

**LONDON'S NORTH-WEST KENT HINTERLAND? RUXLEY HUNDRED, 1200-1350**

**by**

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## ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the development of the former hundred of Ruxley in north-west Kent between 1200 and 1350, focusing on its relationship with the city of London. By the end of the thirteenth century London was a major urban centre which drew in resources from a wide surrounding area to meet its needs. The thesis considers whether Ruxley hundred was part of London's 'hinterland': whether it provided resources for the city, and whether commodities manufactured or imported into the city reached people living in the hundred. For a rural, dispersed hundred such as Ruxley, the impact of the city might have been significant, but it is also possible that local or traditional connections were of greater significance than access to the city itself.

Conventional manorial documentation is scarce for north-west Kent. The thesis therefore tests whether alternative sources, in particular information from lay subsidy returns, can be used to throw light on the experience of lay estates and peasants which is otherwise invisible. It links information from the returns with other documentary and archaeological information, using a micro-historical approach.

The conclusions are that lay subsidy returns can be a valuable resource when combined with other data. The analysis shows that Ruxley hundred was in a position to provide resources to the city and had a network of markets to service its own needs. London merchants operated in the hundred but some interactions may have been mediated through neighbouring Dartford, where wharves were used to move goods to the city along the Thames. The analysis opens up further avenues for research in surrounding hundreds, particularly in the use of the Thames riverside wharves. The new information presented on Ruxley hundred's woodland, husbandry and material culture provides useful context for the presentation of significant local heritage sites to the public.

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The Covid-19 pandemic had a significant impact on everyone undertaking historical research, as libraries and archives closed and the SCONUL scheme enabling students to borrow books from other university libraries was suspended. I experienced further restrictions on activity and travel following delays in treatment for an eye condition when appointments were repeatedly cancelled and a fall which led to a hospital stay and lengthy follow-up rehabilitation. I had particular reason to be grateful for the existence of TEAMS for supervisions and seminars, for the document images available on AALT and for any other academic research accessible online. I could not have continued my research without the care of the NHS staff at the Princess Royal University Hospital and Queen Mary's Hospital rehabilitation ward and the community physiotherapist who later visited me at home, who remained committed to their patients despite the considerable challenges they faced in working under covid restrictions.

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I have volunteered for many years as an archaeologist with the Orpington and District Archaeological Society (ODAS) and have benefited from many discussions with ODAS colleagues on different aspects of the history and archaeology of Scadbury Manor; sadly Dr Hart, former ODAS Site Director, died before my research was completed. Many friends, especially Susan, Jane S, the 'LMH group,' Mary and Nicola have kept in touch throughout lockdowns and restrictions, when I was in hospital (no visitors permitted) and afterwards at home. Their support has meant a great deal.

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## ABBREVIATIONS


AALT	Anglo-American Legal Tradition
AgHR	<i>Agricultural History Review</i>
Arch. Cant.	<i>Archaeologia Cantiana</i> (Journal of the Kent Archaeological Society)
BL	British Library
CCP	Canterbury Cathedral Priory
CCR	<i>Calendar of the Close Rolls</i> (London, 1902-)
CCCU	Canterbury Christ Church University
CChR	<i>Calendar of the Charter Rolls</i> (London, 1903-)
CIPM	<i>Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem</i> (London, 1904-)
CLRO	City of London Record Office
CPR	<i>Calendar of the Patent Rolls</i> (London, 1906-)
CUP	Cambridge University Press
EHR	<i>English Historical Review</i>
EcHR	<i>Economic History Review</i>
Hasted II, III	E. Hasted, <i>The History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent</i> , Vol. II /Vol III, (2 <sup>nd</sup> edition, Canterbury, W. Bristow, 1797; republished by EP publishing & Kent County Library, 1972).
IPM	Inquisition <i>post mortem</i>
KAS	Kent Archaeological Society
KCC	Kent County Council
KHLC	Kent History and Library Centre
LAMAS	London and Middlesex Archaeological Society
LB	London Borough
LUP	London University Press
TLAMAS	<i>Transactions of the London and Middlesex Archaeological Society</i>
MUP	Manchester University Press
ODAS	Orpington and District Archaeological Society
ODNB	<i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i>

OUP	Oxford University Press
PRS	Pipe Roll Society
QW	<i>Placita de Quo Warranto, Edward I-Edward III</i> (ed. W. Illingworth, London 1818).
RCH	<i>Rotuli Chartarum</i> (London, 1837)
Roles Gascons	<i>Roles Gascons, 1242-54</i> , tome premier, ed. F. Michel (Paris 1885).
Sweetinburgh (2010):	S. Sweetinburgh (ed.), <i>Later Medieval Kent</i> (Woodbridge: Boydell Press & KCC, 2010).
TNA	The National Archives
VCH	<i>Victoria County History</i>
YUP	Yale University Press

Annex 2 - Declaration form PhD by Thesis or Portfolio Declaration

I declare that:

- The work presented in this thesis is my own and embodies the results of my research during my period of registration.
- I have read and followed the University's Academic Integrity Policy and that the thesis does not breach copyright or other intellectual property rights of a third party. Where necessary I have gained permission to reproduce copyright materials.
- Any material which has been previously presented and accepted for the award of an academic qualification at this University or elsewhere is clearly identified in the thesis.
- Where work is the product of collaboration the extent of the collaboration has been indicated.

Signature  Date 30 June 2023



## INTRODUCTION

### 0.1 RESEARCH AIMS AND QUESTIONS

This thesis explores the development of the former hundred of Ruxley between 1200 and 1350, focusing on its relationship with the city of London. By the end of the thirteenth century London was well-established as a major urban centre which drew in resources from a wide surrounding area to meet its needs. The key research questions for the thesis concern the extent to which Ruxley hundred was part of London's 'hinterland' in this period: whether it provided resources for the city and whether commodities manufactured or imported into the city reached people living in the hundred. If a relationship existed between city and hundred, how did it work?

The city's relationship with its wider hinterland has been studied in some detail but much less is known about how the rural communities close to London experienced that relationship. For a rural, dispersed hundred such as Ruxley, the impact might have been significant, but it is also possible that local or traditional connections were of greater significance than the presence of the city.

The experience of communities lying close to London in north-west Kent has traditionally been difficult to investigate. Manorial records are invaluable for the study of rural communities but in this period, few records relating to lay manors survive from Kent. Major research programmes such as the 'Feeding the City' project have therefore relied on data from the records of ecclesiastical demesnes. The thesis aims to test whether alternative documentation, in particular information from lay subsidy returns, can throw light on the research questions and be linked with other evidence (including from the archaeological record) to suggest answers which relate to the whole community. It uses a micro-historical approach to make the best use of the limited lay sources available, while using information from the ecclesiastical demesnes to provide context.

The outcomes of this research will inform historians and archaeologists working on London, Kent and city-rural relationships more generally; it will also support local communities' appreciation of their own history and archaeology. The area that formed Ruxley hundred is now part of the London boroughs of Bromley and Bexley and has been extensively

developed in recent centuries. However, two scheduled monuments with thirteenth-century roots still exist there: the site of Scadbury Manor in Chislehurst, a lay manor, and the building known as The Priory in Orpington, formerly the estate centre for Canterbury Cathedral priory's manor of Greater Orpington. A better understanding of their early context will be helpful for public understanding of both sites, and can be disseminated through Open Days, exhibitions and talks which are currently presented by volunteers.

## **0.2 RUXLEY HUNDRED**

### **0.2.1 Background**

In 1200, Ruxley hundred was a rural community in the north-west corner of the county of Kent, within the Lathe of Sutton.<sup>1</sup> The hundred lay some fifteen miles from London Bridge; it was closer to London than to Rochester, Maidstone or Canterbury, Kent's main urban centres at the time. It also had traditional links with the wooded areas of the Weald to the south. Most of the land which formed the medieval hundred no longer lies in the modern county of Kent but in the London boroughs of Bexley and Bromley within the Greater London Authority.<sup>2</sup> These boroughs have seen extensive industrial and suburban development, but successive 'Green Belt' planning policies have protected countryside and greenspace, making it possible to gain some sense of the earlier rural landscape.

In common with most of Kent, lay manorial evidence for Ruxley hundred in this period is scarce; the Manorial Documents Register shows that there are almost no surviving court rolls, rentals or accounts.<sup>3</sup> Canterbury Cathedral's records for its holdings at Bexley and Orpington have fared better.<sup>4</sup> Evidence for peasant activity throughout the hundred is limited.

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<sup>1</sup> Map 1 shows the lathes and hundreds of Kent; Appendix, p.236

<sup>2</sup> Ruxley hundred remained an administrative unit until the local government reforms of 1888. By 1965, further local government reorganisations had brought most of the former hundred within the remit of the Greater London Council, though the civil parish of Knockholt remained within the county of Kent. The local government reorganisation of 1974 confirmed new boundaries for the London boroughs of Bexley and Bromley. Today these boroughs lie within the Greater London Authority; they contain the bulk of the former Ruxley hundred (excluding Knockholt) along with other hundreds formerly in Kent, including Crayford, Little & Lesnes and Bromley & Beckenham.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/finding-records-in-discovery-and-other-databases/manorial-documents-register> [accessed 20/06/2023].

<sup>4</sup> Original documentation relating to the archbishop's demesne of Bexley has not been examined for this thesis. Documentation relating to Canterbury Cathedral priory's demesne of Greater Orpington is held in Canterbury Cathedral Archives, including the bedels' rolls for the manor. A sample of these has been

Fortunately, the hundred benefits from unusually detailed returns which relate to the lay subsidy of 1301, and this thesis uses these returns as a key source.

### **0.2.2 Scadbury Manor, Chislehurst, and The Priory, Orpington.**

Information from standing buildings and from archaeological excavation in the hundred is also limited, as many potential archaeological sites were destroyed by nineteenth- and early twentieth-century development with little or no prior investigation. The hundred nonetheless benefits from the survival of two important heritage sites which date from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries: the moated site of Scadbury Manor, Chislehurst, where the remains of medieval settlement can still be seen, and the building known as The Priory, Orpington, now considerably altered and extended, but once the estate centre of Canterbury Cathedral priory's demesne of Greater Orpington.



**Fig. 1: Aerial view of the Scadbury Manor site in 2022.**

The trees around the moat are secondary woodland; the fishponds lie north-south within the trees to the west of the island. The structures visible are the remains of the Tudor brick manor-house, demolished in 1738, and early 20<sup>th</sup>-century restoration work.

Image: Google Earth.

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examined. An overview of the rolls for Orpington is contained in M. Bowen, 'The Priory Orpington: an account of a working farm based on the Bedells' rolls, 1280-1373, 1471', (reprinted from *ODAS Archives* Vol. 24 No. 4, 2002), pp. 54-85.

Scadbury Manor is a moated site with associated fishponds, scheduled since 2013 as an ancient monument and shortly afterwards placed on the *Heritage at Risk* Register covering Greater London.<sup>5</sup> The manor site, which archaeological evidence suggests was first settled around 1200, is still under excavation; it lies at the heart of the 150-hectare (300-acre) local nature reserve of Scadbury Park, which encompasses much of the original manorial estate.<sup>6</sup> This combination of manor site and wider estate is an unusual survival within Greater London. The site's present owners, Bromley Council, are considering whether to pursue a major conservation project which, if taken forward, would improve public access to the site. The case for such a project and any future public presentation would benefit from an improved understanding of its early history. Much is already known about Scadbury Manor's development from the fifteenth century onwards, following its acquisition by the Walsingham family in 1424. However less is known about its earliest phase of settlement and the significance of the site at that time is not well understood.<sup>7</sup> This thesis aims to fill this gap by providing an improved historical context for the archaeological finds, which could then be utilised as appropriate in future presentation of the site.

The second heritage site, The Priory, Church Hill, Orpington, is a substantial flint and timber-framed building. It contains fabric dating back to the thirteenth century, although most of the external structure relates to later building phases. Listed Grade 2\*, it is part of a complex which includes Grade 2-listed outbuildings dating to the seventeenth century along with Arts-and-Crafts gardens.<sup>8</sup> Like Scadbury Manor, The Priory is also owned by Bromley Council and until 2016 housed Bromley Museums Service, but it is now let on a long lease to

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<sup>5</sup> Scadbury Manor Moated Site and Fishponds: HE List Entry No: 1409786. National Grid Reference: TQ4595770074. The site was the subject of a research investigation by Historic England: M. Alexander, E. Carpenter, D. Hunt, J. Kewley, L. Rees, *Scadbury Moated Manor, London Borough of Bromley, Landscape Investigations* (Research Report 12/2021), <https://historicengland.org.uk/research/results/reports/12-2021>.

<sup>6</sup> The Orpington and District Archaeological Society (ODAS) holds a licence from Bromley Council for archaeological work at the manor. Reports of the excavations at Scadbury: F. A. Hart, *Excavations at Scadbury, Part 1: Excavations near the Island Wall* (ODAS, 2000); *Part 2: Some Remains of Mediaeval Settlement* (ODAS, 2011); *Part 3: The Estate Barn* (ODAS, 2003); *Part 4: A Tudor Gatehouse becomes a Modern Mansion* (ODAS, 2008); *Part 5: Remains of Buildings in the Farmyard* (ODAS, 2005).

<sup>7</sup> The history of the site is summarised in F. A. Hart & S. M. Archer, *Scadbury Manor: an introduction* (ODAS, revised reprint, 2016); see also E. A. Webb, G. W. Miller & J. Beckwith, *The History of Chislehurst* (London: George Allen, 1899), pp. 106-169. A brief history and detailed chronology incorporating recent evidence can be found at [www.odas.org/Scadbury](http://www.odas.org/Scadbury).

<sup>8</sup> The Priory, Orpington: HE List Entry No: 1064330; Outbuildings in the Grounds of the Priory, Church Hill: HE List Entry No: 1084403; Priory Gardens, Orpington: HE List Entry No: 10011444.



an organisation which provides artists' studios.<sup>9</sup> The site was never used as a priory (the name dates from the nineteenth century, when it was a private house), but it belonged to the priory from the eleventh century when Eadsige, chaplain of king Cnut, gave land in Orpington to Canterbury Cathedral.<sup>10</sup> Until the Reformation it served as the estate centre for the manor of Greater Orpington, one of the many estates in Kent held by Canterbury Cathedral Priory. The present building has been significantly remodelled on several occasions.<sup>11</sup>



**Fig. 2: The Priory, Orpington**  
Photograph: ODAS

In contrast to the position at Scadbury, where there is extensive archaeological material but scarcely any manorial documentation, documentation relating to the Greater Orpington manor survives in Canterbury Cathedral Archives but little archaeological work has been carried out at the site. Documentation relating to the priory's estate is used as context for this thesis; the standing building is a valuable reminder of the importance of the demesne

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<sup>9</sup> <https://v22collection.com/v22-orpington-priory> [accessed 20/06/2023].

<sup>10</sup> Charter No 153, N. P. Brooks & S. E. Kelly, *Charters of Christ Church Canterbury, Part 2* (Oxford: OUP for British Academy, 2013), p. 1104 ff; Sawyer no. 1465.

<sup>11</sup> A. Emery, *Greater Medieval Houses of England and Wales: Vol. III, Southern England* (Cambridge: CUP, 2006), p.384 f.

within the hundred at that time. Canterbury Cathedral priory held manors across south-eastern England, particularly in Kent, Essex and Surrey, but few of these centres can now be identified as surviving structures. The Priory is therefore an unusual survival which provides an insight into high-status buildings from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

This thesis focuses on lay activity rather than on the hundred's ecclesiastical demesnes but information relating to The Priory in the Middle Ages adds useful context, and an improved understanding of the later medieval hundred will be helpful for any future interpretation of The Priory.

### **0.3 LONDON**

#### **0.3.1 The development of later medieval London**

At the time of the Norman Conquest, London was already a substantial urban centre in the eleventh century. It grew rapidly in succeeding centuries. By 1200 it was the largest urban centre in the south-east, surpassing Norwich, Winchester and Canterbury in population.<sup>12</sup> It is now generally accepted that by 1300, London had a population of around 80,000.<sup>13</sup> London acted as a major hub for the import of raw materials and finished products, including luxury goods, and for the export of English produce such as wool and woollen cloth; it had already become a centre of distribution within England and was becoming influential internationally. The organisation of its trade was becoming increasingly formalised and the city developed market facilities to support this.<sup>14</sup> Some of London's trade was conducted within England but much of it took place with continental Europe, where links were facilitated by merchants from overseas who spent time in the city and worked closely with local traders.

In the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries the focus for regional communities in England remained a local city, such as Norwich or Winchester, York or Lincoln, Exeter or Bristol, but the presence of London was becoming increasingly significant beyond its

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<sup>12</sup> R. Bartlett, *England under the Norman and Angevin Kings 1075-1225* (Oxford: OUP, 2000), p. 332.

<sup>13</sup> C. M. Barron, *London in the Later Middle Ages: Government and People, 1200-1500* (Oxford: OUP, 2004), p. 45.

