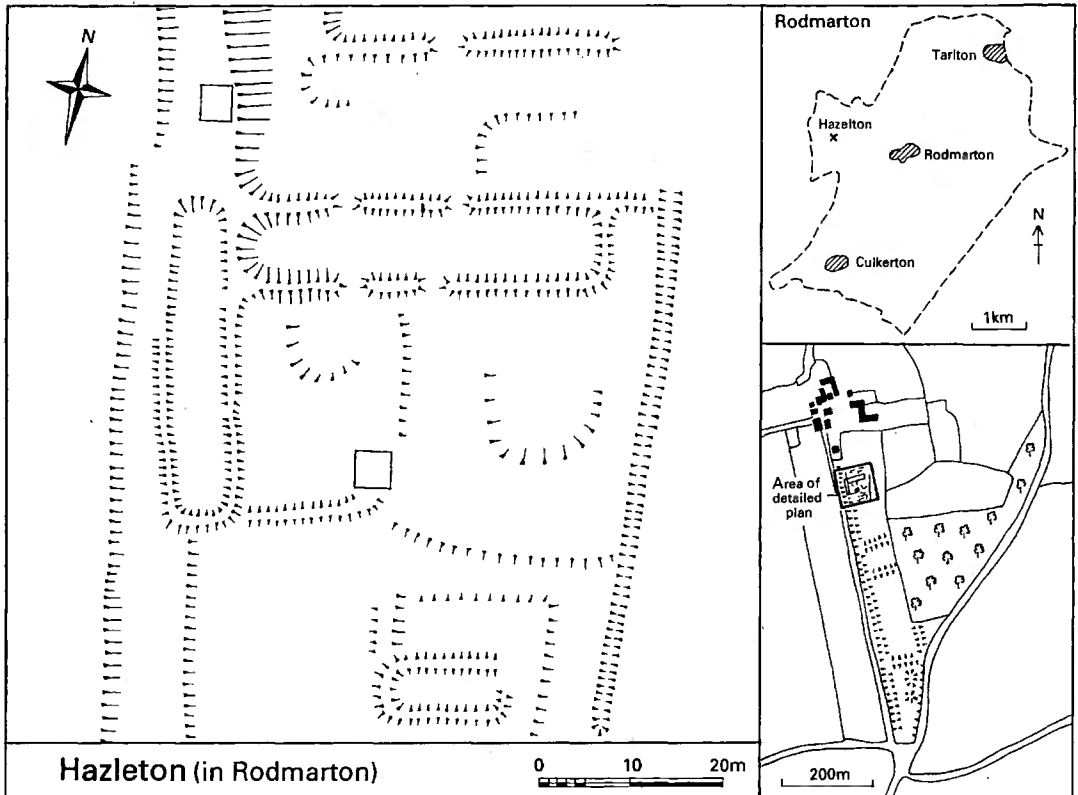


Fig. 9. Earthworks of a sheepcote and (inset) associated pens at Hazleton in Rodmarton.

belonging to the monks of Bruern (Oxfordshire) was located at Hinchwick in Condicote, and Combe to the south of Chipping Campden was established by the monks of Bordesley Abbey (Worcestershire).⁵⁷ A well-preserved site in Dowdeswell parish, in which three buildings lay within a rectangular moated area, called Temple Dowdeswell, belonged to the Knights Templar and was administered from Temple Guiting (Fig. 10).⁵⁸ Granges occupying former villages sites, like Hazleton in Rodmarton, were not common: the majority were the results of the monks acquiring and adapting small settlements. The Benedictines and Augustinians who occupied so much land on the hills usually based their agriculture on traditional manors or rectories, which were generally located in nucleated villages. Occasionally they also held more isolated properties, like Winchcombe Abbey's establishment at Corndean in Winchcombe parish where in the later Middle Ages monks went to be bled and rested, or its pasture at Rossley in a detached portion of Withington parish.⁵⁹ Whether they belonged to the new or the older religious orders, these properties which were developed by the monks in the 12th and 13th centuries away from villages had mostly been founded as farmsteads or hamlets by laymen.

