Travel and the Communications Network in Late Saxon Wessex: a Review of the Evidence

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Abstract

This is an interdisciplinary dissertation examining travel and the communications network in Late Saxon Wessex, that is Berkshire, Devon, Dorset, Hampshire, Somerset and Wiltshire from *c.* 850 to 1066. In chapter 1, I have reviewed work in related areas in order to set my work in context and to determine how to approach such a wide-ranging topic. Chapter 2 sets the scene with a geographical description of Wessex. Chapter 3 looks at looks at changes in settlement patterns from the late Roman period, through to the Post-Conquest period. It concentrates on late Saxon settlements and their relationships to the communications network. Chapter 4 is an examination of the roads and rivers of Late Saxon Wessex, based on a sample of charter boundary clauses and place-names. It is concerned with usability, continuity from earlier systems, and the hierarchical organisation of routes. Chapter 5 is a discussion of the people who were using the communications network and what travelling was like for them. It looks at royal itineration, military travellers, those travelling for religious reasons and economic reasons, and the plight of the individual. The concluding chapter brings together information on settlements, roads and waterways, and journeys to create two models of the system of travel and communications. The first is descriptive and the second considers who was in control of various aspects of the system. It is concluded that the system was evolving during this period, that it was hierarchical and controlled from above, and that an interdisciplinary approach it needed in order to understand it.

Abbreviations

ASC s.a.: *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, sub annis*

ASE: *Anglo-Saxon England*

BAR: British Archaeological Reports, British Series

Berkshire I: Gelling, M. *The Place-Names of Berkshire.* Part I. *English Place-Name Society* XLIX (1973).

Berkshire II: Gelling, M. *The Place-Names of Berkshire.* Part II. *English Place-Name Society* L (1974).

Berkshire III: Gelling, M. *The Place-Names of Berkshire.* Part III. *English Place-Name Society* LI (1976).

Blackwell: Lapidge. M., Blair, J., Keynes, S. and Scragg, D., eds. *The Blackwell Encyclopedia of Anglo-Saxon England.* Oxford, 1999.

CBA: Council for British Archaeology

Devon I: Gover, J.E.B., Mawer, A. and Stenton, F.M. *The Place-Names of Devon*, Part I, *English Place-Name Society* VIII (1931).

Devon II: Gover, J.E.B., Mawer, A. and Stenton, F.M. *The Place-Names of Devon*, Part II, *English Place-Name Society* IX (1932).

Dorset I: Mills, A.D. *The Place-Names of Dorset,*. Part I, *English Place-Name Society* LII (1977).

Dorset II: Mills, A.D. *The Place-Names of Dorset.* Part II, *English Place-Name Society* LIII (1980).

Dorset III : Mills, A.D. *The Place-Names of Dorset,* Part III, *English Place-Name Society* LIX/LX (1989).

EETS: Early English Text Society

EHD I: Whitelock, D., ed. *English Historical Documents: volume I.* 2nd edn. Oxford, 1979.

EHD II: Douglas, D. C. and Greenaway, G. W., eds. *English Historical Documents: volume II.* 2nd ed. London, Oxford, 1981.

EHR: *English Historical Review*

EPNS: *English Place-Name Society*

Hampshire: Coates, R. *Hampshire Place-Names.* Southampton, 1993.

PDNHAS: *Proceedings of the Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society*

S: Sawyer, P. H. *Anglo-Saxon Charters: An Annotated List and Bibliography.* London, 1968.

Wiltshire: Gover, J.E.B., Mawer, A. and Stenton, F.M. *The Place-Names of Wiltshire, English Place-Name Society* XVI (1939).

Chapter 1
Introduction

Cultural landscape ". . . reflects the interplay between technology, environment, social structure, and the values of the society that shaped it."[1] Landscape studies can thus provide a window to the workings of past societies and there is a growing interest in landscape studies for Anglo-Saxon England.[2] But what is landscape?

Tim Ingold, in an article called 'Temporality and Landscape', defined landscape as not equivalent to land, nature or space; it is "the world as it is known to those who dwell therein, who inhabit its places and journey along the paths connecting them."[3] Taking this statement together with the above quoted passage from Trombold, the study of journeys and paths in Anglo-Saxon England should provide insight into that society. This subject has not been thoroughly treated in Anglo-Saxon England for according to G. Martin, "[f]ew aspects of medieval society have been more widely misunderstood than roads and their traffic."[4]

Martin may have overstated his case, but general studies on the Anglo-Saxon period have often overlooked the system of travel and communications. As David Pelteret pointed out, there was a complete lack of comment on roads and communications in important and influential works such as Stenton's *Anglo-Saxon England* and

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[1] C. D. Trombold, 'An introduction to the study of New World road networks', *Ancient Road Networks and Settlement Hierarchies in the New World*, Ed. C. D. Trombold (Cambridge, 1991) p. 1.

[2] For example: M. Aston and C. Lewis, eds., *The Medieval Landscape of Wessex* (Oxford, 1994); M. Gelling, *Place-Names in the Landscape* (London, 1984); Gelling, and A. Cole, *The Landscape of Place-Names* (Stamford, 2000); N. J. Higham, 'Old Light on the Dark Age Landscape: description of Britain in the *De Excidio Britanniae* of Gildas', *Journal of Historical Geography* 17, 4 (1991) p. 363-372; D. Hooke, *The Landscape of Anglo-Saxon England* (London, 1998); Hooke and S. Burnell, eds., *Landscape and Settlement in Britain AD 400-1066* (Exeter, 1995); R. Morris, *Churches in the Landscape* (London, 1989); A. Reynolds, *Later Anglo-Saxon England: Life & Landscape* (Stroud, 1999); T. Rowley, ed., *Anglo-Saxon Settlement and Landscape*, BAR 6, 1974; A. R. Rumble and A. D. Mills, eds., *Names, Places and People: An Onomastic Miscellany in Memory of John McNeal Dodgson* (Stamford, 1997).

[3] T. Ingold, 'The temporality of landscape', *World Archaeology* 25; 1 (1993) p. 157.

[4] G. H. Martin, 'Eleventh Century Communications', *Domesday Book Studies* (London, 1987), p. 62.

Richard Hodges's *Dark Age Economics*.[5] Pelteret believed that the poor nature of previous scholarship on Anglo-Saxon roads ". . . is a serious lacuna in our knowledge since the Anglo-Saxons were a very mobile set of peoples."[6] Furthermore, many scholars have only included short discussions of parts of the travel system in their works. For example, Dorothy Whitelock, in *The Beginnings of English Society*, touched on a few aspects of travel, such as hospitality and provisioning, but did not discuss them exhaustively.[7]

However, several scholars, some writing in the years just before Pelteret's article, have made detailed studies of aspects of travelling and the communications network.[8] Although scholars have viewed this subject in many different contexts, they have usually used one of two broad approaches. Generally, they have tended to look either at the physical lines of communication or at the actual journeys which were undertaken. Studies on the physical layout of the Anglo-Saxon communications network have most commonly focused on the land routes, that it on the courses

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[5]D. Pelteret, 'The Roads of Anglo-Saxon England', *Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Magazine* 79 (1985) p. 155. See also: F. M. Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England*, 3rd edn (Oxford, 1971); and R. Hodges, *Dark Age Economics: The origins of Towns and Trade, AD 600 - 1000* (London, 1982).

[6]Pelteret, 'The Roads of Anglo-Saxon England', p. 155.

[7]D. Whitelock, *The Beginnings of English Society*, (Harmondsworth, 1952).

[8]For example: M. Biddle, 'Seasonal Festivals and Residence: Winchester, Westminster and Gloucester in the Tenth to Twelfth Centuries', *Anglo-Norman Studies* viii (1986) p. 51-72; J. Campbell, 'Some Agents and Agencies of the Late Anglo-Saxon State', *Domesday Studies: Papers read at the Novocentenary Conference of the Royal Historical Society and the Institute of British Geographers*, ed., J. C. Holt (Woodbridge, 1986) p. 201-218; M. O. H. Carver, 'Pre-Viking traffic in the North Sea', *Maritime Celts, Frisians, and Saxons: Papers presented to a conference at Oxford in November 1988*, ed., S. McGrail, CBA Research Report 71 (1990) p. 117-125; T. Charles-Edwards, 'Early Medieval Kingship in the British Isles', *The Origins of Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms*, ed., Steven Bassett (London, 1989) p. 28-39; A. Cole, 'The Anglo-Saxon Traveller', *Nomina* 17 (1994) p. 7-18; C. Cubitt, *Anglo-Saxon Church Councils c. 650-850* (Leicester, 1995); R. Fleming, 'Domesday Estates of the King and the Godwines: A Study in Late Saxon Politics', *Speculum* 58, 4 (1983) p. 987-1007; D. Hill, *An Atlas of Anglo-Saxon England* (Oxford, 1981); D. Hooke, *Anglo-Saxon Landscapes of the West Midlands: the Charter Evidence*, BAR, British Series 95, (Oxford, 1981); A. Reynolds, 'Avebury, Yatesbury and the archaeology of communications' *Papers from the Institute of Archaeology* 6 (1995) p. 21-30; P. H. Sawyer, 'Kings and Merchants', *Early Medieval Kingship*, ed., P. H. Sawyer and I. N. Wood (Leeds, 1977) p. 139-58; P. Stafford, 'The "Farm of One Night" and the Organization of King Edward's Estates in Domesday', *Economic History Review*, 2nd Series (1980) p. 491-502.

of roads and trackways.[9] The navigability of rivers has not been determined for Anglo-Saxon England, but J. F. Edwards and B. P. Hindle have done extensive research into late medieval riverine transport.[10] Nicholas Brooks has made a thorough study of Rochester Bridge, its bridge-work list, and the power structures behind it.[11] Settlement studies which include references to roads and rivers also belong in the first group as they are concerned primarily with the physical position of the routes.[12] Place-name studies offer insight into the layout of the communications network as can be seen in Margaret Gelling's *Place-Names in the Landscape*, in Gelling and Ann Cole's *The Landscape of Place-Names,* and in Michael Costen's contribution to *The Medieval Landscape of Wessex.*[13]

The other type of work done on subjects relating to travel is the study of important journeys. For the early Middle Ages these studies have often focused on missionary work and pilgrimages,[14]

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[9]For example see: G. B. Grundy, 'The Ancient Highways and Tracks of Wiltshire, Berkshire, and Hampshire, and the Saxon Battlefields of Wiltshire', *Archaeological Journal* 75 (1918), p. 69-194; Grundy, 'The Ancient Highways of Dorset, Somerset and South-West England', *Archaeological Journal* 94 (1937), p. 257-290; Grundy, 'The Ancient Highways of Somerset', *Archaeological Journal* 96 (1939), p. 226-297; C. C. Taylor, *Roads and Tracks of Britain* (London, 1976); and G. N. Wright, *Roads and Trackways of Wessex* (Ashbourne,1988).

[10]J. F. Edwards and B. P. Hindle, 'The transport system of medieval England', *Journal of Historical Geography* 19, 1 (1991), p. 123-134.

[11]N. Brooks, 'Church, Crown and Community: Public Work and Seigneurial Responsibilities at Rochester Bridge', *Warriors and Churchmen in the High Middle Ages: Essays Presented to Karl Leyser,* ed., T. Reuter (London, 1992) p. 1-20; Brooks, 'Rochester Bridge', *Traffic and Politics: the Construction and Management of Rochester Bridge, AD 43-1993,* eds., N. Yates and J. M. Gibson (Woodbridge, 1994) p. 1-40, 362-369; Brooks, 'Medieval Bridges: a Window onto Changing Concepts of State Power', *Haskins Society Journal* 7 (1997) p. 11-29.

[12]For example: A. Everitt, *Continuity and Colonization: The Evolution of Kentish Settlement* (Leicester, 1986); J. Haslam, ed., *Anglo-Saxon Towns in Southern England* (Chichester, 1984); and C. Holdsworth 'Bishoprics, Monasteries and the Landscape, c. AD 600-1066', *Landscape and Settlement in Britain AD 400-1066,* ed., D. Hooke and S. Burnell (Exeter, 1995) p. 27-49.

[13]M. Gelling, *Place-Names in the Landscape*; Gelling and Cole, *The Landscape of Place-Names*; and M. Costen, 'Settlement in Wessex in the Tenth Century: The Charter Evidence', *The Medieval Landscape of Wessex,* eds., M. Aston and C. Lewis (Oxford, 1994) p. 97-107.

[14]For example: J. S. Crawford *Anglo-Saxon Influence on Western Christendom 600-800* (Oxford, 1933); C. Jenkins, 'Christian Pilgrimages, AD 500 - 800', *Travel and Travellers of the Middle Ages,* ed. A. P. Newton (London, 1930), p. 39-69; and M. Falkus and J. Gillingham, *Historical Atlas of Britain* (London, 1981).

as well as the movement of armies and kings.[15] These studies have been more concerned with the purposes and sequences of the journeys, or with other such 'historical' details, than with the details of the network of roads and waterways or methods of travelling. In order to gain an overall understanding of the Anglo-Saxon system of travel and communication, both of the above described approaches must be examined.

Thus, many studies have provided vital insight into certain aspects of the system of travel in Anglo-Saxon England, but there has not yet been a comprehensive study of the system. These different types of investigations need to be brought together in a wide-ranging, interdisciplinary landscape study. As will be explained after a review of the sources and scholarship, this dissertation will concentrate on Wessex in the late Saxon period (*c.* 850 -1066).

Throughout the following discussion of scholarship on the physical layout of the communications network and on the journeys, it will be shown that there is both a need for and much scope for a study of travel in early medieval Wessex. This chapter will look at previous work beginning with the layout of the communications network and ending with the journeys. Work from periods and places which can enlighten the situation in Anglo-Saxon Wessex will be considered and the approaches and conclusions of others will be evaluated for general effectiveness, for their use of source materials and, where appropriate, for their significance to late Anglo-Saxon Wessex.

Evidence for the Layout of the Communications Network

How do we define 'the communications network'? M. Aston wrote: "Communication in the past, before the age of telephones and television, implied people or goods moving about the

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[15]For example: T. Charles-Edwards, 'Early Medieval Kingship in the British Isles', p. 28-39; B. Cunliffe, *Wessex to AD 1000* (London, 1993); Falkus and Gillingham, *Historical Atlas of Britain*; M. Gilbert and A. Banks, *British History Atlas* (London, 1968); D. Hill, *An Atlas of Anglo-Saxon England* (Oxford, 1981); S. Keynes, *The Diplomas of Æthelred the 'Unready', 978-1016* (Cambridge, 1980); H. R. Loyn, *Anglo-Saxon England and the Norman Conquest*, 2nd Edition (London, 1991); and Whitelock, *The Beginnings of English Society*.

landscape."[16] Accepting this definition, the network would be the coming together of features involved in that process. These are the roads and tracks, rivers and seaways, the points they connected and the environment through which they passed. Here I will concentrate on work done on roads, tracks, rivers and seaways.

The study of ancient roads has attracted much attention from people with unscholarly methods. Aston summed this up nicely when he wrote that "[a] great deal of rubbish has been written in the past about roads, particularly Roman roads and ridgeways."[17] Moreover, in general works on the history of roads and trackways and even in works devoted to medieval communications, the Anglo-Saxon routes form, at best, a very small section. In Christopher Taylor's *Roads and Tracks of Britain*, there is one comparatively short chapter on the Anglo-Saxon period, while in Geoffrey Wright's *Roads and Trackways of Wessex* the Anglo-Saxon period is treated in the first few pages of a chapter on medieval routes.[18] Likewise, in their respective articles on medieval roads, Frank Stenton and Brian Hindle both quickly passed over the early Middle Ages.[19] Stenton devoted only part of a paragraph to the Anglo-Saxons, saying that there is 'hardly any evidence' for their long distance routes and giving a very general description of the references to roads in the charters.[20] Hindle complained that ". . . the medieval period generally forms a rather meagre chapter, sandwiched between the Roman period and the turnpikes."[21] However, Hindle himself, in this article, used a definition of medieval which excluded the early period.

To help gain an understanding of the layout of the Anglo-Saxon's communications network, it is useful to consider networks

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[16]M. Aston, *Interpreting the Landscape: Landscape Archaeology in Local Studies* (London, 1985) p. 138.

[17]*Ibid.*, p. 138.

[18]Taylor, *Roads and Tracks of Britain*, p. 84-110; and Wright, *Roads and Trackways of Wessex*, p. 50-55.

[19]F. M. Stenton, 'The Road System of Medieval England ', *The Economic History Review* III. I (1936), p. 1-21; and B. P. Hindle, 'The road network of medieval England', *Journal of Historical Geography*, 2. 3 (1976), p. 207-221.

[20]Stenton, 'The Road System of Medieval England ', p. 2-3.

[21]Hindle, 'The road network of medieval England ', p. 207.

which were in use before and after the period in question. The Anglo-Saxon system would have grown out of previous systems and thus its layout may be argued from the location of both prehistoric trackways and Roman roads. Also, the late medieval communications network would have grown out of that of the Anglo-Saxons and it may be possible to extrapolate backwards from the later period. The usefulness of these two approaches must be determined. As it is not in the scope of this dissertation to discover or re-define prehistoric trackways, Roman roads, or medieval roads, the reliability of the work done in these fields must be considered. After looking at scholarship on pre-historic, Roman and late medieval routes, I will concentrate on primary and secondary sources for the Anglo-Saxon period itself. In that section, the methods used for discovering Anglo-Saxon routes and the work done using these methods will be evaluated.

Pre-Anglo-Saxon Routes

'Ancient' tracks from Wessex have been looked at by a number of people. G. B. Grundy mapped many of what he called prehistoric ridgeways in Wessex. He has based his work, at least in part, on features mentioned in Anglo-Saxon boundary clauses and has assumed that the term *hrycgweg,* or 'ridgeway', indicated a prehistoric route.[22] It should be noted that there is no evidence to suggest that this link can be made for all *hrycgwegs.* Grundy used the charter bounds when he described a local way in Weston, he said that it is in a Saxon charter and he noted that the old track cannot be accurately placed on a map.[23] Nonetheless in this case, and in others like it, Grundy did include the road on his map.[24] Furthermore, Grundy did not always say how he was reaching his conclusions. Similarly, a book by H. W. Timperley and E. Brill contained maps and descriptions for walking the prehistoric tracks of Wessex and they also did not state clearly what their evidence is.[25] They all relied on field walking

[22]Grundy, 'The Ancient Highways and Tracks of Wiltshire, Berkshire, and Hampshire', p. 70.

[23]Grundy, 'The Ancient Highways of Somerset', p. 245.

[24]*Ibid*, map facing p. 232.

[25]H. W. Timperley and E. Brill, *Ancient Trackways of Wessex* (London, 1965).

together with, at least in Grundy's case, evidence from Anglo-Saxon charter boundary clauses. Thus, although the works of Grundy and of Timperley and Brill give tantalizing details and are meant to show the communications network of prehistoric Wessex, they must be treated with extreme caution.

In a more recent book, Geoffrey Wright also gave detailed descriptions ancient routes in Wessex, and his work is more reliable than Grundy and Timperley and Brill, even though he did cite some of their conclusions. Wright was interested in more than just walks through the countryside. He also dealt only with main routes and was uneasy with some previous interpretations, but he did not himself explain his evidence. Nonetheless, by looking at Wessex (which for him means Dorset, southern Wiltshire, the very east of Somerset, western Hampshire and part of Berkshire)[26] in distinct blocks of time, his work is much more useful in that the routes he described are identifiable as prehistoric, Roman, medieval or later. In his work, one can see the evolution of main routes in Wessex from pre-history through to the modern period.

The trunk roads of Roman Britain are perhaps the best understood of the 'ancient' routes and there is a network which has been accepted as Roman (fig. 1). There is however, much controversy over what happened to these routes after the Roman period. It has been suggested, by scholars such as Margary and Taylor, that these roads fell into disrepair and were no longer used.[27] But, Taylor and Margary contradicted themselves, while discussing the end to the Roman communication network, by providing some evidence for its continuation. Margary did this by writing of the damage caused to the Roman roads through continued use. Taylor, moreover, supposed that some sections were still used for short-distance travel and thus fulfilled the communication needs of the time.[28] Perhaps instead of focusing on the destruction of sections of the Roman road system, one should try to look at evidence for continuity. Michael Costen believed that the evidence for continuity is strong, particularly because

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[26]Wright, *Roads and Trackways of Wessex*, p. 8.

[27]I. D. Margary, *Roman Roads in Britain*, 3rd edition (London, 1973); Taylor, *Roads and Tracks of Britain*.

[28]Taylor, *Roads and Tracks*, p. 87.

many place-names in Wessex incorporate the term *stræt*, an Old English word for a Roman or paved road.[29] Furthermore, instead of seeing a road changing course near the site of a Roman bridge in order to make use of a ford, as illustrative of the disintegration of the communication system, one might see the adaption of the road as evidence for its continued use.

The theory that Roman roads were abandoned has been weakened by Oliver Rackham. He has provided evidence for continued use of roads and tracks by pointing out that roads are 'highly artificial' and will only survive as long as they are being used. He wrote that even a gravel road, if it is not used, will be overgrown with bushes in five years and will become an impenetrable thicket in ten.[30] Therefore, he believed that the survival to the present day of the line of so many Roman routes must show continuation from the Roman period into the Anglo-Saxon one.[31] Like Taylor, he suggested that if a road was no longer used as a through road, in parts it might be used for local traffic.[32] This is a sound assumption. Thus the remaining population of Britain and the incoming Anglo-Saxons likely used some stretches of existing road and tracks for their travel needs even if they did not maintain the entire Roman system.

The use of the Roman road system in the Anglo-Saxon period, therefore, needs to be examined in detail. Evidence for the extent of its abandonment and for its survival needs to be considered. Another important consideration is: how did the West Saxons change and adapt sections of the Roman network to suit their developing needs throughout the Anglo-Saxon period? If these questions can be answered then we would have a greater understanding of land routes and their evolution in early medieval Wessex. It is in this light that studies on the Roman road network have most to offer.

Late Medieval Routes

The late medieval period in England has been studied in terms

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[29]Costen, 'Settlement in Wessex in the Tenth Century', p. 105.

[30]O. Rackham, *The History of the English Countryside* (London, 1986) p. 257.

[31]*Ibid*, p. 257.

[32]*Ibid, p. 257.*

of its roads and rivers. The analysis of the road network is usually based on itineraries and records relating to the movement of goods as well as Matthew Paris's map of 1250 and the Gough Map of 1360.[33] These sources, which are of a type that does not exist for the early period, are able to give direct evidence for the use and existence of particular routes. There is enough such evidence so that Stenton, who was unable to reach a similar conclusion for Anglo-Saxon England, believed that the medieval road system was extensive enough to provide alternative ways of reaching various places and that it was adequate for the demands.[34]

Hindle made five key points about medieval roads. First, he showed that there was demand for roads from merchants, secular and ecclesiastic officials, the king and court, justices, tax collectors, and pilgrims. Second, he explained that rather than being a physical entity, a medieval road was more of a right of way. Third, he argued for continuity by saying that some Roman roads and earlier tracks were still being used. Fourth, he believed that the roads and tracks 'made and maintained themselves', meaning that the traffic using them was heavy enough in order for it to keep nature from reclaiming the road and light enough that it did not destroy roads more rapidly than nature was able to repair them. Finally, Hindle showed how authors have disagreed about the upkeep of roads and the use of rivers.[35] A study of the early medieval period would have to take into consideration all of these points in order to determine whether the first four are applicable and to search for a solution for the fifth.

Hindle has created a map of medieval routes. He began by mapping the Roman roads and prehistoric trackways for which there is evidence of medieval use, adding those Roman roads whose lines remain in use today.[36] Then he added all of the 'medieval roads'

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[33]For example: Hindle, 'The road network of medieval England and Wales', p. 207-221; Hindle, *Medieval Roads* (Aylesbury, 1982); and Stenton, 'The Road System of Medieval England', p. 1-21.

[34]Stenton, 'The Road System of Medieval England', p. 2-3, 21.

[35]Hindle, 'The road network of medieval England and Wales', p. 208-209.

[36]*Ibid*, p. 217-8, figure 11, p. 219.

for which he has substantial documentary evidence.[37] The resulting map shows all of the known roads of circa 1348. On this map, the notable routes in Wessex are radiating mainly from Marlborough, Salisbury, and Winchester, with there being only one important route extending into Devon.[38] This map shows numerous roads weaving across the region, but many areas were isolated from them. Hindle pointed out that many other routes must have existed for which there is no evidence.[39]

In 1982, Hindle wrote that even though it would have been preferable to transport bulky goods by river or sea, this could not be done in most parts of England and Wales as there were either no navigable rivers or no unobstructed ones.[40] Thus he firmly believed that roads were the mainstay of the medieval transport system.[41] However, in 1991 he and James Frederick Edwards published an article in which they dramatically overturned Hindle's previous opinion of the extent of navigable rivers in medieval England and Wales.[42]

In their article, Hindle and Edwards looked at state rolls from 1219 to 1441 to see how roads and rivers combined to make a total system, showing how goods and people would have used both roads and waterways in order to reach their destinations (fig. 3). They determined that there were many navigable rivers in Wessex during the later Middle Ages. By combining their new information about waterways with previous work on land routes, they were able to create an overall picture on the most important aspects of the communications network.[43]

The article by Edwards and Hindle met with opposition. John Langdon, who favoured the traditional ideas about the difficulty of riverine transport in the late Middle Ages, was very critical of their approach and their conclusions. He did not approve of

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[37] *Ibid*, p. 218.

[38] *Ibid*, p. 220.

[39] *Ibid*, p. 220-221.

[40] Hindle, *Medieval Roads*, p. 5.

[41] *Ibid*.

[42] Edwards and Hindle, 'The transportation system of medieval England and Wales', p. 123-134.

[43] See *ibid.*, map p. 132.

their use of state rolls and he himself looked at purveyance accounts, concluding that the inland water transport system ". . . was significantly more restricted than that shown by Edwards and Hindle."[44] However, Edwards and Hindle have defended their work, showing that both their sources and conclusions are sound.[45]

Evan T. Jones has recently reviewed the evidence present by both Langdon and Edwards and Hindle in an attempt to reconcile their conclusions.[46] He determined that their differences were "because the parties' reliance on different sources meant they failed to engage on the same ground."[47] He then discussed the methods used in Edwards's thesis and suggested that Edwards's conclusions were acceptable when he used direct references to goods and people travelling on particular rivers; however, Edwards also used sources which recorded disputes about blockages to rivers or directions to remove such hinderance as proof of navigation and Jones believed that this was unsound.[48] Furthermore, Jones suggested that there is no evidence that many of these cases were solved so that rivers were navigable, but they do indicate that the river had once been navigable in those sections.[49] Thus for the purposes of this thesis, the sections of rivers that Edwards and Hindle identify as being navigable can be assumed to have been navigable at some point during the Middle Ages, but they must be treated with caution.

The significance of Hindle's research on roads and Edwards and Hindle's work on rivers is obvious for the late Middle Ages, and its significance for the Anglo-Saxon period should not be underestimated. The primary significance of Hindle's work on roads for the study of Anglo-Saxon roads lies in his ability to show which Roman roads and prehistoric trackways were still in use in the late Middle Ages. Their continued use into that

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[44]J. Langdon, 'Inland water transport in medieval England', *Journal of Historical Geography* 19. 1 (1993), p. 1-11.

[45]Edwards and Hindle, 'Comment: inland water transport in medieval England', *Journal of Historical Geography* 19 (1993) p. 12-14. The rivers themselves will be discussed in chapter 4.

[46]E. T. Jones, 'River Navigation in Medieval England', *Journal of Historical Geography* 26, 1 (2000) p. 60 - 75.

[47]*Ibid.*, p. 60.

[48]*Ibid.*, p. 69.

[49]*Ibid.*, p. 63-4.

period must provide evidence for their use, even if it was limited at times, during the Anglo-Saxon period. Nonetheless, we must beware of shifts in emphasis which took place. For example, both the Roman and late medieval road networks focused on London,[50] but London did not dominate during the Anglo-Saxon period.

Edwards and Hindle's work on rivers may be of even greater value to the study of the early medieval communications network in that by basing their conclusions on known journeys and disputes, they have by-passed the difficulties of the changing navigability of rivers. Unfortunately, the surviving historical evidence from the early Middle Ages is not of sufficient detail to allow this type of study. However, Edwards and Hindle's work may be helpful in the study of navigable waterways in early medieval Wessex because, as will be seen in chapter 4, they examined many waterways in Wessex. Moreover, they wrote about a period which is relatively close to the Anglo-Saxon one and was before the dramatic changes in inland water transport that came with large scale canalization.

Anglo-Saxon Routes

Andrew Reynolds asserted that "[t]he network of routes of communication in the English landscape is the result of developments dating back to pre-Roman times, but the Anglo-Saxons were responsible for many of our roads, both major and minor."[51] Aston also believed that ". . . most of the present pattern of lanes and paths is medieval, if not earlier, in date."[52] But the age of a road cannot be assumed and before any route is suggested as in use in the Anglo-Saxon period, it must be examined.

The physical evidence for roads and tracks is often unreliable and insufficient, especially for the Anglo-Saxon period. Roman roads are perhaps the most easily visible of the ancient ways. Margary suggested looking for them by looking for modern roads which are either on a straight alignment or seem to end abruptly but may continue as a track in an appropriate

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[50]Hindle, *Medieval Roads*, p. 20; and Margary, p. 46.

[51]Reynolds, *Later Anglo-Saxon England*, p. 14.

[52]Aston, *Interpreting the Landscape*, p. 141.

direction.[53] One may see them either in the slightly raised remains of aggers or in large depression due to wearing.[54] Crop marks may also show Roman roads, as can hedgerow lines and footpaths.[55] These are significant if they can form a line across large stretches of the countryside on a Roman alignment.[56] Pre-Roman ways can be seen where tracks cross the Roman roads and pay no attention to them.[57] It is not, however, as easy to see the physical evidence for the layout of the Anglo-Saxon system because even though many of the trackways of England can be physically identified in the field as being 'old ', it is hard to give specific dates to their use.[58] Thus if one wants to theorize about when a road was used, one must look for more evidence.

Della Hooke and David Pelteret both have given advice on looking for routeways. Della Hooke wrote an article entitled 'The Reconstruction of Ancient Routeways' in which she explained how local historians could find old roads by looking through documents and relating them to the contemporary landscape.[59] Overall, Hooke believed that, when trying to uncover ancient routes, an approach using historical, archaeological and geographical evidence could contribute the most.[60] She said that "[r]outeways suggested by corridors of archaeological finds are probably the safest to assume", but that lines of parish boundaries and routes in Anglo-Saxon charter bounds have not been fully explored and also have much to add.[61]

Pelteret who, unlike Hooke, was looking specifically for Anglo-Saxon roads, provided a good summary of the sources and some of the work which has been done on them.[62] Like Hooke, he

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[53]Margary, p. 24.

[54]*Ibid*, p. 25.

[55]*Ibid*, p. 25.

[56]*Ibid*, p. 24-26

[57]Everitt, p. 268.

[58]Taylor, *Roads and Tracks*, p. x-xi.

[59]D. Hooke, 'The Reconstruction of Ancient Routeways', *The Local Historian* 12. 5 (1977), p. 212-220.

[60]*Ibid*, p. 219.

[61]*Ibid*, p. 212.

[62]Pelteret, 'The Roads of Anglo-Saxon England', p. 153-163.

believed in using several disciplines.[63] He suggested using historical accounts, law codes, the Old English concordance, place-name evidence, charters, archaeological evidence, settlement studies and aerial photography in order to discover Anglo-Saxon roads.[64]

Remarkably little work has been done on roads in relation to settlement studies. When discussing the importance of routeways in his analysis of Kentish settlement, Alan Everitt wrote: ". . . in the surviving network of woods and farmsteads, of churches, lanes, and boundaries, we have the vestiges of a complete tapestry of settlement."[65] Everitt frequently demonstrated how the communication system affected the settlement of Kent by allowing easy access to some places while isolating others. Thus he attributed the high percentage of markets and boroughs in the foothills of Kent to the area's three navigable rivers, the Medway, the Darent, and the Stour and to the presence there of Kent's only major Roman road.[66] Everitt believed that the study of roads, lanes and other trackways is a key aspect of the topographical reconstruction of settlement. However, since our interest is the roads themselves, we will look at the siting of settlements to see how they may have been linked to other communities.

Christopher Holdsworth took this type of idea into consideration when discussing the re-use of Roman sites in Wessex by Anglo-Saxon bishops by including easy access by land or by water as a reason for selecting those particular sites.[67] Furthermore, Catherine Cubitt suggested that access to the communication network was an important consideration in choosing the sites for church councils, noting that the sites were in close proximity to navigable rivers and to Roman roads.[68] Therefore one should consider where gathering places were and what sort of access these places had to roads and rivers. This

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[63] *Ibid*, p. 158.

[64] *Ibid*, p. 155-163.

[65] Everitt, p. 13.

[66] *Ibid*, p. 49.

[67] C. Holdsworth, 'Bishoprics, Monasteries and the Landscape' p. 32.

[68] Cubitt, *Church Councils*, p. 32.

may be done by following a suggestion made by Pelteret. He believed that one should examine the topography of individual settlements so that one may see the roads which radiate from them.[69] This would include studies of the location and orientation of a settlement's gates. These considerations would be particularly useful in undertaking a very detailed local study of roads and rivers. Nonetheless, changes in the settlement patterns throughout the Anglo-Saxon period should be examined to see how they may relate to traffic and traffic patterns, as well as power structures.

Hooke and Pelteret both pointed out that place-name studies can further augment our understanding of the communications network by helping to locate routeways. Historians and archaeologists frequently comment on the importance of place-names for rediscovering aspects of the ancient landscape, but often this type of evidence is not used as fully as it could be because its use can be difficult. One must be very sure that the meaning given to a place-name is correct. The English Place-Name Society volumes are extremely helpful in this respect, however they have not completed volumes for all of the counties of Wessex. They have only published ones for Berkshire, Devon, Dorset, and Wiltshire.[70] Richard Coates has written a book on Hampshire place-names,[71] but the place-names of Somerset have not yet been thoroughly researched and published. Because these collections of place-names have been written by different people at very different times, they are not uniform. Since the *EPNS* began in 1923, decisions have been made periodically to

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[69]Pelteret, 'The Roads of Anglo-Saxon England', p. 158.

[70]J. Field, 'Indexes to Nos 13-26 (1980-1994)', *The English Place-Name Society Journal* (1996), p. 19; M. Gelling, *The Place-Names of Berkshire,* Part I, *English Place-Name Society* XLIX (1973); Gelling, *The Place-Names of Berkshire,* Part II, *English Place-Name Society* L (1974); Gelling, *The Place-Names of Berkshire,* Part III, *English Place-Name Society* LI (1976); J. E. B. Gover, A. Mawer, and F. M. Stenton, *The Place-Names of Wiltshire, English Place-Name Society* XVI (1939); Gover, Mawer, and Stenton, *The Place-Names of Devon,* Part I, *English Place-Name Society* VIII (1931); Gover, Mawer, and Stenton, *The Place-Names of Devon,* Part II, *English Place-Name Society* IX (1932); A. D. Mills, *The Place-Names of Dorset,* Part I, *English Place-Name Society* LII (1977); Mills, *The Place-Names of Dorset.* Part II, *English Place-Name Society* LIII (1980); Mills, *The Place-Names of Dorset,* Part III, *English Place-Name Society* LIX/LX (1989).

[71]R. Coates, *Hampshire Place-Names* (Southampton, 1993).

include more and more information in the volumes.[72] Thus, the volumes written by Gelling or Mills are more comprehensive than those written by Gover, Mawer and Stenton. Another difficulty in using place-name evidence is that names have often moved from their original location.[73] Furthermore, one cannot be sure about when places were named and when the features within the name were significant. All of these factors need to be taken into consideration when using place-name evidence for the discovery of Anglo-Saxon routes.

Place-name elements which refer to routes and the movement of people should be studied further. One method for analyzing place-names would be through mapping known sites containing relevant elements. The English Place-Name Society's publication on Berkshire, volume II, includes a map which plots places with the element 'ford', but this is not as useful as it could be for this project as the map does not depict many roads. In order to make mapping place-names beneficial to the discovery of routeways in Anglo-Saxon England, one would have compare them with other relevant names, such as those of an appropriate date containing the element *brycg*, as well as roadway elements. Hindle, when discussing late medieval roads, suggested mapping all relevant place-name terms and looking at the alignment of villages and their roads in order to connect neighbouring elements, thus creating linear routes.[74] He suggested that place-names are only of limited value to his study because they cannot date a road and are often referring to roads from before his period.[75] Thus he re-enforced the importance of place-names for the study of early medieval routes.

The words which are important to place-name analysis of routes can also be found in charter boundary clauses. As noted above, Della Hooke believed that Anglo-Saxon charter boundaries are one of the most important sources for uncovering routeways. She showed that the usefulness of the charters lies with the ability to map the relevant features and she believed that the

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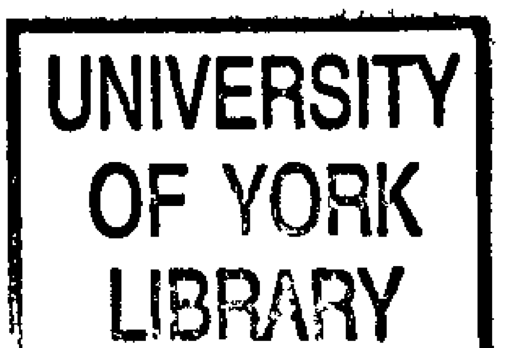
[72]M. Gelling, *Signposts to the Past* (London, 1978) p. 6-7.

[73]Hooke, *Anglo-Saxon Landscapes of the West Midlands*, p. 13.

[74]Hindle, *Medieval roads*, p. 24.

[75]*Ibid*, p. 24.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local historian should trace the boundary features paying close attention to the topography and linear features which could indicate ancient routeways.[76] However, in her article on discovering routeways, Hooke did not stress the problems associated with charter studies. Nonetheless, she did address one of the common objections to charter material in general: the use of information from forged charters. Hooke dismissed this problem by saying that Anglo-Saxon charters can be used as evidence for ancient routeways even if their authenticity is questionable because they are early and predate other documentary evidence.[77] Moreover, since the boundary clauses were written in Old English, they must be relevant to the Anglo-Saxon period even if they are not 'authentic' and they will thus be used in this dissertation.

There are many other problems and difficulties which are specific to the use of charters for this type of study. To begin with, one must be concerned with what the inclusion of a road in a boundary clause may actually mean. When talking of Roman roads as Anglo-Saxon boundary markers, Ivan Margary stated that even if the Anglo-Saxons did not use Roman roads for travel, they did see their usefulness as boundary markers.[78] Similarly, O. G. S. Crawford believed the Anglo-Saxons used the word *stræt* in charters to indicate linear features that they knew had been Roman roads rather than to indicate a current element of the communications network, regardless of its origin.[79]

It is more likely, however, that a road or track term in a boundary clause does signify a used road or track. With the large number of landscape terms at their disposal, is unlikely that the Anglo-Saxons would have chosen ones for their boundary clauses which were not relevant to the feature described. Moreover, as can be seen in Gelling and Cole's *The Landscape of Place-Names*, words used to name features in the landscape tend to reflect their very particular nature. Nonetheless, it should be remembered that, as with place-names, a reference to a road in a

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[76]Hooke, 'The Reconstruction of Ancient Routeways', p. 212-213.

[77]*Ibid.*, p. 212.

[78]Margary, p. 23.

[79]O. G. S. Crawford, *Archaeology in the Field* (London, 1953), p. 74.

charter or its use as a parish boundary does not prove in itself that it was used throughout the Anglo-Saxon period. However, David Pelteret asserted that if a parish boundary follows the same line as a Roman road and if that route ". . . continued in service in post-Conquest times, it is a legitimate assumption that it was used as a routeway by the Anglo-Saxons."[80] Therefore, evidence for routeways gained through their use in Anglo-Saxon boundaries should be used, but used with care.

When tracing a boundary, one must be very familiar with the area in question as the terms need to be understood and identified in the present landscape. Even then, one cannot always solve boundary clauses and when this is possible, it has been suggested that it takes an average of two years to do so.[81] Therefore, this dissertation will make use of other scholars' solutions, especially those of Susan Kelly for Shaftesbury Abbey's charters and Della Hooke for charters in Devon.[82] When using other scholars' work, it must be remembered that not all of the charter 'solved' bounds have been done satisfactorily. Obviously inaccurate identification of the features mentioned in the charters is a danger and some charters may never be solved perfectly. This is detrimental to the study of routes, but even if the exact course of a given route cannot be mapped, the very mention of that route in the charter is significant.

Many people have attempted to solve individual charter bounds or a series of them. For this study, the work of G. B. Grundy, Della Hooke and Susan Kelly is particularly significant. Della Hooke has shown how boundary clause features can best be used by describing their presence in charters, solving numerous charter bounds and then mapping the features which relate to major roadways.[83] She noted that in order for maps of roadway terms to be meaningful for long-distance communications, fords, ferries

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[80]Pelteret, p. 160.

[81]T. R. Thomson and R. E. Sandell, 'The Saxon Land Charters of Wiltshire', *Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Magazine* 58 (1963) p. 442.

[82]S. Kelly, *Charters of Shaftesbury Abbey* (Oxford, 1996); D. Hooke, *Pre-Conquest Charter-Bounds of Devon and Cornwall* (Woodbridge, 1994).

[83]Hooke, *Anglo-Saxon Landscapes of the West Midlands*; Hooke, *Worcestershire Anglo-Saxon Charter-Bounds* (Woodbridge, 1990); Hooke, *Pre-Conquest Charter-Bounds of Devon and Cornwall.*

and bridges also have to be included.[84]

In the early decades of this century, mostly in the 1920s and 1930s, Grundy worked on many charters from Wessex. Hooke commented that he did 'pioneering' work on boundary clauses but she cautioned that he has made mistakes and that the clauses can be solved more accurately.[85] Desmond Bonney wrote more favourably of Grundy, pointing out that Grundy had "a surprising measure of success" even if more recent work has produced "alternative and more acceptable solutions".[86] For example, Susan Kelly, while working on the Shaftesbury Abbey cartuarly, has made many different identifications. She has been much more conservative than Grundy and has corrected many of his mistakes.[87] Overall, Kelly's work seems much more sound and, remembering Hooke and Bonney's comments, Grundy's work must be treated cautiously.

The extent to which the Anglo-Saxons travelled has also been commented on by Grundy. He thought that the ridgeways would have fulfilled the economic needs of medieval England.[88] However, he believed that the Anglo-Saxons had long distance routes and from the examination of charter evidence, he concluded that ". . . a type of through-road formed by the linking up of local roads did spring into existence."[89] This is a very limited picture and, as Michael Costen wrote, "[Grundy's] view of communications seems more than a little outdated. . . "[90] However, even scholars of more recent years have suggested that the Anglo-Saxon road network was insignificant.

A. J. Gurevich, in his *Categories of Medieval Culture*, maintained that in early medieval Europe:

> . . . there were practically no roads to speak of, while such that did exist were often impassable. The old

[84]Hooke, *Anglo-Saxon Landscapes of the West Midlands*, p. 300.

[85]*Ibid*, p. 10, 29.

[86]D. J. Bonney, 'Early Boundaries in Wessex', *Archaeology and the Landscape: Essays for L. V. Grinsell*. Ed. P. J. Fowler (London, 1972) p. 168.

[87]See Appendix A for discussion of the differences in identifications between Kelly and Grundy.

[88]Grundy, 'The Ancient Highways of Somerset', p. 227.

[89]Grundy, 'The Ancient Highways of Dorset, Somerset and South-West England', p. 262.

[90]Costen, 'Settlement in Wessex in the Tenth Century', p. 104.

> Roman highways, in those regions where they existed, fell more and more into disrepair; new routes were rarely cleared and thereafter very difficult to maintain. Such attention as was paid to means of communication by state authorities did not go beyond their own immediate and very limited needs. Yet, even to satisfy these minimal needs was not easy.[91]

However, Gurevich weakened his argument in the very next sentence by suggesting that when granting privileges to great ecclesiastics and laymen, Anglo-Saxon kings did not relinquish their right to make the people repair roads.[92] Also, Gurevich was not precise about either the place or period with which he is concerned.

Moreover, even Christopher Taylor, who, as seen above, believed that traffic became negligible with the collapse of Roman Britain, was very clear that this was his vision for the sub-Roman period and that he did not believe that this situation continued throughout the Anglo-Saxon period.[93] He said that as the Anglo-Saxons formed kingdoms, their administrative and economic needs led to the development of trackways.[94] This trend continued and by the eighth century, according to Taylor, the now well-developed kingdoms had developed a new long-distance system.[95] Thus like Taylor, and unlike Gurevich and Grundy, one must differentiate between periods within the Anglo-Saxon Age and the changes which took place during the course of the early Middle Ages must be considered.

Work on the *Trinoda Necessitas*, the three common burdens of military service, fortress-work and bridge-work recorded in charters, has done much to explain the upkeep of bridges. Of unparalleled relevance here is Nicholas Brooks' work on Rochester's bridge list.[96] The bridge list recorded the obligations of several estates to the maintenance of Rochester

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[91]A. J. Gurevich, *Categories of Medieval Culture*, G. L. Campbell (trans), (London, 1st edition 1972, translated 1985), p. 43.

[92]*Ibid*, p. 43.

[93]Taylor, *Roads and Tracks*, p. 87.

[94]*Ibid*, p. 92.

[95]*Ibid*, p. 96.

[96]Brooks, 'Church, Crown and Community'; Brooks, 'Rochester Bridge'; and Brooks, 'Medieval Bridges'.

Bridge and Brooks has shown how it was related to power structures. This important work needs to be taken into account and correlated with information about the upkeep or roads and watercourses.

Before leaving a discussion of previous work relevant to the layout of the early medieval communications network in Wessex, David Hill's *An Atlas of Anglo-Saxon England* must be considered. Hill has two maps of the communications network: one of coastline changes and navigable rivers and the other of major roads (figs. 2, 52).[97] He showed substantially fewer navigable rivers than did Edwards and Hindle for the late Middle Ages. Thus Hill, like Langdon, seems to believe in the more tradition views of the poor navigability of inland waterways. It should be noted that Hill's atlas was published before Edwards and Hindle's article and therefore Hill could not have taken their findings into consideration when making this map. Anglo-Saxon river travel in Wessex needs to be re-examined in light of Edwards and Hindle's findings.

Hill criticised Stenton for believing that there were no highways in Anglo-Saxon England and he therefore included a map of major roads with an inset of routes in Hampshire.[98] For Wessex, the map itself only includes the Icknield Way, the Foss Way, a road between Williton and Curry in Somerset, and the London Way from Ilchester through Wilton towards London. He showed five major bridges: one over the Thames at Wallingford, one over the Avon at Bristol and three over the Itchen between Winchester and the sea. If these were the only main roads in Wessex in the Anglo-Saxon period, most of Wessex would have been removed from major lines of land-based communications. Hill did not even have Winchester on a routeway of national importance. The Hampshire inset is centred on Winchester and shows where the streets, *herepaths*, ways, paths, fords, bridges and possible routes of Hampshire would have been. Since this insert is in a larger scale, it has greater detail and is better able to show how the communication system would have been made up of roads of varying sizes. Nonetheless, the paucity of thoroughfares in Wessex on the main map indicates either that Hill thought that it

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[97]Hill, *Atlas*, p. 10, 116.

[98]*Ibid.*, p. 115-116.

was necessary only to depict a very few of the largest roads or that he had a poor view of the use of roads in Wessex.

The only other maps on which Hill depicted the communications network are a series showing the placement and relative importance of towns. On these, he has included rivers, the Roman roads, and a very few ancient ways. These maps are more useful than the two discussed above, as Hill has included rivers and roads not on the other two, but he did not comment on the navigability of these rivers. However, there is still not enough detail on these maps to gain a full understanding of the workings of the Anglo-Saxon communications system.

Because no single work or method has been able to satisfactorily determine the layout of the communications system in early medieval Wessex, Hooke and Pelteret's advice on using a multidisciplinary approach has been proven to be correct. It is only in the drawing together of the above describe source material, with all of their benefits and difficulties, that one can gain any understanding of the communications network.

Evidence for the Journeys

At the beginning, it was stated that questions relating to travel could be approached by looking either at lines of communication or at the journeys themselves. As with scholarship on the communications network, the mechanics of journeying in Anglo-Saxon Wessex have been treated only in part or in isolation from other aspects of the system. These works need to be examined for their possible contributions to this dissertation. Before doing that, as with communications network, I will look at studies from beyond late Saxon England in both time and space in order to determine what approaches have been taken and what conclusion have been drawn in other areas of historical research. Of particular relevance are examinations of travelling and travellers in the late Middle Ages, a period with more surviving documentary evidence, and on the continent during the early Middle Ages, for parellels from the same time period.

Late Medieval Travellers

Norbert Ohler has done considerable research into travelling in medieval Europe, focusing on the difficulties faced by travellers. He detailed problems such as bad weather, rough terrain, poor sailing conditions and criminal activity.[99] Ohler's book is very interesting but, it is not particularly relevant to this study as he included all of Europe from 500 to 1500, rarely gave any indication for what time or place is involved, and did not always give adequate evidence for his assertions.

In *Medieval Travellers: The Rich and the Restless,* Margaret Wade Labarge concentrated on the late medieval period and, like Ohler, looked at all of Europe.[100] She focussed on secular and ecclesiastic elite and thereby passed over many types of journeys which took place daily.

Sources from the late medieval England survive so that people's journeys may be traced in great detail. As was seen above, Hindle and Edwards used particulars of journeys to examine and delineate the layout of the communications network. Similarly, so much detail survives about the travels of Henry I and Edward I that Norman Hidden has been able to contribute to the understanding of particular routes through analysis of these itineraries. However, this is only one use for records of journeys.

Late medieval records can tell us what travelling would have been like in that period and what the complications and restrictions were. Hidden has been able to examine in detail the workings of the court as it moved through the kingdom.[101] He showed that, when planning the overnight stoppages, the court had to take into consideration how far such a large group could travel in a day.[102] He also provided evidence for there having been many day excursions.[103] Furthermore, he showed how long journeys may have taken and that the royal household did not

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[99]N. Ohler, *The Medieval Traveller*, trans., C. Hiller (Suffolk, 1989).

[100]M. W. Labarge, *Medieval Travellers: The Rich and Restless* (London, 1982).

[101]N. Hidden, 'Royal Itineraries and Medieval Routes', *Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Magazine* 89 (1996), p. 84-87.

[102]*Ibid,* p. 84.

[103]*Ibid,* p. 84.

always travel together. For example, in 1286, Edward I's wardrobe waggon took four days in the winter to travel from Downton and Salisbury to Hungerford and it joined the king's household there while Edward himself was at Marlborough.[104]

Hindle looked in considerable detail at the movements of the kings John, Henry III, Edward I, and Edward II in order to discuss seasonal variations in their travel patterns. He discovered that the monarchs travelled the most in July, August and September and that they travelled less in the winter.[105] However, the kings were far from stationary in the winter and Hindle concluded that "[t]he consistently high figures suggest in fact that the kings travelled whenever they could, and that the wetter seasons presented no obstacles to the movement of the royal household."[106] Hindle suggested that the only change that the royal household might make for the winter season would be travelling lighter.[107]

Detailed accounts such as those mentioned above for the late Middle Ages simply do not exist for Anglo-Saxon England, so these scholars' methods and studies cannot be duplicated in this dissertation. Nonetheless, their findings provide examples of what may be done and, in the case of Hindle and Hidden, provide theories against which to examine the material which is much more sparse for the Anglo-Saxon period.

Travellers in Continental Europe in the Early Middle Ages

Early medieval regional studies from the continent can add to the study of journeys in Anglo-Saxon England. Wendy Davies and Bernard Reilly, for early Medieval Brittany and late eleventh-century Léon-Castilla respectively, have done work on early medieval charters and have gathered specific information about who went where when by using witnesses lists. In her book *Small Worlds*, Davies included a chapter entitled 'Mobility' in which she looks at the distances that people tended to travel by

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[104]*Ibid*, p. 86.

[105]B. P. Hindle, 'Seasonal Variations in Travel in Medieval England', *Journal of Transport History*, New Series IV. 3, (1978), p. 176-177.

[106]*Ibid*, p. 177.

[107]*Ibid*, p. 177.

identifying individuals in witness lists and seeing what their range was.[108] This is a very localized study and provides insight into the movement of that region's population. Reilly, on the other hand, used witness lists and locations where charters were issued to investigate the make up and travel habits of the royal court.[109]

Ian Wood dealt with some other important considerations in an article about Northumbrians going to Francia. He touched upon the extensive preparations by Ceolfrith for his journey to Rome, including hiring a ship, collecting gifts and having good letters of introduction. He also wrote of the problems faced by those who were ill-prepared, such as Theodore and Hadrian who needed to hire a guide to take them back to Britain and who were detained by Archbishop John at Arles despite having letters of recommendation.[110] Wood (quite rightly) stressed dangers of travelling and how they can be alleviated through careful planning, by having all of the required letters of introduction and by making important connections.[111]

Travellers in Anglo-Saxon England

The extent to which Anglo-Saxons travelled, like the extent of their communications network, has been the subject of some disagreement. For example, Grundy believed that in the Saxon period and even in the centuries immediately after the Norman Conquest, there would not have been much traffic as only salt carriers, peddlers, packmen and cattle drivers would have been travelling.[112] Grundy said that the rest of the population would have been unable to leave their work on the land and would have been too poor to travel.[113] However, these assertions are not

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[108]W. Davies, *Small Worlds: The Village Community in Early Medieval Brittany* (London, 1988) p. 105-133.

[109]B. Reilly, *The Kingdom of Léon-Castilla under Alfonso VI, 1065-1109* (Princeton, 1988).

[110]I. Wood, 'Northumbrians and Franks in the Age of Wilfrid', *Northern History* 31 (1995) p. 15.

[111]*Ibid*, p. 15-19.

[112]Grundy, 'The Ancient Highways of Somerset', p. 227.

[113]*Ibid*, p. 227.

been supported by the surviving evidence. Ideas about the limited nature of early medieval travel and communication in England seem unrealistic when one is faced with the numerous accounts of secular and ecclesiastic people travelling about the countryside. The evidence for trade, royal itineration, and the movement of armies and ecclesiastics from late Saxon period indicates that the Anglo-Saxons had a society in which some people would have travelled on a regular basis. The changes over the course of the Anglo-Saxon period in the amount of traffic on the roads and how that traffic behaved must be considered.

David Hill has mapped several royal itineraries. His first two maps of this sort show the places visited of the kings of Merica and Wessex, respectively, before A.D. 871. Later he did the same thing for Alfred, Edward the Elder, Athelstan, Edmund the Elder, Eadwig, Eadred, Edgar, Edward the Martyr, Ethelred, and Cnut (figs. 55, 56).[114] These maps may give an indication of which places the kings liked to visit and how they may have ruled, but the maps are not adequate for answering questions concerning travel taken simply on their own. The absence of known roads on the maps must be noted. As well, although Hill included the year during which a king visited a certain place, he was usually unable to give any indication of what time of year the king was there.[115] To understand royal itineraries more fully, one would like to know the time of year when the king was known to be travelling and the sequence of places he visited.

As was seen in the continental examples, charter evidence can contribute greatly to the study of itineration. When looking at the diplomas of Æthelred, Simon Keynes laid the foundations for this type of study in Anglo-Saxon England. As a comparison, he used the witness lists and evidence therein to organize Æthelstan charters for 956.[116] From these he was able to conclude that the most of the prominent secular and ecclesiastic men would have gathered only a few times a year to witness charters, suggesting that, in 956, these meetings took place in January, February and

[114]Hill, *Atlas*, p. 83-84, 87-91.

[115]*Ibid*, p. 65-71.

[116]Keynes, *Diplomas*, p. 51.

November with two more during the spring and summer months.[117] Keynes, however, stated that "[t]he references to the meeting places of the witan in royal diplomas hardly enable one to reconstruct an itinerary of King Æthelred, but they do suggest that he and his witan gathered more often on royal estates than in the major ecclesiastical and urban centres of the kingdom."[118] Thus, although one may not be able to follow all of the king's movements, let alone the movements of his nobles, further study of this sort is extremely important because the traceable movements of individuals and the royal court must provide invaluable insight into the realities of travel in Wessex.

Keynes has already shown where the court of Æthelred preferred to stay and that large scale travel was certainly undertaken in the winter months. Martin Biddle's work on festivals and royal residence has added much to our understanding of the movements of the royal court.[119] This study, combined with Hill's maps and information from charters will form the basis of a discussion of seasonal variation in travel.

Royal itineration has been discussed by several scholars with the majority of early medievalists recognising and even stressing the importance of journeying to the power and position of the king. Cunliffe saw travel as a political necessity as the king needed to 'see and be seen'.[120] However, Charles-Edwards saw royal itineration in more economic terms in that the king and court would have had to have moved about in order to take advantage of food resources from different parts of the kingdoms.[121] In his work on the early Saxon period, Charles-Edwards used the known movements of the kings in order to see which areas were in the core of the kingdom and which areas were on the periphery.[122] David Hill's maps of late Saxon royal

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[117]*Ibid*, p. 61-62.

[118]*Ibid*, p. 128.

[119]Biddle, 'Seasonal Festivals and Residence', p. 51-72.

[120]Cunliffe, *Wessex*, p. 306.

[121]Cunliffe, *Wessex*, p. 306; and Charles-Edwards, 'Early Medieval Kingship', p. 28.

[122]Charles-Edwards, 'Early Medieval Kingship', p. 29.

itineraries also show this.[123]

Much of evidence for particular journeys and travelling in general relates to royal itineration and battle sequences, but these are by no means the only type of movement which can be studied. Travel for ecclesiastical reasons would have been common and has been studied from different perspectives, with missionary expeditions to the continent claiming the most attention.[124] Church councils can also contribute to our understanding of travel in the early Middle Ages. Where possible, it would be valuable to look at the time of year when they took place and how the large numbers of people involved would have been able to get to the sites. Some work has already been done on this as Catherine Cubitt has provided a list of dates and places for church councils between 672 and 845, as well as a discussion of who attended.[125] Work of this sort will allow consideration of when people were travelling and how they could have travelled to specific sites.

Examining the movements of people forms only part of the work needed to understand how people would actually have used the communication network. As was seen in the continental examples, the efforts taken to ensure comfort and safety, as well as the general logistics involved in travelling from one place to another, form an important part of our understanding of the mechanics of travel.

For early Anglo-Saxon England, Charles-Edwards believed that the laws relating to food rents may have been required for feeding the royal court as it travelled through the kingdom.[126] He suggested that before c. 700, food rents would not have been collected from an area unless the king visited it, but that eventually the rents from unvisited areas would have been transported to areas where it was needed.[127] Pauline Stafford and Robin Flemming have both investigated the *feorm* of one night at

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[123]Hill, *Atlas*, p. 83-84, 87-91.

[124]See, for example, Newton, *Travel and Travellers of the Middle Ages*.

[125]Cubitt, *Church Councils*, p. 22-23, 297-321.

[126]Charles-Edwards, 'Early Medieval Kingship', p. 64.

[127]*Ibid*, p. 30-31.

Domesday.[128] Following on from these studies, the mechanics of feeding the itinerant court should be investigated and how other travellers fed themselves must also be determined.

Finding shelter while travelling across Wessex must have been of paramount importance. Little has been said about individuals and where they might have stayed, but the sheltering of the court has been discussed. It has often been assumed, especially by Sawyer, that the Anglo-Saxon court almost always stayed at royal vills in the countryside.[129] Charles-Edwards, however, suggested that the early Anglo-Saxon court would have also stayed at the residences of magnates and at monasteries.[130] Even if the court stayed at royal vills, the buildings there were not likely to be extensive enough to shelter everyone if there was to be a large gathering. Moreover, a magnate or monastery could not be expected to have enough covered space for all. In these cases, Dorothy Whitelock suggested that the travellers may have stayed in tents.[131] Catherine Cubitt has also suggested that people may have stayed in tents at church councils.[132] However, there has been no definitive statement on the use of tents or even on the status of sites where the court stayed. Thus where people stayed and what form their shelter took must be investigated further.

As seen in Wood's description of journeys to the continent, those who were travelling, even if only within Wessex, would have had to have done much advance preparation. For a large group which was constantly travelling, such as the royal court, messengers would have had to have been sent ahead to help with arrangements.[133] Individuals and groups who were making special voyages needed to plan carefully before leaving home. Evidence of these plans is scarce indeed, but when available, should provide further insight into the working of the system of travel

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[128]Stafford, 'Farm of One Night', p. 491-502; Flemming,'Domesday Estates of the King and the Godwines', p. 987-1007;

[129]P. Sawyer, 'The Royal Tun in Pre-Conquest England', *Ideal and Reality in Frankish and Anglo-Saxon Society*, ed., P. Wormald (Oxford, 1983). See also Cunliffe,*Wessex*, p. 306.

[130]Charles-Edwards, 'Early Medieval Kingship', p. 28.

[131]Whitelock, *Beginnings of English Society*, p. 55-56.

[132]Cubitt, *Church Councils*, p. 35.

[133]Sawyer, 'The Royal Tun in Pre-Conquest England', p. 287.

and communication.

Although, as seen above, many scholars have touched on itineration and the problems associated with travelling, the detailed workings of the system have not been fully explored. The references to journeys in previous works need deeper investigation in order to determine the true nature of the travel system in early medieval England. It is, moreover, necessary to pull evidence from different types of sources together in order to understand the system.

This Dissertation

Through this review of many primary and secondary sources for travel and the communications network it has become clear that it is not possible in the scope of this thesis to thoroughly investigate all issues across England during the whole Anglo-Saxon period. It has, therefore, been necessary to narrow the study geographically and in time period. It is difficult to create a single regional case study which can both provide a strong model and make best use of the available evidence for the communications network and the mechanics of travel. The roads, tracks and waterways can best be investigated in detail in very small areas, perhaps across a couple of parishes. In order to get a good cross-section of settlement types, the settlement network must be examined in a much larger area. The evidence for journeying, moreover, is very difficult to limit to a small region. There is, then, a tension between the evidence for these different elements of the system of travel and communications. In order to balance the needs of the landscape and historical studies, I therefore chose a large area to form the basis of this dissertation and when necessary I will concentrate on smaller areas within it and will bring in evidence from outside of it.

The area chosen needed to be a well-defined political and geographical entity, significant to the development of England, and must have excellent primary source materials. As will be shown, these requirements are met by the kingdom of Wessex. The word 'Wessex' does not have only one definition which can be considered correct. Its geographical and political connotations vary during the Anglo-Saxon period, with the change in fortunes

of the West Saxon kings, and its popular use in later centuries as a convenient word for areas of southern England has not helped clarify its meaning. Anglo-Saxon scholars generally agree that Hampshire, Wiltshire, and Dorset were part of Wessex. Others include areas to the north, east and south of these counties, depending on what time period is under discussion and whether they are looking at the West Saxon kingdom or areas under the control of the West Saxon royal house. For the purposes of this dissertation, the six counties being treated as Wessex are Berkshire, Devon, Dorset, Hampshire, Somerset and Wiltshire and it is the landscape of these counties that forms the setting for this dissertation.[134] Although the borders of Wessex fluctuate and regions within it have physical characteristics extending beyond its borders, Wessex is a recognisable entity throughout the early Middle Ages. Also, Wessex has an important role in the development of the kingdom of England because the West Saxon kings became the first kings of England. This increases Wessex's significance to the study of travel and communication because, being West Saxon, the first kings of England spent much of their time travelling in Wessex.

Furthermore, the evidence which survives from Wessex makes it a good region for a case study of the system of travel and communication. There is a substantial amount of documentary material relating to Wessex. It has a large selection of Anglo-Saxon charters, is well represented in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* and has other important sources such as the *Burghal Hidage* and the *Life of Alfred*. These sources and their use will be discussed where relevant in later chapters. Also, this region has been the focus of significant archaeological work which helps determine where people were going and, in a few cases, it should be possible to comment on sections of particular routes. Furthermore, since Wessex was well serviced by ridgeways, Roman roads and potentially navigable waterways, it is an excellent area in which to study the continuity of the road network and the relative importance of water and land transport.

Even if it will not be possible to create a map of all of the roads and navigable rivers in use in Wessex, by looking at West Saxon settlement sites and their layout, meeting places, place-

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[134] B. Yorke, *Wessex in the Early Middle Ages* (London, 1995) p. 1.

names and terms in charter boundary clauses, it will be possible to gain an understanding of how the components of the system fitted together in Wessex. This will enable me to comment on the degree of continuity from previous systems and on how the West Saxons changed and adapted the network. Also, charters, law codes and historical narratives will provide evidence for how the system was used in Wessex, that is, who needed it, where they were going, how they moving about the countryside, how they were feeding and sheltering themselves and what were the difficulties that they faced.

After having examined the environment of Wessex, the settlement network, the roads and waterways, and the journeys, I will combine the various aspects of the system of travel and communications in order to comment on West Saxon society.

Chapter 2
The Environment of Wessex

> So the noble prince proceeded undismayed
> up fells and screes, along narrow footpaths
> and ways where they were forced into single file,
> ledges on cliffs above lairs of water-monsters.[1]

The journeys and routes of Anglo-Saxon travellers were intricately bound to the landscape and that landscape needs to be understood before a meaningful discussion of either journeys or routes can take place. This chapter will consider how natural features influenced the communications network.

The landscape of Wessex has been heavily influenced by man for millennia, and, with this in mind, this chapter will try to extract its 'natural' features, including a discussion of 'natural' lines of communications and prehistoric routes. Wessex, which in this dissertation is defined as Berkshire, Devon, Dorset, Hampshire, Somerset, and Wiltshire, is not one coherent topographical unit. The terrain within it is diverse and some of its geological regions extend beyond the kingdoms political borders. Wessex itself is a region of contrasting upland and lowland, with chalk hills, river valleys and moors. The following is a description of the area, moving from north to south and east to west through the major regions of Wessex (fig. 4).

The landscape of eastern Wessex is dominated by the chalk downlands and their gentle rolling hills and valleys. From the north, the chalklands enter Wessex across the Thames Gap from the Chilterns and are found in Berkshire, creating the "defiant scarp overlooking the Vale of White Horse".[2] From the White Horse Hills, the Marlborough Downs extend the chalk toward Salisbury Plain, a chalk plateau which rises to over 900 ft above sea level

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[1] "*Ofereode tha æthelinga bearn/ steap stan-hlitho, stige nearwe,/ enge an-pathas, uncuth gelad,/neowle næssas, nicor-husa fela.*" S. Heaney (trans.) *Beowulf: A New Verse Translation* (New York, 2000) lines 1408-11, p. 98-9. Due to an unforseen technical problem just prior to printing, it has been necessary to convert all Anglo-Saxon characters to their Roman equivalents.

[2] Cunliffe, *Wessex*, p. 1; Timperley and Brill, *Ancient Trackways of Wessex*, p. xxi; P. J. Fowler, *Regional Archaeological: Wessex* (London, 1967) p. 9.

with most of it being over 600ft.[3] From Salisbury Plain, the chalk stretches towards the east, extending outside of Wessex and ending at the Weald.[4] The Hampshire Downs, in eastern Wessex, vary in height from their northern edge to the southern one. In the north and east, the Downs are over 600 ft above sea-level and in some places reach above 750 to 800 ft.[5] In the south, the height is between 300 and 500 ft.[6] This area is broken by the Test, Itchen and Meon valleys.[7]

Around these chalk ridges, there is lowland. Between Salisbury Plain, the Marlborough Downs and Berkshire Downs are two valleys.[8] Firstly, between the Berkshire Downs and Salisbury Plain is the London Basin, is a large low valley, mostly under 200 ft above sea-level.[9] Secondly, the Vale of Pewsey is a wide valley containing the head streams of the Salisbury Avon.[10] To the south and south-west of the Hampshire Downs is the Hampshire Basin, a low area much like the aforementioned London Basin, lying mostly with Hampshire, but extending into eastern Dorset. Within the Hampshire Basin can be found the New Forest, an area of heathland and woodland. The relative proportions of heath and wood in the New Forest in the late Saxon period cannot be precisely determined.[11] To the south and west of the Hampshire Basin are the heathlands of Dorset.

If we go back to the Salisbury Plain, we can follow the chalk south-westerly through Dorset to where it reaches the sea at Weymouth Bay.[12] To the east of this chalkland and to the south of

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[3]H. C. Darby and R. Weldon Finn, *The Domesday Geography in South-West England* (Cambridge, 1967) p. 63. This volume will henceforth be abbreviated as: *DGSW*.

[4]Cunliffe, *Wessex*, p. 1; Fowler, p. 9.

[5] Fowler, p. 9; H. C. Darby and E. M. J. Campbell *The Domesday Geography in South-East England* (Cambridge, 1962) p. 359. This volume will henceforth be abbreviated as: *DGSE*.

[6]*DGSE*, p. 359.

[7]*DGSE*, p. 359.

[8]Cunliffe, *Wessex*, p. 1-2.

[9]*DGSE*, p. 357.

[10]*DGSW*, p. 63.

[11]*DGSE*, p. 357; Fowler, p. 9.

[12]Cunliffe, *Wessex*, p. 1.

the aforementioned Hampshire Basin is the Isle of Purbeck. The north of this region is a chalk ridge and to the south is a ridge of Jurassic limestone, with a clay vale between the ridges.[13] Roughly parallel to the chalk, and to the west of it is a clay vale extending through Wiltshire and into Dorset. In the north the clay vale is mostly below 300 ft above sea-level and its streams carry water to either the Bristol Avon or to the upper Thames.[14] In the south, the clay lands become the Vale of Blackmoor, which lies between 200 and 300 ft above sea-level under the chalk heights.[15] The Vale of Blackmoor was created by river erosion.[16] Now, streams eventually carry the water from this region into the Stour.[17]

To the west of the northern stretches of these Wessex clay vales can be found the southern extension of Cotswold, a Jurassic limestone ridge. The Cotswolds reach heights of over 400 ft above-sea level, but are cut by "various tributaries that flow to join the Bristol Avon" and these are "some 200 ft below the general surface".[18] The ridge moves from north to south through Wessex ending as the cliffs to the south of Bridport, Dorset, on the edge of Lyme Bay.[19] Western Dorset has both "steep valleys and exposed ridges".[20]

Moving to northern Wessex, to the west of the Cotswolds lies a region of hills and valleys in northern Somerset. To the south of this region are the Mendips. Next to the Mendips are the Somerset Levels. The Somerset Levels are marshland and are drained by the Brue, Parrett and Tone rivers.[21] The area is very flat and much of it is below sea-level at high-tide.[22] The

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[13]*DGSW*, p. 129.

[14]*DGSW*, p. 63.

[15]*DGSW*, p. 127.

[16]Cunliffe, *Wessex*, p. 1-2.

[17]*DGSW*, p. 127.

[18]*DGSW*, p. 62-3.

[19]Cunliffe, *Wessex*, p. 2.

[20]*DGSW*, p. 129.

[21]Cunliffe, *Wessex*, p. 2.

[22]*DGSW*, p. 216.

Somerset Levels were affected by flooding, but the marsh is broken by 'islands' of higher ground and along the coast there is a higher strip of silt.[23]

On the other side of the Somerset Levels are the Quantock Hills. The Quantock Hills and most of Exmoor, with the Brendon Hills, are in Somerset. Most of this area lies above 800 ft above sea-level, with substantial areas being over 1000 ft, with the Quantocks in general being lower than Exmoor.[24] Around the Quantocks and to the east of Exmoor lies a region of lowland marsh (under 400 ft) refered to by Darby as the Taunton Region.[25] This are includes the vales of Taunton Deane and Wellington.[26] The Vale of Taunton is just one example of fertile low-lying moorland found in Wessex.[27]

Immediately south of this region is east Devon where the hills are flat on top and are separated by deeply valleys.[28] Moving westwards from here ones finds the area of Devon which is dominated by red sandstone. This area is mostly below 400 ft and 'is drained by the Exe', Culm and their tributaries.[29] Moving along the coast, one reaches the southern extremes of Devon where the ground is higher, but lies mostly below 600 ft.[30] "The surface is broken by the valleys and estuaries of the Dart, the Avon, the Erme, the Plym, the Tavy and the Tamar."[31] To the west of the red Devon area, between Exmoor and the Tamar Valley, is the Culm Measures belt which is a 'broad belt of clays, shales and sandstones'.[32] To the west and north of the Culm measures belt

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[23]*Ibid.*, p. 147, 216.

[24]*Ibid.*, p. 213, 214.

[25]*Ibid.*, p. 214.

[26]*Ibid.*, p. 214.

[27]J. H. Bettey, *Rural Life in Wessex 1500 - 1900* (Gloucester, 1987) p. 8.

[28]*DGSW*, p. 293; M. Todd, *The South West to AD 1000* (Harlow, 1987), p. 1.

[29]*DGSW*, p. 292; Todd, *The South West*, p. 3.

[30]*DGSW*, p. 293.

[31]*Ibid.*, p. 293.

[32]*DGSW*, p. 292; Todd, *The South West*, p. 5.

are the lowlands associated with the Taw and Torridge.[33] Finally, Dartmoor lies in the middle of Devon. It is a large granite mass and is over 1200 ft above sea-level, with some areas rising to over 2000 ft.[34]

Of Devon and Cornwall, Malcolm Todd wrote that ". . . the most powerful influence upon the region is the sea."[35] This comment can be extended to much of Wessex in that Dorset, Hampshire, and south-eastern Devon all border the English Channel, while Somerset and north-western Devon border the Bristol Channel. Rivers too are an important part of the West Saxon landscape. The rivers of Wessex, such as the Frome, Piddle, Stour, the Bristol Avon, the Salisbury Avon, Test, Itchen, and Meon, generally originate in the chalk areas and divide the downlands, forming river valleys. In the south of Wessex, the rivers pass through the Hampshire Basin and in the north one finds tributaries of the Thames.[36] The Thames is the only river which arises in Wessex and does not enter the sea within Wessex.[37] The rivers of the Somerset Levels, the Brue, Parrett, and Tone, were the only means of drainage in that marshy terrain.[38]

These natural features of the West Saxon countryside played a great role in the formation of communications network. The rivers and sea are obvious lines of communications. The structure of the land also influenced the ease of communication. The chalk downlands and their network of ridgeways, which stretch through much of Wessex, facilitated communication throughout the region and beyond it.[39] The valleys had fewer tracks, but Cunliffe pointed out that the banks of the main rivers have gravel terraces and thus could have been used for travelling, especially in the Hampshire Basin where the valleys create links

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[33]*DGSW*, p. 292.

[34]*DGSW*, p. 294; Todd, *The South West*, p. 3.

[35]Todd, *The South West*, p. 1.

[36]Yorke, *Wessex*, p. 1 and Cunliffe, *Wessex*, p. 1.

[37]Aston and Lewis, 'Introduction', p. 1.

[38]Cunliffe, *Wessex*, p. 2.

[39]Cunliffe, *Wessex*, p. 2; Fowler, p. 9.

between the Solent and the chalk.[40] The network provided by the rivers, both large and small, and how they relate to the natural land routes must be important to communication. Upon this natural landscape of Wessex, roads and tracks would have developed.

The first routeway systems in Britain were likely to have been made by animals. Animals moved across the land, spreading out over large areas creating 'broad zones of communications' and they also made more focused tracks when the natural features forced them to funnel together or when they moved locally between food and water supplies.[41] It has been hypothesised that as early as 8000 B.C. there were very many tracks all across Britain caused by the migration of animals and that these tracks were to influence the routeways developed by man.[42] Early people would have followed the animals and would have used the same tracks as the animals, but eventually the people would have started to modify the tracks.[43] By 6000 B.C., new routes would have been made for the pasturing of animals and for trade.[44] As prehistoric people developed permanent settlements, they would have needed to have communication links between habitation sites.[45] Therefore the number of tracks increased, so much so that Taylor suggested, although he cannot prove it, that many modern lanes and roads may be based in part or entirely on Neolithic trackways.[46]

Wright has provided detailed descriptions of a number of prehistoric routes in Wessex, an area which he defined as Dorset, and parts of Wiltshire, Somerset, Hampshire and Berkshire. He cited four main routes which allowed for travel and communications beyond the region: "the Thames-Avon divide in north Wiltshire leading to the Cotswolds; the Test-Loddon divide near Basingstoke leading to Surrey and the North and South Downs;

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[40]Cunliffe, *Wessex*, p. 2-3.

[41]Taylor, *Roads and Tracks*, p. 3; Wright, *Roads and Trackways*, p. 10.

[42]Taylor, *Roads and Tracks*, p. 3; Wright, *Roads and Trackways*, p. 10.

[43]Taylor, *Roads and Tracks*, p. 5; Wright, *Roads and Trackways*, p. 10.

[44]*Ibid*, p. 5-6.

[45]Taylor, *Roads and Tracks*, p. 11; Wright, *Roads and Trackways*, p. 10-11.