<sup>14</sup> Barron, *London in the Later Middle Ages*, p. 46 ff.

immediate region. London's reach soon extended across England, drawing in people and supplies from many parts of the kingdom and influencing national trade and social attitudes.<sup>15</sup> Examination of customs accounts and other documentation shows how products were traded from mainland European cities directly into the port of London from where they could be distributed, but they were also traded to other ports around the coast, including into Southampton and the Cinque ports such as Dover on the Channel coast, and transferred on to London by water or road.<sup>16</sup>

Although its influence in other English regions was increasing, London had a specific relationship with the towns, villages and rural communities immediately surrounding it. Reviewing progress made over the last fifty years in the understanding and interpretation of later medieval London, John Schofield noted 'There has been a massive expansion in empirical knowledge of the capital and its immediate region of small towns and villages.'<sup>17</sup> Much of this expansion in knowledge has related to the city itself. Much more is now known about how Londoners lived in the city in the later medieval period and how the city was administered; detailed studies have illuminated many aspects including the organisation of its trade and commerce and the development of its religious institutions; the lives of specific groups of Londoners – ranging from widows and children to merchants and guild-members – have been investigated.<sup>18</sup> More is also now known about the area immediately around the medieval city. The development of Southwark and Westminster, settlements close to

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<sup>15</sup> Barron, *London in the Later Middle Ages*, p. 57.

<sup>16</sup> Dover: N. Karn, 'England's trade with the Continent in the early thirteenth century: customs and the port of Dover', *Journal of Medieval History*, 46:3, (2020), pp. 306-334; Sandwich: M. Kowaleski, 'Maritime Trade and Industry in Medieval Kent' in S. Bligh, E. Edwards & S. Sweetinburgh, *Maritime Kent Through the Ages*, (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2021), pp. 215-233 (esp. pp. 216 ff.); Southampton: J. Bolton, *The Medieval English Economy 1150-1500* (Frome: Dent, 1985 with supplement), p. 313.

<sup>17</sup> J. Schofield, 'Medieval London: rich resources and new directions', in *London Archaeologist* Vol. 15 No 6, (Autumn, 2018), pp. 155-163 (quotation, p. 155).

<sup>18</sup> Examples include Barron, *London in the Later Middle Ages*; S. L. Thrupp, *The Merchant Class of Medieval London, 1300-1500* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1962); N. Holder, *The Friaries of Medieval London: From Foundation to Dissolution* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2017); P. Nightingale, *A medieval mercantile community: the Grocers' Company and the politics and trade of London, 1000-1485* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1995).

London but outside the city's jurisdiction, has been examined in depth.<sup>19</sup> Studies have been carried out on some surrounding towns and villages, notably Cuxham in Oxfordshire.<sup>20</sup>

Archaeological work has become an increasingly significant source of information following extensive excavations on the former city waterfront and elsewhere.<sup>21</sup> As a result, Londoners' material possessions are better understood; focused analysis of datable archaeological finds has increased the understanding of items ranging from shoes to household utensils, illuminating local consumption and raising questions about the sources of supply.<sup>22</sup> With fashionable shoes, for example, the leather may have been imported from Spain, prepared outside the city but brought in for specialist craftsmen to finish; household utensils of metal may have been made in the city itself, or imported from continental Europe; ceramic fabrics may be traced to specific kiln sites outside the city. This work makes it possible to consider where, for example, the merchants importing leather originated or how ceramic items were traded, and to consider what role people from Ruxley hundred may have played in any of this activity. More generally, historical analysis has increasingly been brought to bear on archaeological investigations (and vice versa) enabling a more comprehensive and nuanced view of London's development in the later Middle Ages and providing a better context for consideration of the surrounding area.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> M. Carlin, *Medieval Southwark* (London: Hambledon Press, 1996); G. Rosser, *Medieval Westminster 1200-1540* (Oxford: OUP, 1989).

<sup>20</sup> P. D. A. Harvey, *A Medieval Oxfordshire Village: Cuxham 1240-1400* (Oxford: OUP, 1965); P. D. A. Harvey, (ed.), *Manorial Records of Cuxham, Oxfordshire* (London, HMSO for Oxford Records Society, 1974).

<sup>21</sup> Waterfront excavation sites are reviewed in J. Schofield, L. Blackmore, J Pearce with T. Dyson, *London's Waterfront 1100-1066: excavations in Thames Street, London, 1974-84* (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2018), [www.colat.org.london-waterfront/](http://www.colat.org.london-waterfront/), [accessed 7/05/2020].

<sup>22</sup> The Museum of London has published important catalogues of datable finds from London excavations which relate to the period covered by this thesis, including G. Egan (ed.), *The Medieval Household*, (London: Museum of London & HMSO, 1998); F. Grew & M. De Neergaard, *Shoes and Pattens* (London: Museum of London & HMSO, 1988); G. Egan & F. Pritchard, *Dress Accessories* (London: Museum of London & HMSO, 1991); E. Crowfoot, F. Pritchard, K. Staniland, *Textiles and Clothing* (London: Museum of London & HMSO, 1992). These provide a more comprehensive view of the material available than was contained in the museum's first catalogue published in 1940: J. B. Ward Perkins (ed.), *London Museum Medieval Catalogue* (London: HMSO, 1940, rp 1965 with minor amendments).

<sup>23</sup> Excavation reports by Museum of London Archaeology (MOLA) and others working in the city now routinely include historical context in addition to detailed archaeological recording.



### 0.3.2 London's 'Region'

The improvements in analysis of Londoners' possessions and of the city's development has not been matched in the rural areas around London. Many excavations in what are now Greater London boroughs took place before modern techniques were available; later developer-funded excavations have sometimes been constrained in terms of what could be recovered and/or what could subsequently be analysed. Although there has been excavation at the Tudor palace at Greenwich, for example, relatively little is known about the early development of the port or its associated settlement.<sup>24</sup> At Woolwich, excavations at a major kiln site are not fully published, making it difficult to know whether ceramics were being traded into the London markets. However recent work by Museum of London Archaeology has provided new information about aristocratic and royal settlement on the Thames riverside.<sup>25</sup>

It is now generally accepted that London exerted considerable influence over an extensive local area which lay beyond the boundaries of the city and its immediate suburbs. The concept of London's 'region' was articulated by Derek Keene in 1989.<sup>26</sup> He argued that London's expansion directly affected the surrounding counties, from which it drew raw materials, produce and people. The historic counties he identified as central to this were Kent, Surrey, Middlesex and Essex; he equated London's 'region' with the portions of those counties closest to the metropolis, most of which now lie within the Greater London Authority. Keene's view was that London's presence directly influenced development in those areas. Choices would be made about land-use or the production of goods which reflected the 'pull' of the city rather than local consumption patterns alone. These choices might vary according to the type of produce under consideration.

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<sup>24</sup> M. Egan, 'The Church in Medieval Greenwich', *Arch. Cant.* 123 (1983), pp. 233-254, provides an overview.

<sup>25</sup> Blatherwick, S., & Bluer, R., *Great Houses, Moats and Mills on the South Bank of the Thames* (London: MOLA, 2009); A. Francis, *The Deptford royal dockyard and manor of Sayes Court, London, Excavations 2000-12* (London: MOLA, 2017).

<sup>26</sup> D. Keene, 'Medieval London and Its Region', *The London Journal* Vol. 14:2 (1989), pp. 99-111. Keene argued that London's region stretched from Waltham Abbey in the north, Watford, Uxbridge and Staines (Middlesex) in the west, Leatherhead and Croydon (Surrey) in the south, and Brentwood (Essex) and Dartford (Kent) in the east.

Keene's propositions were put to the test for the period around 1300 through a major research project funded by the Leverhulme Trust, *Feeding The City (1)*, for which he acted as co-sponsor.<sup>27</sup> This project showed the extent of London's 'reach' and demonstrated how it might vary. In relation to the city's grain supply, it showed that London's influence on agriculture went far beyond Greater London and in certain circumstances embraced some ten counties.<sup>28</sup> The pull of London might well become greater than the pull of local towns, even when these lay closer to those estates where crops were being cultivated; so crops might be selected and grown specifically to cater for London's needs. This was reflected, for example, in the way that the villagers of Cuxham in Oxfordshire grew and exported grain. They did not export wheat to Oxford, a developing city relatively near at hand, but sent it further overland to the small town of Henley-on-Thames, which acted as a hub for onward transport to London via the river Thames.<sup>29</sup> *Feeding the City* also found evidence that some estates in north Kent grew disproportionately high amounts of oats compared with other parts of the county, and concluded that these oats might have been destined for the London market – perhaps to feed the increasing number of horses being used there for haulage and personal transport - rather than for local consumption.<sup>30</sup> Related work covering a later period has been carried out on the provision of timber and brushwood to London for use in building construction and as fuel. This demonstrated that wood – a heavy product, so difficult and expensive to move – was usually brought into London from wooded areas nearby; adjacent woodland was not cleared, as might have been expected, to allow potentially more profitable arable crops to be grown, but was actively managed to ensure a sustainable source of timber and firewood for the city.<sup>31</sup> These studies relied on databases derived largely from demesne accounts which could provide comparable data over long timescales. As the authors recognise, this makes it difficult to apply the results directly to

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<sup>27</sup> Archived at <<https://archives.history.ac.uk/cmh/projects.html#feed1>> [accessed 7 May /05/2020].

<sup>28</sup> B. M. S. Campbell, J. A. Galloway, D. Keene, M. Murphy, *A Medieval Capital and its Grain Supply: Agrarian Production and Distribution in the London Region c. 1300*; (Historical Geography Research Series 40, London: Institute of British Geographers, 1993). The ten counties are shown on p. 14, and are Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Berkshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Kent, Middlesex, Northamptonshire, Oxfordshire and Surrey.

<sup>29</sup> Harvey, *Cuxham, 1240-1400* (1965), p. 103.

<sup>30</sup> Oats: Campbell et. al., *Medieval Capital*, p. 115.

<sup>31</sup> Galloway, J., Keene, D., Murphy, M., 'Fuelling the city: production and distribution of firewood and fuel in London's region', *Economic History Review* 49 (1996), pp. 447-472.

places such as Ruxley hundred, where lay manorial records or information about peasant activities are not readily available, though they raise interesting avenues to explore.

The term 'hinterland' is now widely used to refer to any area surrounding an urban centre which is influenced by that centre and may influence it in return. Today, following Keene, London's region or hinterland is usually taken as the administrative area of Greater London, with attention drawn to any specific circumstances which might suggest wider links; Ruxley hundred therefore falls squarely within its boundary. There is as yet no comprehensive overview of the totality of London's Greater London rural hinterland for the later medieval period, such as has been attempted for London's rural region in the early and middle Saxon periods.<sup>32</sup> However it is clear that there was potential for the hundred to be influenced by the developing metropolis and also for it to provide services, resources and people to the city. It is therefore worthwhile to look for sources that might illuminate what happened in practice, to see whether it is possible to fill a gap and contribute to any future work on the hinterland as a whole.

## **0.4 KENT**

### **0.4.1 Historical work on Kent**

The historic county of Kent lacks a comprehensive modern account of its development during the Middle Ages. The three *Victoria County History* volumes on Kent, produced between 1908 and 1932, covered only limited periods and topics and have not been updated, though Volume 2 remains a useful starting-point for a study of the county's medieval religious houses.<sup>33</sup> The Kent History Project has gone a long way to fill the gap; it does not provide a narrative of the county's medieval history but two volumes are devoted to early and later medieval Kent, each with an introductory overview and a series of essays on different aspects its development.<sup>34</sup> Most ecclesiastical parishes in north-west Kent fell within the Rochester diocese and a further volume in the series focuses on Rochester

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<sup>32</sup> R. Cowie & L. Blackmore, *Early and Middle Saxon rural settlement in the London region* (London: MOLAS, 2008).

<sup>33</sup> William Page (ed.), *A History of the County of Kent: Volume 2*, (London: VCH, 1926).

<sup>34</sup> S. Sweetinburgh (ed.), *Early Medieval Kent, 800-1220* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press & KCC, 2016); S. Sweetinburgh (ed.), *Later Medieval Kent, 1220-1540* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press & KCC, 2010); T. Lawson & D. Killingray (eds.), *An Historical Atlas of Kent* (Chichester: Phillimore, 2004).

Cathedral up to 1994; this includes a chapter which covers the medieval cathedral priory and its estates.<sup>35</sup> However, although progress has been made on the medieval historiography of Kent as a whole, its north-west portion remains overlooked in modern historical writing. This may be because it now lies partly within the modern county of Kent and partly within Greater London but has not been seen as central to the history of either.

The nature of the available source-material and the size of the county means that much modern work concentrates primarily on east Kent. Analyses of specific topics are sometimes restricted to the modern county, omitting the former-Kent territory which now lies in Outer London boroughs.<sup>36</sup> There are exceptions to this: Robin du Boulay includes north-west Kent estates in his study of the landholdings of the medieval Archbishops of Canterbury and has also produced a short study of medieval Bexley.<sup>37</sup> R. A. L. Smith's analysis of the administration of Canterbury Cathedral priory, however, while having general application to all the priory's estates, is drawn mainly from the records of the priory's east Kent and mid-Kent custodies. There has been no specific study of the priory's Surrey custody, which included the Greater Orpington demesne within Ruxley hundred.<sup>38</sup>

#### **0.4.2 North-west Kent and Ruxley hundred**

'North-west Kent' is used in this thesis to describe the area occupied by the former half-lathe of Sutton. In the thirteenth century, Sutton lathe had boundaries with the county of Surrey to the west, the Sussex Weald to the south and the lathe of Aylesford to the east, with the eastern boundary running roughly north-south along the Darent valley.<sup>39</sup> By 1965, four of the former hundreds of Sutton lathe – Blackheath, Little & Lesnes, Bromley & Beckenham and Ruxley – had been incorporated within the Greater London area, while the remainder (Dartford & Wilmington, Somerden, Westerham & Edenbridge, Brasted, Axtane

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<sup>35</sup> A. Oakley, 'Rochester Priory, 1185-1540' in N. Yates & P. Welsby, *Faith and Fabric: A History of Rochester Cathedral 604-1994* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press & Friends of Rochester Cathedral, 1996), pp. 29-55.

<sup>36</sup> The RCHME study of medieval rural housing in Kent (see below fn. 49) restricted its samples to parishes in the modern county.

<sup>37</sup> F. R. H. du Boulay, *Medieval Bexley* (Bexley: Bexley Libraries & Museums, 1993); *The Lordship of Canterbury, An essay on medieval society*, (London: Nelson, 1966).

<sup>38</sup> R. A. L. Smith, *Canterbury Cathedral Priory: A Study in Monastic Administration*, Cambridge: CUP, 1943.

<sup>39</sup> T. Lawson, '26: The Revised Lathes and Hundreds', in Lawson & Killingray, *An Historical Atlas of Kent*, (2004), p. 59.

and Codsheath) stayed within Kent. This remains the position, although there have been some adjustments to boundaries.

Early historical writing on the development of the county of Kent focused on a traditional division of the county into two halves, east and west Kent, divided broadly along the river Medway. Lambarde used this approach. Kilburne used the parish as a basis, while Hasted used lathes, hundreds and the parishes within them to provide the structure for his survey.<sup>40</sup> In the later twentieth century Alan Everitt moved away from administrative structures such as hundreds or parishes and made use of the alternative concept of *pays* (types of countryside derived from specific geological conditions which might occur in different locations) as a way of addressing the county's development.<sup>41</sup> He drew attention to the varied east-west linear landscapes of Kent, which derived from underlying geological formations and cut across the vertical county east-west divide. Everitt used these geological foundations to define a series of *pays*, arguing that an examination of these across the county as a whole was more significant for determining the pattern of early settlement and subsequent development than a focus on the landscape within a particular administrative boundary, suggesting that settlements in similar *pays* might share common features even if located some distance apart.

Everitt's concept of *pays* can be complicated and some of his terminology – notably his use of the term 'Foothills' – has not been generally adopted. However he drew attention to the importance of downland in Kent, typically a mixture of wooded combes and more open chalk grassland; and to the exploitation of woodland and of common grazing land which occurred there.<sup>42</sup> This is particularly relevant for a hundred like Ruxley, which contained extensive woodland and downland landscapes. Brandon and Short's survey of South-East England covers the whole of Kent but uses parishes rather than *pays* as a basis. References

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<sup>40</sup> W. Lambarde, *A Perambulation of Kent*, (1576, reprinted Chatham 1826/Bath 1970); R. Kilburne, *A Topographie or Survey of the county of Kent* (London, 1659); E. Hasted, *The History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent* Vol. II (Canterbury, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition 1797, reprinted EP Publishing 1972).

<sup>41</sup> A. Everitt, *Continuity and Colonisation* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1986), p. 44 ff.

<sup>42</sup> Everitt, *Continuity and Colonisation*, p. 49.

to former north-west Kent are minimal, and little is said about the impact of London on its hinterland in either Kent or Surrey before the early 16<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>43</sup>

The Kent Archaeological Society's *An Historical Atlas of Kent* includes the Outer London boroughs in its mapping; it moves away from Everitt's *pays*, focusing instead on a presentation of physiographic regions based on traditional geological boundaries and standard relief features. A simple portrayal of relief over 200 feet (60 metres) and drainage underlies presentations of, for example, the distribution of wealth and the pattern of landholding in 1300.<sup>44</sup> These maps and the accompanying commentary provide an invaluable visual presentation of information relevant to work on north-west Kent.