To sum up, we are right in stating that nucleated villages were predominant medieval settlement forms in the Cotswolds. But this generalization needs considerable qualification. Before the 10th century the dispersed settlements predominated, and even in the high Middle Ages hamlets and farmsteads persisted in the larger parishes, especially those with areas of woodland



Fig. 10. Aerial photograph of the site of Temple Dowdeswell in Dowdeswell parish, from the north. The site consists of a very regular rectangular moated enclosure, containing three buildings surrounding a yard. These were presumably a house and two agricultural buildings for a tenant of the Templars. Some of the boundary banks and cultivation remains in the adjacent field may also be medieval, but there has been much more recent disturbance, including a curved track for training horses. The boundary to the north marks the edge of Sandywell Park. Photograph taken in 1964. Cambridge University.

in the west of the region. In the 12th and 13th centuries, when the villages had come into existence, new dispersed settlements were being created with the foundation of monastic granges and sheepcotes. Towards the end of the Middle Ages farmers' houses and sheepcotes occupied former village sites.

Changes in Villages and Settlements 1100–1550

In the 12th and 13th centuries villages were being adapted to new circumstances: the population was increasing, both lords and peasants were responding to the rise in the market for produce, and relations between lords and their tenants were changing. In the case of villages with complex plans, such as Great Rissington, streets and groups of houses are likely to have been added when the number of villagers doubled between 1086 and c. 1300. Excavation at Kemble shows that a new section of the village was settled for the first time in the 12th and 13th centuries.⁶⁰ The village could also be reorganized. At Hillsley a new manorial centre, a ring-work, was built in the 11th or 12th century, and an area of ridge-and-furrow was added, either to the demesne or to the village fields.⁶¹ In the western Cotswolds the already ubiquitous dispersed settlements increased in number with the clearance of woodland and the building of new hamlets and farmsteads, such as the small settlement at Ebley in Stonehouse, where a boundary fence and a timber building occupied a new site in the 12th century. At Bishop's Cleeve the main settlements at Cleeve itself and Woodmancote had grown before the Conquest, but the hamlet at Wick was probably founded later. It was located on the hill above the villages near assarts which are recorded c. 1170.⁶²

The impact of the market on peasant society in the 13th century is reflected in the growing proportion of rents in cash, which could only have been paid by peasants selling produce. The pottery and small finds from excavations, along with references in documents to clothing, agricultural implements and household equipment such as brass pots, show that peasants had a sufficient surplus to buy manufactured goods. Excavations at Ebley and other sites confirm the conclusion at Upton in Blockley that buildings with stone foundations replaced earthfast timber construction in the 13th century. Cotswold stone foundations required a considerable amount of labour and some expenditure of cash. They supported timber superstructures which may also have cost the peasant dearly in carriage costs and carpenters' wages. Houses were less easily rebuilt and moved, giving the village plan a greater degree of permanency.

The substantial remains left by Cotswold rural houses from the 13th and 14th centuries might encourage the belief that the peasants enjoyed a high level of prosperity. The tax assessments of the early 14th century for the Gloucestershire Cotswolds suggest otherwise, as the amount of taxation levied per square mile was near to the national mean, and less than that found in Oxfordshire and Berkshire, for example.⁶³ A striking feature of Cotswold peasant society was the persistence of large holdings, in particular the full yardlands found on many manors, which are all the more remarkable in view of the unusually large size of the yardlands, which often exceeded 40 acres (16 hectares), compared with a national average of 30 acres.⁶⁴ It was evidently thought that the returns from the land might be dangerously low if holdings were divided into half- and quarter-yardlands as happened in many other parts of the country.

Landlords charged relatively low levels of rent. The Cotswolds were dominated more than most parts of England by the estates of rich Church lords, who were usually more oppressive than the laity, and a high proportion of the tenants, often two thirds or more, held land by customary tenure, and were therefore more vulnerable to demands for heavy labour services and high tallages, entry fines and other dues. In spite of these disadvantages from the peasants' perspective, the cash value of rents and labour services often rose no higher than 4*d.* per acre, and entry fines, which reached as high a figure as 24*d.* per acre in other parts of England in the early 14th century, averaged 6*d.* per acre in 1340–1 on the Cotswold manors of Winchcombe Abbey.⁶⁵ Gloucestershire tenants resisted their lords' demands, as shown in the Bourton-on-the-Hill dispute between the peasants and Westminster Abbey over labour service in the early 14th century, and individual tenants of Gloucester Abbey were willing to pay large lump sums

in the 13th century in order to be released from the variable demands to which customary tenants were liable, and to pay a fixed leasehold rent in lieu of services and dues.⁶⁶ The main reason for the relatively low rents must have been the lords' awareness that tenants would not have been able to afford heavy burdens in view of their modest agricultural profits.