[46]Wright, *Roads and Trackways*, p. 11-12.

the Thames gap at Goring separating the Berkshire Chalk and the Chiltern which itself continues to East Anglia; and the downland ridge running from Winchester to Butser Hill and the South Downs into Sussex."[47]

The prehistoric routes of Wessex were most often ridgeways which Wright called the highways of Neolithic Wessex. These tracks followed the watersheds and only went down into the valleys when there was no other way to proceed.[48] The Great Ridgeway went through the heart of Wessex and before tracing it in detail, Wright gave a general idea of its course. Starting where it came into Wessex in the north, it went along the northern edge of the Berkshire Downs and then went roughly southwards by the Marlborough Downs towards Avebury. From there, Wright said that its course is uncertain as it crosses the Vale of Pewsey and the western part of the Salisbury Plain. It goes southwards through Shaftesbury and turns westward, going across Dorset to the coast near Axmouth.[49] Wright showed how Ronald Good, the author of *The Old Roads of Dorset*, and Timperley have suggested that the Great Ridgeway was continuous across Dorset, but he was not convinced that this 'alleged' ridgeway was a prehistoric route.[50] Another Wessex ridgeway is the Harroway, an extension of the Kentish ridgeway which was later known as Pilgrim's Way.[51] The Harroway moves westward across Hampshire and Wiltshire, eventually joining the Great Ridgeway at Minterne Hill.[52]

Other prehistoric Wessex ways described by Wright include: a ridgeway along the coast of Dorset,[53] the 'Inkpen Ridgeway' whose 'alleged' route goes east from the Great Ridgeway north of the Harrow Way,[54] and the Puddletown Ridgeway, "a short-distance track linking the ridgeways running generally northwards from

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[47]*Ibid*, p. 10.

[48]*Ibid*, p. 12-13.

[49]*Ibid*, p. 14 and 14-20.

[50]*Ibid*, p. 16.

[51]*Ibid*, p. 20.

[52]*Ibid*, p. 20-25.

[53]*Ibid*, p. 25-28.

[54]*Ibid*, p. 28-31.

Dorchester with those on the heathland between Dorchester and Wareham".[55]

Overall, the suggested prehistoric routes in Wessex are situated within the landscape so that they would be natural corridors of communication, but the scholars cited above were unable to offer definitive evidence for the prehistoric use of large sections of these routes. Nonetheless, these routes, especially the ridgeways, are obvious lines of communications. These landscape features thus need to be kept in mind during the discussion of routeways and journeying as they played a vital role in determining where people travelled and what their trip was like. Some of the 'natural routes' have had long term usefulness, but people have continuously re-written geography according to their politics and economics. In the next chapter, we shall examine some of these changes from the late Roman period, throught different phases of Anglo-Saxon settlement to the early Norman period in order to see late Saxon Wessex in context.

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[55]*Ibid*, p. 31-32.

Chapter 3

The Settlement Network

> So their gallant escort guided them
> to that dazzling stronghold and indicated
> the shortest way to it; . . .
> It was a paved street, a path that kept them
> in marching order.[1]

In this passage, Beowulf and the Geats began the final part of their journey from their homeland, across the sea to Heorot. This passage thus shows a connection between Heorot, their destination, and the *stræt* which was *stan-fah*. This chapter will explore the relationship between settlements and the communications network, as well as outlining settlements changes in Wessex and their implications for the communications network.

In his article 'The Temporality of the Landscape', Tim Ingold wrote that ". . . there can be no places without paths, along which people arrive and depart; and no paths without places, that constitute their destinations and points of departure."[2] If this statement is accepted and the communications network is defined as a coming together of *all* roads and tracks (along with waterways), then all settlements in late Saxon Wessex must be seen as connected to the communications network. Therefore, in order to uncover the communication system in and beyond any given region, the role of the sites connected by the network must be taken into consideration.[3] This type of study, termed macromorphology in *Ancient Road Networks and Settlement Hierarchies in the New World*, stresses not the characteristics of particular routes, but the 'overall configuration of the system' based on a network of contemporaneous sites.[4] So, there is clearly a relationship between settlements and the communications network. These two features of the landscape, moreover, are

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[1]"*Him tha hilde-deor hof modigra/ torht getæhte, thæt hie him to mihton/ gegnum gangan . . . Stræt wæs stan-fah, stig wisode/ gumum ætgædere.*" Heaney (trans), *Beowulf*, lines 312-4, 320-1, p. 22-3. I have changed Heany's translation of *stræt* from track to street.

[2]Ingold, 'The Temporality of landscape', p. 167.

[3]Trombold, 'Introduction', p. 4.

[4]Trombold, 'Introduction', p. 4.

affected by systems of power and control, as will be seen.

There are two types of roads: 'informal' or 'natural' and 'formal' or 'made'.[5] The former were tracks and paths which were not planned, but developed organically, with little labour or maintenance, with the needs of the local populations. The latter, well exemplified by Roman roads, were planned and built by a central authority, often for a military purpose. Such roads sometimes connected existing important places and involved upgrading existing routes. Formal roads were more durable fixtures of the landscape and once built, could influence traffic and settlement patterns. They also might survive political, economic and social change, but they "do not necessarily remain stable once they have been created".[6] Formal routes, although the official expression of those in power, did not necessarily end the use of informal, unofficial routes and the two could exist together.[7] Both types of roads were associated with settlements and the nature of the settlements may show the nature of the road, as Schreiber wrote:

> Certainly local villages were located along roads, but such local roads need not have had anything to do with the over-arching political organization. However, the association of sites of political function with particular roads suggests that those roads served a political function. Sites may be associated with particular roads by simple physical proximity, consistent topographical position, or direct articulation.[8]

Thus in order to explore the communications network in late Saxon Wessex, it is necessary to understand the settlement pattern. Moreover, to understand the role of the state in the system it is necessary to place the late Saxon system in a wider context.

In this chapter I will consider settlements and changes in settlement patterns in Wessex in the late Roman, Early Saxon (400-600), Middle Saxon (600-850), Late Saxon (850-1066), and

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[5]Trombold, 'Introduction', p. 3-6; Crawford, *Archaeology in the Field*, p. 60-1, 67-8.

[6]R. Hassig, 'Roads, routes, and the ties that bind', *Ancient Road Networks and Settlement Hierarchies in the New World*, ed., C. D. Trombold (Cambridge, 1991)p. 25.

[7]K. J. Schreiber, 'The association between roads and polities: evidence for Wari roads in Peru', *Ancient Road Networks and Settlement Hierarchies in the New World*, ed., C. D. Trombold (Cambridge, 1991) p. 243.

[8]Schreiber, 'The association between roads and polities', p. 244.

Norman (post-1066) periods, with the Late Saxon period being treated in more detail than the others. Changes in settlement patterns might be considered as having been provoked by three kinds of social change: ecological, economic and ideological.[9] These factors and the changes themselves have implications for the system of travel and communications as will be shown below. Although, there is a set of 'type sites' from all over England which are used in most discussions of Anglo-Saxon settlement, for the purposes of this dissertation, examples will be drawn from Wessex wherever possible. In particular, after looking at the general trends we will trace the development of Shapwick (Somerset) as a rural case study.

Late Roman

The late Roman settlement patterns need to be considered in order to determine what was the Anglo-Saxon's inherited landscape. In Roman Britain, all types of land were used, from the woodlands of the New Forest and the quarries of the Mendips to the chalk valleys and reclaimed land in the Somerset Levels. By the third century, much of Wessex was covered by dense settlement of greatly differing types. There were towns, villages, villa estates, farmsteads, religious sites and industrial sites of varying degrees of size and importance.[10]

The government of Roman Britain invested in land routes and the roads of this period are some of the most studied in the evolution of roads in Britain. Many scholars have commented on the importance of the Roman road system to Britain[11] and one has concluded that it is the single largest legacy of the Romans to the people of today.[12] The Romans first used the Iron Age tracks

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[9]M. O. H. Carver, *Arguments in Stone: Archaeological Research and the European Town in the First Millennium* (Oxford, 1994) p. 46.

[10]Aston and Lewis, 'Introduction', p. 4; S. Esmonde Cleary, 'Approaches to the Differences between Late Romano-British and Early Anglo-Saxon Archaeology', *Anglo-Saxon Studies in Archaeology and History* 6 (1993) p. 58.

[11]For example: Margary,p. 17; Hindle, *Medieval Roads*, p. 24; and Wright, *Roads and Trackways*, p. 33.

[12]Taylor, *Roads and Tracks*, p. 42.

for military conquest, but they soon needed more roads and better ones, both for bringing in supplies and troops and for communication.[13] Roman roads were engineered, carefully planned and built so as to link important military and civil centres with each other and with smaller communities and to allow rapid communication.[14] The Romans built extensively and it has been estimated that they must have made 8-10 000 miles of roads.[15]

There were a number of Roman roads in Wessex (fig. 1). The locations of these are well established and have been traced in detail by Margary and Wright and can be found on most Ordnance Survey maps. Roman roads in Wessex radiated from and connected Axminster, Badbury Rings, Bath, Dorchester, Exeter, Ilchester, Mildenhall, Old Sarum, Silchester, and Winchester. The roads ran along the coast and across the mainland creating an efficient network for communication within Wessex as need by the Roman military, government and traders.

However, there is evidence for change in the settlement and communications patterns of late Roman period. Archaeology shows that buildings were either not repaired or were being repaired badly and there was a build up of dark earth caused by decay of timber buildings and agricultural and domestic waste. Richard Hodges saw these as signs of a decline from the mid-fourth century in the towns and villas of Roman Britain.[16] However, it is not as simple as this and, while there is no doubt that there was change, there is a debate over the nature of that change. For example, when writing about Italy, Ward-Perkins suggested town-sites with dark earth layers from this period show that they ". . . were less densely settled than either their Roman or their later medieval counterparts".[17] Thus there is a school of thought that maintains that the post-Roman towns were simply put to different uses and that we should not be seeing the changes as

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[13]*Ibid*, p. 42.

[14]Margary, p. 17.

[15]Hindle, *Medieval Roads*, p. 6;Taylor, *Roads and Tracks*, p. 50; and Wright, *Roads and Trackways*, p. 33.

[16]R. Hodges, *The Anglo-Saxon Achievement: Archaeology and the beginnings of English Society* (London, 1989) p. 16.

[17]B. Ward-Perkins, 'The towns of northern Italy: re-birth or renewal', *The Rebirth of Towns in the West AD 700-1050*, eds., R. Hodges and B. Hobley, CBA Research Report 68 (1988) 16 - 27. p. 18.

leading to something which was inferior.[18]

Whatever the reasons, it is clear that there was a change and that in England, even though there were still people living on the sites of Roman towns, these places were no longer functioning as imperial urban centres. For example, new timber buildings in Winchester in the late fourth century were built without respect to the Roman street plan and a street that was resurfaced twice was in an area where a collapsed gate had not been fixed.[19] These examples prove that some people did continue to live in Winchester in the sub-Roman period and did repair or build things they needed. However, the collapsed gate and disregard for the street plan show that the power which had been responsible for such things was no longer functioning. Therefore, the nature of settlement in Winchester had changed.

As Winchester and other such towns had been the places where the imperial bureaucracy and landlords had extracted surplus,[20] these changes must have had ramifications for the communications network. The Roman roads had been an important part of the imperial landscape and there has been much debate over their use in the immediate post-Roman period, with many believing that they fell into disuse.[21] In this model, the disintegration would have started with the collapse of the timber bridges. If the local population did not repair them or if there was not a usable ford nearby, routes became broken at major river crossings.[22] Roads eventually would have become impassable at minor river crossing since fords and culverts would have been destroyed naturally by erosion and floods.[23] Furthermore, the roads themselves would have become blocked by obstacles such as fallen trees.[24] Taylor

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[18]Carver, *Arguments in Stone*, p. 46-48.

[19]B. Eagles,'The Archaeological Evidence for Settlement in the Fifth to Seventh Centuries A.D.' *The Medieval Landscape of Wessex*, eds., M. Aston and C. Lewis (Oxford, 1994) p. 13-32.

[20]Esmonde Cleary, 'Approaches to the Differences between Late Romano-British and Early Anglo-Saxon Archaeology', p. 60-1.

[21]For example: Hindle, *Medieval Roads*, p. 6; Margary, p. 23; Taylor,*Roads and Tracks*, p. 87; Whitelock, *Beginnings of English Society*, p. 15; and Wright,*Roads and Trackways*, p. 51.

[22]Taylor, p. 87.

[23]*Ibid*, p. 87.

[24]*Ibid*, p. 87.

wrote that when 'traffic stopped' the road surfaces themselves would ultimately have been destroyed by the elements.[25] Margary added that those roads which continued to be used would have become impassable sloughs or would have deepened into holloways from use without proper maintenance.[26]

This shows the disintegration of the Roman communications network as a 'natural' event, but in some instances, there were conscious attempts to disrupt the system. Margary has suggested that the roads were dangerous in that hostile forces (*i.e.* Saxons) could have used them easily. He did not think that this use of them by the Saxons could have been prevented by the Britons as "even the deliberate destruction of bridges would have been of little avail against such a wild people."[27] This view is of mass invasion is historiographically outdated, but there is evidence that at this period, Roman roads could have been blocked for defensive purposes. In the sub-Roman period, Bokerley Dyke was built across a Roman road, and thus protected Dorchester by controlling the land access to it. The dyke seems to have been dismantled at one point in time with traffic resuming for a short period before the dyke was built up again.[28] It is interesting that the resources were found to do this at a time when Margary and Taylor question the Romano-British population's ability to maintain any part of the road system.

In other cases, archaeology has shown that Roman roads were being kept up in this period, as seen above when a street near Winchester's collapsed gate continued to be use by enough traffic that it needed to be resurfaced twice.[29] This clearly shows that people in the late and post-Roman periods used and maintained their roads. The process by which some roads continued to be used and others fell into disrepair in the post-Roman and early Saxon periods is difficult to determine. Much of the disintegration described by Margary and Taylor may have happened, but, as will be seen in chapter four, Roman roads did continue to

[25] *Ibid*, p. 87.

[26] Margary, p. 23.

[27] *Ibid*, p. 23.

[28] Taylor, *Roads and Tracks*, p. 86.

[29] Eagles, 'The Archaeological Evidence for Settlement in Fifth to Seventh Centuries AD', p. 16.

be used into the late Saxon period.

Early Saxon c. 400-600

Rosamond Faith wrote: "After the collapse of Roman state power in Britain, political authority, which was already in the fourth century beginning to shift from the *civitas* capital to the countryside, fragmented into a multitude of kingdoms."[30] The changes in settlement patterns in the early Saxon period mirror this change in power structure. Although the small numbers of identified and excavated sites from this period make the settlement pattern difficult to observe, it is known that this was a period of dispersed settlements which had no great differences in status.[31] Although there were people living on sites that were towns in other periods, there was no 'urban life' during the early Saxon period.[32] Most settlements were in river valleys, primarily confluences, and on light soils where ploughing was easy.[33] Hamerow pointed out that these sorts of riverine sites were also the focus of settlement prior to the building of Roman roads.[34] The 'type site' for this period is West Stow, Suffolk (400-650) where archaeologists have found seven small holdings with a total of fourteen houses and sixty-nine sunken-floor buildings, but settlements of this period usually had no more that three or four farmsteads in use at any

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[30]R. Faith, *The English Peasantry and the Growth of Lordship* (Leicester, 1997) p. 4.

[31]Carver, *Arguments in Stone*, p. 53; Esmonde Cleary, 'Approaches to the Differences between Late Romano-British and Early Anglo-Saxon Archaeology', p. 58-9; Hodges, *Anglo-Saxon Achievement*, p. 34; Reynolds, *Later Anglo-Saxon England*, p. 136; C. Scull, 'Archaeology, Early Saxon Society and the origins of Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms', *Anglo-Saxon Studies in Archaeology and History* 6 (1993) p. 69, 76.

[32]A. Vince, 'Saxon urban economics: an archaeological perspective', *Environment and Economy in Anglo-Saxon England*, ed., J. Rackham, CBA 86 (1994) p. 109.

[33]Hamerow, 'Settlement Patterns', p. 417; Carver, 'Exploring, explaining, imagining: Anglo-Saxon Archaeology 1998', *The Archaeology of Anglo-Saxon England*, ed., C. E. Karkov (London, 1999) p. 33; Hodges, *Anglo-Saxon Achievement*, p. 20.

[34]Hamerow, 'Settlement Patterns', *Blackwell*, p. 417.

one time.[35]

It is not the purpose of this section to debate the ethnicity of the inhabitants of various sub-Roman sites or to trace the expansion of Anglo-Saxon activities in England. However, in the sub-Roman period in western Wessex there was some re-use of Iron Age hillforts and Eagles has termed these 'British Settlement Sites'. South Cadbury was re-occupied in the sub-Roman period as can be seen in the re-enforcement of the ramparts and the building of a hall. Pottery finds suggest that it was occupied in the sixth century. Likewise, Congresbury hillfort was occupied in the late-fifth to sixth century.[36]

The people living in the dispersed settlements must have been able to travel between farmsteads. It is not known what routes were used at this time, but there are several possibilities. The early Saxons could have continued to use Roman roads or sections of them. Routes dating from prehistoric times may have still been in use or may have begun been used again. The early Saxons may have relied on entirely new land routes or on waterways. The evidence simply does not allow us to say which one or ones happened. What we can say is that, since it has been established that all sites are necessarily connected to paths,[37] a dispersed settlement pattern needed a large number of routes. Also, as the settlements were largely of similar status, the roads, except for ones built in earlier (*i.e.* Roman) times, are unlikely to have been arranged in a hierarchy.

Middle Saxon c. 600-850

The Middle Saxon period saw significant changes in settlement patterns in that there were increases in numbers, types, size and

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[35]S. West, ed., *West Stow: The Anglo-Saxon Village, East Anglian Archaeology* 24 (1985) p. 10-53, 111-121; Carver, 'Kingship and material culture in early Anglo-Saxon East Anglia', p. 144.

[36]Eagles, 'Evidence for Settlement in the Fifth to Seventh Centuries AD', p. 19-20.

[37]Ingold, 'The Temporality of Landscape', p. 167.

centralisation of settlements.[38] This was the period of the phenomenon known as the 'Middle Saxon Shuffle' which Hamerow summed up as: " . . . the widespread displacement of rural settlements in the seventh and early eighth centuries, often to agriculturally superior settings, and a concomitant reorganization of territorial units."[39] During this period, *wics* were established and minsters came into being and increased in numbers. Also, the growth of manors that characterized later Anglo-Saxon England have their roots in the Middle Saxon period.

Wics

An important characteristic of the Middle Saxon period was the development of the 'emporia' or *wics*, a settlement type which thrived from the seventh to ninth century. They were trading and taxing centres.[40] They varied greatly in size and individual sites had different periods of prosperity.

The most important and best excavated *wic* in Wessex is *Hamwic*, the Middle Saxon settlement on the River Itchen to the east of Late Saxon Southampton. *Hamwic* was founded in the 680's or 690's, some fifty to one hundred years after *wics* in eastern England, such as London, Ipswich and York.[41] Excavations at *Hamwic* show evidence of it being planned in that it consisted of about 42 to 45 hectares enclosed by a ditch and had a regular street plan, with a wide main street and gravelled surfaces. Properties were not divided by fences and, in the northern section, there were buildings, many of which were rebuilt two or three times, tightly spaced and parallel to the streets. Excavations show that, as well as being a trading-place, it was a site of craft production and it has been suggested that it, and its environs of a five km radius, would have been self-sufficient. This and the fact that it was planned set it apart

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[38]Carver, 'Exploring, Explaining, Imagining', p. 34; Hodges, *Anglo-Saxon Achievement*, p. 58; Scull 'Archaeology, Early Anglo-Saxon Society and the origins of Anglo-Saxon kingdoms', p. 76.

[39]H. F. Hamerow, 'Settlement mobility and the 'Middle Saxon Shift': rural settlements and settlement patterns in Anglo-Saxon England', *Anglo-Saxon England* 20 (1991) p. 1.

[40]Carver, *Arguments in Stone*, p. 57; Vince, 'Saxon urban economics', p. 116-7.

[41]Vince, 'Saxon urban economics', p. 110.

from the other earlier Saxon settlements, in that it shows a greater degree of control from above.[42]

Alan Vince has evaluated the evidence for other *wics* in Wessex and has suggested that Swanage, Dorset was a *wic*. He noted that in 877, the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* referred to Swanage as *Swanawic*. He also put forth evidence for a *wic* further to the west. He looked at the *Chronicle* passage in which the reeve of Dorchester met Vikings at the coast and suggested that the landing site may have been at Weymouth Harbour, although others have identified Portland as the site of this incident.[43] The evidence for other Wessex *wics* is sparse indeed.

Wics were important central places and they must have had good access for traffic. But what routes did they use most? Vince showed that their main function must have been as 'international' ports because all known *wics* were on the coast or had access to the coast. If they had been for local, inland trade, then there should be inland *wics*. This means that, although there must have been roads and tracks for the carrying of goods inland, the most important routes in and out of the *wics* were the seaways and not the land routes.[44] Hodges suggested that the *Hamwic* site was chosen because of its place on the communication network: "It was probably chosen as an attractive place to beach the keel-less boats of the period, with good (Roman) roads leading into Wessex."[45]

Royal *Vills* and Aristocratic Residences

The Middle Saxon period saw the beginnings of the growth of the manor and we can see manorial centres, as royal and high status sites, in both the archaeological and written records. In his article on the royal *tun* in pre-Conquest England, Peter Sawyer identified about seventy-five such sites in Wessex.[46]

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[42]M. Brisbane, 'Hamwic (Saxon Southampton): a 8th century port and production centre', *The Rebirth of Towns in the West AD 700-1050*, ed., R. Hodges and B. Hobley, CBA 68 (1988) p. 101-108.

[43]Vince, 'Saxon urban economics', p. 110.

[44]Vince, 'Saxon urban economics', p. 117. See also, Brisbane, 'Hamwic', p. 103-4.

[45]Hodges, *Anglo-Saxon Achievement*, p. 80.

[46]Sawyer, 'The Royal Tun in Pre-Conquest England', p. 273-298.

Commonly cited examples of this new type of settlement are Yeavering (Northumberland) and Wicken Bonhunt (Essex). These sites differ from the West Stow dispersed settlement type in that there is evidence for hierarchy and centralised authority. At Yeavering, there was a sequence of large halls and perhaps an amphitheatre. Wicken Bonhunt dates to the sixth to seventh century and, during its second phase, archaeologists have found a large number of animal bones and a granary. These have been interpreted as evidence that Wicken Bonhunt was a centre for surplus extraction.[47]

In Wessex, Cowdery's Down represents this new type of settlement. Hamerow described it as "an orderly and prosperous settlement, presumably of high status."[48] The Saxon finds there indicate a settlement lasting about 150 years and archaeologists have identified three different phases during that period. The site had eighteen buildings over the course of the period and some of the buildings were located inside two enclosed areas. The buildings, which numbered three in the first phase, then six and finally ten, tend to be larger than others of the period with the largest hall on a similar scale to Yeavering.[49] Halls and larger buildings have traditionally been interpreted as high status buildings. The population has been estimated, in the first phase as being at least twenty, rising to more than sixty by the end of the third phase.[50]

Sites such as this were the new centres for the collection of surplus and therefore there would have been a concentration of traffic at these sites. Thus we would expect them to have good access to the communications network.

Minsters and the Ecclesiastic Landscape

With the Anglo-Saxons' conversion to Christianity came a new form of settlement: minsters. Although his work has met with

[47]M. O. H. Carver, 'Kingship and material culture in early Anglo-Saxon East Anglia', *The Origins of Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms*, ed., S. Bassett (Leicester, 1989) p. 144-6.

[48]Hamerow, 'Settlement mobility', p. 2.

[49]M. Millett, with S. James, 'Excavations at Cowdery's Down Basingstoke, Hampshire, 1978-81', *Archaeological Journal* 140 (1983) p. 247.

[50]*Ibid*, p. 249.

some opposition[51], John Blair has set out a framework for the role of the minster and the changing organization of pastoral care in Saxon England.[52] The term minster, from the Anglo-Saxon *mynstre*, has been chosen to label Christian communities of this period because of its inclusive nature.[53] The early phases of minster development will be considered here and changes in the later period will be discussed below in the section on Late Saxon Wessex.

John Blair argued that in the pre-Viking period, the Anglo-Saxon ecclesiastic landscape was dominated by minsters, communities of greatly varying size, which were composed of either monks or priests. In the seventh and eighth centuries, these communities functioned as central places and ministered to the people in large areas or 'minster parishes'. The minsters had shrines and other religious sites over which they maintained control. The parish churches which dominated late medieval England were not yet common. Through the eighth century, this minster system expanded as new communities were founded by royalty and members of great families. Hase pointed out that in Wessex, the kings Cædwalla (685-8) and Ine (688-726) were involved in founding minsters on royal estates, such as at Eling, Southampton, Bishop's Waltham, Titchfield and Romsey.[54]

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[51]For example, see: E. Cambridge and D. Rollason, 'Debate: The pastoral organization of the Anglo-Saxon Church: a review of the "Minster Hypothesis" ', *Early Medieval Europe* 4, 1 (1995) p. 87-104.

[52]J. Blair, 'Secular Minster Churches in Domesday Book', *Domesday Book: A Reassessment*, ed., P. Sawyer (London, 1985) p. 104-142; Blair, 'Local Churches in Domesday Book and Before', *Domesday Studies: Papers read at the Novocentenary Conference of the Royal Historical Society and the Institute of British Geographers*, ed., J. C. Holt (Woodbridge, 1987) p. 265-78; Blair, 'Minster Churches in the Landscape', *Anglo-Saxon Settlements*, ed., D. Hooke (Oxford, 1988) p. 35-58; Blair, 'Anglo-Saxon minsters: a topographical review', *Pastoral Care Before the Parish*, eds., J. Blair and R. Sharpe (Leicester, 1992) p. 226-66; Blair, 'Debate: Ecclesiastical organization and pastoral care in Anglo-Saxon England', *Early Medieval Europe* 4, 2 (1994) p. 193-212; Blair, 'Churches in the early English landscape: social and cultural contexts', *Church Archaeology*, eds., J. Blair and C. Pyrah (London, 1996) p. 6-18. See also articles in J. Blair, ed., *Minsters and Parish Churches: The Local Church in Transition, 950-1200* (Oxford, 1988).

[53]S. Foot, 'Anglo-Saxon minsters: a review of the terminology', *Pastoral Care Before the Parish*, eds., J. Blair and R. Sharpe (Leicester, 1992.) p. 212-25.

[54]P. H. Hase, 'The Mother Churches of Hampshire', *Minsters and Parish Churches: The Local Church in Transition, 950-1200*, ed., J. Blair. (Oxford, 1988) p. 45-8.

But can we see these sites archaeologically? In Blair's hypothesis, it is possible as, according to him, minster sites are topographically different from secular central places, such as the royal *vills*. He suggested that the minsters were more often located within former Roman enclosures, whereas the *vills* were normally removed from them.[55] Blair even suggested that the minsters played a more important role in the development of small towns than did the royal *vills*.[56] He maintained that minster sites were characteristically curvilinear enclosures defined by a ditch and bank, but the area inside the minster complex would have been similar to secular sites of the time.[57] Minsters were located on prominent and accessible sites, that is on summits, on shoulders of hills, on promontories, on islands in floodplains, on headlands at water-ways, and at cross-roads.[58]

Although there has been no 'scientific study of the sites and topography' of what Hase called 'mother churches' in Wessex, it seems as though Blair's generalizations on minsters' landscape context cannot be applied unaltered to that kingdom.[59] For example, Hase pointed out that early West Saxons were more likely to build churches outside Roman enclosures, such as at Dorchester and Ilchester, and when they did build inside towns walls, such as at Bath and Winchester, the churches were removed from the main roads.[60] Of particular relevance to this study is his assertion that, when the West Saxons were building churches near Roman roads, they normally chose a site close to water, even if at a distance from the road. This meant that villages, such as Andover, Alton and Wimborne Minster, which grew up near the churches were a couple of miles from the Roman roads.[61]

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[55]Blair, 'Minster Churches in the Landscape', p. 35.

[56]*Ibid.*, p. 35-6.

[57]Blair, 'A Topographical Review', p. 231, 259.

[58]Blair, 'A Topographical Review' , p. 227; J. Blair, 'The Minsters of the Thames', *The Cloister and the World*, ed., J. Blair and B. Golding (Oxford, 1995) p. 8, 12, 14.

[59]P. H. Hase, 'The Church in the Wessex Heartlands', *The Medieval Landscape of Wessex*, eds. M. Aston and C. Lewis (Oxford, 1994) p. 54, 56.

[60]*Ibid.*, p. 54.

[61]*Ibid*, p. 58.

Hase, moreover, asserted that the West Saxon minsters were not usually found in the prominent locations which Blair's theory suggests. However, this stand may be seen as argumentative, as Hase himself wrote that "[m]ore often , the early West Saxon churches were built in a *locally* prominent position, in the top of a hillock, such that the church is easily seen from nearby but not from any distance."[62] He also stressed the siting on West Saxon minsters next to rivers. These statements are not wholly incompatible with Blair's theory as outlined above.

Although the ecclesiastic landscape of mid-Saxon Wessex may have been dominated by the minsters and their 'parishes', the bishops and their dioceses were also important aspects of Christianity at this time. In the middle Saxon period, there were two dioceses in Wessex: Sherborne to the west of Selwood and Winchester to the east (fig. 5).

Late Saxon c. 850-1066

In the late Saxon period, some trends seen in the Middle Saxon period continued and there were new developments. This period saw changes in the ecclesiastic landscape with the rise of the parish church and re-drawing of diocesan boundaries. In this period, the trends towards settlement nucleation and high status centres continued from the Middle Saxon period, but perhaps the most important change in this period was the development of the *burh* system. Other important features of the late West Saxon landscape were the secular divisions of shires and hundreds, woodlands and field systems.

Parish churches and continuing developments in the Ecclesiastic landscape

The ecclesiastical landscape changed considerably through the Anglo-Saxon period, with the rise of the parish church, the creation of new dioceses and the Benedictine Reform.

The diocesan boundaries underwent radical changes in under Edward the Elder (fig. 5). From *c.* 909, Wessex was divided into five dioceses. The Winchester diocese was constricted to

[62] *Ibid.*, p. 58.

Hampshire and Surrey, and the new Sherborne diocese only covered Dorset. Wiltshire and Berkshire were served by a diocese based at Ramsbury, while the bishop of Wells was responsible for Somerset. Devon was given its own bishop who was based at Crediton until 1050 when the see was transferred to Exeter. Sherborne and Ramsbury were united in 1058.[63]

Minsters were common features in the mid-Saxon landscape and they played a large role in pastoral care. However, by the mid-tenth century, private churches were becoming increasingly common and by the eleventh century, the majority of the pastoral work was done locally by priests at parish churches.[64] This trend can be seen though the presence of private churches with single priests in wills from the 940s. These new churches were gradually given their own endowments at the expense of the large minster parishes. The laws of Edgar show a concern for maintaining the rights of the minsters as they required thegns to contribute tithes to the old minsters and they could only retain half of their tithes for their own church if it had a graveyard.[65] In the eleventh century, the parish churches were often built, or re-built in stone. Many of the surviving fragments of Anglo-Saxon churches are from this date (fig. 6). However, the evolution to the parish church system was not complete by the end of Anglo-Saxon England and continued until the mid-twelfth century when the parishes became fixed.[66]

Parish churches were important parts of both the rural and urban landscapes. Morris has determined that in the "large towns of pre-Conquest origin . . . at least three-quarters of parish churches were in position before the end of the eleventh century."[67] From before 1200 in Wessex, he listed two churches in Cricklade, three in Dorchester, seven in Wareham, eleven in Wallingford, eighteen parishes in Bristol, twenty-nine parish churches and chapels in Exeter and over fifty in Winchester and

[63]Holdsworth, 'Bishoprics, Monasteries and the Landscape', p. 27-49.

[64]Blair, 'Minster churches in the landscape', p. 57; Morris, *Churches in the Landscape*, p. 163-7.

[65]Blair, 'Secular Minster Churches in Domesday Book', p. 119.

[66]Blair, 'Local Churches in Domesday Book and Before', p. 265; Hase, 'Church in the Wessex Heartlands', p. 73.

[67]Morris, *Churches in the Landscape*, p. 169.

its suburbs.[68] When looking at his data from across England, Morris concluded that, with the exception of Winchester, the towns with more than 25 churches were inland ports.[69] However, as will be seen in below and in chapters four and six, Winchester was well positioned on the communications network, being accessible by water and having good connections to land-routes. Within the towns, parish churches tended to be located near important roads, where thoroughfares came together, and near gates or bridges.[70] For example, St Martin's in Wareham stands just inside the Saxon defences. These key locations on the communications network may have provided travellers with places to give thanks for or to ask for a safe journey.[71] Parishes churches, moreover, had to be accessible for those people who made up their congregations.

Late Saxon Wessex also had a network of monasteries and nunneries, many of which were founded or re-founded in this period. Some minsters of the mid-Saxon period were reformed as Benedictine monasteries in the late Saxon period, forming another, distinct network of Christian worship. In the reign of Edgar, reformed houses received royal patronage and monasteries were often granted more lands. Important monasteries in Anglo-Saxon Wessex included those at Abingdon, Athelney, Cerne, Cranborne, Exeter, Glastonbury, Sherborne and Winchester. Houses for women were located in, for example, Shaftesbury, Amesbury, Wilton, Romsey, Wherwell, Nunnaminster.

Royal Vills and Aristocratic Residences- Continued

Royal vills and thegnly residences were two types of high status, largely rural settlements in the late Saxon period. In the tenth and eleventh centuries, England saw the emergence of a new type of settlement: the manor.[72] Late Saxon manorial centres were the residences of the aristocracy and the early eleventh century compilation on status provides a description of what

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[68]*Ibid.*, p. 168-9.

[69]*Ibid.*, p. 190.

[70]*Ibid.*, p. 192-219.

[71]*Ibid.*, p. 216-7; for more on the dangers of travelling and prayers for safe journeys, see chapter 5.

[72]Reynolds, *Later Anglo-Saxon England*, p. 123-4.

might have been expected in such a settlement. It reads in part as follows: "And if a *ceorl* prospered, that he possessed fully five hides of land of his own, a bell and a castle-gate, a seat and special office in the king's hall, then was he henceforth entitled to the rights of thegn."[73] In Wessex, Portchester (Hampshire) provides an example of such a site. As mentioned above, in the late Roman period, Portchester was the site of a 'Saxon Shore' fort and it seems to have been the site of some activity from that time to the tenth century at which time its importance increased again.[74] It was recorded in the Burghal Hidage, but it was one of the *burhs* which did not become an urban site.

The best excavated example of a Late Saxon royal palace site is Cheddar (Somerset), a place referred to as '*palatio regis*' in a charter of 956.[75] The excavations carried out at Cheddar by Philip Rahtz revealed several phases of building or occupation, starting before c. 930, perhaps from the mid-ninth century, and continuing throughout the Late Saxon period into the late Middle Ages. There was significant change in layout and rebuilding between the first and second phases. The principle building of period one (pre 930) was a north-south orientated long hall, likely two-storied. It was bowed and inside it measured 23 m by 4.5 m at the ends and 5.5 m in the middle.[76] It was associated with at least one of three smaller buildings throughout the period.[77] In period two (post 930 to the late tenth or early eleventh century), a new hall, labelled West Hall I, and the site's first chapel were built.[78] There was a building which may have been a dwelling and there may have been stables, kitchens, houses, and such domestic buildings which have not been

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[73]EHD I, #51, p. 468. "*And gif ceorl getheah, thæt he hæfe V hida fullice agenes landes, bellan ₇ burhgeat setl ₇ sundornote on cynges healle, thonne wæs he thannon forth thegnesrihtes wyrthe.*" F. Liebermann, *Die Gesetze der Angelsachsen*, vol. 1 (1903) p. 456.

[74]Hodges, *Anglo-Saxon Achievement*, p. 26; Reynolds, *Later Anglo-Saxon England*, p. 124-5.

[75]S 611.

[76]P. Rahtz, *The Saxon and Medieval Palaces at Cheddar, excavations 1960-62*, BAR 65 (1979)p. 49, 99-100.

[77]*Ibid*, p. 52.

[78]*Ibid*, p. 53.

recovered.[79] Rahtz believed that these new buildings indicated a modification in the way the site was used and perceived by its royal owners. He suggested that it changed ". . . from a household with royal connections where the king and his retinue might be entertained, to a palace whose sole function was to enable the king to hold court with his *witan* and consume the resources of the area . . .".[80]

Villages and Settlement Nucleation

While *urbanisation* and aristocratic sites are both important themes in Anglo-Saxon settlement studies, the majority of the population were probably peasants and continued to live in rural settings. In the Middle Saxon period, many of the dispersed settlements of the earlier period gave way to more centralised communities and by the end of the Late Saxon period, there was large scale settlement nucleation in much of Wessex, especially in Berkshire, Wiltshire, and Hampshire.[81] Settlement nucleation represents a significant development in society and it happened at this time because the kings and religious communities had enough power over their estates to re-organize them and because there was an increase in the population.[82] This phenomenon will be illustrated in the case study at the end of the chapter. It should be noted, however, that settlement nucleation was not a universal phenomenon in Late Saxon Wessex. In particular, the Domesday survey in Devon shows that dispersed settlement was still very common.

The relationship between rural centres and the communications network has been investigated by Andrew Reynolds and the Compton Bassett Area Research Project at Avebury and Yatesbury (figs. 7, 8). Fieldwork at Yatesbury has uncovered a significant amount of the Anglo-Saxon communications network. It has been determined that the village was dominated by a north-south road continuing

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[79]*Ibid*, p. 376.

[80]*Ibid.*, p. 375.

[81]Reynolds, *Late Anglo-Saxon England*, p. 153.

[82]Faith, *The English Peasantry and the Growth of Lordship*, p. 149-50; Hamerow, 'Settlement Patterns', *Blackwell*, p. 418; Hodges, *Anglo-Saxon Achievement*, p. 168.

from Yatesbury Lane to Barrow Way, past Manor Farmhouse.[83] Excavations have confirmed that this route is pre-1200 and its relationship to the field and parish boundaries shows that it was a 'determining feature in the landscape'.[84] It was the important road in Yatesbury and the archaeologists working there appreciated the value of setting it in a larger context. Reynolds showed how this lane extended to the north at least to Broad Hinton and likely Wroughton. From there it likely joined the north-south Roman road to *Cunetio*.[85] The road leaving the southern end of Yatesbury turns east and goes to Avebury, passing St James church (which has some surviving Anglo-Saxon fabric) and going east-west through the henge. Significantly, as Reynolds pointed out, the road passing out of the western entrance was recorded as *herepath* in a charter of 939 and the Ordnance Survey still labels it as such (fig. 36).[86] It then climbs to the top of the ridge, passing over a ridge way and continuing a sinuous course into Marlborough, an Edward the Elder foundation which may be a marginal town.[87] Thus Reynolds has shown how the road, so important *in* Yatesbury, connected that village with other settlements and routes of regional and national significance.[88]

Burhs and towns

Because of the importance of towns in late Saxon settlement studies, it is necessary to think about the meaning of the words town and urban before examining the *burhs*. In discussions of late Saxon towns, both Martin Biddle and Jeremy Haslam have written lists of characteristics, of which a place should have three or four in order to be considered a town or, in Haslam's

[83]Reynolds, 'Avebury, Yatesbury', p. 21-22.

[84]*Ibid.*, p. 22, 24.

[85]*Ibid.*, p. 24-25.

[86]S 1968.

[87]Reynolds, 'Avebury, Yatesbury', p. 24-25; Haslam, 'Towns of Wiltshire', p. 98-101; Yorke, *Wessex*, p. 312.

[88]Reynolds, 'Avebury and Yatesbury', p. 28.

view, proto-urban.[89] Biddle's list included: defences; a planned street system; a market; a mint; a role as a central place; a relatively large and dense population; a diversified economy; urban type plots and houses; social differentiation; complex religious organization; and a judicial centre.[90] Haslam's characteristics of proto-urban sites are: location on distinctive topographical sites; perhaps having been fitted into an existing agricultural system; being central settlements of large royal estates; being centres of routeway networks; usually forming the administrative heads of hundreds of other large land units; usually having a minster; often having a clear topographical relationship to earlier settlements, either Roman or Iron Age; sometimes being the sites of either early battles or Viking raids.[91] David Hill, however, pointed out that all of these sorts of activities also took place in rural sites and that towns were created where they were concentrated in one spot.[92] Therefore, while these lists should not be used as absolutes, they give a good indication of the type of activities taking place in town and of the appearance of townscapes.

While not all *burhs* can be considered to have been urban sites, the *burhs* have formed the backbone of scholarship on towns in late Saxon England.[93] The burghal system had its foundations

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[89]M. Biddle, 'Towns', *The Archaeology of Anglo-Saxon England*, ed., David Wilson (London, 1976) p. 100; Haslam, 'Introduction', p. xvi. See also: Carver, *Arguments in Stone*, p. 1-3; Reynolds, *Later Anglo-Saxon England*, p. 160-2; Yorke, *Wessex*, p. 309-13.

[90]Biddle, 'Towns', p. 100.

[91]Haslam, 'Introduction', p. xvi.

[92]D. Hill, 'Towns as Structures and Functioning Communities through Time: The Development of Central Places 600-1066', *Anglo-Saxon Settlements*, ed., D. Hooke (Oxford, 1988) p. 212.

[93]For a selection of scholarship on towns and *burhs* see: Biddle, 'Towns'; M. Biddle and D. Hill, 'Late Saxon Planned Towns', *Antiquaries Journal* 51 (1971) p. 70-85; Carver, *Underneath English Towns* (London, 1987); C. Dyer, 'Recent Developments in early medieval urban history and archaeology in England', *Urban Historical Geography: Recent Progress in Britain and Germany*, eds., D. Denecke and G. Shaw (Cambridge, 1988) p. 69-80; Haslam, ed., *Towns*; D. Hinton, *Wessex and the South 800-1500* (London, 1977); Hill, 'Towns as Structures and Functioning Communities through Time', p. 197-212; D. Hill and A. Rumble, eds., *The Defense of Wessex: The Burghal Hidage and Anglo-Saxon Fortification* (Manchester, 1996); P. Ottaway, *Archaeology in British Towns from the Emperor Claudius to the Black Death* (London, 1992); Vince, 'Saxon urban economics'; P. Wormald,'Burhs', *The Anglo-Saxons*, ed., J. Campbell (London, 1982) p. 152-3.

in Alfred the Great's need to protect his kingdom from Viking attacks and, after his death, it was expanded by his children, King Edward the Elder and Lady Æthelflæda. This system of forts was recorded in the 'Burghal Hidage', an administrative document, probably written between 911 and 919. It is a list of *burhs*, twenty two of which were in Wessex itself, and the number of hides assigned to their upkeep and has a formula for using their hidage to calculate the length of their walls. The places are listed in a circuit starting in Sussex, continuing west along the coast, entering Hampshire at Portchester (fig. 9). At Southampton, the circuit made a loop through central Wessex taking in Winchester, Wilton, Chisbury, Shaftesbury. From there, the circuit turned back to the Channel at Christchurch, continuing west near the coast past Wareham, Bridport, Exeter and Halwell. Then it went north through Devon, taking in Lydford and Pilton. For there it turned towards the east, including Watchet, Axbridge, Lyng, Langport, Bath, Malmesbury, Cricklade. Along the Thames, it also included Wallingford and Sashes. Some of the *burhs* were new foundations while others were built upon Roman or Iron Age sites. Many have similar street layouts which is evidence of planning by a central authority. Their spacing at no more than twenty miles from the next, was strategic, making each place no more than a day's walk, from its neighbouring *burh*. Some of the *burhs* were short lived forts, but many became urban sites in late Saxon Wessex and their key defensive positions on the communications lines, as discussed below, would have facilitated trade in times of peace.

The function of the *burhs* changed during the late Saxon to early Norman periods, as has been demonstrated by Alan Vince. They grew from simple forts into thriving urban centres. In their initial phase, the *burhs* were forts, founded by the West Saxon royal family to help protect their kingdoms from the Vikings. Vince raised the questions as to whether or not some or all of these *burhs* were to have permanent garrisons. He also pointed out that perhaps from the time of Alfred, the *burhs* were minting sites.[94]

At some point during the period c. 850 and c 1050, Vince suggested that the function of many of the *burhs* changed in that

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[94] Vince, 'Saxon urban economics', p. 108-119.

they become more than forts. They developed into important central places and urban centres, but it is not always easy to determine when this happened and which *burhs* became truly urban. Many became home to permanent populations and developed as centres of craft production.[95] The *burhs* were different that the *wics*. A greater range of activities took place in them and they had a more local or regional, rather than international, emphasis.

We will look at Cricklade, Wareham and Winchester as examples of *Burghal Hidage* sites that developed urban characteristics. The *burh* at Cricklade was a small Alfredian foundation that became a mint and a Domesday borough (fig. 10). The *burh* itself was south of the river and had rectangular plan. It had a walkway around the inside of the defences and regular internal streets, some of which were influenced by earlier routes. [96] Haslam suggested that its site was chosen because the causeway there (the *gelad* in its name) had become the crossing-point over the Thames for the Roman road known as Ermine Street.[97]

Wareham was also a significant settlement in the Late Saxon period, located between the Frome and the Piddle rivers (fig. 11). It was a *Burghal Hidage* site, a mint, a Domesday borough and had two churches. Wareham is perhaps best known to archaeologists for its surviving defensive earthwork on three sides of the town. In the late tenth or early eleventh century Wareham's clay rampart had a stone wall added to it, replacing a timber palisade.[98]

Winchester was the 'capital' of Wessex and it has been extensively researched (fig. 12).[99] Excavations have shown that the nature of the settlement in Winchester changed dramatically in the ninth century, possibly as a result of the decline of *Hamwic* after the Viking raids there in 840 and 842.[100] Late Saxon

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[95] *Ibid.*, p. 112-4.

[96] J. Haslam, 'The Metrology of Anglo-Saxon Cricklade', *Medieval Archaeology* 30 (1986) p. 99-100.

[97] Haslam, 'Towns of Wiltshire', p. 106-107.

[98] J. D. Richards, *Viking Age England* (London, 1991) p. 53-4.

[99] M. Biddle, ed. *Winchester in the Early Middle Ages: an Edition and Discussion of the Winton Domesday,* Winchester Studies 1 (Oxford, 1976).

[100] Ottaway, *Archaeology in British Towns*, p. 133; Yorke, *Wessex*, p. 309.

Winchester was an important religious, economic and royal centre. It was the southwest's most productive mint. Its street plan shows evidence of control by a central authority and the grid pattern street plan is now known to be Anglo-Saxon and not Roman.[101] The main east-west street retained the Roman line between the two gates, but the other Roman intramural streets were lost as buildings were placed over them.[102] However, excavation and charter evidence show that the basic street plan probably dates from before c. 904 and is not later than the mid tenth century.[103] Winchester also had churches of regional significance. Firstly there was the Old Minster which was located to the north of the present cathedral. The church was first built in the mid-seventh century and was remodelled on a few occasions in the late tenth century. It was a site of pilgrimage and royal burials.[104] In 903-4 a second minster was built just to the north of the Old Minster and this is known as the New Minster. The other large church was Nunnaminster, founded by Eahlswith, wife of King Alfred, in the late tenth century.[105]

The *burhs'* relationship to the routeways of Wessex was described by Richard Abels in *Lordship and Military Obligation in Anglo-Saxon England*. He wrote that the *burhs* ". . . dominated the kingdom's lines of communications: the navigable rivers, Roman roads, and major trackways."[106] When discussing the strategic locations of the *burhs* he wrote the following:

> Portchester, Southampton, and the other boroughs along the southern coast of England guarded the mouths of navigable rivers and inlets that offered the best harbourage in the area. The burhs of Southwark, Sashes, Wallingford, and Cricklade formed a continuous line of defense along the Thames. (Wallingford was not only sited on the river, but as its name suggests, controlled an important ford.) The borough at Wareham was located near the coast of Dorset on a ridge of high ground

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[101]*Ibid*.

[102]Biddle and Hill, 'Late Saxon Planned Towns', p. 70-71.

[103]*Ibid*, p. 78.

[104]Ottaway, p. 136-7.

[105]*Ibid*, p. 137.

[106]R. Abels. *Lordship and Military Obligation in Anglo-Saxon England* (London, 1988) p. 69.

> between the Frome and the Piddle rivers, which made it not only a strategic point, guarding access into the interior of Dorset, but also a natural stronghold . . . Even an apparent exception such as Lydford, which was planted on neither a river nor a major road, was on a strategic site, a promontory which marked the traditional frontier with Cornwall and guarded the access route up the valley of the Lyd.[107]

Hinton also said that the *burhs'* functions were to provide refuge, block rivers and guard river-crossings. In addition, he too saw that, in some cases, proximity to an important road was a consideration in the siting of the *burhs*.[108]

Alan Vince's statement on the role of these *burhs*, adds another dimension to the relationship between them and the communications network. He wrote:

> I would suggest that the inland towns of southern England mainly came into existence as forts in the 9th century, developed local marketing roles in the 10th and early 11th centuries and only later became part of the network for distributing goods to the coast in one direction and circulating imports inland in the other.[109]

It was from the mid-eleventh century that he saw the *burhs* becoming centres for overseas trade as well as local. What are the ramifications of this for the communications network? Reynolds has suggested, as land-routes were "essential components of both economic and defensive networks", the extent of the road network increased in the late Saxon period.[110] The traffic on those routes must have increased too.

Shires and Hundreds

Another class of relevant topographical features which may have affected the communications network are the political and administrative divisions of the shires and hundreds. These are perhaps more ideological than physical boundaries, but they were nonetheless important parts of the geography of late Saxon Wessex.

The West Saxon shires of Dorset, Hampshire, Somerset and Wiltshire have their origins in the seventh and eighth centuries

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[107]Abels, p. 71.

[108]Hinton, *Alfred's Kingdom*, p. 40.

[109]Vince, 'Saxon urban economics', p. 114.

[110]Reynolds, *Later Anglo-Saxon England*, p. 179.

and the latter three took their names from their principle towns of *Hamwic*, Somerton and Wilton. Devon also had its origins in the seventh and eighth centuries and was formed from part of the sub-Roman kingdom of *Dumnonia* (which had also included Cornwall). Berkshire may have been created later in the eighth or early ninth century as a result of the conflict between Merica and Wessex.[111] Thus by the late Saxon period, the six shires which were the heartlands of Wessex were well established.

Hundreds first appear in the sources in the tenth century and by the Norman Conquest, they had come to play very important roles in local administration, as will be seen in chapter 5. The term hundred literally indicated an area of one hundred hides, but the West Saxon hundreds varied considerably in size.[112] Audrey Meaney has examined hundred meeting sites from Cambridge and has determined that they were often at river-crossings and on or near important roads.[113] She concluded that ". . . the major consideration in choosing a hundred meeting-place must have been ease of access, and, it would seem, not only for the men of each hundred, but for the messengers and officials from further afield . . . "[114] In Wessex, the name of Wonford hundred (Devon) indicates that it met at the fording site.[115] Likewise, Tollerford hundred (Dorset) met at by crossing-point of a tributary of the Frome and by a Roman road.[116] The Crediton hundred (Devon) was well serviced by an important *herepath*[117] and Kinwardstone hundred (Wiltshire) met near a Roman road.[118]

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[111]*Ibid.*, p. 72-3.

[112]H. R. Loyn, 'The Hundred in the Tenth and early Eleventh Centuries', *British Government and Administration: Studies Presented to S. B. Chrimes*, eds., H. Hearder and H. R. Loyn (Cardiff, 1974) p. 1-2.

[113]A. L. Meaney, 'Hundred Meeting-Places in the Cambridge Region', *Names, Places and People: An Onomastic Miscellany in Memory of John McNeal Dodgson*, eds., A. R. Rumble and A. D. Mills (Stamford, 1997) p. 195-240.

[114]*Ibid.*, p. 220.

[115]O. S. Anderson, *English Hundred Names: the South West* (Lund, 1934) p. 98-9; *Devon II*, p. 441.

[116]Anderson, *English Hundred Names: the South West*, p. 112.

[117]See chapter 4 and appendix A.

[118]Anderson, *English Hundred Names: the South West*, p. 165-6.

Woodlands and Fields

When the landscape historian W. G. Hoskins was writing in the 1950's, it was thought that when the Anglo-Saxons arrived in England, the land was heavily forested and difficult to traverse.[119] However, current scholarship presents a modified view. Some indication of the amount and types of woodland in late Saxon Wessex has been gained through studies of *Domesday Book* and charter boundary clauses.[120] From the records in *Domesday*, Rackham has calculated the percentage of woodland and wood-pasture. The coverage was 20% in Berkshire, 15% in Hampshire, 13% in Dorset and Wiltshire, 11% in Somerset, and 4% in Devon.[121] Thus Wessex was largely deforested in late Saxon Wessex. The words used in Anglo-Saxon charters and place-names also show areas of woodland. For example, *leah* indicates a settlement in a wooded area, *bearu* is a small wood, and *wudu* is a wood.[122] Rackham estimated that in Norman England no area of woodland was more than four miles from a village, but that villages could be as much as a day's journey from woodlands.[123] These woodlands were regularly used by the Anglo-Saxons for wood for crafts, carpentry and fuel, as well as for pannage (fig. 13).[124]

For a population heavily involved in agriculture, fields were very important aspects of the landscape. Field systems evolved during the course of the Saxon period and varied considerably from region to region, in reflecting different settlement patterns and land quality. Nucleated settlements are associated with open fields. Each field was farmed in strips by

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[119]W. G. Hoskins, *The Making of the English Landscape* (Harmondsworth, 1955).

[120]For example, see: Gelling, *Place-Names in the Landscape*; Gelling and Cole, *The Landscape of Place-Names*; Hooke, *The Landscape of Anglo-Saxon England*; M. Jones, *England before Domesday* (London, 1986); O. Rackham, *Ancient Woodland: its History, Vegetation and Uses in England* (London, 1980); O. Rackham, *The History of the Countryside*; O. Rackham, 'Woods, Hedges and Forests', *Aspects of the Medieval Landscape of Somerset*, ed., M. Aston (Somerset, 1988) p. 13-31; Reynolds, *Later Anglo-Saxon England*.

[121]Rackham, *History of the Countryside*, p. 78; Rackham, *Ancient Woodland*.

[122]Gelling and Cole, Chapter 6.

[123]Rackham, *History of the Countryside*, p. 78.

[124]Hooke, *Landscape of Anglo-Saxon England*, p. 139-69.

individuals working together. Groups of furlongs and fields were used in crop rotation and there were common pastures on waste.[125] The map of open fields in David Hill's *Atlas of Anglo-Saxon England* shows that in the late medieval period, they were common in most of Wessex east of Devon and Exmoor.[126] Upland regions and heavily wooded regions, areas which had more dispersed settlement patterns, may have had some small open fields, but were more reliant on pasture lands.[127] Journeys to such places were a regular part of life in the West Saxon countryside.

Post Conquest Wessex

The impact of the Norman Conquest on the settlement patterns in Wessex was mixed. As seen above, the growth of parish churches and of manorialism began in the Anglo-Saxon period and continued into the Norman period. Also, from the mid-eleventh century and after the Norman Conquest, new towns began to arise. Other additions to the landscape in the early Norman period were castles, hunting preserves and non-Benedictine monasteries.

Sites other than those recorded in the *Burghal Hidage* were functioning as urban centres by the end of the Saxon period. The boroughs and markets of the *Domesday Book* indicate towns and marginal towns.[128] In the late medieval period, many of these sites and newly founded markets grew in importance and came to eclipse some of the Saxon urban sites. The relationship between the new towns and the communications network varied. Some were founded in places with good access to the communications network, while others were removed from it. Many caused changes in the communications network.[129] Hampshire provides two contrasting examples from the thirteenth century. Newtown was founded near an important route between Oxford and Southampton, while the

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[125] *Ibid.*, p. 113-5

[126] Hill, *Atlas*, no. 193, p. 112.

[127] Hooke, *Landscape of Anglo-Saxon England*, p. 128-30.

[128] H. C. Darby, *Domesday England* (Cambridge, 1977), p. 289-320, 364-8; and Yorke, *Wessex*, p. 311-3.

[129] Hinton, *Alfred's Kingdom*, p. 178.

former Winchester to London road shifted to the north to pass through the newly founded New Alresford.[130] Thus, in some cases, sites were chosen near existing lines of communications and in others, the system adapted to suit new traffic patterns.

The development of castles, as fortified residences, has been traced back into the late Saxon period.[131] However, William changed the landscape of England by undertaking an extensive program of building motte and bailey castles in both urban and rural locations. As one of their roles was to control routes and movements, they were sited near important sections of the existing communications network.[132] For example, Castle Neroche (Somerset), which has an undated pre-Norman phase, was re-developed in the early Norman phase and its location was such that it guarded a key route to the Devon and Cornwall.[133] The castle in Great Somerford (Wiltshire) was over an earlier church site and the choice of this site may have been due to its defensive location above the ford.[134] Marlborough castle was by the River Kennet and near the junction of routes from London to Bath and Cirencester to Salisbury and Lugershall (Wiltshire) was on the edge of the Salisbury Plain, next to a road to Winchester, by Chute Forest.[135]

Castles in urban centres greatly disturbed existing street patterns. This can be seen both through topographical surveys of towns and, as Biddle and Hill have underlined, in *Domesday* when it recorded the clearance of houses to create space for the castles as this would have necessarily involved disrupting the street patterns.[136] The castle in Wallingford, for example,

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[130]M. Hughes, 'Towns and Villages in Medieval Hampshire', *The Medieval Landscape of Wessex*, eds., M. Aston and C. Lewis (Oxford, 1994) p. 199.

[131] For a summary of arguments for pre-Conquest castles, see R. Higham and P. Barker, *Timber Castles* (London, 1992) p. 38-57.

[132]Higham and Barker, *Timber Castles*, p. 200-1.

[133]Higham and Barker, *Timber Castles*, p. 49; and Hinton, *Alfred's Kingdom*, p. 130.

[134]O. H. Creighton, 'Early Castles in the Medieval Landscape of Wiltshire', *Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Magazine* 93 (2000) p. 114.

[135]J. H. Stevenson, 'The Castles of Marlborough and Ludgershall in the Middle Ages, *Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Magazine* 85 (1992) p. 70-1.

[136]Biddle and Hill, 'Late Saxon Planned Towns', p. 82.

require the demolition of eight *hagae*.[137] Also, documentary and archaeological evidence show that streets were destroyed when the castle was built in Winchester in 1067.[138]

The West Saxon landscape was also altered by changes in hunting grounds. In the late medieval period, there were four types of hunting grounds: forests, chases, parks and warrens.[139] Forests were large areas protected by special law for royal use. Forests in Wessex were located, for example, in Dartmoor, Exmoor, the Mendips, Selwood, Bere Regis, Saversnake and the New Forest. Chases were unenclosed areas of non-royal estates for hunting and in Wessex these were located in Dartmoor and Cranborne. Parks were enclosed, private game reserves holding animals such as deer and were numerous. These were found on royal, ecclesiastic and secular lordly estates. Cantor and Hatherly have determined that in Devon there was one park in every thirty thousand acres or more and that in the rest of our study area there was one park in every ten to twenty thousand acres.[140] Finally, warrens could be either areas where local lords were allowed to hunt small game, ranging from rabbit, hares, foxes, to badgers, pheasants and so on, or a small enclosed area for breeding rabbits.[141]

In post-Conquest England many new monasteries were built to house new orders. New sites included: Carthusian houses in Witham and Hinton (Somerset); Cistercian houses in Bindon (Dorset), Beaulieu, Netley and Quarr (Hampshire), Cleeve (Somerset) and Stanley (Wiltshire); a Gilbertine house in Marlborough; and Premonstratensians in Titchfield (Hampshire) and Edington (Wiltshire). There were also houses of Augustinians, friars and members of military orders.[142]

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[137]Hill and Biddle, 'Late Saxon Planned Towns', p. 82; and D. F. Renn, *Norman Castles* (London, 1968) p. 337.

[138]Biddle, ed., *Winton*, p. 278, 280, and 303; Biddle and Hill, 'Late Saxon Planned Towns', p. 82.

[139]J. Bond, 'Forests, Chases, Warrens and Parks in Medieval Wessex', *The Medieval Landscape of Wessex*, eds., M. Aston and C. Lewis (Oxford, 1994) p. 115-6; L. Cantor, 'Forests, Chases, Parks and Warrens', *The English Medieval Landscape*. Ed., L. Cantor (London, 1982.) p. 56.

[140]Cantor, 'Forests, Chases, Parks and Warrens', p. 79; L. M. Cantor and J. Hatherly, 'Medieval Parks of England', *Geography* 64 (1979) p. 75.

[141]Bond, 'Forests, Chases, Warrens and Parks', p. 144-8; Cantor, 'Forests, Chases, Parks and Warrens', p. 82-83.

[142]Aston and Lewis, 'Introduction', p. 7.

Shapwick Case Study

Shapwick in Somerset has recently been the focus of a 'ten year multidisciplinary landscape investigation' by Michael Aston, Christopher Gerrard and their team of more than 500.[143] The site was in use throughout the periods studied in this chapter and it allows us to see the development of one site throughout the early medieval period and its relationship with the communications network.

There were nine Roman sites in the Shapwick parish, including villages, farmsteads, and agricultural dwellings. Archaeologists have identified a hierarchy of settlement in the fourth century and have suggested that a high status site might be a villa and that people owing services to the inhabitants of the villa lived in small planned settlement with an agricultural focus. A Roman road ran east-west through Shapwick from Combwich on the coast and inland towards Ilchester.[144]

Aston and Gerrard wrote about the early medieval period which they defined as the fifth to ninth century (fig. 14). This period takes in both the early and middle Saxon periods. The settlements in these centuries are 'elusive', but by using habitative field names, the team investigating Shapwick has identified four hamlets or farmsteads. The Shapwick project thus provides evidence for dispersed settlement in Wessex.[145] With the conversion of the Anglo-Saxons to Christianity, which largely took place during the Middle Saxon period, the Church made its presence felt in the landscape. Aston and Gerrard suggested that by the eighth century Shapwick had a church and that it had become the centre of an estate.[146]

The farmsteads of early and middle Saxon Shapwick were replaced in the tenth century by a nucleated village with open fields, as were those of Meare and Compton Dundon. These places are noticeably different from most Somerset settlements which remained dispersed. As these three places belonged to

[143]M. Aston and C. Gerrard, 'Unique, Traditional and Charming. The Shapwick Project, Somerset', *The Antiquaries Journal* 79 (1999) p. 1-57.

[144]*Ibid.*, p. 15-23.

[145]*Ibid.*, p. 23-27.

[146]*Ibid.*, p. 23-27.

Glastonbury Abbey, Aston and Gerrard have suggested that the Abbey and perhaps St Dunstan in particular were responsible for these changes. By the end of our period, there were three regions of importance in the Shapwick area: a church to the west of the village, the village in the centre and perhaps a mill to the east. The archaeologist have suggested that there was a pre-twelfth century hollow way in the area of the modern West Street. Unfortunately, excavations in the area have not provided conclusive dating evidence for this road. The tenth-century nucleated settlement was laid out in an east-west orientation and Aston has suggested that one of the reasons for this was the orientation of the pre-historic lines of communications.[147]

Investigations at the manor house, which was removed from the village, indicated that there were buildings on the site as early as the eleventh century, but that the moat was likely built in the twelfth century (fig. 15). In the late medieval village, the east-west-roads continued to dominate, as the majority of the house lined them.[148] Thus Shapwick villages retained the layout imposed in the tenth century until the post-medieval period.[149]

Conclusion

Settlement patterns changed through the course of the early medieval period. They are to be linked to economic and political developments. During the Late Saxon period, there were many types of settlement, each having access to the communications network. The type of access and the needs of the people living in these different types of settlements varied considerably. It is for the next two chapters to look in more depth at the communications network and how it was used in the Late Saxon period.

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[147]*Ibid.*, p. 27-30, 45.

[148]*Ibid.*, p. 34.

[149]*Ibid.*, p. 31, 34.

Chapter 4
The Communications Network

From a detailed study of the documents and material culture, it can be inferred that roads and tracks of varying size and importance wove their way through the landscape of late Saxon Wessex, coming together with rivers and waterways to form a complex, hierarchical network. The layout and workings of the network can be uncovered, at least in part, for late Saxon Wessex. This chapter will explore some of the evidence which can be used to reveal sections of the network and consider it within its landscape context. It will then explore the quality, usability and upkeep of both land-routes and waterways, and the continued use of older routes through the Anglo-Saxon period. After taking all of these factors into consideration, how the network may have functioned at different levels will be discussed.

The Sources and Mapping

Because of the size of the kingdom of Wessex and because of the great variety of sources which can be used to examine routeways, it has been necessary to narrow the search parameters. This section will explain the samples which form the majority of the discussion on the communications network. Furthermore, before considering its implications, the evidence must be considered in its landscape context, through distribution maps and detailed landscape investigations. Because of the differences in the sources for and uses of land-routes and waterways, these two aspects of the communications network will be considered separately. As river crossing points, such as fords and bridges, form part of the over-land network, they are considered with the roads rather than with the waterways.

Roads and crossing points

The majority of the information on roads and river-crossings in this chapter comes from boundary clauses and, to a lesser extent, place-names. Ivan Margary and O. G. S. Crawford did not think that the term *stræt* referring to a Roman road in a charter

indicated that the road was still used as a road.[1] This would seem to suggest that the inclusion of a road in a charter is meaningless for the uncovering of the communications network; however, this cannot be the case. It is more believable that a road or track term in boundary clauses does signify a road or track. Oliver Rackham has calculated that 11.6 % of boundary features are roads, paths and ways, while another 4.6 % are fords and bridges[2] and, with the large number of landscape terms at their disposal, it is unlikely that the Anglo-Saxons would have chosen to use ones, roughly 16% of the time, which were not contemporaneously accurate for the feature described. Boundary clauses have therefore recorded the existence and use of river crossings and roads in particular places at particular times. Place-names, like-boundary clauses, record the existence of elements of the communications network and these two sources provide a unique insight into the communications network through two main avenues of investigation. Firstly, their relevant features may be set in the geographical situation and, secondly, the words used to modify those features may be examined. However, before looking at the material itself, it is necessary to understand the sources and the samples used in this dissertation.[3]

The place-name evidence is based on the English Place-Name Society volumes for Berkshire, Devon, Dorset and Wiltshire, supplemented by Richard Coates's *Hampshire Place-Names*.[4] It should be noted that Coates's volume does not include what he terms "every minor feature"[5] and he thus may have chosen to omit some lesser names which may have indicated Anglo-Saxon routeways. Therefore, while the information provided by this book is important, the data on Hampshire must be considered incomplete. Somerset is also a problem area as there is no appropriate volume on that county. These 'missing counties' must be remembered when looking at the implications of the place-name sample.

[1]Margary, p. 23; and Crawford, *Archaeology in the Field*, p. 74.

[2]Rackham, *Countryside*, 259.

[3]Please note that in this dissertation boundary clause features and place-name elements have been treated as seperate samples.

[4]See abbreviations for bibliographical references.

[5]*Hampshire*, p. I.

For a place-name to be included in the sample itself, it must contain a routeway or crossing point element and must have been recorded before 1100, usually in Domesday Book or earlier. Names which were first recorded after 1100 have not been included because the relevant terms continued to be use, meaning that names recorded after this period may reflect only later features. For example, Devon's Ford Abbey was named *Hartescath* in the foundation charter and was not referred to as *Forda* until 1136.[6] The place-name sample is further limited as the boundary clause elements, listed in some *EPNS* volumes, which are not identifiable as later place-names have not been included. Nonetheless there has been some inevitable overlap with the boundary clause samples as described below.

The boundary clauses, which by the ninth century were often long, detailed vernacular descriptions of estates in land grants,[7] have been looked at on different levels.[8] Through a search of the Old English Corpus and Sawyer's list of charters, I have determined that there are at least 26 Latin and 379 Old English boundary clauses surviving from Wessex. These numbers are great enough that it has not been possible to examine all of the potentially relevant charters in detail. I have done studies on three different levels of detail. On the most general level, a distribution of relevant features has been made based on searches in the Old English Concordance.

Then, I made a more detailed study of the charters associated with Glastonbury Abbey, as discussed by Lesley Abrams in her book on the abbey's endowments (fig. 16).[9] Lands held by the Abbeys were recorded in a list in a manuscript of 1247/8.[10] This list recorded more land grants than have survive and although this text in valuable in discussions of, for example, land holdings, it does not provide the sort of information needed in this study. Of the charters which have survived, some have

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[6]*Devon II*, p. 648.

[7]*EHD I*, p. 377.

[8]For my use of boundary clauses attatched to spurious charters, see chapter 1, Anglo-Saxon routes.

[9]L. Abrams, *Anglo-Saxon Glastonbury: Church and Endowment* (Woodbridge, 1996).

[10]*Ibid.*, p. 14.

come down to us as single sheets, others in cartularies dating to *c*. 1340 and *c*. 1342, or as copies in other manuscripts.[11] From the surviving charters, the 43 boundary clauses which concern places within Wessex were examined, but four of these did not contain relevant routeway elements. This left a 'Glastonbury sample' of 39 charters which have been translated and roughly located, but whose bounds themselves have not been solved.

Furthermore, I have worked on two groups of charters whose bounds have largely been solved. I have studied the charters of Shaftesbury Abbey, using the work done by G. B. Grundy and Susan Kelly to map the exact course of the boundary clauses, where possible. The extant Shaftesbury charters have survived in one early fifteenth-century manuscript.[12] The cartulary begins with thirty pre-Conquest charters of which six have been omitted from this study because they were donations of land outside of Wessex, had no boundary clause or did not contain relevant terms within their boundary clauses. Four more have been discarded from the most detailed sample because of their distance from the other estates. Thus of the thirty Shaftesbury Abbey charters, I have concentrated on the twenty which are about identifiable places and include at least one boundary clause relating to land located roughly between Salisbury and Dorchester (fig. 17). It should also be noted that these are not the only Anglo-Saxon boundary clauses surviving from this area, but because of the limited time and space of the thesis, I have not incorporated others here. Nonetheless, the twenty selected Shaftesbury Abbey charters provide a strong sample from which to study routeways.

In order to provide a comparison for the information from the Shaftesbury Abbey estates, another sample, within a limited geographical area was needed. This time I used estates from western Wessex, those within the county of Devon (fig. 18). As with the estates owned by Shaftesbury Abbey, the 30 relevant bounds of the Devon charters have been translated and mapped in great detail, this time using the work of Della Hooke and H. P. R. Finberg.[13] This sample differs from the Shaftesbury one in

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[11]*Ibid.*, p. 10-4.

[12]Kelly, *Shaftesbury*, p. xviii-xix. The manuscript is BL Harley 61.

[13]Hooke, *Devon and Cornwall*; H. P. R. Finberg, ed., *The Early Charters of Devon and Cornwall* (Leicester, 1963).

that these estates were held by a number of different people and communities, such as Glastonbury and Exeter, and it includes all known examples from the region. Thus, although this chapter makes use of the Old English Concordance and the Glastonbury charters, the majority of the discussion is based on twenty of the Shaftesbury charters, the thirty Devonshire bounds and the place-names that fit the above-describe criteria (fig. 19).

Both the boundary clause samples and the place-names have been searched for a core group of relevant Old English words denoting water crossings and roads of different sizes.[14] The two common terms for water crossings indicate different types of crossings. Firstly, a *brycg* would normally mean 'bridge', but could also indicate a causeway or a dry, raised way across watery ground. Secondly, a *ford* was a shallow water-crossing and could be either natural or artificial. The term *brycg* appears thirteen times in the place-name sample and in 36 boundary clauses from Wessex, that is in 6 % and 12 % of the samples respectively. The fords, however, are found in 156 place-names and 180 clauses, or 79% and 59% of the overall samples. It is not surprising that bridges were far less common than fords in that they required a greater input of resources than did fords. The high occurrence of fords in charter bounds and in place-names shows their vital role in the Anglo-Saxon communications network.

A larger variety of terms is used for roadways and their exact meaning is more difficult to determine. *Weg* is the most problematic and the most common roadway term, occurring twelve times (6%) in the place-name sample and in 193 of the Wessex boundary clauses, occuring in 6% and 63% of the names and charters respectively. *Weg* is usually translated as 'way' and was applied to roads and paths of greatly varying size, quality, and importance. The next most common was *herepath*, a term, appearing in four place-names and 107 boundary clauses, and literally meaning 'army path'. It is thus taken to be a military road or a highway. Gelling suggested that it was the normal term

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[14]The definitions in this section are based on the following works: Gelling, *Place-Names in the Landscape;* Gelling and Cole, *The Landscape of Place-Names*; Hooke, *Anglo-Saxon Landscapes of the West Midlands*); and A.H. Smith, *English Place-Name Elements*, Part 1 & 2, *English Place-Name Society* 25 & 26 (Cambridge, 1956).

for a main road in much of the south west.[15] The word *stræt* is defined as "a Roman road, a paved road, an urban road, a street"[16], but most commonly it has been thought of as a Roman road. While the element *stræt* is found in six more place-names than *herepath*, *stræt* is only found in 65 of the boundary clauses. Hooke has asserted that *stræts* and *herepaths* were of similar status.[17] The other term found in significant numbers, occurring in two place-names and 28 boundary clauses, is *pæth*, which indicated a path or small track.[18] Some of the terms used for small tracks and lesser roads are: *anstiga*, *fær*, and *lane*. *Fær* means a difficult passage and *lane* was a narrow track or land. *Anstiga* is a more problematic word which may mean indicate a link road, a steep path or a strategic path.[19] Also, terms for road junctions were found. They are *(ge)læte*, *twicen*, and *twisla*. These all make fewer than four appearances in the place-names and boundary clauses.

These words indicate particular sections of the communications network, but boundary clauses and place-names can reveal much more than just, for example, that there was a *strete* in Badbury in 955.[20] In many instances the terms for the relevant features do stand alone simply indicating that there was a road or crossing, but often the bounds contain further descriptions of them. On the local level, these qualifiers have likely been added to help distinguish one feature from another, but they have wider implications and enable the scholar to gain a deeper knowledge of the routeway elements. The qualifying words and phrases include, among others: directions, personal names, types of vegetation, animals, and fabric, as well as indications of both size and age. Through these, one can see what was noteworthy about particular features; what attitude of the Anglo-Saxons was towards their communications network; how they

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[15]Gelling, *Place-Names in the Landscape*, p. 79.

[16]Smith, *English Place-Name Elements*, EPNS XXVI, p. 161 .

[17]Hooke, *Anglo-Saxon Landscape of theWest Midlands*, p. 311.

[18]Smith, *English Place-Name Elements*, EPNS XXVI, p. 58.

[19]Place-name scholars have not agreed on a definitive meaning for this term. For a discussion of its various interpretations, see Gelling and Cole, *The Landscape of Place-Names*, p. 66-7.

[20]S 568.

distinguished between different routes; and the relative quality of various routes. We will also see how qualifying words help with mapping, discussing the maintenance of routeways and discovering hierarchies of routes.

Information from boundary clauses and place-names can be mapped in different ways. The place-name maps are based on the present location of the name, even though in some cases it is also possible to locate the relevant features within the landscape. The information from boundary clauses has been mapped in two ways. Firstly, general distribution maps have been made showing the location of the estates where relevant elements were recorded rather than the road or crossing point's exact location and orientation. Secondly, many of the boundary clauses can be, and have been, solved on the ground, giving a micro-topography which provides more detailed information about the communications network. Before turning to these maps, it is interesting to bear in mind the paucity of routes shown on David Hill's map of Anglo-Saxon roads, as discussed in Chapter 1 (fig. 2).[21]

In his *Atlas of Anglo-Saxon England*, David Hill included a map of all known Anglo-Saxon boundary clauses and it shows a few areas of Wessex for which there are no boundary clauses (fig. 20).[22] These are in northern and western Devon, part of Somerset, south-eastern Wilthsire and near the coast between Southampton Water and the Isle of Purbeck. The maps based on boundary clause features relevant to this study found in the Old English Corpus search necessarily reflect this pattern and the cannot be used to comment on the presence or absence of different elements of the communications network in those areas (figs. 21-28). There are, however, other interesting patterns in these distribution maps.

For example, the majority of the estates where *stræts* were recorded are near Roman roads and this is discussed in detail in the continuity section below (fig. 26). There are significantly higher concentrations of *stræts* towards the east of Wessex and around and to the north of Bath. There is a large area in Somerset that does not have a *herepath*, but there are a few *stræts* in this area (fig. 24). Most charters do not have both *stræts* and *herepaths*, but there is a cluster of estates with both

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[21]Hill, *Atlas*, p. 116.

[22]Hill, *Atlas*, p. 24.

near Winchester. *Wegs* are found both in charters with and without *stræts* and *herepaths* (fig. 27). Moreover, as most common type of road found in the Old English Corpus search, their distribution mirrors the distribution of surviving charters. The *paths* appear in smaller numbers and were more commonly recorded outside of Devon (fig. 25). The small number of *brycgs* are scattered across Wessex (fig. 22). The two estates north of Exeter refer to the same bridge as do two near Shaftesbury. The *fords* are much more numerous than *brycgs* and are also scattered across Wessex (fig. 23).