#### **0.4.3 The maritime economy of Kent's Thames riverside**

Kent has a long coastline and the county's medieval development was significantly affected by its maritime economy. Useful research has been carried out on the Cinque Ports, and their connections with continental Europe and other English ports - including London - are now better understood.<sup>45</sup> Less work has been done on the maritime economy of the Thames riverside closer to London, though some specific studies have been undertaken on individual aspects of riverside settlement, including some aspects of the history of medieval Greenwich (formerly in Kent, now within Greater London).<sup>46</sup> Gillian Draper has included Dartford and Greenwich in a survey of the provision of raw materials from Kent to London and of local trades associated with ship-building, showing the contribution made by these

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<sup>43</sup> P. Brandon & B. Short, *The South East from AD 1000* (Harlow: Longman, 1990); the impact of London as revealed by the 1524 lay subsidy is discussed on p. 129.

<sup>44</sup> Lawson & Killingray, *Historical Atlas of Kent* (2004); the physiographic regions are shown on p. 2: North Kent Region; Downs; Vale of Holmesdale; Chart Hills; Low Weald; High Weald; Marsh; River Valley. Specific summaries and maps which allow the Ruxley area to be seen in a wider context include S. Sweetinburgh, 'Territorial Organisation of the Church', pp. 40-41; D. Webb, 'Pilgrimage', pp. 46-47; S. Sweetinburgh, 'Landholding in 1300', pp. 48-49.

<sup>45</sup> Including: Dover: Karn, 'England's trade with the Continent'; Sandwich: Kowaleski, 'Maritime Trade', pp. 215-233; H. Clarke, S. Pearson, M. Mate, K. Parfitt, *Sandwich: the 'completest medieval town in England', a study of the town and port from its origins to 1600* (Oxford: Oxbow, 2010).

<sup>46</sup> M. Egan, 'The Church in medieval Greenwich', *Arch. Cant.* 123 (1983), pp. 233-254; G.M. Draper, 'Timber and Iron', in Sweetinburgh, (2010), pp. 55-77.

riverside settlements.<sup>47</sup> However, more recent work on medieval maritime Kent has focused only on the Channel ports and the Thames estuary within the modern county.<sup>48</sup>

#### **0.4.4 Archaeological and building evidence**

Kent's medieval archaeology also lacks a modern, comprehensive overview to provide a context for its north-western hundreds. In 1982 Stuart Rigold lamented the lack of archaeological information about the county from the tenth to the fourteenth centuries and pointed to the need for more non-destructive survey work.<sup>49</sup> Since Rigold wrote there have been important studies of specific aspects of Kent's archaeology, including of the built environment. The Royal Commission on the Historic Monuments of England undertook an extensive survey of medieval rural housing in Kent and this has made a major contribution to an understanding of gentry housing, focused on property in rural areas rather than in towns. Its sampling was confined to parishes within the modern county boundary but its historical analysis makes reference to buildings elsewhere (including in the former-Kent boroughs of Greater London).<sup>50</sup> The report points out that few noble families had their main estates in Kent, even though many held land there; over time a wealthy gentry class emerged as residents. It is essentially this class whose property survived to be studied in Kent. The report follows Brown in asserting that more gentry families settled in north-west Kent, influenced by the presence of London, but they were less wealthy than those in the east.<sup>51</sup> In Ruxley hundred, this proposition is borne out in that few major families appear to have based themselves on their Ruxley estates by the later thirteenth/early fourteenth centuries. The development of Scadbury Manor, a substantial site (though any buildings which existed before the early sixteenth century have not survived or have been replaced by later structures which cannot be excavated) reflects the position of the tenants, the de

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<sup>47</sup> Draper, 'Timber and iron', esp. p. 69.

<sup>48</sup> Kowaleski, 'Maritime Trade and Industry in Medieval Kent' does not cover the riverside wharves nearer London. The importance of hythes elsewhere along the north-west stretch of the Thames for transport (including at Woolwich and Erith) is discussed in Draper, 'Timber and Iron', especially pp.62.

<sup>49</sup> S. E. Rigold, 'Medieval Archaeology in Kent' in P. E. Leach (ed.), *Archaeology in Kent to AD 1500*, CBA Research Report No. 48 (London: CBA, 1982), pp. 84-86.

<sup>50</sup> S. Pearson, *The Medieval Houses of Kent: an Historical Analysis* (London: HMSO, 1994); S. Pearson, P. S. Barnwell, A. T. Adams, *A Gazetteer of Medieval Houses in Kent* (London: HMSO, 1994); P. S. Barnwell & A. T. Adams, *The House Within: Interpreting Medieval Houses in Kent* (London: HMSO, 1994).

<sup>51</sup> Pearson, *Medieval Houses*, p. 17 (referencing A. Brown, 'London and North-west Kent in the later Middle Ages: The Development of a Land Market', *Arch. Cant.* 42 (1977 for 176), pp. 145-155).

Scathebury family, who emerge as wealthy but were never of knightly status. The surviving buildings at Greater Orpington reflect the wealth of Canterbury Cathedral priory and its ability to invest in its estates over time.

The third volume of Anthony Emery's survey of the surviving greater medieval houses of England and Wales, published in 2006, covers both Kent and London.<sup>52</sup> Emery notes that Kent contained few royal or baronial residences, suggesting this was because so much of the land was held by either Christ Church Cathedral Priory or St Augustine's Abbey and also because the gavelkind system of tenure meant that property could be divided through multiple inheritances and sold on at will. He draws attention to the residential presence in the county of the lesser gentry rather than barons, as demonstrated by the RHCME study, which influenced the scale and location of surviving properties.<sup>53</sup>

Emery records only two surviving buildings which fulfil his criteria for 'greater houses' from medieval Ruxley hundred. Wickham Court, a significant brick-built house in West Wickham, dates to the later fifteenth century, so is outside the timeframe of this thesis. It is not known whether an earlier house stood on the site, which was at the heart of an important local manor from the thirteenth century onwards; it is likely there was an earlier manorial complex but no archaeological investigation has been undertaken there.<sup>54</sup> The second building considered by Emery, The Priory, Orpington, has been extensively modified.<sup>55</sup> There is no published recording of the standing building.

Mark Gardiner uses landscape survey as well as excavation to provide a brief outline of rural settlement in south-east England from an archaeological perspective.<sup>56</sup> He makes specific reference to 'square manorial structures now set in woodland' as a feature of settlement in north-west Kent, drawing attention to the excavation of a domestic building in Joyden's Wood near Dartford, close to the border of Ruxley hundred.<sup>57</sup> The Joyden's Wood site is relevant to an understanding of Scadbury Manor, but it has no moat; significant moated

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<sup>52</sup> Emery, *Greater Medieval Houses Vol. III, Southern England*.

<sup>53</sup> Emery, *Greater Medieval Houses*, Vol III, p. 260.

<sup>54</sup> Emery, *Greater Medieval Houses*, Vol. III, p. 416.

<sup>55</sup> Emery, *Greater Medieval Houses*, Vol. III, p. 384 f.

<sup>56</sup> M. Gardiner, 'South-East England: Forms and Diversity in Medieval Rural Settlement', In N. Christie & P. Stamper, *Medieval Rural Settlement: Britain and Ireland, AD 800-1600* (Oxford: Windgather, 2012), pp.100-117

<sup>57</sup> Gardiner, 'South-East England', p. 102.



sites outside Ruxley hundred which still survive in north-west Kent, such as Howbury Manor at Slade Green, have had no modern archaeological investigation.<sup>58</sup> Scadbury Manor is a complex multi-period site and it is not straightforward to recover its pre-1350 archaeology, much of which is now beneath (and possibly destroyed by) the scheduled remains of the Tudor brick manor-house of the Walsingham family and subsequent early twentieth-century restoration work designed to create 'garden features' in a medieval style. However, the information recovered from excavation at the site, if it can be related to a wider historical context, should improve understanding of manorial settlement generally in north-west Kent.

Within Ruxley hundred, the excavations at Scadbury Manor have been published, as has the excavation of a domestic, possibly manorial, site from the twelfth/thirteenth century close by in St Paul's Cray.<sup>59</sup> Older excavations were rarely written up to modern standards. Excavations within the area of the former hundred are now conducted in the context of the planning process, with the results usually available as unpublished 'grey literature', but most are limited in scope and provide little evidence from the later medieval period.

## **0.5 LINKS BETWEEN KENT AND LONDON**

In circumstances where land was held in fee by aristocratic families and passed through inheritance to the eldest son, younger sons of families living in rural communities often moved away to make a living elsewhere. The expanding city of London offered opportunities for this. In later centuries younger sons from families outside London might become formally established as apprentices to London citizens and craftsmen who belonged to one of the city companies.<sup>60</sup> A system of craft apprenticeship leading to company membership was not fully in place as early as the thirteenth century, when many of the major city companies had not yet formed, but young men with aristocratic backgrounds whose home was in Ruxley hundred might have made use of family connections to move into the city.

Where land was held by gavelkind tenure and could be inherited equally by surviving children, as was frequently the case in Kent, there might also be pressure for family

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<sup>58</sup> Howbury Moated Site: Historic England List No. 1001986, Grid Ref: TQ 52788 76672.

<sup>59</sup> Scadbury manor, fn. 4 above. The St Paul's Cray site: M. J. Saunders, 'The Excavations of a Medieval Site at Walsingham School, St. Paul's Cray, Bromley, 1995', *Arch. Cant.* Vol. CXVII (1997), pp. 199-225.

<sup>60</sup> Thrupp, *Merchant Class of Medieval London*, p. 208 ff.

members to move away.<sup>61</sup> Most gentry or peasant land was held in this form of tenure, and the land available after division might be too limited to support a large family. The expansion of London meant there were opportunities for all kinds of work in addition to craft and specialist activities. Residents of Ruxley hundred were well-placed for travel to the city and it is likely that many moved to London to gain employment. However firm evidence of movement from Ruxley hundred to the city can be hard to find, although bynames may sometimes suggest locational or family relationships.

There could also be movement from the city to the countryside. The presence of Londoners as property-owners in Kent has been commented on by writers from William Lambarde onwards. In 1576 Lambarde observed, in relation to north-west Kent:

‘The gentlemen be not heere [in Kent]...of so auncient stockes as elsewhere, especially in the partes nearer to London, from whiche citie... courtiers, lawyers and marchants be continually translated, and do become new plants amongst them...’<sup>62</sup>

Lambarde’s observations about London settlers in the countryside were based on local knowledge; he had trained and worked in London and as a young lawyer lived in Greenwich in north-west Kent.<sup>63</sup> Certainly, the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries had seen courtiers, lawyers and merchants from London acquiring property in Kent, including in Ruxley hundred. In 1424, the wealthy merchant Thomas Walsingham acquired Scadbury Manor as a rural base and his family remained there for over two hundred years. Walsingham served in government posts, having provided wine to the households of successive kings as well as to Cardinal Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester and Chancellor of England. King Henry VI rewarded him with a house in the grounds of St Katherine’s Hospital, of which he was proud, but Scadbury became the family’s rural base.<sup>64</sup> Was this already the pattern in Ruxley hundred in earlier centuries? The lack of detailed documentation makes it difficult to

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<sup>61</sup> Brown, ‘London and North-West Kent in the Later Middle Ages’ *Arch. Cant.* 42 (1976), pp. 145-155.

<sup>62</sup> W. Lambarde, *Perambulation of Kent*, (1576, reprinted Chatham 1826/Bath 1970), p. 6.

<sup>63</sup> R.M. Warnicke *William Lambarde, Elizabethan Antiquary, 1536-1601* (London & Chichester: Phillimore, 1973), p. 105.

<sup>64</sup> J. Clayton, *A Fifteenth-Century Merchant in London and Kent: Thomas Walsingham (d.1457)*, unpublished MA dissertation, 2014) online at <<https://sas-space.sas.ac.uk/5776/>> [accessed 26/06/2023].

identify such movement in the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, but bynames, tax records and feet of fines can suggest lines of enquiry.

Acquisition of a rural property by a Londoner through purchase rather than inheritance presupposes the existence of an active local land market. Brown has argued that such a market existed in north-west Kent in the medieval period. She noted key factors that supported a land market there, in particular the favourable system of Kentish gavelkind tenure, which made property easily available as it could be alienated at will. A tenant might be willing to sell property in return for an apprenticeship in London, which would provide skills for a family member and lead to citizenship. She identified a balance of interests – Londoners moving out, looking for investment and relaxation, local people moving into the city, looking for employment and opportunity.<sup>65</sup>

Londoners are likely to have retained a base in the city even if they built up significant holdings elsewhere; they might acquire property in Ruxley hundred to obtain access to local produce or exploit the opportunity to sell commodities from the city. Mercantile activity seems to have played a significant part in any movement between city and hundred; examples are considered in Chapter 6.

The availability of a landscape suitable for recreation may have been a factor in a move to the country. There were no royal forests in Kent, so access to land for hunting was less controlled than in some English counties. In the later twelfth century, William FitzStephen observed that the citizens of London were accustomed to hunt in Kent 'up to the waters of the Cray', which might suggest that far from being primarily of economic interest, the area was used for recreation, with the river Cray providing a natural boundary.<sup>66</sup> Whether land in Ruxley hundred was used for recreation, and if so, by whom, is therefore explored in Chapter 2.

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<sup>65</sup> Brown, 'London and North-west Kent', (1976), p. 147.

<sup>66</sup> John Stow, 'Appendix: Libellum de situ et nobilitate Londini', in *A Survey of London. Reprinted From the Text of 1603*, ed. C. L. Kingsford (Oxford, 1908), pp. 218-229. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/no-series/survey-of-london-stow/1603> pp. 218-229 [accessed 14/05/2020].

## 0.6 WIDER ECONOMIC CONTEXT

The period from 1200 until 1350 saw major economic changes in England.<sup>67</sup> Over the thirteenth century, the population increased, leading to pressure on land; the financing of wars in France and Scotland led to new forms of taxation, while local resources were commandeered to provision successive military campaigns. Disease and bad weather affected the country in the early fourteenth century. Prices rose and many people saw their living standards fall, though the implications varied from region to region.

Mavis Mate has outlined the implications for Kent.<sup>68</sup> Despite the challenges, she termed 1200 to 1348 'an age of expansion' for the county: there were opportunities for those willing to adapt. Many lords took on the direct management of their demesnes. New areas were brought into cultivation, including marshland along the coast and woodland in the Weald; Scadbury Manor, which lay on higher, wooded slopes above the river-valley of the Cray, may be an example of such settlement in Ruxley hundred. Towns and villages expanded as people looked for new ways to provide for their families, though most rural settlement in Kent remained dispersed.

Mate emphasised the significance of gavelkind tenure in Kent, which could result in plots becoming uneconomic but which also gave tenants more control over the disposal of their land. By the thirteenth century, rents in Kent were more often linked to cash payments than to service obligations. Tenants could manage their time on their own holdings but had to find ways of obtaining cash, whether through the sale of surplus produce or in return for labour. An increased focus on trade meant that markets and fairs received charters, whether for new foundations or to confirm existing arrangements. Urban, and increasingly, rural, markets offered new opportunities for people to sell their produce and services for

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<sup>67</sup> Discussion includes I. Kershaw, 'The Great Famine and Agrarian Crisis in England, 1315-22', *Past and Present* 59 (1973), pp. 3-50; M. Mate, 'The agrarian economy of south-east England before the Black Death: depressed or buoyant?' in B. M. S. Campbell (ed), *Before the Black Death: studies in the 'crisis' of the early fourteenth century* (Manchester: MUP, 1991), pp. 79-109; M. Bailey, 'Peasant welfare in England, 1290-1348', *EcHR* 51 (2) (1998), pp. 223-251; B. M. S. Campbell, 'the Agrarian Problem in the Early Fourteenth Century', *Past and Present* 188 (2005), pp. 3-70; B. M. S. Campbell & K. Bartley, *England on the Eve of the Black Death: An Atlas of Lay Lordship, Land and Wealth, 1300-49* (Manchester: MUP, 2006).

<sup>68</sup> M. Mate, 'The Economy of Kent: An Age of Expansion, 1200-1348', in Sweetinburgh (2010), pp. 1-10.

cash; they could also purchase specialised goods and services which they could not provide for themselves.

Lords and tenants who adopted new agricultural practices could obtain greater value from their land. This was evident in Kent, which by the late thirteenth century was 'in the vanguard of contemporary agricultural advance'.<sup>69</sup> Investment was made in sheep-flocks on poorer land. The integration of arable cultivation with pastoral grazing and the adoption of vetch along with peas and beans as fodder crops improved the soil and allowed more intensive cropping of grain. Horses were increasingly used for haulage. The lay subsidy return for 1301 for Ruxley hundred shows that lords and peasants there were adopting these changes (discussed in Chapter 3).

While the thirteenth century provided opportunities for expansion, from its later decades onwards England faced major external crises. Disease attacked livestock to an extent not previously experienced.<sup>70</sup> From 1275 to 1280 scab affected sheep-flocks across the country, killing around half of the sheep and rendering fleeces worthless; outbreaks continued into the 1320s. The impact on the wool-trade was immense.<sup>71</sup> Large flocks on ecclesiastical manors, such as those of the Bishop of Winchester, were particularly at risk, but Mate points out that the wide distribution of Canterbury Cathedral priory's estates meant that some escaped the worst effects. The priory could therefore obtain healthy animals to restock affected flocks.<sup>72</sup> There are no figures available for losses on lay estates in Ruxley hundred, but the dispersed nature of settlement and the smaller size of individual flocks there may have helped to curb transmission, meaning restocking was possible and that wool was available when flocks elsewhere in the country were devastated. Local lords were able to expand their involvement in the wool trade, despite the relatively poor quality of the local wool (discussed in Chapters 3 and 6). Overall, however, the agricultural economy of Kent was in a strong position at the start of the fourteenth century.