The agrarian crisis when it arrived in the early 14th century hit the Cotswolds earlier and harder than most other parts of the country. Manorial records refer to the poverty of tenants and the dilapidation of buildings. Pinbury, on the estate of the nuns of Caen, on high ground to the north of Cirencester, was a small village with a dozen yardlands, and as early as 1273–90 the proceedings in the lord's court do not suggest much economic health. When holdings changed hands one incoming tenant was not required to pay any fine at all; the highest fine recorded was 6*s.* 8*d.* for a yardland, and a half-yardland was obtained for only 2*s.*, which translates into 1*d.*–2*d.* per acre. Tenants were being required to maintain and rebuild houses, an obligation which usually appears as a major problem not in the 13th century but after the epidemic of 1348–9 when tenants were scarce. Perhaps because of its remoteness from the estate centre at Minchinhampton, the nuns' administrators found it difficult to control the villagers, who were subject to the domination of a wealthy office-holding tenant family, the Johans. This may have made life difficult for the other inhabitants.⁶⁷

In the early 14th century villages were beginning to shrink in size. Eyford, near Stow-on-the-Wold, had a greatly reduced tax-paying population as early as 1327. In the 1341 enquiries into the tax of the ninth, 17 Gloucestershire parishes, mostly on the hills, recorded complaints of people leaving their holdings, land lying uncultivated, and other fundamental troubles.⁶⁸ The problems can be shown to have had substance, and not to be just taxpayers' exaggerated grumbling, because a number of the places were shrinking or deserted soon afterwards, at Aylworth, Harford, Little Aston and Wontley in Bishop's Cleeve.

By 1381, after the Black Death of 1348–9, Bidfield, Hilcot, Lasborough and Ledgemore were said to be uninhabited, Aylworth and Castlett were reduced to a single household, and Aston in Avening, Bagendon and Elmestree were very shrunken. The lord of Upton in Blockley was paying the king's taxes in 1383 on behalf of the defunct village.⁶⁹ In other regions villages more often became deserted or severely shrunken at the end of the 14th and in the 15th century, so the Cotswolds were quite unusual in losing so many settlements by the early 1380s.

By c. 1500 another dozen Cotswold settlements were deserted, and many others had shrunk in size, leaving distinctive earthworks on the edge of an existing village. The earthwork remains of six buildings, perhaps lying in three or four tofts, at Little Colesbourne suggest that that village was once larger, for example.⁷⁰ We underestimate the effects of the shrinkage if we judge its extent from the physical remains that are visible now, because some villages were reduced to a very low level and have revived in modern times. The East End of Sherborne appears to the modern visitor as a neatly planned 19th-century estate village, built on the abandoned site of a dense and extensive medieval settlement. The earthworks of deserted houses and tofts, forming rows along the main street just like their modern successors, are visible behind and alongside the modern dwellings. Evidently the 50 or so houses of the mid 14th century had largely been abandoned by the end of the Middle Ages. At Hazleton (near Northleach) the once large village had been reduced to only five tenants and farmers in the mid 16th century, and the 1522 military survey suggests a similar situation at Calmsden, Condicote and Coln St. Denis.⁷¹ Between the 1320s and the 1520s a conservative estimate of the number of dwelling houses abandoned in Cotswold villages, hamlets and farms would be in excess of 3,000.

Contraction affected all forms of settlement: hamlets or small villages were most likely to disappear completely. The majority of larger villages were shrunken. The phenomenon of the total desertion of a village, where a parish or township was emptied by the abandonment of the

central settlement, often accompanied by the conversion of its fields to a pasture, is found in a handful of cases: Boxwell, Lasborough, Pinbury, Roel, Sezincote, Stowell and Sudeley are the best examples, and even this list includes some villages of modest size. Such upheavals are more commonly encountered in the low lying part of Gloucestershire to the north of the hills, and in the midland counties to the north and east.