Distribution maps of the place-names show some very interesting differences to those of the boundary clause features from the Old English corpus (figs. 29-35). The place-name maps show that many fewer sections of the communictions network have survived as place-names than were recorded in boundary clauses. The lack of material for Somerset stands out on these maps and makes their interpretation difficult. The *stræts* are all near Roman roads (fig. 33). All but one of the *herepaths* are in Devon, which fits in nicely with Gelling's theory that *herepath* was the common term for an important road in the south-west (fig. 31).[23] In the Old English Corpus maps, *paths* were more common outside of Devon, the only *paths* in the place-name sample are in that county (fig. 32). *Wegs* are very few in the place-name sample and are found only in Devon and in the north of the kingdom (fig. 35). *Brycgs* are found in small numbers across Wessex (fig. 29). The *fords* are by far the largest groups of land-route elements in the place-name sample (fig. 30). They are more common in Devon, south of Exmoor, than in the other counties, but they do appear frequently in all the counties for which the information has been published.

In order to gain a better understanding of the location of the relevant boundary terms, a group of charter boundary clauses has been solved. This group includes the charters from Devon and those held by Shaftesbury, as described above. A detailed description of the location of the roads and water-crossings included in them is given in Appendix A.

There are a number of points which must be remembered when trying to map the precise locations of boundary clause features.

[23]Gelling, *Place-Names in the Landscape*, p. 79.

Namely, that the cardinal directions used were often inexact, that many relevant features were recorded in isolation from other routeways terms, and that other were found to be linked to one another. While the discussions both of direction and of connections use only those boundary clauses in Appendix A, the discussion of isolated elements also makes use of more of the Shaftesbury charters as well as some of the Glastonbury ones.

Many charter boundary clauses contain directions which tell someone perambulating the bounds which way to walk in order to reach the next land mark. When the bounds include a *herepath*, *stræt*, or *weg*, the direction record the orientation of the road. Thus, a charter of 670 for Pennard shows that the way there is on a roughly north - south line, as the bounds go *north endlang weies*.[24] The eastern bounds of the Corfe and Blashenwell charter moved south to the *herepath* and then continued south along it.[25] From this one would expect the herepath to be on a north-south alignment, and Kelly's identification of is, as will be seen below, shows that it was a north - south road from Kingston (fig. 37).

In Liddington (Wiltshire) the bounds of charter of 940 go "from the red stone west along the way to the two barrows. . .".[26] Thus one would expect to find an east-west orientated road, but Kelly has identified this as being an ancient track called the Sugar Way[27] and this ridgeway runs north north-east by Liddington. The instruction to go east would indicate to someone walking the boundary in what direction they ought to go on this road, but since it is not on a east-west alignment, it shows a possible danger in using directions when commenting on the communications network. Another problem that can arise is the confusion by later copyists of the words east and west. For example, in the Tarrant Hinton charter, when the bounds were generally moving westward, the boundary clause records instructions to go *est* and Kelly has suggested that it should read *west*.[28] Therefore, one

[24]S 236. Kemble 20, vol. 1, p. 10-11 and vol. 6, p. 225.

[25]S 632.

[26]S 334. "*of thane stane west onlang weies on there tweie iberges. . .*" Kelly, #11, p. 44.

[27]Kelly, p. 46-7.

[28]S 429. Kelly #9, p. 36 and comments on p. 37 and 39.

must be careful when using directions given in charter boundary clauses and should make every effort to locate the road or path within its proper landscape setting. Nonetheless, when this is not possible evidence for direction should not be dismissed without careful consideration.

It is logical to expect there to be roads or tracks leading to and away from *fords* and *brycgs*, but there are many examples of river-crossings unassociated with land routes both in place-name sample and in boundary clauses. In the place-name sample, there is no compound using the term *brycg* and the are no *weg-fords*. However, the nature of place-names means that this is less startling than in boundary clauses because whereas the place-names record the distinguishing feature(s) of an area, the boundary clauses record a series of features which were able to be perambulated.

Finding isolated *brycgs* in the boundary clauses is especially odd because of the high resource input needed to build a bridge, such as at Badbury (Wiltshire) where there was a stone *brycg*.[29] This *brycg* was isolated from the other routeway terms in the boundary clause, but it would be reasonable to assume that it would have been a fairly major crossing point and would have had a road passing over it. Indeed, in order for a place to be known as a crossing-point it would have had to have been accessible by some sort of way or track.

Many of the crossing points, however, may not have had any regional significance and may have only had small footpaths leading to them. For example, in the charter relating to Stoke St. Mary and Creech St. Michael[30] there are six different fords, none of which are associated with roads or tracks in this boundary clause. These fords may have simply been good places for crossing the streams and may have had only local significance with small footpaths being able to fulfil the demand for their use. These footpaths, and indeed larger roads, may not have been included in the written records when they are simply passed over and did not form an vital part of the boundary.

In the Shaftesbury and Devon charters, there are also numerous cases of words for roads of varying size and importance

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[29]S 568.

[30]S 345.

unassociated with other routeway terms, but, similarly, this creates no great problem. In charters, boundaries often use a section of road which stands isolated within the clause from other roads, as can be seen in the following examples: a *weie* at Iwerne Courtney;[31] and an *ealdan weg* and a *weg* both in the Clyst St Mary bounds;[32]and each of the *strate*, *weie*, *herepath*, and *othere herepath* in the bounds of Liddington[33]. It should also be noted that there are no compounds in the place-name sample using two terms for roads. Nonetheless, there can be no doubt that the roads would have been connected to numerous paths and tracks which were never recorded in boundary clauses but were a vital part of daily travel.

Even though it is an obvious point that roads and water crossings came together to form the the land-based communications network, the study of known links adds to the understanding of the system. It is when the terms for various parts of the communications network are brought together that the charters and place-names can be most helpful.

Place-names show different elements of the over-land communications network coming together when a single name uses more than one relevant term, but, unfortunately, there are few of these. In Devon there are two examples of roadway terms in combination with the term ford. Firstly, Harford was *herepathford* in the late Saxon period[34], indicating that a herepath crossed the water over a ford at this place. Secondly, Parford, where there was a path reaching a ford, was *Pathford* in a charter claiming to date to 739 and *Patford(a)* in 1086.[35] In Wiltshire, there are two places having streets leading to fords. These are at Stratford Tony and Stratford-sub-Castle, both of which are, interestingly, on the same Roman road, and thus illustrate the use of fords along different sections of it.

In many of the charters, the relevant terms appear in clusters, as the bounds move from one routeway feature to others.

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[31]S 656.

[32]S 669.

[33]S 459.

[34]*Devon II*, p. 405.

[35]*Devon* II, p. 432.

Thus, the Fontmell charter[36] has nine relevant features in the middle of the clause, as the bounds go from Washers Pit "to the hollow way, from the hollow way to valley way from valley way to the ridge way, from there along the ridgeway, from ridge way out to the friend way. . . ".[37] The hollow way is on the line of a footpath moving south from Washers Pit at ST 898168 (fig. 38).[38] After the *wines wei*, the bounds go to some strip lynchets at ST 875167 (fig. 39).[39] Thus the bounds move between these points on the four ways, but the *sledweie*, *hrigcs[w]eg* and the *wines wei* have not been satisfactorily identified.[40] The *hollewei* was in a valley and the movement of the bounds from the *sled weie* to the *hricgeweg* shows the connection between the ridge and the valleys. Unfortunately the term *wines wei* does not provide information to indicate the relative elevation of that way and the next element in the clause is the strip lynchets, which are on rising land and thus cannot be used to uncover the relative elevation of the friend way. Nonetheless, through the first three ways, this boundary clause clearly illustrate the interaction of roads on both high and low ground.

In Devon, a section of the Seaton bounds,[41] makes heavy use of land route elements. The bounds go "to the herepath west then by the herepath, from the head of the coomb way down then on/by the coomb way to *horegan* ford, from *horegan* ford down stream to the nither stone ford, from nither stone ford . . .".[42] The *herepath* was on the line of the Roman road from Sidford to Colyford and led to the coomb way which would have been in the

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[36]S 419.

[37]S 419. "*on holewei, of holewei, of hollewei on sledwich, of sledweie on hrigcsweg, thannen anlang hricg weges, of rig wei ut to the wines wei* . . . ". Kelly, #8, p. 30-32.

[38]Kelly, p. 34.

[39]Kelly, p. 34.

[40]Kelly, p. 34.

[41]S 910.

[42]S 910. ". . . *on thone herpoth. west thonne on herpoth of cumbes weges heafod. adune thænne on cumb weg on horegan ford. of horegan forde adune on strem on nytheran stanford. of nytheran stanforda* . . ." . Hooke, *Devon and Cornwall*, p. 190-2.

valley to the south of Pratt's Hill (fig. 40).[43] This Roman road slopes down here, as does the *cumbweg* as it makes its way to the *ford* over Holyford Brook at SY 236923 (fig. 41).[44] From this *ford*, the bounds followed a stream rather than a path or way to the *ford* which gave name to Stafford.[45]

Also in Devon, the Stoke Cannon bounds show the coming together of ways as they go along a *weg* to a stone and then to the place where *tha wegas to licgath*, a cross-roads at Stoke Post (fig. 42), and then along a *hrycg weg*.[46] These ways come together on high ground and today footpaths, bridleways and roads come together there. This is the only cross-roads in the detailed charter sample which can be seen in its precise landscape context, as the ones in Iwerne Minster, Tisbury, and Uplyme are all unlocated.[47] The place-name sample include one cross-roads; the name Twichen (Devon) comes from the term *twicen* and shows another coming together of ways.[48]

Besides the numerous cases of land route elements within charters being joined, there are several cases of roads, tracks and water crossings from different charters linking up with each other to form larger sections of the communications network. For example, the mapping of Kelly's interpretation of the green *weg* in the Iwerne Minster bounds and of the hollow *weg* in the Fontmell charter shows that these ways were connected, forming a north-south ridgeway.[49] Also, in the Winterbourne Tomson bounds, an unlocated *herepath* joined the *weg* which the Mapperton bounds took to the horn-gate and by means of that *weg* and gate, the *herepath* was connected to Mapperton's *stret*. This *stret* has been identified as the Roman road running between Dorchester and Badbury Rings,[50] meaning that the area was well serviced by high

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[43]Hooke, *Devon and Cornwall*, p. 192.

[44]*Ibid.*, p. 192.

[45]Hooke, Devon and Cornwall, p. 192. See also *Devon II*, p. 623.

[46]S 389. Hooke, *Devon and Cornwall*, p. 134-136.

[47]S 630, S 850, and S 442 respectively. Kelly, p. 92 and 112; and Hooke, *Devon and Cornwall*, p. 130.

[48]*Devon* I, p. 57.

[49]S 630 and S 419. Kelly, p. 34, 92-3.

[50]S 490. Kelly, p. 60-2.

status roads.

There are two areas within the Devon charters where one can see short sections from different charters come together to form the communications network. One instance involves a *herepath* from the Sandford bounds being connected to one from the Down St Mary bounds. The second involves a series of linkages using elements from six different estates (figs. 45-47). This series, starting in the west with the Sandford bounds,[51] begins with a *herepath* across Creedy Bridge, itself a feature that appears in the Crediton bounds.[52] From the *brycg*, the Sandford bounds proceed "*on thone northran way andlang the herpothes*" and Hooke identified this as the Crediton road.[53] The Crediton bounds also follow the *herepath* from the *brycg*, but whereas the Sandford bounds leave it at a spring, the Crediton bounds stay on this road to a *ford* at SX 931995.[54] On this stretch of road, is the Shobrook *ford* at SX 867997 recorded in the Creedy Barton[55] and Monkton in Shobrook[56] boundary clauses. Both of these clauses also record the *herepath* moving west from here. Then, after a *ford* in the Crediton bounds, this series continues east along a *herepath* as recorded in the Stoke Canon bounds.[57] Thus this series is one road, an east-west *herepath* with the necessary fords and bridges, but, interestingly, there are no roads branching off of it recorded in these clauses.

Such connections between the different relevant terms in the boundary clauses and within place-names give specific examples of the manner in which various elements were related and formed a greater network. They also show the importance of some routes, such as the major Devon herepath, in terms of land division, as well as avenues for communications.

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[51]S 890.

[52]S 255.

[53]Hooke, *Devon and Cornwall*, p. 181.

[54]*Ibid.*, p. 90.

[55]S 1387.

[56]S 387.

[57]S 389.

Rivers and the Sea

Uncovering a network of navigable waterways is a complicated task, differing significantly in sources and methods from the above-described work on land-routes. Because waterways change so much over time, through both natural processes and interference by man, it is not possible simply to say that rivers which are navigable today would have been the ones navigable a thousand years ago. Coastlines have also changed and silting and erosion have meant that once important ports are no longer usable.[58] Furthermore, floods and droughts would have affected what was navigable on any particular day. Boats of different sorts could have been used on rivers of different depths and they will be considered below in the discussion of hierarchies.

As the modern system of waterways cannot be assumed to be the same as the Anglo-Saxon system, it may be easier to use, as a comparison, the late medieval system which is closer in date. For this reason, it is useful to look at the extensive work done on late medieval waterways. John Langdon suggested that there were only a handful of navigable rivers in or bordering Wessex: the Avon to Bristol, the Thames to Oxford, and the Parret to Langport and Thorney, and the Tone to Curry Bridge. Of these, he only considers the Avon and the Thames as far as Henley to be 'A' routes.[59] This, however, only represents a fraction the the possibly navigable routes in late medieval Wessex.[60]

J. F. Edwards and B. P. Hindle, on the other hand, concluded that few areas in England and Wales were more than fifteen miles from navigable water and these areas included, in Wessex, part of Exmoor and a region stretching from the Marlborough Downs through a narrow section south and west to the Blackmore Vale (fig. 3).[61] The major navigable rivers in or bordering Wessex were: the Thames probably as far as Lechlade; the Hamble as far as Botley; the Alre/Itchen to New Alresford; the Test to Romsey; the Salisbury Avon definitely to Fordingbridge and likely to

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[58]Aston, *Interpreting the Landscape*, p. 140.

[59]Langdon, 'Inland water transport in medieval England', p. 4-5.

[60]For more on the differences between Langdon and Hindle and Edwards, see Chapter 1.

[61]Hindle and Edwards, 'The transport system of medieval England', p. 129-30.

Salisbury; the Torridge above Bideford, to at least Weare Gifford; the Parret/Tone to Langport and Taunton; the Brue from Glastonbury to the Axe via the Pillow Cut; the Axe as far as Panborough; and, finally, the Bristol Avon to Bath.[62] They also suggested than the following minor rivers were navigable: the River Beaulieu as far as the village of Beaulieu; the Frome to Wareham (but there were wharves in Roman Dorchester); the Exe, when not blocked, to Exeter; the Teign to Newton Abbot; the Dart as far as Totnes; the Tamar, from the twelfth century, at least to Morwellham; the Taw to Bishops Tawton; the Yeo between Ilchester and Langport; and the Medina on the Isle of Wight inland to Newport.[63] This is indeed an impressive list of waterways and, according to them, is typical for a region in England.

There has not been as much work done on waterways in the Anglo-Saxon period. In *An Atlas of Anglo-Saxon England*, David Hill defined his navigable rivers as "those thought to have been used regularly for the transport of goods and passengers."[64] He only showed two navigable rivers in or bordering Wessex (fig. 52): the Avon as far as Bath and the Thames which he believed may have been navigable between Oxford and Cricklade. There are further four rivers (the Itchen to Winchester, the Test for a short way, the Avon to the area of Old Sarum, and the Stour) which he labelled as being possibly navigable, leaving most of inland Wessex inaccessible by water.[65] This is a more extensive system than Langdon suggested for the later Middle Ages, but it contrasts sharply with Edwards and Hindle's conclusions. It is interesting to note, however, that Hill has included the Stour as possibly navigable, while Edwards and Hindle did not. But do the Anglo-Saxon sources allow us to say more than Hill has done?

The late Saxon boundary clauses of Wessex, which provided much detailed information about land routes and places where rivers and streams were crossed, are not very helpful when

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[62]*Ibid.*, p. 130-1.

[63]Edwards, *The Transport System of Medieval England and Wales - a Geographical Synthesis*, p. 265-309, 315-324, 335, 378; Edwards and Hindle, 'The transportation system of medieval England and Wales', p. 130-1.

[64]Hill, *Atlas*, p. 11.

[65]Hill, *Atlas*, map 15, p. 10.

looking at navigability of waterways. The words used in boundary clauses for land routes, such as *weg*, *stræt*, and *pæth* clearly all indicate sections of the communications network, whether they be large or small. However, riverine terms, such as *broc* and *lacu*, do not indicate whether the features could be used for travel and transportation. Gelling and Cole suggested that the terms for waterways were hierarchical with *ea* at the top, followed by *broc* and *burna*, with *lacu*, *rith*, and *rithig* at the bottom.[66] As *ea* was the standard word for 'river',[67] I have looked for the usage of this word in the boundary clauses of the Devon and Shaftesbury samples. Unfortunately, *ea* does not appear in the Devon charters. In the Shaftesbury sample, the word *ea* is used in only one boundary clause and it refers to the Nadder or a branch of it.[68] The Nadder is a small river in Wiltshire and it was not one of the rivers considered navigable by Edwards and Hindle. Thus the word *ea* , the standard word for river, does not necessarily indicate a navigable river.

Gelling and Cole have found that major rivers are usually often referred to by name and there are upwards of twenty five different named rivers or streams in the Devon and Shaftesbury charter samples.[69] The majority of these, such as the Culm, Creedy, Lim, Axe (by Seaton), Tarrant, and Piddle, are not on Hindle and Edward's list of navigable rivers. The rivers on their list which do appear in the charter sample are the Avon (to Bradford-on-Avon), Dart, Exe, Frome (fig. 50), Teign (fig. 51), and Torridge and these usually conform to Gelling and Cole's suggestion by simply being referred to by name. For example, the Stoke Canon bounds go ". . . *thanon ut on exan up anlang exan oth scræwanleges lace*. . ."[70] Thus the Exe is named. Interestingly in the Devon sample, a few of the named rivers are associated with the word stream. For example, at the end of the Topsham

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[66]Gelling and Cole, *The Landscape of Place-Names*, p. 2.

[67]Gelling, *Place-Names in the Landscape*, p. 20; Gelling and Cole, *The Landscape of Place-Names*, p. 14-5; Smith, *English Place-Name Elements*, EPNS XXV, p. 142.

[68]S 329.

[69]The Shobrooke was *scipbroc* in the Crediton bounds and *sceoca broces* in the Monkton bounds(S 255, S387) and the descriptive 'sheep brook' of the boundary clause is now the name of the brook.

[70]S 389. Hooke, *Devon and Cornwall*, p. 134.

clause, the bounds go "*thanon up on exan stream oth pole.*"[71] Here, Hooke translated *stream* as river, but Smith's volume defined it simply as 'stream' and Gelling and Cole do not include a discussion of the term *stream*.[72] This study has found no clear method by which to determine navigability from Old English words, so rivers and streams which appear in boundary clauses have little to add to the uncovering of the network of waterways at present.[73]

While boundary clauses are not particularly helpful and records like those used by Hindle, Edwards, Langdon and Jones do not exist for the Anglo-Saxon period, historical sources can provide interesting insight into the use of waterways for travelling in late Saxon Wessex. Although the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* does not often include references to how people reached their recorded destinations, in some cases it does and these can be used to reconstruct some of the system of water-travel. That the seas were important is obvious and several places on the coast of Wessex are mentioned as having been reached by boat. For example, the entry for 914 reads, in part, as follows:

> In this year a great naval force came over here from the south from Brittany, and two earls, Ohter and Hroald, with them. They went west round the coast so that they arrived at the Severn estuary and ravaged Wales everywhere along the coast where it suited them. . . And the king arranged that men were stationed against them on the south side of the estuary, from the west, from Cornwall, east as far as Avonmouth, so that they dared not attack the land anywhere on that side. Yet they stole inland by night on two occasions - on the one occasion east of Watchet, on the other occasion at Porlock.[74]

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[71]S 433. Hooke, *Devon and Cornwall*, p. 123.

[72]Smith, *English Place-Name Elements*, vol. XXVI, p. 163.

[73]Continuing work by place-name scholars and boundary clause experts, particularly by Gelling and Cole, may in time change this picture.

[74]*ASC* s. a. 914; *EHD I*, p. 212-3. "*Her on thysum geare com micel sciphere hider ofer suthan of Lid wiccum, 7 twegen eorlas mid, Ohtor 7 Hroald, 7 foron west on butan thæt hie gedydon innan Sæferne muthan, 7 hergodon on North Wealas æghwær be tham sæ, thær hie thonne on hagode . . . 7 se cyng hæfde funden thæt him mon sæt with on suth healfe Sæfern muthan westan from Wealum, east oth Afene muthan, thæt hie ne dorston thæt land nawerge secan on tha healfe; Tha be stælon hie theah nihtes upp æt sumum twam cirron, æt othrum cierre be eastan Wæced, 7 æt othrum cierre æt Port locan. . .*" C. Plummer, ed., *Two of the Saxon Chronicles* (Oxford, 1892, 1952) p. 98.

Other areas on or near the coast of Wessex for which the *Chronicle* records people arriving in boats are: Dartmouth, Teignmouth, Portland, Swansea, Southampton, Portsmouth, Bosham, and, obviously, the Isle of Wight. Ships also went to the mouth of the Taw, into the Tamar, to the mouth of the Frome and inland to Bristol, Exeter, and Winchester.

Although the *Chronicle* shows the importance of the coast as a thoroughfare, it, like Hill's *Atlas* shows a very limited use of inland waterways. This is in stark contrast to the picture presented by Hindle and Edwards for the later Middle Ages. Clearly much work still needs to be done on this area. Documents, like the *Chronicle*, will add little new and do not provide good evidence for activities, such as trading, which would have made use of the rivers.

John Blair has suggested that Anglo-Saxon canals have also been under-studied.[75] Gelling and Cole defined *lad*, in place-names, as 'dyked water-course, canal' and in literary Old English as 'way, course, journey, conveyance'. They thereby suggested that "[t]he notion of load-bearing canals links the senses nicely."[76] This term appears in place-names, notably in the Somerset Levels, and in boundary clauses, such as that of Shifford, on the Thames in Oxfordshire.[77] Blair presented further evidence of canals on the Thames from the Abingdon Chronicle which inlcudes passages on cutting them.[78]

Thus the water-based section of the communications network in Wessex was made up of the sea, rivers, and canals. The navigablility of rivers is difficult to determine and depended greatly on the type of watercraft used. This will be expanded upon in the hierarchies section below.

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[75]Blair, *Oxfordshire*, p. 121; Blair, 'Canals', *Blackwell Encyclopaedia*, p. 81.

[76]Gelling and Cole, *The Landscape of Place-Names*, p. 20-1.

[77]Gelling and Cole, *The Landscape of Place-Names*, p, 20-1; Blair, *Oxfordshire*, p. 121; S 911.

[78]Blair, *Oxfordshire*, p. 121; J. Stevenson, ed., *Chronicon Monasterii de Abingdon*, Rolls Series 2 (1858) pt. i, p. 480-1; pt. ii, p. 282.

Evidence for the Nature of the Communications Network

In this section, I will bring together material from a variety of historical and archaeological sources in order to determine how routes were maintained, used and perceived. First, I will examine the upkeep of roads and river channels, looking for evidence of their construction and maintenance, or lack thereof. Then I will consider the issue of the continuity of use from earlier times.

Usability and Maintenance

Routeways were not static features in the landscape and their position in the network would have altered with changes in their quality. This section will concentrate on factors which effected the usability of specific routes, including such things as the size, fabric, quality and maintenance of particular elements of the communications network. How the network was maintained, and the power behind this, is of vital importance for our understanding of the system of travel and communications as a whole and will therefore be examined in detail.

The size of rivers and land routes greatly affected the traffic which was able to use them, as was seen in the discussion of mapping navigable rivers. Larger, ocean-going ships were more restricted in their use of inland waterways than were smaller boats. Place-names and charter boundary clauses both contain information about the relative sizes of the roads and water crossings, giving an indication of what they could have been used for and how they might fit into a hierarchy. 'Informal' or 'natural' roads were those not planned by a central authority and sections of them could expand to considerable widths, only being constrained by features in the landscape.[79] However, the width of routes of this sort, perhaps represented by*wegs* or *pæths* in late Saxon Wessex, could vary considerably over sort distances.[80] *Stræts*, as Roman roads, indicate sections of an important system of communications.[81] Originally the Roman roads were usually of a

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[79]Trombold, 'Introduction', p. 3; Crawford, *Archaeology in the Field*, p. 60-1.

[80]Trombold, 'Introduction', p. 3. See also Hyslop in the same volume.

[81]For more on *stræts* as Roman roads, see 'Continuity' below.

substantial width, but the term *stræt* itself does not prove how wide a road was in the Anglo-Saxon period.

The term *herepath* may indicate a road of considerable width. In his work on ancient routes in the new world, Ross Hassig showed that, in order to move about the landscape efficiently, armies need to have access to wide roads because, if a path was only wide enough for two or three men, an army numbering in the hundreds would have been spread out over a large distance.[82] Moreover, a *here* in the laws of Ine was defined as a group of more than thirty five.[83] In this light, the 'army roads', the *herepaths*, of Wessex may have been the wider roads, the ones large enough for an army, the ones traversed by armies.

The *Leges Henrici Primi* are also important here. The *Leges* were written in the years leading to 1118.[84] According to Wormald, they show a new interest in roads, but the relevant statutes may not be Norman legal innovations.[85] Of particular interest here is its discussion of the width of the *via regis*. The *Leges* state that highways had to be wide enough for two wagons to pass each other, for herdsmen to make contact with their goads at full length and for sixteen knights to ride abreast.[86] These would have been substantial roads indeed and it may be safe to assume that the *via regis* of the Anglo-Saxon period would have been approximately this width.

Some qualifiers are directly concerned with size. In Devon, the Stoke Canon bounds went to a *langan forda* which was located between Rewe and Columbjohn[87] and there are at least five long fords in the place-name sample. Broad fords were also commonly found, appearing in at least eight place-names. These terms are

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[82]Hassig, 'Roads, routes, and ties that bind', p. 22-3.

[83]F. L. Attenborough, ed., *The Laws of the Earliest English Kings* (Cambridge, 1922) 'Laws of Ine', 13.1, p. 40. The laws of Ine and this statute are discussed further in chapter 5.

[84]L. J. Downer, ed., *Leges Henrici Primi* (Oxford, 1972) p. 35.

[85]P. Wormald, *The Making of English Law: King Alfred to the Twelfth Century* (Oxford, 1999/2001) p. 46. This law code contains many references to the travelling and the communications network and it will be discussed in several places in this dissertation.

[86]Downer, *Leges*, 80, 3, p. 248-9. The *via regis* are discussed further under hierarchies.

[87]S 389. Hooke, *Devon and Cornwall*, p. 134-135.

relative, but they do indicate place where the fords seemed larger than normal. Other qualifiers comment less obviously on the size of the roads and crossing points, such as when they refer to the types of traffic which used them. When one of the roads or crossing-point terms has been compounded with a type of animal, that part of the network should be of sufficient quality for that type of animal to use it. Thus the oxen *brycg* at Hinton St. Mary[88] should have been wide enough and strong enough for oxen to cross it and would have been used by them regularly enough for that to be the its distinguishing feature. Similarly, when a ford near Creech St. Michael was called *horsford* in a charter dated to 882, it is reasonable to assume that it was suitable for a horse to cross the water with relative ease.[89] It may, however, have been too deep for a shorter legged animal or the current may have been too strong for a weaker one to cross easily.

A ford with a wider range of uses may be seen in Devon. In 1086 Wonford was recorded as *Wenforda*, and the first element has been translated as wagon, making "the whole name descriptive of a ford which would carry a wagon."[90] Therefore, this must have been a substantial ford, providing an easy crossing point for those travelling over land on foot, on horseback or, indeed, with wheeled vehicles.

Some of the relevant boundary clause features and place-names elements, especially the fords, have qualifiers which indicate when they could be used and if they might have been difficult to use. The most obvious example of this is the place-name Great and Little Somerford. This name appeared as *Sumerford* in 937, *Somerford* in 956 and *Somreford* and *Sumreford* both in 1086 and means 'ford usable in the summer months'.[91] Therefore this ford must have become unusable in the wet winter months.

The level of the water at a ford had ramifications for the ease of its crossing. The crossing at Droxford must have been reliable as the place-name, recorded as *drocenesforda* in 825, *drocelesford* in the tenth century and *Drocheneford* in 1086,

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[88]S 502.

[89]S 345.

[90]*Devon* I, p. 169.

[91]*Wiltshire*, p. 73.

means 'ford at the dry place'.[92] Similarly, the names Shalford Bridge and Farm were recorded as *scealdan ford* in 944[93] and this indicate the presence of a shallow ford. Conversley, Deptford in Wiltshire was a 'deep ford'[94] and thus the ford there must have been more difficult to cross. Such names show areas where travel was more or less difficult and reliable.

Words relating to the fabric which formed the features can be used as an indicator of quality. Sand is often found modifying the term ford. The charter of the Iwerne Minster estate records a *sand ford* located at the site of the later Farrington Bridge.[95] Sampford Courtney,[96] Sandford (Devon)[97] and Sandford Orcas (Dorset)[98] also record the existence of sand fords. These fords were probably not of great quality and likely were naturally occurring.

The *EPNS* volume on place-name elements defined the Anglo-Saxon word *wudu* as "a wood, a grove, woodland, a forest" and when applied to a building or structure it means wood or timber.[99] However, Margaret Gelling defined it as "the most colourless OE term for a collection of trees", but (using Woodbridge, Suffolk, Woodchurch, Cheshire and Kent, and Woodkirk, Yorkshire as examples) she did say that *wudu* could indicate the building material.[100] Thus, Woodbridge, found in the bounds of both Fontmell and East Orchard (Dorset) is likely a bridge made of wood.[101] On the other hand, the numerous wood fords, such Woodford Bridge (Devon) and Woodford (Wiltshire) were more likely

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[92]Coates, *Hampshire*, p. 67.

[93]*Berkshire*, I. p. 240.

[94]*Wiltshire*. p. 231-232.

[95]S 630. G. B. Grundy, 'Dorset Charters', *PDNHAS* LVIII (1936) p. 133; and Kelly, p. 92.

[96]*Devon* I, p. 165.

[97]*Devon* II, p. 411.

[98]*Dorset* III, p. 389.

[99]Smith, *English Place-Name Elements* Part II, p. 279.

[100]Gelling, *Place-Names in the Landscape*, p. 227-228.

[101]S 419 and S 710 respectively. *Dorset* III, p. 105. See also Kelly, p. 34 and 100.

fords in a wooded area than fords made of wood.[102] Nonetheless, a wooden ford may be recorded in the charter bounds for Creech St Michael where there was a *beamford* .[103] *Beam* means tree, but Smith pointed out that in place-names its "common meaning . . . is 'beam or timber', sometimes probably with the specific sense of 'beam of timber laid across a stream to form a foot bridge' . . ."[104] Thus this crossing may have been a tree felled across the water. Similarly, two of the Corfe and Blashenwell charters record a *beam broc* which Kelly says was a tree trunk over a brook.[105] Could this have been used for travel or does the absence of a word for a river crossing mean that this was not done? It would not have been used for heavy traffic, but people on foot might have used it.

The other important term for a wooden feature found in Wessex is *thel*, meaning "a board, a plank".[106] Thelbridge, Devon was *Talebrua* in 1086 and was a plank bridge over a stream.[107] Devon also has another Thelbridge which appears in the Sandford charters.[108] There are no other routeway features combined with the word *thel* in the place-names and in the charters which were studied in detail.

The use of the word *stan* may be very important when trying to identify the relative merits of sections of the communications network, but this depends on the interpretation of this modifying word. *Stan* in its simplest definition means stone, but in relation to roads, and some fords, it refers to stone paving.[109] Stone surfaced roads are recorded in charters: the Tisbury bounds

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[102]S 388 and S 789 respectively. See also: Hooke, *Devon and Cornwall*, p. 145-6; *Devon* I, p. 153; and *Wiltshire*, p. 373.

[103]S 237.

[104]Smith, *English Place-Name Elements*, Part I, p. 21.

[105]S 534 and S 573; Kelly, p. 69 and 83.

[106]Smith, *English Place-Name Elements* Part II, p. 203.

[107]*Devon* II, p. 395.

[108]S 405 and S 890. See also *Devon*, II, p. 412 and Hooke, *Devon and Cornwall*, p. 67 and 183.

[109]Smith, *English Place-Name Elements* Part II, p. 143.

include a *stanweie;*[110] a *stanwey* appears in the Plush bounds;[111] and two charters relating to Corfe and Blashenwell include the same *stanwei* which, unfortunately, is unlocated.[112] There is no indication of whether these ways were naturally stony or if they were metalled. Metalled roads may be indicated by the element *stræt* which may be translated simply as a paved road.[113] Perhaps this was one of the features which distinguished a *stræt* from a *herepath*.

There is much evidence for stone fords and just a few will be considered here.[114] The place-names Stanford in the Vale (Berkshire) and West Stafford (Dorset) have both been interpreted as meaning 'stony ford'.[115] Likewise, Kelly translated the *stanforde* in the Beechingstoke (Wiltshire) bounds as 'stony ford' and she located it at SU 109599 where the east-west road through Woodborough crossing a stream.[116] Furthermore, the *stanford* in the Crediton bounds was over the Yeo and Hooke simply refered to it as 'stone ford'.[117] The stone fords could have been naturally occurring, enhanced by people or entirely artificial.

Stone bridges can be found in a spurious charter relating to Corfe and Blashenwell and in an Ottery St Mary charter.[118] The latter of which was either at Fenny Bridge or at Woodford Bridge and if it was at Fenny Bridge, it was on a Roman road.[119] These stone bridges can be unequivocally deemed artificially created and can be presumed to indicate a place where the communications network was of high quality. Even if only the bridges were certainly man-made, the stone fords and stone ways, be they artificial or natural, were likely more permanent or more solid

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[110]S 850.

[111]S 347.

[112]S 632 and S 573. Kelly, p. 80 and 82.

[113]Smith, *Elements*, vol 2, p. 161.

[114]For more examples, see Appendix A & B.

[115]*Berkshire* I, p. 398; and *Dorset* I, p. 243.

[116]S 478. Kelly, p. 48, 52.

[117]S 255. Hooke, *Devon and Cornwall*, p. 87, 92.

[118]S 721.

[119]Hooke, *Devon and Cornwall*, p. 171.

than other types of fords and ways and it may be reasonable to consider those which are known to have been stone as being of a higher quality than most. Therefore, they likely provided more reliable line of communication and may have been fairly important routes.

The usability of routes was also affected by their state of repair. In order for a communications network to flourish, it needs new elements to be built and old ones to be maintained. Anglo-Saxon charter bounds provide examples of damaged sections of the communications network. There was a *brokene strate* recorded near Liddington, in King Edmund's charter of 940[120] and another in King Eadred's charter for Badbury in 955.[121] They may have been described as broken because of a problem with the surface of the *stræts* at those points. The implication is that it would have been less easy to travel comfortably over these section of the *stræts*. Also, if these *stræts* were recorded as being broken and if the words used in the bounds are supposed to be applicable for a long time, it follows that these *stræts* must have been in ill repair and they must have been expected to remain so.

The adjective broken is also applied to a bridge in a 904 charter which records the following as part of a boundary in Wrington (Somerset): ". . . *of than combe on brokenanbrugge of thar brugge to stanbrugge of stanbrugge to* . . ."[122] The stone bridge, which was, no doubt, a crossing of much higher quality when the bounds were written, may have been a replacement for the broken one.

Charters also provide glimpses into the mechanics of the repair system. The Anglo-Saxons developed a standard clause in the charters in which a piece of land would be granted free of all earthly dues except for military service, fortress building and bridgework. Higham has suggested that a duty to maintain roads may have survived through the sub-Roman period into the

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[120] S 459. Kelly #11, p. 44-45.

[121] S 568. Kemble 434, vol. 2, p. 304-305 and vol 6, p. 235-236.

[122] S 371; Birch #606, vol 2, p 263-4. I have translated this as ". . . from the valley to the broken bridge, from that bridge to the stone bridge, from the stone bridge to. . . "

early English period.[123] Brooks has traced the history of the duty to perform bridgework in detail and has concluded that while it is possible that this duty survived from the Roman period, it is more likely that it was re-introduced by churchmen or from Francia between *c.* 600 and *c.* 750.[124] It appears in charters from from the mid-eighth century in Mercia and the mid-ninth century in Wessex.[125] Brooks has suggested, moreover, that, as several charters "refer to boroughwork and bridgework as a joint service", the duty of bridgework "might be performed at bridges in, or adjacent to, the major English boroughs."[126] Brooks saw a strong connection between bridge and fortress work.[127] Moreover, the laws of Æthelred, written in a period of Viking attacks, linked the repair of fortifications and bridges with the provision of military and naval forces as needed for the common good.[128]

A continental parallel may be sought in the so-called fortified bridges in western France in the ninth century. Simon Coupland examined the evidence for the military use of bridges in ninth-century France and has determined that, despite Charles the Bald's short-term use of fortified bridges to block the passage of Vikings along the Seine, this was not a long term strategy for defence, partly because it would have hindered trade.[129] Brooks, however, saw Anglo-Saxon *brycges* and *burhs* functioning together for both the military and economic good of the kingdom controlling the movement of armies and traders.[130]

It is significant that it was bridgework that was included in

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[123]N. Higham, *Rome, Britain and the Anglo-Saxons* (London, 1992) p. 147-8.

[124]Brooks, 'Rochester Bridge', p. 14-15; see also Abels, *Lordship and Military Obligation*, p. 71-2.

[125]Brooks, 'Church, Crown and Community', p. 1.

[126]West Saxon examples include: S 463, S 465, S 475, S 485, S 480, S 491 and S 502. Brooks, 'Church, Crown and Community', p. 2.

[127]Brooks, 'Church, Crown and Community', p. 2.

[128]A. J. Robertson, ed., *The Laws of the Kings of England from Edmund to Henry I* (Cambridge, 1925) 'VI Æthelred', 32.3, p. 101.

[129]S. Coupland, 'The fortified bridges of Charles the Bald', *Journal of Medieval History* 17 (1991): 1-12.

[130]Brooks, 'Church, Crown and Community', p. 2.

the list of common duties and was considered a standard obligation of landholders. This may have been due to their defensive role, but it may also have been related to their unique position in the communications network. Perhaps bridges rather than roads were included as obligations in charters because they were the elements of the land-route network which could not 'maintain' themselves. Hindle has suggested that traffic on the road network was such that the roads made and maintained themselves.[131] Fords may also have fallen into this category, but bridges could not.

Evidence from Rochester (Kent) gives excellent and unique insight into provisions for bridge repair. The site was first bridged by the Romans, but it is not known how long this bridge functioned. Brooks has argued that the Anglo-Saxon bridge was maintained at least from the eighth century. An early eleventh century document known as the 'Rochester Bridgework list' survived in both Latin and Old English in the twelfth century *Textus Roffensis* and its provisions were used until 1380. This text listed estates, the king, bishop and archbishop and beams and planks they had to supply for the upkeep of specific sections of the bridge.[132] Unfortunately, this document and charters referring to bridge-work charters do not elaborate on how the bridge work was co-ordinated and carried out. Brooks suggested that when the king, bishop or archbishop was listed as responsible for a certain piers, tennants or a reeve from their listed estates would have been responsible for organising repairs. He also determined that the bridge was originally the responsibility of the lathe of Aylesford and that amendments to the list show an evolution from territorial obligation to obligations owed by a lord. In particular, the estates listed on the bishop of Rochester's piers had been re-written so that the burden was spread out among more of the bishop's estates.[133]

Gelling noted the absence of 'bridge' names prior to c. 730 and asserts that, in order to allow for easier travel, many

[131]Hindle, 'The road network of medieval England and Wales', p. 208-9.

[132]*Ibid*, p. 16.

[133]Brooks, 'Church, Crown and Community', p. 6-8.

bridges were built in areas where there had earlier been fords.[134] In the case of Redbridge (Hampshire) early forms of the place-name show this progression. In c. 730 the name *hreutford* was recorded, as was *hreodford* in c.890, but the name in 956 is *hreodbrycge*, followed by *hreodbricge* in 1045 and *Rodbrige* in 1086.[135] This change in the name indicates that the ford over the Test was replaced by a bridge between c. 890 and 956. However, again, the nothing is known about the building process.

Two poems attribute St Swithun (d. 863) with building Winchester's bridge over the Itchen in 859.[136] The language used in the shorter poem suggests a composition date of not earlier than the tenth century, but it survives only as a copy from the first half of the twelfth century.[137] The longer poem, *Unum Beati Swithuni Miraculum*, appears in manuscripts dating to the first quarter of the twelfth century and to the second half of the eleventh century.[138] These do not prove that Swithun undertook a bridge building program, but do show that there was a tradition by at least the eleventh century that the bridge dated from his episcopacy and was connected to the saint himself.[139] In the late Middle Ages in England, bridgework became closely connected with the Church and salvation as those who built and repaired bridges could be granted indulgences.[140] Rune stones from Viking Age Sweden record bridges having been built for someone's soul.[141]

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[134]Gelling, *Place-Names in the Landscape*, p. 64-65.

[135]Coates, *Hampshire*, p. 137. See also: Gelling, *Place-Names in the Landscape*, p. 65.

[136]Biddle, Winchester Studies I, p. 271-2; Lapidge, 'Swithun', *Blackwell*, p. 437; R. N. Quirk, 'Winchester Cathedral in the tenth century', *The Archarological Journal* CXIV (1957) p. 28. The longer poem, *Unum Beati Swithuni Miraculum* is in BM Royal MS 15 C.vii, fo. 125 r-v and Bodleian, MS Auct. F. 2. 14, fo. 49v. The shorter is in BM MS. Royal 15 C. vii, fo. 124v. These two have been printed in A. A. Locke, *In Praise of Winchester* (London, 1912). I have been unable to consult these texts and await Lapidge's forthcoming volume on the cult of St Swithum.

[137]Biddle, Winchester Studies I, p. 272.

[138]Biddle, Winchester Studies I, p. 271, fn. 6.

[139]Biddle, Winchester Studies I, p. 271-2.

[140]M. Cook, *Medieval Bridges*, Shire Archaeology (Princes Risborough, 1998), p. 13-5.

[141]A. Gräslund, 'Some Aspects of Christianisation in Central Sweden', *Social Approaches to Viking Studies*, ed., Ross Samson (Glasgow, 1991) p. 47, 51.

The St Swithun poems may indicate a similar sentiment of bridge building as a holy act in late Saxon Wessex.

The maintenance of waterways was important for preserving navigability, especially on marginal rivers and artificial canals. Charter evidence from South Stoneham (Hampshire) indicates that the Itchen's course was altered. This charter records a grant from King Edward to Old Minster in 1045 and its boundary clause refers to the *ealdan Icenan* and the *niwan ea*.[142] Biddle suggested that the new section of the river may have helped navigation to Winchester, but also pointed out that the next strong reference to shipping into Winchester comes from 1189-1204.[143] Thus even if the charter shows that there was an attempt to improve the Itchen, the efforts may not have had lasting effect.

Work on an artificial waterway can be seen in the Abingdon Chronicle which recorded a request by the men of Oxford that the monks of Abingdon make a canal for easier passage from Abingdon to Culham.[144] Here, then, the landowners were responsible for the building of a section of the communications network, but how often was this the case? As seen above, bridge work was a part of the standard obligations owed by estates for important crossings, but minor one would also have needed upkeep. Many sections of the communications network, especially *fords*, were qualified by personal names or words such as *cyng* or *bisceop*. If these were indicators of ownership, what were the implications for the upkeep of the features? Perhaps the king, or his agent, was responsible for maintenance of the crossings which gave names to Kingsbridge and Kingsford in Devon. Likewise, Baccela, Cana, Cerdic, their families, or workers may have maintained the fords at Battleford (Devon), Canford Magna (Dorset) and Charford (Hampshire).

Evidence of work being done on the road system is rare. The South Hams charter's boundary clause reads, in part, as follows: "*on thone dic thær esne thone weg fordealf*".[145] Hooke translated

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[142]S 1012.

[143] Biddle, Winchester Studies I, p. 270-1.

[144]Stevenson, ed., *Chronicon Monasterii de Abingdon*, pt. 1, p. 480, pt. 2, p. 282; Blair, *Oxfordshire*, p. 121.

[145]S 298. Hooke, *Devon and Cornwall*, p. 105.

this as "then to the dyke where Esne dug the way" and she indicated that the road is still in evidence and cuts through an earthwork at SX 666494.[146] Here is an example of a named individual constructing a way, but nothing is known of the circumstances under which this was done. Nonetheless, the way was dug in order to facilitate communications in that area by removing the impediment cause by the earthwork.

Roadworks can be seen in the *burhs* and villages of the late Saxon period.[147] The West Saxon *burhs* of Alfred the Great and Edward the Elder, were planned sites and show regular street plans dating to this period. Similarly, nucleated villages which dotted the late Saxon countryside often had regular street plans. The roads of these settlements were planned by a central authority, royal in the case of the burhs and lordly, either monastic or secular. How they were made cannot now be recovered.

Although many people would have worked on the construction and maintenance of the communications system, there were occasions when purposeful destruction was done. The *Leges Henrici Primi* include the offense of *stretebreche* in a list of the 'jurisdictional rights of the king'.[148] This term is explained later in the law code: "The offense of *stretbreche* occurs where someone destroys a road by closing it off or diverting it or digging it up."[149] The penalty for this was one hundred shillings.[150] Thus King Henry was trying to protect the roads from willful damage. The Anglo-Saxon communications network must have suffered from the same types of problems and the use of the Old English term in the Latin law code may be significant in that light.

Maintenance work and road building thus took place, but how long could sections of roads survive?

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[146]*Ibid.*, p. 106.

[147]For more on *burhs* and settlement nucleation, see chapter 3.

[148]*Leges Henrici Primi*, 10,1. Downer, p. 108, 109.

[149]*Leges Henrici Primi*, 80, 5a: "*Stre[t]breche est ai quis viam frangat concludendo uel auertendo uel fodiendo.*" Downer, p. 250, 251.

[150]*Leges Henrici Primi*, 80, 5. Downer, p. 249.

Continuity

Even though traffic patterns have changed over time, some elements of the communications network seem to have remained in use for thousands of years. The issue of continuity is important to our understanding of the Anglo-Saxon communications network because it would show if these patterns of landscape use and lines of communication were able to survive great upheavals and political change.

Modifying words may give evidence as to the relative age of a route through the use of the word 'old'. This word occurs at least five times in the Glastonbury charters, seven times in the Shaftesbury charters and six in the Devon sample. The Devon charters, for example, record an *ealdon herepath* in the Crediton bounds, an *healdan weg* in the South Hams bounds, an *ealdan herepath* in Topsham, an *ealdan ford* and an *ealdan weg* in Clyst St Mary, and an *ealdan wege* in Sorley in Churchstow.[151] The characterization of these roads as old may be significant, but what exactly does it indicate?

Is age itself enough for a routeway feature to be termed old or does there need to be a new, or newer, bridge, road or so on in order for people to refer to another as old? The latter is clearly the case in the previously mentioned South Stoneham charter where the two courses of the river Itchen were distinguished from each other by being described as *eald* and *niwe*.[152] We may also see it in the Crediton charter. The Crediton bounds begin at Creedy Bridge and follow a *herepath* for a distance. At the ends of the clause, the bounds take an *eald herepath* to the Creedy and follow it back to Creedy Bridge.[153] Since the second *herepath* was labelled *eald*, it was being differentiated from the first and may have been thought of as older than the first. Perhaps in situations when the *eald* is not a comparison to another routeway feature, it may be showing that the element is older than other features in the landscape.

If the roads were thought of as particularly old at a certain point in time, old enough that this was a distinguishing feature,

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[151]S 255, S 298, S 433, S 669, and S 704.

[152]S 1012.

[153]S 255.

could they indicate ancient routes? Both the Devon and the Shaftesbury samples have one example of a known Roman road being described as 'old'; the *ealdan herepath* in the Topsham bounds and the *elthen stret* in Mapperton both refer to Roman roads.[154] While the term *eald* indicates a routeways feature that the Anglo-Saxons thought was especially old and even if there are cases where they are known to have been used in Roman or pre-historic times, the use of the word is not proof enough of a route's ancient status.

As seen in Chapter 2, ridgeways were very important features in the landscape of Wessex. They formed natural communications routes and were used by pre-historic travellers. The term ridgeway appears often in the boundary clauses, but only those roads which are identified as being on the same line as known pre-historic ridgeways can be used to argue for continue use. There are a few examples of this in the charter samples. In Liddington the bounds of a charter of 940 go "from the red stone west along the way to the two barrows. . .".[155] Kelly has identified this *weg* as being an ancient track called the Sugar Way which runs north-north-east by Liddington.[156] The bounds of Crediton, Devon record a *herepath* which has been associated with a pre-historic ridgeway on the line of the modern road from Exeter to Okehampton.[157] Interestingly, the *healdan weg* in South Hams is a ridgeway. This may indicate that this ridgeway, like the above examples, was an ancient route or at least that it was viewed in a similar manner. These examples show continuity as the Anglo-Saxons used ancient and natural land routes.

The most easily visible pre-Saxon land routes are the highly artificial Roman roads and as they were the main arteries for a province with a well developed system of communications, questions over their continued use are significant for understanding the Anglo-Saxon communications network. When researching Roman roads in late Saxon Wessex, a detailed examination of the *stræts* in the place-names and in the charter boundary clauses is vital. There are nine surviving West Saxon

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[154]2 433, Hooke, *Devon and Cornwall*, p. 123; S 490, Kelly, p. 60-62.

[155]S 334. "*of thane stane west onlang weies on there tweie iberges. . .*" Kelly, #11, p. 44.

[156]Kelly, p. 46-7.

[157]S 255. Hooke, *Devon and Cornwall*, p. 93.

place-names in the sample containing the element *stræt*. All of these have been associated with Roman roads by the place-name scholars. Berkshire and Hampshire have four places which make explicit use of the term *stræt* and were recorded before 1100. Stratfield Mortimer, which was *Stradfeld* in Domesday Book,[158] is to the north of Silchester on the line of the Roman road headed to London. Stratfield Saye and Turgis, which were *Stratfeld* in 1053x1066 and *Stradfelde* and *Stradfelle* in Domesday,[159] are on the same road. East Stratton in Hampshire[160] lies next to the Roman road from Winchester to Silchester, whereas Streatley in Berkshire[161] is along the road headed roughly north from Silchester. Interestingly this place is also on a major east-west ridgeway.

There are three *stræt* place-names in Wiltshire: Stratton St Margaret, Stratford Tony, and Stratford-sub-Castle. Stratton St Margaret was *Stratone* in Domesday and is next to the Roman road, known as Ermine Street, running through Swindon.[162] The other two are in the region around Old Sarum. Stratford Tony appeared in charters as *on stretford* [163], and as *on stret ford* and *on streat ford* [164], while in Domesday Book it was *Stradford* .[165] This name means "[f]ord where the (Roman) road crosses"[166] and provides evidence for the Anglo-Saxon use of the Roman road heading south-west from Old Sarum. Stratford-sub-castle was simply *Stratford(e)* in 1091 and it too indicates a ford carrying a Roman road.[167] This place is just south of Old Sarum.

In Devon, there are two recorded pre-1100 place-names using the element *stræt*. They are Strete Raleigh, which was *Estreta* in

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[158]*Berkshire I*, p. 216.

[159]*Hampshire*, p. 157.

[160]*Ibid*.

[161]*Berkshire II*, p. 531.

[162]*Wiltshire*, p. 33.

[163]S 229.

[164]S 540.

[165]*Wiltshire*, p. 224.

[166]*Ibid*.

[167]*Ibid.*, p. 371-2.

1086, and Straitgate Farm, which was *Strætgeat* in 1061.[168] They are quite near each other on the south side of the Roman road between Exeter and Honiton. These place-names will be considered below in conjunction with two boundary clauses relating to estates at Ottery St Mary.[169]

Of those charters which I have closely examined, there are seventeen boundary clauses containing *stræts*. Some of these do not relate to Roman roads. Two in the Glastonbury sample are not obviously near Roman roads and these are the estates at Christian Malford and Damerham.[170] Of those charter bounds which were solved by Hooke or Kelly, Ashford and Boehill, Dawlish, Easton Basset, and South Hams have streets which are not near known Roman roads.[171] Although this in itself is extremely important, casting doubt on the definition of *stræt* as a Roman road, or perhaps indicating places where the knowledge of Roman roads is not complete, these examples cannot be used to argue for or against the continued use of Roman roads.

The other examples of *stræt* all seem to fit the traditional definition in that the estates in whose bounds they are found are on or near Roman roads. The bounds of an Idmiston charter of 948[172] include a street and since Idmiston is on the line of the Old Sarum to Silchester Roman road, this charter proves that at least part of that road was still in use in the late Anglo-Saxon period. Likewise, three charters give evidence for the continued use of the Foss Way. There were *stræts* in the bounds of Grittleton, Nettleton and Podimore.[173] Since Grittleton and Nettleton on are the Foss Way north of Bath and Podimore is on it just north of Ilchester, if these *stræts* were in fact on the line of this road, they show its continued use along two very different sections. Butleigh is also near the Foss Way and has a *stræt*, but because of its proximity to other Roman roads and

[168] *Devon II*, p. 579 and 606, respectively.

[169] S 721 and S 1033.

[170] S 466 and S 513 respectively.

[171] S 653, S 1003, S 630, and S 298 respectively.

[172] S 541.

[173] S 472, S 504, and S 743 respectively.

because I have not solved this charter bound, its charter[174] should only be used to say that at least one Roman road was in use in that area.

In his work on Yatesury and Avebury, Reynolds pointed out that a charter relating to Badbury (Wiltshire)[175] referred to the Roman road to the north of the Yatesbury Lane junction as *brokene strete* and that to the south this junction as strete (fig. 7).[176] Reynolds has suggested that the terms used in this charter for the southern portion of the Roman road imply "its contemporary use".[177] While this is true and while the use of the term *brokene* does show that "the derelict condition of the road at this point was its most notable feature"[178], the very fact that the word *strete* is used is significant. It means that the Anglo-Saxons still saw that feature of the landscape as a *stræt*, that is as a land route. Also, the nearby estate of Liddington[179] had a *stræt* identified by Kelly as being a Roman road. This one was on the line of the Roman road headed south towards Mildenhall near Marlborough[180] and thus provides additional proof of the continued use of that road.

The only place where *stræt* was used for a Roman road in the Shaftesbury regional study was in the Mapperton bounds and this *stræt* would have been on the line of the Roman road between Dorchester and Badbury Rings. There are two Devonshire estates using the term *stræt* in reference to a Roman road: Ottery St Mary in S 1033 uses part of the Exeter to Honiton road and Clyst St Mary uses a section of the Exeter to Lyme Regis road.[181]

In some cases words other than *stræt* were used when naming and describing sections of Roman roads. For example, although Chandler's Ford in Hampshire does not contain the element *stræt*,

[174] S 270a.

[175] S 568.

[176] Reynolds, 'Avebury, Yatesbury', p. 24-25.

[177] *Ibid.*, p. 25.

[178] *Ibid.*, p. 24-25.

[179] S 459.

[180] Kelly, p. 47.

[181] S 1033 and S 669 respectively. See Hooke, *Devon and Cornwall*, p. 208, 210 and 163.

it does make reference to a section of a Roman road. This place is between Winchester and Southampton and the ford in question was over Monks Brook on the line of the Roman road.[182] Likewise, Frilford, or 'Frithela's ford', near Abingdon took it name from the crossing of a Roman road over Osse Ditch stream.[183] Thus, by referring to one of their water crossings points, these place-names provide evidence for the continued use of those sections of the Roman road system.

The Devonshire bounds, moreover, provide a few examples of Roman roads being referred to as *herepaths*. This happens in the bounds of Topsham where the *ealdan herpath* has been identified as the Roman road moving south east from Exeter.[184] Also, the Seaton bounds have a *herepath* which was a section of Roman road between Sidford and Colyford.[185] Furthermore a *herepath* in the Ottery St Mary S 271 charter may be on the line of a Roman road. Hooke believed that it was either the Roman road between Exeter and Honiton or a road perpendicular to this passing Gosford Farm.[186] If this was the Roman road, it was also referred to as a *stræt* in the S 1033 Ottery St Mary bounds. This group of examples is interesting and strengthens Gelling's assertion that *herepath* was the common word for important roads in the south west.[187] On the other hand, the Topsham and Seaton *herepaths* may have been so called because they were perceived differently by those recording the bounds. Unfortunately, the charters provide no evidence for what the differences may have been between the Roman roads called *herepath* and those called *stræt*.

It should be noted that in the Shaftesbury regional study, several examples were found of the boundaries crossing over pre-historic ridgeways or Roman roads without mentioning them. In cases such as Tarrant Hinton and Winterbourne Tomson where Roman roads are silently crossed, or Teffont where the Harrow Way was not mentioned, if one were only to look at evidence internal to

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[182]*Hampshire*, p. 50.

[183]*Berkshire* II, p. 405.

[184] S 433. Hooke, *Devon and Cornwall*, p. 123.

[185]S 910. Hooke, *Devon and Cornwall*, p. 192.

[186]S 721. Hooke, *Devon and Cornwall*, p. 171.

[187]Gelling, *Place-Names in the Landscape*, p. 79.

the boundary clause, one might be tempted to argue against the continued use of these land routes. However, this would not be sound, as can be seen from the presence of the Roman road, not included in the Winterbourne Tomson bounds, forming part of the bounds in the neighbouring estate of Mapperton. Also, the Mapperton bounds crossed the Roman road twice but only mention it once. Thus the Roman roads and pre-historic ridgeways may not have been recorded where they were not needed to denote the boundary and the abandonment of earlier routes should not be seen as the reason for their omission. Furthermore, as was seen in Chandler's Ford and Frilford, place-name evidence cannot be used to argue against continuity as the lack of *stræt* place-names along a particular stretches of Roman roads does not prove that those sections were not used. Therefore, place-names and features in boundary clauses cannot be used to argue conclusively against the continued use of Roman roads.

The place-name evidence and charter evidence from Glastonbury, Shaftesbury and Devon prove that fourteen or fifteen different sections of Roman roads were used in the late Saxon period. These by no means cover the whole Roman network in the south west, but they provide enough coverage that, along with the overall distribution maps of *stræts*, Roman roads must be considered in any discussion of communication and travel in late Saxon Wessex.

The very presence of late Saxon sites along Roman roads may provide evidence of the continued use of these roads. In this light, settlement studies and archaeology both provide evidence for the continued use of Roman roads and make use of knowledge provided by charters and place-names. Work at Shapwick and the landscape surveys at Avebury and Yatesbury both took into account the Roman roads in the areas. Shapwick itself was sited along side a Roman road and the road linking Yatesbury and Avebury was possible joined to a Roman road.

Hierarchies

Through a discussion of the sources, locations, usability and continued use of sections of the communications network, it has become clear that there is a great difference between some of its

elements.

In his book *Interpreting the Landscape*, Michael Aston suggested examining the communications networks on four levels: national, provincial, regional and local.[188] The latter three of these are particularly relevant to this thesis. Aston defines 'provincial links' as those which covered several counties and we can equate this level with communications taking place across the whole of the kingdom of Wessex. Aston's regional level takes several parishes and the local level was within one territory. That roads were organised in different levels is logical and the same must be true for waterways. To understand how this hierarchical system of communications, roads and waterways must both be examined.

Rivers

As seen above, there is not yet a reliable map of the extent of navigability of rivers in late Saxon Wessex. Nonetheless, there are some generalizations which can be made about the hierarchy of waterways. The importance of the seas around Wessex cannot be under estimated. Some of the major rivers were, no doubt, navigable for large ships for at least part of their course. The upper regions of these rivers and other minor rivers and streams could have floated smaller boats and thus helped with smaller scale transport. Because of the relationship between boats and the hierarchy of waterways, it is necessary to examine the types of boats used in late Saxon Wessex.

Sean McGrail saw one type of British and Scandinavian ship building as part of the same tradition which he referred to as 'Viking'.[189] Jan Bill maintained, however, that the Viking ships were lighter, slimmer and faster than what the Anglo-Saxon were likely building at that time.[190] The Bayeux Tapestry depicts ships of this sort and there are numerous archaeological examples from Scandinavia (fig. 53). Viking ships were clinker built, had a steering oar on the starboard, had a single square sail and some had oars. Both warships and cargo ships were built in this

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[188]Aston, *Interpreting the Landscape*, p. 143-6.

[189]S. McGrail, *Ancient Boats* (Aylesbury, 1983) p. 46.

[190]J. Bill, 'Ships and Seamanship', *The Oxford Illustrated History of the Vikings*, ed., P. Sawyer (Oxford, 1997) p. 182.

style. Warships were long and comparatively narrow with sails and rowing positions along the length of both sides. The Gokstad ship, for example, 23.3 m long, 5.25 m wide and 1.95 m deep, while Skuldelev 5 was 17.4 m long, 2.6 m wide. Mercantile ships were wider and deeper, with a hold and a few rowing positions. Skuldelev 1 was 16.3 m long, 4.5 m wide and 2 .1 m deep with a draught of 1.25 m and could carry 24 tons of cargo. Skuldelev 3 was 13.8 m long, 3.7 m wide, and 1.6 m deep, with a draught of 0.84 m and it could carry 4.6 tons. Smaller boats in this style may have been ferries or fishing boats.[191]

No Viking-style ships dating to the late Saxon period have been found in England, but a mid-sized ship, known as the Graveney boat, was uncovered near Whitstable in Kent in 1970 and is related to this building tradition.[192] This ship would have been 14 m long by 3.9 m wide at the middle and was built in *c.* 930. It was clinker built, may have had a sail, and its keel shows evidence of having been repaired. It could carry seven tons and had a draught of 0.65m and could thus have carried heavy cargo in streams as well as at sea.[193]

Boats made by stretching skins over timber frames (curraches or coracles) were used in and around Wessex during the late Saxon period.[194] The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* records a journey made in 891 by three men from Ireland to Cornwall in *anum bate butan gerethrum* (a boat without oars), *geworht of thriddan healfre hyde* (made of two and a half hides).[195] Using a skin boat for that journey is not in itself remarkable as such boats are found in documentary sources throughout this period, such as 'The voyage of St Brendan' which describes the saint building and sailing the

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[191]Bill, 'Ships and Seamanship', p. 188-93; McGrail, *Ancient Boats*, p. 46-8; E. Roesdahl, *The Vikings*, trans., S. M. Margeson and K. Williams (London, 1987) p. 83-92.

[192]V. Fenwick, ed., *The Graveney Boat: a Tenth Century Find from Kent*, British Archaeological Reports 53 (1978); McGrail, *Ancient Boats*, p. 49-50.

[193]Fenwick, *Graveney Boat*, p. 249-54.

[194]McGrail, *Ancient Boats*, p. 35.

[195]*ASC* s.a. 891; Plummer, ed., 'Parker Ms', *Saxon Chronicles*, p. 82.

vessel.[196] Moreover, re-constructions of such boats show that they are seaworthy.[197]

Logboats were once thought to be prehistoric, but radiocarbon and dendrochronological dating of archaeological finds shows that they were in use from the Bronze Age until modern times.[198] However, many still remain undated. Logboats were made from hollowed whole or half trunks, usually of oak, and some were expanded or extended with boards. Examples from the early medieval Britain include five from Warrington (Lancashire), one from Barton (Lancashire), one from Brecon (Powys), and Clapton (Greater London).[199] Finds of logboats have averaged 2.75 to 4.65 m (9 - 14¾ ft) long.[200] They could have been put to a multitude of uses, but with range of watercraft available to the Anglo-Saxons it is likely that logboats were primarily used for travelling short distances. Their main uses may have been fishing and ferrying, but they were likely also used in fowling, collecting canes and reeds, and carrying goods and animals.[201] McGrail has suggested that logboats in our period were invaluable on inland waterways and lakes.[202]

Many of these boats had comparatively small draughts and thus could have been used in fairly shallow waters. They did not require deep harbours and elaborate docks, but could have landed on beaches or at banks or could have been moored in shallow water.[203] However, McGrail has suggested that with the increased urbanisation and consumerism, larger sea-going ships were built to deal with greater demand for goods from the tenth or eleventh

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[196] S. Keynes and M. Lapidge, eds, *Alfred the Great: Asser's Life of King Alfred and other Contemporary Sources* (Harmondsworth, 1983) p. 282, fn 12; McGrail, *Ancient Boats*, p. 35; H. D. Farmer and J. F. Webb, eds., 'The Voyage of St Brendan', *The Age of Bede* (London, 1965) p. 236 on.

[197] McGrail, *Ancient Boats*, p. 35-6.

[198] S. McGrail, *Logboats of England and Wales*. BAR 51, pt 1 & 2 (1978) p. 109; McGrail, *Ancient Boats*, p. 38-9.

[199] McGrail, *Logboats*, p. vii, 157-9, 233-6, 288-96; Richards, *Viking Age England*, p. 90.

[200] Richards, *Viking Age England*, p. 90-1.

[201] McGrail, *Logboats*, p. 88-9; Richards, *Viking Age England*, p. 90.

[202] McGrail, *Logboats*, p. 89.

[203] Fenwick, p. 181-3; McGrail, *Logboats*, p. 89-90; McGrail, *Ancient Boats*, p. 57.

century.[204] Larger ships with greater draughts would have needed deeper waters and more sophisticated docks and would not have been able to penetrate as far inland.

Roads

Michael Costen suggested three general levels of roads existing in late Saxon Wessex: long distance routes between the most important sites, more localised routes between central places, and the very local routes within one "central-place territory".[205] These can be seen in the documentary evidence.

The law codes give an indication of differing status of land-routes by singling out special roads. 'Æthelred IV', for example, set out penalties for those who committed murder *in via regia*, that is on the king's highway.[206] The laws of William stated that roads of this status were Watling Street, Ermine Street, the Foss Way and Icknield Way.[207] The *Leges Henrici Primi* state that "*[o]mines herestrete omnino regis sunt* ".[208] Later in the law code, there are several references to the *via regis*, defined as a road " . . . which is always open, which no one can divert with walls he has erected, which leads into a city or fortress or castle or royal town."[209] These two definitions are significant to our understanding of the most important roads in the kingdom. The second, shows the ties between significant sites and routes. It is a more inclusive definition that the list in the laws of William. In the first, I would suggest that the use of an Old English term in a clause setting out royal control over roads is significant and may point to older prerogatives. The word *herestrete* is in itself interesting in

[204]McGrail, *Ancient Boats*, p. 57.

[205]Costen, 'Settlement in Wessex in the Tenth Century: The Charter Evidence', p. 105.

[206]Robertson, *Laws*, 'IV Æthelred', 4, p. 74-5.

[207]'William' 26; Pelteret, 'Roads of Anglo-Saxon England', p. 156.

[208]"All highways are completely the concern of the king. . .". Downer, *Leges Henrici Primi*, c. 10. 2, p. 108-9.

[209]"*Et via regia dicitur que semper aperta est, quam nemo conclaudere potest vel auertere cum m[ur]is suis, que ducit in ciuitatem vel burgum vel castrum vel portum regium.*" Downer, *Leges Henrici Primi*, 80, 3a, p. 248-9.

that the boundary clauses more commonly use either *stræt* or *herepath*.

As seen above, the very words used in charter boundary clauses and place-names for the roads and water crossing give an indication of the status of the route. *Herepaths* and *stræts* were high status, and long distance roads, whereas *paths* and *lanes* were smaller, more local routes. The qualifying words applied routeway terms, both in the boundary clauses and in the place-names, can help determine into which level to put individual examples of some of the more general terms, particularly *weg* and *ford*. In their discussion of *ford* Gelling and Cole pointed out that it is second most common "topographical generic in English place-names" and that the vast majority of these refer to crossings of local significance, facilitating travel between nearby settlements.[210] Many of the qualifiers used with *fords* provide vital information about their use, the landscape through which they pass and therefore about their significance.

Many of the West Saxon routeways elements, especially water crossings, were associated with both domesticated and wild animals. The domesticated animals include horses, oxen and sheep. The combination of horse or oxen with bridge or ford likely indicated a crossing point often used by these animals. A sheep ford could either have been one used frequently by a shepherd driving his sheep or it may have been located in a field where sheep normally were grazing. The combination of fish, birds, and insects with fords and bridges show that the Anglo-Saxons who described the boundaries and coined names associated those animals with the routeway features. Thus Beaford indicates a ford in an area where gadflies were prevalent[211] and Blandford Forum was a ford where gudgeon were found.[212] Likewise, the *hrucgan cumbes ford* in the Crediton bounds indicates that ford was known by its location in the woodcock's coomb.[213] Similarly, the Anglo-Saxons noted that deer frequented the area in

[210]Gelling and Cole, *The Landscape of Place-Names*, p. 71.

[211]*Devon I*, p. 86.

[212]*Dorset II*, p. 87-88.

[213]S 255. See also Hooke, *Devon and Cornwall*, p. 86.

Peadingtun (near Ashburton, Devon) where there is recorded a *deor ford(a)* .[214]

Trees and bushes were also used in distinguishing crossing points. There were alder fords, oak fords, orchard fords, willow fords, and so on. The use of these specific descriptive words shows the importance of woodland terminology to the Anglo-Saxons. It helps create a image both of the landscape surrounding that area of the communications network as rustic and of the routes passing through cultivated and uncultivated wooded areas.

The connection between the natural landscape and the terms associated with routeway features can also be seen when colours have been associated with routeway features, but unlike the flora and fauna, these are more often found in combination with roads than with crossing points. For example, Whiteway Barton, Devon was Witeweia in 1086.[215] This place got is name by being next to a way which was white in apprearance due to white clay in the local soil.[216] Also in Devon is Rudway, known as Radewei in 1086, and this area has deep red soil.[217]

While terms such as these provide insight into the landscape through which the roads passed, they also help to suggest how the roads might fit into a hierarchy. Many of them, especially those associated with farming activities likely were routes of minor significance. However, when a routeway term is attached to a word for a settlement or place of habitation, one can determine what the people who composed the bounds thought was the focal point of the road and whether the road had local or regional significance. A *stoc wey* or farm way, as found at Henstridge would be a very local route.[218] The *wicweie* at Winterbourne Tomson translates as 'farm way' and would likewise have been a local route.[219] However, at Tarrant Hinton, since the word *wic* modified the term *herepathes,* its interpretation is more

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[214]S 1547.

[215]*Devon II*, p. 479.

[216]*Ibid.*

[217]*Ibid.*, p. 445.

[218]S 570. Kelly #18, p. 73.

[219]S 485. Kemble 392, vol. 2, p. 239-40 and vol. 3, p. 417.

difficult.[220] The *wic* should be a place of local significance, however, a *herepath* is generally considered to be a highway of greater importance. Consequently, this route was a through-road which, at Tarrant Hinton, was headed towards a local farm or dwelling.

The Anglo-Saxons also saw ecclesiastic sites as the focus of some routes. For example, in Meavy, Devon, a charter boundary clause records a *cyric weg*.[221] Church is compounded with ford in the place-name Charford, also in Devon, which was *cyricforda* in c. 970 and *Chereforda* in 1086, meaning 'church ford'.[222] These were very likely local churches and the routes named for them would thus have been of local signifiicance.

The importance of mills and their access to the communications network is in evidence as there are several place-names using the terms mill and ford. For example: Milford in Hartland Hundred (Devon) was *Meleforda* in 1086;[223] Milford in Lifton Hundred (Devon) was *Melefort* in 1086;[224] Milford-on-Sea (Hampshire) was *Melleford* in 1086;[225] and Milford (Wiltshire) was, similarly, *Meleford* in 1086. The association of mills and fords is logical as both are riverine and roads needed to reach the mills.

The connections found between routeways features of different status can show potential traffic flow. For example, a mill in the Sixpenny Handley bounds is located where the bounds leave a *weg*. This shows us the first stage of the mill's access to trade routes (fig. 48). Furthermore, this way was connected to a *herepath* found in the Tarrant Hinton bounds (fig. 49). Moreover, that *herepath* was on the line of the Salisbury to Blanford Forum road and if the *herepath* is extended beyond the recorded section, it would meet two Roman roads. This clearly shows the mill's access to land routes of significant proportions. This example also shows that while Costen's levels may indicated roads of

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[220]S 429. Kelly #9, p. 35-37.

[221]S 963. See Hooke, *Devon and Cornwall*, p. 197, 199.

[222]*Devon* I, p. 290.

[223]*Devon* I, p. 75.

[224]*Devon* I, p. 208.

[225]*Hampshire*, p. 117.

varying significance, the communications network was a web of routes from all levels.

Conclusion

The communications network was made up of roads, tracks, rivers and seaways of varying usability. Some lines of communications used in the late Saxon period dated back to the Roman and prehistoric periods. The upkeep of key parts of the system were clearly regulated by central authority, whereas building and repairs on minor routes were undertaken at the initiative of those using them. The status of sections of the network depended on their local, regional, and 'provincial' significance and how they were used will be expanded upon in the next chapter.

Chapter 5

The Journeys

The previous chapters have set out to uncover the network used for travel and communications in late Saxon Wessex by looking at factors in the physical layout of this system. This chapter will discuss evidence, mostly documentary, for the journeys which took place and the people who made them. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, saints lives and other historical narratives tell of journeys which took place and how they were made. Legislation, religious rules and homilies contained guidelines for people who were using the system and people who came into contact with them. Charters record gatherings of people and prerogatives relating to travel. Wills, charms and poetry show the concerns of travellers. Through an examination of these and other sources, it will be shown that the system of journeying was complex and multi-layered, with different forces shaping different aspects of it.

The communications network in late Saxon Wessex was in constant use as traders, raiders, royalty and peasantry crisscrossed the kingdom in the course of their daily business. There were men, women and children making journeys of greatly varying lengths with very different goals, obstacles, and support. The groups of travellers can be divided into four main categories: those involved in royal itineration, the military, those making trips for religious reasons and those who made trips while working. As there are many differences between those travelling in groups and those travelling alone, the plight of the individual traveller also deserves special attention.

Each of these groups and individual travellers all faced some of the same obstacles. All of those taking a trip of any length had to have a method of transportation, be it boat, horse, cart, or foot. Not all would have had a choice in the matter, but decisions had to be made about when a journey would take place, that is during what month and week, on what day, and at what time. The weather had to be taken into consideration and storms could add significant danger to journeys. Anyone who was to be gone for more than a few hours had to make provision for food and drink or go hungry. Furthermore, anyone away overnight had to have a place to sleep. A route had to be chosen and the

travellers had find their way to their destinations. Travellers also had to be concerned with how they would be treated by the people they would meet along the way, as some risked being robbed or physically attacked on journeys. How travellers dealt with these factors depended on the size of the group with which they were travelling, the status of that group, and their own personal status. Through an examination of how the different types of travellers handled these issues, the system of travel in late Saxon Wessex can be revealed.

Royal Itineration

The West Saxon royal court was itinerant and there is fuller information relating to its movements than there is for any other types of travel. The mechanics and customs of royal itineration will serve as a model for Anglo-Saxon travel and the other types of travel will be examined in relation to it. However, while many of the issues covered here are relevant to other groups of travellers, a few of them are specific to royal itineration.

Those involved in Royal Itineration

Royal itineration involved much more than just the movements of the kings. Indeed a large and diverse group of people participated. The composition of this group varied considerably from time to time, with the numbers swelling when there was a great council meeting. The king, his family, trusted friends and advisors formed the core of this group. These people had many followers, servants, and animals to serve their wants and needs. Other leading men, both ecclesiastic and secular, joined them for business meetings and social gatherings, greatly increasing the size of the court. All these people in turn would have brought others with them for their own comfort and prestige.

The royal family, the *witan*, their families, entourages, servants, slaves and animals were all part of this type of travel. It also should be noted that there were times when there was more than one royal household in that the king did not always have his wife, mother, or children with him. The exact composition of the Anglo-Saxon royal court at any given time is not known due to a lack of surviving detailed information.

Nonetheless there are some very important sources which I will survey to build a picture of the royal court.

In his life of King Alfred, written in 893, Asser, who was himself an important member of the royal court, recorded how it was made up. His account states that the king's followers were divided into three groups which would rotate their service monthly, so that a man would be with the court for one month and at his home for the next two.[1] This meant that there was always a group of men with the king, but that they all were also able to be on their own estates, looking after their own affairs on a regular basis. However, while Asser stated how men were divided for service at the royal court, he did not indicate who was at court when. This information can be found in charters. Accordingly, charters may provide the best information about the composition of the royal court.

Before looking at West Saxon charters, it may be useful to examine the results of work done by Bernard Reilly on late eleventh century Léon-Castilla. Reilly used witness lists and the locations at which charters were signed to determine who was with King Alfonso VI in the period from January to late May 1075.[2] Reilly traced the court as it travelled 1363 kilometres from Léon or its environs to Santiago de Compostela, to Ovedio in Asturias and then back to Léon from where they went to Burgos in Castilla and finally to Sahagun. Reilly attempted to discover just how many people would have been travelling with Alfonso VI. He began by looking at the charter lists to see which important people were with the king. Reilly determined that Alfonso was always accompanied by at least one of his two sisters, two bishops, the *major domo*, the *alférez*, a royal notary, and one count.[3] In addition, he then suggested that there would also have been a chaplain, a doctor, a bard, a jester, a falconer, a master of hounds, two squires, and three body servants for the king. He also enumerated other necessary people, such as: two maids and two servants for the king's sister; one cleric, one groom and two servants for each bishop; one squire and two servant for each of the *major domo* and the *alférez*; a clerk for the notary; two

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[1]Keynes and Lapidge,'Asser's Life of King Alfred', ch. 100, p. 106.