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<sup>69</sup> B. M. S. Campbell, 'Agriculture in Kent', in Sweetinburgh (2010), p. 27 f.,

<sup>70</sup> P. Slavin, 'Climate, Pathogens and Mammals: England in the age of emerging diseases, c. 1275-1362', in M. Muller (ed.), *The Routledge Handbook of Medieval Rural Life* (London: Routledge, 2022) pp. 153-174, summarises recent thinking on climate, animal diseases and the Black Death in England.

<sup>71</sup> P. Slavin, 'Mites and merchants: the crisis of English wool and textile trade revisited', c. 1275-1330, *EcHR* 73:4 (2020), pp. 885-913.

<sup>72</sup> Mate, 'Agrarian economy of south-east England', p. 85.

Heavy rain in 1314-16 led to poor harvests across England in 1315, 1316 and 1317, causing widespread famine for people and animals, though specific implications varied.<sup>73</sup> Kent's 1306 harvest was worse than harvests elsewhere, but the county suffered less severely from harvest failure in 1315-17.<sup>74</sup> Catastrophic damage was inflicted on England's cattle herds by the rinderpest pandemic of 1319-20, which had spread from continental Europe, but the effects were not uniform.<sup>75</sup> Mate suggested that effective management improved the efficiency of Canterbury Cathedral priory's estates, putting them in a relatively strong position to respond to crises; Canterbury Cathedral priory was able to restock from its wide range of estates, though ten years later herds were still below the pre-pandemic levels.<sup>76</sup>

Kent went on to experience a lack of fodder following drought in 1331 and 1339, along with further serious outbreaks of sheep and cattle disease in 1334-35. Prices fell and income reduced; higher taxation to finance the Hundred Years War added further strain in the decades leading up to the Black Death.<sup>77</sup> The mixed husbandry regime practised in Ruxley hundred must have been severely tested by rinderpest and these subsequent difficulties.

Bailey drew attention to the likely vulnerability of the poorest peasants across England from the end of the thirteenth century onwards.<sup>78</sup> Mate suggests that peasants in Kent would have been particularly hard hit in the decades before 1350, compared with the county's gentry or aristocratic lords, though the lack of evidence makes this difficult to observe.<sup>79</sup> Peasants in Ruxley hundred would not have escaped these consequences.

## 0.7 METHODOLOGY

Given the nature of the available evidence, this thesis adopts a micro-historical approach. It makes use of prosopographical data, looking at evidence from bynames to identify and link individuals wherever possible, and to find clues to their occupations or locational origins. It then brings in further documentary and archaeological evidence to provide a fuller picture.

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<sup>73</sup> Mate, 'Economy of Kent', p. 7.

<sup>74</sup> Campbell, 'Agriculture in Kent in the High Middle Ages', p. 46.

<sup>75</sup> P. Slavin, 'The Great Bovine Pestilence and its economic and environmental consequences in England and Wales, 1318-50', *ECHR* 65:4 (2012), pp. 1239-1266; Campbell, 'Agriculture in Kent', pp. 48 f.

<sup>76</sup> Mate, 'Agrarian Economy', p. 90 ff; Campbell, 'Agriculture in Kent', pp. 46 ff.

<sup>77</sup> Mate, 'Economy of Kent', p. 8 f.

<sup>78</sup> Bailey, 'Peasant welfare' (1998), p. 247 f.

<sup>79</sup> Mate, 'Economy of Kent', p. 9 f.

Adopting the hundred as a basis for study (rather than, say, a *pays* or region not linked to a specific administrative boundary) makes it possible to identify individuals where a name, hundred and sometimes a place are given in documentation, for example in court records. Documentary sources which identify both individuals and places in Ruxley hundred include contemporary legal documents: extents of debt, 'feet of fines' and – for tenants-in-chief holding directly from the crown – inquisitions *post mortem*. Unfortunately, certificates registered under the Statute of Merchants rarely given an individual's location below county level, though this can sometimes be deduced from other information. Lay subsidy returns are used to gain a wider picture of wealth and possessions.

Linking references from a range of documentation makes it possible to reconstruct family connections and can reveal wider social networks. Attempts have been made to link documentary accounts to archaeological information. Other documentation such as letters or petitions provide occasional insights. Individuals and places are also sometimes identifiable from references in royal documentation such as the Close, Charter, Patent, Liberate and Fine Rolls.

Using disparate information from a mix of sources inevitably leaves gaps. It rarely identifies the poorest members of society and only occasionally reveals the presence of women. There will be many aspects of Ruxley hundred life that have not found their way into the surviving records. However, bringing together apparently unrelated information can reveal surprising connections. The use of lay subsidy returns means it becomes feasible to frame a narrative and to answer - if only provisionally - questions about the way this part of rural Kent worked. Even provisional answers lead to a better understanding of the development of London's rural hinterland in the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries and may provide a basis for future work.

## **0.8 STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS**

The structure of the thesis is set out below.

**Chapter 1: Using information from lay subsidy returns as a source** considers how lay subsidy returns combined with other sources might be used to investigate the research questions posed. There are well-known difficulties with using lay subsidy information but

given the general lack of records from lay manors in Ruxley hundred, the returns offer an insight into life there in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries which is otherwise invisible.

**Chapter 2: Woodland** considers the uses of woodland in Ruxley hundred. The local geology supported woodland; the expanding city of London needed timber and firewood. Its citizens also enjoyed recreational activities. The chapter looks first at the evidence for a 'woodland economy' in the hundred and whether this affected how local woodland was managed. It has been said that provision of wood to London cleared its trees; it has also been argued that in contrast, the woodland was deliberately managed as a sustainable resource. The chapter examines these opposing views, looking beyond lay and ecclesiastical demesnes to assess the roles of peasants and merchants. It then goes on to assess how far the hundred's landscape was used for recreation – and if so, who used it: Londoners, local lords, peasants?

**Chapter 3: Husbandry** investigates agricultural practices in the hundred, to establish whether surpluses were available that could be sold in London in addition to firewood and timber, and whether the needs of London might have influenced local husbandry. It considers evidence from the 1301 lay subsidy return relating to major stock and crops but also explores whether other produce, such as fruit or flax, but which is not covered in the return, might have been grown for the city.

**Chapter 4: Material Culture** brings together documentary and archaeological evidence relating to the presence of material culture in the hundred. It considers whether this was locally produced or brought in from outside, exploring whether London was a source.

**Chapter 5: Buying and Selling** considers how any surplus produce might have been sold and how commodities needed in the hundred could be acquired. It explores the development of markets and fairs in the hundred and examines how they might have been used.

**Chapter 6: Networks** examines evidence for individuals who were active in trade with London. It explores links between them and what these might show about the relationship between the city and the rural community of the hundred.

**Chapter 7: Conclusions** pulls together the threads of earlier chapters, relating them to the original research aims and questions as set out in the Introduction. It considers the



conclusions that can be drawn from the evidence for Ruxley hundred and identifies how investigation into the Thames riverside from Dartford to the west might improve an understanding of the relationship between London and its rural hinterland.

**Appendix 1: Maps.** This includes a map of the lathes and hundreds of Kent; an extract of a 1659 edition of Symondson's 1596 map of Kent, showing north-west Kent in relation to London, a map showing the markets of Kent in 1350 and Hasted's map of the hundred of Ruxley for 1778.

## CHAPTER 1: USING LAY SUBSIDY ASSESSMENTS AS A SOURCE

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

Ruxley hundred has little surviving documentation from the period between 1200 and 1350 which might throw light on the activities of lay lords and peasants, making it challenging to investigate any relationship between the hundred and the city of London. Assessments for lay subsidies have the potential to fill this gap. This chapter outlines the background to lay subsidy assessments and the issues relating to their use. It identifies returns which survive for Kent and considers how a detailed return for Ruxley hundred for 1301 might be used as a key source to explore links between the hundred and the city.

#### 1.1.1 The development of lay subsidies as a form of taxation

King Henry II introduced a new form of personal taxation in 1166 to raise revenue for crusade which supplemented, and eventually replaced, a traditional form of taxation linked to cultivable land.<sup>1</sup> The new taxes, known as subsidies, were levied following principles used by the Church in raising tithes; an individual's movable wealth was valued and the tax due calculated as a percentage of the valuation. Exemptions might be set for certain goods or categories of people, but in principle a subsidy could cover a greater number of individuals than a land-based tax and could be levied on the value of a variable range of goods, resulting in a larger tax base.

By the beginning of the thirteenth century subsidies were well-established. A number were levied by King John. Further subsidies were imposed during the reign of King Henry III.<sup>2</sup> After a gap, imposition became more frequent under King Edward I. Between 1275 and 1306 he imposed ten subsidies, with those levied between 1290 and 1306 providing funding for successive military campaigns. Later subsidies were imposed in 1307 (to pay for the burial of Edward I and the marriage and coronation of Edward II), 1309, 1315, 1316, 1319, 1322,

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<sup>1</sup> The introduction of lay subsidies is summarised in R. Bartlett, *England under the Norman and Angevin Kings, 1075-1225* (Oxford: OUP, 2000), p. 166 f. A detailed account of the background and arrangements for subsidies levied between 1290 and 1334 is given in J. F. Willard, *Parliamentary Taxes on Personal Property, 1290 to 1334: A Study in Mediaeval English Financial Administration* (Cambridge, Mass.: Medieval Academy of America, 1934). The summary returns for England for 1334 are printed in R. E. Glasscock (ed.), *The Lay Subsidy of 1334* (London: OUP for British Academy, 1975).

<sup>2</sup> Willard, *Parliamentary Taxes*, p. 9.

1327, 1332 and 1334.<sup>3</sup> After 1294 two percentage rates operated in some years, one adopted in the countryside, another in towns, while at other times a single rate was set.<sup>4</sup> The new subsidies applied initially to all individuals whether lay or clerical, but clerics were also taxed separately by the Pope. Following protest, by the later thirteenth century the subsidies were to be applied only to lay individuals. However, the Kent return for 1334-35, the only one in England to include names of assessed individuals, shows that the movables of a few clerics continued to be assessed.<sup>5</sup>

The processes for assessment and collection became increasingly standardised during the thirteenth century.<sup>6</sup> The king proposed a subsidy and sought Parliament's approval; once Parliament had approved the imposition and agreed its form (approval was not automatic), the king appointed tax collectors for each shire, usually two senior knights who could command respect. Four knights were then selected to assess inhabitants by hundred. They assessed the value of individuals' movable property, recorded the results by vill, calculated the tax due as a percentage of the valuation and provided the details to the chief taxors. In the earlier thirteenth century, a copy of the detailed assessment was passed to the Exchequer but in later years, a summary was normally submitted. Detailed supporting information was retained locally.

The rates to be applied were agreed by Parliament. Instructions about exemptions of classes of potential taxpayers and of goods to be assessed were passed to the assessors, but these did not cover every eventuality. The amounts raised therefore varied, depending on the rates and exemptions set but also on decisions taken by local assessors.

Over time, the valuations became increasingly standardised. Only a limited range of stock and crops was assessed in rural areas with little reference to individual possessions. More

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<sup>3</sup> Willard, p. 10. S. Jenks, 'The Lay Subsidies and the State of the English Economy (1275-1334)', *Vierteljahrschrift für Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte* (1998), pp. 1-39 provides a list of subsidies from 1275-1334, with details of dates, thresholds and exemptions at Appendix 1, p. 29 ff.

<sup>4</sup> Willard, *Parliamentary Taxes*, p. 9. A single rate operated in 1290, 1297 and 1301. If two rates were set – such as a tenth and sixth – the former applied to rural areas, the latter to urban areas.

<sup>5</sup> Glasscock, *Lay Subsidy*, p. xxi, shows that there was confusion over clerical taxation in the fourteenth century, but the small number of clerics included in the 1334-35 return for Kent indicates that movables on lands regarded as Temporalities were to be taxed but those on lands regarded as Spiritualities were exempt. This may also have been the practice in 1301.

<sup>6</sup> Willard describes the arrangements and their evolution in detail, p. 54 ff.

detailed valuations of specific possessions were made in urban locations. Increasingly, especially in towns, a sum to be collected might be agreed at the outset, and local jurats left to determine how payment should be delivered.

This core process remained in place until the fifteenth and tenth set for 1334. Criticism of extortion and corruption on the part of the appointed assessors appointed for the subsidy imposed in 1332 led to changes; for 1334 and all successive subsidies, the total sums to be collected were fixed at the level set in 1332 and it was left to local administrators to assess how the amounts due should be delivered. From 1334 onwards, the returns supplied to the Exchequer usually recorded only the totals due from each shire, grouped by hundred and listed by vill.<sup>7</sup>

### **1.1.2 The survival of detailed assessments**

Summary returns were provided to the Exchequer, but local assessments, showing names, details of what had been assessed, valuations and the payment due, were kept locally in case of later questioning. These were rarely retained long-term but some examples have nonetheless survived, including assessments from both rural and urban locations.<sup>8</sup> The return for Ruxley hundred for 1301, discussed further below, is an example of a detailed return submitted to and retained by the Exchequer.

Willard outlines how the detailed assessments were made. For thirteenth-century assessments, a threshold of liability of taxable property was put in place, so for example in 1297, when the percentage charged was nine per cent, the minimum threshold for payment

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<sup>7</sup> Glasscock, *The Lay Subsidy of 1334*.

<sup>8</sup> Printed sources for local returns for Edwardian subsidies outside Kent include E. Powell, *A Suffolk hundred in the year 1283: the assessment of the hundred of Blackbourne for a tax of one thirtieth and a return showing the land tenure there* (Cambridge: CUP, 1910); A. T. Gaydon, *The Taxation of 1297: A translation of the local rolls of assessment for Barford, Biggleswade and Flitt Hundreds, and for Bedford, Dunstable, Leighton Buzzard and Luton* (Streatley: Bedfordshire Record Society Vol. XXXIX, 1959 for 1958), with a return for the fifteenth of 1301 for rural Shillingford hundred, printed as an appendix; D. & R. Cromarty (eds.), *The Wealth of Shrewsbury in the Early Fourteenth Century: six local subsidy rolls 1297-1322: text and commentary* (Shrewsbury: Shropshire Archaeological and Historical Society, 1993); R.P. Coates, 'Valuation of the Town of Dartford, 29 Ed I', *Arch. Cant.* Vol. IX (London, 1874), pp. 285-298; P. D. A. Harvey, *Manorial Records of Cuxham, Oxfordshire, circa 1200-1359* (London: Historical Manuscripts Commission JP 23 (1976), 1304 return for Cuxham, pp. 712-714; E. A. Fuller, 'The Tallage of 6 Edward II and the Bristol Rebellion', *Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society*, Vol. 19, (1894-95), pp. 171-278, translation of a return for Wiltshire vill of Minety, 1313, pp. 196-8).

was 9 s. A minimum threshold therefore excluded poorer inhabitants from payment. However, no threshold was set for the fifteenth of 1301.

Certain classes of goods were traditionally exempt from assessment, notably the valuable possessions (such as a war-horse, armour, jewellery, clothing) of knights, gentlemen and their wives. In rural areas some specified items were exempt, including certain garments, a gold or silver buckle or silk girdle if in daily use, a bed, a drinking cup of silver or a mazer.<sup>9</sup> These exemptions benefited the wealthier members of society. The initial instructions given to assessors in 1301 contained no exemptions for any categories of movable goods, but on 9 December a writ was issued requiring assessors to apply the exemptions used in previous subsidies.<sup>10</sup>

In urban areas, the assessors considered all an individual's movable goods unless a specific exemption applied. The assessors seem generally to have examined movables in three main categories, personal, household and trade, indicated in some returns by phrases such as 'in the treasury', 'in the barn', 'in the chamber', 'in the larder', or 'in merchandise'.<sup>11</sup> Stock and stores of crops might be listed if they were present, but most attention was given to personal possessions and household goods. These might be described in detail. Willard notes that the assessment for Colchester made in 1301 included detailed entries for items such as beds, linen sheets, towels, items of clothing, bowls, tripods and pans, along with items related to the capital held by individuals carrying out a craft or a trade such as casks, hides or tallow.<sup>12</sup> In other returns, inventories might be simplified, with general categories ('clothes') replacing specific items. Assessors evidently made a judgment about the general standard of living reflected in personal possessions. Goods essential for a person's livelihood, such as artisans' tools or day-to-day food for the household, were not normally assessed.

In rural areas, the focus of assessment was an individual's stock and crops. Willard suggested that the stock and grain valued and taxed in rural areas represented surpluses

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<sup>9</sup> Willard, p. 79; Jenks, 'Lay Subsidies', p. 29 ff.

<sup>10</sup> Willard, p. 25.

<sup>11</sup> D. & R. Cromarty, *Wealth of Shrewsbury*, p. 37.