The explanation for the reduction in the size of Cotswold settlements is partly the overall fall in the numbers of people, which was the case in almost every part of England. The crisis in the region before 1348 shows that the Black Death hastened rather than began the decline. Immediately after the plague of 1348–9 no village is likely to have lost all of its people at once, but rather the mortality opened up opportunities for migration. Some disadvantaged villages suffered a long-term imbalance between emigration and immigration, as is apparent at Roel, and parts of the Cotswolds lost population in comparison with the adjacent lowlands.⁷²

The malaise in the region's settlements was not just an ecological problem, though cultivators on the hills are known to have suffered from low arable yields, and they must have been especially vulnerable when sheep disease occasionally deprived them of an important cash crop (wool) and valuable manure. The social imbalances which afflicted the villages, by which the yardlanders and half-yardlanders depended on the labour of a small number of cottagers and smallholders, were not their main difficulty. But it is true that when the plagues and migrations reduced the number of smallholders, the cultivators became dependent on servants who were not always easy to recruit. The deepening problems of the village economies was not just a question of the breakdown in village solidarity and the rise of wealthy and acquisitive individuals, like Henry Chander of Roel who took over five holdings from his neighbours. Such people, however, contributed to the decay of villages by taking a large share of the common pasture and refusing to observe the disciplines of the open fields.⁷³ Nor can the troubles of the Cotswold villages be attributed solely to the policies of the lords, who while they maintained serfdom as long as possible, thereby encouraging migration, cannot be found often to have removed villages deliberately to create sheep pastures. At Wontley in Bishop's Cleeve the lord was slow to take advantage; the abandoned village site was turned into a profitable enclosure *c.* 1480, a century after the villagers had departed.⁷⁴

No single factor can therefore be invoked to explain the restructuring of the rural landscape in the two centuries after *c.* 1320, but rather a combination of all of the changes mentioned. We should beware of taking too negative a view of the period. Many people moved from their villages, not out of misery and despair, but in the hope of improving their lot. Many of the settlements that disappeared were small and restricted, and their inhabitants departed for villages and towns with better facilities and prospects. Some of the shifts in settlement at this time reflect important social changes, as lords leased out their demesnes and pasture, and tenant farmers took over the management of these valuable assets and on occasion went to live on their leasehold lands. Within the peasant community the yeomen who engrossed holdings and took over their neighbours' land were also creating new units of production, more efficient and market oriented than the yardland holdings of earlier generations. Most villages were reduced in size but survived. The peasants were not necessarily demoralized by their new circumstances, as they were individually better off than their predecessors, and a community spirit persisted. A clear demonstration of the commitment to collective assets is provided by the church building of the late 15th and early 16th centuries. At Bledington, for example, we know that peasant families paid for new windows as their names appear in the stained glass. Many Cotswold villages remained mainly agricultural, but Bibury, which appears depressed in its agrarian economy after the Black Death, is depicted in the poll tax of 1381 as a local commercial centre, with eight craftsmen and traders.⁷⁵

Finally, an example of remarkable growth in the midst of the deserted settlements and shrunken villages deserves to be highlighted. As the population of the whole country was halved, the Stroud valleys went through a remarkable economic boom, as their cloth industry, which had begun before the Black Death, expanded to satisfy both domestic and overseas consumers. The population of the new parish of Stroud increased threefold, from about 70 households in 1327 to more than 200 in 1551. Rodborough was quite sparsely populated in the early 14th century, with no more than two dozen manorial tenants, but by 1522 40 households were listed in the military survey, which omitted poorer inhabitants. In these two parishes and in Bisley new fulling mills were being constructed. Nearby the clothiers built their houses, and hamlets grew to accommodate the cloth workers attracted to the valleys.⁷⁶ This mushroom growth continued in the 17th and 18th centuries, and most of the existing buildings date from that period or later, but the origin of these industrial settlements at the end of the Middle Ages should not be forgotten, and deserves more attention from researchers.