[2]Reilly, *The Kingdom of Léon-Castilla*, p. 148-149.

[3]*Ibid*, p. 150-151.

servants and two squires for the count; a military escort estimated at 120 men; and general support personnel, such as cooks, cart drivers, herders and smiths.[4] By the end, Reilly estimated that the court would have consisted of 226 people, 51 carts and more than 200 animals.[5] Since these numbers are based largely on guess-work and assumptions, the exact figures should not be regarded as established fact. Nonetheless, what Reilly has demonstrated is that the number of people travelling with the king of Léon-Castilla on a regular basis was considerable, numbering in the hundreds.

The charters of Anglo-Saxon England do not provide enough information to support conclusions as precise as Reilly's. However, witness lists of authentic Anglo-Saxon charters can be used to re-construct attendance at the royal court because, as Simon Keynes demonstrated, the compilation of these lists indicate that they were written by scribes who were at the meetings and recorded actual attendance.[6] Therefore, although the witness lists do not include all those in attendance a council meeting, the people whom they do include were there. Hence, they give a subset of those in the king's retinue.

Keynes has looked in detail at witness lists from the period and through his work, the minimum attendance at the court at the few well documented council meetings can be determined. For example, the charters of King Æthelred II (978-1016) can provided insight into the composition of the royal court. There are more than one hundred surviving charters of King Æthelred with witness lists. Average sizes of the lists can be determined using the tables created by Keynes in his *The Diplomas of Æthelred the Unready*. The witnesses included queens, archbishops, bishops, abbots, æthelings, ealdormen and *ministri* or thegns. The average numbers of witnesses in the surviving Æthelred charters are in the high twenties and low thirties with some having less than ten, others more than fifty, and with one even having more than eighty.[7] From these numbers, it can be assumed that there was

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[4]*Ibid*, p. 150-155.

[5]*Ibid*, p. 155.

[6]Keynes, *Diplomas*, p. 130-1.

[7]Numbers are based on the Tables in: Keynes, *Diplomas*.

considerable variation in the numbers of important men attending court. It is nonetheless clear that a normal meeting would include about thirty men of high status.

In order to better understand the composition of the court, we will look at two examples in detail. A charter of 997, in which Æthelred granted land at Downton and Ebbesborne (Wiltshire) to Old Minster, was issued at Wantage and had 64 names in its witness list, including the following: the king, the king's mother, Ælfthryth, and five sons of the king; the archbishops of Canterbury and York, thirteen other bishops and fourteen abbots; the ealdormen Æthelweard of the Western Provinces, Ælfric of Hampshire, Ælfhelm of Northumbria, Leofsige of Essex and Leofwine of the provinces of the Hwicce; and finally, twenty three thegns.[8] This witness list shows the royal family, the great ecclesiastics and the secular leaders coming together in large numbers. It is interesting to compare these numbers with the estimates given by Reilly. As we have seen, he suggested that the king of Léon-Castilla travelled with eight or nine high status individuals, a retinue of more than 220 people and over 200 animals.[9] Æthelred's gathering at Wantage involved eight times as many high status people than were normally with the king of Léon-Castilla. Even if Æthelred did not have a military escort comparable to this, the servants and support staff needed to look after and entertain Æthelred and companions must have numbered in the hundreds. While a handful of them may have been from Wantage itself, the vast majority of them would have travelled there as part of a royal, ecclesiastical or noble retinue. Thus we must imagine that when this meeting took place, Wantage was 'invaded' by hundreds of people of varying status, in different groups from numerous directions.

Royal itineration did not always involve such large numbers. A comparatively short witness list, such as that from a 1009 charter in which Æthelred granted land at Hamp (Somerset) to Athelney Abbey, may provide evidence for a smaller meeting.[10] It names twenty men including the king, three of his sons, seven bishops, three abbots, three ealdormen and three thegns. Again,

[8]S 981; Keynes, *Atlas of Attestations*.

[9]Reilly, p. 155.

[10]S 921.

these men would have had followers and servants with them, making the total number of people involved much larger than the twenty in the charter.

Witness lists are not the only surviving sources which can provide evidence about the numbers involved in royal itineration. Wulfstan of Winchester's late tenth-century life of Saint Æthelwold (d. 984) provides a description of a great gathering at which King Æthelred was in attendance. As this ceremony involved King Æthelred, it needs to be considered in the light of royal itineration. Wulfstan wrote that the following people were present at the rededication of the Old Minster, Winchester , on October 20, 980: King Æthelred, nine bishops (including St Dunstan and St Æthelwold), virtually all of the ealdormen, abbots, thegns, and leading nobles from all of England.[11] However, the actual number of people who were visiting Winchester at that time must have been much larger than this list of men, as many would have brought wives, sons, or daughters and most would have had servants. Moreover, it is impossible to determine whether men and women of the lower classes travelled from a distance to attend such an important ceremony and went unrecorded. Some of the people attending the ceremony would have arrived with the king and others may have gone to it because they knew that the king was going to be there. It is interesting to wonder how the presence of the king affected the attendance of the rededication and how many of the people there can be considered to have been taking part in royal itineration.

Not all of the people involved in royal itineration actually travelled from place to place with the king. While some would have accompanied him during his journeys, others would have joined the itinerant court for particular meetings. This applies to the core group of high status men and women, as well as to those of lower social standing. In most cases it cannot be known whether the nobles and their servants arrived independently at a meeting. For example, when the Archbishop of York appears in a witness list, all that can be known for sure is that he was with the king for the meeting. Whether he travelled from York to a southern meeting cannot be determined. Likewise, an ealdorman,

[11]M. Lapidge and M. Winterbottom, *Wulfstan of Winchester: The Life of St. Æthelwold* (Oxford, 1991) p. 61.

thegn or abbot could have travelled with the king from his previous location or from one of their own estates. Meetings of all sizes must have involved people doing both. We can imagine the king with his retinue arriving at a particular place and being joined by others with their retinues. Many of those travelling to court would have done so on a regular basis, but some would only have done so a few times (or even just once) during their lives. These men went to see the king for particular items of business.

There were also people being sent from the king and court on the business of the court. Riding for the king was an important duty in late Saxon Wessex and this can be seen in a compilation on status from 1002-1023. This text says that a thegn could advance if, among other criteria, he "had thrice gone on his [lord's] errand to the king.[12] The king valued those who rode on his behalf.

The royal court, as the moving centre of the kingdom, was a focal point of the system of travel and communications. Many people travelled to and from the court while others travelled with it. The numbers involved varied considerably from time to time. The king always had a group of followers with him and a large number of others joined them for special events and important meetings. The composition of this group of travellers was as fluid and changeable as was its destination.

Seasonal Variation

An issue of importance to our understanding of Anglo-Saxon travel is seasonal variation. There are two main considerations. First, how did the seasonal weather patterns effect the Anglo-Saxons' abilities to travel and second how did the Christian calendar influence the timing of journeys? In this section, these will be treated in turn through an examination of the movements of the royal court.

The seasons and forces of nature had a great effect on the travellers of late Saxon Wessex as they faced all types of weather, from dry and hot to wet and cold. Although travelling on hot dusty roads and tracks must have been uncomfortable, as

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[12] *EHD I*, #51, 3 , p. 468. ". . . *thriwa mid his ærendan gefore cynge*". Liebermann, I, p. 456. See also: Campbell, 'Some Agents and Agencies of the Late Anglo-Saxon State', p. 213.

long as there was enough water for people and their animals to drink, this provided no danger. Storms and bad weather, however, made travelling very uncomfortable and even dangerous. Flooded roads, storms at sea, poor visibility, strong winds and extreme cold could endanger any travelling party. It has often been assumed that travel in medieval England was not undertaken in the winter because of the poor conditions. Was this really the case?

Before looking at how the weather influenced the royal court's pattern of movement, it is necessary to take a brief look at how the routes may have been altered. Indeed, the navigability of some rivers must have improved with the wetter winter months, while others may have swelled to the point of being dangerous. Crossing waterways could make land travel difficult. Ferries and bridges were much rarer than fords, but they would have been safer. A ford across a large river must often have been precarious, but even fording smaller rivers and stream may have become dangerous during rainy periods when they were swollen and running more swiftly. There is evidence to suggest that the land routes used may also have changed from season to season. Boundary clauses and place-names used contain indications of seasonal routes.[13] For example, as was discussed in chapter 4, Somerford Keynes (Wiltshire) was *Sumerford* in 683 and 931. Similarly, Great and Little Somerford, Wiltshire was *Sumerford* in 937, *Somerford* in 956 and *Somreford* and *Sumreford* both in 1086.[14] These two sets of place-names mean "ford usable in the summer months" and thus indicate a place which was a reliable part of the communications network only in the drier summer months.[15] The Mapperton boundary clause contained a *winterburne ford*.[16] This was a ford across a stream that flowed during the winter. In other seasons, this fording-site may not have been needed as with less water, the stream may not have been an obstacle. Thus some of the routes used by travellers changed throughout the year, with the seasons and the weather, but this does not show that travel could not have taken place. However,

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[13]For detailed description of the boundary clause and place-name sample see Chapter 4 and Appendix A.

[14]*Wiltshire*, p. 46, 73.

[15]*Wiltshire*, p. 46, 73.

[16]S 490.

more concrete insights into seasonal variation can be gleaned from an examination of the movements of the royal court.

Seasonal variation in travel has been studied in great detail for late medieval England by B. P. Hindle. He looked at the movements of the kings John, Henry III, Edward I, and Edward II. He graphed the number of movements they made each month and he found that John travelled the least in June and October and moved the most in February, March, July and August. Henry III travelled least in February, April and May, preferring to be on the move between August and January. Edward I rarely travelled in November and travelled the most in August and September. Finally, Edward II does not seem to have had a least favourite month for travelling, but the evidence indicates that he moved more frequently between June and October than between November and May. Overall Hindle concluded that royal itineration was not greatly hindered by seasonal weather patterns and that it did, in fact, take place throughout the year in late medieval England. Furthermore, he believed that as royal itineration had many properties in common with other types of traffic, others were also travelling throughout the year.[17]

Hindle's conclusions may provide a guide for the Anglo-Saxonist, but they, obviously, should not be transferred without question. Also, his methods cannot be adopted wholesale as the evidence from the Anglo-Saxon period does not survive in a similar level of detail. Nonetheless, his work should be borne in mind when studying seasonal variation in late Saxon Wessex. Furthermore, an examination of the movements of the West Saxon royal court does provide the best evidence for seasonal patterns in Anglo-Saxon travel. Because England was a Christian nation and because royal itineration had to include practical considerations, it provides an excellent opportunity to see how both the weather and the Christian calendar affected travel.

The ground-work for this study has been carried out by David Hill. He mapped the Anglo-Saxon kings' movements, showing the places where the monarchs are known to have visited in particular years and, where possible, on particular days.[18] The information on which Hill's maps are based is far from complete. For

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[17]Hindle, 'Seasonal Variation', p. 172-7.

[18]Hill, *Atlas*, p. 83, 85-91, p. 94.

example, it is known where King Æthelstan was on twenty or twenty one different days, but these dates are distributed over the whole course of his fourteen year reign (fig. 55). The largest number in one year is four in 934 when he was in Winchester on May 28, Nottingham on June 7, Buckingham on September 12, and in Frome on December 16. There was also a military expedition to Scotland that year. During the course of that expedition he went to Chester le Street, Ripon and Beverley.

Another year for which similar detail is available is 1065 (including January 1066) when there are five known dates and locations for the itinerary of Edward the Confessor (fig. 56). On May 4, he was in Windsor. That summer, he was in Wilton and on October 25 he was in Britford. On the 28th of December he was in Westminster and he died on January 5, 1066 in London. While these dates and places show that the courts of Æthelstan and Edward did move, there are too many gaps to create a solid itinerary or to tell exactly when the court travelled to and from these places. Also, we cannot know how many times the court moved between, for example, December 16, 933 and May 28, 934 or between October 25 and December 28, 1065. Where the kings were between these dates, when they changed location and how many different places they visited cannot even be guessed. However, there are patterns which can be reconstructed.

The known dates and locations of royal itineration are most often found in charters and in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* and tend to reflect council meetings and important gatherings. There were many gatherings at Easter and in the spring and summer. There were also a number of dates and places recorded for the Christmas season. The periods with fewer known dates tend to be between Christmas and Easter and in October. Simon Keynes, in a very detailed study of the charter evidence, determined that gatherings were normally held in January, February and November with two more in the spring and summer months.[19] These meetings necessarily involved people making journeys of various lengths. Even if the king and his household were already at a particular location, the other people participating in the meetings had to travel to the site. As these meetings took place in all seasons they demonstrate that royal itineration was not prevented by

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[19]Keynes, *Diplomas*, p. 62.

yearly weather patterns and that people could undertake the journeys they needed to make despite adverse weather.

Having determined that it was possible for royal itineration to take place in all seasons, it is time to see how the Christian calendar affected it. Martin Biddle has made a study of the location of the courts at the three Christian festivals of Easter, Whitsun, and Christmas from the tenth to the twelfth centuries.[20] He set out to discover whether the *Chronicle* entry for 1086 was accurate. It recorded that William the Conqueror had crown-wearing ceremonies, when he was in England, at Easter in Winchester, at Whitsuntide in Westminster and at Christmas in Gloucester.[21] Biddle has compiled information about where kings actually celebrated these feasts and has concluded that it was not as regular as the Chronicler suggested, but that the Normans tended to use the same set of places: Winchester, Gloucester and Westminster, with Windsor also being used frequently.[22]

Biddle looked at the years from 900 to 1066 to see whether or not celebrating these festivals in those locations was a tradition inherited by the Normans from the late Saxon kings. The surviving evidence for these years only indicates where the kings were on the feast days 33, or possibly 39, times. Biddle showed that the evidence suggests that the system used by the Normans may have been in use during, but not before, the reign of Edward the Confessor (1042-66). Hare, moreover, suggested that regular festival courts were held in Wessex, based on continental patterns, from the reign of Ecgberht (802-39).[23] Since the evidence is very sparse before the reign of Edward the Confessor, there is no discernable pattern until his reign. The information from his reign indicates that there are similarities between his movements and the trends found in early Norman England. It is known that Edward the Confessor spent three Whitsun festivals in Windsor or London/Westminster, three Christmases in Gloucester or Westminster, and two Easters in Winchester. Deviation from this

[20]Biddle, 'Seasonal Festivals and Residence', p. 51-72. For more on crown-wearing and Gloucester as a site for royal festivals, see: M. Hare, 'Kings, Crowns and Festivals: the Origins of Gloucester as a Royal Ceremonial Centre', *Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society* 115 (1997) p. 41-78.

[21]*ASC* s.a. 1086.

[22]Biddle, 'Seasonal Festivals and Residence', p. 51-9.

[23]Hare, 'Kings, Crowns, and Festivals', p. 46-7.

'pattern' included two Easters spent in Gloucester and one in Westminster, with one Christmas in Winchester.[24] These, interestingly, still used the same set of places, even if the feasts were different. Overall, these studies indicate that during the late Saxon period, there was a development which saw the royal court being at particular places for the major religious festivals. Thus royal itineration was becoming more regularly connected with certain places at certain times in the Christian calendar.

There can be little doubt that the nature of travel varied throughout the course of the year. Our information is too sparse to determine whether royal itineration was spread out relatively evenly but it is clear that the court did travel in all seasons. Nonetheless it must be remembered that the weather, even if it did not prevent the court from moving for weeks or months at a time, must have affected the comfort of those on the move. The Christian calendar also influenced the movements of the court. Early in the Late Saxon period, there were often assemblies at various locations on important days in the Christian Calendar. By the end of the Saxon period, the locations at which Easter, Whitsun and Christmas were celebrated became more regular, but still required movement of the court to those places. Overall, the image we are creating of royal itineration must include movements in all seasons.

Logistics

In order for such a large and wide-ranging group, or groups, of travellers to have been comfortable while travelling, there were a number of logistical problems which had to be considered. Everyone needed food, drink and shelter. People and their possessions needed transportation and the routes to their destinations had to be known. The way the king and his household, as well as those travelling independently to the royal court, dealt with issues will be examined to see if there was a system in place which facilitated their journeys.

We will begin by looking at the acquisition of food and shelter, two things which were of great concern to all travellers who were journeying over long distances. Although people may

[24]Biddle, 'Seasonal Festivals and Residence', p. 56, 69, Appendix D.

have been able to carry food for the beginnings of their journeys, as time passed, they would have needed to obtain more food, for both themselves and their animals. Likewise any traveller who was away from home overnight had to find shelter and how this was done depended greatly on the social status of the individual and of the group to which he or she was attached. The nobles travelling with the royal court, for example, had different expectations from tradesmen. For the royal court, which was always on the move, these concerns had to be dealt with constantly. The logistical problems of feeding and housing the large numbers of people involved in royal itineration must have been great. The king and his personal retinue travelled together using royal resources, whereas others, such as nobles and bishops, used their own when they travelled to and from the royal court.

The royal family and the nobles who held many estates were able to stay at their own residences while travelling in late Saxon Wessex. In his article on the royal tun, Sawyer suggested about seventy-five places which were royal estates in Wessex, out of a total of over one hundred and fifty in England.[25] Therefore, roughly half of them were in Wessex. These are the main places where the royal court is known to have stayed during the Anglo-Saxon period. The West Saxon royal house usually travelled within Wessex and in the south-east. Edward the Confessor, however, spent more time in London and Gloucester.

Charles-Edwards saw itineration as an economic necessity for early medieval kingship as a large group could not stay in one place for long without a long-distance food trade. He also suggested that it was easier to move the group than the supplies they needed.[26] Simply put, the royal court had to travel from place to places in order to feed itself. This is where the royal estates and, in particular, the burden of the *feorm* of one night come into play. The *feorm* of one night was a duty exacted from some estates and it involved supplying enough provisions to last

[25]Sawyer, 'The Royal Tun in Pre-Conquest England', p. 273-298.

[26]Charles-Edwards, p. 28.

the court for twenty-four hours.[27]

Pauline Stafford has made a detailed study of the *feorm* of one night and food renders owed to King Edward the Confessor.[28] She summarized the payments of the *feorm* as recorded in Domesday. The *feorm* of one night was neatly organised in Wiltshire, Somerset and Dorset. In Wiltshire, full *feorms* and fractions of them were given to vast, single manors, whereas in Dorset and Somerset groups of manors together provided the *feorm*. She also pointed out that the Domesday evidence shows other areas of southern England were less methodically organised. The Exeter Domesday recorded that estates in Devon had previously paid the *feorm* but they no longer did so by 1086. Estates in Sussex owed three night's *feorm* and Surrey may have paid in the past. There is no evidence that Berkshire or Oxfordshire manors paid the *feorm* , but as Stafford pointed out, this may have been due to choices made by the compilers of the *Domesday* records for those counties. As in Devon, Shropshire had owed *feorm* in the past. Gloucestershire had places which owed goods in kind and these may have been for a shire or manor-wide *feorm*. There were more payments in kind north of the Thames, in counties such as Bedfordshire and Northamptonshire. Royal manors in eastern England, like those in the neatly organised Cambridgeshire and less well organised Norfolk and Suffolk, also paid a *feorm*. Warwickshire's burdens changed between 1066 and 1086. Overall, the shires of western Wessex show the best evidence for strongly organised payments of the *feorm*. In Dorset, Somerset and Wiltshire nearly all the royal holdings were responsible, or partly responsible, for the *feorm* of one night. Stafford suggested that this shows the estates had recently been reorganised. She suggested that Hampshire had been organised for *feorm* payments previously, but that by 1066, the system there was crumbling. Devon and Shropshire both show that places which had paid the *feorm* earlier in the eleventh century were no longer doing so. Gloucestershire's southern regions were more like Wiltshire and Somerset, its neighbouring counties. The reasons

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[27]P. Stafford, 'The "Farm of One Night" and the Organization of King Edward's Estates in Domesday', *Economic History Review*, Second Series (1980) p. 491.

[28]*Ibid.*, p. 491-502.

for the differences in what estates in different counties owed in term of the *feorm* of one night could be due to ancient rights, regional factors or royal control.[29]

As the royal court itinerated more often in Wessex, it is particularly interesting that the Domesday evidence suggests a highly organised system in three of its shires and a decaying system in two (with no evidence for Berkshire, we cannot speculate on what was going on there). These two facts must be linked. The kings itinerated more often where they were owed the *feorm* and they were owed the *feorm* in the areas they visited most often.

That the *feorm* affected where the royal court went is clearly illustrated in the *Chronicle*. It records that King Æthelred went "across the Thames, into Shropshire, and received there his food-rents in the Christmas season."[30] Interestingly, as Stafford pointed out, *Domesday Book* recorded that three manors in Shropshire, namely Chirbury, Maesbury and Whittington, had owed the *feorm* in the reign of Æthelred.[31] Perhaps it was the food on these three manors which drew Æthelred to Shropshire in 1006.

As mentioned above, nobles could also use their estates for food while travelling. Robin Fleming, when examining the holdings of the Godwines' and of King Edward the Confessor as they were recorded in the Domesday Book, pointed out that the Godwines, however, received twenty-two nights' *feorm* from their estates in Essex and Norfolk.[32] These estates had formerly been royal estates and Fleming suggested that estates like these were given by kings to help earls 'defray expenses' and to 'assure loyalty'.[33] In this manner, the monarchs may have been giving earls the provisioning framework they would have needed. It is also interesting to note that in the case of the Godwines, the kings alienated lands in areas where they tended to travel less frequently.

[29]*Ibid.*, p. 491-502.

[30]*ASC* s.a. 1006; *EHD I*, p. 241. "*Tha wæs se cyng ge wend ofer Temese into Scrobbesbyrig scire.⁊ nam thær his feorme in thare middewintres tide.*" Plummer, *Chronicles*, p. 137.

[31]Stafford, 'Farm of One Night', p. 494.

[32]Fleming, 'Domesday Estates of the King and the Godwines', p. 992-3.

[33]Fleming, 'Domesday Estates of the King and the Godwines', p. 998.

Some estates' burdens seem to be designed for helping their owners travel to and from court. Fleming suggested that members of the rural elite acquired properties in town partly to provide themselves with places to stay during their necessary journeys there.[34] Moreover, bishops and nobles who were headed to council meetings usually had to spend at the very least one night on the way. Many of them would have had arrangements by which they could have accommodation on their own estates on the way. An early ninth-century charter of Bishop Ealhmund of Winchester, records him granting an estate at Farnham (Surrey) to one Brihthelm in exchange for four properties in Wiltshire. However, the bishop was to have the right to two nights entertainment in Farnham each year.[35] Thus, as Farnham lies between Winchester and London, Bishop Ealhmund assured himself of being able to have two nights accommodation each year on his way between Winchester and London. Thus he was using prerogatives on estates in order to ensure easy shelter on his journeys.

The king would have had many servants travelling on his business and they could expect to be provided for while travelling because of their positions. They were under the protection of the kings and allowed to use parts of the system under the control of the kings. For example, in the charter by which King Edward the Elder granted to Winchester privileges for the monastery at Taunton (Somerset) there is a clause stating that Taunton had previously been obliged to provide the king with one night's entertainment, his falconers' with nine and to provide for eight dogs and their keeper.[36] Thus burdens other than the common three did involve providing accommodation for the king or people in his service, as well as his animals.

When not staying on their own estates, the king and his

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[34]R. Fleming, 'Rural Elites and Urban Communities in Late-Saxon England', *Past & Present* 141 (Nov 1993) p. 3-37.

[35]S 1263.

[36]S 373; H. P. R. Finberg, *The Early Charters of Wessex* (Leicester, 1964) #424. This charter may have been modified (Abrams, p. 86, Harmer, p. 524-5) and Finberg suggested that this clause in particular may be a later addition (p. 128), but as there are non-West Saxon charters which give exemptions for similar duties (i.e. S 186 and S 190) , this type of duty was certainly known in Anglo-Saxon England. The charter scholars have not suggested when the modifications may have been made, if indeed there were additions. Other similarities between the duties listed in this charter and known duties from the Anglo-Saxon period are discussed below.

household could stay at monasteries or the homes of noblemen. Often the sources are vague about the type of accommodation received in particular communities. The *Benedictine Rule* gives guidelines on how visitors are to be treated in monasteries. The monks were to greet their guests as they would have greeted Christ and they were to keep beds ready, yet they were also supposed to avoid contact with their guests.[37] Giving provisions and shelter to hungry and thirsty travellers could be a great burden for the monasteries, especially when the royal court was involved because of its large numbers and prestige. The king needed to be treated with respect and this would have necessarily included providing food and drink of high quality. In Wulfstan's *Life of St Æthelwold*, there is a miracle story connected with providing food and drink to the king and his followers. In this case, King Eadred (924-955) and a group of Northumbrians, presumably members of his court or household, stopped at Abingdon and they were given hospitality by the monastery. The miracle was that although the doors were shut, and the servants drew drinks all day, the containers never emptied.[38] Since a miracle was needed in order for there to be enough to satisfy the king and his companions, this story reveals that providing for the royal court could be an onerous responsibility.

Similarly, noblemen and women who hosted the itinerating court had to be concerned with the amount of supplies that were available for them. This is well illustrated by a passage in the *Life of St Dunstan*. It records an episode in which King Æthelstan (924-939) visited the noblewoman Æthelfleda in Glastonbury. The king sent a messenger ahead to tell her that he was on his way and the messenger was to make sure that there were appropriate provisions. It was found that there was not enough mead, but Æthelfleda prayed to the Virgin and what had been lacking was then miraculously supplied.[39] Therefore, as with the miracle at Abingdon, this story shows that finding food and drink for the royal court could be a great hardship for its hosts. The

[37]J. McCann, trans., *The Rule of Saint Benedict* (London, 1952) ch. 53, p. 119.

[38]Lapidge and Winterbottom, *Wulfstan of Winchester: The Life of St. Æthelwold* p. 23.

[39]W. Stubbs, ed., *Memorials of St. Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury*, Rolls Series, ch. 10, p. 17.

role of the messenger must also be noted. The king used men in his service to make arrangements ahead of his arrival. This would have helped to ensure that all went smoothly for him and his important companions.

Travellers were a vulnerable part of Anglo-Saxon society and during times of peace, people usually travelled to and from places where they could expect to be safe. However, there are cases when things did go very badly for members of the royal family, their guests and companions. Here we will look at two examples, one when hospitality was not given with honourable intentions and the other when hospitality was refused.

The first example relates to the treachery of a host which led to the death of an ætheling in 1036, recorded in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* and the *Encomium Emmae Reginae*. The plot against Alfred, son of Æthelred the Unready and Emma of Normandy, made use of aspects of travel. According to the *Encomium*, Alfred's stepbrother, King Harold (son of Cnut and Ælfgifu of Northampton) wrote a letter to both of Emma's sons, pretending to be her, asking them to come to her aid. Alfred, believing it to be from her, began the journey from the safety of the continent to England. Once in England he was met by Earl Godwine who led the prince and his companions to Guildford. There he gave them food, drink and shelter. Then, while they were sleeping, he took them prisoner. Some were killed, others were sold into slavery and Alfred was killed.[40] Thus Godwine took advantage of his position as host and used the power that it gave him to get rid of a member of the West Saxon royal family. Both versions of this story blame Godwine for the murder, but the *Encomium* also stresses Harold's role. Pauline Stafford has suggested that the *Encomium* was a political work written to explain Emma's actions and that in this passage Emma was showing herself and her sons as victims.[41]

The second example relates to people travelling to the royal court. It took place in Kent and Gloucester and illustrates how finding food and shelter could have disastrous effects. There are slightly different accounts of this episode in the surviving

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[40]A. Campbell, ed., *Encomium Emmae Reginae*, 2nd edn (Cambridge, 1998) Book III, ch. 2-6, p.40-47.

[41]P. Stafford, *Queen Emma and Queen Edith: Queenship and Women's Power in Eleventh-Century England* (Oxford, 1997) p. 29, 36.

versions of the *Chronicle* but they agree on the basics. In 1051, King Edward the Confessor's brother-in-law, Eustace, count of Boulogne, arrived in Dover. He and his men demanded billets but there was a disagreement and an Englishman was killed. Then there was a full scale fight before Eustace and his men fled to the king in Gloucester. Earl Godwine sided with the Englishmen against the wishes of the king and this gave Edward an excuse to act against this very powerful earl. Godwine and his sons were exiled that year.[42] As Eustace was related by marriage to the English royal family and as he made his was to the court, this episode can be considered in light of royal itineration. It has been shown that ensuring shelter and food was a great concern for those who were travelling and that giving these could be a great burden. In this case the travellers tried to force themselves on unwilling hosts without seemingly having had the right to do so. Perhaps their connection to the king made them bold and despite all of their mistakes, the king was sympathetic to Eustace and his men.

Not all of the people going to and from the royal courts had access to such privileges and an exceptional journey was recorded in the reign of Alfred. Three men went from Ireland to Cornwall in a boat made of hides. They had food with them for seven days and, according to the *Chronicle*, that was exactly that number of days after leaving that they arrived in Cornwall. From there they went to see King Alfred.[43] Their voyage did not make use of any established rights, but their journey was, nonetheless, successful.

Before leaving the discussion of food and shelter, it is necessary to consider what type of shelter the royal court may have found at the monasteries and secular estates. Accommodation at this time could have been provided in permanent buildings. However, it could equally have been in temporary huts or tents.[44] At the large council meetings, for example, not all of the *witan*, officials and servants could have been given shelter in standing buildings. When looking at the itineration of Alfonso IV, Reilly

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[42]*ASC* s.a. 1051.

[43]*ASC* s.a. 891.

[44]Cubitt, *Church Councils*, p. 35; Sawyer, 'Royal *Tun*', p. 286; Whitelock, *Beginnings*, p. 55-6.

suggested that the prestigious members of the Spanish court would have used tents, while the lower class people may have slept under carts.[45] In Anglo-Saxon Wessex the royal household and other large groups must have made extensive use of tents as portable shelter (figs. 57-59).

In Asser's *Life of Alfred*, there is a passage describing Alfred searching for his brother, King Æthelred, when they were supposed to be going to fight the Vikings. Asser recorded that Æthelred "was still in his tent at prayer".[46] Also, the *Durham Ritual* recorded that in 970, the provost of Chester-le-Street was working in a tent near Woodyates by a Roman road.[47] Thus tents must have been considered appropriate accomodation for kings and important members of the Church.

That tents were used by secular and ecclesiastic elite in late Saxon England is confirmed by their presence in wills. For example, in 1042 or 1043, Ælfric Modercope made a will before he went across the sea and in it he said, "[a]nd I bequeath to Bishop Ælfric my tent, and my bed-clothing, the best that I had out on my journey with me."[48] As he bequeathed the best one to the bishop, this sentence implies that he had more than one set with him. Even if this will was written just before he went overseas, it shows that this man owned these things and it is likely that he used them in England too. Similarly, Archbishop Ælfric, in his will dated to 1003 or 1004, bequeathed to St Albans an estate, his books and his tent.[49] If we imagine that tents provided much of the shelter for those on journeys at those attending council meetings, than it would be logical for an archbishop to have his own tent. Women also owned tents.

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[45]*Reilly*, 154.

[46]Keynes and Lapidge, 'Asser's Life of Alfred', Ch. 37; p. 78-9. ". . . *in tentorio in oratione positus* . . . " W. H. Stevenson, ed., *Asser's Life of King Alfred* (Oxford, 1904) p. 29.

[47]Cubitt, *Church Councils*, p. 310; Wormald, *Making of English Law*, p. 437; T. J. Brown, ed., *The Durham Ritual, a Southern English Collectar of the Tenth Century with Northumbrian Additions, Durham Cathedral Library A IV 19*, Early English Manuscripts in Facsimile 16 (Copenhagen, 1969) xvi.

[48]S 1490; "*And Alfric biscop I biquethe mine teld 7 min bedreaf that ic best hauede vt on mi fare mid me.*" D. Whitelock, ed., *Anglo-Saxon Wills* (Cambridge, 1930) p. 74-5.

[49]S 1488, Whitelock, *Wills*, # XVIII, p. 53.

Wynflæd, in circa 950, left to Æthwold her two buffalo-horns, a horse and her red tent.[50]

Another logistical problem was finding transport. The royal court and its 'support staff', like other travellers, had four basic types of transportation from which to choose. They could travel in boats of various sizes, in wheeled vehicles, on horseback, or on foot. In the winter, people used skates, as seen in archaeological finds in York, and they may have used sleds. Unfortunately, however, there is no late Saxon evidence for sleds.[51]

The type of transportation used would have had a great effect on the relative length of the journey. Norbert Ohler suggested that average walking speed was two and a half to four miles an hour and thus twenty to twenty-five miles a day and that a horse could cover thirty to thirty-five miles a day.[52] Martin Carver, however, said that a group walking and with carts could cover fifteen miles, that a boat being rowed could cover thirty-six nautical miles and that a boat under sail could cover seventy-two nautical miles a day. About these figures, Carver wrote: "These figures are of course average, approximate and notional; but with less spurious precision, the proposal is simply that sailing is twice as quick as rowing which is twice as quick as walking."[53] Thus the distance between places depends very much on the type of transportation used.

Overland transport varied considerably with the comparative wealth of the travellers. The wealthy travelled in wheeled vehicles or, more often, on horse and the poor, in contrast, went on foot. Although there is very little direct evidence for individuals making long journeys on foot, this must have been very common. Likewise, there is very little evidence for carts or wagons in the written record and there are no archaeological remains of carts from Anglo-Saxon England. Other portage would have been done by pack animals and some goods must have been carried or pulled by people. Large groups on the road, such as the royal court and military would have had people both riding

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[50]S 1539, Whitelock, *Wills*, # III, p. 11.

[51]Pelteret, 'Transport and Communication',*Blackwell*, p. 454.

[52]Ohler, p. 97.

[53]Carver, 'Pre-Viking traffic in the North Sea', p. 122.

and walking. Also, processions, such as the one carrying Edward the Martyr's body from Wareham to Shaftesbury and the one carrying Æthelwold's body from Wallingford to Winchester, likely featured all types of land transport - carts, horseback and walking.

In most cases the type of transportation used in royal itineration is unknown and can only be guessed. For example, when King Alfred was retreating from the Vikings in 878, he "journeyed in difficulties through the woods and fen-fastnesses with a small force."[54] Although they may have had horses, it is easy to imagine this small group of men forcing their way through the woods on foot.

There are, however, some cases where the type of land transport used was recorded. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* tells us that " . . . Ealdorman Æthelmund rode from the province of the Hwiccians . . . ", that Alfred rode to Egbert's Stone, and that Edmund Ironside rode to Northumbria.[55] Even if one doubts the exactness of the *Chronicle* in any particular case, the image given by it is of the wealthy and important travelling riding rather than walking.

The means of procuring transport differed for various groups in society. However, simply put, travellers might own, borrow, hire or steal the horses, wagons, or ships that they needed for their journeys. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* for 896 includes a reference to Ecgwulf, the king's horse thegn and he has been interpreted as the person responsible for making the king's transportation arrangements.[56] The kings were able to raise land transport for themselves and for their interests. Providing transport was one of the many duties that an estate could be asked to provide. For example, King Edward the Elder gave privileges at Taunton to the Bishop and community of Winchester. They were to now be free of all but the three common dues, but in the past the community at Taunton had to provide cartage for any

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[54]*ASC s.a.* 878; *EHD I*, p. 195. ". . . *he lytle werede un iethelice æfter wudum for, ⁊ on more fæstenum*". Plummer, *Chronicles*, p. 74.

[55]*ASC* s.a. 802; 878; 1016; quotation from *EHD I*, p. 183. ". . . *rad Æthælmund ealdorman of Hwiccum . . .*", Plummer, *Chronicles*, p. 59.

[56]Keynes and Lapidge, p. 289, note 34.

loads that the king wanted taken to Curry or Williton (fig. 13).[57] The burgesses of Wallingford, moreover, owed the king carrying services, by land and sea, at *Domesday*.[58] Thus the king was in a position to command transport services from his tenants.[59]

One final logistical problem that needs to be considered is the way in which people might have found their way in unfamiliar countryside. There are no 'road maps' surviving from Anglo-Saxon England, nor is there any evidence that they ever existed. The Anglo-Saxons, therefore, must have had another method of navigating in strange places. A hypothesis has been put forth to explain this. Ann Cole suggested that because of the literal meaning of Anglo-Saxon place-names, a knowledge of the names of the places along their routes would have given them a wealth of information about the trip that they could expect.[60] The relevance here of place-names using roadway and crossing-point elements is clear.[61] As Cole asserted, the *stræt-ford* indicated where a Roman road crosses a river.[62] She moved beyond this and suggested that other names may have shown where travellers could have overnighted. For example, she said that if a place was called *mere-tun* (meaning pond-settlement), if the pond was man-made and if it was near a Roman road, it would have provided services for travellers and their animals.[63] Interesting though this may be, it does not provide us with an answer as to how the Anglo-Saxons were able to find their way while away from home. How did they choose the right road? If they needed to know a series of place-names, who told them?

The most obvious solution to the problem of finding one's way would have been to use local guides. Asser recorded that when he left Wales at King Alfred 's request, he travelled to Surrey with

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[57]S 373. See also above, footnote 35.

[58]Martin, 'Eleventh Century Communications', p. 62.

[59]See also below, discussion on *Rectitudines Singularum Personarum* in section on estate workers."

[60]Cole, 'The Anglo-Saxon Traveller', p. 7.

[61]For more on roadway and crossing-point terms used in West Saxon place-names, see Chapter 4.

[62]Cole, 'The Anglo-Saxon Traveller', p. 9.

[63]*Ibid.*, p. 12.

two Englsh guides.[64] The kings were able to demand help for those travelling to them. A charter from Edward the Elder records that the community at Taunton also previously had to lead people coming from another region to the next royal vill on their way.[65] This service would have been greatly appreciated by any traveller who did not know the route in that region. Rights such as these meant that the king was able to provide guides to those who were moving from royal estate to royal estate, thus removing the danger of getting lost.[66]

Military Travellers

We have seen how the royal court, as the governing body in late Saxon Wessex and perhaps the most commonly itinerant large group, operated within a system while travelling. Closely connected to it was the military, whose leaders included many of the nobles from the court and whose movements greatly effected the affairs of the kingdom. Military forces on the move in Anglo-Saxon England included both defenders and invaders, attacking armies and those reacting to them. Military travellers had many things in common with those who were travelling with the royal court, but their journeys differed considerably both in intent and method. Thus the known movements of military forces add another dimension to the picture of journeys made in late Saxon Wessex.

Although there were probably military groups often travelling in Anglo-Saxon England, there are a few well-recorded periods of high intensity of military movements. During the Viking campaigns, the large armies were highly mobile. David Hill has mapped the known movements of armies during the Viking wars in Alfred's reign, during the 'Reconquest' and in Athelstan's and

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[64]Asser, *Life of Alfred*, Ch 79; Keynes and Lapidge, p. 93.

[65]S 373; Finberg, *Wessex*, p. 128. The charter reads as follows: ". . . *et si aduenae de aliis regionibus aduenirent, debeant ductum habere ad aliam regalem uillam quae proxima fuisset in illorum via.*" Kemble, 1084, vol. 5, p. 159. This charter is the same charter discussed above, footnote 35.

[66]See also below, discussion on *Rectitudines Singularum Personarum* in section on estate workers.

Æthelred II's reigns.[67] The information is too sparse to determine exactly what routes were taken or even where armies were on most dates. However, in periods of high intensity of activity, enough is known to help illustrate the system of travel and communications, as will be seen below.

Composition of military groups

Military groups, both Anglo-Saxon and enemy, varied considerably in size. Some idea of the numbers involved can be gleaned from the late seventh century laws of Ine which only survive as an appendix to the laws of Alfred and thus must be relevant to our period.[68] They state that "[w]e call up to seven men 'thieves'; from seven to thirty-five a 'band'; above that is an 'army'."[69] Although these numbers are from an earlier period, they give an indication of the size of the groups which were travelling for military reasons in late Saxon Wessex. When we think of an army, we can think of a group of more than thirty-five men. However, the armies moving through Wessex were often composed of men numbering in the hundreds.

It is difficult to write about the size of the English army as it was not one standing, unified force. Richard Abels, an expert on Anglo-Saxon armies, has determined that by 871 there were three types of English military forces: the national host led by the king and using men from different parts of the kingdom under the leadership of their bishops or ealdormen; shire forces under their ealdormen; and thegns' war bands.[70] Abels pointed out that this was not an effective means protecting the country because 'a highly mobile raiding band' would have had time to wreck havoc before the army could be summoned, brought together and journey to meet the enemy. He also suggested that this flaw caused Alfred to reorganise his army so that there was a standing force, ready to fight.[71] The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* describes how the army was raised during the reign of King Alfred. It reads as

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[67]Hill, *Altas*, p. 56-60, 65-71.

[68]Wormald, *Laws*, p. 376.

[69]*EHD I*, # 32, 13.1, p. 400. "*Theofas we hatath oth VII men; from VII hlof oth XXXV; siththan bith here.*" Attenborough, p. 40.

[70]Abels, p. 58.

[71]*Ibid.*, p. 62-3.

follows: "The king had divided his army into two, so that always half its men were at home, half on service, apart from the men who guarded the boroughs."[72] By having a standing and mounted *fyrd*, Alfred had an army that could travel swiftly to where it was needed.[73]

Under Æthelred the Unready the army returned to depending on levies. The *Chronicle* entries for the reign of Æthelred show that English resistance to the Vikings was raised on a shire basis. Thus in 999, there is a reference to the Kentish levy. Likewise, in 1003, after the Vikings had stormed Exeter, the English assembled an army of men from Wiltshire and Hampshire. As things became more desperate, Æthelred "ordered the whole nation from Wessex and Mercia to be called out" in 1006.[74] By 1010, things had become so bad that:

> Then all the councillors were summoned to the king, and it was then to be decided how this country should be defended. But even if anything was then decided, it did not last even a month. Finally there was no leader who would collect an army, but each fled as best he could, and in the end no shire would even help the next.[75]

The unified, mobile and effective army of Alfred was no longer travelling across Wessex to protect her. It must be remembered, however, that the *Chronicle* entries for Æthelred's reign were written after the Danish victory and the extremely negative view put forth in them reflects the mood of a defeated nation.[76]

In the eleventh century, large Anglo-Saxon armies were generally made up of a local and national armies. So that in 1066, the core of the English army at Stamford Bridge and

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[72]*ASC* s.a. 893; *EHD I*, p. 202. ". . . *hæfde se cyning his fierd on tu to numen, swa thæt hie wæron simle healfe æ ham, healfe ute, butan thæm monnum the tha burga healdan scolden.*" Plummer, *Chronicles*, version A, *s.a.* 894, p. 84. For more on the dates see *EHD I*, p. 200, n. 9.

[73]Abels, p. 63.

[74]*ASC s.a.* 1006, *EHD I*, 240. "*Tha het se cyng abannan ut ealne theodscipe of Westseaxum ₇ of Myrcean.*" Plummer, *Chronicles*, p. 136.

[75]*ASC s.a.* 1010; *EHD I*, p. 243. "*Thonne bead man ealle witan to cynge. ₇ man thonne rædan scolde hu man thisne eard werian sceolde. Ac theah man hwæt thonne rædde. [that] ne stod furthon ænne monath. æt nyxtan næs nan heafod man [that] fyrde gaderian wolde. ac ælc fleah swa he mæst myhte. Ne furthon nan scir nolde othre gelæstan æt nystan.*" Plummer, *Chronicles*, p. 140-1.

[76]S. Keynes, 'A tale of two kings: Alfred the Great and Æthelred the Unready', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5th series, 36 (1986), p. 201-2.

Hastings was a group of 'select troops' from all over England. They were then joined by 'stipendary troops' and local freemen.[77] It would be interesting to know whether any of the local forces at Stamford Bridge stayed with the army as it marched to Hastings. This combination of national and local forces would have involved two very different types of journeys being made to a battle site. Firstly the national force would have had to have come from a base or a previous battle, often over long distances. On the other hand, the locals would have made short trips to the sites.

At the battle site, Anglo-Saxon armies met their enemies, Viking and, later, Norman armies, the members of which also had to journey through and around England. Many estimates have been given about the size of the various invading Viking armies. Sawyer suggested that the figures given in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* are very misleading.[78] This theory maintains that the smaller numbers of ships recorded in the *Chronicle,* like 3 or 23 ships might be accurate, but that the larger figures of more than 80 are estimated and the A. D. 871 fleet of 350 is a multiple of a previous number.[79] As ships likely had crews of about 30, or at the most 50-60, the majority of the Viking armies "may have been counted in hundreds, and even the larger forces may still have been under 1000."[80] This has been a popular theory, but Brooks has argued against it.[81] He examined evidence for Viking armies in Ireland, France and Spain. He pointed out that the same Viking armies were active in these areas and found that these sources and the *Chronicle* often recorded similar numbers of ships in Viking fleets, normally ranging from fifty to 250 with 100 to 200 being 'by no means rare'.[82] He therefore believed that the

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[77]Abels, p. 175.

[78]P. Sawyer, *The Age of the Viking* (London, 1971) p. 125-6; N. Brooks, 'England in the Ninth Century: The Crucible of Defeat', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society,* 5th series, 29 (1979) p. 2-3; and Richards, *Viking Age England,* p. 15.

[79]Richards, *Viking Age England,* p. 15; Brooks, 'England in the Ninth Century', p. 2-3.

[80]Richards, *Viking Age England,* p. 15.

[81]Brooks, 'England in the Ninth Century', p.

[82]*Ibid*, p. 5-6.

varying figures given in the *Chronicle* need to be taken seriously.[83] Moreover, he could not see how armies of only a few hundred could have had the successes that the Vikings had in the late ninth century. He concluded that the great armies of 865 and 892 would have been very different from the earlier Viking raiding parties and would have contained a few thousand men.[84] Thus even if one does not adopt Brooks' thesis, it is clear that the number of Vikings travelling in and around Wessex at times numbered in the hundreds and, perhaps, even reached over a thousand. It should also be remembered that warriors were not the only people involved in military itineration, as the Vikings may have had women, children and servants with them.

The Fighting Season

There does seem to be considerable seasonal variation in the movements of the military forces travelling in late Saxon Wessex. Both English and Danish kings repaired and built ships to be ready for the campaigning season. The laws of Æthelred II demanded that the warships be ready soon after Easter and the *Encomium Emmae Reginae* shows Cnut preparing his ships as the summer drew near.[85] Also, the *Chronicle* records the Vikings preparing their ships in the spring, for example in 1009.

The majority of the known movements of the armies took place in the summer months. By late autumn, the Viking armies were looking for their winter quarters and in different years they were in England or in Scandinavia. For example, in 1009, after Martinmas (November 11) and after ravaging everywhere in Sussex, Hampshire and Berkshire, the Vikings made their winter quarters on the Thames.[86] Between then and Christmas they stayed in that area and after Christmas, they went to Oxford and returned following the Thames.[87] The English army was not usually moving as a group in the winter. In 1006, the Chronicler simply says

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[83] *Ibid*, p. 7.

[84] *Ibid.*, p. 9-11.

[85] Robertson, *Laws*, 'V Æthelred', 27, p. 87; Campbell, *Encomium*, p. 19.

[86] *ASC* s.a. 1009; *EHD I*, p. 242.

[87] *ASC* s.a. 1009, *EHD*, p. 242.

that the English army went home when winter approached.[88] However, English soldiers would have needed to band together when the Vikings were on the move in the winter. Thus, again in 1006, when the Vikings left their winter quarters to harry in Hampshire and Berkshire, an English army gathered at the Kennet to fight them.[89] Therefore, although most of the military movements were in the summer, with many being in the spring and autumn, there were a few important ones recorded for the winter months.

Logistics

As with royal court, the armies, both English and enemy, were large itinerant groups for which transport, food and shelter had to be provided. The Anglo-Saxon military forces sometimes used methods of overcoming these issues similar to those used by the royal court. However, at times they had to resort stealing and taking things by force. The enemy armies, likewise, overcame their logistical obstacles through both legitimate and illegal means.

Armies depended on manoeuvrability in order to be successful, making good transportation very important for them. Armies used all types of transportation available to them. The invading armies from Scandinavia and Normandy came in ships and after arriving they made use of both land and water transport. Likewise, the English armies used boats and horses and were also at times in part pedestrian.

The written sources have left evidence for the use of boats in different types of waterways. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* for 892 records:

> In this year the great Danish army, which we have spoken about before, went back from the eastern kingdom westward to Boulogne, and they were provided with ships there, so that they crossed in one journey, horses and all, and then came up into the estuary of the Lympne with 200 [and 50] ships. That estuary is in East Kent, at the east end of that great wood which we call *Andred* . . . The river, of which we spoke before, comes out of the Weald. They rowed their ships up the river as far as the Weald, four miles from the mouth of the estuary, and there they

[88] *ASC* s.a. 1006; *EHD I*, p. 240.

[89] *ASC* s.a. 1006; *EHD I*, p. 240.

stormed a fortress.[90]

Thus this case illustrates different ways the Vikings used their ships: first as sea going vessels, being sailed to England, and second on inland waterways, being rowed up a river. Battles were also fought at sea. So, ships and water transport was clearly very important to the Vikings and their attacks.

Military forces relied on both water and land transportation. These two types of transport were commonly used in conjunction in the period. Generally speaking, people and goods could be carried by boats and then transferred to overland types of transportation. The Viking armies made heavy use of both land and water transportation. For example, the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* often shows the Vikings arriving in boats and moving throughout England on land. They would then return to their ships when they wanted more protection or to sail away. They also often had two forces moved in tandem, one travelling on land, predominantly on horseback, and another sailing to their mutual destination. This can be seen in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* entry for 877:

> In this year the enemy army from Wareham came to Exeter; [and the naval force sailed west along the coast] and encountered a great storm at sea, and 120 ships were lost at Swanage. And King Alfred rode after the mounted army with the English army as far as Exeter, but could not overtake them . . . [91]

This passage thus illustrates the Vikings' use of both land and sea travel. Boats and horses or pedestrian travel were linked and together they formed an important network. The above quoted passage for 877 also illustrates a common trend in West Saxon military movements. In a number of cases the defensive army is shown pursuing the enemy across land.

The importance of road travel to the armies may be seen

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[90]*ASC s.a.*, *EHD I*, p. 201. "*Her for se myccla here tha we ge fyrn ær ymb spræcon eft of tham east rice weastward to Bunan. ⁊ thær wurdon ge scipode swa [thæt] hi asætton hi on ænne sith ofer mid horsum mid ealle. ⁊ tha comon up on Limine muthan mid thridde healf hund scipa. se mutha is on eastwarde Cent æt thes mycclan wudu east enda the we Andræd hatath . . . se ea the we ær ymb spræcon. lith ut of tham wealda ; on the ea hi tugon / up heora scipa oth thone weald iiii mila fram tham tham mutham utan weardum. ⁊ thær abræcon an geweorc . . .*". Plummer, *Chronicles*, p. 85.

[91]*ASC s.a.* 877, *EHD I*, p. 195. "*Her cuom se here into Escan ceastre from Werham, ⁊ se sciphere siglede west ymb utan, ⁊ ha mette hie micel yst on sæ, ⁊ thær forwearth cxx scipa æt Swanawic ; ⁊ se cyning Ælfred æfter tham gehorsudan here mid fierde rad oth Exan ceaster; ⁊ hie hindan ofridan ne meahte . . .*" Plummer, *Chronciles*, p. 74.

through the manner in which the Anglo-Saxons named a group of their roads: the *herepaths*. As seen in chapter 4, *herepath* literally means army path and it has been suggested that by so naming certain roads, the Anglo-Saxons were showing that they were the main arteries through the kingdom. While small groups of soldiers could have travelled over roads of any size, large armies needed substantial roads in order to travel efficiently. Simply put, if a path was only wide enough for two or three men, an army numbering in the hundreds would have been spread out over a large distance. So, the *herepaths* of Wessex may have been the wider roads, the ones large enough for an army, the one traversed by armies. Moreover, the *Leges Henrici Primi* stipulated that the *via regis* had to be wide enough for sixteen armed knights to ride side by side.[92]

Having seen that the Anglo-Saxon and Viking armies travelled both over land and water, it is time to turn our attention to how they acquired the transportation they used. The acquisition of ships by the Anglo-Saxon state happened in a few different ways. In the reign of Æthelred II, there was a national campaign to increase the numbers of English warships. The order was given in 1008 and the ships were ready in 1009. The chronicler who wrote that section believed it to be the largest number of ships ever collected under any English king.[93] The 'state' gained ships through bequests, or rather, did not lose access to them when their original owners died. Ships were also left in wills. In a will dated to 1003 or 1004, Archbishop Ælfric gave his best ship and its tackle to the king. He also bequeathed a ship each to the people of Kent and Wiltshire.[94] These were presumably for military purposes. Another such example is the 1008 to 1012 will of Alfwold, bishop of Credition. In it he bequeathed to his lord, among other things, "a ship sixty-oared; it is quite complete, save alone that he would have fully equipped it in a fitting manner for his lord, had God granted it."[95] The date of

[92]Downer, *Leges Henrici Primi*, 10,2, p. 109. For more on this, see chapter 4, 'Useability and Maintenance' and 'Hierarchies'.

[93]*ASC* s.a. 1009.

[94]S 1488.

[95]S 1492: "*ænne scegth .LXIIII. ære he is eall gearo butan tham hanon hi hine wolde ful gearwian his hlaforde to gerisnum gif him god uthe.*" A. S. Napier and W. H. Stevenson, eds., *The Crawford Collection of Early Charters and Documents* (Oxford, 1895) p. 23-4.

this will suggests a possible connection to the ship levy of 1008-9. Kings could also be presented with ships as gifts. This is seen in the *Vita Ædwardi* when Earl Godwin gave a golden ship to Edward the Confessor.

Horses are found in wills in a military context. A number of the wills include equal numbers of horses with and without trappings. So that Ealdorman Æthelmær's will, in 971 X 983, says: "And I bequeath to my royal lord as my heriot. . . and eight horses, four with trappings and four without. . .".[96] Likewise, in the will of Brihtric and his wife Ælfswith, 973 X 987, the king was left four horse, two with and two without harnesses.[97] This is in accordance with the laws on heriot recorded in the reign of Cnut. An earl's heriot (literally 'army trappings') included eight horses, four saddled and four unsaddled.[98] A thegn of the king had four horses, two saddled and two unsaddled as part of his heriot, while other thegns' heriots included one horse and its trappings.[99] The other group who had to include horses in their heriot were the Danes who were close to the king and this was two horses with one saddled and one unsaddled.[100] Nicholas Brooks says that the unsaddled horses could have been ridden by lightly armed men, but that it is more likely that they were relief horses to allow greater mobility or to be used as pack animals.[101]

The English military was operating within established means of raising transport in late Saxon Wessex. In some instances, the Vikings can be seen to be doing the same, but they also deviated substantially from the accepted system. The Vikings of 892 brought horses with them overseas as did the Normans in 1066 (fig. 53). However, it was more common for the Vikings simply to

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[96]S 1498. "*And ic becwethe minum cynehlaforde to heregeatuwum . . . and VIII hors feower gerædode and IIII ungerædode . . .* ". Whitelock, *Wills*, no. X, p. 26-7.

[97]S 1511. Whitelock, *Wills*, no. XI, p. 27.

[98]Robertson, *Laws*, 'II Canute' 71a, p. 209.

[99]Robertson, *Laws*, 'II Canuet' 71a.1 and 2., p. 211.

[100]Robertson, *Laws*, 'II Canute' 71a.4., p. 211.

[101]N. P. Brooks, 'Arms, Status and Warfare in Late Saxon England ', *Ethelred the Unready: Papers from the Millenary Conference*, ed., D. Hill, BAR 59 (1978) p. 86.

take horses from the Anglo-Saxons when they wanted or needed land transport. For example in 881 and 885, the *Chronicle* records that they stole the horses they wanted. On other occasions, it records that they demanded them. In 1013, Swein ordered the people of the Danelaw to give his army horses for their journey south to take the rest of England.[102] Thus, the invading armies acquired land transport to the detriment of the Anglo-Saxons.

Similarly, when the armies needed food, they, unlike those involved in royal itineration, did not always come by their provisions honestly. Invading armies either plundered the supplies they needed or compelled the English to provide them. In 998, the Vikings based themselves in the Isle of Wight for a period, and while there, they supplied themselves with food from the mainland, namely from Hampshire and Sussex.[103] Similarly, in 1006, the *Chronicle* records that the Vikings went to the Isle of Wight and simply took whatever they needed. After Christmas, they went into Hampshire and Berkshire and travelled as far as Wallingford, before engaging the English in battle at the Kennet. They moved past Winchester to the sea "and fetched themselves food and treasures from more than 50 miles from the sea."[104] Later that year, the English paid tribute to the Vikings and gave them provisions so that "they were supplied with food throughout England."[105] Thus during the Viking wars, Æthelred was forced at times to provide food for the enemy army. Earlier, in 991 or 994, he paid tribute and made a peace treaty with the Vikings and it contained the provision that if any other fleet harried in England, the Vikings would help the English and the English would provide them with food as long as they were there.[106]

Even the English, in times of military distress would take food to feed the army or resistance. Asser records that Alfred, in 878 while living in the Somerset Levels with a few thegns and soldiers, "had nothing to live on except what he could forage by frequent raids, either secretly or even openly, from the Vikings

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[102]*ASC* s.a. 1013; *EHD I*, p. 245-6.

[103]*ASC* s.a. 998.

[104]*ASC* s.a. 1006; *EHD I*, p. 240-1. "⁊ *mæte* ⁊ *madmas ofer L mila him fram sæ fættan.*" Plummer, *Chronicles*, p. 137.

[105]*ASC* s.a. 1006; *EHD I*, p. 240-1.

[106]Robertson, *Laws*, 'II Æthelred', 1.1, p. 57; *EHD I*, p. 438.

as well as from the Christians who had submitted to the Vikings authority."[107] He was forced to take such actions, because in his military retreat he did not have access to the normal means available for kings to acquire food. In Asser's account, this behaviour was justified by its necessity and by the fact that he only stole from the pagans and those who had joined them.

Thus the armies did not always gain their provisions through normal and long standing channels. Even compared to royal itineration, the obtaining of transport, food and shelter for the military forces active in Wessex was often difficult for the people. Providing for the king and his court was a considerable burden for a monastery or an estate, but it was part of the required services and was expected. The needs of the military forces were extra and often met through illegal means. Thus they were a greater burden for the people.

Travel as part of Military Success or Failure

The ease or difficulty of travel greatly affected the military. Some aspects of the system of travel and communications proved to be an advantage for both the English and foreign armies. However, other aspects caused them considerable problems and were even partly to blame for failures. These differed for the local and foreign armies.

Perhaps, in this respect, the most obvious advantage to the English troops when fighting enemy forces was that they were more familiar with the area. When Cnut's forces were fighting Edmund's, the English were doing badly and made a strategic retreat. The Danes did not pursue them because it was dark and they did not know the area well enough.[108] Thus the English were able to escape successfully because they knew how to move through that area. It is also noteworthy that the Encomiast wrote that the darkness was in part responsible for the Danes not following the retreating army.[109]

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[107]Keynes and Lapidge, 'Asser's Life of King Alfred', Ch. 53, p. 83. "*Nihil enim habebat quo uteretur, nisi quod a paganis et etiam a Christians, qui se paganorum subdiderant domino, frequentibus irruptionibus aut clam aut etiam palam subtraheret.*" Stevenson, *Asser's Life of King Alfred*, p. 41.

[108]Campbell, *Encomium Emmae Reginae*, p. 27.

[109]*Ibid.*, p. 27.

Most of the regular traffic on Wessex's roads and waterways must have taken place during daylight hours, as it was safer and easier. Thus travelling after dark was the exception and was used for a stratigical advantage when necessary. An example can be found in the confrontation in 900 between King Edward the Elder and his cousin Æthelwold. Æthelwold rebelled against his cousin and took control of Wimborne and Christchurch. King Edward and his army camped nearby at Badbury Rings. Æthelwold responded by riding away at night, eventually making his way to the Danish army in Northumbria.[110] The darkness allowed him to escape. The use of night travel to gain an advantage was not limited to the English and there are examples of the Vikings using the same tactics. Notably, in 876, the mounted Viking army, which was staying in Wareham, "stole by night away from the English army to Exeter."[111] Thus, again the cover of darkness provided a chance for escape.

The basic terrain could also provide protection for a force by being hazardous to travellers. King Alfred, when he retreated to Athelney, used the poor travelling conditions as his protection. It is recorded that he "journeyed in difficulties through the woods and fen-fastnesses. . .".[112] He himself was in no danger from the terrain, but the difficulty in passing through it was his defense.

Any situation which led to the unnecessary deaths of fighting men can be seen as a military failure and this occasionally happened when armies did not take care to use the communications network properly. The Vikings, when travelling quickly, did not always act prudently and sometimes did not take the time to look for the safest place to cross rivers. In 893, the *Chronicle* records that after a battle at Farnham, they fled and crossed the Thames where there was no ford.[113] This time, the Vikings suffered no negative consequences from this action. However, in 1013, Swein led his army from Winchester towards London and "many

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[110]*ASC* s.a. 900.

[111]*ASC s.a.* 876; *EHD I*, p. 194-5. ". . . *hie tha under tham hie nihtes bestælon thære fierde se gehorsoda here into Escan ceaster*". Plummer, *Chronicles*, p. 74.

[112]*ASC s.a.* 878; *EHD I*, p. 195. ". . . *he lytle werede un iethelice æfter wudum for, ⁊ on more fæstenum*". Plummer, *Chronicles*, p. 74.

[113]*ASC s.a.* 893; *EHD I*, p. 202.

of his host were drowned in the Thames because they did not trouble to find a bridge."[114] Their poor choice in their crossing point caused their deaths. These examples may also relate to the role that Brooks assigned to bridgework as a partner to fortress work in the protection of the kingdom.[115] The Vikings may have chosen not to crossing at a bridge as that may have made them more exposed to the Anglo-Saxon defenders or increased the likelihood of a confrontation.

As already mentioned, weather greatly influenced journeys in late Saxon Wessex and the forces of nature proved most dangerous when there were great storms. Storms at sea, even for those who were travelling from place to place within Wessex, were particularly life-threatening. As military forces made use of boats, they were vulnerable to storms. Both English and Vikings lost men and boats in storms. In 877, the Viking fleet was headed from Wareham to Exeter when it "encountered a great storm at sea and 120 ships were lost at Swanage."[116] Even if these figures are not reliable, this must have been a considerable blow to the Vikings. The English also suffered severe set backs because of storms at sea. The English fleet of 1009 gathered at Sandwich, but was divided when Wulfnoth Cild took twenty ships and ravaged the south coast of England. One Brihtric then took 80 more ships to capture the traitor, but a wind arose and destroyed these ships, the remains of which were burned then by Wulfnoth.[117] This was effectively the end of Æthelred's ship-levy. Thus while sailing after a traitor, a large part of the fleet was destroyed by a storm and the fleet did not recover from this disaster.

In other words, clearly the actions of the military forces were greatly influenced by their ability to move through the landscape and to acquire provisions for themselves. The way in which they did this and the effects of it both underline and contradict some aspects of the system as seen in royal

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[114]*ASC* s.a. 1013; *EHD I*, p. 246. ". . . *mycel his folces adranc on Temese. fortham hi nanre brycge ne cepton.*" Plummer, *Chronicles*, p. 143

[115]Brooks, 'Church, Crown and Community', p. 2.

[116]*ASC* s.a. 877; *EHD I*, p. 195. ". . . *tha mette hie micel yst on sæ,* ⁊ *thær forwearth cxx scipa æt Swanawic. . .*". Plummer, *Chronciles*, p. 74.

[117]*ASC* s.a. 1009; *EHD I*, p. 242.

itineration.

Religious Travel

There were many people in late Saxon Wessex who made journeys for religious reasons. People attended church services, bishops and priests travelled from community to community spreading the word of God. Saints relics were sometimes carried from place to place, and people made pilgrimages to saints' shrines.

Travelling Ecclesiastics - bishops, priests and monks

Before looking at the mechanics of this type of travel, it is necessary to think about the people involved and why they were making journeys.

Pastoral care in early Christian Wessex, according to the minster hypothesis described in the chapter on settlements, involved groups of secular clergy travelling from a mother church through large minster parishes, carrying out duties such as preaching, performing baptism, saying mass, prescribing pennance and caring for the sick.[118] As the parish church developed during the late Saxon period, pastoral care became more local, with priests living in the communities that they served.[119] Moreover, as will be seen, with the Benedictine Reform, members of re-founded houses were restricted in their ability to travel. Thus through the course of the late Saxon period, the number of monks and priests travelling over medium and long distances would have decreased.

Bishops and archbishops were important travellers throughout the period. They journeyed frequently and for many different reasons. As seen toward the beginning of this chapter, they were important figures at the royal court and thus were part of royal itineration. They travelled in the course of managing their estates. They also had a duty to travel throughout their dioceses, ministering to the people. The size and number of West

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[118]A. Thacker, 'Monks, preaching and pastoral care in early Anglo-Saxon England', *Pastoral Care Before the Parish*, eds., J. Blair and R. Sharpe (Leicester, 1992) p. 140. For literature on the minster hypothesis, see Chapter 3.

[119]Blair, 'Minster Churches in the Landscape', p. 57.

Saxon diocese, and therefore the distance each bishop needed to travel to do this, changed during the course of the late Saxon period (fig. 5).[120] By the time of the Conquest, each bishop was responsible for considerably less territory than they had been two hundred years earlier.

Glimpses of the mechanics of this category of travelling can be found in several types of sources. Wulfstan (d. 1023) has been credited with writing a work, known as the *Canons of Edgar,* between 1005 and 1007. This work is a list of rules or guidelines for the secular clergy and was intended to make clear their duties and expected behaviour.[121] The *Canons* contain a reference important to this study: clergy at a synod were supposed to have with them books, vestments, ink, parchment and provisions for three days.[122] In his commentary on this, Fowler pointed out that the source for this was *The* Capitula *of Theodulf* but that the requirement to take ink, parchment and food was a practical addition.[123] This decree would mean that the people in charge of the synod did not have to provide food for all of the delegates.[124] Wulfstan is making it clear that the clergy were to take responsibility for their own provisions, but the decree makes no mention of food for the journey to the synod. This is logical as the clergy obviously would have been expected to provide for themselves while on the road.

There are many miracle stories from the whole of the Anglo-Saxon period in England relating to the provisioning of travellers and a selection of them refer to saintly ecclesiastics who were not in a position to take advantage of the normal means of obtaining food, shelter and other supplies either for themselves and for those visiting them. Bede's *Life of Cuthbert,*

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[120]For more on the division of diocese, see sections in chapter three on Mid- and Late Saxon ecclesicatic landscape.

[121]For more on the *Canons of Edgar* see the introduction in: R. Fowler, ed. *Wulfstan's Canons of Edgar* EETS 266 (1972).

[122] Fowler, ed. *Wulfstan's Canons of Edgar,* § 3, p. 2: Hagen, *Production and Distribution*, p. 331.

[123] Fowler, ed. *Wulfstan's Canons of Edgar*, p.xxxvi-ii, 23.

[124]A. Hagen, *A Handbook of Anglo-Saxon Food and Drink: Production and Distribution* (Hockwold-cum-Wilton, 1995) p. 331.

for example, contains a number of such stories.[125] Examples from late Saxon Wessex are less plentiful, but there is one worth considering in this context. In Wulfstan's *Life of St Æthelwold*, Æthelwold was journeying to various places spreading the word of God and he had given the holy oil to a cleric to look after. The cleric had not taken enough oil and had managed to lose the flask before it was used. When he realised his mistake, he retraced his steps and found a now full flask lying on a road. This was seen as a great miracle.[126] Even if one doubts the 'truth' behind this story, it clearly shows replacing rare or sacred items, such as the holy oil, would have been very difficult when one was travelling far from one's base and normal supply lines.

Generally speaking, the bishops and archbishops would not have travelled alone, but would have been accompanied by group of clerics and servants and would have taken advantage of perogatives such as the bishop of Winchester's right to two nights at Farnham.[127] A charter supposedly from King Ine to Glastonbury Abbey limited the bishops' rights to use the Abbey for their travelling arrangements.[128] This charter is known as the 'Great Privilege' and has been deemed a forgery, but must have existed by the early twelfth century because of its inclusion in William of Malmesbury's *Gesta regum Anglorum*.[129] The charter itself says that all the Abbey's possessions were to be free of the three common dues, free from interference of bishops and the archbishops and that the bishop can only come when invited, can only bring three or four men with him and must stay in one of two lodgings in Pilton or *Poelt*. It can be assumed that the number of people who normally travelled with the bishop was more than the four person limit imposed by the charter. Besides trying to control the bishops, this can be seen as an attempt by the monastic house to alleviate some of the great

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[125]For examples, see: H. D. Farmer (ed) and J. F. Webb (trans), *The Age of Bede* (London, 1965), chapters 5, 7, 11, and 12.

[126]Lapidge and Winterbottom, *Wulfstan of Winchester: The Life of St. Æthelwold*, Ch 32, p. 48-49.

[127]S 1263. See above, royal itineration.

[128]S 250; Finberg, *Wessex*, p. 113-4.

[129]Abrams, *Glastonbury*, p. 46, 128. The charter also survives in two fourteenth-century cartularies.

burden placed on them by their duty to shelter travellers.

Even if this charter is a post-conquest forgery, these exemptions are similar to evidence from other sources. There were attempts to control the make up of the bishops' retinues and how they behaved while travelling in their dioceses. The great reforming king Edgar gave land to Winchester in a charter which also said that the bishop was not to take food and drink from the monks' estates, that he should only take senior monks with him and that he was not to take laymen or clerks into the cloister or refectory.[130] Thus this charter, like the two spurious Glastonbury ones, curbed the bishop's abilities to take what they would in terms of hospitality from the monasteries in their dioceses. Moreover, the stipulation that the bishop was only to take senior monks with him is mirrored in the *Regularis Concordia,* a Rule of the tenth-century Benedictine Reform. It says that the brethren were not to take youths as travelling companions but were to take "grown-up persons from whose conversation they may take profit."[131] These two instances show that during the Benedictine Reform, the Church and the king were working together to control which men in orders were travelling because they were concerned for the spiritual well being of the individuals in question.

Wulfstan, in his *The Institutes of Polity,* shows that there was also concern for the behaviour of travelling bishops. He wrote:

> Nothing useless ever befits bishops: not folly nor stupidity, nor too much drinking, nor childishness in speech, nor idle buffoonery of any kind, not at home nor on a journey, nor in any place.[132]

That Wulfstan felt it necessary to include a provision for their behaviour away from home reflects the large amount of travelling that bishops did. Wulfstan did not, however, make it clear whether he felt that these things were more likely to happen

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[130] S 818; Finberg, *Wessex,* # 119, p. 54.

[131] ". . . *adultos quorum admonitione meliorentur secum comitatu ducant . . .*". T. Symons, ed., *The Monastic Agreement of the Monks and Nuns of the English Nation* (London, 1953) Ch. 11, p. 7.

[132] M. Swanton, trans., *Anglo-Saxon Prose* (London, 1975) p. 130. "*Ne geriseth ænig unnytt æfre mid bisceopum,/ ne doll ne dysig not to oferdruncen/ ne cildsung on spæce ne idel gegaf/ on ænig wisan ne æt ham ne on sith/ ne on ænigre stowe.*" K. Jost, ed., *Die Institutes of Polity, Civil and Ecclesiastical* (Bern, 1959) p. 77.

while on a journey or in any place that was not at home.

There was much concern for the well-being of the monks, and while the bishops were constantly travelling, those in monastic orders, in contrast, were supposed to remain in their houses. Monks were not allowed to travel without permission, as stipulated in Chapter 67 of the *Benedictine Rule*. The *Benedictine Rule* explains the fears behind this:

> When brethren return from a journey, let them on the day they return, at the end of each canonical Hour of the Work of God, lie prostrate on the floor of the oratory and ask the prayers of all on account of any faults that may have surprised them on the road, by the seeing or hearing of something evil, or by idle talk. Nor let anyone presume to tell another what he has seen or heard outside the monastery, because this causes great harm.[133]

They were afraid that the traveller would be contaminated by the secular world and therefore they restricted monks' movements.

There are many sources relevant to Late Saxon Wessex which discuss the behaviour expected of pious clerics while on journeys. Most obviously, the *Benedictine Rule* and, to a lesser extent, the *Regularis Concordia* contain instructions for how the monks were to behave if they were given permission to venture outside the monastery. The *Benedictine Rule* directs monks to pray at the proper hours when on a journey, not to eat away from the monastery if returning the same day, and to get underclothing, and better cowls and tunics to wear while away from the monastery.[134] The *Regularis Concordia*, moreover, says that monks should not waste time and should occupy themselves with psalms or necessary business while travelling.[135] The two rules differ slightly in that the *Benedictine Rule* does not permit someone on a journey of less than a day to take food or drink from others, but the *Regularis Concordia* does allow monks to take part in secular feasts, but only if they receive

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[133] "*Revertentes autem de via fratres, ipso die quo redeunt, per onmes canonicas horas, dum expletur opus Dei, prostrati solo oratorii ab omnibus petant orationem propter excessus, ne qui forte subripuerint in via, visus aut auditus malae rei aut otiosi sermonis. Nec praesumat quisquam referre alio quaecumque foris monasterium viderit aut audierit, quia plurima destructio est.*" McCann, *The Rule of Saint Benedict*, p. 153-4.

[134] McCann, *The Rule of Saint Benedict*, Ch 50, 51, and 55, p. 117, 125.

[135] Symons, Ch 11, p. 7.

unexpected hospitality while travelling.[136] Like the *Benedictine Rule*, the *Regularis Concordia* requires those on journeys to pray at the appointed hours, but it adds that if they were on horseback, they had to dismount first.[137] These are the Rules that guided monks behaviour.

Pilgrims and Church Goers

Lay people in late Saxon Wessex would have often made trips for religous reasons and here these will be considered in two categories: first there were the more routine journeys necessary for Christian worship and second, there were pilgrimages.

One of the journeys made regularly in late Saxon Wessex was to the local church to take part in baptisms, hear sermons and mass, and receive pennance. While some of the local churches were also places of burial, not all manorial churches had graveyards, as can be seen in 'II Edgar' which set out payments of tithes according to whether or not a thegn's church had a graveyard.[138] Therefore, in some cases journeys for burials would have been longer, to an old minster rather than to the local parish church.

Trips in this category were more like the farmer's to his fields, than the long journeys of the royal court and the military. However, some of the same issues apply. For example, the weather still had a great effect on the people who were making the relatively short trips to church. The *Life of St Æthelwold* relates the story of one of the saint's early miracles which involved helping his nurse go to the church. On a feast day, Æthelwold's nurse wanted to go to church to pray, but there was such a great rain storm that she was unable to leave the house. She began to pray and she and the young Æthelwold were miraculously transported to the church.[139] Thus they were able to attend church without the discomfort of having to brave the

[136]Symons, Ch. 11, p. 8.

[137]Symons, Ch 11, p. 7.

[138]Robertson, *Laws*, 'II Edgar' 1.1, 2, 2.1, p. 21; Blair, 'Secular Minster Churches in Domesday Book', p. 119; Blair, 'Minster Churches in the Landscape', p. 57; Morris, *Churches in the Landscape*, p. 228.

[139]Lapidge and Winterbottom, *Æthelwold*, Ch 5, p. 8-9.

storm. Again, even if this may not be taken at face value, it shows that the Anglo-Saxons were concerned with the effect that a storm could have even on comparatively short journeys.

Another class of religious traveller was the pilgrim and the cult of saints became increasingly popular in the tenth century.[140] Pilgrims could travel in large group or small groups, they could be distinguished or common and they could travel very long distances or quite short ones.

Some of the pilgrimages which stand out the most in the sources are the ones taken by upper class West Saxons, kings, thegns and higher ecclesiastics to Rome. Some of these journeys may have started and ended within Wessex. For example, King Alfred went twice to Rome, once as a boy in 853 and then with his father in 855.[141] People were clearly worried that they might never return from their pilgrimages to distant lands.[142] There are a few wills in which this is clearly stated. In Ketel's will of 1052 to 1066, it says "And if I do not come back again. . .".[143] Further, when it is referring to Ketel's agreement with his stepdaughter, Ælfgifu, the provision is made that ". . . if death befall us both on the way to Rome. . ." the estate in question was to go to Bury St Edmund's.[144] Similarly when Ulf and his wife Madselin went to Jerusalem, their will, written between 1066 and *c.* 1068, had provisions both for if they returned and if they did not.[145] Two wills of Siflæd survive and the second states that it is the one made when "she went across the sea".[146] The people making these journeys and wills were aware that they were putting themselves in danger and were putting their affairs in order before setting out. The need to have matters taken care

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[140]D. W. Rollason, *Saints and Relics in Anglo-Saxon England* (Oxford, 1989) p. 187.