<sup>12</sup> Willard, p. 75; D. & R. Cromarty discuss how trade goods were assessed in Shrewsbury town: *Wealth of Shrewsbury*, pp.46 ff.

rather than basic stores and this view has been largely accepted. Assessors would identify animals which had been bred for sale or whose products, such as wool or hides, would be available for sale, or stores of crops which had been produced for onward sale rather than routine household use.<sup>13</sup> The approach was standardised over the years. By the end of the thirteenth century only large animals (horses, cattle, sheep, pigs) were considered and smaller animals such as poultry were not valued. The valuations took no account of the age or condition of an animal, though the value given might differ in different places. Similarly, crops were standardised in type and value: essentially, stores of arable crops (wheat, rye, barley, dredge, oats) and fodder crops (such as hay and vetch or peas and beans) were assessed, but not fruit or vegetables. No account was taken of the condition of the crop. Basic agricultural equipment was not normally assessed. Bees and beehives were included in returns from rural Lincolnshire in 1225 but ignored in later returns.<sup>14</sup> Perishable produce such as cheese, fruit, vegetables, ale or eggs, was not normally assessed, even if produced for sale.

Some rural returns contain valuations of categories of unspecified household goods, such as utensils or brassware, and to unspecified 'merchandise' or items 'in the tannery' which could be connected to a trade. Personal possessions are not normally included. However in the Ruxley hundred return for 1301 there is reference to unspecified items *in camera*, suggesting the assessors aimed to identify personal possessions that would justify an additional tax charge.<sup>15</sup>

## 1. 2 USING LAY SUBSIDIES AS A SOURCE

Lay subsidy returns in both their summary and detailed forms contain a wealth of information but there has been extensive debate about their value as a source. The assessors had general instructions for their work but had to make their own decisions about who and what should be counted. Although the basic principles outlined above were evidently followed throughout the country, there might be considerable local variation in coverage or in the level at which certain goods were disregarded for assessment. There was

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<sup>13</sup> Willard, p. 85.

<sup>14</sup> E.g. Cazel & Cazel, *Lay Subsidy Rolls, 1225, 1232*, p. 10.

<sup>15</sup> This is discussed further in Chapter 4.

also scope for error and evasion. These issues make comparisons across the country difficult.

John Hadwin took a pessimistic view of the use of lay subsidies as a source for economic history, though he accepted they could provide useful information if linked with other sources or used to put forward hypotheses.<sup>16</sup> Stephen Rigby drew particular attention to the limitations of urban returns for estimating wealth or population. He noted the scope for evasion, the possible exemption of trade capital and the difficulty of establishing which entries related to town centres and which to a wider, more rural, area beyond the town. He demonstrated that discrepancies were evident when estimates of wealth derived from returns for towns in Lincolnshire were compared with information from alternative sources.<sup>17</sup> Rigby concluded that while returns might suggest useful lines of inquiry, it was unwise to rely on them for complex calculations which could not be confirmed from other sources.<sup>18</sup>

Stuart Jenks recognised the difficulties presented by the returns, especially when aggregated nationally, but took a more optimistic view of their value as a source. He suggested that most returns succeeded in measuring surpluses available in a locality, and that these surpluses were destined for 'local and more likely interregional or even foreign' trade, making it possible to measure the performance of the English economy.

Pamela Nightingale tested concerns about the validity of patterns of wealth shown in lay subsidy figures by comparing them with the patterns revealed by Statute Merchant certificates of debt.<sup>19</sup> She argued that early Statute Merchant certificates showed that the value of credit and coin moved in line with the valuations of lay subsidies until 1294. Thereafter the lay subsidy figures became an 'increasingly defective guide to the general economic fortunes of medieval England' because exemptions (especially of wool, excluded

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<sup>16</sup> J. F. Hadwin, 'The Medieval Lay Subsidies and Economic History', *ECHR* 36: 2 (1983), pp. 200-217: 'The lay subsidy rolls are not especially accurate reflections of medieval wealth' (p. 214).

<sup>17</sup> S. Rigby, 'Urban society in early fourteenth-century England: the evidence of the lay subsidies' in *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, Vol. 72 issue 3 (1990), pp. 169-184.

<sup>18</sup> Rigby, 'Urban society', p. 184.

<sup>19</sup> P. Nightingale, 'The Lay Subsidies and the Distribution of Wealth in Medieval England, 1275-1334', *ECHR* 57:1 (2004), pp. 1-32.

from the returns because of the introduction of a new customs regime) reduced the valuations. Despite this, she suggested the returns could be used to show how the famine and agrarian crises of the early thirteenth century affected the economy and could be useful for considering wealth when linked with information from other sources.

Although the caveats with national data are recognised, detailed returns have been used successfully by historians to investigate local issues. Surviving returns from Bedfordshire from 1297 provide useful examples of both urban and rural assessments; these have been used by Kathleen Biddick to explore the relationship of peasants with the market.<sup>20</sup> Biddick observed that in Bedfordshire, different grains circulated in the medieval market along different paths, with barley and dredge (used for malting) moving in a market system centred outside the county, in Cambridge and London, while oats were linked to local markets. Different areas of the county specialised in different stages of the lifecycle of cattle.<sup>21</sup> She concluded that peasants organised their production of grain and livestock products in relation to a hierarchy of marketing paths as well as for their own subsistence. Those specialising in commercial assets including sheep and malting grains, who traded in regional markets, had greater opportunities for credit and were better able to control the distribution of their products.<sup>22</sup>

The local return for Blackbourne hundred, Suffolk, from 1283 covers a densely populated rural community spread over the differing landscapes of High Suffolk and the Breckland. It provides standardised information on the stock and crops held with no reference to other possessions. Slavin showed how this assessment could be analysed to throw valuable light on peasant holdings and their role in the local economy by exploring a range of issues including stocking densities, links between peasant activity and the local landscape and evidence for peasant involvement in commercialisation.<sup>23</sup> Blackbourne did not have many

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<sup>20</sup> Gaydon, *Taxation of 1297*; K. Biddick, 'Medieval English Peasants and Market Involvement' (*The Journal of Economic History* Vol. 45, No. 4 (1985), pp. 823-83; 'Missing Links: Taxable Wealth, Markets, and Stratification among Medieval English Peasants' *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, Vol. 18, No. 2 (1987), pp. 277-298.

<sup>21</sup> Biddick, 'Peasants and Market Involvement', pp. 829, 831; 'Missing Links', p. 292.

<sup>22</sup> Biddick, 'Missing Links', p. 297.

<sup>23</sup> P. Slavin, 'Peasant Livestock in Late Thirteenth-century Suffolk: Economy, Environment and Society', in M. Kowaleski, J. Langdon, P. R. Schofield (eds.), *Peasants and Lords in the Medieval English Economy* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2015), p. 3-26. The return is summarised in Powell, *A Suffolk hundred*.



formal markets, but this does not seem to have inhibited trading; peasants could participate in informal as well as formal markets. Slavin concluded that generation of surpluses of both stock and crops for sale was a significant aspect of local peasant activity.<sup>24</sup>

D. & R. Cromarty examined surviving fourteenth-century returns for the town of Shrewsbury, which covered three wards of the town itself along with the rural hamlets of its 'liberty'.<sup>25</sup> These show the wide range of items assessed in the town while returns for the rural hamlets (where they survive) include only basic stock and standard crops, along with occasional unspecified household utensils and brassware.<sup>26</sup>

These analyses show that for rural areas, local returns offer information about local people that is rarely available elsewhere. They should throw sufficient light on surplus stock and crops to suggest lines of enquiry about commercialisation and the wider rural economy. They do not provide detailed information on material items within a household, though some may contain limited references. It is helpful if the returns can be linked with other documentation, such as on manorial tenure. However, in the absence of such information, they remain a useful source.

### **1.3 LAY SUBSIDY INFORMATION RELATING TO KENT AND RUXLEY HUNDRED**

#### **1.3.1 Lay subsidy returns from Kent**

Returns for Kent do not survive for many of the subsidies levied and even where available, may cover only part of the county.<sup>27</sup> The earliest surviving return which includes any assessment from Ruxley hundred relates to only a single vill, included in the return for the fortieth of 1232. For this subsidy, four knights were chosen as county assessors for Kent and asked to work as two teams to speed up the process.<sup>28</sup> A return thought to represent the work of one of these teams survives in part; this gives totals by vill for some hundreds but

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<sup>24</sup> Slavin, 'Peasant Livestock', p. 18.

<sup>25</sup> D. & R. Cromarty, *Wealth of Shrewsbury* (1993), p. 11.

<sup>26</sup> Cromarty & Cromarty, relevant portions of the returns of 1309, p. 108 f, and 1316, p. 122 f.

<sup>27</sup> Surviving Kent returns provided to the Exchequer are catalogued in The National Archives' E 179 database for Kent.

<sup>28</sup> The surviving Kent fortieth assessments for 123, TNA E 179 123/1 & 2, are printed in F. A. Cazel & A. P. Cazel, *Rolls of the Fifteenth of the Ninth Year of the Reign of Henry III for Cambridgeshire, Lincolnshire and Wiltshire and Rolls of the Fortieth of the Seventeenth Year of the Reign of Henry III for Kent* (London: PRS, 1983), pp. 107-119; assessment and dating, p. vii f.

does not contain detailed assessments for individuals. North Cray is the only vill shown from Ruxley hundred.<sup>29</sup> The total tax owed on the movable goods of North Cray vill, including the two local jurats who undertook the assessment, was 13 s 10 d for those assessed and 5 s ½ d for the assessors, giving a total of 18 s 10 ½ d. The jurats are named as Herbert filius Scotland' and Galfrid' Hocke but there is no information about any other individual in the vill. It would be invaluable to have the 1232 information for the remaining vills, to allow a comparison with later returns; for the fifteenth of 1301, North Cray vill owed a total of 37 s 8 ¼ d and a member of the Scotland family still lived there (suggesting relatively little change over seventy years) but nothing more can be concluded.<sup>30</sup>

Three detailed local returns from Sutton Lathe in north-west Kent survive for the fifteenth of 1301, for Dartford vill, and Ruxley and Somerden hundreds.<sup>31</sup> An undated return for a fifteenth, from the late thirteenth century or possibly from 1301, also survives for Eastry hundred in east Kent.<sup>32</sup> There are incomplete summary returns of lay subsidy assessments for the county from 1327, 1332 and 1334.<sup>33</sup> The 1327 return includes entries for Ruxley hundred, but below the level of the hundred the entries are not given by vill but by a series of labels which appear to relate to a local feature or geographical area, such as 'North', 'Est', 'Hethe', 'Gattons' or 'Grene'.<sup>34</sup> This makes it difficult to establish locations or compare the entries with other documentation.

Ruxley hundred is also included in the returns from Kent for the heavily criticised subsidy of 1332 and for the fifteenth and tenth of 1334, when a new process was adopted for England. Although the Kent taxors received the same instructions as other shires, both Kent returns contain the names of individuals and the sum owed, grouped by hundred.<sup>35</sup> In other English

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<sup>29</sup> North Cray (*villata de Nortcraye*) entry: Cazel & Cazel, *Rolls of the Fifteenth and Fortieth*, p. 115.

<sup>30</sup> TNA E 179/123/5, North Cray.

<sup>31</sup> See p 35 below.

<sup>32</sup> Eastry return: TNA E 179/123/9, a single membrane in a late thirteenth century hand, attributed in the TNA Discovery 179 database to 1275, 1290 or 1301 as these were the only occasions when a fifteenth was granted on its own.

<sup>33</sup> Returns for 1327: TNA E 179/123/10; 1332: E 179/123/11; 1334: E 179/123/12.

<sup>34</sup> TNA Discovery E 179 database, entry for E 179/123/10 and notes.

<sup>35</sup> The 1334 summaries for Kent by hundred are printed in Glasscock, *Lay Subsidy of 1334*, p. 140 ff. The full return for Kent is printed in H. A. Hanley & C. W. Chalklin, 'The Kent Lay Subsidy of 1334/5', in F. R. H. Du Boulay (ed.), *Documents Illustrative of Medieval Kentish Society*, Kent Records, Vol. 18, (Ashford: KAS, 1964), pp. 58-172; Ruxley hundred, pp. 133-135.

counties the returns are broken down by vill; possibly the small hundreds of Kent were thought to equate to vills elsewhere.<sup>36</sup> In the Kent returns for 1327, 1332 and 1334, details of the names of individuals and the amounts owed in each hundred were passed to the Exchequer, while other shires provided totals owed by each vill but did not provide individuals' names and assessments. It has been suggested that names and assessments were included in the Kent returns because of the special position of the moneyers of Canterbury and the Men of the Cinque Ports, who were exempt from paying the subsidy; details may have been retained in case of future challenge over exemptions.<sup>37</sup> The inclusion of individual names and totals provides some useful information for Ruxley hundred as a whole but the absence of any differentiation by vill limits its value. The 1334 return for Ruxley hundred has been used in this thesis for comparison purposes, as the 1334 data has been published in full for Kent and included in summary form for England as a whole, meaning the local totals can be set in a national context, but the returns for 1332 and 1327 have not been examined.<sup>38</sup>

The two chief taxors appointed for Kent for 1334 were the Abbot of St Augustine, Canterbury, and Thomas Bacoun, the chief justice of assize in Kent, who was later appointed as one of the investigators into irregularities in the 1332 assessment for the counties around London – Kent, Surrey, Sussex, Essex, Hertford and Middlesex.<sup>39</sup> In 1334, in Kent as elsewhere, the amount to be raised was to equate to that of 1332, but the local share was to be agreed between the taxors and local men in each district and the way in which the amount should be met was to be settled locally. If agreement could not be reached, the taxors were to make the assessment. The Abbot was to be responsible for collection.

### **1.3.2 The Sutton Lathe returns for the fifteenth of 1301**

Given these limitations, the survival at the Exchequer of three detailed lay subsidy assessments from Sutton Lathe in north-west Kent for the fifteenth of 1301, for the hundreds of Ruxley and Somerden and for the vill of Dartford, is especially valuable. The

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<sup>36</sup> Glasscock notes that Kent is the only county to give a breakdown by hundred rather than vill, p. 140.

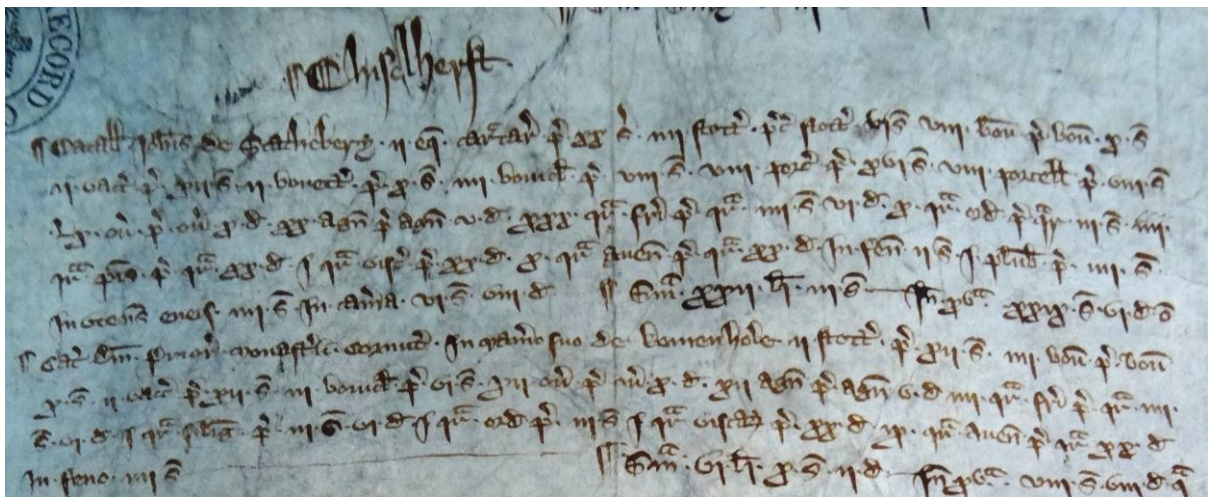
<sup>37</sup> Willard, *Parliamentary Taxes*, pp. 114-118; Hanley & Chalklin, 'Kent Lay Subsidy', p. 60.

<sup>38</sup> The summaries for English counties are printed in Glasscock, *Lay Subsidy of 1334*; Kent summaries, p. 140-148, Ruxley hundred, p. 145: a total of 321 persons, tax owed, £47. 0 s. 2 ½ d.

<sup>39</sup> Hanley & Chalklin, 'Kent Lay Subsidy', p. 59.

Ruxley return is an unpublished 10-membrane parchment roll written in Latin in several hands.<sup>40</sup> It is arranged by vill, listing named individuals along with an assessment of the value of their movable goods, a total of that valuation and a calculation of the tax due. The final membrane includes a schedule giving the assessments of the ten assessors.

Dartford vill and the hundred of Somerden also lay within Sutton lathe.<sup>41</sup> Both returns contain similarly detailed assessments of individuals' assets, though the items included differ. As there are no returns for 1301 for the remaining Kent hundreds (other than, possibly, for Eastry) it is not possible to set the detail of stock and crops or of personal possessions in a county-wide context.