Conclusion

Villages were formed in parts of the Cotswolds between the 10th and 12th centuries. Before then people lived in small settlements, and these 'non-villages' continued in part of the region, especially in the wooded west. Even as the villages were forming, various pressures and influences created small and scattered settlements—assarts, mill houses and mill hamlets, farmsteads (some of which became monastic granges) and establishments from which pastures were managed. When the villages were shrinking and some of the smaller ones being deserted, sheepcotes, farms and industrial hamlets ensured that the numbers of 'non-villages' became an even more prominent feature of the Cotswold settlement pattern. The growth of small settlements suggests some of the factors which led to the development of nucleated villages. Villages are closely linked with extensive arable cultivation, and some of the non-villages were used for pastoral farming, or they were created when woodlands were cleared. When arable farming became less profitable in the period after 1320, some villages shrank or became redundant. Lords played a part in founding villages and hamlets. Both show signs of planning, though this is not always as regular as first appears. In the case of mills, sheepcotes and granges, lords set up isolated settlements which provided the most profitable way of exploiting resources. Peasants also participated in the growth of settlements, by gathering in villages which served as the most convenient and equitable base for tilling the fields. They settled near lords' buildings, such as manor houses, churches and mills. It was largely through the initiatives of migrants in the later Middle Ages that villages lost population, and migration ensured that new scattered settlements grew in the industrial valleys.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to the Society for electing me as its President, which gave me the opportunity to make this address. The Society and its officers welcomed me and showed me many courtesies during my year in office, and in particular David Smith, the secretary. A generous grant from the Society helped me to pay for the illustrations. David Aldred has worked with me on some of the research used here, and the interpretations have been influenced by our discussions. The staff of the *Victoria County History*, Nicholas Herbert and John Juřica, have visited sites with me and discussed the issues that they raise. I have benefited from conversations with Mick Aston. Grenville Astill invited me to visit his work at Combe, and Neil Holbrook involved me in a research project on rural settlement. Joe Bettey advised on granges of Kingswood. I have a

number of debts to Martin Ecclestone, including information about Rodborough. I have also been helped in field work and planning by Jenny Dyer, Paul Hargreaves, Roy Sladden and Eric Vince. Permission to visit and plan the sites illustrated here was given by Mr. Brierley of Thorndale Farm, Viscount Sandon of Burnt Norton, Carter Jonas for Aston Blank, Mr. Owen of the Stowell Park Estate for Compton Abdale, and Lady Brinckman of Hazleton Manor. Andy Isham prepared the drawings, and Nancy Moore typed the footnotes. The aerial photographs were generously supplied by the Cambridge University Air Photograph Library, which gave permission for Figs. 7 and 10 to be reproduced. Fig. 4 is Crown Copyright/MOD, and is reproduced with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office.