[141]Keynes and Lapidge, '*Asser's Life of King Alfred*', chapters 8 and 11, p. 69-70.

[142]See also F. Barlow, *The English Church,1000-1066* (London, 1963) p. 291-2.

[143]"*and gif ic ongein ne cume . . .* ". Whitelock, *Wills*, p. 88-9. S 1519.

[144]"*and gif vnc þan fordsith sceot on Rome weye . . .* ". Whitelock, *Wills*, p. 90-1. S 1519.

[145]Whitelock, *Wills*, p. 95, 207.

[146]"*tho sche ouer se ferde.*" Whitelock, *Wills*, p. 94-5. S 1525.

of was included in the *Leges Henrici Primi* which stated: "If anyone goes to Rome or Jerusalem or distant parts, he shall appoint a person to whom he commits the care of his affairs."[147] This law would also mean that someone was able to conduct business on behalf of travellers while they were away and this would have been important for those who were on such lengthy journeys. The pilgrimages overseas, however, were not the only ones of importance.

There were many significant pilgrimage sites in late Saxon Wessex. A list of saints' resting places in England, the *Secgan be tham Godes sanctum the on Engla lande ærost reston,* was recorded in two surviving texts dating to the early and mid-eleventh century (fig. 60).[148] West Saxon places included in this document are: Abingdon, Old Minster, New Minster and Nunnaminster in Winchester, Romsey, Wilton, Shaftesbury, Glastonbury, Congresbury, Exeter, Tavistock, Malmesbury, Wimborne Minster, Milton Abbas, and Amesbury. Here we will briefly consider a few saints' cults and pilgrimage sites.

Swithun was bishop of Winchester from 852 until his death in 863 and little is known about his life. He was buried outside of the Old Minster, Winchester until 971 when his remains were moved to a more splendid tomb by King Edgar and Bishop Æthelwold. Their promotion of his cult was successful and his shrine became a focal point for pilgrimage.[149] Swithun, moreover, was not the only saint whose relics were at Winchester. The list of saint's resting places also included Birinus, Hedde, Justus, Æthelwold, Alfheah, Birnstan, and Frithestan at Old Minster, Judoc and Grimald at New Minster and Eadburh at Nunnaminster.[150]

Shaftesbury was also an important site for pilgrimage, having relics of two royal saints: Ælfgifu, mother of King Edgar, and

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[147]"*Si quis Roman uel Iersualem in regiones longinquas ierit, habeat eum cui rerum suarum curam commiserit*". Downer, *Leges Henrici Primi* , # 61.15, p. 199.

[148]A third was destroyed in the Cotton Library fire. For a discussion on this text see: D. W. Rollason, 'List of saint's resting-places in Anglo-Saxon England', *Anglo-Saxon England* 7 (1978) p. 61-93.

[149]Biddle, *Winton*, p. 461; Lapidge, 'Swithun' in *Blackwell Encyclopaedia*, p. 437; Rollason, *Saints and Relics* , esp. p. 182-186; W. W. Skeat, ed., *Ælfric's Lives of Saints*, Early English Text Society, 76 & 82 (1881, 1885, reprint 1999) p. 441-71

[150]Rollason, 'List of saints' resting places', p. 91-2.

her grandson Edward, King and Martyr (d. 978). The cult of Edward the Martyr grew quickly from the time of his death. It was promoted by his half-brother and successor Æthelred the Unready and by Cnut.[151] Æthelred also promoted the cult of his half-sister, St Edith, at Wilton.

Glastonbury was credited with having relics of Aidan and Patrick in the list of resting places. The life of St Dunstan, recorded that "Irish pilgrims, as well as other crowds of the faithful, cherished that place of Glastonbury, which I have mentioned, with great affection, especially in the honour of the blessed Patick the younger, who is said to rest there happily in the Lord."[152] Thus the tomb of Patrick, in particular, brought pilgrims from near and far to Glastonbury.

Journeys to saints' shrines, were undertaken by people from all levels of society. When discussing miracle stories from saints' lives, Rollason pointed out that from the tenth century, those involved in pilgrimage were often lay people, from lower classes and suffering from disabilities.[153] One such story was recorded by Wulfstan in his *Life of Saint Æthelwold.* It recounts the story of Ælfhelm, a blind man from Wallingford. Ælfhelm had a vision of Æthelwold who told him to go to his tomb at Winchester in order to have his sight restored. Ælfhelm journeyed to Winchester and was led to Æthelwold's tomb. After praying for the night, his sight was restored and, as the *Life* says, "In the morning he no longer needed a guide, and returned homewards, his sight restored, rejoicing and blessing the Lord in his heart and mind."[154] This miracle story thus illustrates a

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[151]For discussions on the cult of Edward the Martyr, see: C. Fell, 'Edward, King and Martyr and the Anglo-Saxon Hagiographic tradition', *Ethelred the Unready: Papers from the Millenary Conference*, Ed. D. Hill, British Archaeological Reports 59 (1978) p. 1-13; D. W. Rollason, 'The cult of murdered royal saints in Anglo-Saxon England', *Anglo-Saxon England* 11 (1983) p. 1-22; B. Yorke, 'Edward, King and Martyr: A Saxon Murder Mystery', *Studies in the Early History of Shaftesbury Abbey.* ed. Laurence Keen (Dorchester, 1999) p. 99-116.

[152]*EHD I*, # 234, p. 879-8. "*Porro Hibernensium peregrini locum, quem dixi, Glestoniæ, sicut et cæteræ fidelium turbæ, magno colebant affectu, et maxime ob Beati Patricii junioris honorem, qui faustus ibidem in Domino quievisse.*" Stubbs, *Dunstan*, ch. 5, p. 10-11.

[153]Rollason, *Saints and Relics*, p. 187.

[154] " . . . *et mane facto iam ampluis ductore non indigens ad propria cum gaudio reuersus est videns, corde et animo Dominum benedicens.*" Lapidge and Winterbottom, *Æthelwold*, Ch 42, p. 64-7.

type of religious travel, a type in which a person travelled to a shrine for a cure and underlines the logistical requirement of the disabled for a carer.

Ælfric's life of St Swithun contains numerous stories of pilgrims being cured by visiting the saint's tomb in Winchester. Unfortunately, Ælfric seldom said where the pilgrims began their journeys or what the journeys themselves were like. There are, however, a few exceptions to this. The longest journey recorded in this life was made by an Anglo-Saxon who had gone to Rome hoping to be cured of his blindness, but this did not work. While there, he heard of recent miracles at the tomb of St Swithun, immediately returned to England and regained his sight in Winchester.[155] Ælfric also recorded two pilgrimages from the Isle of Wight, journeys which obviously required access to boats. The first of these was undertaken by three blind women and their *dumbne* guide, who were all healed at the tomb in Winchester.[156] The second was about a bedridden thegn who had a dream involving the saint. After he woke up, he was carried to a local church where he was healed. He then made a pilgrimage to Winchester.[157] This life contains two other interesting stories about the physically disabled being healed by St Swithun. In one, after having a dream about being healed, a *ceorl egeslicc gehoferod* made a pilgrimage to the saint's tomb with the aid of his two crutches and was made fit.[158] In the other, a disabled thegn wanted to be taken to Winchester in a horse litter, and when he voiced his wish, he was cured. He then made his pilgrimage on foot.[159]

While the miraculous elements of these stories and the knowledge that they were written to glorify the saints make them problematic, they do contain much useable evidence. They show the importance of the saints' tombs as foci of pilgrimage and give an indication of the distances people were willing to travel to visit these West Saxon shrines. They show the involvement of

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[155] Skeat, *Ælfric's Lives of Saints*, p. 455.

[156]Skeat, *Ælfric's Lives of Saints*, p. 451-3.

[157]*Ibid*, p. 463.

[158]*Ibid*, p. 449.

[159]*Ibid.*, p. 453.

people from widely differing classes and that pilgrimages were untaken by people looking for cures. Ælfric's life of Swithun reports that the Old Minster was "hung all round with crutches, and with the stools of cripples".[160] If this was the case, the shrine must have attracted people looking for cures, as the stories report. It is also noteworthy that the impetus for some of the journeys is reported as being a command from one of the saints.

While many pilgrimages were undertaken because of a deep religious conviction on behalf of the pilgrim, others were undertaken as a punishment imposed by the kings, courts, or religious leaders. The laws of Cnut give two cases in which a person was to do pilgrimage as part of making amends for a crime. Firstly, if a man killed a minister of the altar he was required to make a pilgrimage.[161] Secondly, if a minister of the altar killed someone or committed another serious crime, he had to go on a pilgrimage to wherever the pope decreed.[162] This law is much the same as 'VIII Æthelred' 27.[163] In these cases the very impetus for the journey came from earthly authorities: the king and pope.

Pilgrimages were both physical and spiritual journeys and the manner of travelling was an important aspect of it. For example, the *Vita Ædwardi*, written in 1066-7 for his widow Queen Edith, includes a story about a vision in which a blind man would be cured if he visited eighty churches, travelling barefoot and wearing only woollen cloths.[164] Thus to be cured, this man would have had to travel considerable distances in great hardship. In most cases, pilgrims were responsible for providing themselves with the necessities while on journeys. However, monasteries were particulary required to look after pilgrims. St Æthelwold was praised for being a receiver of pilgrims and St Dunstan

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[160] "*Seo ealde cyrce wæs eall behangen mid criccum and mid creopera sceamelum*". *Ibid*, p. 468-9.

[161] Robertson, *Laws*, 'II Canute' 39, p. 197.

[162] *Ibid.*, 'II Canute' 42, p. 197.

[163] *Ibid.*, 'VIII Æthelred', 27, p. 125.

[164] F. Barlow, *The Life of King Edward who rests at Westminster* (London, 1962) p. 65.

dedicated himself to the benefit of pilgrims and strangers.[165] Therefore, although pilgrimages were difficult, pilgrims themselves had special status.

Those who work

Having looked at the main concerns of those travellers involved with royal itineration, those who fought and those who prayed, it is time to consider those who worked. For the purposes of this discussion, those included here are the people involved in the production, distribution and consumption of goods and those involved in estate management and the local courts. This group includes the majority of the people of late Saxon Wessex, but it is the area about which history says the least. Nonetheless there are several important points which can be made. Indeed, it is vital to our understanding of the system of travel and communications to look at the details of why and how these people were journeying and to compare them to royal, military and religious travellers.

Perhaps the most obvious difference between this category of traveller and royal itineration or military movements is the size of the group and the average length of their journeys. With the exception of long distance traders and riding-men, the journeys made by those who worked were relatively short and were made by small groups. However this does not diminish the importance of this type of traveller as there were thousands of journeys belonging to this category made every day in late Saxon Wessex. The journeys in this category are very different in nature from the majority of those already discussed. These are not the monarchs, the warriors and the clerics on business of great religious or national importance. These are the workers and traders, as well as great men fulfilling their local and regional duties. Many trips in this category were extremely local and they generally went unrecorded. The journeys made by these people and for these activities used many levels of the communications network, were conducted in many different ways and

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[165]See *Benedictine Rule*, esp. chapter 53, 56; Lapidge and Winterbotton, *Wulfstan of Winchester: Life of St Æthelwold*, p. 45; *EHD I*, 'Life of St Dunstan', # 234, ch 25, p. 902.

can add greatly to our overall understanding of the system of travel and communications in late Saxon Wessex.

Estates and Agriculture

The majority of people in late Saxon Wessex worked on land which was owned by the elite - royalty, nobles, churches and monasteries. The elite often owned estates across England and from them were able to raise resources. The role of the estate in royal itineration has been sketched out above. The successful running of these estates was a complex affair, based on the interdependency of people of various classes and in itself required many journeys to be undertaken.

The workings of an estate is clearly shown in *Rectitudines Singularum Personarum,* a late tenth- or early eleventh-century text written in eastern Somerset or western Wiltshire.[166] This text details the rights and duties of the people connected to an estate, from the lord and *geneat* to the various agricultural workers and slaves. A small number of these duties were directly related to travel or involved travelling. At the top, the thegn had to make journeys to fulfil his obligations to attend his superior and guard the coast. Next in the hierarchy was the *geneat* whose duties included riding and performing carrying services, supplying cartage, entertaining the lord, conducting strangers to the manor, attending his superior, guarding the horses and carrying messages near and far. The *gebur* had to perform cartage. The man looking after the bees, if he had a good amount of land, and the taxable swineherd both were to have a horse. The provision for the beekeeper said that the horse could be used by the lord or that the beekeeper could be required to go himself. The swineherd's horse was to be available for the lord's needs.[167]

The estate system allowed for the transportation of goods between estates owned by the same men. Jennifer Bourdillon, when looking into the evidence for the animal provisioning of *Hamwic* ,

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[166]Crossley-Holland, 'An Estate Memorandum: Duties and Perquisites', *The Anglo-Saxon World*, p. 257-61; P. D. A. Harvey, '*Rectitudines Singluarum Personarum* and *Gerefa*', English Historical Review, 108 (1993), 1-22; Yorke, *Wessex*, p. 256.

[167]Crossley-Holland, 'An Estate Memorandum: Duties and Perquisites', *The Anglo-Saxon World*, p. 257-61

has stressed the importance of multiple estates. By examining the bones found in excavation, she has shown that animal husbandry did not take place within *Hamwic* and that, as the remains include all parts of animals, they must have been brought there on the hoof.[168] She then speculated on how we should imagine them arriving and on how these trips might have been controlled:

> Had the animals at Hamwic come from far? One might suspect that the land at that time was not geared for the distant travel of flocks and herds, but one might be wrong. In fact if there was strong organisation from some power outside the settlement, the good well-ordered countryside may have stretched far afield. The historians talk of multiple estates, and Hamwic maybe was part of some royal complex of properties; or some of its provisioning might have come from taxes due to the king.[169]

Thus, she was suggesting that it was possible for the animals to have been brought over large distances and that people in positions of authority were involved in making it happen. Therefore, one aspect of estate work was the production of foodstuffs.

Evidence from charter boundary clauses shows a few routeway elements which were connected to agricultural activities. For example, there was a *stoc weg* (farm way) in the Henstridge.[170] There are also several fords and a bridge which have domestic animals used as their modifiers and were thus likely used in farming.

Traders

Goods were transported all over Wessex and many journeys were made in the course of their production and redistribution. The farmers had to go to the fields, the herders moved through the countryside with their animals, the traders moved goods to markets, and the consumers carried the merchandise home. The production of any goods required the worker to gather resources and to go to the place of production. Every farmer, craftsman

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[168] J. Bourdillon, 'The Animal Provisioning of Saxon Southampton', *Environment and Economy in Anglo-Saxon England* Ed. O. Rackham (London,1994), 122-123.

[169] *Ibid.*, p. 124.

[170] S 570.

and smith, or their deputies, took part in journeys of this nature, but in a dissertation of this size it is not possible to look at examples of all kinds of travelling associated with the production of goods. Some sense of the travelling needed to produce agricultural goods is seen above and this section will concentrate on merchants and consumers.

While farmers and estate owners may have played a role in transporting and selling good, there were professinal merchants in late Saxon Wessex. There is much more documentary evidence about the people who were active in trading goods than there is for those who were producing them. Traders, as men whose livelihoods depended on the safe transportation of goods, were very aware of the dangers that their peripatetic existence presented. This is very well illustrated in Ælfric's *Colloquy*. His merchant says:

> I go aboard my ship with my wares, and row over parts of the sea, selling my goods, and buying precious things which cannot be produced in this country. Then, with great peril on the sea, I bring them here to you. Sometimes I suffer ship wreck, and lose all my things scarce escaping with my life.[171]

This merchant travels overseas, but this is relevant to this discussion as the West Saxon merchants who went overseas had to come and go from the Wessex coast. Moreover, those traders who sailed along the English coast were also in danger from the sea.

Further evidence of the dangers faced by merchants comes from the increased status they could gain if they were successful. According to an early eleventh-century compilation on status, ". . . if a trader prospered, that he crossed thrice the open sea at his own expense, he was then afterwards entitled to the rights of a thegn."[172] Through this, the king was able to encourage traders

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[171]Crossley-Holland, 'A Colloquy ', p. 224. "*Ic astige min scyp mid hlæstum minum, ⁊ rowe ofer sælice dælas, ⁊ cype mine thingc, ⁊ bicge thicg dyrwyrthe tha on thisum lande ne beoth acennede, ⁊ ic hit togelæde eow hider mid micclan plihte ofer sæ, ⁊ hwylon forlidenesse ic tholie mid lyre ealra thinga minra, uneathe cwic ætberstende.*" G. N. Garmonsway, ed., *Ælfric's Colloquy* (London, 1939), p. 33. The benefits of examining material from colloquies must out-weigh the problems of using these vocabulary exercises in historical discussions. While it is acknowledged that the passages do not record specific events, it is probable that they present realistic situations and will be used in that light.

[172]*EDH I*, #51, 6, p. 469. "⁊ *gif massere getheah, thæt he ferde thrige ofer wid sæ be his agenum cræfte, sa wæs thonne syththan thegnrihtes weorthe.*" Liebermann, I, p. 458. This section of the compilation on status is only in the *Textus Roffensis*.

to make dangerous journeys and to reward their accomplishments.

The other reward for the trader was financial. However, their prosperity depended on not losing too many goods through shipwreck or theft. That shipwreck was a problem can be seen in above-quoted passage from Ælfric. This is confirmed by an examination of rights in charters. One of the rights that the king granted to landholders was the right to any shipwreck that washed up on an estate's shores. A writ of King Edward the Confessor records him giving Ramsey Abbey the rights to shipwreck in Brancaster and Ringstead in Norfolk.[173] The presence of charters granting these rights shows that shipwrecks must have been common.

Although there was no royal protection for traders' goods lost at sea, the West Saxon kings were concerned with providing protection for merchants and their goods. When Æthelred made an agreement with the Viking army in 991 or 994, he was concerned with the safety of his traders, as the treaty included provisions which stated when traders should not be persecuted. For example, any trading ship in an estuary was to be left in peace as long as it was not driven ashore. If this happened and the men fled to the borough, then the men's lives and the goods that they carried with them were to be left in peace.[174] These provisions were for any ship whether it belonged to a group involved in the peace treaty or not. There were further arrangements made for traders from places involved in the treaty. They were to have peace on land and water, inside and outside the estuary. If one of Æthelred's subjects went to an area outside the treaty, he and his goods were to have peace if the army went there. He and his goods were also to be left in peace if he drew his ship ashore, built a hut or pitched a tent.[175] However, such a trader was not allowed to cooperate too closely with those outside the treaty, as can be seen in the next clause in the treaty:

> If he bears his goods into a house in common with those of the men not included in the truce, he shall forfeit his goods, but he himself shall have protection and his

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[173]S 1109.

[174]Robertson, *Laws*, 'Æthelred II', 2, 2.1, p. 56, 57.

[175]Robertson, *Laws*, 'II Æthelred', 3, 3.1, 3.2, p. 56, 57.

life [shall be spared], if he makes himself known.[176] This last clause can be seen not just as providing the traders some sort of protection under the law, but also as an attempt to control their activities.

There are many other passages in the documentary evidence which can be seen as efforts by various kings to control the activities of traders. As seen in Chapter 3, the kings worked to funnel traffic through particular places. There were attempts to monitor trade and traders as can be seen in many of the late West Saxon laws codes. For example, the 'Laws of Alfred' demanded that traders present themselves to the king's reeve in a public meeting before going into the country to do business and all those who joined them were also to present themselves to the king's reeve.[177] This law can be seen 'in action' in 789 when the port-reeve in Dorchester greeted three Viking ships, expecting them to be carrying traders and their wares. However, instead of allowing themselves to be escorted to the king's residence, the Vikings murdered the reeve.[178] Thus this unfortunate reeve died while trying to control the movements of the seamen who he had thought were traders.

It is often widely assumed that traders were not active on Sundays. Assemblies, markets, hunting and other secular activities were forbidden on Sundays in many of the law codes, but these laws affected local travel and local activities more than long distance trading. 'IV Æthelred' shows that some merchants were expected to be travelling on Sundays. It records tolls required at Billingsgate (London) and includes the provision for tolls being paid on cloth on Sunday and Tuesday and Thursday."[179] Therefore the law makers must have expected cloth merchants to be travelling on Sundays. [180]

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[176]Robertson, *Laws*, 'II Æthelred', 3.3, p. 58, 59. "*Gyf he his æhta bere geman thara unfrithmanna æhta into huse, tholie his æhta ⁊ æbbe sylf frith ⁊ feorh, gif he hine cythe.*" Liebermann, I, p. 222.

[177]*EHD I*, 'Laws of Alfred', 34, p. 413.

[178]*ASC s.a.* 789; *EHD I*, p. 180; A. Campbell, *Chronicle of Æthelweard* (London, 1962) *s.a.* 789, p. 27.

[179]Robertson, *Laws*, 'IV Æthelred', 2.3., p. 73.

[180]The laws of the Northumbrian priests forbid all carrying of goods by wagon, horse or on one's back, but travellers were allowed to carry sustenance for their needs.

While they were chiefly aimed at bringing in taxes, tolls themselves can be interpreted as a type of control over the traders. The collection tolls put a direct tax on those who were travelling in Late Saxon England and thus also controlled the routes used. In Devon, the place-name Galford has been interpreted as 'tax ford' and this place may have been the site of a battle between the Britons and the men of Devon in the early 820s.[181] It is located at SX 47 86 by the River Lew west of Dartmoor and may have been on a key route and taxing point between Devon and Cornwall.

Some tolls were encoded in law. 'IV Æthelred' gives the tolls required at Billingsgate in London. For example, small ships paid a half-penny and large ships with sails paid a full penny.[182] 'IV Æthelred' also makes provision for those who were accused of not paying tolls to clear themselves of the charges. The town-reeve, the village reeve or any other official was responsible for bring accusations against people who did not pay their tolls.[183] Further evidence of royal control of the toll system comes from charters. In a writ, King Edward the Confessor granted to Ramsey Abbey the market at Downham by water and by land with the right to tolls on all that was carried in and out of the market."[184] Closer to the study area, King Edgar granted to Abingdon the right to the royal tolls at *Hwitanclife* and *Portsmanna-hythe*.[185] In both of these cases, the kings granted rights to collect tolls. Tolls were therefore controlled by the central authority which on occasion granted the rights to them to other people. Interestingly in the two cited cases, the grants were made to monasteries.

The final stage in the redistribution network is the obtaining of the goods by the consumer. There is a colloquy written by Ælfric Bata in which a master plans a trip in order to get supplies. It reads in part as follows:

> Tomorrow I'll ride or sail to the city on an errand to buy what I need before winter comes, since now it's

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[181]*Devon I*, p. 187.

[182]Robertson, *Laws*, 'IV Æthelred', 1, p. 71.

[183]Robertson, *Laws*, 'IV Æthelred', 3, p. 73.

[184]S 1109; Harmer, *Writs*, # 61, p. 261.

[185]S 701; Finberg, *Wessex*, # 99, p. 50.

> summer and the weather and the roads are good and peaceful for walking, riding or sailing. Tomorrow sit with our boys in your school. Stay with them through the day until I get back in peace, God willing. Guard my clothes and the key to my lodging, our books and the key of my case, and especially the boys of our school, so they don't go wandering idle but stay busy doing something worthwhile until I come back from my errand, by the grace of God. [186]

This passage illustrates some of the concerns of the Anglo-Saxon consumers.

First, they had to chose how they were going to travel to their destination. This would have depended on several factors, such as whether there were waterways linking their homes and their destination or whether the landscape dictated a land route. Another factor was the availability of transportation, such as boats, carts, horses or other pack animals. Without access to any of these, the consumer would have been forced to walk and carry their purchases themselves.

Second, it indicates a consideration for the seasons and weather. The master was making sure that the school had enough supplies so that he would not have to travel in the winter. Ælfric Bata comments on the fact that the weather of the summer meant that travelling was better then, both by road and by water.

Third and final, there are a few phrases in this passage which show that travelling could be a dangerous affair. Ælfric Bata's master refers to returning by the will and grace of God. This is more than convention and reflects real fears that the Anglo-Saxon had of travelling.

Courts and Justice

The Anglo-Saxons had a system of justice which required much travel and the men of Late Saxon Wessex had a duty to work for the proper implementation of the law. This involved people from

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[186] "Ego uolo crás equitare siue nauigare ad ciuitatem propter meam necessitatem, et émere ibi que [hooked e] necessaria sunt mihi antequam hiemps aduenerit, quoniam [hooked e] estas est modo et bone uie et bone aure et tranquille [hooked e] ad ambulandum suie equitandum vel nauigandum. Et sede crás cum nostris pueris in gymnasio uestro, et mané cum eis tota die donec reuertar in pace, si Deus uolerit, et custodi uestimenta mea et hospitii mei clauem et libros nostros et clauem loculi mei et precipue scolam nostram, ne errantes uacent, sed ut utiles sint et aliquid boni operantes usque dum perueniam iterum de mea necessitate, gratia Dei.": S. Gwara, S. (ed) and D. Porter (trans) *Anglo-Saxon Conversations: The Colloquies of Ælfric Bata* . (Woodbridge, 1997), Colloquy 20, p. 120, 121.

all levels of society and from all vocations.

As seen in chapter three, Wessex was divided into administrative units of shires and hundreds, each of which had a court. H. R. Loyn has suggested that the king's court and the shire court were 'remote' and 'selective', so that it was to the hundred court meetings that the majority of the population would have turned for justice.[187] When looking at the evolution of the hundred court, he pointed to its tenth-century origins. The laws of Edward the Elder (899 - 924) and then laws of Athelstan (924 - 939) required reeves to hold regular meetings for the settlement of disputes. These meetings were not yet called hundred courts, but Athelstan's legislation in particluar was moving ever closer to the hundredal organization as it was later to be understood. It is not until the *Hundred Ordinance* that we can see a full statement about hundred courts.[188] The *Hundred Ordinance* was written in the mid-tenth century in a period ranging from late in the reign of Edmund (939 - 946) to early in the reign of Edgar (959 - 975).[189] Wormald has suggested that it could have been written either by an individual hundred or as a royal code. Either way, Wormald saw it as " . . . part of a heavily encouraged trend towards the organization of local peace initiatives."[190] The *Ordinance* itself includes statues which affected the movements of men. For example, it stipluated that the men of the hundred were to gather for the court every four weeks. It also made provision for calling together the men in a crisis and recorded that if they were required to follow a crinimal into another hundred, they were to contact and involve the man in charge of that hundred.[191]

Journeys related to the administration of justice were also included in the law code traditionally known as 'III Edgar', a code which was promolgated at Andover in before 963.[192] This code

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[187]Loyn, 'The Hundred', p. 1.

[188]Loyn, 'The Hundred', p. 6.

[189]Loyn, 'The Hundreds', p. 6; Wormald, *Making of English Law*, p. 378.

[190]Wormald, *Making of Englsih Law*, p. 378.

[191]*EHD I*, # 39, 2 , 5, p. 429-30.

[192]Wormald, *Making of English Law*, p. 313-7; and Whitelock, *EHD I*, p. 431.

is a full statement on the organisation of the system of justice. Of particular relevance here are the laws concerned with the frequency and composition of court meetings. It stated that the hundred court was to meet as previously established, that the borough court was to be held three times a year and that the shire court was to be held twice a year.[193] Furthermore, it required a bishop and an ealdorman to be at the shire meetings.[194] Thus there were fixed times when men had to make the journey to the courts.

'III Edgar' also included laws in which the people would have had to have made trips in the course of administering justice. Men chosen from those at a meeting were to ride to one who was frequently accused and did not attend the meetings. Furthermore, those who refused to ride to him were to be fined.[195] It is interesting to note that the law code says they were to ride, thus implying an availability of horses. Men were likely expected to arrive at the meeting on horseback rather than just on foot.

A charter, recording a land dispute in Herefordshire between 1016 and 1035 shows men travelling from a court meeting in the pursuit of justice.[196] It begins by recording that a shire court met at Aylestone (Herefordshire) and that those present included: Bishop Athelstan, Ealdorman Ranig, Edwin who was son of Ealdorman Leofwine, Leofwine, Wulfstan's son, Thurkil the White, Tofi the Proud, sheriff Bryning, Æthelgeard of Frome, Leofwine of Frome, Godric of Stoke and all the thegns of the Herefordshire.[197] Clearly this was a sizable gathering and many travelled across the shire to be there. A man, Edwin, Enniaun's son, went to that meeting to have settled a dispute with his mother over a piece of land. The men of the shire sent the thegns Leofwine of Frome, Æthelsige the Red, and Wynsige the shipman to see the mother and to learn of her case. After telling the thegns that the land was hers and that she was leaving it to her kinswoman, the wife of

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[193]Robertson, *Laws*, 'III Edgar', 5, 5.1, p. 27.

[194]*Ibid.*, 5.2.

[195]*Ibid.*, 7, 7.2.

[196]S 1462.

[197]*EHD I*, p. 602-3.

Thurkil the White, Edwin's mother instructed them to take her message to the shire court. They then rode to the meeting and repeated her words. Thurkil asked that the members of the court uphold the mother's wishes and with their permission he rode to Hereford Cathedral and had this written in the gospel-book.

This charter shows four distinct groups of journey that were needed in order for the dispute to be properly settled. First, the men of the shire had to come together. Second, the man with the complaint made the trip to the meeting place. Third, three thegns were sent to gather more information and report back to the court. Fourthly, one of the leading men journeyed to the Cathedral to have the verdict properly recorded. This system of justice depended on the ability to travel and to communicate with safety and speed.

The law codes, which were the basis of justice in late Saxon Wessex, contain many clauses which relate to different aspects of the system of travel. Where they refer specifically to one of the other categories of travel, I have dealt with them in the appropriate section. There are a few, however, which cannot be neatly classified and will thus be mentioned here.

It has already been established that obtaining food and shelter were important considerations for the Anglo-Saxon traveller. The granting of shelter, moreover, had a role to play in the judicial system of Anglo-Saxon Wessex, as giving food and shelter symbolised the link between two people whereas refusing them showed that they had no bonds with each other. There are a number of laws relating to providing hospitality. The laws of Edmund says that a family is free of a vendetta if they abandon the one who has committed murder, if they do not pay the compensation he owes and if they do not give food and shelter to him.[198] Other law codes forbid giving any food or shelter to a fugitive and the punishment for doing so was paying five pounds to the king.[199] Thus while controlling the justice system, the king was also controlling a criminal's ability to find accommodation.

There were also limits on how long a man could stay with someone who was not his lord. Cnut decreed that ". . . no-one

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[198]Robertson, *Laws*, 'II Edmund', 1.1, p. 9.

[199]Robertson, *Laws*, 'II Canute', 13.2, p. 181.

shall entertain any man for more than three days, unless he is committed to his charge by the man whom he has been serving."[200]

The Individual Traveller

Some of the people who were travelling for any number of reasons were in fact travelling alone. The individual traveller was more vulnerable than were travellers making their journeys in groups and their concerns differed, especially in terms of the dangers that they faced. There are many different types of dangers facing travellers. Above we have seen what steps were taken by some of the groups to avoid starvation and exposure while travelling, as well as how they dealt with the forces of nature and finding their way. They also had to be concerned with being the victims of crime. In these matters, the individual would have been much more vulnerable than those travelling in groups. Individuals also had the added concern of how they, as single strangers, would be treated by those they met on their travels. The stranger, as an unknown element, was viewed with suspicion and did not fit into 'normal' Anglo-Saxon society. The fears, problems and issues facing the individual traveller have been used in Old English poetry, but such a person was more than a literary figure. Strangers were real people, moving at the edge of society.

The fears associated with travelling which were felt by individuals can be seen in their poems, prayers and charms. The following journey charm, which was written down in the early eleventh century, is particularly illustrative and as it is in the first person singular, it shows the viewpoint of the individual who would have used it:

> By this rod I protect myself and commend myself into God's keeping - against that wounding stab, against that wounding blow, against that fierce horror, against that great terror which is hateful to everyone, and against everything hateful that comes into the land.
>
> A charm of overcoming I chant; a rod of overcoming I carry -overcoming by word, overcoming by deed. May this avail me so that no nightmare upsets me nor my

[200]Robertson, *Laws*, 'II Canute', 28, p. 189. "*And thæt nan man nænne man ne underfo na længe thonne threo niht, butan hine se befæste, the he ær folgade.*" Liebermann, I, p. 330.

> belly afflicts me nor fear for my life ever arises; but may the Almighty save me, and the Son and the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, the Lord worthy of all glory, inasmuch as I have obeyed the Creator of the heavens.
>
> Abraham and Isaac and such men, Moses and Jacob and David and Joseph and Eve and Anna and Elizabeth, Sarah and Mary too, mother of Christ, and also brothers Peter and Paul, and also a thousand of your angels I call to my aid against all foes. May they lead me and protect me and preserve my going. keep me entirely and rule over me, guiding my work. May God, the Hope of heaven, and the array of the saints and the multitude of those renowned for overcoming, of those steadfast in truth, and of angels, be a hand over my head. I entreat with willing heart that Matthew be my helmet, Mark my mail-coat, radiant, confident, Luke my sword, sharp and shimmering edge, John my shield, and the Seraph, created beautiful in heaven, my spear.
>
> Forth I go: may I meet with friends, with all the inspiration of angels and counsel of the blessed. Now I invoke the God of overcoming, the grace of God, for a good journey and mild and light winds upon the coasts. I have heard of the winds rolling back the water, of men constantly preserved from all their foes. May I meet with friends, so that I may dwell in the safe-keeping of the Almighty, protected from the loathsome enemy who harasses my life - firm-founded in the inspiration of the angels and within the holy land of the puissant Lord of the heavens, the while that I am allowed to dwell in this life, Amen.[201]

Thus the person saying this was asking for the Lord to protect him from bodily harm, poor weather and dangerous people.

Using charms or prayers for protection while travelling must have been quite common. In his homily on auguries, Ælfric warned against using superstition to protect oneself. He wrote:

> Neither may any man give heed to days on which he shall journey, or on which he shall return, because God created all the seven days . . . But he who wishes to journey any whither, let him sing his *Paternoster* and *Credo*, if he know [them], and cry to his Lord, and cross himself, and travel without care through God's protection, without the devil's sorceries.[202]

It would be interesting to know more about how people might have choosen days for travelling or about the 'devil's sorceries'.

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[201]Bradley, *Anglo-Saxon Poetry*, p. 548-9. For the Old English, see: E. van Kirk Dobbie, ed., *The Anglo-Saxon Minor Poems*, Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records 6 (New York, 1942) # 11, p. 126-8.

[202]"*Ne sceal nan man cepan be dagum on hwilcum dæge he fare. oththe on hwylcum he gecyrre. forthan the god gesceop ealle tha seofan dagas . . . As sethe hwider faran wille singe his paternoster. and credan. gif he cunne. and clypige to his dryhten. and bletsige hine sylfne . and sithige orsorh thurh godes gescyldnysse. butan thæra sceoccena wiglunga.*" Skeat, ed., *Ælfric's Lives of Saints*, p. 370-1.

The above quoted journey charm, while using Christian elements, may well hark back to earlier, pagan charms.[203] Christian prayers, as proposed by Ælfric, could have been said by beginning or ending their journeys at the many gate-side churches which, as seen in chapter two, became common in the late Saxon period.[204] That this happened may be seen in the *Vita Ædwardi* which tells a story in which prayers were said before leaving a port. Harold Godwinson gathered with his men and ships in Bosham (Sussex) before beginning his period in exile and, according to the*Vita Ædwardi*, he prayed for guidance and for safety at sea.[205] Because of this passage's placement in the *Vita Ædwardi*, a source written for Harold's sister, it may be more rhetoric than fact. However, this event was also recorded on the Bayeux Tapestry (fig. 54).

Fear for personal saftey must have been paramount. The *Vita Ædwardi* records that before Tostig Godwinson became earl of Northumbria the lack of law there was such that "even parties of twenty or thirty men could scarce travel without being either killed or robbed by the multitude of robbers in wait".[206] However, Tostig persecuted the robbers and restored order. Again, this espisode is recorded in a work that set out to praise the family of Godwine, so its veracity must be questioned. Nonetheless, it shows that peace and good administration benefitted travellers and that there was, literally, safety in numbers.[207]

One particular type of person travelling alone was the exile.

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[203]Bradley, *Poetry*, p. 544, 548.

[204]Morris, *Churches in the Landscape*, p. 216-7.

[205]Barlow, *Life of King Edward*, p. 21.

[206]"*ut uix triginta uel uiginti in uno comitatu possent ire, quin aut interficerentur aut depredarentur ab insidiantium latronum multitudine.*" Barlow, *The Life of King Edward*, p. 51.

[207]This is a common motif and was used by Bede, who wrote: " It is related that there was so great a peace in Britain, wherever the dominion of King Edwin reached, that, as the proverb still runs, a woman with a new-born child could walk throughout the island from sea to sea and take no harm. The king cared so much for the good of the people that, in various places where he had noticed clear springs near the highway, he caused stakes to be set up and bronze drinking cups to be hung on them for the refreshment of travellers. No one dared to lay hands on them except for their proper purpose because they feared the king greatly nor did they wish to, because they loved him dearly." B. Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors, eds., *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (Oxford, 1969) ii.16, p. 192-3.

While administering justice, the kings and their official could force someone to travel by making them exiles. Exiles were a part of the system of travel in late Saxon Wessex, but acted outside of it. They were a part of the system in that they were created for in the law codes. One could be outlawed for ignoring the will of the court four times or for killing a priest. In the case of the former, the criminal could be pardoned by the king and in the case of the latter, the murder could make amends by going on pilgrimage.[208] Thus exile was not the only punishment that could be inflicted. However, if one became an outlaw in one area, one was an outlaw in the whole kingdom.[209] The exile operated outside the system of travel in that they were no longer part of normal life. People should not have offered them food, drink, shelter or transport. They were abandoned by society. Not all exiles, however, found themselves friendless. Notable expections are St Dunstan, Queen Emma and members of the Godwine family. Emma , for example, fled to her family and connections in Normandy.

Although all of those undertaking journeys to distant places were necessarily moving through regions where they were strangers, the stranger travelling alone was 'friendless'. The difficulty of being in this position is illustrated by a passage in a poem from the *Exeter Book*. *The Fortunes of Men* reads in part as follows:

> One must needs travel on foot in ways remote and carry his provisions with him and tread the spray-flung track and the dangerous territory of alien peoples. He has few surviving providers; everywhere the friendless man is disliked because of his misfortunes.[210]

Bradley called a this a ". . . wisdom-poem cataloguing aspects of human experience of life and death".[211] Through it we can perhaps gain insight into how it would have felt to be the lonely traveller.

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[208]Robertson, *Laws*, 'Edgar I', 3.1, p. 17; 'II Canute', 42, p. 197.

[209]Robertson, *Laws*, 'III Æthelred' , 10, p. 69.

[210]Bradley, 'The Fortunes of Men', lines 27-32, p. 342. "*Sum sceal on fethe on feorwegas/ nyde gongan ond his nest beran,/ tredan uriglast eltheodigra/ frecne foldan; ah he feormendra/ lyt lifgendra, lath bith æghwær/ fore his wonsceaftum wineleas hæle.*" G. P. Krapp and E. van Kirk Dobbie, eds., *The Exeter Book* (New York, 1936, 1966), p. 154.

[211]Bradley, p. 341.

The stranger, moreover, was a real figure in West Saxon life and there are many law codes from throughout the whole Anglo-Saxon period which deal with issues relating to strangers, trying to find them a place in society. The stranger, to some extent, was seen as a dangerous element introduced into relatively closed societies. The stranger himself, on the other hand, was concerned for his own safety while he was far from home.

Travellers were, of course, obliged to follow all of the laws of the land. There were, moreover, a few laws specific to strangers and travellers from afar. The laws of Ine demanded that "[i]f a man from a distance or a foreigner goes through the wood off the track, and does not shout nor blow a horn, he is to be assumed to be a thief, to be either killed or redeemed."[212] If a man is thus killed, his kinsmen cannot then claim his wergild.[213] The laws of Wihtred of Kent from 695 contain a nearly identical passage.[214] An echo of these may be found in a statute attached to Edgar's law codes . It states that "[a] cow's bell, a dog's collar and a horn for blowing - each of these three shall be worth a shilling, and each is reckoned as an informer."[215] Thus this law was likely promoted throughout the Anglo-Saxon period. It was intended to protect the local population as strangers were required to make it known where they were. These strangers may have been travellers. By making legitimate travellers announce their presence, the kings may have been putting them at risk in that criminals would have been able to find them easily. However, if such a man was killed and the body was concealed for a long time, the family could claim the wergild.[216]

Cnut's laws set out procedure for dealing with a "friendless

[212]*EHD I*, no 32. 'Laws of Ine', 20, p. 401. "*Gif feorcund mon oththe fremede butan wege geond wudu one ne hrieme ne horn blawe for theof he bith to profianne oththe to sleanne oththe to ahesanne.*" Thorpe, *Ancient Laws*, p. 114-6.

[213]*EHD I*, no 32. 'Laws of Ine', 21, p. 401.

[214]*EHD I*, no. 31, 'Laws of Wihtred', 28, p. 364.

[215]Robertson, *Laws*, 'I Edgar', 8, p. 19. "*Hrytheres belle, hundes hoppe, blæshorn, thissa threora ælc bith anes scill weorth;* ⁊ *ælc is melda geteld.*" Liebermann, I, p. 194.

[216]*EHD I*, no 32. 'Laws of Ine', 21.1, p. 401.

man or one come from afar" who commits a crime.[217] If they could not find anyone to act as surety, they had to go to prison until facing the ordeal. Thus if no one could vouch for a man, he would be kept isolated until God could decide his fate. In conjunction with the above, Cnut's laws also said: "Verily, he who pronounces a more sever judgement upon one who is friendless or come from afar than upon one of his own acquaintances injures himself."[218] These two statutes show what must have been common attitudes towards strangers. In the first case, the people had to be protected from potentially dangerous visitors, but the visitors themselves were also important and need protection too.

Other laws were set up specifically to protect strangers by deterring people from harming them and, most importantly, giving them a place in society. 'VI Æthelred' says that the people "should not vex or oppress strangers and men from afar."[219] More commonly laws stated that the king would act as kinsman and protector to strangers.[220] These laws give someone who is travelling to places where they are not known a friend in the form of the king. And as Wulfstan wrote in his *Institutes of Polity*, a king was to order correct judgement for both friends and strangers.[221] As the king is responsible for peace in his kingdom, it is fitting that he should protect strangers. An Old English proverb, moreover, suggests that all people should be kind to strangers. It reads as follows: "Help both the known and the unknown where you can; who will have need of another is unknown."[222] Therefore, even if strangers were often treated as outsiders, there was a school of thought which encouraged people

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[217]Robertson, *Laws*, 'II Canute', 35, p. 195. ". . . *freondlæs man oththe feorran cuman*. . . ". Liebermann, I, p. 336.

[218]Robertson, *Laws*, 'II Canute', 35.1, p. 195. "*Witodlice, se the freondleasan* ⁊ *feorran cumenan wyrsan dom demeth thonne his geferan, he derath hym sylfum*." Liebermann, I, p. 336.

[219]Robertson, 'VI Æthelred', 48, *Laws*, p. 105. "*And thæt hi æltheodige men* ⁊ *feorran cumenen ne tyrian ne tynan*." Liebermann, I, p. 258.

[220]Robertson, *Laws*, 'VIII Æthelred', 33, p. 127 ;*Ibid*., 'II Canute', 40, p. 197.

[221]Wulfstan, *Institutes of Polity* §3, Swanton, p. 127.

[222]Swanton, p. 175. "*Help ægither gea cuthen gea uncuthen, thær thu muge; uncuth hware hwa othres bethurfe*." R. D. N. Warner, ed., *Early English homilies from the Twelfth Century MS Vesp. D. XIV* (London, 1917, 1971), lines 23-4, p. 4.

to be fair to them.

Conclusion

In this chapter, the great variety of travellers in late Saxon Wessex has been emphasised. We can make generalisations about the different groups on the roads and waterways. For example, royal court's methods of itineration were well establish and involved a series of rights and prerogatives. The military, however, lived outside the normal rules and the armies often fended for themselves. Other types of travellers had to journey under a mixture of self-reliance and control from above. However, it is through the bringing together of the evidence relating to so many different types of journeys, that it becomes possible to understand what travelling was like for the people of late Saxon Wessex. Moreover, it has been shown that system of travelling was hierarchical. Some parts supported the kings' interests and were strictly controlled, while other parts were less formal. The changes in the degree of control of the system marked out changes that were taking place more generally in the period 850 to 1066. Aspects of control are examined further in the next chapter.

Chapter 6
The System

In the previous chapters, travelling in late Saxon Wessex has been examined in terms of the environment, a settlement network, land routes and waterways, and the journeys made. It is through the bringing together of these different elements that the system of travel and communications can be inferred. In this chapter, models of this system will be proposed and interpreted.

The System of Travel and Communications: a description

So far this dissertation has been concerned with the basic question 'what was travelling like in late Saxon Wessex?' This has involved investigating who was travelling when, on what routes and what conditions were like for them. After the stage was set, each chapter looked at a particular aspect of the communications system and in each a series of levels was established. Chapter three established a settlement hierarchy. Chapter four considered different types of routes, both on land and on water. Chapter five looked at various classes of people and the journeys that they normally made. Thus, these different elements of the system of travel and communications can be supposed to have all functioned in a series of levels, and it may be possible to draw all of these elements together into one series of levels.

Michael Aston suggested that the roads and rivers which make up communications networks operate on four levels: national, provincial, regional and local.[1] This hierarchy of routes is directly related to the journeys which were made on them and the logistical requirements of the journeys. An acknowledgement of this is included in the *Leges Henrici Primi* in a section about the length of time someone must be given in order to respond to a summons to court:

> If he is in the same county he shall receive notice of the hearing amounting to seven days; if he is in an adjoining county, a period of fifteen days shall be appointed; if he is in the next county but one, the period of notice shall be three weeks; if he is in a

[1]Aston, *Interpreting the Landscape*, p. 145-6.

> county one further remove[d] than this, the period shall be four weeks; no further time than this is possible, wherever he might be in England, unless a lawful excuse detains him.
>
> If he is beyond the sea, he shall have six weeks and a day to allow for the sea passage, unless the business of the king's service or his own illness or storm or some lawfully sufficient reason calls for longer adjournment.[2]

This passage shows the relationship between time, distance and the increasing difficulties of travelling by setting out different requirements based on location. By combining Aston's levels with information on journeys, we can create a model which desribes the system of travel and communications in late Saxon Wessex

If we visualised the levels in this model as a series of four concentric circles, the centre, or first level, is 'home' and includes only journeys made within one estate. The radius of this circle is three to four miles. Multiple return journeys in this level could be made on foot during the course of one day. By journeying further away from this base, a traveller moved to a higher level in the system of travel and communications. The next circle, or second level, encompasses journeys made with an eight to twelve mile radius. This level was rougly equivalent to the distance from home that could be covered in a return journey in a day on foot or with a cart.[3] In the third level or circle are those journeys involving distance which required the traveller to be away overnight. It encompassed long-distance journeys which were made within the bounds of Wessex itself. The fourth and outer level in the model are journeys which extended beyond the bounds of Wessex, either to other parts of Britain or overseas. Even though this level is beyond the scope of this thesis, it has nonetheless been touched upon in previous chapters. It will therefore be considered in brief. Having

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[2] "*Si in eodem comitatu sit, inde as vii dies terminum habeat; si in alia scira sit, xv dierum terminus ponatur; si in tertio comitatu sit, iii ebdomade; si in quarto, iii ebdomade; et ultra non procedit ubicumque fuerit in Anglia, nisi competens eum detinear soinus. Si ultra mare est, vi ebdomades habeat et unam diem ad accessum et recessum maris, nisi vel occupatio seruitii regis uel ipsius ergitudo uel tempestas uel aliquid competens amplius respectet.*" Downer, *Leges Henrici Primi*, 41, 2a-b, p. 146-7.

[3] Carver, 'Pre-Viking traffic', p. 122; Ohler, p. 97. For the differences in the figures used by these two scholars, see chapter five, royal itinertation: logistics.

sketched four possible levels, I will now examine each in detail to see if documented journeys and known routes defined in previous chapters can be fitted into them.

Level 1: Local

The first level in the model included the multitude of trips made within the settlements where people lived and included all of those people who had a permanent home, a centre or a base from which they normally worked. The peripatetic royal court, exiles and those who were only temporarily in Wessex cannot be seen as having a single base in Wessex from which they travelled. So, there were people in late Saxon Wessex who did not travel in this level of the model.

The wide variety of people, places and activities involved in this level of travel makes it the most diverse of the levels, but it is the most constricted in terms of the distance travelled. This level included those short trips made between home and work, such as the farmer living in a nucleated village to his fields or the parish priest to his church. This is also the simplest level of travel in that it required the least amount of preparation; the transportation, food and shelter to be had were available within the estate or settlement.

Local people made journeys at this level throughout the year, but the nature and purpose of the journeys changed with the seasons. The differences in the trips made by men living in rural England, can be seen in the illustrations of the *Julius Work Calendar*, a Canterbury manuscript dating from c. 1020.[4] It shows the ploughing, sowing and harvesting of crops, the tending of animals, and the gathering of wood. These illustrations indicate some of the different travel requirements that these activities had. The January ploughing scene had oxen. These large beasts of burden would have gone from their stable to the fields. Perhaps the oxen bridge over the River Stour in the Hinton St Mary bounds was used for this purpose (fig. 44).[5] The wood-cutters in June and the harvesters in August had carts to help them move their produce (fig. 13). The May scene of shepherds and sheep and the September scene which may show pigs

[4]Cotton Julius A.VI.

[5]S 502.

and pannage[6] show activities which may have involved trips longer both in distance and duration.

One type of travel in this level that is visible in the place-names and charter boundary clauses are the trips to the estates mill, a common feature of the West Saxon landscape.[7] Mill-fords occurred several times in the place-names and boundary clause sample. These fords provided land-route access to the mills from both sides of the waterways concerned.

So far all types of travel considered in this level have had an economic focus; however, trips to the local church also fall within this category. Churches were an important part of the landscape, found both in rural and urban settings.[8] It was in the late Saxon period that the thousands local churches recorded in *Domesday* were built in England (fig. 6). Boundary clauses and place-names recorded rural routes which gave access to churches. For example, the bounds of Meavy (Devon) included a church way, *cyric wege*.[9] Also, Charford (Devon), *cyric forda* in *c*. 970 and *Chereforda* in 1086, was named after a ford which was on a road or track to a church.[10]

There are a few Old English words which indicate local roads. These are *pæth*, *anstiga*, *fær*, and *lane*. The word *weg* was used to indicate both roads of both local and national significance, so it is the modifying words in place-names and boundary clauses, as well as the landscape context which show whether particular *wegs* were major or minor routes. For example, the West Orchard (Dorset) bounds followed a *higweg* (hay way) from a shallow *ford* to the end of this way, near the modern Winchells Farm.[11] The agricultural focus of this path and its terminus within the bounds of the estate indicate that is was a minor route, illustrative of many which form the first level in the travel and

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[6]This scene has been interpreted both as pigs feeding with armed swineherds and as hunters going after wild boar.

[7]Philip Rahtz has found that there were at least 5642 watermills recorded in the *Domesday Book*; 'Mills', *Blackwell Encyclopaedia*, p. 314.

[8]For a discussion of the evolution of the parish church, see chapter 3 and the references therein. For more on church architecture see Taylor and Taylor, *Anglo-Saxon Architecture*.

[9]S963; Hooke, *Devon and Cornwall*, p. 197-9.

[10]*EPNS Devon*, vol. 1, p. 290.

[11]S 445; Kelly, #10, p. 39-41. See also Appendix A.

communications network.

Of the large number of fords in the charter boundary clause and place-name samples, many would only have had a local significance. Gelling and Cole have suggested that most places with *ford* names indicated routes which connected neighbouring communities and that ". . . patterns of travel and transport which caused some of the places to become military, trading and administrative centres emerged later than the coining of names."[12] Thus there is no reason to expect that Hatford on Frogmore Brook (Berkshire) or 'Ceada's ford' on a branch of the River Nadder were ever more than local routes. Places like Wallingford, with its key location of the Thames, were the exceptions rather than the rule.

So far we have seen that there was a specialised level of roads and crossing-points which formed a network used in local travel. However, when one's 'home' or 'base' was located next to or near a larger route, that route could have a local function. As seen in chapter 4, the *wic herepathes* of the Tarrant Hinton bounds show a *herepath* being identified by its connection to a farm (fig. 49).[13] Also, the bounds of Liddington (Wiltshire) go through an orchard to a *herepath*[14] and the bounds of Ayshford and Boehill (Devon) include a reference to the *stræt* which is outside the common pasture.[15] These examples show that, even though there was a class of route which only had local significance, any type of route could be used for local travel.

Archaeological and landscape evidence from Shapwick (Somerset) and Chalton (Hampshire) show routes from this level operating in nucleated villages, typical of the late Saxon countryside. As noted in chapter 2, Shapwick changed from a group of farmsteads to a nucleated village in the tenth century.[16] Aston's maps from before and after this change show that there were more paths or roads within the nucleated village (figs. 14-

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[12]Gelling and Cole, *The Landscape of Place-Names*, p. 71.

[13]S 429. Kelly #9, p. 35-7.

[14]S 459; Kelly, #11, p. 44-5.

[15]S 653; Hooke, *Devon and Cornwall*, #13, p. 156.

[16]Aston and Gerrard, 'Shapwick', p. 27-30, 45.

5, 61).[17]

The excavations around Chalton have revealed a settlement dating from the fifth to the eight centuries on the hill-top at Church Down. This settlement was no longer used by the ninth century and by 1086, the two Domesday villages of Blendworth and Chalton, the latter likely also including the village of Idsworth, had been established.[18] In contrast to the earlier settlement, these were in the valleys. It is obvious that the local system of routes would have needed to adapt to allow access to the new sites, but what the effect was on longer distance routes is difficult to suggest. There is a chance that traffic moved to the valley, but it is, perhaps, more likely that the long distance routes were not changed by this and that only the local network was altered.

The extent of the use of waterways in this level can only be guessed. Where an appropriate waterway passed through or next to an estate, village or town, the local inhabitants would have had to have crossed it or could have used it to move livestock, produce or people within the immediate area. The evidence for or against this, from archaeology and written sources, simply does not exist. However, the log boats discussed in chapter 4 could have provided water transportation for this level. Common sense dictates that at this level and for most people, paths were normally more important than rivers. There are a couple of reasons to think this. First, as land travel required no special transportation considerations, anyone could participate in it. Second, with the short distances involved here, one has to wonder whether owning and loading boats was both time and cost effective. Besides which this level is concerned with the most local trips and includes the walk or ride from home to the river or stream, so that there were necessarily more land-trips than water ones. However, the case of one type of labourer, the fisherman, deserves further attention in this respect. Ælfric's fisherman says that he catches whatever swims in the stream and does not often fish at sea because it requires a large ship. When questioned about whaling, he replies: "It is safer for me to

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[17]*Ibid*, Fig. 11, p. 24 and Fig. 12, p. 30.

[18]B. Cunliffe. 'Saxon and Medieval Settlement-Pattern in the Region of Chalton, Hampshire', *Medieval Archaeology* 16 (1972) p. 5.

go to the river with my ship than to go with many ships to hunt whales." The questioner, however, points out that many do fish whales.[19] Thus while some fishermen travel out into the sea, Ælfric's fisherman does not venture that far away and can therefore be seen as belonging to this level of the system.

Thus far we have been looking at local travel in rural Wessex, but before leaving this level, activities within urban centres must also be considered (figs. 10-12). Investigations have shown that Winchester's intra-mural grid-pattern street plan was on a different alignment than the Roman one. There was the east-west high street which followed much the same line as its Roman antecedent, but Biddle and Hill have determined that this was due to the continued use of the sites of the Roman gates and approach roads. There were also east-west back streets, a series of north-south streets on either side of the high street, and streets along the inside of some sections of the walls. Archaeological and written evidence shows that this grid-pattern street system was set out in the Anglo-Saxon period by the early tenth-century. It was on these roads that the people who worked and lived in Winchester went about their daily business. Other sites in Wessex with similar patterns andcharacteristics include Wareham, Cricklade , Wallingford, Exeter and Bath.[20]

The word *stræt* started to be used in the modern sense of urban road during this period and Hill and Biddle pointed to two Anglo-Saxon charters which named some of the known streets of Winchester in the late tenth and early eleventh centuries. These streets were *Cypstræte* or merchant street, *Flæsmangere stræte* or butcher street, *Scyldwyrhtana stræte* or shield-maker street, and *Tænnere stret* or tanner street. These reflect the occupations taking place on them and thus the type of traffic they would have serviced.[21]

Level 2: Regional

This level is different from level one in that for most

[19]Crossley- Holland, 'Ælfric's Colloquy', p. 223. "*Gebeorhlicre ys me faran to ea mid scype mynan, thænne faran mid manegum scypum on huntunge hranes.*" Garmonsway, p. 29-30.

[20]Biddle and Hill, p. 70-1, 78-82.

[21]S 925, and S 889. Biddle, *Winton*, p. 233-4, 455; Biddle and Hill, 'Late Saxon Planned Towns', p. 75.

Anglo-Saxons, journeys made in this level were special or different from the local, daily ones discussed above. It is perhaps useful to think of the levels in terms of perceived distance. The journeys made in this level took the travellers beyond their own settlement. These were the longest return journeys which could be made in one day as having to spend the night away from home made a journey very different in nature. So for those travelling on foot or with a cart, the radius of this level would be roughly eight to twelve miles. Those on horseback or in a boat being rowed, however, could have gone fifteen to twenty miles from their base and returned in a day.[22] As will be seen, the most common types of journeys in this level involved the Church, manors, markets, and courts.

Since no place in Wessex was more than twenty miles from a *burh* and many were within ten to fifteen miles of the nearest one, this level can be seen as extending from a rural 'home' as far as nearest *burh* or urban centre. Moreover, many of the journeys which fall within this level were made for economic reason: trips to local markets, distributing agricultural goods, and the provisioning of *burhs* from their hinterland. Excavations at Cowdery's Down have uncovered a series of buildings and the site has been interpreted as high status. This site and others like it, along with monasteries and nunneries such as Glastonbury and Shaftesbury were centres of surplus collection and in this role were places where traffic converged. Food and other rents had to be brought from outlying settlements to a central point for consumption and re-distribution. Charters provide many examples of the type of goods an estate might bring. A charter of Edward the Elder required Tichborne (Hampshire) to pay to the community of Winchester the following in rent: " . . .12 sesters of beer, 12 of sweet Welsh ale, 20 ambers of clear ale, 200 large loaves, 100 small loaves, 2 oxen - one salt, the other fresh - 6 wethers, 4 swine, 4 flitches of bacon, and 20 cheeses".[23] King Edgar also gave a certain Æthelwulf land at Kilmeston (Hampshire)

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[22]Carver, 'Pre-Viking Traffic', p. 122; Ohler, p. 97. In extreme circumstances, it would have been possible to make longer journeys in a 24 hour period.

[23]S 385; Finberg, *Wessex*, #37, p. 36. ". . . *twelf seoxtres beoras, and twelf geswettes wiliscealoth, and twentig ambra hluttor ealoth, and tu hrietheru other sealt other fersc, and six wetheras, and feower swin, and feor fliccu, and twentig cysa* . . .". Kemble, 1088, vol 5, p. 164.

on condition that he gave to the bishop and community of Winchester one church-scot, five shingles and one plank.[24]

The great landowners were not the only ones who needed to gather provisions; the towns of late Saxon Wessex were not self-sufficient and required agricultural goods to be brought in from the countryside. Paleoecologist Jennifer Bourdillon looked into the question of animal provisioning in Southampton and suggested that the town many have been part of a multiple estate system controlled, perhaps by the king. She also pointed out that it is not possible to tell from how far away the animals came.[25] Fleming, when writing about thegnly involvement in towns and trade, suggested that, although merchants could have transported goods from the countryside to markets, the Anglo-Saxon thegns may have been as directly involved with this as their continental counterparts were. "All thegns in England, whether they had control of one *masura* or a dozen, must have journeyed to Winchester, Droitwich or Gloucester throughout the year, to exchange their excess corn and hams for pottery, salt, metal goods and money."[26] Most likely, it was a combination of merchants, thegns and thegnly agents who kept the goods moving between the countryside and urban communities in late Saxon Wessex.

The monasteries were great landowners, but, with Benedictine Reform which saw also monastic lands increase, monks were only to visit estates when absolutely necessary. This can be seen in the *Regularis Concordia* which instructed that "[t]he brethern shall not gad about visiting the properties of the monastery unless either great necessity or reasonable discretion require it."[27] The colloquy of Ælfric Bata includes a master making a day trip to a town or market to get the supplies that the monastery needed and did not produce itself.

Regional 'Christian' travel centred on pastoral care as travel within a parish or diocese fits into this level of

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[24]S 693; *EHD I*, #110, p. 559-61.

[25]Bourdillon, p. 124.

[26]Fleming, 'Rural Elites and Urban Communities', p. 19.

[27]"*Villarum autem circuitus, nisi necessitas magna compulerit et necessariae rationis discretio hoc dictauerit, uagando nequaquam frequentent.*" Symons, Ch 11, p. 8.

regional travel. Wulfstan's *Life of St Æthelwold* includes a miracle when the saint was ". . . on a journey to scatter the seed of God's word in the Lord's field".[28] Journeys such as this, which saw ecclesiastics ministering to the people were an important part of this level.

As seen in chapter 5, there were many links between the administering of justice and the system of travel and communications and, although the 'Hundred Ordinance' has provisions for going into other regions, the majority of the travelling which took place for judicial reason fits into this level. The people attending the increasingly important shire and hundred courts travelled to meeting places which were chosen because of their location on the communications network.[29] If necessary, during the proceedings, delegates would be sent out to gather more information or men could set out in pursuit of a criminal, as in the case cited in chapter 5. People also travelled in this level to find sanctuary.

The transportation needs for this level would have varied considerably with the nature of the journey undertaken. Carts, pack horses or boats would have been needed in order to move large amounts of heavy goods. However, we should not underestimate how much may have been carried by people in this level of regional travel.

The routes used for this type of travel are often the same used in the higher levels of travel: the *herepaths*, *stræts*, and long-distance *wegs*. Andrew Reynolds's work at Yatesbury and Avebury well illustrates land-routes functioning in this level of travel. A road, possibly coming from Wroughton, passed through Yatesbury, curved and passes through Avebury, headed to Marlborough (fig. 8).[30] This road linked Yatesbury and Avebury and gave them links to other parts of this region.

As with level 1, determining the extent of water-traffic in this level is problematic as most of the written evidence for the use of waterways applies to levels 3 and 4. However, Ælfric

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[28]"*Nam cum iter quoddam sacer antistes ageret ut in agro Dominico semen uerbi Dei spargaret. . .* " Lapidge and Winterbottom, *Wulfstan of Winchester: the Life of St Æthelwold*, #32, p. 49.

[29]Meaney, 'Hundred meeting-places', p. 220. See also chapter 3, shires and hundreds.

[30]Reynolds, 'Avebury, Yatesbury', p. 21-25.

Bata's colloquy is interesting in this light. In it, the master says that he will either sail or ride to the city on the following day and asks his assistant to stay with the boys through the day until he returns.[31] This implies that a return journey to a market could take place during one day and could be made by water, just as easily as by land, when a traveller had access to a boat and navigable water. However, as this is a vocabulary exercise it would be dangerous to read too much into it. Nonetheless, traffic in this level would have made use of inland waterways not navigable to large ships. People living near the coast could have used the Bristol Channel and the English Channel, but would not have ventured far out into the seas. Logboats were likely to have been the most commonly used boats in this level of travel for carrying people, animals and goods.[32] The Graveney boat may also have been used in this level as its construction meant that it could carry heavy cargo in streams as well as at sea.[33] Overall, it can be hypothesized that waterways were used more in this level than in the previous one and less than in the following one.

Level 3: Across Wessex

Level 3 covered a far greater geographical area and consisted of fewer people than levels 1 and 2. The journeys involved people travelling distances greater than fifteen or twenty miles and as much as 150 or 200 miles across Wessex. People travelling in this level included the royal court and those associated with it, Anglo-Saxon and Viking armies, pilgrims, and merchants. The main destinations in this level of the system had regional, national and royal significance. They included burhs, monasteries, pilgrimage sites, and royal estates. Most of the travellers involved in this level travelled in groups and in some cases this included small groups coming together to form large groups at their destinations. The nature of travel in this level differed considerably in terms of logistics from levels one and two because journeys in this level involved travellers being away

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[31]Gwara and Portern, *Anglo-Saxon Conversations: The Colloquies of Ælfric Bata*, #20, p. 120, 121.

[32]McGrail, *Logboats*, p. 88-9; Richards, *Viking Age England*, p. 90.

[33]Fenwick, *Graveney Boat*, p. 249-54.

overnight. While the people involved in this level of travel may not have travelled more than 20 miles every day or even every week, some groups, such as the royal court and the Viking armies, may be seen as not operating in lower levels of the system. After looking at the travellers in more detail, we will consider the logistics of travel in this level and then the routes involved.

By not having one place that functioned as its centre, the West Saxon court did not have a single base from which it normally travelled. Therefore, as levels 1 and 2 involved return journeys made in one day from a centre or home, the court, in effect, did not function in the lower levels of the system of travel and communications. Even if it commonly visited particular sites or based itself in an area for a period of time, it was not a normal part of that environment and was perceived as a burdensome, temporary resident. This can be seen in the stories recording the miraculous supplies of drink at Abingdon and Glastonbury in the *Life of St Æthelwold* and the *Life of St Dunstan* respectively.[34]

In the late Saxon period, the majority of the West Saxon kings travelled most often within the bounds of Wessex, especially Dorset Hampshire, Somerset, and Wiltshire, as can be seen on David Hill's maps of royal itineration.[35] From the middle Saxon period until the tenth century, the majority of the known locations for the kings were in Wessex, with the next largest concentration being in the south to the east of Wessex. There are, however, a few itineraries which stand out as being different. For example, Athelstan's itinerary shows considerable variation and a journey into Northumbria and Scotland (fig. 55). Æthelred the Unready's itinerary shows considerably more journeys in south-eastern England. This can be seen as a reaction to the Viking struggles.[36] By the time of Edward the Confessor, the king spent as much time out of Wessex as in Wessex. Edward's itinerary shows a clear preference for Gloucester and London, with Winchester coming in third (fig. 56). Hill noted that there

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[34] Lapidge and Winterbottom, *Æthelwold*, p. 23 and Stubbs, *Memorials of St. Dunstan*, ch 10, p. 17. See also chapter 5, royal itineration.

[35]Hill, *Atlas*, # 148, 154-8, 160-3, 167-9, p. 82, 84-5, 87-91, 94.

[36]*Ibid.*, p. 85.

was also a change from rural to urban sites.[37]

Thus, at the beginning of this period, the West Saxon kings normally travelled in this level, that is, across Wessex, making only occasional excursions beyond the kingdom's boundaries. Such trips were made both within Britain, especially to the rest of southern England, and to the continent (*i.e.* to Rome). Throughout the period 850 to 1066, the kings spent an ever increasing amount time outside of Wessex, that is in level 4 of this model. So, do the parameters of level encompass royal itineration? Perhaps they do in the ninth century, but by the eleventh century, the court's patterns had changed enough that it can no longer be thought of as travelling primarily in this level.

Other travellers in level three were the armies. The Anglo-Saxon armies, as they were not normally national armies, usually travelled within this level. For example, in 1003 when the Vikings travelled into Wiltshire after storming Exeter, "a great English army was gathered from Wiltshire and Hampshire".[38] These men were travelling beyond the bounds of level 2, but remained within Wessex. Æthelred's order in 1006 for "the whole nation from Wessex and Mercia to be called out" was exceptional.[39]

In chapter five, the Viking armies' movements in Wessex were examined, as were their methods for dealing with their logistical requirements. They were itinerant groups which forced themselves on local West Saxon populations. The historical sources indicate that while they did have bases in the winter, they were very mobile and were not tied to a specific locality as, for example the *Chronicle* in 1006 records them ravaging in Hampshire and Berkshire from the Isle of Wight.[40] Thus even when they did have a base, they were not bound by the parameters of levels 1 or 2 of this model and roamed across all of Wessex, that is in level 3. Moreover, they were from abroad and spent of their time in England outside of Wessex and thus also travelled in level 4.

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[37]*Ibid.*, p. 95.

[38]*ASC*, *s. a.* 1003; *EHD I*, p. 239. "*Tha ge gaderode man swithe mycele fyrde of Wiltun scire ⁊ of Hamtum scire.*" Plummer, *Chronicles* , p. 135.

[39]*ASC s. a.*, *EHD I*, p. 240. ". . . *abannan ut ealne theodscipe of Westseaxum. ⁊ of Myrcean.*" Plummer, *Chronicles* , p. 136.

[40]*ASC* s. a. 1006.

Therefore, perhaps the group 'military travellers' needs to be split, with the Anglo-Saxons normally operating in level 3 and the Vikings often in level 4.

The transportation of goods from the countryside to local markets was discussed in level two, but the long-distance trade network was part of this level of travel. Ramsay summed up the merchants' role in this level when he wrote:

> Small quantities of goods needed to be transported for long distances as an inevitable result of industries being small-scale and, in most cases, highly localised. The merchant, as middleman, was all the more indispensable because he had to distribute the goods of what were commonly very small establishments of craftsmen.[41]

The merchant covered longer distances than those who produced the goods he carried. As the places where trade could take place were restricted by law, the merchants' normal routes took them between the main re-distribution centres: the markets and *burhs*.

Different types of pilgrimage fitted into different levels of the system with those taking place within Wessex belonging to this level. Pilgrims, unlike the royal court and the Viking armies, were often people who had a base, a home, and participating in this level of travel was more unusual for them. Stories from Wulfstan's *life of St Æthelwold* and Ælfric's life of St Swithun illustrate this type of travel. They tell of blind men and women travelling from their homes in Wallingford and the Isle of Wight to Winchester, distances of more than 40 miles (in a straight line) and 20 miles respectively.[42]

The logistic requirements of travelling in this level were more complex than in the lower levels. Arrangements needed to be made for food, shelter and transportation for these groups which were often large. The various types of travellers moving in this level had different means of dealing with these issues. The royal court, whose numbers could be in the hundreds, used royal prerogatives, such as *feorm* of one night and levies, for food supplies, horses, ships and places to stay. They also benefitted

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[41]N. Ramsay, 'Introduction', *English Medieval Industries*, Eds., J. Blair and N. Ramsay (London, 1991) p. xxxiv.

[42]Lapidge and Winterbottom, *Wulfstan of Winchester: The Life of St Æthelwold*, p, 65-7; Skeat, *Ælfric's Lives of Saints*, p. 451-3. These stories are presented and discussed in chapter 5, pilgrims and church goers.

from hospitality and gifts, like King Æthelstan staying with a noblewoman in Glastonbury and Godwine's gift of a ship to Edward the Confessor.[43] Shelter itself was often portable, such as the tent that Alfred the Great's brother used at Ashdown.[44] These were used in combination with buildings available at their destinations, like the halls at the royal palace of Cheddar. The great noblemen and ecclesiastics, like the royal court, made use of rights on their estates in order to provide for their needs while travelling. The Godwines had rights to the *feorm* of one night on some of their estates and the Bishop of Winchester reserved the right to stay at Farnham when granting away an estate.[45]

According to the *Benedictine Rule* pilgrims could expect hospitality from monasteries. In a section on the reception of guests, monks were told to treat churchmen and pilgrims with honour and that special attention to be paid to the poor and to pilgrims.[46] The virtue attached to the providing for pilgrims can also be seen when Wulfstan praised St Æthelwold as father and shepherd to monks, champion of nuns and virgins, consoler of widows, defender of churches and receiver of pilgrims.[47]

The armies did not have the regular supplies that the royal court and elites normally had, nor did they have the prestige of pilgrims. They, especially the Viking armies, were not concerned about operating within the law and often resorted to theft of both food and transport. The *Chronicle*, for example, records Vikings armies stealing food from Hampshire and Sussex in 998, and the Isle of Wight Hampshire and Berkshire in 1006.

Evidence for long-distance traders' logistical needs is scarce, but it can be assumed that they would have been responsible for their own needs. They needed ships for transporting goods by water and carts and horses for transporting goods by land. A treaty of Æthelred II refers to traders

[43]Stubbs, *Memorial of St Dunstan*; and Barlow, *Life of King Edward*.

[44]Asser, *Life of Alfred*, Ch 79; Keynes and Lapidge, p. 78-9.

[45]Flemming, 'Domesday Estates of the King and the Godwines'; and S 1263.

[46]McCann, Chapter 53, p. 119.

[47]Lapidge and Winterbottom, *Wulfstan of Winchester: The Life of St Æthelwold*, p, 45.

beaching their ships and building huts or pitching tents.[48] Another type of traveller responsible for providing for him or herself is the exile. As there were laws which forbade people from giving supplies and shelter to exiles, these 'outlaws' cannot have legally obtained the goods and services which would have made travelling in Wessex bearable. Thus, although all travellers making journeys in this level of the communications system had need for food, supplies, shelter and transportation, it is clear that their means of acquiring them differed considerably.

Travel at this level took place in all seasons. While the surviving evidence does not allow for the compilation of detailed itineraries for any members of the West Saxon royal family or other attendants at the royal court, it does indicate that they could and did itinerate throughout the year. Similarly, although the summer months formed the main fighting season, the armies also moved across the landscape at other times of the year.

Land journeys made in this level of travel would have normally taken place on the *herepaths*, *stræts*, and great *wegs* which were the trunk roads of Anglo-Saxon England. The use of a great many sections of Roman roads in late Saxon Wessex has been shown in an examination of boundary clauses and place-names, such as Stratfield Mortimer, Stratfield Saye and Turgis which were on the Roman road between Silchester and London. These sources have also shown the existence of other important land routes. For example, the *herepaths*, such as one near Crediton which provided access across Devon, were important routes for long distance travel. Ridgeways also provided good land access across Wessex. Those travellers who began their journeys at rural settlements, isolated from routes of that magnitude, would have begun their journeys on the local routes described in level 1. For example, someone leaving the mill in Sixpenny Handley would have started on a minor way before reaching a *herepath* from which they also could have accessed two Roman roads (figs. 48-9).[49] So, although we can identify levels of roads using Costen's suggestions, the different levels cannot function independently. It was the coming together of roads and tracks of various sizes

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[48]Robertson, *Laws*, 'II Æthelred', p. 56-7.

[49]S 389.

that allowed people to make the journeys from their estates, to regional centres and across the kingdom.

The network of navigable rivers and seaways was very important to this level of the system of travel and communications and most of the albeit limited historical evidence for the use of waterways in late Saxon Wessex fits into this level. Hindle, Edwards, Langdon and Jones debated the relative use of waterways and land routes in late medieval England. The evidence for Anglo-Saxon Wessex clearly indicates that goods and people travelled both by land and by seas, sometimes within the same journey.

Many of urban sites clearly had excellent access to the important roads, rivers and the sea. For example, Winchester was on a possibly navigable river, a ridgeway and was a hub in the Roman road network. Exeter was near important *herepaths* and non-Roman *stræts*, on used Roman roads and a navigable river and had good access to the sea. As was seen in chapter 2, Abels and Hinton have both pointed out the strategic locations of the burhs in terms of the communications network.

Level 4: Beyond the borders of Wessex

While this dissertation has not set out to investigate travel and communications outside of Wessex, several issues related to it have been discussed and it has become clear that this would be the next level in the system of travel and communications. In terms of this dissertation, this level can be thought of as the gateway for Wessex, encompassing the journeys made both by foreigners to Wessex and by West Saxons to other parts of Britain and Europe. People travelling in this level included ambassadors, pilgrims, and traders.

There are a few obstacles particular to those travelling far from home, in strange lands and these applied both to foreigners in Wessex and to West Saxons travelling outside of their kingdom, especially on the continent. For example, they had to be concerned with their personal safety where they were strangers, they had to find their way in unfamiliar territory. It is the former upon which we will concentrate here. While strangers in Wessex may have been vulnerable, they were nominally under the protection of the kings, but how safe were Anglo-Saxon travellers abroad?

One of the most historically visible types of West Saxon overseas travellers were the pilgrims making trips to Rome or Jerusalem. Kings, bishops and individuals took part in this type of travel throughout the whole Christian period of Anglo-Saxon England, either by choice or as penance, and the sources show how vulnerable they could be. For example, the 'A' version of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* records the death of a priest named Æthelmod when he journeyed to Rome.[50] Surviving wills record some of the fears of the pilgrims, such as Ketel and Ælfgifu who were headed to Rome between 1052 and 1066[51] and Ulf and Madselin who were headed to Jerusalem in 1066 and *c.* 1068.[52] They all wanted their affairs in order in case they never returned. Specific danger of travelling abroad were recorded in saints' lives. For example, the *Vita Edwardi* includes a passage in which two parties of Anglo-Saxons, including Tostig, Bishop Ealdred two royal priests, numerous noblemen and retainers, were in Rome and decided to leave together. They were attacked and robbed just outside the city.[53] This large group was still vulnerable.