**Fig. 3: Extract from TNA E 179/123/5**  
**This shows the first two assessments for Chislehurst vill (for John de Scathebury and Hornchurch Priory's manor of Kemnal). (Photograph: Janet Clayton).**

The grant of a fifteenth was made in January 1301 by a Parliament sitting in Lincoln. King Edward I had sought a grant of 20 per cent in the previous year to finance his military campaign in Scotland, but this was rejected; Parliamentary approval was given only after the rates were changed to fifteen and ten per cent (for rural and urban areas respectively) and

<sup>40</sup> TNA E 179/123/5.

<sup>41</sup> Dartford vill: TNA E 179/123/4, eight membranes with a schedule of the assessors; headed 'villata Dartford'; partially printed in Coates, 'Valuation of the Town of Dartford, 29 Ed I'. Coates does not include the details for standard stock or crops but gives names and other possessions with values. Somerden hundred: TNA E 179/123/6, two membranes which appear to cover two vills, one with no heading, the other headed 'Cransted'.

agreement had been given to a review of magnates' other concerns, notably the boundaries of royal forests.<sup>42</sup> The start of the campaign delayed the appointment of assessors and instructions were not sent out until after Michaelmas; the first assessors were only appointed after 24 October.<sup>43</sup> Three knights were appointed as chief taxors. For Kent, these were Richard de Rokesle (a significant landholder in Kent: as a tenant of the de Crevequers, including at the manor of Ruxley in Ruxley hundred, and as a knight of the archbishop at the manor of Little Orpington in Ruxley hundred); Robert de Kemesynge (of Kemsing near Sevenoaks); and Guncelin de Clyve (holder of the manor of Mortimers at Cliffe on the Hoo peninsula).<sup>44</sup> It was customary to appoint a taxor closely connected with the Church to improve trust and defray criticism of corruption by the officials involved. Sir Richard de Rokesle may have fulfilled this role, since as a knight of the archbishop he may have had a connected with the temporal administration based in Canterbury; in 1313 he served as Archbishop Winchelsey's Steward of the Lands, a role earlier held by his ancestor, Robert de Rokesle, from around 1220 to 1231.<sup>45</sup>

A writ set the first payment date for the subsidy as 'the morrow of St Lucy the Virgin', whose feast day was 13 December, but the late start must have made this unachievable.<sup>46</sup> There is some indication that elsewhere in Kent, collectors were at work between April and June 1302.<sup>47</sup> The assessment for Dartford refers to Michaelmas (29 September) 1301 as the date set for payment, but the schedule of collectors' assessments gives a payment date of Michaelmas 1302.<sup>48</sup> There is no information on the Ruxley hundred roll to show when payment was due. The Ruxley hundred assessment must have been prepared after October 1301, but the precise timing of its completion and of the collection of the payments is uncertain.

The three Kent rolls from 1301 adopt the basic approach outlined above, but the returns show differing approaches to the detail of local assessment. The Ruxley hundred roll,

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<sup>42</sup> Willard, *Parliamentary Taxes*, p. 20.

<sup>43</sup> There is no information on the roll about the date at which payment was due.

<sup>44</sup> *CPR 29 Edward I*, vol 3, p. 613. Mortimers: Hasted III, p. 509.

<sup>45</sup> Du Boulay, *Lordship of Canterbury*, p. 393 f.

<sup>46</sup> *CPR 29 Edward I*, vol 3 p. 613.

<sup>47</sup> Willard refers to dated receipts which are included in TNA E 179/237/52; *Parliamentary Taxes*, p. 247.

<sup>48</sup> TNA E 179/123/4.

covering a rural area, contains entries for certain specific items in addition to the usual stock and crops: firewood (*buscha*), carts (*carecta ferrata*), utensils (*in utensilis*), cast metal utensils/vessels (*in utensilis eneis, in eneis*), and 'leads' (*plumbum cum tripodum*). Valuations are also given for unspecified items 'in the chamber' (*in camera*) and for unspecified merchandise (*in mercandisis*).

The final membrane of the 1301 return for Ruxley is written in a different hand from those used in the remainder of the assessment. This is the schedule showing the assessment of the assessors themselves. There is no indication of the vill/s for which each was responsible. Adam de Esthalle and Simon de Broke have an association with families known to tenant local manors (East Hall lay on the eastern boundary of Orpington; Simon de Broke held part of a fee in St Paul's Cray). Thomas de Mares may be related to the knightly de Mares family who had held the manors of Sandling and Okemore since the twelfth century. The assessors have relatively moderate valuations ranging from £1 8 s 10 d to £2 18 s. Thomas de Mares has six affers – an unusually high number for the hundred overall – and four heifers. The other nine have a mix of oxen, stotts and affers, pigs, cows and heifers and sheep. All have stores of wheat, barley and oats – Thomas has four quarters of oats. Three have stocks of vetch. None has any other possession valued – no utensils, 'leads' or items *in camera*, yet it is unlikely that they had no such goods. Overall, the impression is of assessments of just sufficient size and variation to avoid comment; high enough to be believable, since the individuals would be known within the community, but not so high that the tax payment would be burdensome.

Dartford's eight assessors had a more varied range of total valuations; one had goods valued at £6 3 s 2 d, another, John Lambyn, at £5 5 s 2 d, while the lowest valuation was for £2 7 s 8 d – still a significant amount when compared to the Ruxley assessors' valuations.<sup>49</sup> Six assessors were appointed for Somerden.<sup>50</sup> Unfortunately the detail in five of the assessments is rubbed and virtually illegible. The final entry, for Robert le abat, gives a total assessment of 25 s.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> TNA E 179/123/4; Coates, 'Valuation of the Town of Dartford', p. 298.

<sup>50</sup> TNA E 179/123/6.

<sup>51</sup> TNA E 179/123/6.

The local assessors may have compiled the returns for submission themselves or used clerks to produce a final version. The Exchequer document is evidently a fair copy of a draft, or of another fair version to be retained locally. There are few mistakes or corrections on the Ruxley return. An occasional copying error occurs in the body of the text (such as a value omitted for an item, which does not affect the total given). Some entries have small amendments made in a different ink, occasionally to add an overlooked item, but more usually to round the tax charge up to a full penny from three farthings; where this is done '+q' is entered in the left-hand margin in a different hand. Similar adjustments are made on the Somerden roll.<sup>52</sup>

In Somerden hundred, the general range of stock and crops listed is broadly similar to those assessed in Ruxley hundred, though Somerden has no barley, peas or beans included.<sup>53</sup> The values are also similar, although wheat is valued at a higher price in Somerden than in Ruxley hundred while some animals, including oxen, stotts and cows, have a lower value. However no-one in Somerden is assessed for firewood or for merchandise, although some individuals have goods 'in the chamber' and unspecified cast metal vessels ('leads' are not separately identified). Two individuals have valuations for a tannery, presumably of hides intended for sale; no similar entries are included for Ruxley hundred or for Dartford vill.

Basic tools and equipment are generally disregarded in Somerden, as in Ruxley hundred and Dartford vill, but there are a few puzzling entries where spades and shovels are valued. Tools such as these must have been in widespread use everywhere; agricultural tools were not normally assessed in any subsidy.<sup>54</sup> Possibly they are included here to bring a few of the poorest individuals within the minimum payment of the fifteenth – two individuals have a spade and shovel valued at 3 *d* along with a young pig valued at 1 *s*, giving total assets valued at 15 *d* and a tax payment due of 1 *d*.<sup>55</sup> No-one in Ruxley hundred or Dartford vill has an assessment as low as this. It is also possible that for some reason, these items were regarded by the assessors as specialist or additional equipment over and above the basic

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<sup>52</sup> Willard regards the Somerden adjustments, raising the  $\frac{3}{4}$  *d* fraction to a penny, as a simplification rather than correction of an error, *Parliamentary Taxes*, p.145.

<sup>53</sup> TNA E 179/123/6.

<sup>54</sup> Willard, *Parliamentary Taxes*, p. 79 - noting these exemptions were by custom not injunction.

<sup>55</sup> TNA E 179/123/6.

agricultural spade or shovel: perhaps tools designed specifically for digging drainage ditches, or even for digging for iron ore.<sup>56</sup> Similar treatment is given to three individuals assessed for the items *haus* and *ligo*, a rope and mattock, apparently routine items which it is surprising to see included.

The return for 1301 for Dartford vill is different in character from the other two.<sup>57</sup> Dartford was not yet regarded as a town, but the vill contained a well-established settlement along the river Darent, close to the two hythes which serviced maritime trade along the river Thames.<sup>58</sup> The highest assessment, recorded in the first entry, was for the Templars, of £24 15 s 2 d; but 'vacata per breve' is written in the margin, suggesting that on review, they were exempted from payment as a religious order.<sup>59</sup> The return covers Dartford itself along with a surrounding rural area. Many people living in Dartford must have been engaged in trade and manufacturing rather than in agriculture. Unspecified merchandise is included, but also some specific raw materials such as hemp, flax or linen and hides or skins. The return contains several entries for cast metal vessels and utensils of different kinds; the vessel types and valuations are standardised, but there is a wider variety than in either Ruxley or Somerden hundreds. Unspecified goods 'in the chamber' are also included. While there is far less detail than in the Shrewsbury or Colchester returns referred to above, the Dartford return has a closer similarity to an urban return than those for Ruxley or Somerden hundreds.<sup>60</sup>

The lowest amount of tax paid in Dartford vill is 1 ½ d. The highest total assessment is that of the Templars, but as noted above they were exempt from payment. The next highest total assessment is that for Sibilla, widow of Richard the Tanner, at £10 14 s 2 d. There are fewer high assessments than in Ruxley or Somerden hundreds and only 18 individuals out of 218 assessed have assessments over £5. The assessors may have felt that they had to take

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<sup>56</sup> Iron ore presence in the Weald: J. Hodgkinson, *The Wealden Iron Industry*, (Stroud, The History Press, 2008), p. 12. Iron working was taking place in the Tonbridge area but ore was not widespread there.

<sup>57</sup> TNA E 179/123/4; Coates, 'Valuation of the Town of Dartford', pp. 286-298.

<sup>58</sup> Dartford is recorded as having two hythes (wharves) in *Domesday Book: Morgan, DB Kent*, 1,1.

<sup>59</sup> Coates, 'Valuation', p. 286.

<sup>60</sup> Discussed further in Chapter 4.



greater notice of possessions in the workshop or home in order to raise an appropriate amount of tax from the vill.

## **1.4 USING THE 1301 LAY SUBSIDY ASSESSMENT FOR RUXLEY HUNDRED**

### **1.4.1 Information relating to Ruxley hundred**

The range and detail included in the 1301 return for Ruxley hundred makes it an important source, although its limitations must be recognised. The surviving manuscript includes only the information needed to provide a final tax assessment; it was not designed as a comprehensive census of inhabitants in the hundred, nor as a record of all aspects of any household assessed. Even within the parameters set for the tax, its coverage and accuracy reflect decisions made by the assessors 'on the ground' and there is no way of telling whether those decisions were correct or reasonable. There is nothing to show whether an assessor went out and looked for himself at the animals and crops in the fields, barns and yards, or applied a rough-and-ready view of what might plausibly be contained in a chamber, or simply relied on what he was told. Caution is therefore needed in any interpretation; but despite these caveats, there is a great deal to be learned from the return and from comparisons with the Dartford and Somerden returns.

The return provides names for Ruxley's vills, providing an insight into the structure of the hundred in 1301. This is the first available overview of the hundred's administrative structure since the production of *Domesday Book* in 1086, when it lay within the half- lathe of Sutton and was named *Helmestrei*. Seventeen vills are listed; there is a close match with the list of parishes given for the hundred by Hasted in 1797. Table 1 compares the estates listed in *Domesday Book*, those shown in the 1301 return and Hasted's list of parishes. It follows Hasted's ordering, as this relates closely to present-day placenames.

Domesday Book's Helmestrei estates <sup>61</sup>	Vills named in 1301 lay subsidy return for Ruxley hundred <sup>62</sup>	Hasted's 1797 list of parishes in Ruxley hundred <sup>63</sup>
-	Chislehurst	Chislehurst
-	Hayes	Hayes
Wicheham	Wickham	West Wickham
Chestan	Keston	Keston
-	Farnborough	Farnborough
-	Downe	Downe
Codeham	Cudham	Cowdham (Cudham)
-	Knockholt	Nockholt (Knockholt)
Ciresfel	Chelsfield <sup>64</sup>	Chelsfield
Orpinton	Orpinton	Orpington
Croctune	-	[Crofton] <sup>65</sup>
Orpinton <sup>66</sup>	-	[Lesser Orpington] <sup>67</sup>
Sentlinge	-	St Mary Cray
-	Okemore	St Mary Cray <sup>68</sup>
Sudcrai	-	St Mary Cray <sup>69</sup>
Craie	St Paul's Cray	Paul's Cray (St Paul's Cray)
Crai	Footscray	Foots Cray
Craie	North Cray	North Cray & Ruxley <sup>70</sup>
Rochelei	Ruxley	North Cray & Ruxley
Bix	Bexley	Bexley
-	Hever [detached]	'Parts of the parishes of Hever and Chiddingstone ... within the borough of Linckhill'

**Table 1: Ruxley hundred: estates, villas and parishes, 1086, 1301 and 1797.**

<sup>61</sup> Morgan, *DB: Kent*, entries attributed to *Helmeſtrei*: Bix, 2, 6; Orpinton, 3,1; Rochelei, 5, 22; Ciresfel, 5, 23; Sudcrai, 5, 24; Wicheham, 5, 25; Craie, 5, 27; Craie, 5, 28; Crai, 5, 34; Croctune, 5, 35; Codeham, 5, 36; Chestane, 5, 37; Sentlinge, 5, 38.

<sup>62</sup>TNA E 179/123/5. The order in the table follows that of Hasted's parishes, not of the return itself.

<sup>63</sup> Hasted II, p. 2. The table uses the order given by Hasted. The modern placename is given where different.

<sup>64</sup> Damage means the name is largely illegible but the names of those assessed make clear this is Chelsfield vill.

<sup>65</sup> Included within Orpington parish (Hasted II p. 101).

<sup>66</sup> Listed in Axtane hundred (Morgan, *DB Kent*, 2, 30), but considered part of Ruxley hundred by Hasted.

<sup>67</sup> Included within Orpington (Hasted, II, p. 103).

<sup>68</sup> Sandling and Okemore linked together as a single manor in St Mary Cray parish: Hasted II, p. 114.

<sup>69</sup> Hasted states that St Mary Cray was 'antiently called South Cray', (Hasted II, p. 112).

<sup>70</sup> The parishes were merged in 1557 by Cardinal Pole, Archbishop of Canterbury: Hasted, II p. 141.

On the 1301 roll, the villas are listed as follows: recto: Rokeslee (Ruxley) m1; North Creye (North Cray) m2; Bix' (Bexley) m2; Fotescrey (Footscray) m6; Chiselhurst m6; Okemere m7; C[helef]eud (Chelsfield) m8; Hese (Hayes) m8; Kestane (Keston) m9; Okeholt (Knockholt) m10; schedule of assessors, m10. Dorse: Creypaulin (St Paul's Cray) m 1; Farnberghe (Farnborough) m 1; Downe m 2; Orpinton (Orpington) m 3; Codh'm (Cudham) m 7; Wych'm (Wickham) m 8; Heue' (Hever) m 9.<sup>71</sup> This suggests two groups running very broadly north-south, but the order has no obvious significance (other than that it begins with Ruxley manor, where the hundred meeting-place is likely to have been sited).

There are differences between the *Domesday* entries and those from 1301. Chislehurst, a royal estate, was not entered separately in *Domesday Book*, presumably because information on royal holdings was available elsewhere. *Bix* (Bexley) is included in *Domesday Book* as an estate of the archbishop; the demesne is not included in the 1301 return, as at this date, clerics were not covered by subsidies, but lay tenants from the vill are listed. Orpington was included twice in *Domesday Book*, once as the demesne of the monks of Canterbury Cathedral Priory (the manor of Greater Orpington), and once as a lay estate held by a knight of the archbishop of Canterbury (the manor of Little Orpington). The monks' demesne, later known as Greater Orpington, is not included in the 1301 return, but some names there (such as Gilbert de Maleville) must belong to the lay estate later known as Little Orpington. This manor was held by the de Rokesle family and sub-tenanted by the de Malevilles, who also held the manor of Halstead in Axtane hundred as knights of the archbishop. Lay tenants of the priory were covered by the subsidy. This explains the entries for the villas of Hayes, Downe and Knockholt, all absent from *Domesday Book* (or subsumed under the Orpington entry), which were on priory land but occupied by tenants.

*Sentlinge* (Sandlings, later, Sandling) and South Cray were shown as separate lay estates in *Domesday Book* held by Bishop Odo of Bayeux but are not separately recognised in the 1301 return. *Domesday Monachorum* shows that the Canterbury Cathedral monks still regarded *Sentlinge* as their property, but after 1066 it had been granted by King William I to Bishop Odo and the priory could not recover it.<sup>72</sup> The successful market village (later town) of St

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<sup>71</sup> The Discovery (TNA) catalogue entry lists only the villas shown on the recto membranes.

<sup>72</sup> D. C. Douglas, *The Domesday Monachorum of Christ Church Canterbury* (London, RHS, 1944), p. 17, p. 81.