Notes

1. C. Brace, 'Looking Back: the Cotswolds and English National Identity, c. 1890–1950', *Jnl. Hist. Geography* 25 (1999), 502–16.
2. As recently as 1980 a plan of Naunton based on the modern O.S. map could be published as 'a typical Anglo-Saxon riverside settlement': R. and M. Beckinsale, *The English Heartland* (London, 1980), 50.
3. B.K. Roberts and S. Wrathmell, *An Atlas of Rural Settlement in England* (London, 2000), 9–26.
4. H.S.A. Fox, 'The People of the Wolds in English Settlement History', in *The Rural Settlements of Medieval England*, ed. M. Aston, D. Austin and C. Dyer (Oxford, 1989), 77–101; idem, 'Wolds before 1500', in *The English Rural Landscape*, ed. J. Thirsk (Oxford, 2000), 50–61.
5. On different types of village plan, see B.K. Roberts, *The Making of the English Village* (London, 1987); C. Lewis, P. Mitchell-Fox and C. Dyer, *Village, Hamlet and Field, Changing Medieval Settlements in Central England* (Macclesfield, 2001), 49–51.
6. Upton: R.H. Hilton and P.A. Rahtz, 'Upton, Gloucestershire, 1959–1964', *Trans. B.G.A.S.* 85 (1966), 70–146; Roel and Hawling: D. Aldred and C. Dyer, 'A Medieval Cotswold Village: Roel, Gloucestershire', *Trans. B.G.A.S.* 109 (1991), 139–70; Eastington: *Victoria County History of Gloucestershire (V.C.H. Glos.)* 9, 117, plate 40; Sherborne: R.H. Hilton, 'Winchcombe Abbey and the Manor of Sherborne', in *Gloucestershire Studies*, ed. H.P.R. Finberg (Leicester, 1957), 99–101.
7. P. Ellis, 'The Medieval Settlement at Hullasey, Coates', *Trans. B.G.A.S.* 102 (1984), 210–12; M. Aston and L. Viner, 'A Study of Deserted Villages in Gloucestershire', in *Archaeology in Gloucestershire*, ed. A. Saville (Cheltenham Art Gallery & Museums and the B.G.A.S., 1984), 284.
8. Hilton, 'Manor of Sherborne'; *V.C.H. Glos.* 9, 218–24; *ibid.* 7, 164–5.
9. The replanning of Hidcote and Hazleton is a discovery of my own field work in the first case, and work carried out jointly with David Aldred in the second. For Lower Slaughter, see C.C. Taylor, *Village and Farmstead. A History of Rural Settlement in England* (London, 1983), 152.
10. For Hazleton and Hidcote, see note 9 above; for Roel, Aldred and Dyer, 'Cotswold Village', 141–2.
11. J. Timby, 'Pottery in the Cotswolds AD 400–1000', in K. Wilkinson, L. Prosser and N. Holbrook, *The Origin, Development, Decline and Persistence of Cotswold Settlement* (Cotswold Archaeol. Trust, 1995), 64–70. The 11th- and 12th-century dates for the earliest pottery from village excavations or field-walking are based on information from nine places in the Cotswolds, mostly from *Trans. B.G.A.S.* 108–119 (1990–2001).
12. M. Gelling, *Signposts to the Past* (London, 1978), 173–5.
13. *V.C.H. Glos.* 7, 24, 27.
14. *Ibid.* 9, 167–72.
15. *The Place-Names of Gloucestershire*, ed. A.H. Smith (English Place-Name Soc. 38–41, 1964–5), 2, 18, 20.
16. D. Hooke, 'Village Development in the West Midlands', in *Medieval Villages*, ed. D. Hooke (Oxford, 1985), 134; Aldred and Dyer, 'Cotswold Village', 143–9.
17. G.B. Grundy, *Saxon Charters and Field Names of Gloucestershire* (B.G.A.S., 1935–6), 107–13.
18. Hooke, 'Village Development', 134–5.