That the kings were concerned with the ease of travel on the continent is illustrated by a passage from Cnut's letter of 1027:

> I therefore spoke with the emperor and the lord pope and the princes who were present, concerning the needs of all the people of my whole kingdom, whether English or Danes, that they might be granted more equitable law and greater security on their way to Rome, and that they should not be hindered by so many barriers on the way and so oppressed by unjust tolls; and the emperor consented to my demands; and King Rodulf, who chiefly had dominion over those barriers, and all the princes confirmed by edicts that my men, whether merchants or other travelling for the sake of prayer, should go to and return from Rome in safety with firm peace and just law, free from hindrances by barriers and tolls.[54]

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[50] *ASC s. a.* 962.

[51] S 1519; Whitelock, *Wills*, p. 89.

[52] Whitelock, *Wills*, p. 95.

[53] Barlow, *The Life of King Edward*, ch. 5, p. 33-7.

[54] *EHD I*, #53, p. 477. "Locutus sum igitur cum ipso imperatore, et domino papa, et principibus qui ibi erant, de necessitatibus totius populi universi regnimei, tam Anglorum quam Danorum, ut eis concederetur lex æquior et pax securior in via Romam adeundi, et ne tot clausuris per viam artentur, et propter thelon injustum fatigentur; annuitque postulatis imperator, et Rodulphus rex, qui maxime ipsarum clausurarum dominatur; cunctique principes edictis firmaverunt, ut homines mei, tam mercatores quam alii orandi causa viatores, absque omni angaria clausurarum et theloneariorum, firma pace et justa lege securi, Romam

The king's concern for his people abroad parallel's royal concern in England for strangers' well-being. The plight of West Saxon travelling overseas is extremely interesting, but as there has not been space in this dissertation to cover this subject adequately, it is an area for further research.

Those travelling to and from Wessex could do so either by land or by sea. As with the previous two levels, the main land routes are the *herepaths*, *stræts* and important *wegs*. The Roman road system provided good access to many areas of England. The Foss Way, mentioned in the bounds of Grittleton, Nettleton and Podimore[55], was an important, direct conduit to the north and north-east as far as Lincoln. Wessex is also connected to other regions in England by important ridgeways, such as the one known as the Great Ridgeway and the Icknield Way which goes through the heart of Wessex, through the Chilterns and continues as far as East Anglia.[56] Another long-distance ridgeway is the Inkpen, a route that joins the Great Ridgeway in Wiltshire and runs parallel to it through Hampshire and continues into Surrey and Kent.[57] Also, the Harroway runs from Wiltshire and Hampshire, through Surrey to join the Pilgrims' Way in Kent.[58]

With the exception of the Thames on the northern fringes of Wessex, the navigable rivers of Wessex arise and enter the sea within the kingdom.[59] This means that, while the rivers provided access from the heart of the kingdom to the sea, it was mainly the sea itself which provided water access to other areas of Britain and the continent.

The System of Travel and Communications: an explanation

The model for the late Saxon system of travel and communications in Wessex, put forward above, consists of levels

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eant et redeant." B. Thorpe, ed., *Florentii Wigorniensis Monachi Chronicon ex Chronicis* (London, 1848) p. 186-7.

[55]S 472, S 504, and S 743 respectively.

[56]Wright, *Road and Trackways*, p. 14.

[57]*Ibid.*, p. 28.

[58]*Ibid.*, p. 20.

[59]Aston and Lewis, 'Introduction', p. 1.

based on increasing distances travelled. While there are many common themes within each level, they each contain several different types of journeys which had specific needs and ways of handling the difficulties they faced. It is now time to consider further the political, social and economic forces at work in the system and how they fitted in with the geographic levels of the descriptive model. In order to examine the forces behind the system, this section will use another set of levels, this time it is based on who might have had control over parts of the system The levels are as follows: peasants, the secular elite, the Church and the kings.

Level 1: Peasants

How much control did the lower classes have over their own movements? Changes in settlement patterns and lordship during the Anglo-Saxon period affected the travel patterns of the lower classes. In much of Wessex, many of the dispersed settlements of the early Saxon period were replaced in the middle and late Saxon periods by nucleated villages, often under the control of a local lord or monastery. Farmers, for example in nucleated villages with open fields had shorter trips to make than those living on dispersed farmsteads and working on detached pastures. Also, people's journeys to churches changed during the late Saxon period as the minster system was supplanted by a system of parish churches, founded and supported by local lords. Thus both working and religious travel patterns of the lower classes were altered by higher powers in the late Saxon period.

Moreover, those living and working on estates had responsibilities to their lords. For example, the cottager's duties in the *Rectitudines Singularum Personarum* included working for the lord every Monday and three days a week during the harvest.[60] These duties would have severely restricted the cottager's ability to go far from home. Moreover, law codes indicate that the lower classes were not free to travel as and when they please. In particular, 'II Cnut', which forbade a person from giving hospitality to any man for more than three days without his master's permission, shows that ordinary people's movements and time away from home were controlled by

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[60]Crossley-Holland 'An Estate Memorandum', p. 257.

their lords.[61] Therefore if a man or woman made a substantial journey without their lord's permission, they were putting themselves outside the normal system of travel and communications.

Traders were often travellers, but they were not free to travel where they wanted to as there were laws dictating locations where goods of a certain value could change hands. In the time of Alfred, traders and their companions had to present themselves to a reeve at a public meeting before going into the countryside.[62] Later law codes, such as Athelstan's 'Grately Code' in *c.* 926-930 demanded that all buying take place within a town.[63] The primary function of the laws was the control the exchange of goods, but they also took some freedom of movement away from individual traders, funneling them through the new urban centres.

Level 2: The secular elite

As seen above, the upper classes of Anglo-Saxon society had some control over the people under them, but how much control did they have over themselves?

Some noblemen were able to demand transportation and accommodation from estates across Wessex and England. Chapter 5 highlighted the Godwine family who, in the eleventh century, had twenty-two nights' farm from their estates.[64] Moreover, as Robin Fleming has pointed out, the secular elite have often been studied only in terms of their rural activities, but they were important parts of urban life in the late Saxon period.[65] She showed that thegns acquired land in towns and promoted trade. They were thus the power behind some of the increased traffic through towns as the fortress *burhs* became towns in the tenth and eleventh centuries.

People who wanted to further themselves in the kingdom's power structure would have had to have been in attendance at the

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[61]Robertson, *Laws*, 'II Canute', 28, p. 189.

[62]*EHD I*, # 33, 'Laws of Alfred', 34, p. 413.

[63]*EHD I*, # 35, 'Athelstan's Laws at Grately', 10-13, p. 419

[64]Fleming, 'Domesday Estates of the King and the Godwines', p. 992-3.

[65]Flemmng, 'Rural Elites and Urban Communities', p. 3-5.

royal court. The *Gethynthco* recorded that a thegn who was to prosper needed, among other requirements, to serve the king, to ride in his household band, and to go on the king's errands three times.[66] Moreover, the *Rectitudines Singularum Personarum* says that thegns had to work on bridges, equip a ship, guard the coast, supply a military guard, and attend their superiors.[67] Therefore, while the nobles may have been able to exercise control over use made by the lower classes of the system of travel and communications, their use of it was at least partially subject to those above them.

Level 3: The Church

Each level of the descriptive model of the system of travel and communication featured at least one type of religious or Church-related travel. Anglo-Saxon Christainity required people of all social classes to make journeys of varying length. People went to their parish churches to partake in the sacraments and went to churches with burial rights when burying loved ones and at their own deaths. Some undertook pilgrimages and others travelled to monasteries with goods owed to them. Bishops, monks, priests and their servants travelled as part of the royal court and the Christian calendar influenced the court's schedule of itineration. In these respects, then, the Church exercised some control over the movements of all types of people throughout their lives. It is therefore necessary to examine the Church's power over the system itself and how this was related to the secular power structure.

In some respects the Church can be seen as a self-regulating part of the system of travel and communications, particularly from the time of the tenth-century Benedictine Reform. The *Benedictine Rule* and the *Regularis Concordia* both have a number of provisions about the behaviour of monks travelling beyond the confines of the monastery and about the treatment guests were to receive. Also, Wulfstan's *Institute of Polity* includes a section on how bishops should behave while travelling.

However, in many cases, the Church and the kings worked together in the regulating of the system. The Benedictine Reform

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[66]*EHD I*, #51, p. 468-9.

[67]Crossley-Holland 'An Estate Memorandum', p. 257.

was backed both by the Church and the kings, especially King Edgar. Royal law codes prohibited gathering on Sundays and included pilgrimage as a possible punishment. Kings granted estates to monasteries and thus helped them build up their role as centres for surplus collection.

Level 4: The kings

Through the evidence presented in this thesis, it has become clear that travelling was an important part of economic, political, military and religious life in late Saxon Wessex and that kings of Wessex played a pivotal role in the development and running of the many elements in the system of travel and communications. Good leaders were expected to make their regions safe for travellers and this was a recurring motif in stories written in and about Anglo-Saxon England, from Bede's account of King Edwin in *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* to the eleventh-century *Vita Ædwardi*'s praise of Earl Tostig. That rulers did work for the protection of vulnerable travellers can be seen in the Anglo-Saxon law codes from Æthelred and Cnut, as well as the *Leges Henrici Primi*.[68] These law codes all put strangers under the protection of the kings. The laws of Æthelred and the *Leges Henrici Primi*, moreover, include specific punishments for those who committed murder on the king's highways.[69]

Royal authority can be seen at work in the layout of the communications network through the location and promotions of settlements. Kings, as the central authority, chose the *burh's* sites and minting sites. As mentioned above, they controlled trading places. They also imposed tolls as a means of raising money from their ability to control the communications network. The role of the kings in imposing tolls can be seen in 'IV Æthelred' which listed the tolls required at Billingsgate in London. A toll at a ford can be seen at Galford in Devon. This was probably the site of *Gafulford* and *Gafolford* recorded in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* for the year 823 and has been interpreted

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[68]Robertson, *Laws*, 'VI Æthelred', 48, p. 105; 'II Canute', 40, p. 197; Downer, *Leges Henrici Primi*, 10,3, p. 109 and 75,7a, p. 237.

[69]Robertson, *Laws*, 'IV Æthelred', 4, p. 75; Downer, *Leges Henrici Primi*, 12, 2 p. 115 and 80,2, p. 249.

as 'tax ford' from the Old English *gafol*.[70] Kings also continued to demand that estates do bridgework. They legislated on the need for bridgework and against willful destruction of elements of the network.

The kings were the power behind the Anglo-Saxon armies and were thus involved in the armies' use of the system of travel and communications. Alfred's division of his men into three groups, one of which was on military service, showed his ability to order people to move through the landscape. In the reign of Æthelred the 'Unready', armies were often called up when and where they were needed and there was a ship levy. In 1008, he commanded every 300 or 310 hides of land to produce one warship and every eight hides, a helmet and corselet.[71] The kings were thus able to pull together transport and men for journeys of a military nature.

The royal court involved many people travelling. The kings were able to command the services, food and shelter they needed, from their own estates, such as Cheddar in Somerset, and through prerogatives, such as the *feorm* of one night. They also imposed themselves on other secular and monastic estates, as was seen in the *Life of St Dunstan* when the king and his thegns stayed at Glastonbury. Kings needed to send people on their business and royal agents travelled using the authority of the kings. The kings also commanded people to visit them. Asser was summoned to Alfred's court and he wrote of needing the king's permission to travel back to Wales.[72]

Despite their great power, the kings were not able to control all aspects of the system all of the time. At times we have seen kings or members of the royal court operating outside the normal system of travel. These, however, these occurred when the individuals in question were not in a position to use normal procedures or to exert power over those around them. One often discussed example of this is when King Alfred was wandering in the Somerset Levels after having been defeated by the Vikings and, according to Asser, was forced to steal food. The fact that power was needed to obtain provisions and shelter was a reason

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[70]*Devon I*, p. 187.

[71]*ASC*, 1008; Whitelock, *EHD*, p. 241, n. 3; Keynes, *Diplomas*, p. 215-6.

[72]Asser, Ch 81.

why the majority of West Saxon kings spent so much time in their seat of power, that is in Wessex itself. Alfred's situation in the Somerset Levels was unusual and was caused by military defeat. Enemy armies were random elements in the system, but by fighting them and making treaties with them, the kings were making an effort to retain control of their kingdoms, including the travel system. Moreover, Æthelred II's treaty with the Vikings in 991 or 994 specifically mentions aspects of the system relating to traders.

Other elements beyond the control of the kings were the weather and the basic landscape. As seen in Chapters 2 and 5 these had a profound effect on the siting and use of certain routes and on the comfort of travellers. The kings were affected by the Christian calendar. Despite measures taken throughout the late Saxon period, some elements of the communications system remained outside the control of the kings.

Conclusion

This chapter started with a model which suggested that the system of travel and communications can be considered in a series of levels of increasing range. This model suggested that all people were involved in the system and that many participated in different levels at different times. As the levels took in greater distances, the logistical requirements also became greater, while the number of prime movers grew smaller. The higher levels were thus more complicated and more specialised. While any road could have been used at any level, the model shows the general principle that as one moved through the levels, the roads used became more substantial. Moreover, the relative use of waterways increased with the levels. This model works well but it is often difficult to assign elements of the system to particular levels and by the end of the period, the political situation had changed enough to affect the parameters of levels 3 and 4.

In level three of the descriptive model, it was noted that royal itineration changed during the course of the late Saxon period in such a manner that the classification 'Level 3' did not work as well in towards the end of the period as court spent more

time travelling in other parts of England. But what were the implications of this for level 4? Royal journeys across the sea did not become much more frequent until after the Conquest. Thus, if by the end of the Saxon period, the old kingdom-boundaries did not have as great an effect on royal traffic patterns, the definition of levels 3 and 4 needs to be adjusted. The boundaries of level 3 changed with the change in political boundaries and kingdom was no longer Wessex but became England. So by the end of the Saxon period, the higher levels could be divided to reflect the differences between travelling in areas of England and overseas. In order to extrapolate a model that could be applied to any area of Anglo-Saxon England, we might then suggest using five levels: local, regional, 'ancient kingdom' (ie Mercia, Wessex, Northumbria and so on), rest of England, and abroad. Interestingly, since the passage from the *Leges Henrici Primi* which set out response times to summons also used five levels,[73] this model has strong paralells with the contemporary views. However, the *Leges* were primarily concerned with time and distance travelled and did not define the third level in terms of ancient kingdoms. The proposed model for the system is also concerned with social classes and their travel patterns, so administrative boundaries are also relevant. Therefore, the level of 'ancient kingdom' is important.

The latter half of the chapter was an attempt to explain who was in control of the system. It has been shown that the system evolved throughout the Anglo-Saxon period and did so in conjunction with social, economic, religious and military changes. The second model has suggested that the changes in and characteristics of the travel and communications system were controlled from above. Those with the lowest social standing had least control over any elements of the system. The nobles and the Church some control over themselves and those beneath them, but they were dependant on the authority of the kings. Even though there were a few elements of the system that the kings could not control, they were certainly governing most elements of the system. It has been through the bringing together of these two models and evidence from archaeology, place-names studies and

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[73]Downer, *Leges Henrici Primi*, 41,2a-b, p. 146-. See above, 'The System of Travel and Communications: a description'.

traditional history that we have been able to gain an understanding of the workings of the system of travel and communications in late Saxon Wessex.

Appendix A
Solved Boundary Clauses

The following contains detailed information of the locations of relevant elements from the communications network as found in the charters of Devon and those held by Shaftesbury Abbey which are in the area roughly between Salisbury and Dorchester. This discussion relies heavily on the work done by Grundy, Hooke, and Kelly.[1]

Devon

Æschyrste (S 433)

This estate has not been identified. It had a *herpath*, leading to *gyrde hricges ford* (the yardland ridge's ford). The bounds then went to *wungyfe ford* and then along a *herpath*.

Ashford in Burlescombe and Boehill in Sampford Peverell (S 653)

The bounds of this estate began at *broces ford* which Finberg located at ST 033143, but Hooke suggested ST 043145 as a possible location.[2] The next relevant feature was a *weg*, now called Whitnage Road. The bounds followed this *weg* to the *stanford* over a small stream at ST 030155.[3] From this *ford* the bounds went to a *weg* which has been more difficult to locate. Finberg suggested a northward course for the bounds and Hooke, despite pointing out a second possibility, supported Finberg. Thus the way was in the area between the above mentioned ford and a dyke which Hooke saw as being on the course of Whitnage Lane.[4] The next four relevant

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[1]G. B. Grundy, 'The Ancient Highways and Tracks of Wiltshire, Berkshire, and Hampshire, and the Saxon Battlefields of Wiltshire', *Archaeological Journal* 75 (1918) p. 69-194; Grundy, 'Dorset Charters', *PDNHAS* LV (1933) p. 239-268; Grundy, G. B. 'Dorset Charters'. *PDNHAS* LVI (1934) p. 110-130; Grundy, 'Dorset Charters', *PDNHAS* LVII (1935) p. 114-139; Grundy, 'Dorset Charters', *PDNHAS* LVIII (1936) p. 103-136; Grundy, 'Dorset Charters', *PDNHAS* LIX (1937) p. 95-118; Grundy, 'The Ancient Highways of Dorset, Somerset and South-West England', *Archaeological Journal* 94 (1937) p. 257-290; Hooke, *Devon and Cornwall*; and Kelly, *Shaftesbury*.

[2]Hooke, *Devon and Cornwall*, p. 156-7.

[3]*Ibid.*, p. 158.

[4]*Ibid.*, p. 158.

features were fords: *stanihtne ford, fileth leage ford, æscford* and *broces ford*. The stony ford was either at ST 027170, as Finberg suggested or, less likely, near Holbrook Farm.[5] The 'hay leah ford' could have been at ST 031184, at Fair Oak, but Hooke pointed out that, on this section of the boundary, there were several fords which are possible locations.[6] The next ford, 'ash-tree ford', Hooke tentively located near Pugham Farm and that ford would thus have been near ST 056154.[7] The bounds ended with the same 'brook ford' with which they began. Interestingly, this charter also recorded that there was a *stræt* outside the common pasture. Finberg saw this as the main road from Wellington to Tiverton and Hooke has not contradicted this.[8]

Clyst St Mary (S 669)

The Clyst St Mary bounds first encountered the communications network at a *stræt*, perhaps a section of the Roman road running from Exeter to Lyme Regis.[9] These bounds moved through the landscape eventually arriving at an *ealdan ford*. Hooke pointed out that the parish boundary crossed Grindle Brook at a ford at SY 001901.[10] Soon the bounds reached an *ealdan weg*, associated by Hooke with the modern road from Clyst St Mary to Ebford.[11] The last mention of the communications network in this boundary clause was a *weg* leading to a dyke. Hooke saw this as part of the road to Topsham.[12]

Crediton (S 255)

The Crediton bounds are lengthy and include many features of interest. As with the Sandford charter S 890, the clause started

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[5]*Ibid.*, p. 158.

[6]*Ibid.*, p. 158.

[7]*Ibid.*, p. 159.

[8]*Ibid.*, p. 160.

[9]*Ibid.*, p. 163.

[10]*Ibid.*, p. 163.

[11]*Ibid.*, p. 164.

[12]*Ibid.*, p. 164.

at Creedy Bridge (*cridian brycge*) at SS 846011 (fig. 45).[13] They left the bridge on a *herpath* which "is the road followed by the parish boundaries" in this area (figs. 46-47).[14] It should be noted that the parish boundary took a more direct line than the modern road does. The herepath led to *sul ford* at SX 931995.[15] Further along in the clause there was *hrucgan cumbes ford*, or woodcock's coomb ford, across the Shuttern Brook at Ashford.[16] *Wealdancumbes ford* was to be found on Kelland's Brook at SX 838966, where the modern Crediton-Oldridge road crosses.[17] The next routeway feature was a *herepath ford*. This feature likely gave Harford its name and it was "on the road from Town Barton in Tedburn St Mary to Venny Tedburn."[18] The bounds came shortly to a *grenan weg*, identified as a section of the modern road from Cheriton Cross to Crediton at SX 79596.[19] The next routeway feature in the bounds was an unlocated *path*. Soon there was Hana's *ford* for whose location Hooke related several suggestions, but she reccommended SX 727905, based on the Tithe Award, as the best possibility.[20] The bounds moved along couple of features before coming to a *stanford*. It was across the Yeo and Hooke places it at SX 715932.[21] The next relevant feature was a *herepath* which has survived in the course of the Exeter - Okehampton road.[22] Hoskins has asserted that this is on the line of a prehistoric ridgeway.[23] The feature Bucga's *ford* has not been located, but Hooke said that it gave name to Budbrook near

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[13]*Ibid.*, p. 90.

[14]*Ibid.*, p. 90.

[15]*Ibid.*, p. 90.

[16]*Ibid.*, p. 91.

[17]*Ibid.*, p. 91.

[18]*Ibid.*, p. 91.

[19]*Ibid.*, p. 92.

[20]*Ibid.*, p. 92.

[21]*Ibid.*, p. 92.

[22]*Ibid.*, p. 93.

[23]*Ibid.*, p. 93.

Crockernwell.[24] Soon the bounds reached a *pathford*, a crossing either of the Teign at SX 713893 or of a stream in Parford.[25]

The next feature of interest here was the rush *ford* located at SX 710946.[26] Another ford, Cidda's ford or *cyddanford*, may have been at SX 745971.[27] Hooke has not precisely located the *dith ford*, but she said it was to the east of Appledore Farm.[28] The last ford in the bounds was Beonna's *ford* and Hooke located it at SS 830080. The penultimate routeway feature was an *ealdan herepath* that could be either the road from Stockleigh English to Priorton Barton or the road going south-east from East Village (fig. 43).[29] The bounds ended at Creedy Bridge.

Creedy Barton (S 1387)

This boundary clause began and ended at Shobrook *ford* located at SX 867997.[30] The bounds then moved eastward on a *herpath*, on the line of the modern road moving eastward from the above cited coordinates (figs. 46-47).[31] At the end of the clause, the bounds took the *herepath* back to the *ford*. This herepath was likely the westward extension of the modern road.

Culmstock (S 386)

The bounds of Culmstock only included two routeway features. The first is *culumford*. This was a crossing of the Culm and Hooke suggested that it was at ST 083137, where a road formerly crossed the river.[32] The other feature was a *herpoth* which Hooke associated with the modern road runnning north-eastwards from Appledore.[33]

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[24]*Ibid.*, p. 93.

[25]*Ibid.*, p. 93-94.

[26]*Ibid.*, p. 94.

[27]*Ibid.*, p. 94-5.

[28]*Ibid.*, p. 95.

[29]*Ibid.*, p. 97.

[30]*Ibid.*, p. 195.

[31]*Ibid.*, p. 195.

[32]*Ibid.*, p. 139-140.

[33]*Ibid.*, p. 140.

Dawlish (S 1003)

The Dawlish bounds began at the mouth of the Teign (fig. 51) and their first routeway element was a *stræt* on the west side of St Michael's Church (SX 944731).[34] The bounds followed the *stræt* to a dyke. Hooke said that "the road leads NNW from the site of the present station".[35] The bound then went past several unidentified features, arriving at another *stræt* near Little Haldon. Here the modern road is "slightly to the west" of the parish boundary.[36] The next road, *port stræt*, was a section of an ancient way now called the Port Way.[37] The *EPNS* volume here pointed out that this was not the nearby Roman road, as one might expect from the use of the term *stræt*. The bounds followed this road past an earthwork to *dofliscford* which was a crossing point of Dawlish Water at SX 939791.[38] Again the bounds continued along the port *stræt*. The last relevant element was a *cocc ford*. This has not been precisely located, but Hooke pointed out that it gave name to Cofford.[39]

Holcombe (Hooke # 28)

This boundary clause has two routeway elements; a *weg* and a *smala path*. The *weg* went to the west of the church and may have been the same as the *stræt* in the Dawlish bounds.[40] The *path*, however, was not clearly identify by Hooke, who simply suggested that it would have been "moving north-eastwards to the road from Holcombe".[41]

Ipplepen, Dainton, and Abbotskerswell (S 601)

The only routeway terms found in these bounds were three *herpaths*. The first Hooke identified as part of Abbotskerswell's

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[34]*Ibid.*, p. 204.

[35]*Ibid.*, p. 204-5.

[36]*Ibid.*, p. 206.

[37]*Ibid.*, p. 206; *Devon II*, p. 501-2.

[38]Hooke, *Devon and Cornwall*, p. 206.

[39]*Ibid.*, p. 206.

[40]*Ibid.*, p. 214.

[41]*Ibid.*, p. 214.

parish boundary: a road from Denbury to Newton Abbot.[42] The second has not been identified. The third, according to Hooke, "may be the road crossing the boundary at SX 867692".[43]

Little Dart (S 1863)

This unsolved boundary clause had a *herpoth* and a red *ford*.

Littleham (S 998)

The Littleham bounds first made use of the communications network by following a *hricg weg* that is now part of the Salterton road through Redgate.[44] From the ridgeway the bounds went to a dyke and then to a cross ways, recorded as *wega gelæto*. This junction has not been clearly identified. After passing an area of 'dirty land', the bounds reached a *grenan weg*, followed by *auan ford*. Hooke said that the *weg* went next to the present Liverton Copse and that the *ford* took the bounds across Withycombe Brook.[45] From here the boundary moved upstream and came to another *grenan weg*. This *weg* has also not been located. Soon the bounds reached the final relevant feature: a *herepath*. The *herepath* was a road heading "north-westwards from Butleigh Station".[46] Because of road construction, this road is hard to see on recent OS maps.

Meavy (S 963)

Interestingly, these bounds began at *cleaca* (stepping stones) and Hooke pointed out that there are still stepping stones in the Meavy River at the suggested location of SX 545670.[47] The next routeway element was a *ford lace* and Hooke asserted that the fording place of this brook was at SX 532683.[48] There were two *wegs* in the latter part of this clause. The

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[42]*Ibid.*, p. 154.

[43]*Ibid.*, p. 154.

[44]*Ibid.*, p. 202.

[45]*Ibid.*, p. 202.

[46]*Ibid.*, p. 202.

[47]*Ibid.*, p. 197.

[48]*Ibid.*, p. 198.

first, a *hig weg*, she said was on the line of a section of the Yelverton to Princeton road.[49] From the hay *weg*, the bounds moved to the second way, called church (*cyric*) *weg*. Hooke showed that this was a lane that formerly continued from the hay *weg* to Sheepstor.[50] The bounds ended where they started, at the stepping stones.

Monkton in Shobrook (S 387)

Monkton's bounds had two features of interest: *sceoca ford* and *herpoth*. The bounds began and ended at Shobrook ford which would have been at SX 867996. The *herepath* was on the line of the modern road from Creedy Bridge crossing the above mentioned fording place (figs. 45-47).[51]

Newton St Petroc (S 388)

This boundary clause only contained one routeway element, begining and ending at a *wuduford*. This has survived in the name Woodford Bridge. The ford was over the Torridge at SS 398126.[52]

Nymed, Down St Mary (S 795)

This boundary clause used two lengths of *herpoths*. This first can be seen in the Exeter to Barnstaple road and the second was a continuation of the first.

Ottery St Mary (S 721, S 1033)

There are two surviving charters with boundary clauses relating to estates at Ottery St Mary.

S 721, only contained two routeway elements, both coming in the middle of the clause. The first was a *herepath*, recorded as *herpowe* which led to the second, a *stanbrugge*. Hooke presented two possibilities for each of these. The *herepath* was either the Roman road from Exeter going north-east or the road past Gosford Farm.[53] The bridge therefore would either be Fenny Bridge or

[49] *Ibid.*, p. 199.

[50] *Ibid.*, p. 199.

[51] *Ibid.*, p. 142.

[52] *Ibid.*, p. 146.

[53] *Ibid.*, p. 171.

Woodford Bridge.[54]

The charter S 1033 started at a *stræt geate*, in Straightway Head, and then moved to *tælenford*, a ford across the Tale at SY 088971.[55] A Roman road connected these two points. A pool later in the clause was termed *stræt pool*. It was at Fenny Bridge and the *stræt* reference may be to the Roman road running north-east towards to Honiton.[56] The bounds soon came to a hollow way, recorded as *hoan weg*, which Hooke said could either be a the road now going over the ridge from Holcombe or the one over Chineway Hill.[57] The next relevant feature, a *ford* came just before a ridgeway which Hooke identified at a section of a modern lane following the parish boundary over Venn Ottery Common between Aylesbeare and Tipton St John.[58] After this the bounds soon came to a *stanford* about whose location Hooke could only say "[t]his may have been where one of the bridlepaths crosses a brook to the south of Higher Metcombe."[59] Finally, the bounds returned to the *stræt* gate on a *herepoth*. Hooke suggested that this was the ridgeway that marked the western boundary of the parish.[60]

The short clause relating to the boundary between Wiggaton and Ottery ended by following the above mentioned *herepoth* back to the *stræt* gate.[61]

***Peadingtun* (S 1547)**

The *Peadingtun* bounds relate to an area near Ashburton. The first half of the boundary clause only contained one routeway element: a *deor ford*. This ford was north-east of Heatree Cross.[62] The next relevant feature was a *weg* which is now represented by the road forming the southern boundary of the

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[54]*Ibid.*, p. 171.

[55]*Ibid.*, p. 208.

[56]*Ibid.*, p. 210.

[57]*Ibid.*, p. 210.

[58]*Ibid.*, p. 211.

[59]*Ibid.*, p. 211.

[60]*Ibid.*, p. 211.

[61]*Ibid.*, p. 212.

[62]*Ibid.*, p. 219.

Bickington parish, turning north-west past Killinch.[63] The last quarter of the clause contained a series of fords. The bounds went from a *hwita ford* to a *fulan* (foul) *ford* to Hild's *ford*. Hooke believed that the white ford was across Batham's Brook at SX 807692.[64] She suggested that one of the other two fords was at Collacombe Bridge at SX 8106775.

Sandford (S 405, S 890)

There are two charters for the estates at Sandford and their details differ considerably.

Charter S 405 used several relevant boundary features. The first was a *herepath* followed by the bounds from SS 810014 to SS 804013. The next relevant feature was another *herepath* which Hooke said "may be the ridgeway from Copplestone to Newbuildings past the Furzeland farms".[65] This *herepath* led to an unlocated *thornisces weg*. Further along the bounds was another *herepath* which Hooke suggested was a road crossing the Knathorne Brook at SS 768046. She did not agree with Finberg's suggestion of a road to the north.[66] This *herepath* led to Lill's *ford* which, according to Finberg and Hooke, was likely over the Knathorne Brook at Spirelake Cross.[67] The next *herepath* is difficult to locate. It led to a plank bridge (*thel brycge*) which gave name to Thelbridge, but Hooke set forth the idea that the bridge of the charter was further east at Dowrich Mill.[68] Towards the end of the clause there were three more relevant features. First, there was a *stanford* located at SS 813047.[69] Soon after came a *stigele*, a steep path, on the line of a green track from West Sandford village to Henstill, which owes its name to this feature.[70]

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[63]*Ibid.*, p. 221.

[64]*Ibid.*, p. 221.

[65]*Ibid.*, p. 118.

[66]*Ibid.*, p. 118.

[67]*Ibid.*, p. 118.

[68]*Ibid.*, p. 120.

[69]*Ibid.*, p. 121.

[70]*Ibid.*, p. 121.

Finally, there was a *hroces ford* which gave Ruxford its name.[71]

The second Sandford charter, S 890, began on a *herpoth* from *crydian bricge*, Creedy Bridge. The bridge was at SS 847012 and the *herpoth* would have been on the line of the road crossing this bridge (figs. 45-47).[72] The bounds then proceeded immediately on the northern *weg* along the *herpoth* and Hooke said that this is the Crediton road.[73] The bounds left the *herpoth* for a short distance, but then returned to it. They soon came to and follow an unidentified *weg*. The next relevant feature was the *hroces ford* also seen at the end of S 405. From there the bounds went along the *stigele*, again seen in S 405. The S 890 bounds, like the S 405 bounds, went to Thelbridge. In this charter, Hooke gave a very precise location for the bridge: SS 822048.[74] The bounds ended where they started, at Creedy Bridge.

Seaton (S 910)

The Seaton boundary clause first used a routeway element when moving along a *hrichweg*. Unfortunately this ridgeway and the *readan weg* which follows it, are now both unlocated on the ground. The next relevant feature was another *weg* which is also now unidentified. This first locatable routeway element was a *herpoth* on the line of the Roman road from Sidford to Colyford (fig. 40).[75] The *herpoth* led to a *weg* labelled 'the head of the coomb way' and would have been in the valley to the south of Pratt's Hill (fig. 41).[76] Notably, in this area the modern road is not on the parish boundary. The bounds followed the *weg* to a *ford* across Holyford Brook at SY 236923,[77] and from there the bounds went down stream to a *nytheran stanford* at Stafford (SY 244922).

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[71] *Ibid.*, p. 121.

[72] *Ibid.*, p. 183.

[73] *Ibid.*, p. 183.

[74] *Ibid.*, p. 183.

[75] *Ibid.*, p. 192.

[76] *Ibid.*, p. 192.

[77] *Ibid.*, p. 192.

Sorley in Churchstow (S 704)

This clause started at *cyncges br[icge]*. This feature gave name to Kingsbridge, but the bridge itself is unlocatable. The boundary later came to a *weges bige*, way's bend. About this Hooke said, "[t]he north-eastern boundary of Sorley follows a road as far as the eastern corner of the parish and the reference may be to the bend above Warcombe".[78] The bounds then arrived at a *bricge* in the Avon valley.[79] From there the they took an *ealdan weg* to a meadow. These features are unidentified. The bounds left the meadow by a *weg* which Hooke identified as the road from Halwell to Churchstow, which is on the same line as the parish boundary.[80] The bounds soon passed two fords neither of which can be precisely located. A *lanu* led away from the second of these fords and it too has not been located by Hooke.

South Hams (S 298)

This boundary clause covers an area in the South Hams District. The first road in the clause was a *weg* north of Lower Cumery.[81] The bounds then proceeded along water features until arriving at Beonna's *ford*, whose location could be either SX 679478 or SX 679483.[82] The bounds did not reach another routeway element for some distance. Eventually they made use of an *ealdan weg* which was a ridgeway from Churchstow to Bantham Ham.[83] The next road was an unidentified *stræt*. Towards the end of the clause there was another *weg* which Hooke thought could have been a roadway going south from Halwell towards Kingsbridge.[84] Soon there was a *herepath*. Hooke was uncertain about its location, but suggested the Sorley-Kingsbridge road as a possibility.[85] From the *herepath* the bounds passed to a *ford* and then to a *holan*

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[78] *Ibid.*, p. 167.

[79] *Ibid.*, p. 166.

[80] *Ibid.*, p. 167.

[81] *Ibid.*, p. 106.

[82] *Ibid.*, p. 106.

[83] *Ibid.*, p. 108.

[84] *Ibid.*, p. 109.

[85] *Ibid.*, p. 109.

weg. These were, respectively, on the river north of Kingsbridge and a road to the estuary.[86]

Stoke Canon (S 389)

The Stoke Canon bounds began at *sulford* which was seen in the Crediton bounds and was across the Exe near Fortescue.[87] From the ford, the bounds followed a *herepoth* to *langan forda*. The *herepoth*, Hooke demonstrated, was on the line of Green Lane and the *ford*, although not specifically located, may have been where the modern road crossed backwaters or the Culm between Rewe and Columbjohn.[88] Further along the clause recorded a *weg* on the line of the road from Stoke Canon to Pinhoe.[89] The clause also recorded a cross-roads, a place where the *weges to licgath*, which Hooke identified as Stoke Post at SX 941962 (fig. 42). From there the bounds went to a *hryc weg* which has survived as a bridle path above Stoke Woods.[90] Before returning to *sulford*, the bounds passed over Athelstan's water-meadow *ford*, a fording point north of Brampford Speke across the Exe.

Topsham (S 433)

This estate's boundary clause recorded three routway features. Towards the middle of the clause there was an *ealdan herpath* identified as a section of the Roman road from Topsham to Exeter.[91] The only water-crossing in the clause was a *ford* across a brook at SX 940907.[92] The final relevant feature was a *weg* which Hooke identifies as Old Rydon Lane.[93] This area is now within the greater Exeter region.

Treable, Cheriton Bishop (S 830)

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[86]*Ibid.*, p. 109.

[87]*Ibid.*, p. 134.

[88]*Ibid.*, p. 134-135.

[89]*Ibid.*, p. 136.

[90]*Ibid.*, p. 136.

[91]*Ibid.*, p. 123.

[92]*Ibid.*, p. 124.

[93]*Ibid.*, p. 125.

The Treable bounds made use of routeway terms only for a short distance. The bounds reached a *stanford* whose identification is problematic. Hooke said that "[i]f the Crediton bounds did not suggest a stone ford on the Spreyton road it would be tempting to suggest that this was the ford near Forder farm."[94] From that stone ford, the bounds moved to *lamford*, which is also not precisely identified. From there the bounds moved east on a *weg*. The way may have been on the line of the road to Cheriton Bishop.[95]

Uplyme (S 442)

Uplyme made use of many routeway elements in its boundary clause. The first was a *here path* which Hooke discussed, but I am unable to identify it from her comments.[96] The *huneford* may have been at SY 315922.[97] The *waynlete* (junctions of ways) and a *herepath* that came soon after it are both unlocated. The bounds moved from a coomb's head to a *rede weg*. The red way can be idenfitied as on the line of the modern A373.[98] Later in the clause came a *saltford*. Hooke related two possibilities for its location: SY 333933 and SY 339949.[99] She used the latter on her map of estate boundary.[100] The final relevant feature was a weyate which may be translated either as 'way gate' or 'wagon gate'.[101] In either case, this is unidentified on the ground.

Upton Pyne (S 498)

The first relevant feature in the Upton Pyne clause was a *wey* which has not been identified. Hooke wondered if the next, a *grene wey*, was a continuation of the present Bidwell Lane.[102] The

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[94]*Ibid.*, p. 178.

[95]*Ibid.*, p. 178.

[96]*Ibid.*, p. 128, 130.

[97]*Ibid.*, p. 130.

[98]*Ibid.*, p. 131.

[99]*Ibid.*, p. 132.

[100]See *Ibid.*, p. 129.

[101]*Ibid.*, p. 133.

[102]*Ibid.*, p. 150.

other two routeway terms appeared in succession, as the bounds moved from a *foulan forde* to a *herepath*. The ford, according to Hooke was the one near Higher Shute and the *herepath* was on the line of the modern road called Rixenford Lane and formed the northern boundary of the parish.[103]

Shaftesbury

Cheselbourne (S 334, S 342, S 485, S 955)

The bounds of land at Cheselbourne are recorded in four of the Shaftesbury charters, but two of these are almost identical. In the two identical charters (S 334 and S 342), Kelly recommended using both Grundy and the Dorset *EPNS* volumes for discussion of the boundary-marks. Unfortunately, Kelly, Grundy and the *EPNS* volumes disagree on the placement of the *herepaths* in these two charters. The term *herepath* was used four times in each of these two charters and Kelly indicated that these referred to two *herepaths* , but she did not locate either of them precisely.[104] From her descriptions, one would expect to find the first *herepath* west of the stream which flows from Lyscombe Farm heading roughly northwards. The second one would then be on the northern boundary running towards Henning Hill which Kelly suggested may have been Giant's Grave.[105] Grundy believed that there were three *herepaths*, the first being on a ridgeway on the western boundary.[106] This would fit in with Kelly's discussion of the bounds. Grundy saw the second use of the term *herepath* as referring to a second *herepath*. He identified this as the Cheselbourne - Piddletrenthide road. He then saw the last two uses of *herepaths* as being one highway on the line of the modern road going through the Cheselbourne valley.[107] This would not be incompatible with Kelly. However, in *EPNS* volume all four of the

[103] *Ibid.*, p. 150.

[104] Kelly, p. 28-9.

[105] *Ibid*, p. 24.

[106] G. B. Grundy, 'Dorset Charters', *Proceedings of the Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society* LVI (1934), p. 125.

[107] *Ibid*, 1934, p. 126.

instances of *herepath* were listed together and it is said that "this track runs NE and gives name to Hartfoot Lane in Hilton".[108] Thus, it has been difficult to decide exactly where these *herepaths* would have been.

In the third Cheslebourne charter, S 485, Kelly and Grundy also disagreed, this time about the location of a *hricge weg*. The relevant passage reads as follows: "from the black thorn bush along the ridgeway to the barrow".[109] Grundy placed the ridgeway along the eastern boundary of the parish, with the thorn bush being the north-eastern corner of the parish. Kelly, however, equated the barrow with the north-eastern corner (ST 784018) and therefore the ridgeway would have been to the north of that.[110]

Finally, the fourth boundary clause relating to Cheselbourne (S 955) has two *pathes* and a *lane*, none of which have been specifically identified by Kelly. The first *path* was, significantly, described as *eald* and Grundy believed it is represented by a road heading due south from Bingham's Melcombe passing near Bramblecombe Farm.[111] The second *path*, he said, was a road running west-northwest from Dewlish. The first of Grundy's suggestions would easily fit in with Kelly's description of the course of the bounds, but she did not positively identify any of the landmarks near enough to the second path to support Grundy. The *sticelen lane* also remained totally unidentified by Grundy and he believed that its course has not survived.[112]

Compton Abbas (S 630)

The bounds of Compton Abbas provided evidence for two ways. The first was *imeren hole way* (boundary hollow way) and stretched across the Fontmell Downs.[113] If it was along the line of the present footpath, it may have reached the present main road,

[108] *Dorset III* , p. 206.

[109] "*of pane blake thornen anlang hricge weges to pe beorge*" Kelly# 13, p. 54.

[110] Kelly, p. 58.

[111] Grundy,1934, p. 116.

[112] *Ibid*, p. 119.

[113] Kelly, p. 91.

which Wright believed was part of a pre-historic ridgeway.[114] The second way was a *hereway* and was probably on the line of the road from Twyford to Bedchester.[115]

Corfe, Blashenwell and the Isle of Purbeck (S 534, S 573, and S 632)

Three charters in the Shaftesbury collection relate to this area and they have been most helpful. S 534 is about the Isle of Purbeck and is to the east of the Corfe and Blashenwell charter S 632. The third, S 573, is also about Corfe and Blashenwell, but it a 'spurious conflation' of the other two.[116]

The bounds of both S 534 and S 632 started at a *ford* over the river Wych. From there S 534 went over the marsh to a junction of ways, recorded as the *weilaite*.[117] This junction would have been in a low-lying area to the south of the Purbeck Hills.[118] The next relevant feature in the Isle of Purbeck bounds was a *herepath* which would have run along the line of the road from Kingston and to Langton Matravers.[119] From the *herepath*, the bounds went along a ditch to Strutheard's *path*, a identifiable footpath, and eventually along another *path* to the coast.[120] The western part of the bounds soon came to a straight *herepath*, identified by Kelly as being on the line of the present road heading northward to Kingston (fig. 37).[121] The only other relevant feature in the western boundary was a *ford* over a tributary of the river Wych.[122] The two *herepaths* in this clause were on the alignment of two modern roads which meet in Kingston and might have come together there.

The Corfe and Blashenwell charter S 632 was about land to

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[114]Wright, p. 16-17.

[115]Kelly, p. 91.

[116]*Ibid*, p. 82.

[117]"*ouer þan merse þare weilaite*" Kelly #16, p. 67.

[118]Kelly, p. 69.

[119]*Ibid*, p. 69.

[120]*Ibid*, p. 69

[121]*Ibid*, p. 70.

[122]*Ibid*, p. 70.

the west of the Isle of Purbeck charter. As mentioned above, the bounds began at the same *ford* as did the bounds in S 534. From there, the bounds reached the *ford* mentioned at the end of the of S 534 and then went immediately along a *richt weg*, shortly coming to a *herepath*, likely to be the same as the one in the western boundary of S 534, before reaching the coast.[123] The Corfe and Blashenwell charter S 632 then recorded its own western boundary, but there are problems with this section and it has not be solved. Even though the routeway features included here are not locatable to any degree of precision, it is worth noting that a *stan weg*, a *irich weg*, and Ælfstan's *path* made up part of the boundary before it returned to the *ford* over the Wych. Since the *path* followed immediately after the *herepath*, it is logical to assume that they were connected to each other.

The third charter relating to this area, S 573, covered both of the areas described in the other two boundary clauses. It started in the south-western corner of the estate[124] and its first relevant feature was a *weg* and the second was a *stan wei*, the same one as in S 632. The next relevant landmark was a considerable distance along the bounds and was an *eald weg* which the bounds followed between a brook and a valley. Then the bounds reached a *stanene brugge* which was not mentioned in either of the other bounds. From the bridge, the bounds went along a *wei* and then onto a *richt wei* and then follow a stone embankment down to the previously mentioned *ford* over the River Wych. The last relevant feature in this clause was Strutheard's *weg* and was referred to as Strutheard's *path* in S 534.

Grundy discussed the bounds of the Isle of Purbeck charter and the second Corfe and Blashenwell one (S 573). In the Isle of Purbeck bounds, Kelly has agreed with his identifications of the eastern *herepath* and with his second suggestion for Strutheard's *path*.[125] She disagreed substantially with the rest of his identifications of routeway features in that charter, as well as all of those in the aforementioned Corfe and Blashenwell

[123] *Ibid*, p. 79.

[124] *Ibid*, p. 82.

[125] Grundy, 1935, p. 118.

charter.[126]

Dinton (S 329)

The Dinton bounds only recorded one routeway feature: *ceaden ford*. Ceada's ford is currently unlocated, but would have been on one of the branches of the River Nadder.[127]

Donhead (S 630)

In her discussion of the Donhead bounds, Kelly said that she believed that Grundy left out part of the estate in his solution of the bounds.[128] Thus, the identification of the only routeway feature in these bounds is based on Kelly and she has associated the *ealden hole weg* with the track going south towards the present Ferne House.[129]

Easton Basset (S 630)

The bounds at Easton started and finished at Offa's *weg*. According to Kelly and Grundy, this was the ". . . track which cross the road running east from the village of Berwick St. John at approximately ST951223."[130] These bounds ended with a *strete* running back to Offa's *weg*. The *strete* would have been Water Street in Berwick St. John.[131]

Fontmell (S 419)

The bounds of Fontmell began at Woodbridge, *wde brugthe*, and soon travelled along *snelles hamme weghe* which, according to Grundy, was the north-south road running past Bedchester.[132] Grundy's suggestion here was the same road which Kelly had identified as representing the line of the *hereweg* in Compton

[126] *Ibid* p. 121-128.

[127] Kelly, p. 21-22.

[128] *Ibid*, p. 40.

[129] *Ibid*, p. 89.

[130] Kelly, p. 90. See also: G. B. Grundy, 'Ancient Highways and Tracks of Wiltshire, Berkshire, and Hampshire, and the Saxon Battlefields of Wiltshire', Archaeological Journal, vol 75, 1918, p. 115.

[131] Kelly, 91.

[132] G. B. Grundy, 'Dorset Charters', *Proceedings of the Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society LVIII* (1936), p. 103.

Abba. Noteably, Kelly did not mention it in relation to the Fontmell bounds.[133] If one were to follow Kelly's description, one could only say that the *weg* was somewhere in the area between Woodbridge and Hawkcombe Lane in Compton Abbas.[134] Thus, Grundy's suggestion must be treated cautiously.

Kelly and Grundy also disagreed when the bounds next met the communications network and followed it for some distance. This series started with a *holleweie*, shown by Kelly to be on the line of the footpath running southward from Washer's Pit (fig. 38).[135] Furthermore, according to Kelly's work, between the aforementioned *holleweie* and some strip lynchets at ST 875167 (fig. 38), the bounds went along a series of unidentifiable ways: *sledweie*, *hricgesweg*, and *wines weie*.[136] Grundy located these ways, but since Kelly did not follow his recommendations and since Kelly and Grundy differ in opinion about the landmarks just before and just after this series, Grundy's identifications, once again, ought to be set aside. Nonetheless, this section of the boundary clause is interesting, especially in that here we can see the meeting of ways from both high and low ground.

The Fontmell bounds eventually returned to *wdebricge* before reaching a *herepath*, *path*, and *ealdan herepath*. These were not connected to each other and were unidentified by Kelly.[137] Grundy also did not locate the *path*, but he did come up with an identification for the two *herepaths*, believing that they were both part of the north-east ridgeway which is now a road through Orchard.[138] While this suggestion is not wholly incompatible with Kelly's discussion of the bounds, the absence of this identification in Kelly's work means that his precise identification should be seen as questionable. Even though one cannot map these *herepaths*, or these sections of a *herepath*, they were probably important parts of the communications network, whereas the *path* most likely was only of local significance, as

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[133]Kelly, p. 34-5, 91.

[134]*Ibid*, p. 34.

[135]*Ibid*, p. 34.

[136]*Ibid*, p. 34.

[137]*Ibid*, p. 34.

[138]Grundy, 1936, p. 107-9.

can be seen in its recorded landscape context: in this section, the bounds went ". . . to the west of the enclosure path and from there down to the stile".[139]

Henstridge (S 570)

Grundy tried to make the bounds of this estate be those of the later parish of Henstridge, but Kelly pointed out that R. Forsberg's suggestion of it being the parish of Abbas Combe is much better.[140] There were only two elements of the communications network included in the Henstridge bounds: a *stoc wey* and a *irichte herepath*. The first is unidentified on the ground whereas the second relevant element, the straight *herepath*, may have been the road passing through Temple Combe, an area to the south of Henstridge.[141]

Hinton St. Mary (S 502)

Hinton St. Mary's only feature relevant to this study is an *oxene bricge* over the River Stour. Kelly and Grundy both located this at ST 782152, where the parish boundary met the river at a place now called Twinwood Coppice (fig. 44).[142]

Iwerne Courtney (S 656)

Kelly believed that Grundy "is surely correct in locating [the bounds] in the north-western part of the Iwerne Courtney parish."[143] Iwerne Courtney only has one relevant feature in its boundary clause: a *weie* whose location Grundy deemed undeterminable while suggesting that it could possibly be a local ridgeway running up to Farrington from the south-south-west.[144] Kelly did not locate it specifically and from her description of the rest of the boundary, one can only say that it must have been

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[139] "*be weste hegen pathe and thar of dune to thare stigele*", Kelly #8, p. 31.

[140] Kelly, p. 76.

[141] *Ibid*, p. 76.

[142] Grundy, 1936, p. 120 and Kelly, p. 65.

[143] Kelly, p. 98.

[144] Grundy, 1936, p. 130-131.

to the west of the Iwerne River.[145]

Iwerne Minster (S 630)

The Iwerne Minster estate shared its western boundary with the aforementioned Iwerne Courtney estate, but the rest of this boundary clause is more useful to this study. The first reference to the communications network came near the beginning of the clause when the bounds reach a *weie itwislen* (fork in the road) a land mark which has not been located by Kelly.[146] Grundy placed the cross-roads to the south-east of Hill Farm.[147] Interestingly, the north-south road forming part of Grundy's cross-roads is part of a pre-historic ridgeway.[148] I wonder if Grundy chose this spot partly because it was on a ridgeway.

The next relevant feature was an *ealden ford* which would have crossed the Iwerne River, according to Kelly, at the point where the modern parish does so.[149] Grundy had this just to the south, where the modern road crosses the river.[150] Kelly's use of the parish boundary as indicating where the Anglo-Saxon clause may have crossed the river is probably more sound than Grundy's use of a modern road.

After describing the common boundary with Iwerne Courtney, the Iwerne Minster bounds followed a stream to a *sand ford*, located at the site of the later Farrington Bridge.[151] Neither this *ford* nor the above mentioned old *ford* were associated with roads or tracks in this clause.

The northern boundary of the Iwerne Minster estate was composed, in part, of two *wegs*. Grundy believed that the first, a *gren wai*, was very apparent in the landscape and he made it part of the north-south ridgeway which runs from Shaftesbury to

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[145]Kelly, p. 98.

[146]*Ibid*, p. 92.

[147]Grundy, 1936, p. 132.

[148]Wright, p. 10.

[149]Kelly, p. 92.

[150]Grundy, 1936, p. 132.

[151]Grundy, 1936, p. 133 and Kelly, p. 92.

Blanford Forum.[152] The second, a *mereweg*, Grundy believed was a track running from the ridgeway westward. Kelly, however, did not locate the green way and suggested that the second way was either a boundary or pool way and was on the line of a track going south-east through Stubhampton Bottom (fig. 38).[153] Again Kelly's interpretations have been more conservative and seem to fit better with the rest of the landmarks.

Mapperton in Almer (S 490)

This charter outlines an estate next to Winterbourne Tomson. About its bounds, Grundy wrote, ". . . its landmarks are by no means fully determinable. . .".[154] Work done since then has helped Kelly and she has been able to identify many of the boundary features. Mapperton is on the Roman road running between Dorchester and Badbury Rings and this road was referred to as the *elthen stret* in this charter's boundary clause.[155] The bounds left this road and went onto a *weie* to horn-gate. Kelly identified the horn-gate as being at the southern end of Great Coll Wood.[156] Interestingly, there is a footpath which joins the main road to this spot. The Mapperton bounds also followed a *wei* to a *ford* on the Winterborne. The bounds would have had to have come back across the Roman road between the tumulus at ST934017[157] and this ford on the Winterbourne. The only boundary feature mentioned between these two points is a *weie*. Thus the Roman road was likely crossed by this way. Another interesting point about this charter is its lack of reference to the *herepath* from the Winterbourne Tomson bounds (see below) even though it would have had to have crossed it.

East Orchard (S 710)

East Orchard shared part of it boundary with West Orchard and part with Fontmell. It crossed the aforementioned *wudebricge*

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[152]Grundy, 1936, p. 134.

[153]Kelly, p. 92-3.

[154]Grundy, 1933, p. 245.

[155] Kelly #14, p. 60 and p. 61-2.

[156]Kelly, p. 62.

[157]*Ibid*, p. 62.

and its only other relevant features were two fords: *land scorford and Funtemel ford*. The boundary ford may have been where the parish boundary parts with Stirchel Stream, while the other ford was a crossing point on Fontmell Brook.[158] As with the *oxene bricge* in Hinton St. Mary and the *fords* in Iwerne Minster, these fords were recorded without reference to any tracks or roads going to or from them.

West Orchard (S 445)

The West Orchard bounds went along the communication network for a short distance from a *sceadlen ford* over the Stirchel (Manston Brook) where it was crossed by the parish boundary, to a *higweg*. The present road to Winchells Farm is on the same alignment as was this hay way.[159] The bounds followed this *weg* to its end. Since the *weg* had an end within the limits of this estate, it must have been a route of only local significance.

Piddletrenthide (S 744)

The boundary clause of this charter runs anti-clockwise.[160] Its only element relating directly to routeways was a *herepath* and it has been identified both by Kelly and Grundy as being on the line of a section of the north-south road between Cerne Abbas and Dorchester.[161] This formed part of the parish boundary and was a ridgeway.[162] As shown by Grundy, this was a branch of the great Dorset ridgeway[163] and would thus have facilitated long distance communications.

Sixpenny Handley (S 630)

These bounds contain two routeways which were not connected to each other. Its *herepath* was on the line of the road running south from Sixpenny Handley and its *weg* would have been on the

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[158] *Ibid*, p. 100.

[159] *Ibid*, p. 43.

[160] *Ibid*, p. 105.

[161] Grundy, 1937, p. 110-111, and Kelly, p. 105.

[162] Grundy, 1937, p. 110-111, and Kelly, p. 105.

[163] Grundy, 1937, p. 110.

line of the road headed north to Farnham (fig. 48).[164]

Tarrant Hinton (S 429)

The first relevant element was a *lane* that was used in this boundary clause between a quarry and the Tarrant. The bounds crossed the Tarrant at a *ford* and then followed it to a *herepath*. This *herepath* went through a little wood which Kelly located in Eastbury Park.[165] These bounds must have crossed the Roman road either on this *herepath* or along the next boundary feature, a furrow or trench, since the *ford* was to the west of the Roman road and Kelly located the feature after the furrow, a barrow, to the east of it.[166]

The second *herepath* in this boundary clause was described as the *wic herepathes* . This is now known as Week Street and is part of the Salisbury to Blanford Forum road (fig. 49).[167] Kelly pointed out that the *wic* could have been a "simple dairy farm, but it is speculated that the word could refer to a near by Romano-British village".[168] In either case, the *wic* was a place of minor importance which would have had good access to long distance communications. Nonetheless, the *wic* would have had to have been a significant enough place on that section of the *herepath* in order for it to have been known, at least locally, as the *wic herepath*.

As with the other *herepath* in this boundary clause, the *wic herepath* was connected to a *ford*. This *ford* crossed over a stream, perhaps at ST 960127.[169]

Teffont (S 326)

The bounds of the Teffont estate began and ended on a *readen weg*. The red way led to a *ford* on the Nadder ST 986300.[170] This

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[164]Grundy, 1936, p. 117 and Kelly, p. 91.

[165]Kelly, p. 38.

[166]*Ibid*, p. 38-9.

[167]*Ibid*, p. 39.

[168]*Ibid*, p. 39.

[169]*Ibid*, p. 39.

[170]*Ibid*, p. 19.

ford was described in the charter as being the ford to Teffont.[171] Thus it would have been considered as part of the communications network serving Teffont. The other routeway terms came towards the end of the clause and were on the eastern boundary. There was *funtnesford*, likely over Teffont stream, followed by a *herepath* which in turn led back to the *reden wege*.[172] Thus if one could accurately solve this charter's boundary clause, one could trace a section of the communications network from a crossing point on Teffont stream, along an important road, to another road and then to a crossing point over the Nadder. The boundary of this estate had to have crossed the pre-historic ridgeway known as the Harrow Way,[173] but the ridgeway was not mentioned in the bounds.

Tisbury (S 850)

The Tisbury charter contains a wealth of information about the communications network, even if many of the features have not been precisely identified.

There was a *twichenen* (road junction) between a valley and a boundary. After the boundary there was a *grene wei* which is now only a footpath to the north of Swallowcliffe Wood. Grundy and Kelly both made this identification, but Grundy used a longer section of it.[174] Soon the bounds crossed a stream by means of an *ealde wdeforde* at ST 954273.[175] Grundy located this *ford* further south on the stream where a modern road crosses it.[176]

Since they disagreed on the exact location of the *ealde wudeford*, obviously, Grundy and Kelly presented different views on the second *grene wei* which the bounds follow from the ford. Grundy saw this green way as being on the line of the modern road passing near Squalls Farm.[177] Later he put the *wealwege* to the west of Twelve Acre Copse and showed how it connected to a summer

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[171]See Kelly # 3, p. 326.

[172]Kelly, p. 19.

[173]Wright, p. 21.

[174]Grundy 1918, p. 109 and Kelly, p. 112.

[175]Kelly, p. 112.

[176]Grundy, 1918, p. 110.

[177]*Ibid*, p. 110.

way and ridgeway which he identified from sources outside of this sample.[178] However, from her location of the ford, Kelly left the course of the second green way unidentified. Later, she showed the bounds running east from an area near Squalls Farm along a *wealwege* to a *hig wege*.[179] Although it is interesting to see the bounds moving from one *weg* to another, this is not as helpful as it might be in that Kelly located neither of these *wegs*. Also, she said that both Grundy and Jackson confidently put the next few of the boundary features, starting with the *hig wege*, along the later parish, but the parish line may have changed.[180] Thus these identifications should not be trusted. In this series, the clause also recorded a *ford* in a pasture crossing an intermittent stream. As seen in other boundary clauses, this ford stood isolated from other routeways terms.

In the later part of this boundary clause, there was a series of relevant elements linked together. First in this series was a *mearc wei*, identified by both Grundy and Kelly as a east-west oriented footpath between East Knoyle and Ruddlemoor Farm.[181] The bounds then went "*of thane wege anlang hricges to nipedeforde*".[182] Grundy saw this series as containing only one *weg* and extended the *mearc wei* from the above-mentioned footpath by tracing the road to the *forde* south of the Fonthill Abbey Wood.[183] Kelly believed that the 'way along the ridge' was different from the *mearc wei*. She left the ridgeway unlocated and placed the ford at ST 923301, not at Grundy's location.[184]

On the other side of *nipedeford*, the bounds continued along a *weg*, next turning onto a *herpoth*. Then they left the communications network returning to it soon and following a *stanweie* for a short distance. Grundy had the first *weg* on the

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[178]*Ibid*, p. 110.

[179]Kelly, p. 112.

[180]*Ibid*, p. 112.

[181]Grundy, 1918, p. 110-111 and Kelly, p. 113.

[182]Kelly, p. 109.

[183]Grundy, 1918, p. 111.

[184]Kelly, p. 113.

line of part of the road to Fonthill Gifford.[185] Then, his *herpoth* ran south-south-east on the course of the main road from Fonthill Gifford. Finally, his *stanweie* was in Fonthill Park.[186] This would have made a small loop away from his boundary way and back to it further north. Kelly's interpretation of this section, following that of R. Jackson, was quite different and made a larger loop to the north. The *weg* coming from the ford, she had on the same line as Grundy, but she extended it towards Fonthill Bishop.[187] In this model, the *herpoth* and *stanweie* are not precisely identified.[188]

Winterborne Tomson (S 485)

The final charter in the Shaftesbury regional sample is that of Winterborne Tomson, an estate next to the above discussed Mapperton. Its first routeway feature was a *wic weie* which may have had the same alignment as the modern road from Winterborne Tomson to Winterborne Kingston.[189] The western part of the boundary was along the line of the present parish boundary and was recorded as the *mearc wei*.[190] There was also a *nearu anstiga* (narrow footpath) along a wood.[191] Likely this only had local significance and was probably never an important part of the larger communications network.

To the south of this, after passing two other landmarks, the bounds took a *herepath* to the horn-gate also seen in the Mapperton bounds.[192] Interestingly, Mapperton's *stret*, was not mentioned in this boundary clause even though it would have been crossed twice; firstly by the boundary way and secondly some time shortly after the horn-gate.

The final relevant term in the Winterbourne Tomson boundary

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[185]Grundy, 1918, p. 111.

[186]*Ibid*, p. 111.

[187]Kelly, p. 113-114.

[188]*Ibid*, p. 114.

[189]*Ibid*, p. 58.

[190]*Ibid*, p. 58.

[191]*Ibid*, p. 59.

[192]*Ibid*, p. 59.

clause was another *herepath* which was on the line of the road to Bere Regis.[193]

[193]*Ibid*, p. 59.

Appendix B
The Place-Name Sample

The place-name sample is based on the *EPNS* volumes for Berkshire, Devon, Dorset and Wilthsire and Richard Coates's *Hampshire Place-Names*.[1] It includes places whose names contain road and water-crossing elements and were , with a couple of exceptions, recorded prior to 1100. The following list of place-names is organised by county and alphabetically, includes a definition and a selection of early spellings. The dates given are from Coates and the *EPNS* volumes. When the names are considered individually in the main text, the dates are given more attention. There are more names listed here than places which appear on the maps because the locations of some have been lost.

Berkshire

Appleford - 'apple (tree) ford'; *Æppelford, Appelforda* in *c.* 895, *Apleford* in 1086.

Basildon - personal name plus ford; *Bestlesforda* in *c.* 690, *Bæstlæsford* and *bestles forda* in *c.* 895.

Beedon - tub or vessel, here indicating a steep valley plus way; *beden weg* in 965.

Blackwater Bridge - stream name plus ford ; *brydan ford* in 973-4.

Denford House - 'ford in a valley'; *Denforda* in *c.* 935, *Daneford* in 1086.

Duxford - 'Duduc's ford', *Dudochesforde* in 1086.

Frilford - 'Frithela's ford', *Frieliford* in 1086.

Garford - 'Gara's ford' or 'ford at the triangular piece of land'; *Garanforda* in 940, *Garanford* in 960, *Wareford* in 1086.

Hatford - 'head/headland ford', *Hevaford* in 1086.

Lashford Lane - 'physician or bog/stream ford'; *læsces ford* in 956 and 985.

Lyford - 'ford where the flax grows'; *Linforda* in 944, *Linford* in 1032 and 1086.

[1]See abbreviations for bibliographical information.

Maideford - 'mayweed or maiden ford'; probably *mægthæ ford* and *mægthaford* in *c.* 957.

Maidenhead - landing place of the maidens; *mægden hyth*

Moulsford - 'Mul's ford'; *Muleforda* in *c.* 1110.

Ock Hundred - 'ford on the river Ock', *Eoccenforda.*

Runsford Hole - undefined first element, 'ford'; *sunesforda* in *c.* 895.

Slotisford - 'ford with a bar'; *Heslitesford, Esliteford,* and *Eletesford* in 1086.

Sandford, Dry - 'sandy ford'; *Sandforda* in 811, *Sanford* in 1086.

Shalford Bridge and Farm - 'shallow ford'; *scealdan ford* in 944.

Shefford, East and Great - 'sheep ford', *Siford* in 1086.

Shellingford - 'ford of the people of Scear' or 'plough share ford', *Scaringoford* in 931, *Serengeford* in 1086.

Stanford Dingley - 'stony ford'; *stanworde* in 1086, *Stanford,* in 1220.

Stanford in the Vale - 'stony ford', *Stanford* in 1086.

Stratfield Mortimer - 'open land traversed by a Roman road'; *Stradfeld* in 1086

Streatley - 'wood or clearing by a Roman road'; *stretlea* in *c.* 690, *stretleæ* in 687, *Estralei* in 1086.

Swinford - 'swine ford'; *Swinford* and *Swynford* in 931.

Wallingford - 'ford of Wealh's people'; *Welengaford* in *c.* 895, *Welingaford* in *c.* 895, *Wælingforda* in *c.* 915, *Wealingaforda* in 1003-4 and in mid 11th century, *Wealungaforda* in *c.* 1100, *Wallingeforth* in *c.* 1070, *Warengeforth, Walengeford, Walengefort, Warengeford* in 1086.

Waycock Hill - hillcock way; *weg cocce* in 940.

Welford - 'willow ford'; *weliford* in 821, *wælingford* in 821, *Welig forda* and *Weligforda* in 949, *Weligforda* in 956; *Waliford,* in 1086.

Devon

Anstey, East - 'a small track' *Anesti(n)ga* in 1086.

Anstey, West - 'a small track' *Anesti(n)ga* in 1086.

Ashford - 'ash tree ford'; *Aiseforda* in 1086.

Ashford (lost) - 'ash ford'; *Aiseforda* in 1086.

Ayshford - 'ash tree ford'; *Escford, æscforda* in 958, *Ais(s)eford(a)* in 1086.

Battisford - 'Bott(e)'s ford'; *Botesforda* in 1086.

Battleford - 'Baccela's ford'; *Bacheleford* in 1086.

Beaford - maybe 'gadfly ford'; *Baverdona* in 1086.

Bickford Town - 'Bicca's ford'; *Bicheforda* in 1086.

Bideford - maybe 'Byda's ford'; *Bediford(a)* and *Bedeford(e)* in 1086.

Binneford - 'Beonna's ford'; *Beonnan ford* in 930.

Bradford - 'wide ford'; *Bradefort* in 1086.

Bradford Barton - 'broad ford'; *Bradeford(a)* in 1086

Bradford (in Virginstow) - 'broad ford'; *Bradeford(a)* in 1086.

Bradford (under Pyworthy) - 'broad ford'; *Bradefort* in 1086.

Brampford Speke - likely 'ford by the bramble'; *Branfort*, *Branfortuna*, and *Brenfort* in 1086.

Bridford - likely 'brides ford'; *Brideford(a)* in 1086.

Broadaford (in Ugborough) - 'broad ford'; *Bradeforda* in 1086.

Brushford - 'a ford with a causeway'; *Brisforda*, *Brigeforda* in 1086.

Butterford - first element unknown, 'ford'; *Botreforda* in 1086.

Chagford - 'gorse or broom ford'; *Cagefort* and *Kagefort* in 1086.

Charford - 'church ford'; *cyric forda* in *c.* 970, *Chereforda* in 1086.

Clifford Barton - 'cliff ford'; *Clifort*, *Cliforda* in 1086.

Coddisford - 'Codda's ford'; *Codaforfa* in 1086.

Cofford Farm - first element uncertain, ford; *cocc ford* in 1044.

Creedy Bridge - river name plus bridge; *Cridianbrycg* in 739, *Crydan brigce* in 956.

Culliford Farm - river name plus ford; '*culumford* in 938.

Dipford - 'deep ford'; *Deppaforda* in 1086.

Diptford - 'deep ford'; *Depeforda* in 1086.

Drayford - 'dragnet or dray ford'; *Draheforda* in 1086.

Dunsford - 'Dunn's ford'; *Dunnesforda* and *Dunesforda* in 1086.

Elsford - personal name plus ford (note: maybe different names over time, perhaps indicating different owners); *Ailavesfort* in 1086.

Farway - 'way/going way'; *fareweia* in 1086.

Ford - 'ford'; *Forda* in 1086.

Ford (lost) - 'ford'; *forda* in 1086.

Fulford, Great - 'dirty ford'; *Folefort* in 1086.

Galford - 'tax ford'; *Gafulford* and *Gafolford* in *Chronicle* entry for 823.

Gappah - 'goat's path'; *Gatepada* in 1086.

Greenway Farm - 'green way'; *Grenoweia* in 1086.

Halsfordwood - likely 'for by a neck of land'; *Halsforda* in *c.* 1100.

Hankford - 'Haneca's ford'; *Hanecheforda* in 1086.

Harbourneford - river name plus ford; *Herberneford(a)* in 1086.

Harepath - 'army road'; *herepath* in 739

Harepath - 'army road'; *herpoth* in 1005.

Harford - 'army road ford'; *herepathaford* in 739.

Harford - 'army ford'; *Hereford(a)* in 1086.

Henford - 'Hinds' ford'; *Hindefort* in 1086.

Henstill - 'hen path'; *henne stigele* in 930, in *henne stigle* in 997.

Hockford Waters - 'Hocca's ford'; *Hochaorda* in 1086.

Holyford Farm - 'dirty ford'; *horegan ford* in 1005.

Ideford - personal name plus ford; *Yudaforda* in1086.

Kersford - 'cress ford'; *Carsforda* and *Casforda* in 1086.

Kingsbridge - 'king's bridge'; *cinges bricge* in 962.

Kingsford - 'king's ford'; *Chinnesfort* in 1086.

Lambert - 'lamb ford'; *Lantfort* and *Lanforda* in 1086.

Langford Barton - 'long ford'; *Langeforda* in 1086.

Lapford - 'Hlappa's or leaps ford'; *Eslapaforda* in 1086.

Langford - long ford'; *Langafort* in 1086.

Lydford - river name plus ford; *Hlydanforda* in *c.* 1000, *Lydanford* on coins 979-1016, *Lideforda* and *Lidefort* in 2086.

Matford House - perhaps 'maiden ford'; *Matforda* in 1086.

Milford - 'mill ford'; *Meleforda* in 1086.

Milford - 'mill ford'; *Melefort* in 1086.

Newenham Abbey - old name meant 'alder ford'; *Alraforda* in 1086.

Oakford - 'oak ford'; *Alford* in 1086.

Orway Farm - personal name plus ford or ' ford along the bank'; *Orrawia* in 1086.

Parford - 'path ford'; *Pathford* in 739, *Patford(a)* in 1086.

Ponsford - river name plus ford; *Pantesfort* in 1086.

Putford, East - 'Putta'a ford'; *Potiforda* in 1086.

Putford, West 'Putta's ford'; *Poteforda* and *Podiforda in 1086.*

Rackenford - perhaps 'ford by the houses by the *racu* or path'; *Racheneforda* , *Litel Racheneforda* in 1086.

Roadway - 'red way'; The corrupt 1086 spelling was *Radehida*. Its ending was *weye* in 1242.

Rudway - 'red way'; *Radewei* om 1086.

Rushford Barton - 'rush ford'; *Risfort* in 1086.

Ruxford Barton - 'rook's ford'; *hroces ford* in 930, *hrocesford* and *hrocesforda* in 997.

Sampford Courtney - 'sandy ford'; *Sanfort* in 1086, *Sandfort* in 1093.

Sampford Peverell - 'sandy ford'; *Sandford(a)* in 1086.

Sampford Spinney - 'sandy ford'; *Sanford(a)* in 1086.

Sandford - 'sandy ford'; *sand ford* in 930, *Sandforda* and *Sandford* in 997, and *Sandforda* in 1008-12.

Sherford - 'clear/bright ford'; *Sciref*ord in *c*. 1050, *Sirefort* in 1086.

Sherford, East and West - 'clear ford'; *Sirefort* in 1086.

Shillingford - 'Sciella's ford'; *Esselingaforda* and *Sellingeforda* in 1086.

Sigford - 'Sicga's ford'; *Sigeforda* in 1086.

Silverton - stream name plus ford and settlement or 'settlement by the ford in the miry place'; *Sulfretona* and *Siffertona* in 1086.

Spurway Barton - 'track or path through brushwood'; *Espreuweia* and *Sprewea* in 1086.

Stafford - 'stone ford'; *stan ford* in 1005, *Estaforda* in 1086.

Stafford Barton - 'shore/bank ford'; *Stafort* and *Stadforda* in 1086.

Staverton - 'stone ford settlement'; *Stofordtune* in 1050-72, *Stovertona* in 1086.

Stowford - uncertain, could be 'ford marked by staves', 'ford at a bank', or 'stone ford'; *Estatforda* and *Staford* in 1086.

Stowford, East and West - 'ford marked by staves or posts'; *Estaveforda* in 1086.

Straitgate Farm - 'Roman road gate'; *Strætgeat* in 1061.

Strete Raleigh - 'Roman road'; *Estreta* in 1086.

Swimbridge - 'bridge'; *Birige* in 1086.

Taleford - river name plus ford; *tælenford* in 1061.

Thelbridge - 'plank bridge'; *Talebrua* in 1086.

Thelbridge Bridge - 'plank bridge'; *thelbrygc* in 930, *thel bricge* in 997.

Tiverton - 'double ford'; *Twyfyrde* in 880-5, *Toveretona* in 1086.

Twitchen - 'cross ways'; *Tuchel* in 1086, *Twychene* in 1281.

Walford (lost) - 'Britain's ford'; *Waleforda* in 1086.

Washford Pyne - 'flood ford'; *Wesforda, Wesfort, Wafforda* in 1086.

Way - 'way'; *Weia* in 1086.

Whiteway Barton - 'white way'; *Witeweia* in 1086.

Whitford - 'white ford'; *Witefort* in 1086.

Womberford (lost) - stream name plus ford; *Wiborda* in 1086.

Wonford - ford plus stream name; *Wenfort* in 1086 *Wunforda* in *c.* 1100.

Wonford - perhaps 'wagon ford'; *Wenforda* in 1086.

Woodford - 'wood ford' ; *Odeforda* in 1086.

Woodford Bridge - 'wood ford'; *wuduford* in 938.

Dorset

Blandford Forum - 'ford where gudgeon are found'; *Blaneford(e)* in 1086.

Blandford St Mary - 'ford where gudgeon are found'; *Bleneford(e)* and *Blaneford(e)* in 1086.

Bradford Abbas - 'broad ford'; *Bradford* in 839-55, *braden forda* in 933, *bradenford* in 988, *Bradeford* in 1086.

Bradford Peverell - 'broad ford'; *Bradeford(e)* in 1086.

Bryanston - perhaps was a ford name; *Blaneford* in 1086.

Bridge Farm - perhaps 'causeway' rather than 'bridge'; *Brige* in 1086.

Canford Magna - 'Cana's ford'; *Cheneford* in 1086.

Child Okeford - 'oak tree ford'; *Acford* in 1086.

Crawford, Great (lost) - 'crow ford'; *Craveford* in 1086.

Fordington - 'farm at the fording place'; *Fortitone* in 1086.

France Farm - *Nodford* in 1086.

Hanford - 'ford at the stone'; *Hanford* in 1086.

Langford Farm - 'long ford'; *Langeford* in 1086.

Langton Long Blanford - *Bleneford* and *Blæneford* in 1086.

Leftisford (lost) - 'Leofgeat's ford'; *Levetesford* in 1086.

Nutford - 'ford where nuts grow'; *Nortforde* and *Notforda* in 1086.

Okeford Fitzpaine - 'oak tree ford'; *Acford* in 939-46, *Adford* in 1086.

Sandford Orcas - 'sandy ford'; *Sanford* in 1086.

Shillingstone - 'oak tree ford'; *Alford* in 1086.

Stafford, West - 'stony ford', *Stanford, Staford,* and *Stafort* in 1086.

Stinesford - 'ford frequented by sandpiper or dulin'; *Stincteford* in 1086.

Thornford - 'ford where thron trees grow'; *thornford* in 946-57, *thornford* in 998, *Torneford* in 1086.

Walford Bridge - 'shakey/unsteady ford'; *Walteford* in 1086.

Week Street Down - 'main road to the farm'; *wic herepathes* in 935.

Woodbridge - probably 'wooden bridge' and not' bridge in the wood'; *wde brigthe*, *wde bricge*, and *wdebrige* in 932, *wdebrige* and *wudebricge* in 963.

Woodsford - 'Wigheard's ford'; *Werdesford* in 1086.

Hampshire

Arlesford, New and Old - 'alder tree ford'; *alresforda* in 701, *alresforda* in 947 X 955.

Anstey - 'small path'; *Hanstige* in 1086.

Chandler's Ford - 'Searnægal's ford'; *searnægles ford* in 909.

Charford - 'Cerdic's ford'; *Cerdeford* in 1086.