Mary Cray, a separate parish in Hasted's time, developed on land in Sandling and South Cray.<sup>73</sup> In 1301, the lay holders of land in Sandling and in South Cray must have been included in the return for Orpington vill. It is surprising to see Okemore listed as a separate vill in 1301 – this small lay estate is not included in *Domesday Book*. After 1309 it was sold to Roger de Rokesle, then the holder of Sandling as the heir of Gregory de Rokesle, and thereafter remained linked with Sandling, forming a combined manor which by the eighteenth century was known as 'St Lyne Okemore'.<sup>74</sup>

Farnborough manor is likely to have originated as a sub-infeudation of the *Domesday* Chelsfield estate.<sup>75</sup> In 1301 Chelsfield and Farnborough were lay estates held by the same lord.<sup>76</sup> Crofton, listed in *Domesday Book* as a separate lay estate, had not survived as a distinct vill by 1301; it was presumably subsumed within Orpington vill. The manor was held by the de Maleville family.<sup>77</sup> By Hasted's time it lay within Orpington parish.

Ruxley manor was shown as a lay estate in *Domesday Book*, held of Odo of Bayeux by Mauger in 1086; his de Rokesle descendants took their name from the place. The hundred, named *Helmestrei* in 1086, went on to take the name of the manor; this presumably became the site of the hundred meeting-place after the Norman Conquest, and may have been so earlier, as there is no other information about the location of *Helmestrei* as an assembly site. Ruxley manor stood on high ground at a central point, close to routeways running north-south through the hundred and east-west through Kent, with commanding views in all directions. The later parish of Ruxley was merged with North Cray in 1557.<sup>78</sup> The church of Ruxley manor, dedicated to St Botolph and deconsecrated at the time of the merger, was used as a barn for many years, is now listed as Grade II and still stands close to the site of the original manor house.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> The significance of Sandling is discussed further in Chapter 5.

<sup>74</sup> A 1726 estate map of the manor of 'St Lyne Ockmere' was produced for Sir Philip Chesterfield: KHL, U1823P14.

<sup>75</sup> Hasted II, p. 53, notes that the parish church was a chapel of Chelsfield church.

<sup>76</sup> Otto de Grandison as tenant of the Duchy of Lancaster; previously held by Simon de Montfort.

<sup>77</sup> Hasted II, p. 103 f.; du Boulay, *Lordship*, p. 359.

<sup>78</sup> Hasted II, p. 141.

<sup>79</sup> HE List Entry No.: 1002026, Grid Reference TQ 48528 70244. Present building probably late 13<sup>th</sup>/early 14<sup>th</sup> century but some evidence of an earlier church and graves from excavations nearby.

Hever is included in both Hasted's parish list and in the 1301 return as a 'detached' portion of the hundred. Hasted notes that the hundred included 'part of the parishes of Hever and Chidinstone, viz. so much as is within the borough of Linkhill...'. Hever has been identified as an area of the early *denns* - distant woodland in the Weald where pigs would be fed on pannage in the autumn - of the archbishop's estate of Bexley from the tenth century, and of Canterbury Christ Church Priory at Orpington from the eleventh century.<sup>80</sup> Cudham, a lay manor, also had detached *denns* in the Weald near Edenbridge.<sup>81</sup>

#### 1.4.2 Bynames in the returns

The second tranche of information provided by the 1301 return is the wealth of names of individuals. These are of interest in themselves but are particularly helpful when they can be compared with the names in the 1334 return. There are many differences between the two lists, but around a third of the bynames can be identified as also present in 1334. The 1301 names are listed by vill, so where groups of names can be identified in both lists, it becomes possible to identify the general position of vill groupings in the 1334 return. The order of the vill differs in 1334 from that given for 1301 and names at the margins cannot always be allocated definitively, so it is not possible to compare vill details precisely between the two returns. However, an awareness of the broad vill groupings makes the 1334 material much more useful as a comparator.

The detail of the bynames from the 1301 and 1334-35 assessments for Ruxley hundred provides information that may, with caution, offer evidence to show whether the hundred had a relationship with London – or with other local areas. The names may allow families to be traced or contacts to be identified in other documentation. The thirteenth century was a time when bynames were often individual to the person named describing their occupation (for example *pistor*, baker) or the nature of the place where they lived (related to a geographical feature, such as *de birchwode*, *ate Noke*, or derived from *hache*, a gate into woodland), or a personal characteristic or nickname rather than an inherited family name. By the later fourteenth century, this was changing, and names were more often family

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<sup>80</sup> K. P. Witney, *The Jutish Forest* (London 1976), p. 219; du Boulay, *Medieval Bexley*, p. 2.

<sup>81</sup> Witney, *Jutish Forest*, p. 221.

names inherited from the father – though they may still reflect family occupations or locations from a previous generation.<sup>82</sup> The 1301 bynames should therefore capture something of the structure of the thirteenth-century world, while the bynames from the 1334-35 return should still offer useful markers for family occupations or the geographical origins of their owner.

In 1301, where an individual name – usually of a manorial lord - can be linked to a location within a vill, the return shows that the assessors progressed from household to household in a geographical sequence, much as in a nineteenth-century census; proximity of name may therefore show proximity of location. In a dispersed community such as Ruxley hundred, this is not as helpful as it might be in a town or large village, as people listed next to one another in the return might in practice live some distance apart. However adjacent names related to craftwork or to service occupations such as baker or miller, along with references to individuals nearby with merchandise, may indicate the core of an expanding hamlet or the presence of a developing market village such as St Mary Cray or Farnborough, where artisans and traders were settling.

It is interesting to compare the bynames from Ruxley hundred with those shown in the 1301 returns for Dartford vill and Somerden hundred. Somerden contains many bynames with a locational element from the immediate area, whether derived from a placename, such as de Cherecot (Charcot, a hamlet), de Heure (Hever), or relating to a feature of the landscape, such as de grone (*gronna*: swampy place, marsh, probably relating to the Eden valley), de underhelde (helde = slope), ate welle.<sup>83</sup> There are a few names relating to a specific occupation: *molendinarius* (miller), *taylur*, le carpenter, *cocus* (cook), and the rather startling Wilfhunte brothers (possibly relating to an earlier family occupation of hunting wolves, considered vermin, in the Wealden forest?).<sup>84</sup> Dartford, however, contains many

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<sup>82</sup> P. McClure, 'Patterns of Migration in the Late Middle Ages: the evidence of English Place-name Surnames' in *TEHR* 2<sup>nd</sup> series, Vol. XXXII No. 2, May 1979), pp. 167-182, esp. p. 167. Draper, 'Timber and Iron', Sweetinburgh (2010), pp. 55-77, uses byname evidence from the 1334-35 subsidy return to explore shipbuilding and ironworking in Kent.

<sup>83</sup> TNA E 179/123/6.

<sup>84</sup> The Weald is unlikely to have contained wolves in 1301 but in earlier centuries wolves had been hunted in England as vermin, to protect sheep and deer. In 1252 Henry III gave William de Say the right, for life, 'that he may freely hunt the wolf, the hare, the fox, the cat and the otter without nets in the water, through all the king's forests and rivers on this side of the Trent, provided that he take none of the king's deer'; *CChR. Vol. I*, p.

more names relating to occupations, including *taunator* (tanner), *wodere* (dealer in woad), *sutor* (cobbler), *cordewaner*, carpenter, *pelliparius* (skinner), *chepman* (chapman), though there are also locational names: de Stonham, de Foleswich from neighbouring hamlets; *ate hethe* (Dartford heath still exists), *ate forde*. The bynames suggest that at the end of the thirteenth century, Dartford was developing rapidly as a place of manufacturing and trading, while Somerden had little evidence of manufacturing.<sup>85</sup> Ruxley hundred has a mixture of names, some locational, some occupational, some with no obvious meaning. The occupational bynames from the hundred are discussed in more detail in later chapters.

### 1.4.3 Stock and Crops

The third area of interest from the 1301 return concerns the information it provides about crops and stock. This might show whether surpluses were being generated in order to supply the city of London which could not be identified in the *Feeding the City* project, because its database, designed to show trends over a long period, necessarily focused on ecclesiastical demesne accounts. The return also offers evidence for potential surpluses of stock, particularly of cattle and sheep. It also provides information about the presence of horses in the hundred, particularly specialist cart-horses; some entries also include a reference to carts, though to no other agricultural equipment. These issues are considered in Chapter 3.

The 1301 return also contains information about items which are not standard stock or crops. *Buscha*, firewood, is identified in several entries for Ruxley hundred but is absent from the Somerden and Dartford returns. Firewood was a basic household necessity so stores of it should have been disregarded for tax purposes, suggesting the Ruxley hundred assessors identified these examples as a surplus generated specifically for sale. The possibility of trade in wood products including firewood is considered in Chapter 2.

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880. William de Say held Cudham in Ruxley hundred and estates elsewhere in Middlesex and Kent. Whether this family name relates to earlier wolf-hunting in the Weald must be speculative.

<sup>85</sup> Draper refers to crafts and trades in Dartford, associated with maritime activity: 'Timber and Iron', Sweetinburgh (2010), p.67.

#### **1.4.4 Personal Possessions**

Some personal possessions, notably cast metal vessels, utensils and unspecified 'goods in the chamber', are assessed in all three 1301 returns.<sup>86</sup> These may have been regarded as indicating a particular standard of living surplus to basic requirements, possibly including items in addition to the exemptions applied, and therefore taxable. Most of these items had to be obtained from an external source – they could not be easily made at home – so may provide evidence for trading links. Ruxley inhabitants as consumers are considered in Chapter 4.

### **1.5 AN INFORMATION SOURCE FOR POPULATION AND WEALTH?**

#### **1.5.1 Estimating population density and wealth in Ruxley hundred in 1301 and 1334-35**

The detail available in the 1301 return for Ruxley hundred has not previously been used to any great extent, though Langdon used information from the returns for Ruxley and Somerden hundreds to throw light on the use of horses and oxen at the turn of the thirteenth century, particularly by peasants.<sup>87</sup>

Hanley and Chalklin, following Willard, argued that it was impossible to use the Kent return for 1334-5 to determine population at the level of an individual hundred, but the evidence from the return has been used to calculate comparative wealth and relative population density by hundred across Kent as a whole.<sup>88</sup> This shows that in north-west Kent, the most densely populated hundreds in Sutton lathe were Blackheath, which contained the early market at Lewisham and the wharf at Greenwich, and Dartford & Wilmington, with over fourteen taxpayers per thousand acres. Next came Bromley & Beckenham hundred and Little & Lesnes hundreds, at between ten and fourteen taxpayers per thousand acres, and then Ruxley hundred and Brasted at between seven and ten taxpayers per thousand acres. The least densely populated hundreds were Axtane, Codsheath, Westerham & Edenbridge and Somerden, with fewer than ten taxpayers per thousand acres. In terms of tax assessment,

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<sup>86</sup> TNA E 179/123/4, E 179/123/5, E 179/123/6.

<sup>87</sup> J. Langdon, *Horses, Oxen and Technological Innovation* (Cambridge: CUP, 1986), p. 191.

<sup>88</sup> Hanley & Chalklin, 'Kent Lay Subsidy', p. 63; T. Lawson & C. Chalklin, 'Medieval Taxation: The Lay Subsidy of 1334-5' in Lawson & Chalklin, *Historical Atlas of Kent*, with maps, p. 58.



the wealthiest hundred was Little & Lesnes, paying more than £3, followed by Blackheath, Bromley & Beckenham and Dartford at between £1 10 s and £3, then Ruxley and Axtane, at £1 5 s and £1 10 s, and finally Westerham & Edenbridge, Brasted, Codsheath and Somerden, paying below £1 5 s. This suggests that while Ruxley hundred was reasonably prosperous, it – along with Axtane – was not faring as well as the hundreds bordering the Thames (Blackheath, Little & Lesnes and Dartford); or as hundreds along the Thames estuary around Rochester, Faversham or Thanet, or some hundreds around Romney Marsh.

### **1.5.2. Who is missing?**

Absolute numbers of population in the returns have only limited use because of the exemptions and omissions which must be assumed to be present. John de Scathebury features as the first entry in the 1301 return for Chislehurst vill, with a high assessment, but the de Scathebury name is missing from the Ruxley hundred return for 1334-5 (though the family were still at Scadbury manor over ten years later). Hanley and Chalklin point out that the 1334-35 return might include fewer than half the total heads of household in the county, reflecting exemptions (including the men of the Cinque Ports) and those at subsistence level who would have had no assets to be valued.

The total number of households assessed for Ruxley hundred in 1334-35 was 321; for Somerden, no names were entered, although there was space for 55 names; in Dartford vill, the total assessed was 133.<sup>89</sup> In 1301 the total number of households assessed for Ruxley hundred was of the order of 500; damage to the document means an accurate figure cannot be derived.<sup>90</sup> In Somerden it was 104 and in Dartford, 218. If these figures are doubled (to reflect those exempt or excluded because of poverty or for some other reason) and multiplied by 4.5 as a broad figure for an average household, the total population of Ruxley hundred in 1301 could be of the order of 4,500; for Somerden, it might be 936 and for Dartford, 1,962.<sup>91</sup> It is impossible to know how many individuals were disregarded, whether deliberately or accidentally. Everyone was meant to be assessed in 1301, but decisions

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<sup>89</sup> Hanley & Chalklin, 'Kent Lay Subsidy', Ruxley, p. 135, Somerden p. 142, Dartford p. 143.

<sup>90</sup> TNA E 179/123/5. The number of entries that can be read is around 79 but there are gaps, particularly in the return for Bexley. 500 is suggested as an approximate total only.

<sup>91</sup> These are not accurate population figures but are included to give a sense of scale.

about whether someone had no meaningful assets to value would have been difficult to make. Omissions might be made to favour a friend or family member, or in response to a bribe, or to benefit someone whose influence was feared. The figures cannot be considered accurate. Yet, looking at them, the differences between the three hundreds and the internal differences and variations in assessments within the hundreds suggest that on balance, the assessors were aiming to give a plausible overview of what they saw around them. The figures also give an idea of relative scale, which could be varied by using different figures of household size. Given how little we know about Ruxley hundred in 1301 even this crude approach is of some interest.

There is nothing in the returns about the make-up of households. Most entries in the 1301 return relate to men, but a few women are included – ranging from Agnes de Bladindon in Bexley, with the high total assessment of £18 16 s, Matilda Atheleye in Orpington at 18 s 7 d or Marie at Hoke in Cudham assessed at 9 s. Some forenames could be male or female – Julian', Alic' - so the total number of women assessed is uncertain. A few are explicitly identified as widows, such as Agnes relict' Stoyl of Cudham, assessed at £5 13 s 2 d, or Alic' relict' Richard Akerman of Hayes at 10 s 6 d. There is no information about the presence of children or servants in the household.

There are some scraps of evidence from other documentation to confirm that a significant number of people could have been excluded from assessment because of poverty. Otto de Grandison (nephew and heir of Otto Grandison who held the manor of Chelsfield in 1301) left a will at the time of his death in 1358 with a bequest of 1 s each to 'forty of my poor tenants at Chellesfield'. This is outside the timeframe of this thesis and comes after the ravages of the Black Death, but it may indicate that even then, there were many more households in the locality than the 28 listed in the 1301 assessment of the vill.<sup>92</sup>

A 'proof of age' inquisition held in 1315 to determine the age of John d'Aubigny and his right to inherit his father's estates (he was a minor when his father died), throws some light on

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<sup>92</sup> Transcription of 1358 will of Otto de Grandison II: Kent Archaeological Society, *Medieval and Tudor Kent Wills at Lambeth, Book 25 page 592*: <http://www.kentarchaeology.org.uk/Research/Libr/Wills/Lbth/Bk25/page%20592.htm>, [accessed 16 March 2017.]

the presence of servants and workers on an aristocratic estate who might not be separately assessed in a return.<sup>93</sup> The d'Aubigny family were living at Hockenden when John was born. Hockenden was held by Sir Richard Stangrave of Edenbridge as a tenant of Canterbury Cathedral priory; the d'Aubigny family were evidently sub-tenants. Family friends, neighbours and retainers gave evidence at the hearing about the date of John's birth. Richard de Marisco, who saw John being carried into the churchyard, may have been a member of the aristocratic de Mares family who held the manor of Sandling – adjacent to the church - in Ruxley hundred in the thirteenth century, but who does not feature in the 1301 lay subsidy (though Thomas de Mares was an assessor). Others also claimed to have seen him being carried into St Mary Cray church for baptism, or to have known of him as a baby because of their links with the family. They included Alexander Badecok, whose sister Alice had been the baby's nurse; Richard Walter, who was working as a thresher on the Hockenden estate when John was born; Gilbert Gerold, who saw John lying in his cradle; Nicholas de Hockenden who was in his father's service when John was born; Ralph Vyel, a servant at Hockenden and John de Welsh, another servant. Thomas atte Spycher was a near neighbour at Hockenden and was at the purification of John's mother Isabel.