19. N. Holbrook, 'The Patterns of Late and sub-Roman Settlement in the Cotswolds', in Wilkinson *et al.*, *Cotswold Settlement*, 27–35.
20. Royal Commission on Historical Monuments (England), *Iron Age and Romano-British Monuments in the Gloucestershire Cotswolds* (London, 1976), 1–3, 9–11, 30–1, 44–5, 49–50, 52 etc.
21. D. Hooke, 'Pre-Conquest Woodland: its Distribution and Usage', *Agric. Hist. Review* 37 (1989), 114.
22. Timby, 'Pottery'.
23. *Place-Names of Glos.* 1, 5, 14, 61; 4, 23–9; H.P.R. Finberg, 'Continuity or Cataclysm?', in H.P.R. Finberg, *Lucerna* (London, 1964), 13. For more discussion of British names, see below, pp. 103–6: A. Breeze, 'Chaceley, Meon, Prinknash, and Celtic Philology'.
24. *Current Archaeol.* 177 (2001), 397.
25. J. Bond and C. Lewis, 'The Earthworks of Hawling', *Trans. B.G.A.S.* 109 (1991), 169–70.
26. J. Whybra, *A Lost English County. Winchcombeshire in the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries* (Woodbridge, 1990).
27. H.P.R. Finberg, *Early Charters of the West Midlands* (Leicester, 1961), 51, 52, 56, 60, 61, 70. On these general tendencies, C. Dyer, *Making a Living in the Middle Ages* (New Haven and London, 2002), 18–42.
28. *Current Archaeol.* 177 (2001), 398.
29. E.G. Price, 'Frocester: Landscape and Settlement from the 5th Century to Modern Times', *Trans. B.G.A.S.* 116 (1998), 10–12, 18.
30. H.S.A. Fox, 'Approaches to the Adoption of the Midland System', in *The Origins of Open Field Agriculture*, ed. T. Rowley (London, 1981), 64–111; Lewis *et al.*, *Village, Hamlet and Field*, 191–205.
31. H.C. Darby and I.B. Terrett, *The Domesday Geography of Midland England* (Cambridge, 1954), 21–3, 428, 431; B.M.S. Campbell, *English Seigneurial Agriculture 1250–1450* (Cambridge, 2000), 70, 98–9; C. Dyer, 'Sheepcotes: Evidence for Medieval Sheepfarming', *Medieval Archaeol.* 39 (1995), 136–64.
32. Dom. Bk., f. 167.
33. Bond and Lewis, 'Hawling', 109.
34. The reference to the peasants' wood is from an estate in the lowlands, Elmstone Hardwicke, but similar common facilities must have existed on the hills, A.J. Robertson, *Anglo-Saxon Charters* (Cambridge, 1939), 28–31.
35. The existence of such settlements in other parts of the country has been noted in C.C. Taylor, 'Dispersed Settlement in Nucleated Areas', *Landscape Hist.* 17 (1995), 27–34.
36. *V.C.H. Glos.* 9, 170–2.
37. *Ibid.* 7, 140–2; M. Ecclestone, 'The Name "Manless Town" in Brimpsfield Parish', *Glevensis* 31 (1998), 51–2; N. Smith, 'Manless Town, Brimpsfield: an Archaeological Survey', *Glevensis* 31 (1998), 52–9.
38. *V.C.H. Glos.* 9, 248–59. Thornden is at O.S. Nat. Grid SP 019169.
39. *Red Book of Worcester*, ed. M. Hollings (Worcs. Hist. Soc., 1934–50), 4, 359–63.
40. *The Poll Taxes of 1377, 1379 and 1381*, ed. C.C. Fenwick (British Academy, Rec. of Social and Economic History, new series 27, 1998), 288.
41. Worcestershire Record Office, ref. 009:1, BA 2636/177, 92509.
42. P. Franklin, *The Taxpayers of Medieval Gloucestershire* (Stroud, 1993), 62, lists 17 taxpayers, apart from the lord of the manor. The Burnt Norton site is at O.S. Nat. Grid SP 147416; the main village site is at SP 137433. It is sometimes called Lower Norton, but this is not an early name.
43. *V.C.H. Glos.* 9, 9–11; C. Dyer, 'The Rise and Fall of a Medieval Village: Little Aston (in Aston Blank), Gloucestershire', *Trans. B.G.A.S.* 105 (1987), 165–81.
44. *V.C.H. Glos.* 9, 17. The site is at O.S. Nat. Grid SP 133197.
45. *V.C.H. Glos.* 6, 182.
46. *V.C.H. Glos.* 9, 93, 215; *ibid.* 7, 55, 59; *ibid.* 9, 236, 242.
47. Dyer, 'Sheepcotes', 161
48. C. Dyer, 'Seasonal Settlement in Medieval Gloucestershire: Sheepcotes', in *Seasonal Settlement*, ed. H.S.A. Fox (Leicester, 1996), 25–33.
49. Dyer, 'Sheepcotes', 161.
50. *V.C.H. Glos.* 9, 33. The site is at O.S. Nat. Grid SP 052146.
51. Dyer, 'Sheepcotes', 151 gives the formula that each sheep occupied a square yard of floorspace.