Clatford, Upper- 'burdock ford'; *Cladford* in 1086.

Droxford - 'ford at the dry place'; *drocenesforda* in 826, *drocelesford* in the tenth century, *Drocheneford* in 1086.

Dunbridge - 'bridge in the valley'; *Denebrige* in 1086.

Fordingbridge - 'bridge of the dwellers at Ford', with ford indicating an earlier crossing at this site; *Fordingebrige* in 1086.

Harbridge - 'Hearda's bridge'; *Herdebrige* in 1086.

Harford or Hartford - 'grey or hare's ford'; *Hariforde* in 1086.

Leckford - 'channel ford'; *leahtforda*, and *leghford* in 947, *Lechtford* in 1086.

Milford-on-Sea - 'mill ford'; *Melleford* in 1086.

Redbridge - 'reed bridge' on the site of an earlier ford; *hreutford* in *c.* 730, *hreodford* in *c.* 890, *hreodbrycge* in 956, *hread bricge* in 1045, *Rodbrige* in 1086.

Rockford - 'rook's ford'; *Rocheford* in 1086.

Stratfield Saye and Stratfield Turgis - 'open land by the Roman road'; *stratfeld* in 1053 X 1066, *Stradfelde* and *Stradfelle* in 1086.

Stratton, East - 'Roman road farm'; *strattone* in 903.

Twyford - 'double ford'; *tuifyrde* in 963 X 975, *Tuiforde* in 1086.

Warnford - 'stallion ford' or 'Wærna's ford'; *wearnæforda* in 1053, *Warneford* in 1086.

Wiltshire

Ansty - 'small path'; *Anestige* in 1086.

Bradford-on-Avon - 'wide ford'; *Bradanforda* in *c*. 900, *Bradeforda* in 1001, *Bradeford* in 1086.

Barford St Martin - 'barley ford'; *Bereford* in 1086.

Barford Park - *Bereford* in 1086.

Britford - 'ford used by Britons'; *Brutford* in 826, *Bredford* and *Bretford* in 1086.

Christian Malford - 'ford by a cross'; *Cristenal(l)eford* in 937, *Cristemalford* in 940, Cristemeleford in 1086.

Clatford - 'ford where the water-lily grows'; *Clatford* in 1086.

Codford St Mary and St Peter - 'Codda's ford'; *Coden ford in 901,* Coteford in 1086.

Cricklade - perhaps 'rock passage'; *Crecca gelad* in *c*. 925, *Crocgelad* in 1008, *Creocc gelad* in *c*. 1050, *Crecgelode* in *c*. 1050, *Crichelade* in 1086.

Deptford - 'deep ford'; *Depeford* in 1086.

Durnford - 'secret or hidden ford'; *Darnford* and *Diarneford* in 1086.

Enford - 'duck ford'; *Enedford* in 934.

Highway - 'high or hay way'; *Hiw(e)i* in 1086.

Iford - 'island ford'; *Igford* in 987.

Kingway Barn - 'king's way'; *Kingweye* in 931, *Kingwei* in 956.

Landford - 'long' or more probably 'lane ford'; *Langeford* in 1086.

Langford, Steeple, Little and Hanging - 'long ford'; *langanforda* in 943, *Langeford* in 1086.

Longford Castle - 'long ford'; *Langeford* in 1086.

Maidford - probably 'mayweed ford'; *magthe ford* in 931.

Manningford Abbots, Bohune and Bruce - 'ford of the people of Manna'; *Maning(a)ford* in 987, *Maneforde* and *Maniford* in 1086.

Milford - 'mill ford'; *Meleford* in 1086.

Plaitford - perhaps ' ford by which games were held'; *Pleiteford* in 1086.

Somerford, Great and Little - 'summer ford'; *Sumerford* in 937, *Somerford* in 956, *Somreford* and *Sumreford* in 1086.

Somerford Keynes - 'summer ford'; *Sumerford* in 941.

Stapleford - 'ford marked by a post'; *Stapleford* in 1086.

Stoford - 'stony ford'; *stanford* in 943.

Stowford Farm - 'stony ford'; *stanford* in 987.

Stowford Bridge - 'stony ford'; *Stanfrde* hundred in 1086.

Stratford-sub-Castle - 'ford where the Roman road crosses'; *Stratford(e)* in 1091.

Stratford Tony - 'ford where the Roman road crosses'; *stretford* and *streatford* in 948, *Stradford* in 1086.

Stratton Margaret - 'farm of the Roman road'; *Stratone* in 1086.

Ugford - 'Ucga's ford'; *Ucganford* in 956, *Uggafordinga* in 1045, *Ogeford* and *Ocheforde* in 1086.

Wilsford - 'Wifel's ford'; *Wifelesford* in 982, *Wivlesford* in 1086.

Wilsford - 'Wifel's ford'; *Wiflesford(e)* in 1086.

Wishford, Great - 'ford by the wych-elem'; *Wicheford* in 1086.

Wishford, Little - 'ford by the wych-elem'; *Wicheford* in 1086.

Woodford - 'wood ford'; *wuduforda* in 972.

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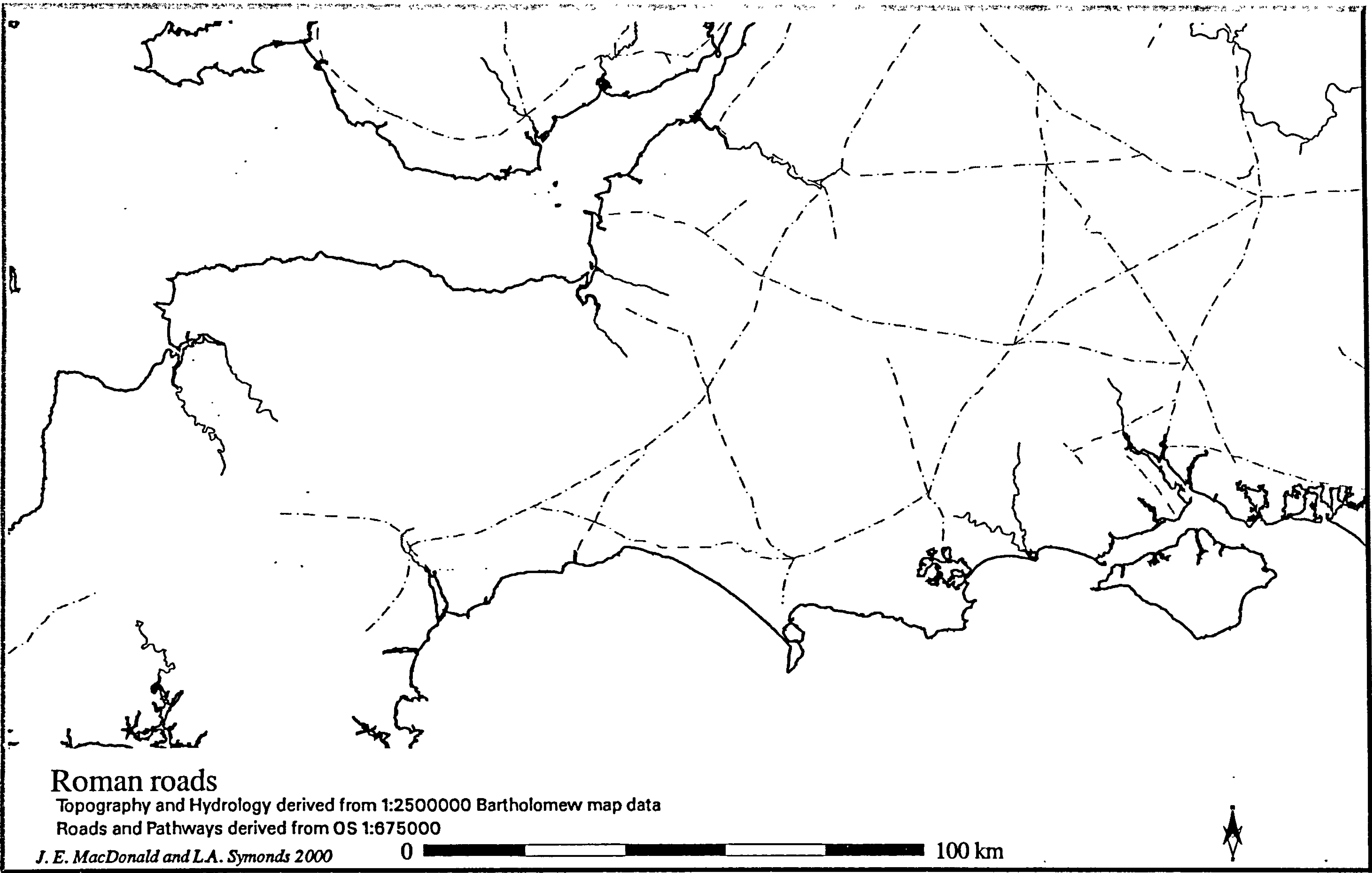


Figure 1

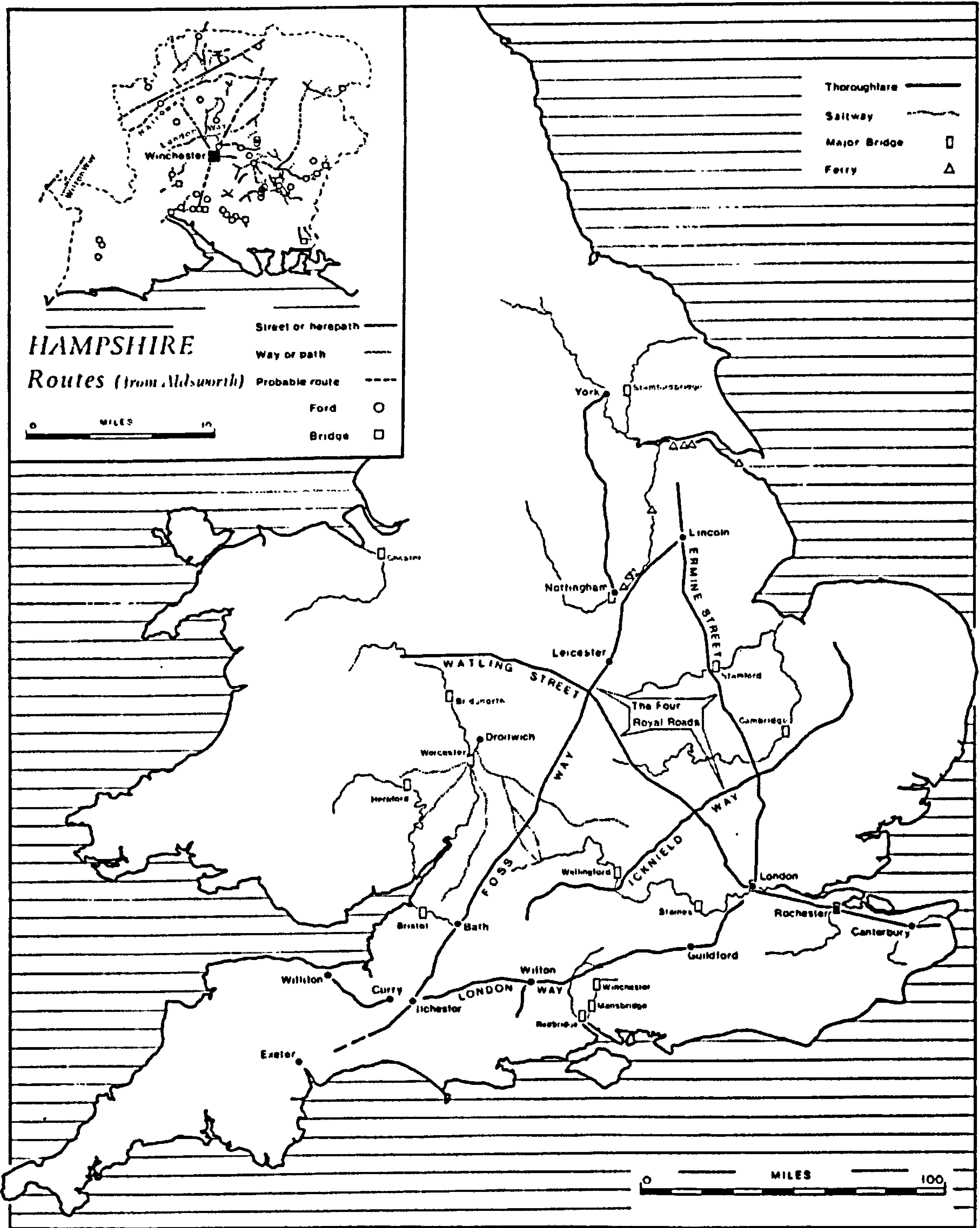


Figure 2: Hill's map of Anglo-Saxon roads (p. 116)

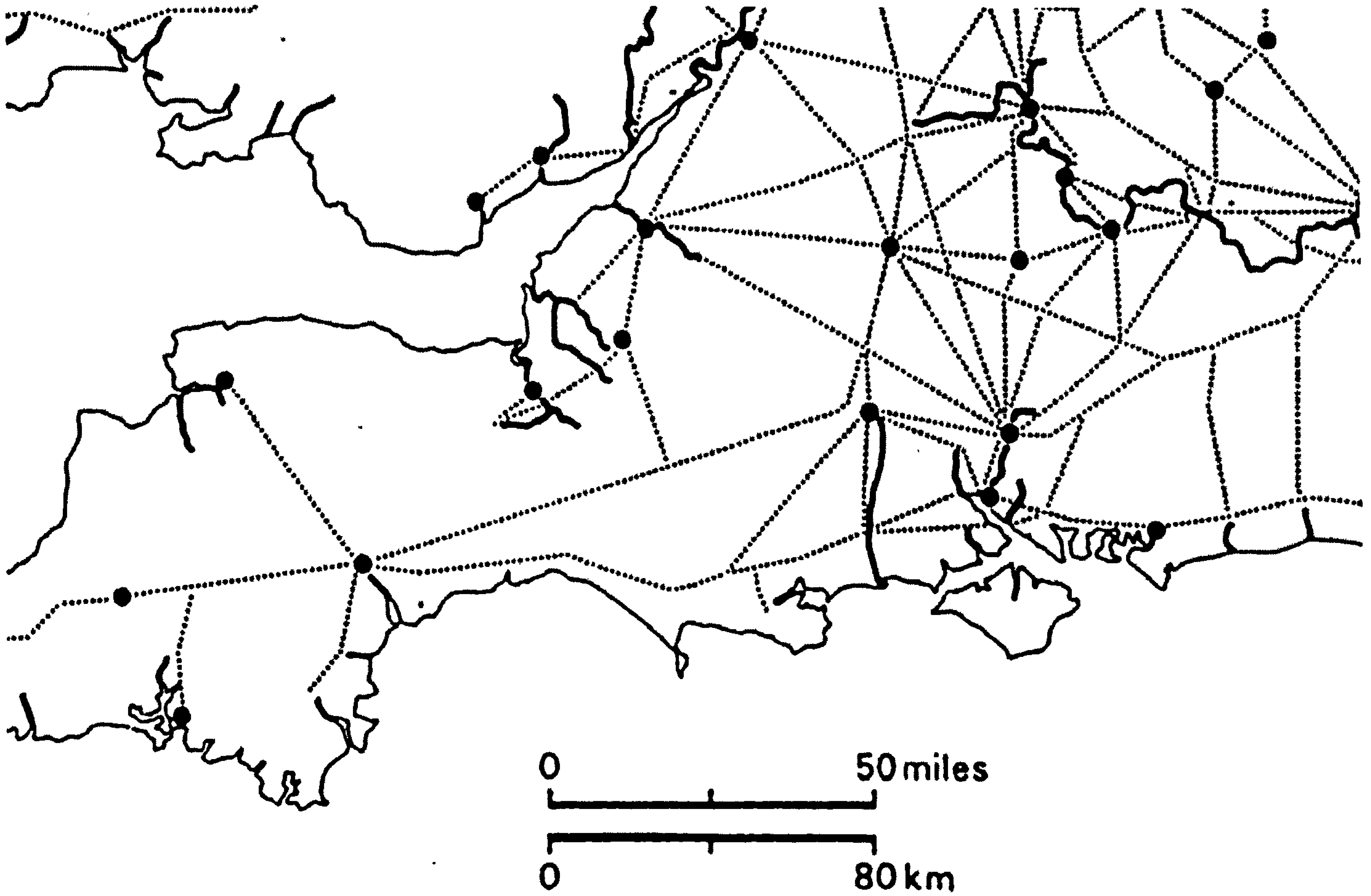


Figure 3: The West Saxon portion of Hindle and Edwards' map from 'The transport system of medieval England', p. 132.

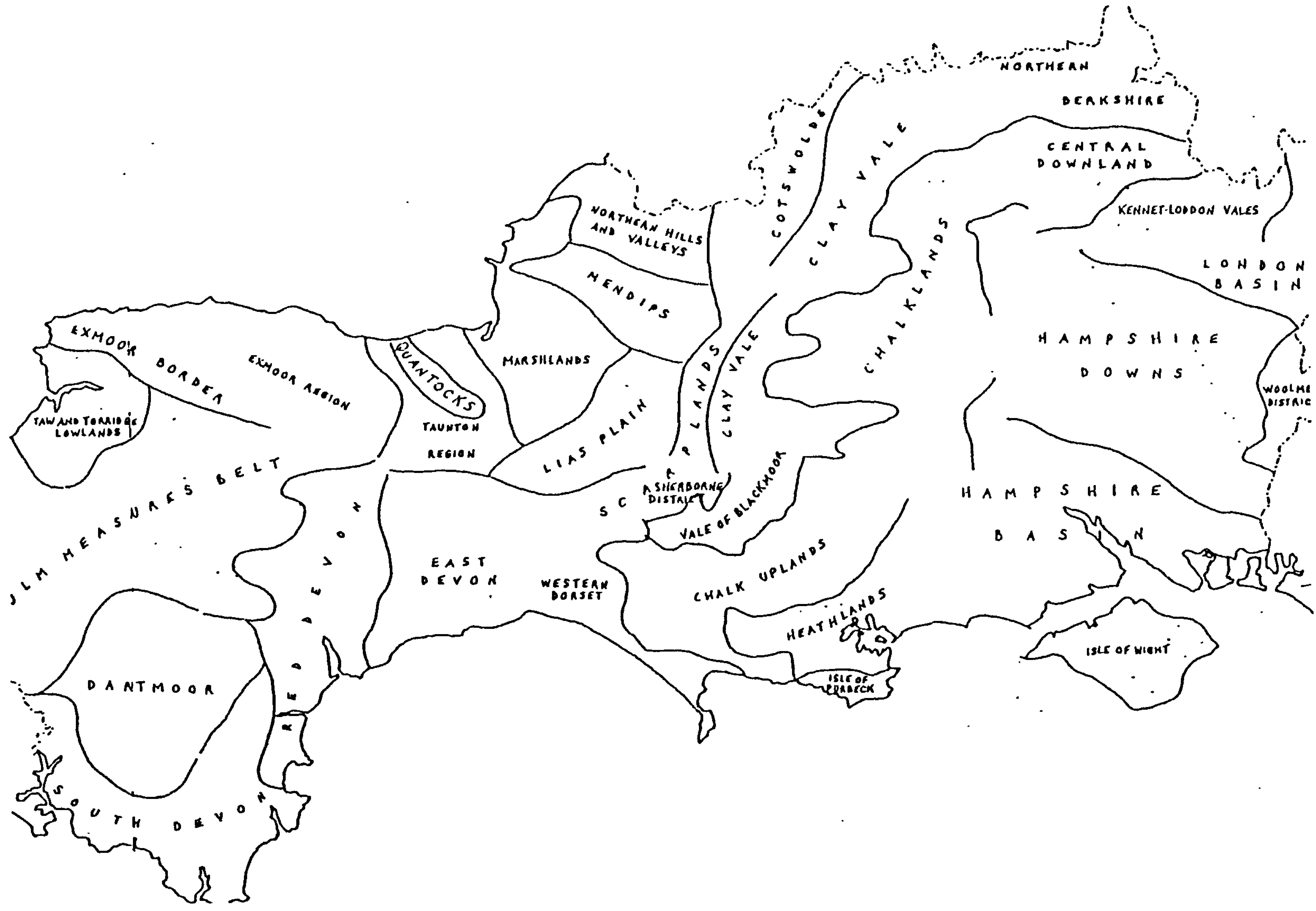


Figure 4: The geography of Wessex. Re-drawn from Darby by J. N. MacDonald (*DGSW* p. 62, 128, 215, 291; *DGSE* p. 238, 358).

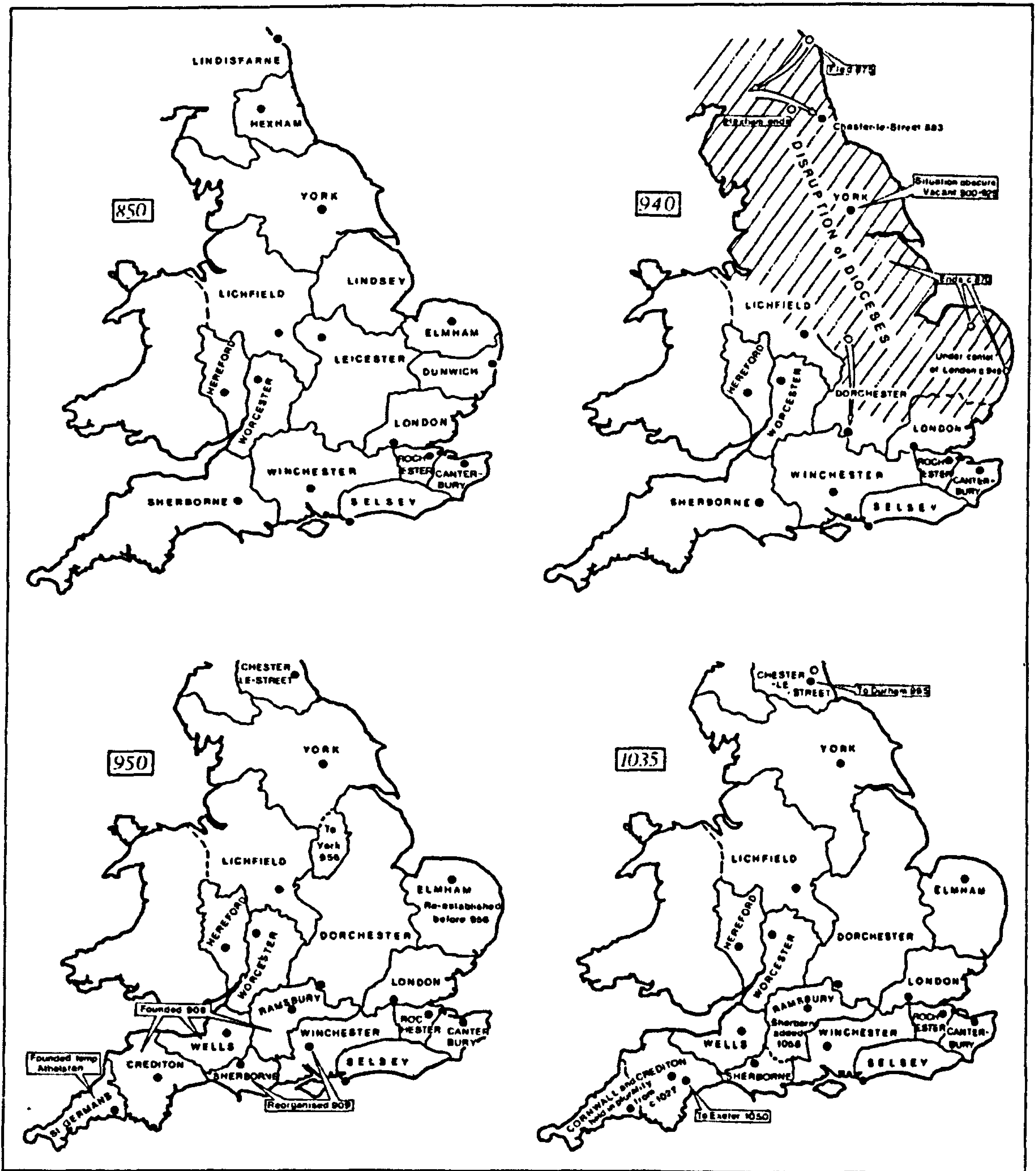


Figure 5: Hill's maps of changes in diocesan boundaries (p. 148).

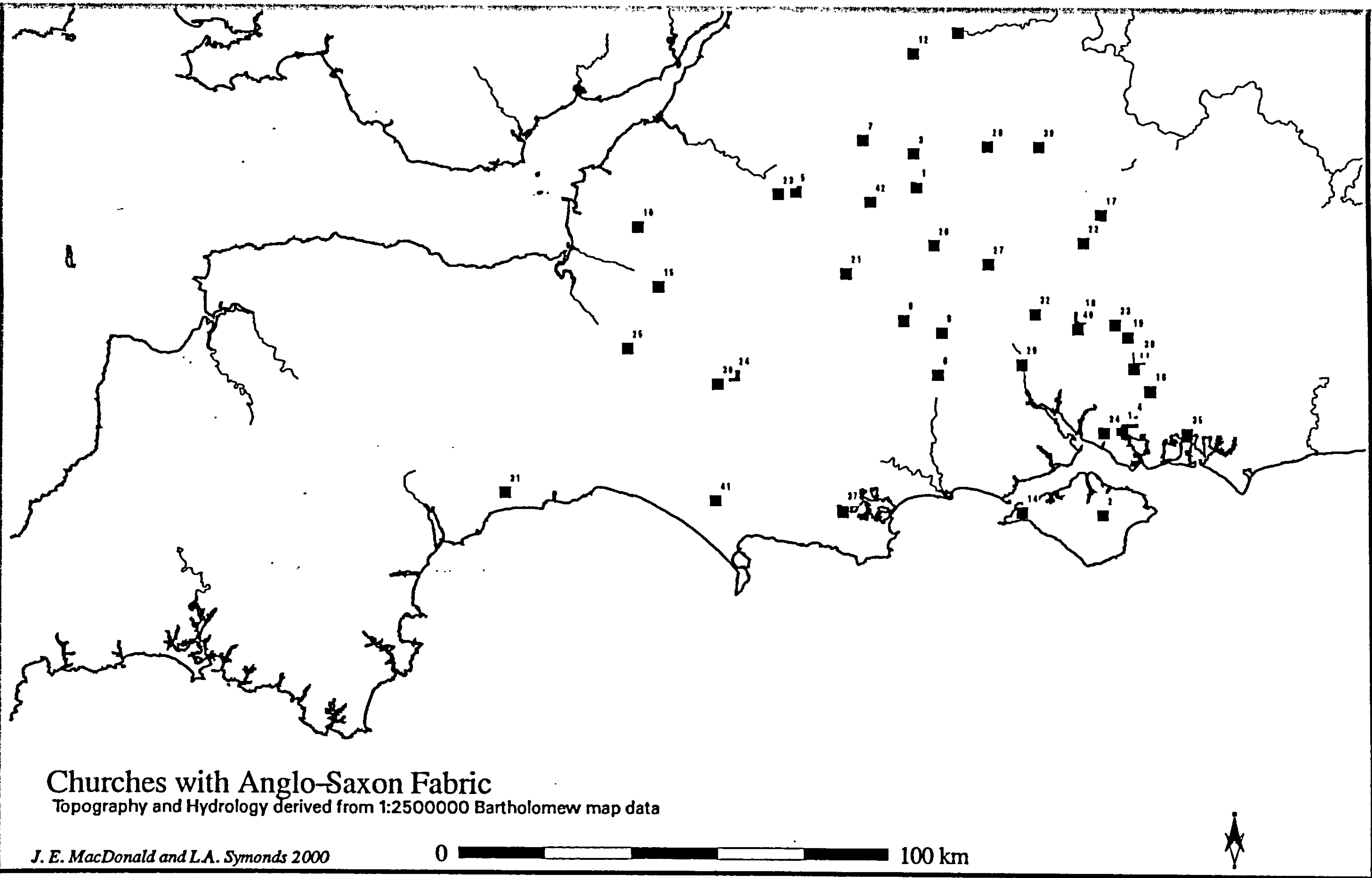


Figure 6

Key for figure 6

1 Alton, Barnes
2 Arreton
3 Avebury
4 Boarhunt
5 Bradford-on-Avon
6 Breamore
7 Bremhill
8 Britford
9 Burcombe
10 Cheddar
11 Corhampton
12 Cricklade
13 Fareham
14 Fresh Water
15 Glastonbury
16 Hambledon
17 Hannington
18 Headbourne Worthy
19 Hinton Ampner
20 Inglesham
21 Knook
22 Laverstoke
23 Limpley Stoke
24 Milborne Port
25 Muchelney
26 Netheravon
27 Potterne
28 Quarley
29 Ramsbury
30 Romsey
31 Sherborne
32 Sidbury
33 Little Sombre
34 Tichborne
35 Titchfield
36 Warblington
37 Wareham
38 Warnford
39 Wickham
40 Winchester
41 Winterborne Steepleton

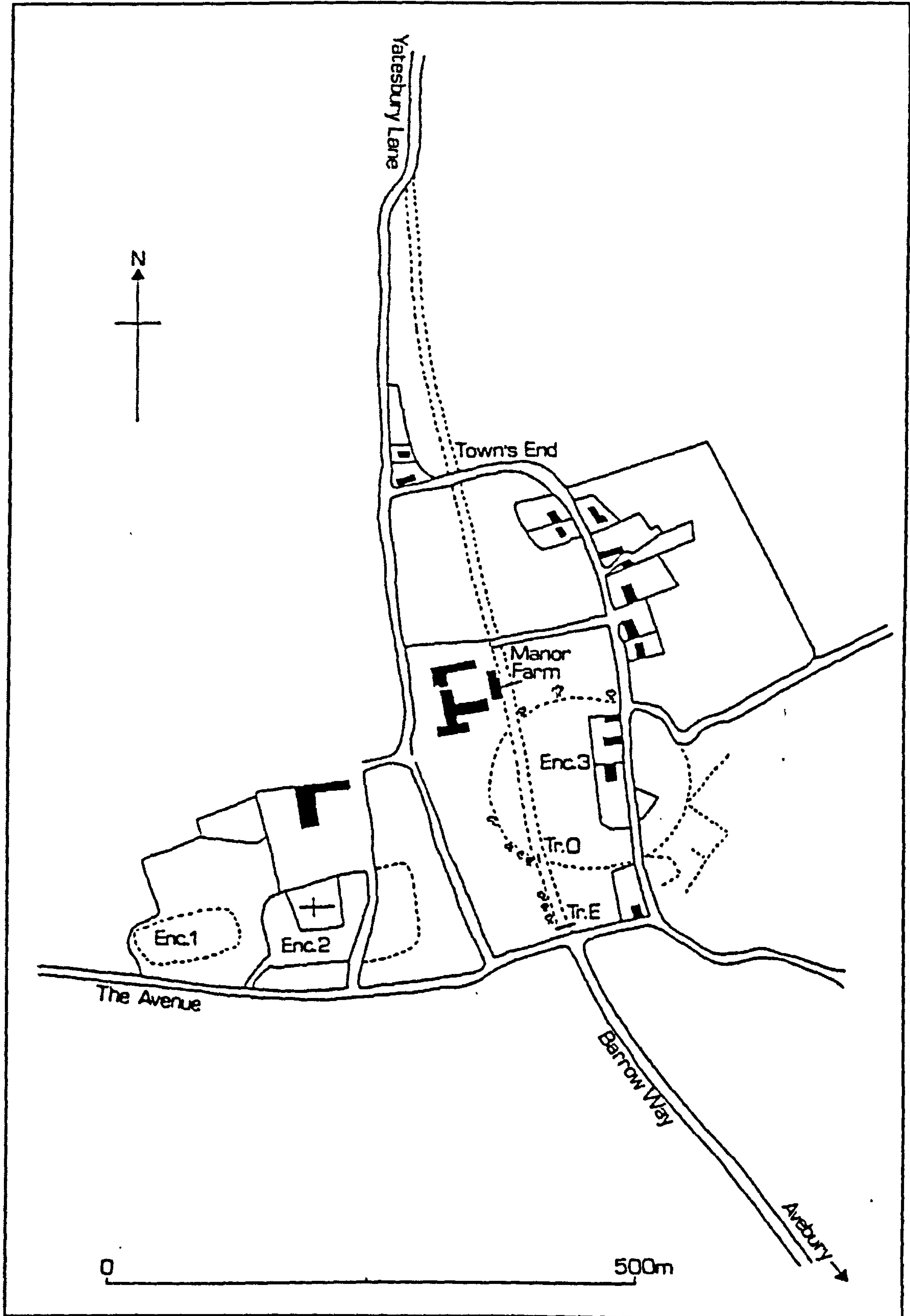


Figure 7: Yatesbury (Reynolds, p. 23).

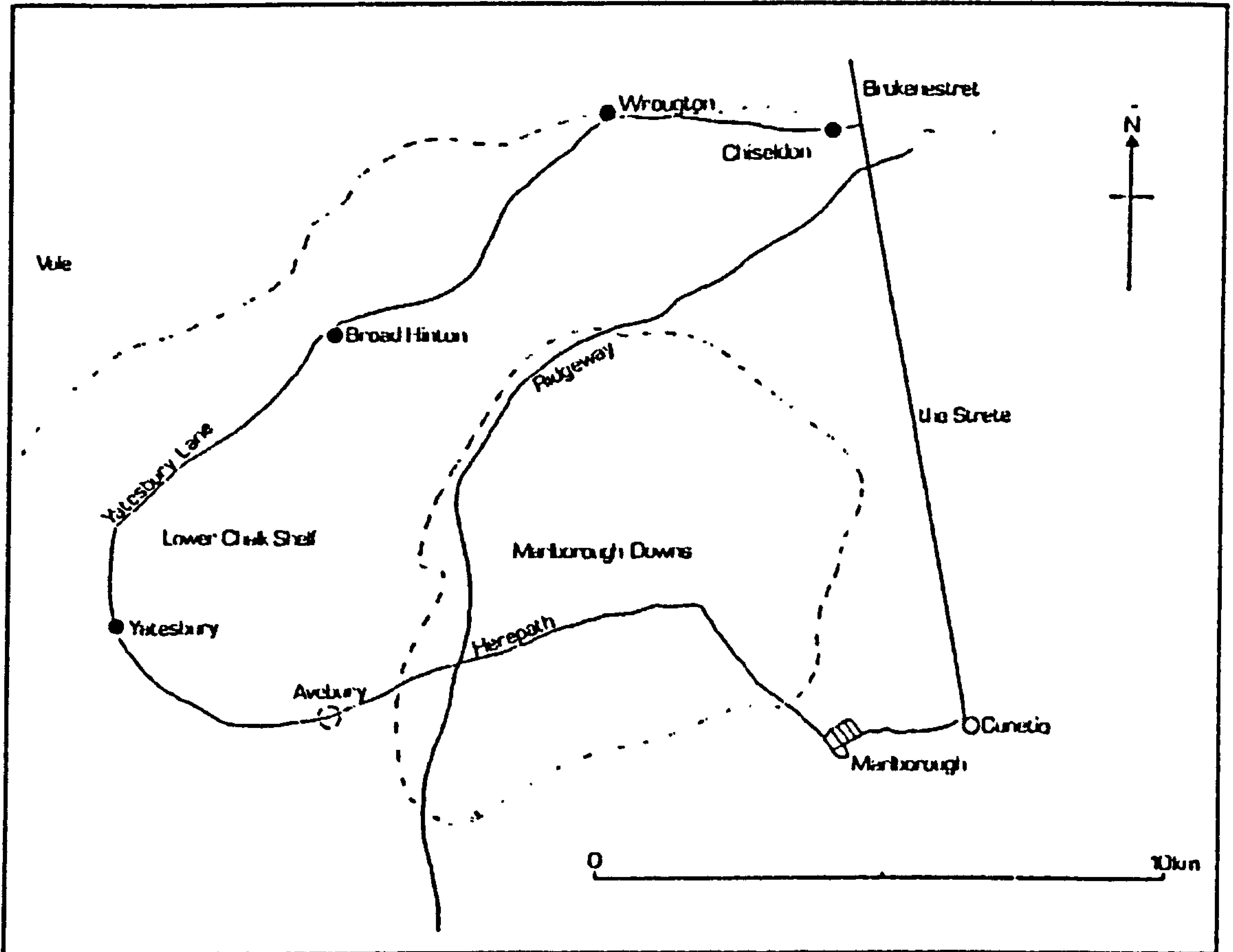


Figure 8: The communications network in the Yatesbury region (Reynolds p. 24).

CRICKLADE
WALLINGFORD
MALMESBURY
BATH
CHISBURY
WATCHET
PILTON
LYNG
CADBURY
WILTON
WINCHESTER
SHAFTESBURY
LANGPORT
SOUTHAMPTON
PORTCHESTER
CHICHESTER
EXETER
BRIDPORT
CHRISTCHURCH
WAREHAM
LYDFORD
HALWELL

Burghal Hidage Sites in Wessex

Topography and Hydrology derived from 1:2500000 Bartholomew map data

J. E. MacDonald and L.A. Symonds 2000

0 100 km

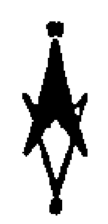


Figure 9

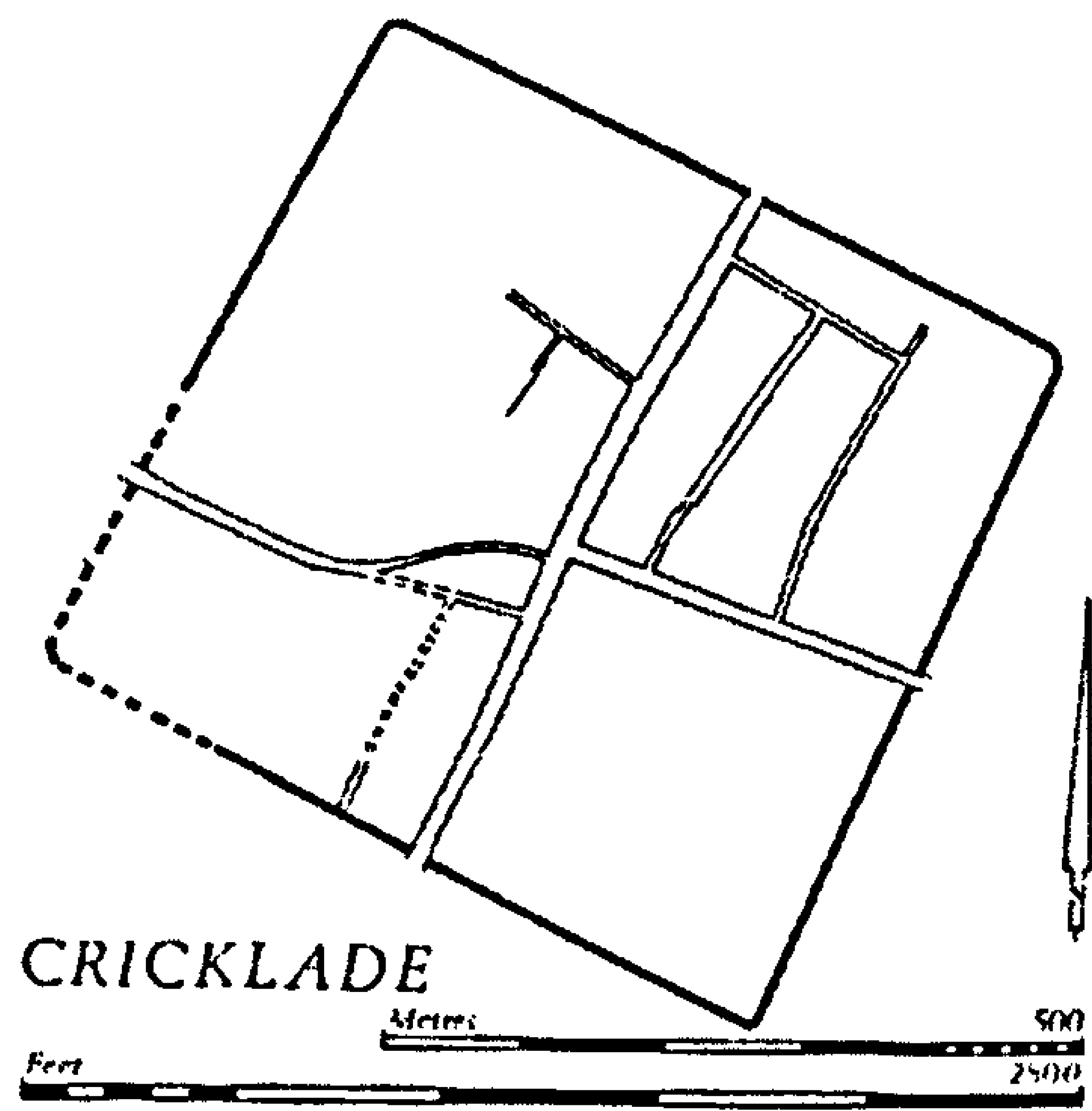


Figure 10

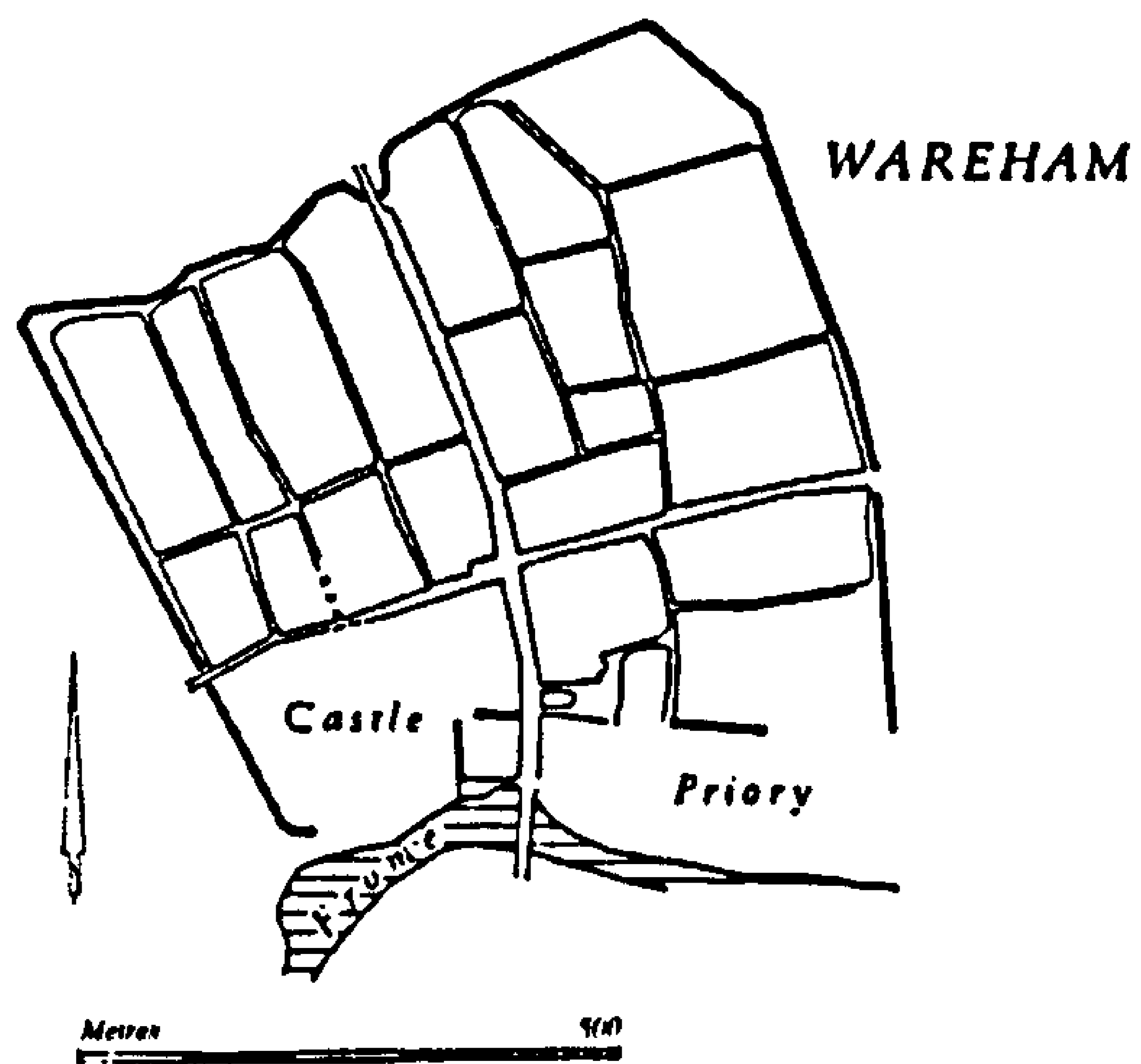


Figure 11

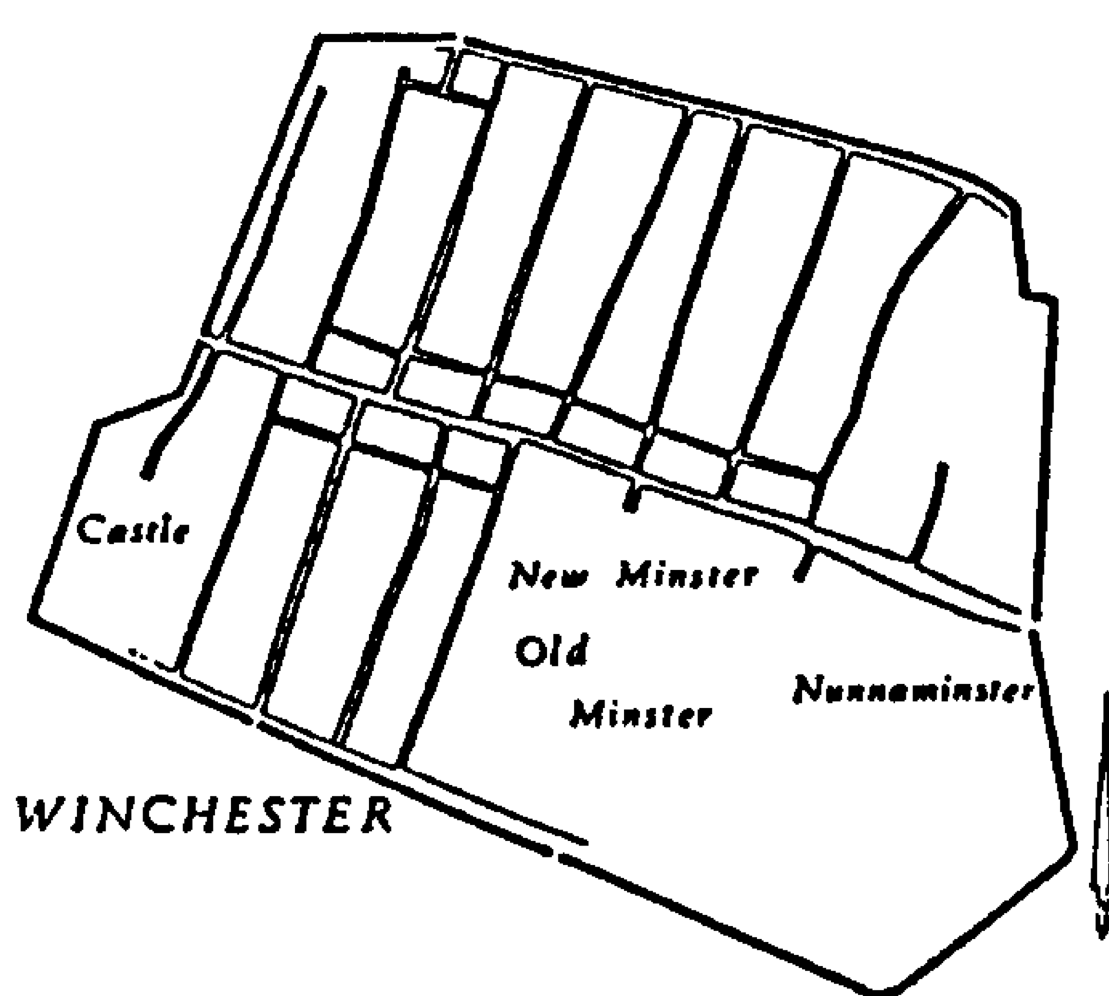


Figure12

Burh street plans from Hill's Gazetteer in *The Defense of Wessex*(p. 201, 222, 226)

Figure 13: 'June' from Cotton Julius A.VI

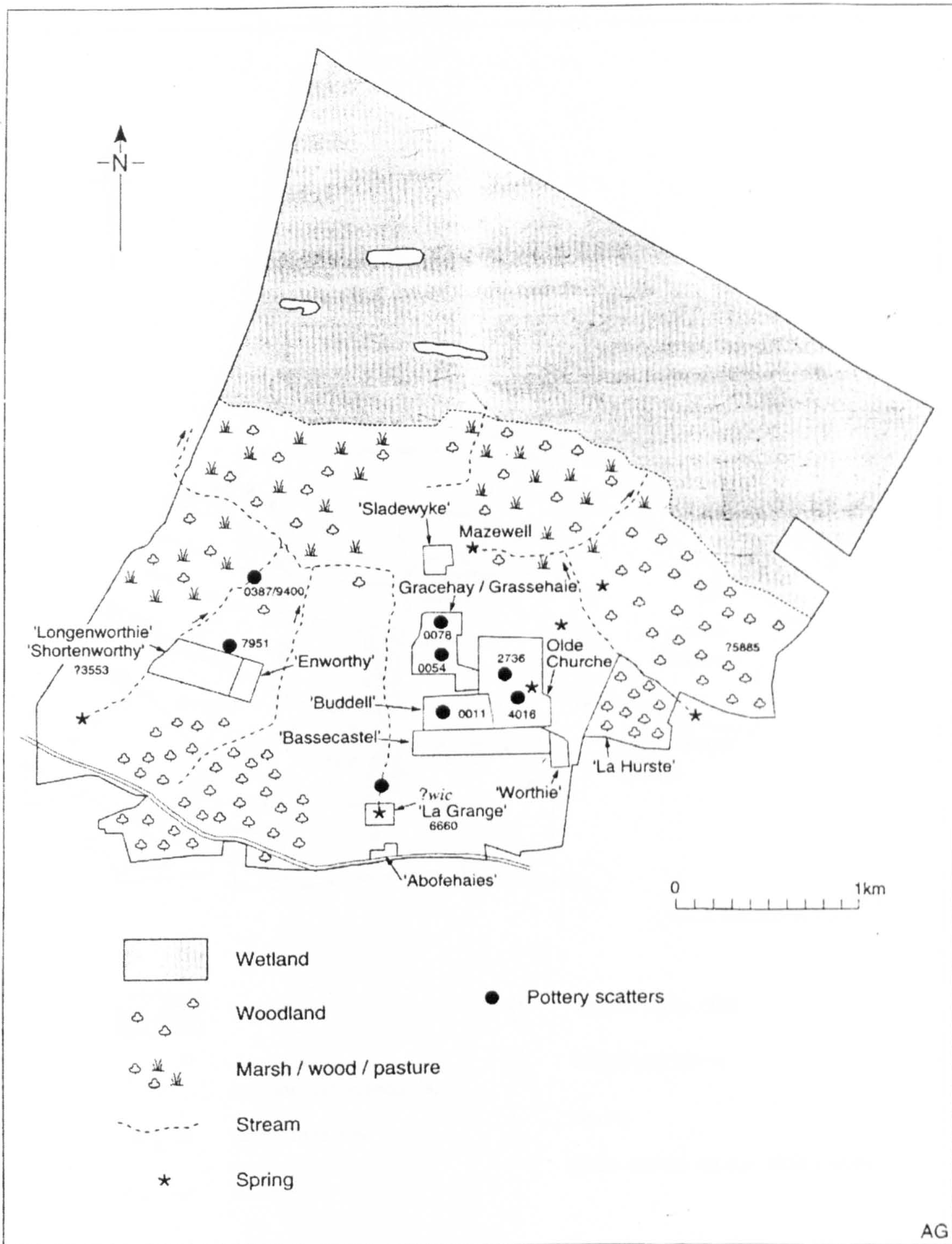


Figure 14: Shapwick in the early middle ages (Aston and Gerrard, p. 24).

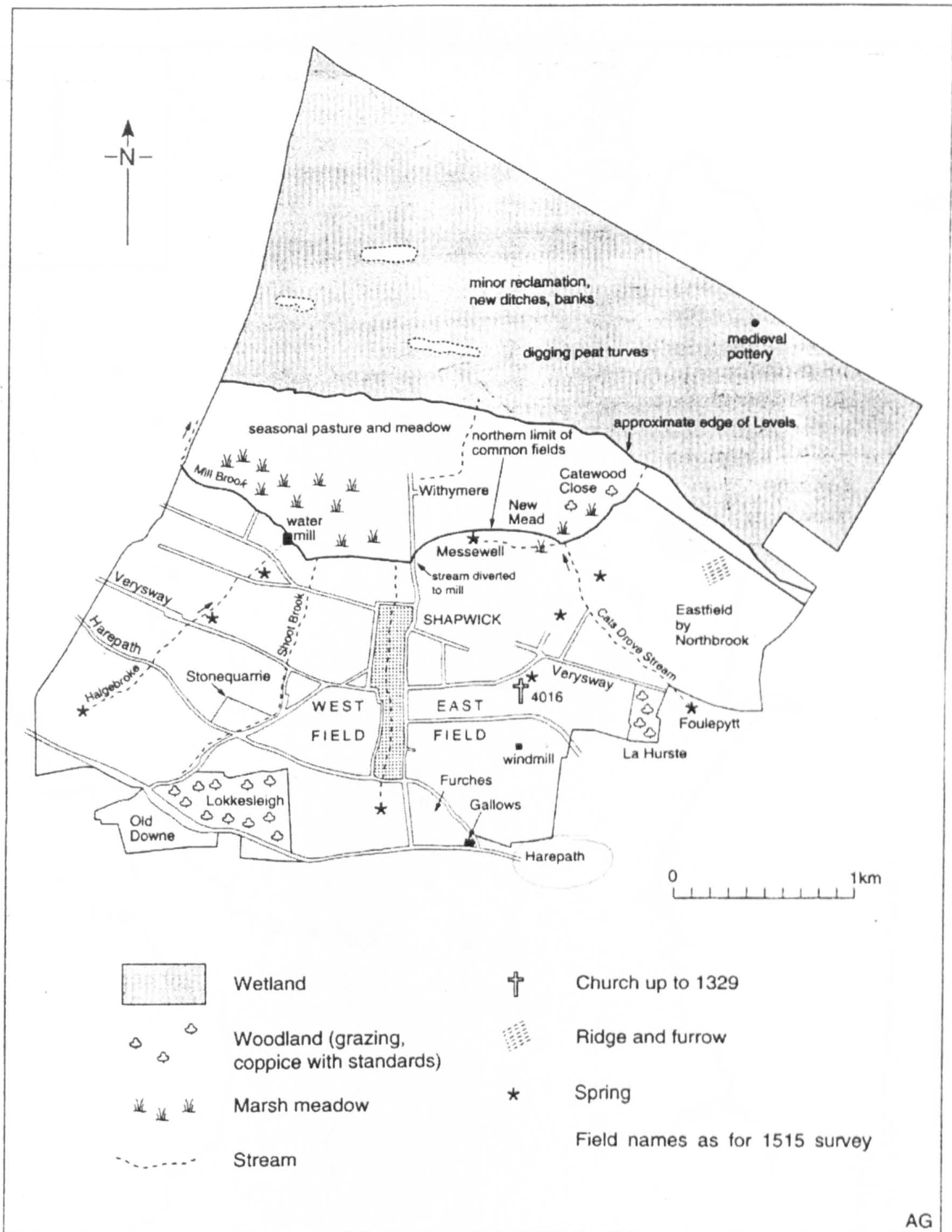


Figure 15: Shapwick in the late middle ages (Aston and Gerrard, p. 30).

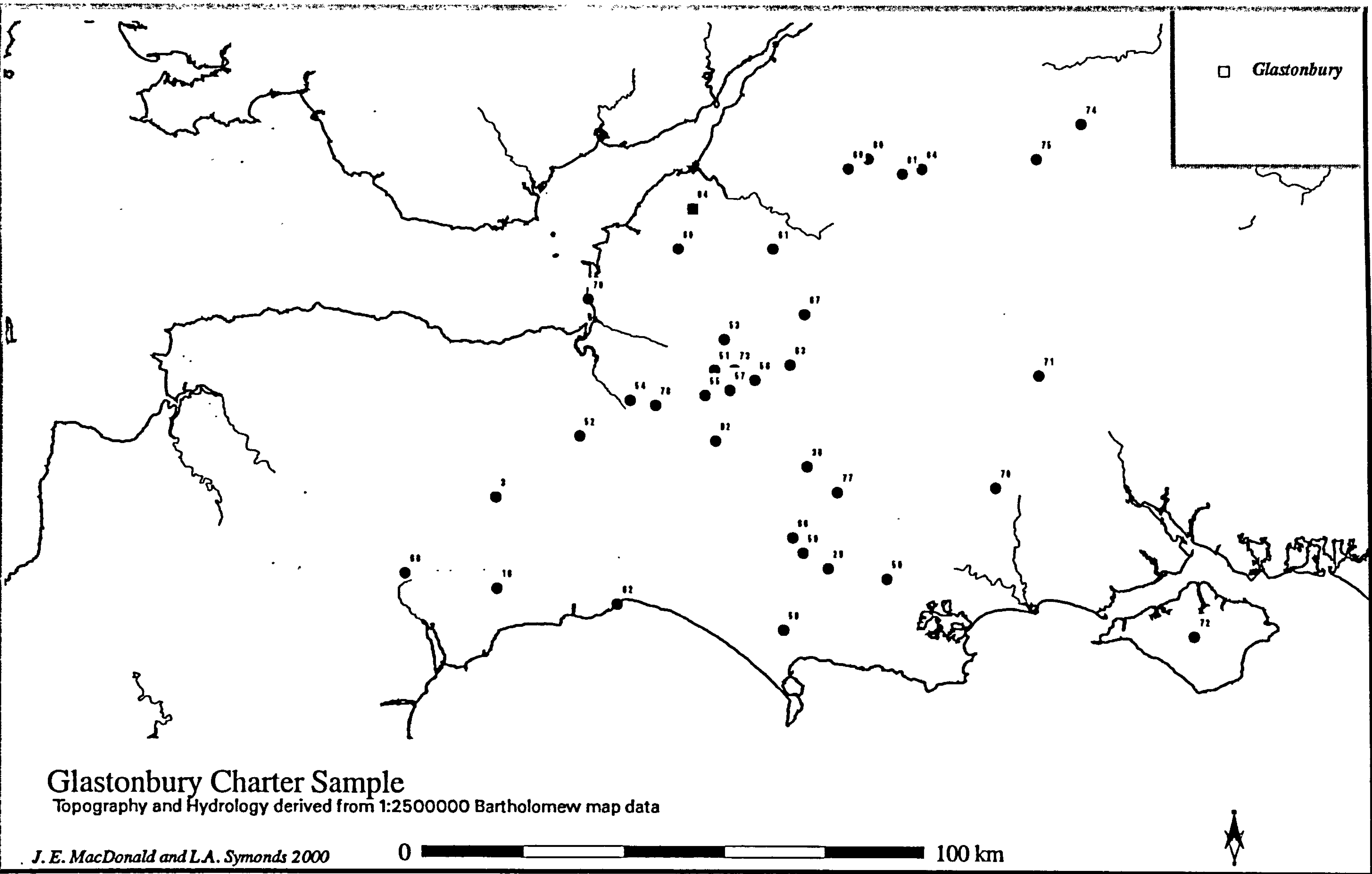


Figure 16

Key for figure 16	Place
16	Ottery St Mary
29	Cheselbourne
3	Culmstock
38	Henstridge
50	Winterborne Tomson
50	Wrington
51	Pennard
52	Creech St Michael
53	Dulcote
54	Middlezoy
55	Butleigh
56	Ditcheat
57	Lottisham
58	Winterborne Monkton
59	Plush
61	Marksbury
62	Lyme Regis
63	Batcombe
64	Christian Malford
65	Langley
66	Buckland
67	Mells
68	Brampford Speke
69	Nettleton
70	Damerham
71	Idmiston
72	Winterborne
73	Pennard Minster
74	Compton Beauchamp
75	Badbury
76	Langford
77	Sturminster Newton
78	High Ham
79	Berrow
80	Grittleton
81	Buckland
82	Podimore
84	Glastonbury

Figure 17: The Shaftesbury boundary clause sample (Kelly, p. xxv)

1. Crediton
2. South Hams
3. Sandford
4a. Topsham
4b. *Aeschyrste*
5. Uplyme
6. Stoke Canon
7. Stoke Canon
8. Culmstock
9. Monkton, Shobrooke
10. Newton St Petroc
11. Upton Pyne
12. Ipplepen, Dainton & Abbotskerswell
13. Ayshford & Boehill
14. Clyst Wicon
15. Sorley, Churchstow
16. Ottery St Mary
17. Down St Mary
18. Cheriton Bishop
19. Little Dart
20. Sandford
21. Seaton
22. Creedy Barton
23. Stoke Canon
24. Meavy
25. Littleham
26. Dawlish
27a. Ottery St Mary
27b. Wiggaton
28. Holcombe
29. *Peadingtun*

Figure 18: The Devon boundary clause sample (Hooke, *Devon and Cornwall*, p. 7).

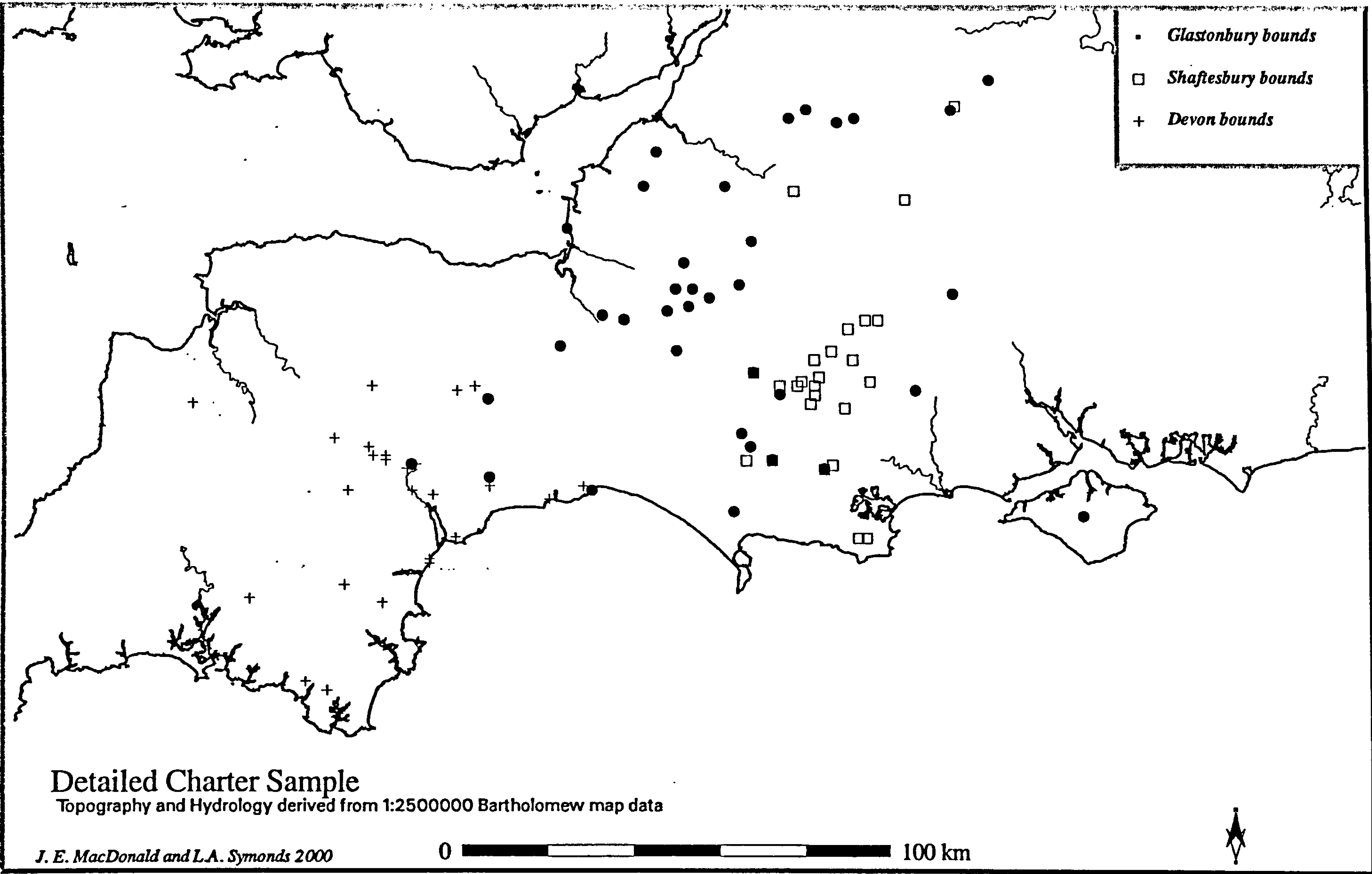


Figure 19

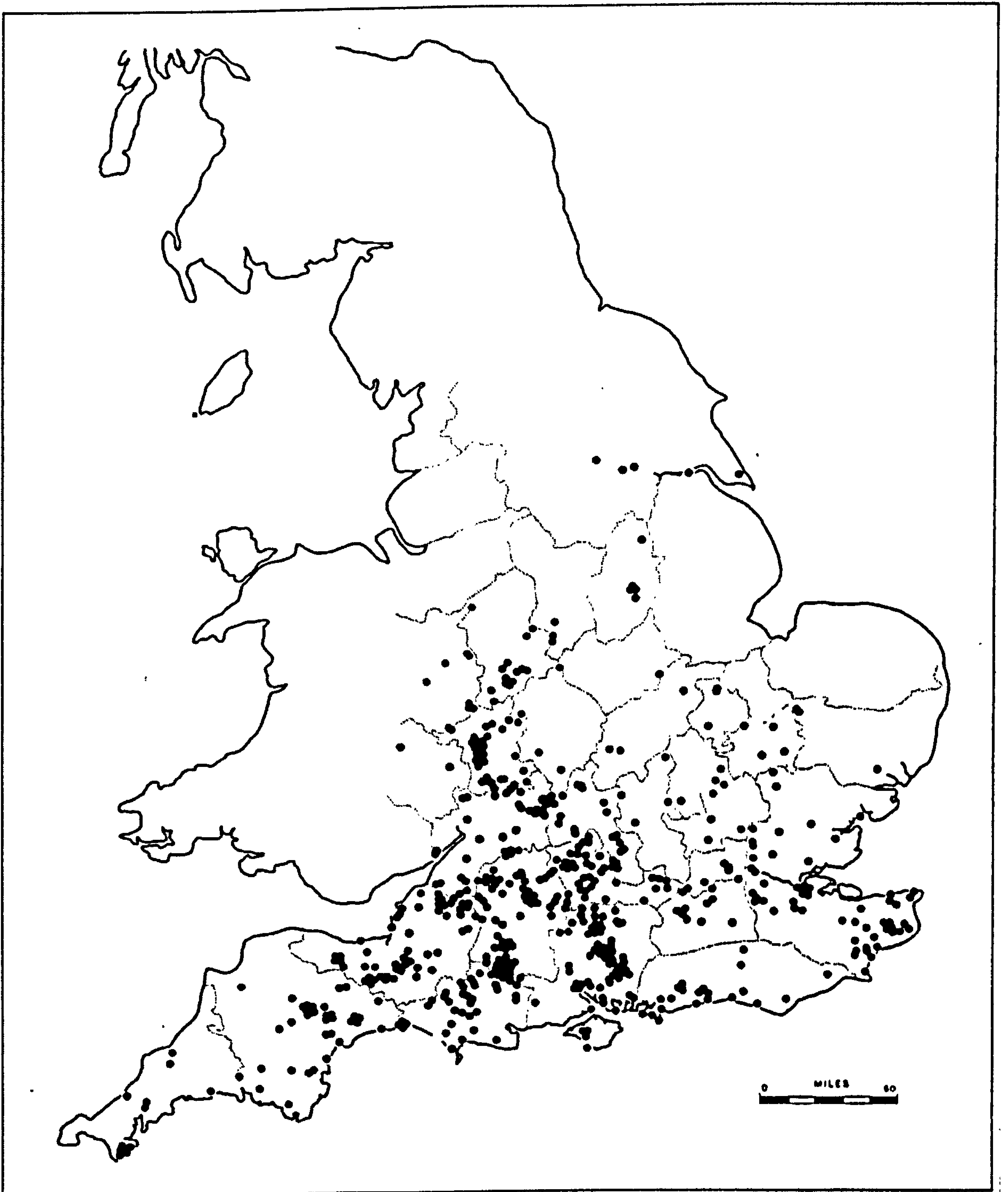


Figure 20: Hill's map of surviving boundary clauses in Anglo-Saxon England (p. 24).

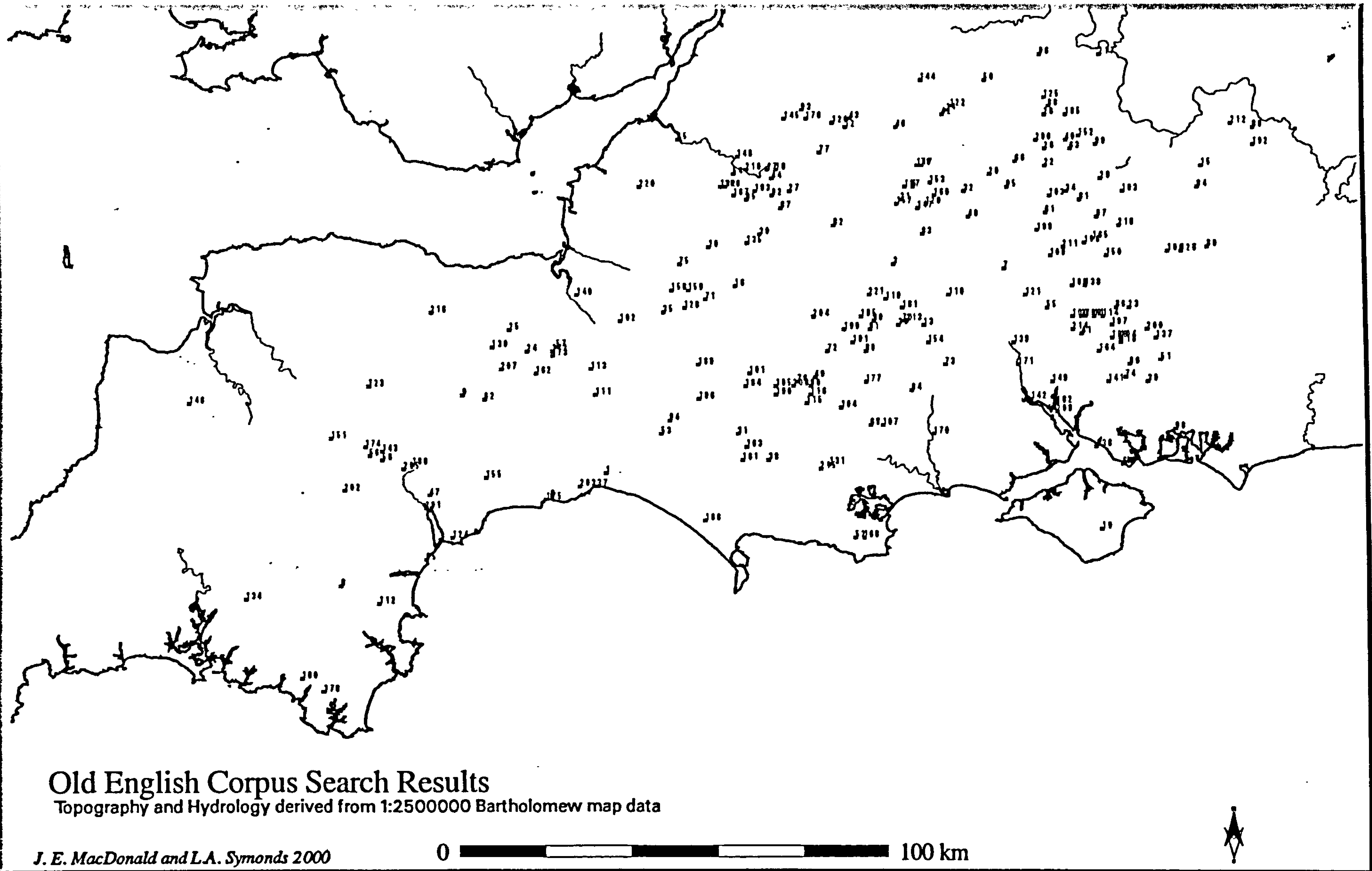


Figure 21

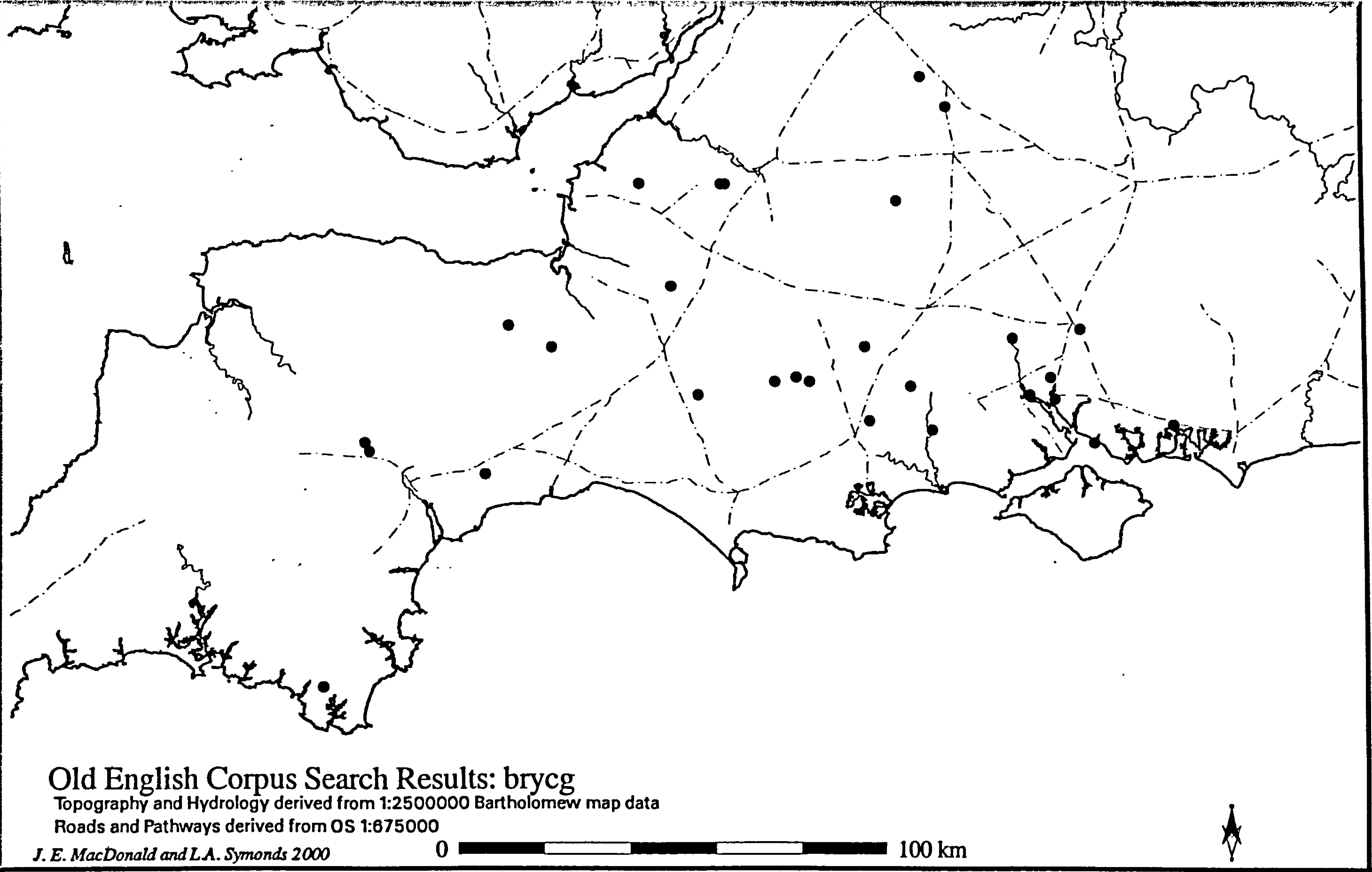


Figure 22

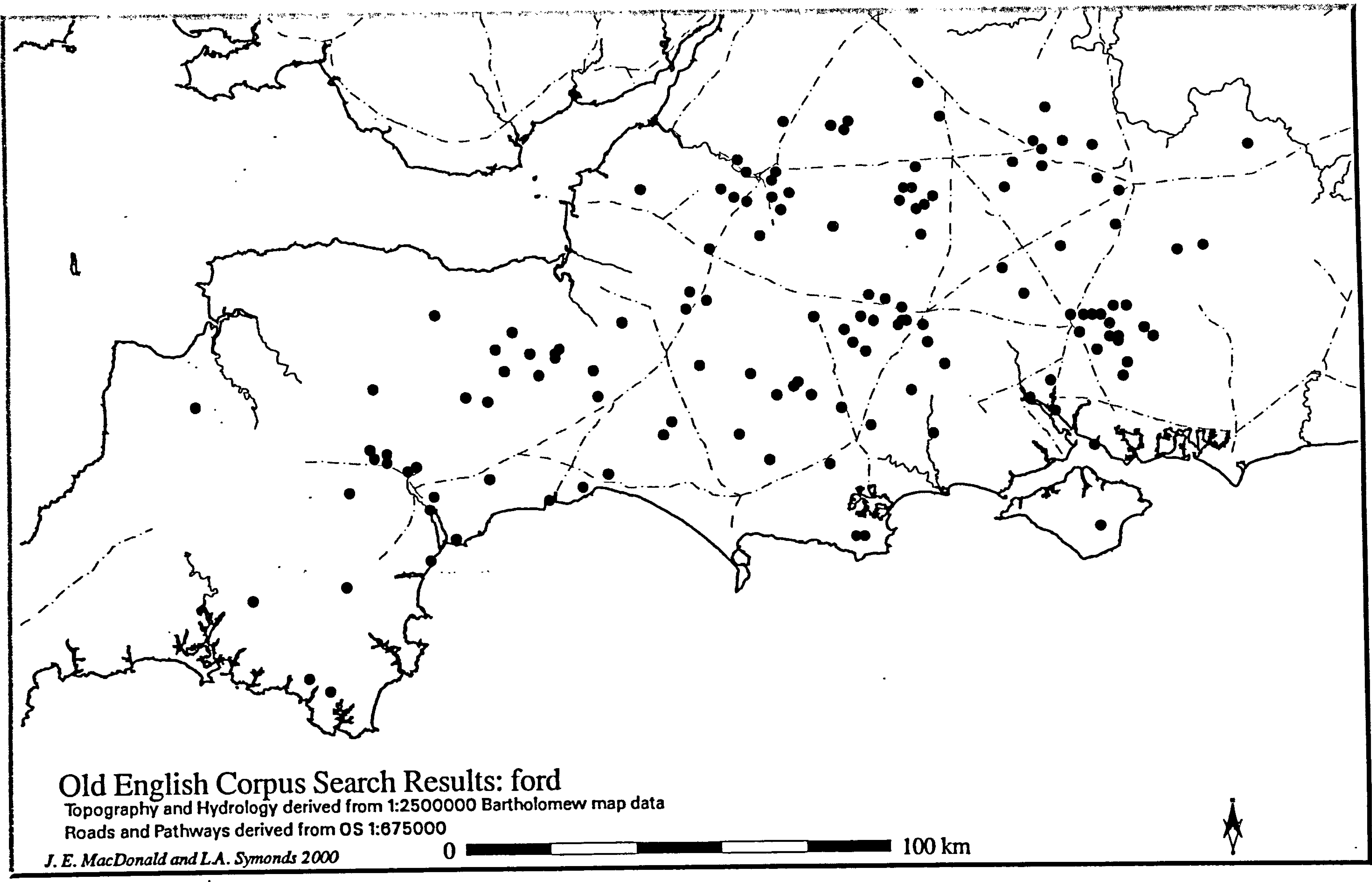


Figure 23

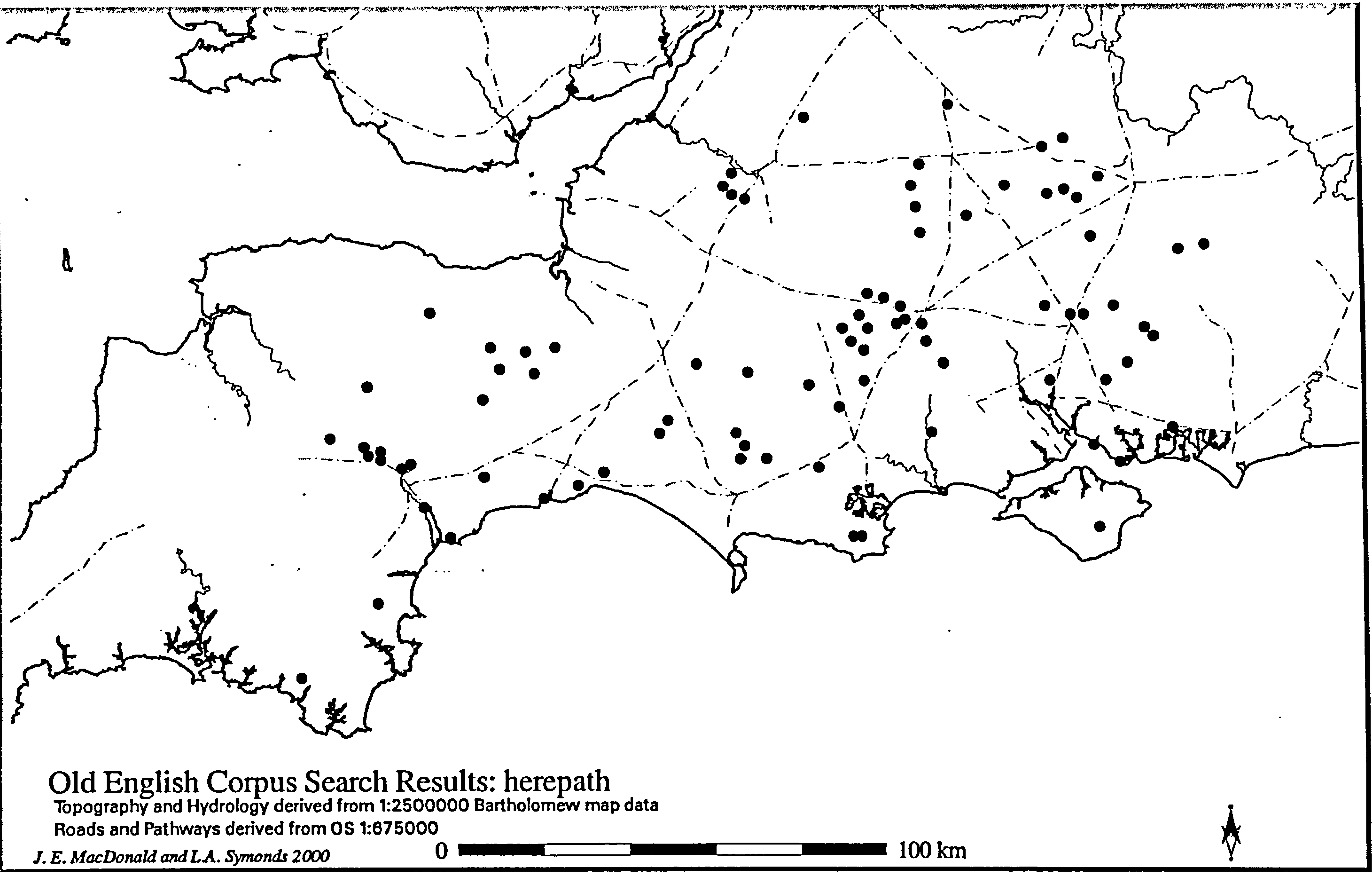


Figure 24

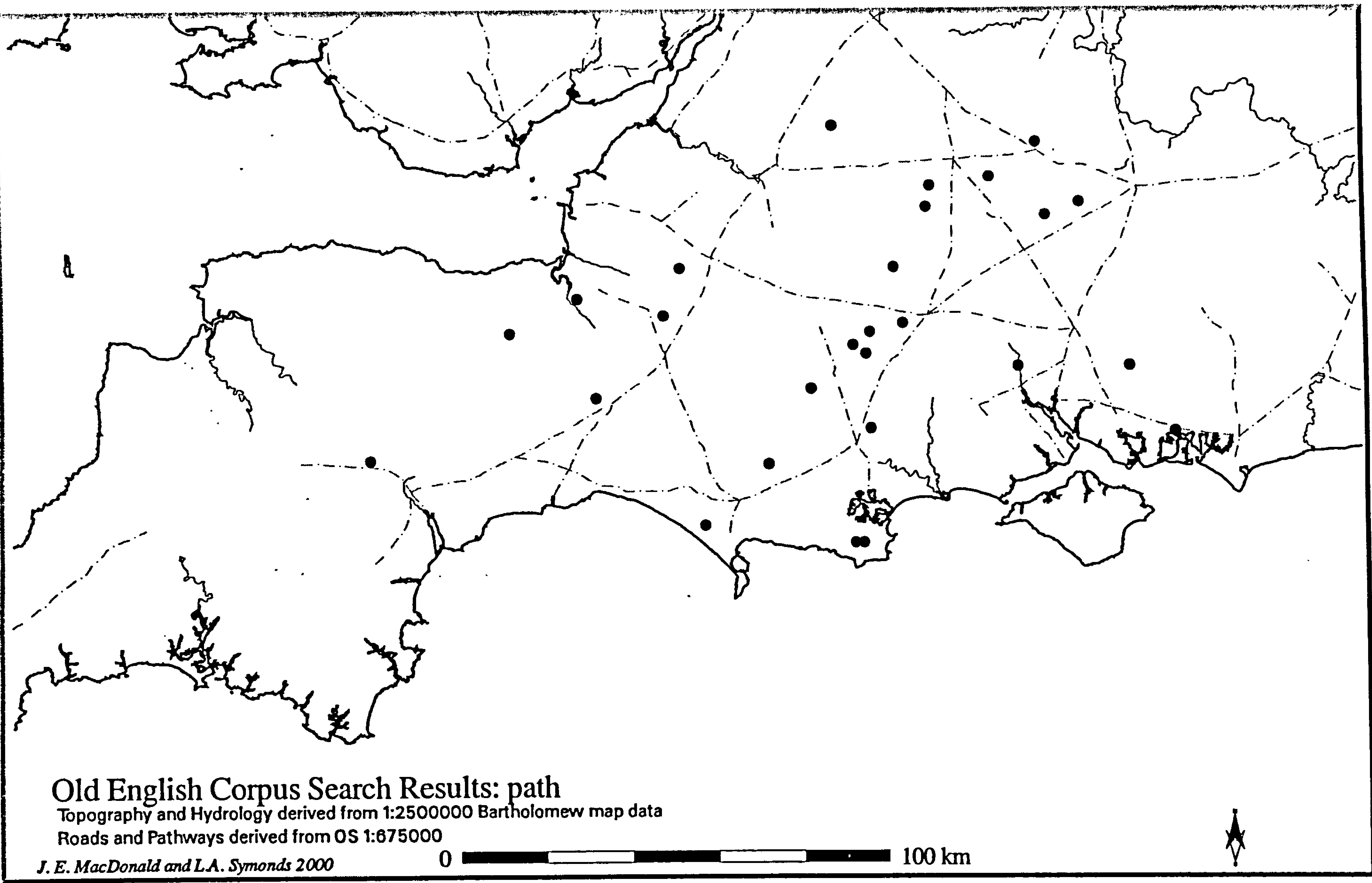


Figure 25

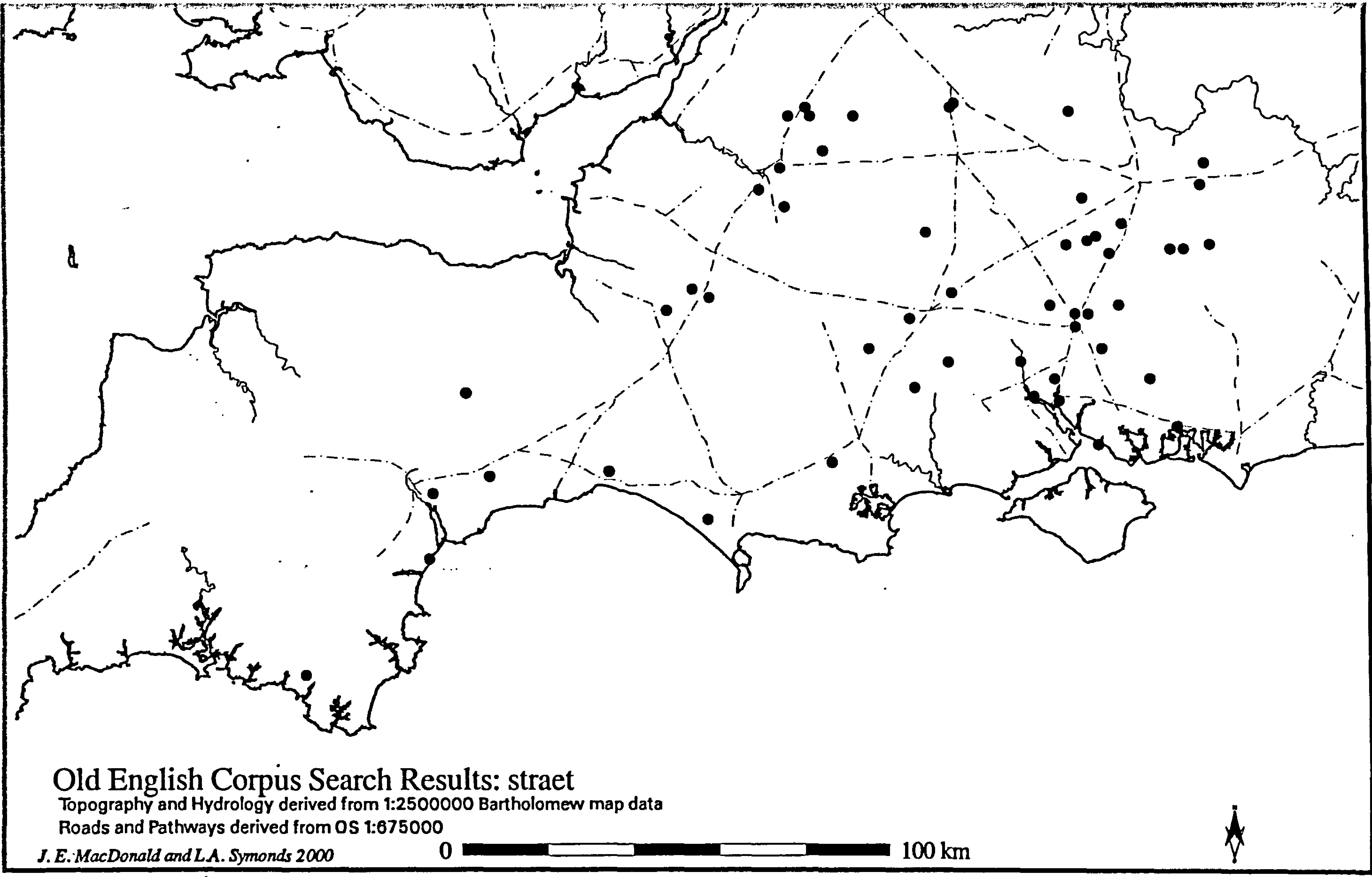


Figure 26

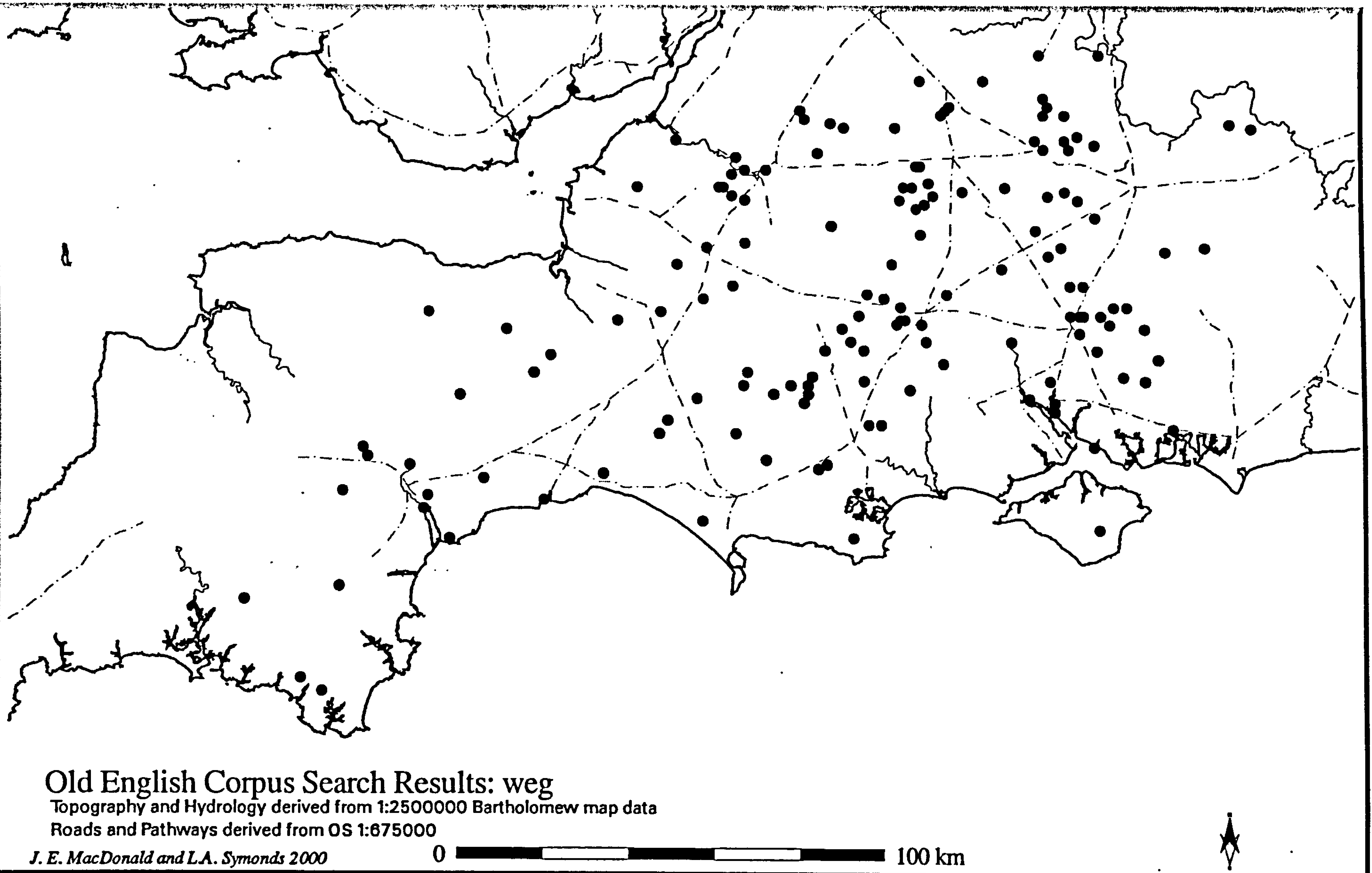


Figure 27

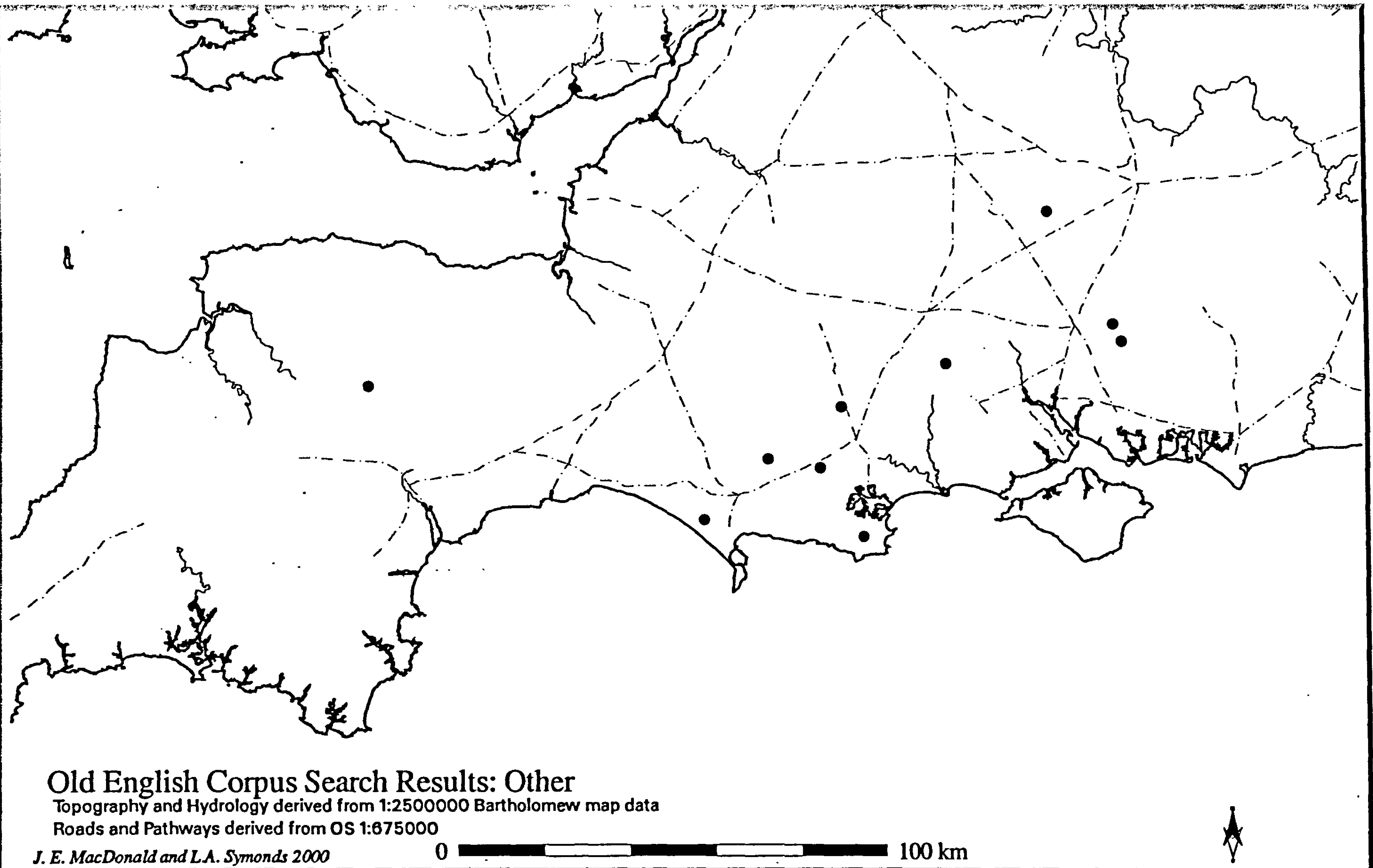


Figure 28

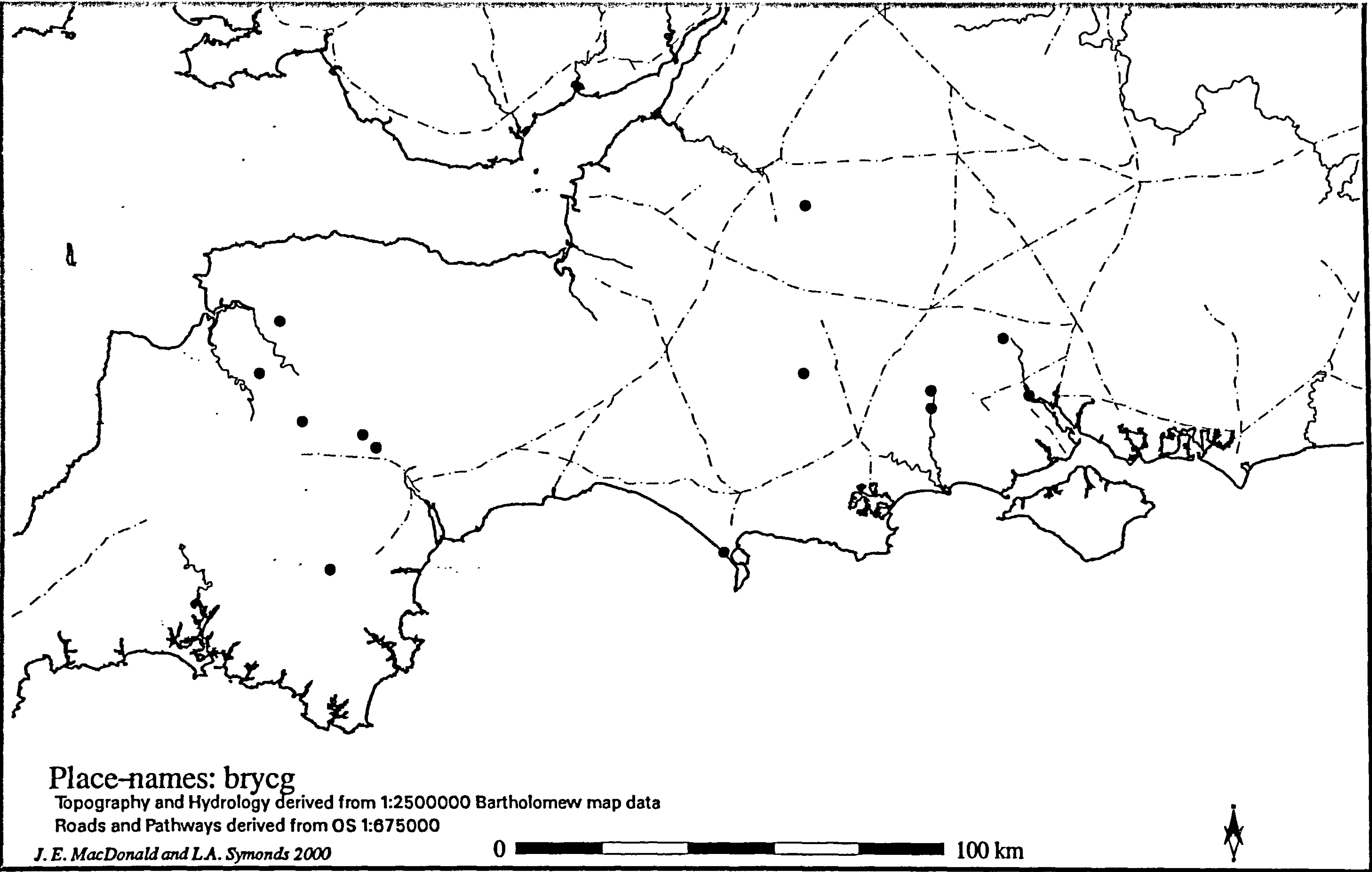


Figure 29

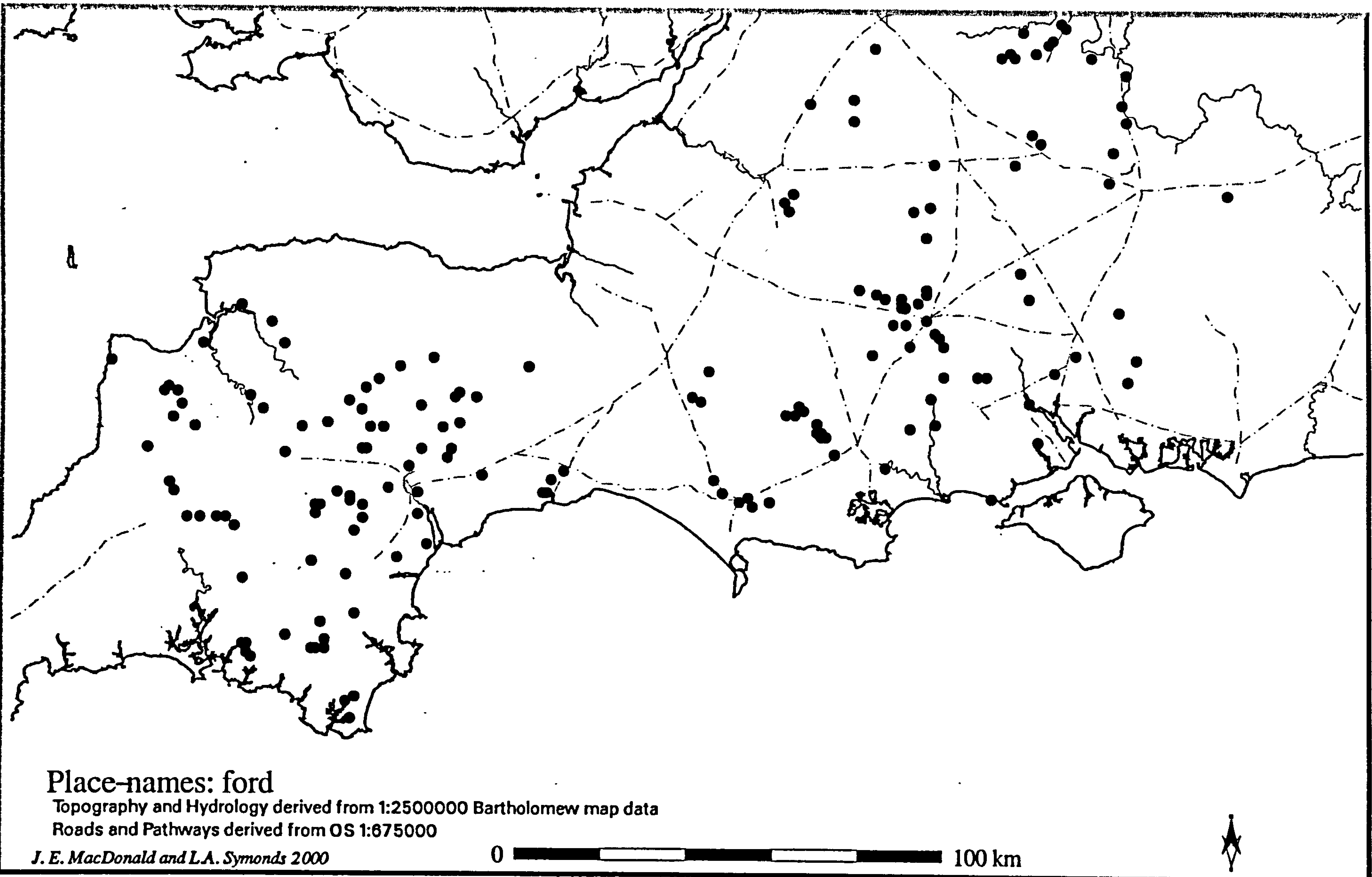


Figure 30

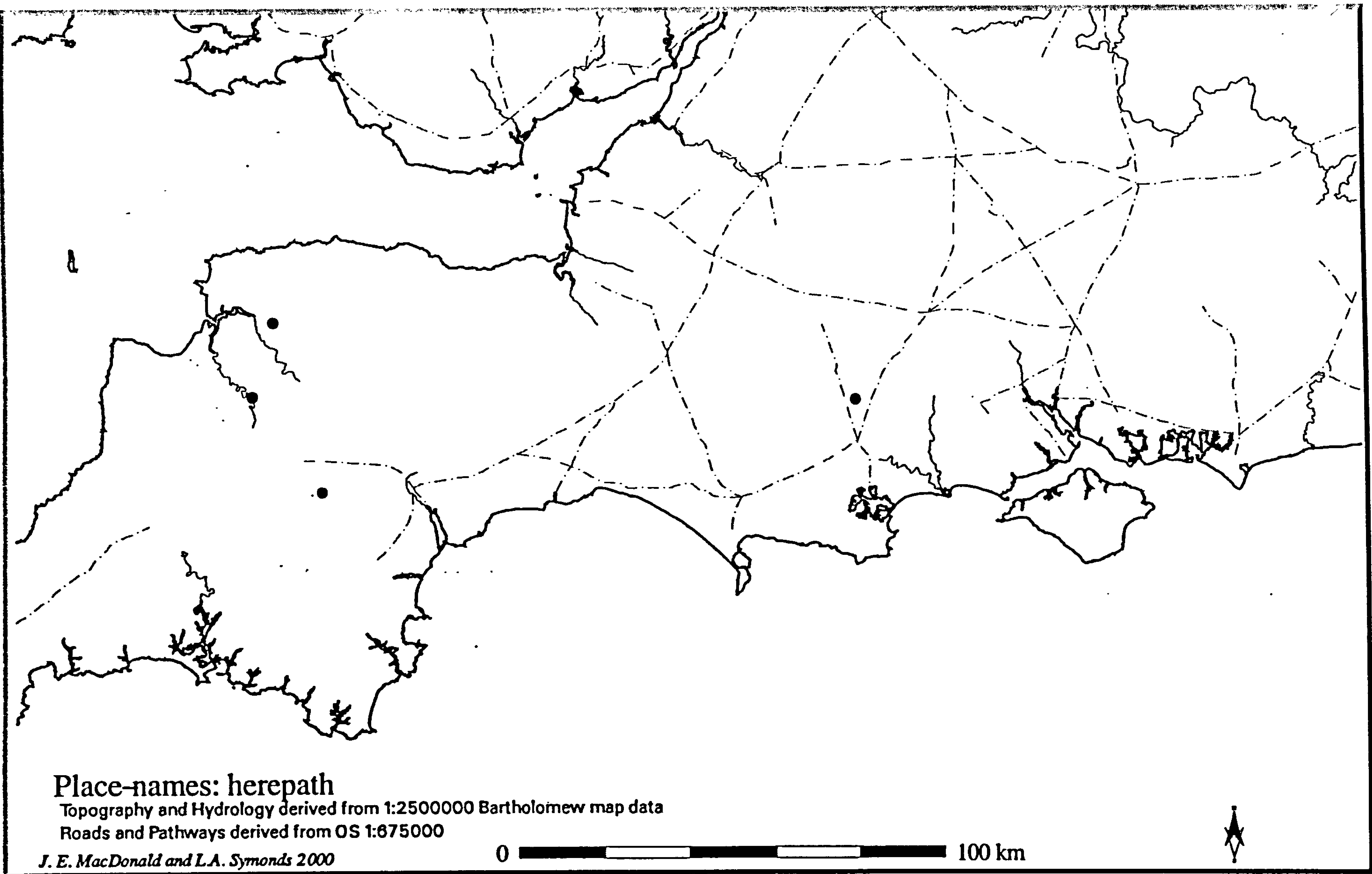


Figure 31

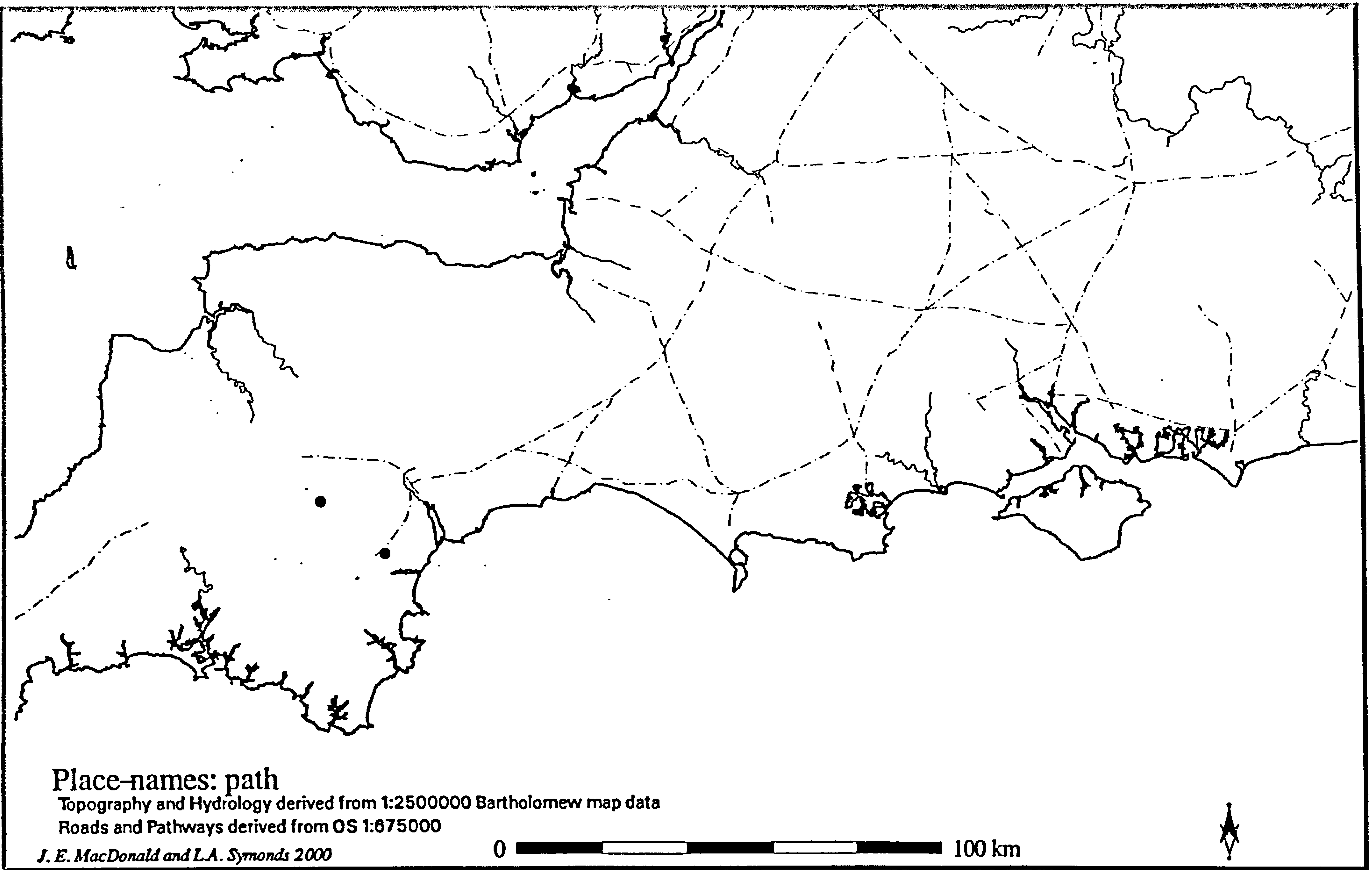


Figure 32

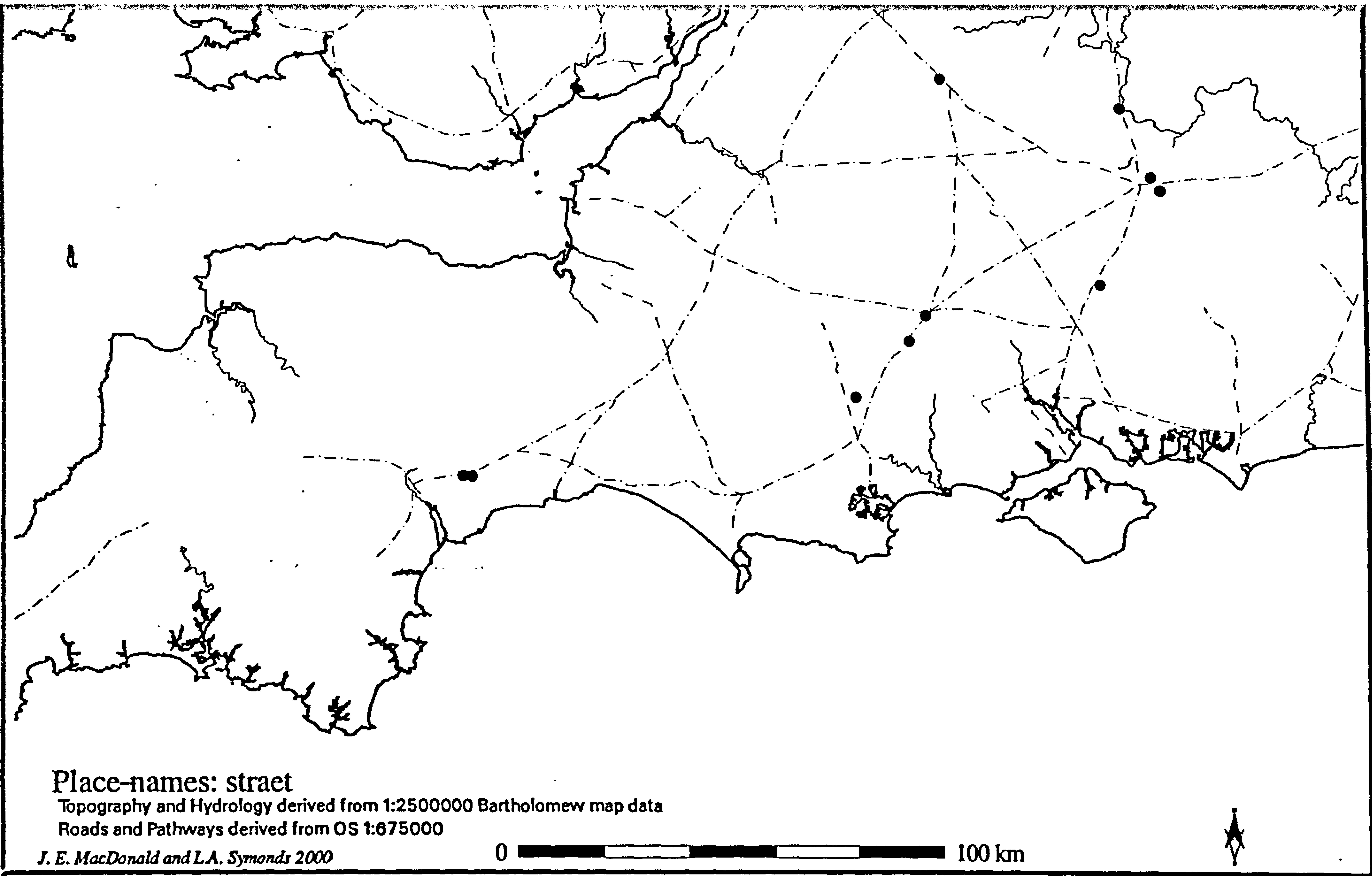


Figure 33

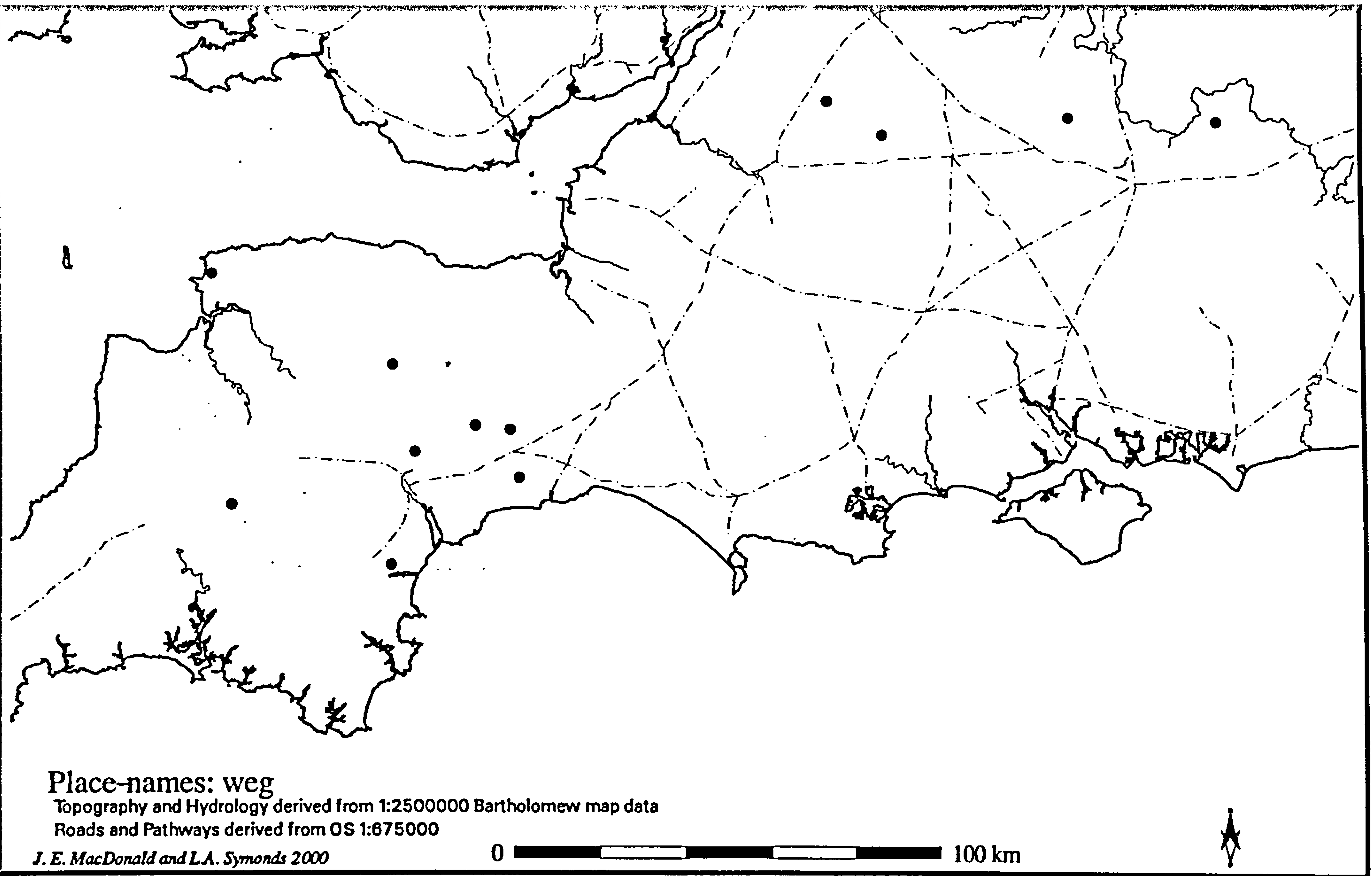


Figure 34

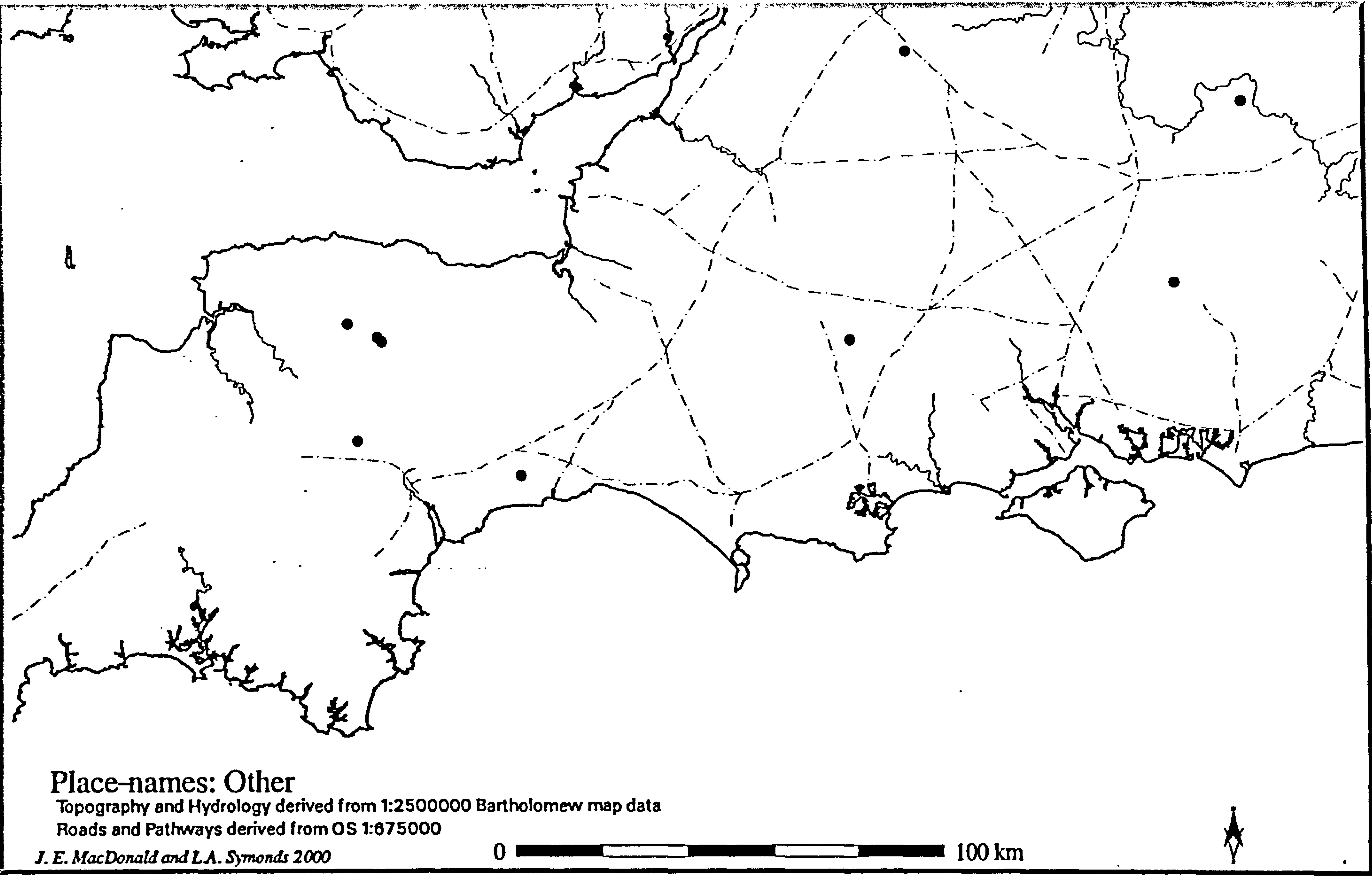


Figure 35

Figure 36: A *herepath* outside of Avebury (S1968)

Figure 37: A *herepath* running north-south at Kingston (S 534)

Figure 38: A *weg* in Stubhampton Bottom (S 630, S 419)

Figure 39: Strip lynchets south of Shaftesbury (S 419).

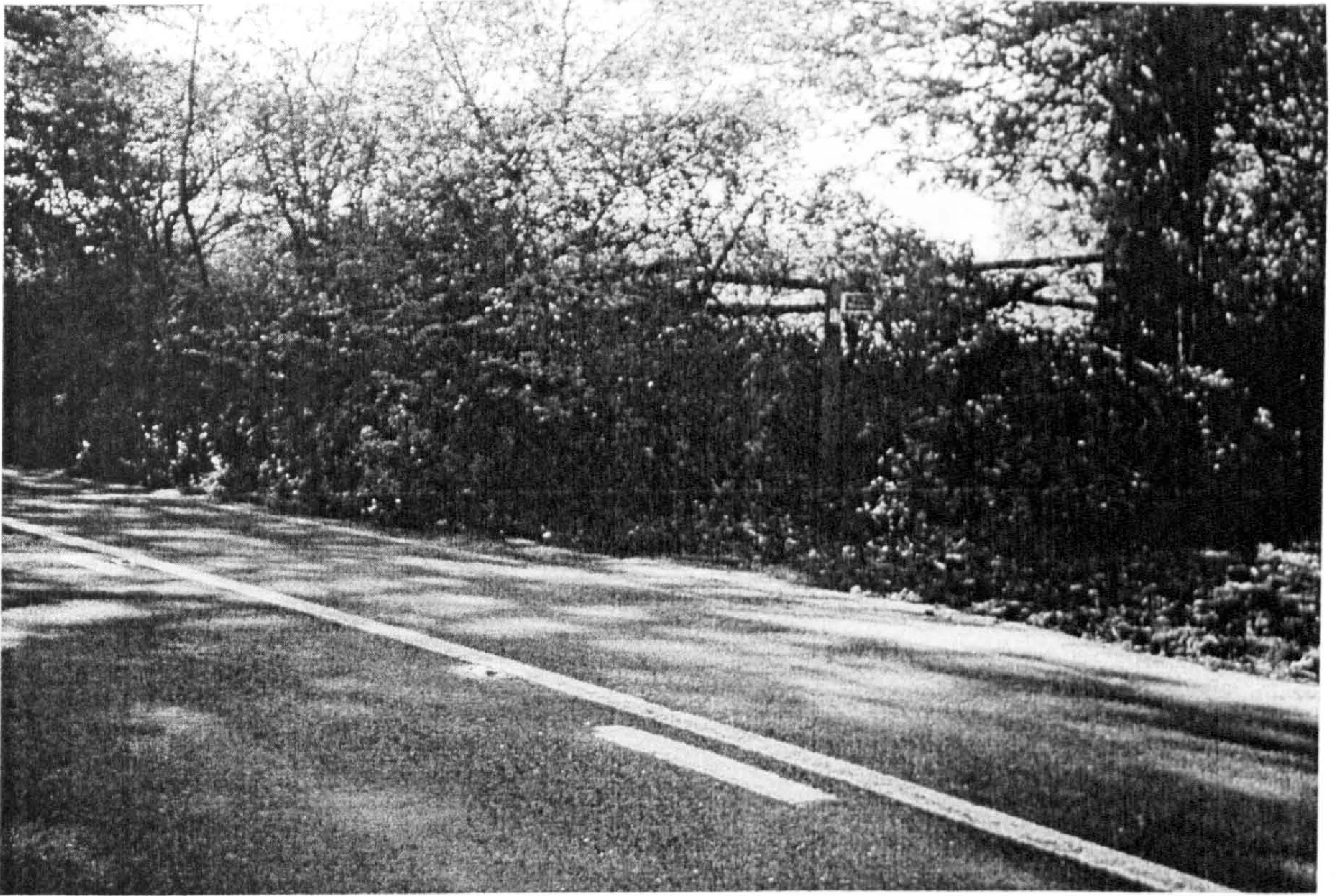


Figure 40: A *herepath* in the Seaton bounds (S 910)

Figure 41: A *weg* in the Seaton bounds. The signpost in figure 40 points to this *weg*.

Figure 42: Stoke Post. This is the place where the *weges to licgath* in the Stoke Canon bounds (S389).

Figure 43: An old *herepath* near the end of the Crediton bounds (S255).

Figure 44: Looking towards the site of the oxen *brycg* over the Stour (S 502).

Figure 45: The modern crossing of Creedy Bridge (S 255, S 387, S 890).

Figure 46: A *herepath* moving east from Creedy Bridge. Note that it is now a holloway.

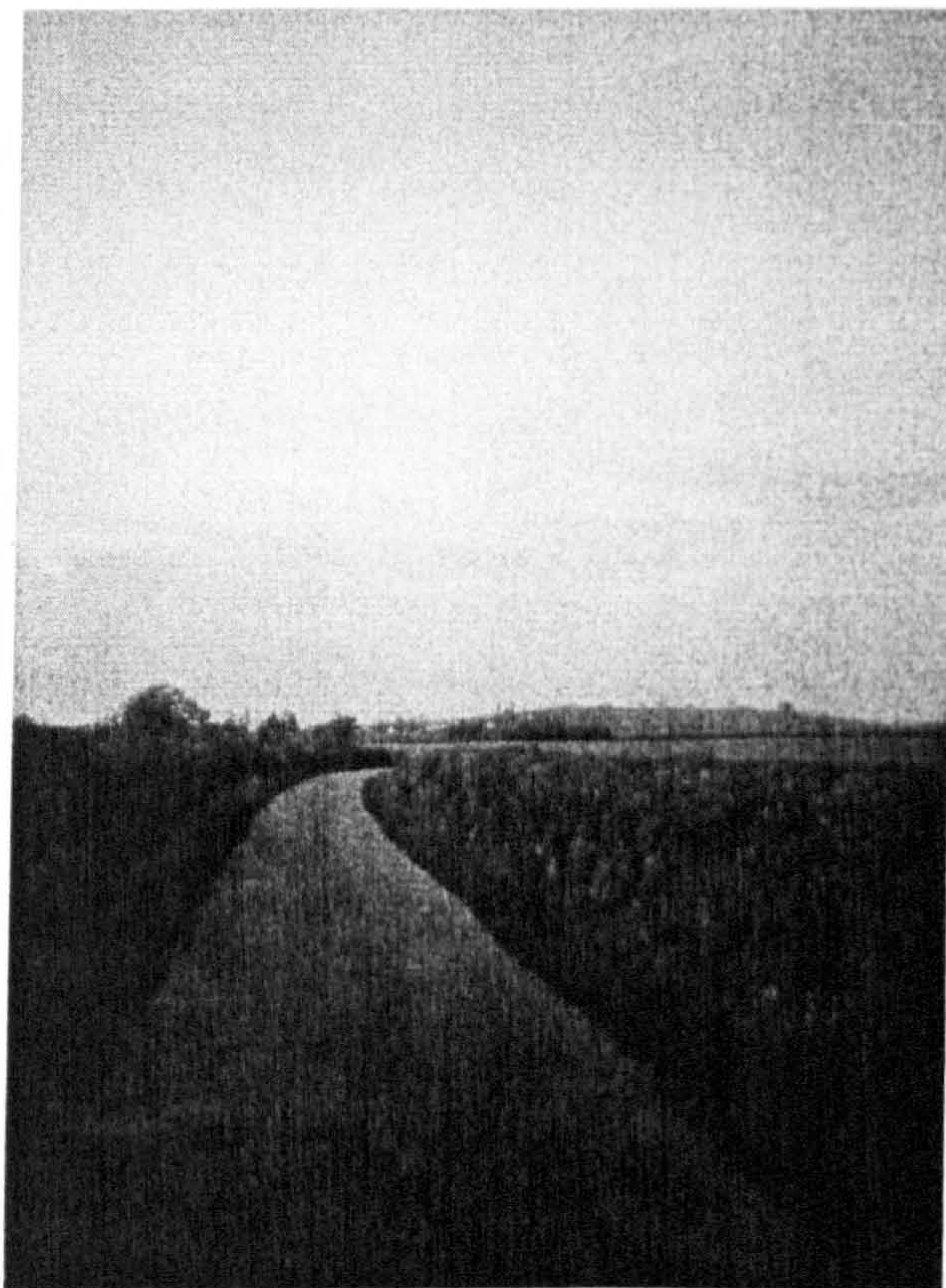


Figure 47: The same *herepath*, further to the east. Note the change in landscape.

Figure 48: A *weg* headed north towards Farnham (S 630)

Figure 49: A *herepath* at rights angles to the above *weg* (S 429).

Figure 50: The Frome in Wareham.

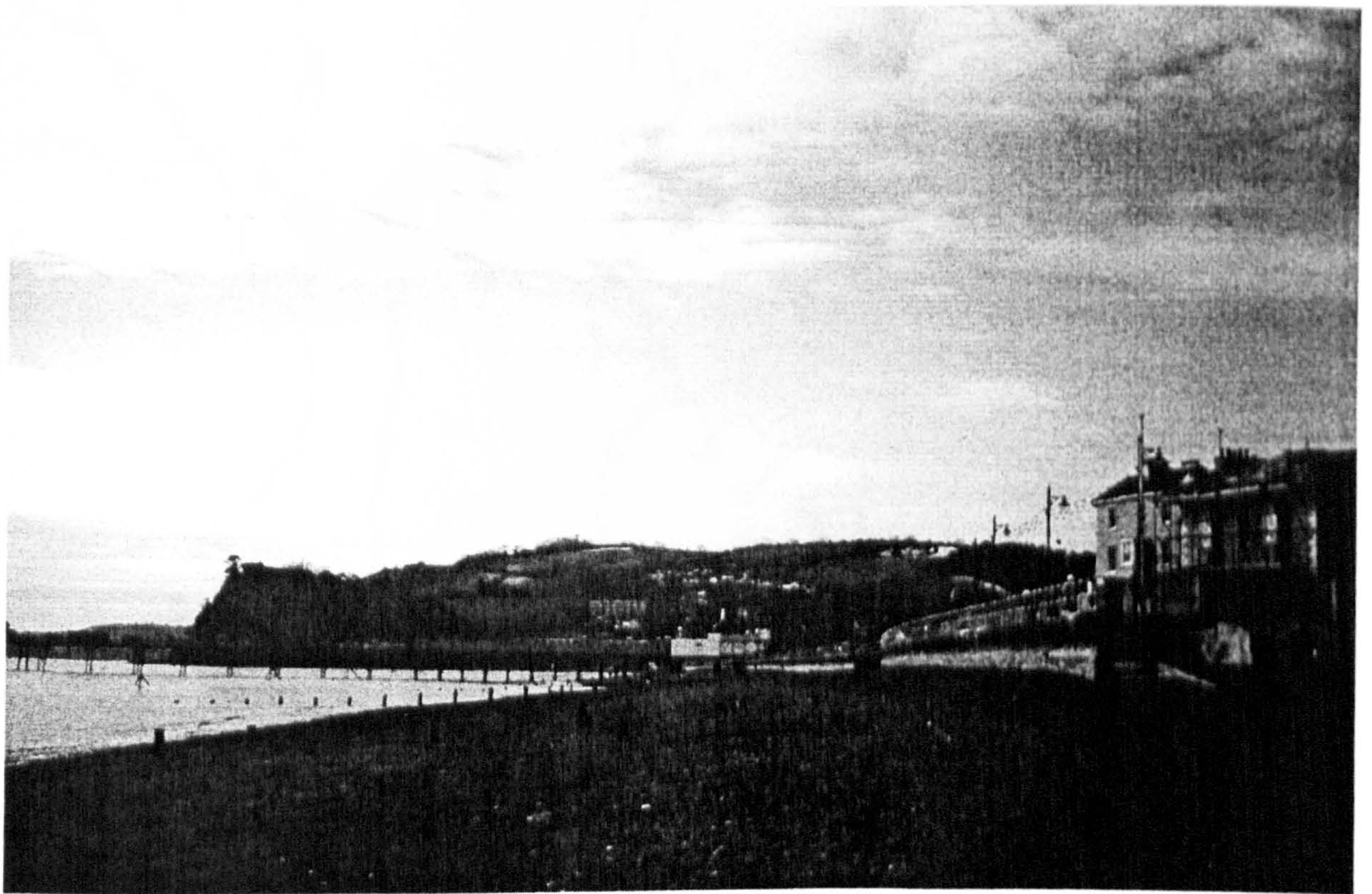


Figure 51: The Devon coast at Teignmouth, looking towards the mouth of the river.

Figure 52: Hill's map of navigable rivers and coastline changes (p. 10).

Figure 53: The Bayeux Tapestry. Boats carying men and horses to England.

Figure 54: The Bayeux Tapestry. Harold at the church in Bosham.

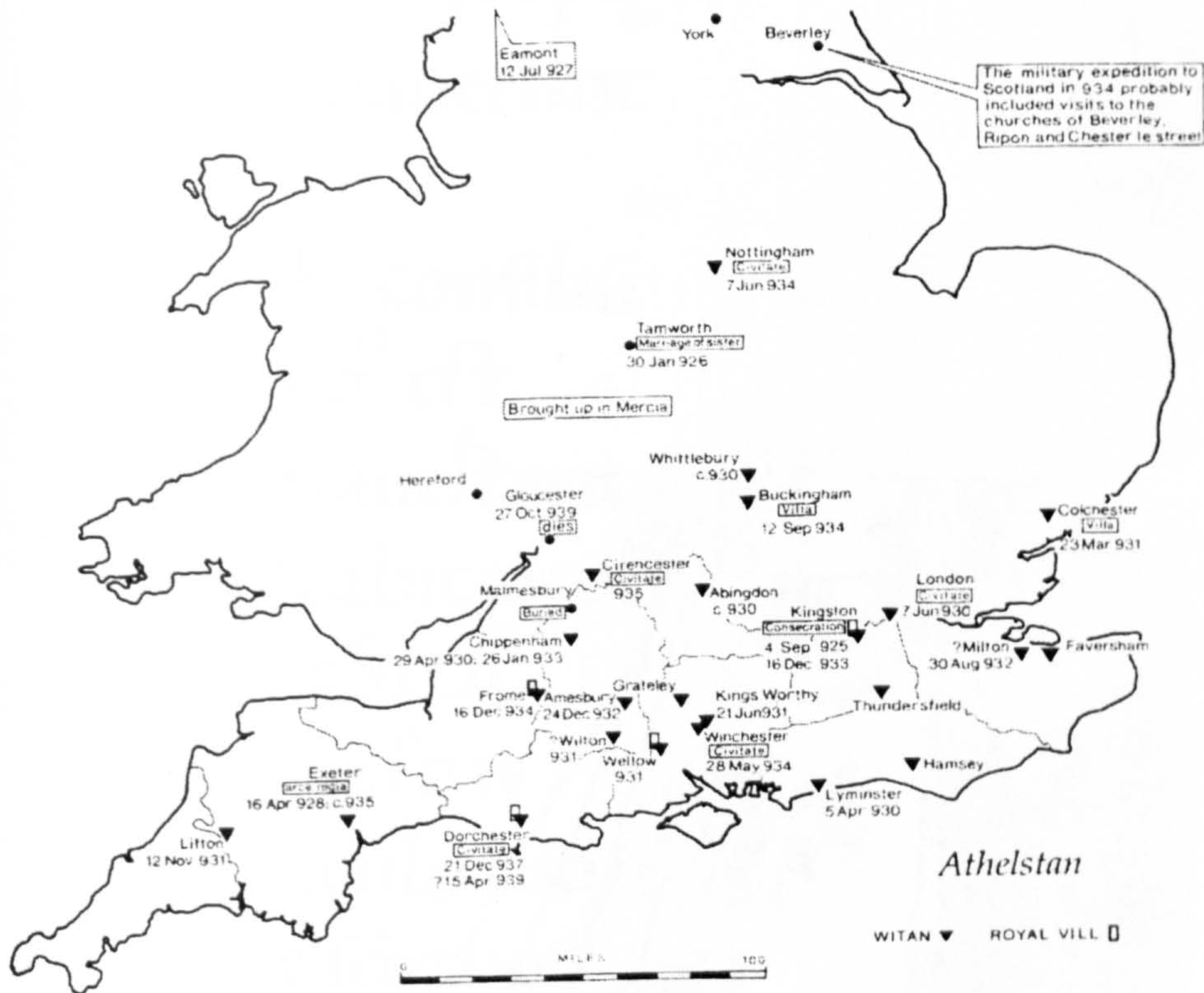


Figure 55: Hill's itinerary of Athelstan (p. 87).

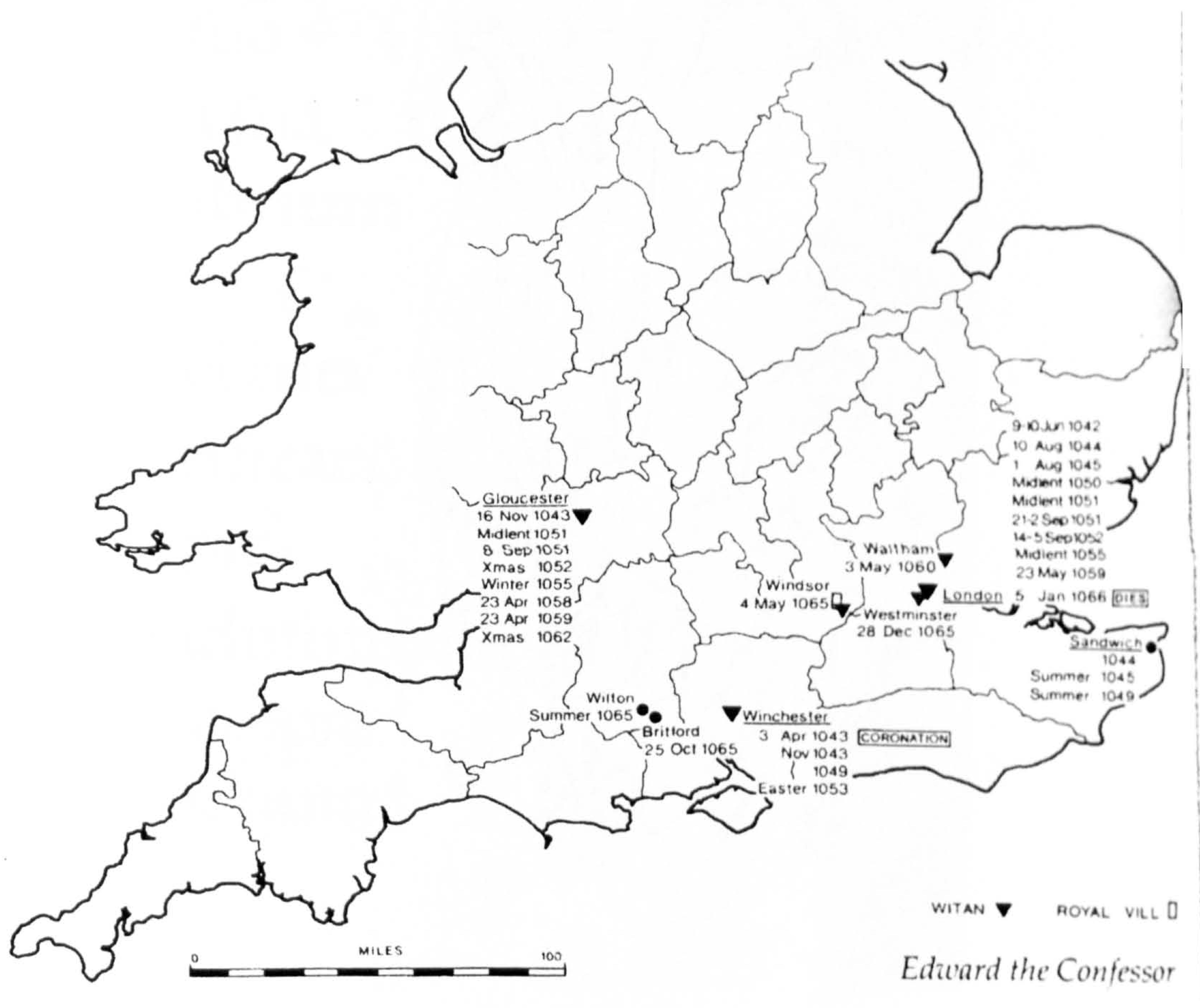


Figure 56: Hill's itinerary of Edward the Confessor (p. 94).

Figure 57: An eleventh-century manuscript illumination of a tent from the Bury Psalter (Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica, Reg. Kat. 12, f. 29r).

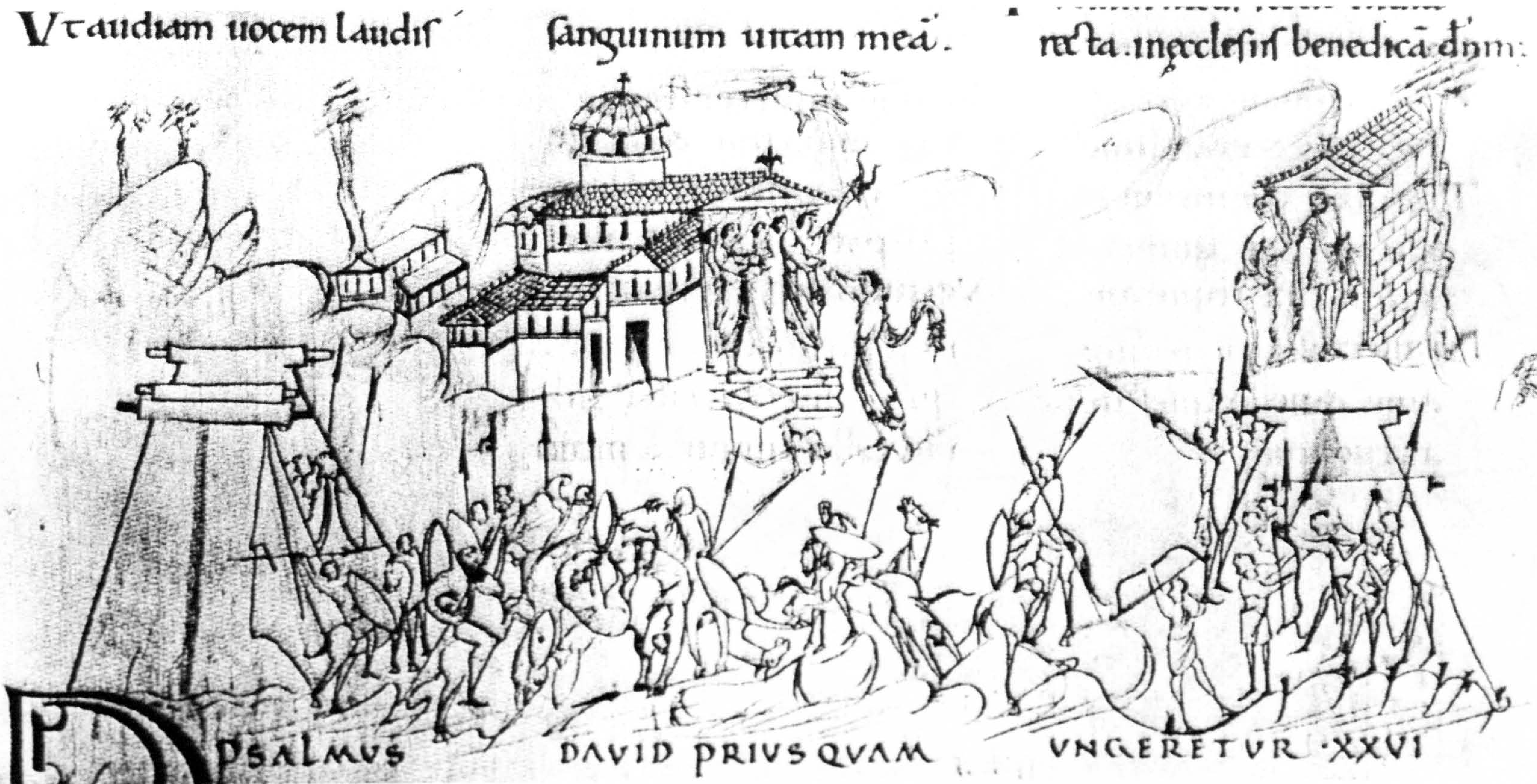
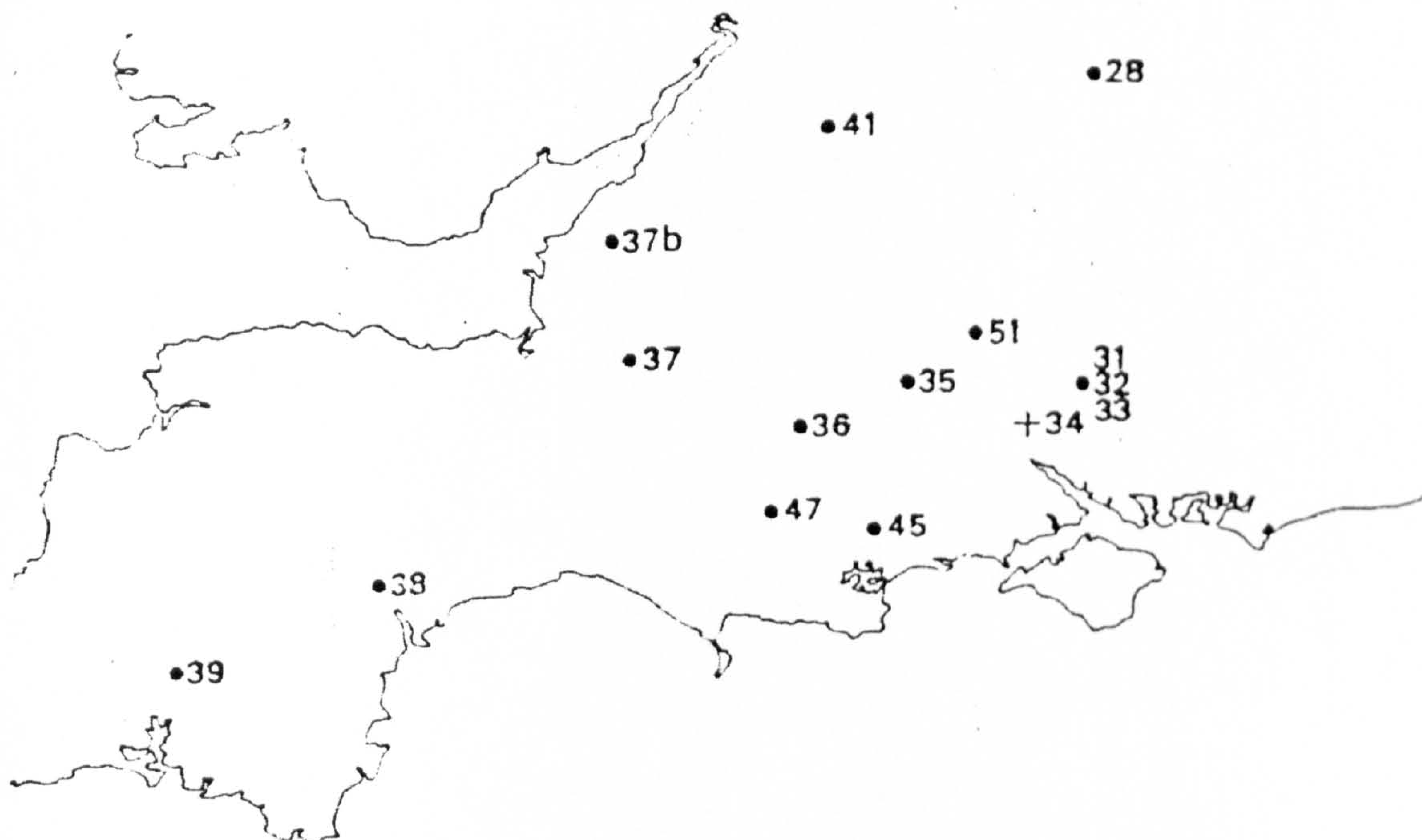


Figure 58: An eleventh-century manuscript illumination of tents in the Harley Psalter (BL Harley 603, f. 15r).

Figure 59: An eleventh-century manuscript illumination of tents from the Harley Psalter (BL Harley 603, f. 25r).



28. Abingdon
31. Winchester, Old Minster
32. Winchester, New Minster
33. Winchester, Nunnaminster
34. Romsey
35. Wilton
36. Shaftesbury
37. Glastonbury
37b. Congresbury
38. Exeter
39. Tavistock
41. Malmesbury
45. Wimborne Minster

Figure 60: The resting-place of saints (Rollason, p. 88-93).