52. Hilton, 'Manor of Sherborne', 111–13; C. Dyer, *Lords and Peasants in a Changing Society. The Estates of the Bishopric of Worcester, 680–1540* (Cambridge, 1980), 139.
53. *V.C.H. Glos.* 9, 11.
54. *Ibid.* 11, 234–8. The sheepcote is at O.S. Nat. Grid ST 929982; the main grange with its standing medieval buildings is at ST 928984.
55. Dom. Bk., f. 168; V.R. Perkins, 'Documents Relating to the Cistercian Monastery of St. Mary, Kingswood', *Trans. B.G.A.S.* 22 (1899), 179–256.
56. *V.C.H. Glos.* 11, 240–1; Public Record Office (P.R.O.), SC 12/7/70, f. 17.
57. E.S. Lindley, 'Kingswood Abbey, its Lands and Mills', *Trans. B.G.A.S.* 73 (1954), 115–91; *V.C.H. Glos.* 6, 67; P. Rahtz and S. Hirst, *Bordesley Abbey* (BAR Rep. 23, 1976), 16–19. I am grateful to Professor G. Astill for showing me the plan of earthworks at Combe which date from the period of the Bordesley grange there.
58. *V.C.H. Glos.* 9, 59.
59. G. Haigh, *The History of Winchcombe Abbey* (London, 1948), 84, 100; *V.C.H. Glos.* 9, 59.
60. R. King, A. Barber and J. Timby, 'Excavations at West Lane, Kemble: An Iron-Age, Roman and Saxon Burial Site and a Medieval Building', *Trans. B.G.A.S.* 114 (1996), 35–41.
61. B. Williams, 'Excavation of a Medieval Earthwork Complex at Hillesley, Hawkesbury, Avon', *Trans. B.G.A.S.* 105 (1987), 147–63. See also *Trans. B.G.A.S.* 116 (1998), 104.
62. A. Barber and G. Walker, 'Westwick Road, Ebley, Gloucestershire', in *Three Medieval Sites in Gloucestershire*, ed. N. Oakley (Cotswold Archaeol. Trust Occasional Paper 1, 2000), 1–14; *Medieval Settlement Research Group Annual Rep.* 5 (1990), 24.
63. *The Lay Subsidy of 1334*, ed. R.E. Glasscock (British Academy, Rec. of Social and Economic History 2, 1975), xxvii.
64. *Agrarian History of England and Wales*, ed. J. Thirsk, 2 (Cambridge, 1988), 663–8.
65. Gloucestershire Record Office, D 678/96.
66. B. Harvey, *Westminster Abbey and its Estates in the Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1977), 227–31; R.H. Hilton, 'Gloucester Abbey Leases of the Late Thirteenth Century', in R.H. Hilton, *The English Peasantry in the Later Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1975), 139–60.
67. P.R.O., SC 2/175/79, 80, 83.
68. *Agrarian Hist.* 2, 233–4; Franklin, *Taxpayers of Medieval Glos.*, 59; *Nonarum Inquisitiones in Curia Scaccarii* (Rec. Com., 1807), 407–15.
69. *Poll Taxes*, ed. Fenwick, 263, 270, 285, 288, 301, 303, 305 (this edition mistakes Ledgemore for Lowsmoor); Hilton and Rahtz, 'Upton', 83.
70. C. Parry, 'An Earthwork Survey at Little Colesbourne, Withington, Gloucestershire', *Trans. B.G.A.S.* 107 (1989), 223–8.
71. P.R.O., SC 2/175/1, f. 32; *The Military Survey of Gloucestershire, 1522*, ed. R.W. Hoyle (B.G.A.S., Glos. Rec. Series 6, 1993), 109, 121, 217. My observations of the earthworks at Sherborne were reported to the National Trust in 1990.
72. Aldred and Dyer, 'Cotswold Village', 154–8; R.H. Hilton, 'Social and Economic Evidence in Late Medieval English Tax Returns', in R.H. Hilton, *Class Conflict and the Crisis of Feudalism* (London, 1985), 253–67.
73. C. Dyer, 'Peasants and Farmers: Rural Settlements and Landscapes in an Age of Transition', in *The Age of Transition. The Archaeology of English Culture 1400–1600*, ed. D. Gaimster and P. Stampfer (Oxford, 1997), 66–7.
74. C. Dyer, 'Deserted Medieval Villages in the West Midlands', in C. Dyer, *Everyday Life in Medieval England* (London, 1994), 27–45; Dyer, *Lords and Peasants*, 245.
75. *Poll Taxes*, ed. Fenwick, 294.
76. E.M. Carus-Wilson, 'Evidence of Industrial Growth on some Fifteenth-Century Manors', in *Essays in Economic History*, ed. E.M. Carus-Wilson (London, 1962), 151–9; *V.C.H. Glos.* 11, 10, 100, 108–11; *Military Survey*, ed. Hoyle, 115–16; information from Martin Ecclestone.