The d'Aubigny family and several witnesses do not appear in the 1301 lay subsidy return for Ruxley hundred. It is possible that the family were assessed in Axtane hundred, as Hockenden manor spanned the hundred boundary and the Axtane assessment for 1301 does not survive; but they were evidently regarded as living within the St Mary Cray parish, and the parish church was within the Ruxley hundred boundary. Sir Richard Stangrave is assessed in Axtane hundred in 1334-5, presumably for Hockenden manor.<sup>94</sup> Members of a Walter family are in Chislehurst in 1334-5 and an Alic'atte Spiche is in Dartford vill then; there are Welshes in Chislehurst and Orpington. Some other names including Badecok feature elsewhere in Kent, but not in adjacent hundreds. It is not possible to be certain that they are related to the witnesses. Although there could be good reason for names being absent from the Ruxley returns, either because they were assessed elsewhere in 1301, or

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<sup>93</sup> J E S Sharp and A E Stamp, 'Inquisitions Post Mortem, Edward II, File 45', in *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem: Volume 5, Edward II* (London, 1908), pp. 354-361. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/inquis-post-mortem/vol/pp354-361> [accessed 4 August 2021].

<sup>94</sup> Hanley & Chalklin, 'Kent Lay Subsidy', Ruxley hundred, pp. 133-135, Axtane hundred, pp. 144 f.

the family had died out or moved away by 1334-5, the 'proof of age' reminds us that servants and workers might pass under the radar, not assessed if they were resident as servants in their lord's house; and some aristocrats might not feature at all.

Despite the difficulties and the uncertainty around absolute numbers and even broad-brush information, the returns for both 1301 and 1334 have an important role to play. They can be compared with other returns and with each other; they offer the possibility of linking their evidence with other information, which might have no meaning on its own. The results can suggest ways of considering issues around trade and interactions between communities which would otherwise be invisible. The returns are particularly useful in providing insights into the assets of local people who do not often appear in documentation, and about whom little is known in this period.

## **1.6 LONDON LAY SUBSIDY RETURNS**

Lay subsidy returns also survive for London.<sup>95</sup> These list individuals by ward and by tax owed; occasionally, a name may be supplemented by an occupation (corder, fishmonger). No specific assets are listed. It is possible to identify a few names in the earlier returns which derive from place-names in Ruxley hundred (notably de Rokesle and de Cray/e) and names which also occur in the hundred, such as Lambyn and Fivian.<sup>96</sup> Caution is needed, as it is often impossible to tell whether a name found in London and also in Ruxley hundred relates to the same individual or is even from the same family – their occurrence may be coincidence. The advantage is that a comparison of names can suggest avenues to explore, which may lead to closer identification, and the returns have therefore been used to consider the relationship between Ruxley hundred and the city.

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<sup>95</sup> Printed as E. Ekwall (ed.), *Two Early London Subsidy Rolls*, (n.s. 1951): *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/no-series/early-london-subsidy-rolls> [accessed 21 June 2023]; 'The London lay subsidy of 1332: Account of subsidy collectors', in *Finance and Trade Under Edward III the London Lay Subsidy of 1332*, ed. George Unwin (Manchester, 1918), pp. 61-92. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/manchester-uni/london-lay-subsidy/1332/pp61-92> [accessed 19 February 2022].

<sup>96</sup> These names are discussed in later chapters.

## **1.7 CONCLUSIONS**

This chapter has explored how information from lay subsidy returns might be used, focusing primarily on the unpublished return for Ruxley hundred relating to 1301, comparative material from lay subsidy returns for 1334-35 and additional material from the returns for 1301 for Dartford vill and Somerden hundred. While the difficulties with using lay subsidy returns are acknowledged, it demonstrates that these sources can be used to improve our understanding of the lives of people – particularly lay gentry and peasants – living in Ruxley hundred and how they experienced the relationship with the developing metropolis of London. The returns enable links to be made with other sources, both documentary and archaeological, and these links make it possible to explore activity in Ruxley hundred across a range of people and places. The remaining chapters use information from the returns for this purpose.

## CHAPTER 2: WOODLAND

### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

Ruxley hundred contained extensive woodland and heathland, valuable resources for any community in the later Middle Ages. This chapter examines how people in Ruxley hundred used these resources.

First, the chapter sets out the evidence for a 'woodland economy' in the hundred. It examines how woodland was managed and used in the later Middle Ages and the implications of the expansion of London. The city, with only limited access to woodland of its own, depended on its hinterland for timber and fuel, yet these were heavy items and difficult to transport. The chapter examines evidence for how woodland was used within Ruxley hundred, to assess whether it was deliberately managed to service London's needs.

The second part of the chapter considers the use of woodland (with associated heathland and wetland) as a recreational space. Falconry and hunting with dogs were favourite pursuits of the aristocracy and recreational use might influence how woodland was accessed and managed. William FitzStephen noted in the late twelfth century that Londoners were accustomed to hunt in Kent 'up to the waters of the Cray', an unusual reference to the river which flowed through Ruxley hundred.<sup>1</sup> The chapter looks for evidence of recreational use, considering who might have used woodland in this way and whether this throws any light on the relationship between countryside and city.

### 2.2: THE WOODLAND ECONOMY

#### 2.2.1: Background

Hasted drew attention to the extensive woodland and heathland present in Ruxley hundred in the late eighteenth century. He commented on coppice woods in many locations, including at Farnborough, Cudham and Knockholt in the south. Bexley to the north was 'much covered with heath and furze'.<sup>2</sup> St Paul's Cray was 'diversified with hill and dale,

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<sup>1</sup> John Stow, 'Appendix: Libellum de situ et nobilitate Londini', in *A Survey of London. Reprinted From the Text of 1603*, ed. C L Kingsford (Oxford, 1908), pp. 218-229. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/no-series/survey-of-london-stow/1603/pp218-229> [accessed 14 May 2020].

<sup>2</sup> Hasted, II, p. 46 (Farnborough), p. 60 (Cudham), p. 78 (Knockholt), p. 162 (Bexley).

interspersed with woods, verdant pastures along the valleys, and on the gentle declivities fertile fields of corn land'.<sup>3</sup> Hasted was describing an eighteenth-century landscape which reflected contemporary management practices, but a thirteenth-century inhabitant would have recognised his account.<sup>4</sup> The significant presence of woodland within the hundred is confirmed by place-names which refer in some way to woodland or trees.<sup>5</sup> Within the hundred, the geology of the Thames basin favoured woodland and heathland to the north and west, where the stony soils, especially those on higher ground, could be difficult to cultivate. Further south, the chalk downland supported dense deciduous woodland in its combes.<sup>6</sup>

The hundred therefore had the potential to provide for the needs of the local community while also generating surpluses to be sold. To achieve this, careful management was important. Oliver Rackham has suggested that managed wood-pasture – a combination of managed trees and grazing land – was prevalent in medieval England, but some woods were increasingly maintained specifically to produce timber and underwood. These were often privately owned and might be differentiated from general wood-pasture by fenced boundaries which excluded animals (and people).<sup>7</sup> Within either environment, trees such as oak, ash, elm, hornbeam or beech would be permitted to reach their full height as 'standards' before being felled for timber. They might be surrounded by an underwood of smaller trees and bushes, including hazel or alder. The underwood, and sometimes larger trees such as elm, would be coppiced - cut at the base and allowed to re-grow from multiple shoots - over a regular cycle, providing a renewable resource.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Hasted, II, p. 126.

<sup>4</sup> Hasted's 1778 map of Ruxley hundred shows the presence of woodland: Appendix, Map 3.

<sup>5</sup> A significant proportion of the vill names in the hundred derive from terms for trees or woodland: Wallenberg, KPN & PNK: Chislehurst, gravelly woodland, KPN 300; Hayes, brushwood, underwood (medieval 'Hese', deriving from OE hǣs), PNK, p. 26; Knockholt, Oak-wood, PNK p. 27; Bexley (Bix, Bixle), 'box-wood clearing', KPN, p. 134; Ruxley (Rokesle), 'Rook's clearing', KNP, p. 68; Okemore /Acmere, 'Oak-pool', PNK p. 20. The pre-Norman Conquest name for the hundred, as recorded in *Domesday Book*, was *Helmestrei*, Helm's Tree, suggesting a significant tree marked the hundred meeting-place, P. Morgan, *DB Kent*, 3,1; PNK, p. 11.

<sup>6</sup> A. Everitt, *Continuity and Colonisation* (Leicester: LUP, 1986), p. 25 f. Geological information:

<sup>7</sup> O. Rackham, *Trees and Woodland in the British Landscape: The Complete History of Britain's Trees, Woods & Hedgerows* (revised ed., London: Phoenix, 1996), p. 62 ff.

<sup>8</sup> Rackham, *Trees and Woodland*, p. 63 f.; P. Stamper, 'Woods and parks', in G. Astill & A. Grant (eds.), *The Countryside of Medieval England* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1988), p. 130 f.

Coppiced trees were cut in rotation. If managed within wood-pasture, compartments of newly-cut trees would be protected from grazing animals by hurdles or fences. The coppicing cycle varied depending on the size of pole required but was usually between four to eight years.<sup>9</sup> Standards were also at risk from animals browsing on new growth.

Pollarding was a form of coppicing of large trees, particularly oaks, in which the main trunk was permitted to grow up beyond the base but was then cut at a height which deer or cattle could not reach, so that new shoots developed undisturbed.<sup>10</sup>

Wood-pasture is likely to have been widespread in Ruxley hundred. The association of grazing and woodland followed an earlier practice of using woodland as seasonal pasture for pigs. By the thirteenth century the practice of droving pigs to distant *denns* in woodland was in decline, but wood pasture and heathland remained important sources of grazing for cattle and sheep. Woodland might be managed as common land, where traditional custom and practice limited the lord's control and offered greater access to peasant smallholders.<sup>11</sup> Custom was important in determining how the products of woodland were used. A lord would reserve large timber trees for his own use, while tenants might be allowed to gather wood for specific purposes; usually these were limited to house-building and repair, the maintenance of fences or for use as firewood.<sup>12</sup> However a lord might decide to prevent access to and use of a wood by introducing fencing and locked gates, or woodland might be incorporated into the wider protected space of a park, though limited access rights might be offered to tenants in return for services or payment. Peasants with no customary rights to access managed woodland, whether for grazing or to collect firewood, or who were unable to pay the fine required, would depend on local common land, supplies from neighbours or a local market, or might resort to illicit entry.

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<sup>9</sup> Stamper, 'Woods and Parks', p. 131.

<sup>10</sup> Stamper, 'Woods and Parks', p. 63 f.

<sup>11</sup> Stamper, 'Woods and Parks', p. 133 ff.

<sup>12</sup> Stamper, 'Woods and Parks', p. 135. In 1271, at his manor of Edelmeton [Edmonton in Middlesex], William de Say was entitled to fines in respect of housbote, heybote and ferbote; 'Inquisitions Post Mortem, Henry III, File 42', in *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem: Volume 1, Henry III*, ed. J E S Sharp (London, 1904), pp. 273-287, *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/inquis-post-mortem/vol1/pp273-287> [accessed 12 June 2018]. The IPM does not indicate whether similar fines operated at his manor of Cudham in Ruxley hundred.



There is some evidence that on the ecclesiastical estates of Ruxley hundred, certain areas of woodland were becoming more intensively managed during the thirteenth century with access carefully controlled and animals excluded. This suggests that timber and wood products rather than grazing were becoming increasingly significant in the local economy.

### **2.2.2 Using wood products**

Wood, whether from full-height tree-trunks, smaller branches or coppice poles was an important resource. Timber trees were used for the local construction and repair of houses and farm buildings, but could also be sold further afield, especially to expanding urban centres. Smaller branches could be split to make wagons, rafters, trestles for tables, chests for storage or staves for barrels; these were products which could be used directly on a manor or smallholding or sold on, and were needed in both rural and urban settings. Coppice poles of varying diameter and strength could be used to make fences and moveable hurdles for use on the farm, to construct the wattle-and-daub framework for internal partitions in buildings or used to make household furniture or handles for tools. Again, these were needed locally but might also be sold further afield.

Richard Britnell has explored how peasant farmers and larger estates obtained the farm equipment they needed.<sup>13</sup> Much agricultural equipment was made of wood. This required access to sources of timber and coppice-poles, but also to appropriate tools and sometimes to additional components or specialist skills. Specialist components such as cartwheels could be purchased to support local repairs, while specialist workmen might be brought in to repair complex structures such as mills. Even where sources of wood were easily available, peasants and the managers of large estates were rarely self-sufficient.<sup>14</sup> Lords might prefer to sell their wood rather than to process it themselves, and to buy in the more complex items they required.

The bedels' rolls for Orpington show that the manor purchased a wide range of wooden items, including spades, buckets, casks and even hay wagons, even though it had extensive

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<sup>13</sup> R. Britnell, 'Making or Buying? Maintaining Farm Equipment and Buildings, 1250-1350', in M. Kowaleski, J. Langdon, P. R. Schofield (eds.), *Peasants and Lords in the Medieval English Economy: Essays in Honour of Bruce M S. Campbell* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2015), pp. 225-245.

<sup>14</sup> Britnell, 'Making or Buying?' eg p. 232, 236, 237.

sources of wood products on its own land.<sup>15</sup> The manor employed its own workers to make routine wooden items such as fencing and feed-troughs, but specialist skills or materials were common factors in the items purchased: spades were tipped with iron shoes while buckets, casks and cartwheels were all bound with iron. It is likely this was the practice on other large estates.

Wood was a significant fuel in rural areas, whether for use at home or by local artisans and craftsmen such as brewers, bakers and blacksmiths.<sup>16</sup> Larger branches could be collected for fuel while smaller branches and twigs were gathered for kindling. Wood could also be processed to form charcoal, offering the intense and consistent heat needed by blacksmiths and providing a more portable fuel for use in domestic braziers.<sup>17</sup> This generated local demand for those able to provide these products and they were potentially in demand further afield.

Associated woodland products were also important. Oak galls were used in the manufacture of ink, so could be collected and processed or sold on, though evidence for this practice in Ruxley hundred does not survive. Oak bark was a key ingredient of the tanning process and other woods such as alder also had high tannin content; both oak and alder were available in the hundred.<sup>18</sup> Bynames suggest that tanners were working in Dartford before 1301 and the occupational byname 'le Tanner' also occurs in the 1301 lay subsidy return for Wickham vill, suggesting both local demand and the possibility of sales further afield.<sup>19</sup>

In addition to its use for fuel, brushwood could be packed into bundles for use in strengthening flood defences. This was especially relevant to Surrey and north-west Kent where estates on the Thames riverside, such as Bermondsey and Lesnes priories, were

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<sup>15</sup> Bowen, 'The Priory Orpington', p. 78 f.

<sup>16</sup> Fuel: K. P. Witney, 'The Woodland Economy of Kent 1066-1348', *Agricultural History Review*, 38 (I), (1990), pp 20-39, fuel p. 31 f.

<sup>17</sup> Charcoal: Stamper, 'Woods and Parks', p. 139.

<sup>18</sup> Stamper, 'Woods and Parks', p. 131.

<sup>19</sup> The lay subsidy return for 1301 for Dartford includes the bynames *Taunator* (tanner) and Tanner (twice), suggesting local tanning activity, TNA E 179 123/4; R. P. Coates, 'Valuation of the Town of Dartford, (1874), pp. 285-298. Wickham: TNA E179/123/5, Wickham.

responsible for the maintenance of local defences.<sup>20</sup> From the later thirteenth century onwards, increased flooding of the reclaimed marshland along the Thames put its fertility at risk.<sup>21</sup>

### 2.2.3 The influence of London

By 1300, some 80,000 people were living in London.<sup>22</sup> Industries and craft processes were expanding to meet their needs; many of these – such as brewing and baking on a commercial scale, the manufacture of metal vessels, the dyeing of fabric for cloth production – depended on large supplies of fuel.<sup>23</sup> New buildings incorporating timber-framing were a significant feature of the urban landscape; churches, public buildings and wharves on the river-front were under construction, along with domestic housing. The city could not meet its requirements for wood from within its own boundaries, meaning that timber and firewood, heavy products to move, had to be brought in from surrounding areas. Transport by water was more economical than overland carting, so sources of supply which had access to river-transport were at a premium.<sup>24</sup>

North-west Kent had access to London via the river Thames or major route-ways such as Watling Street and so was a potential source of supply, but it was also well-settled by the thirteenth century. Traditional woodland might therefore already have been cleared to make way for settlement or for increased arable cultivation. Ann Brown suggested that medieval woodland in north-west Kent was indeed extensively cleared, particularly in the valleys of the Cray and Darent rivers, following exploitation by coopers making barrels for London brewers, but the evidence for this assertion is not clear.<sup>25</sup> In contrast, Witney has argued that woodland in north-west Kent was protected from clearance precisely because

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<sup>20</sup> J. A. Galloway, 'Storm flooding, coastal defence and land use around the Thames estuary and tidal river c. 1250–1450', *Journal of Medieval History*, 35:2 (2009), 171-188, ref. to responsibilities of those benefitting from flood protection for its maintenance, p. 177.

<sup>21</sup> Galloway, 'Storm flooding, coastal defence and land use around the Thames', p. 175 f. Draper has noted the importance of wood for flood defences for Lewisham priory's land at Greenwich; 'Timber and Iron' (2010), p. 65.

<sup>22</sup> C. Barron, *London in the Later Middle Ages: Government and People 1200-1500* (Oxford, 2004), p. 238.

<sup>23</sup> The expansion of manufacturing: Barron, *London in the Later Middle Ages*, p.73

<sup>24</sup> J. Galloway, D. Keene, M. Murphy, 'Fuelling the City: Production and Distribution of Firewood and Fuel in London's Region', *Economic History Review* 49 (1996), pp. 447-472.

<sup>25</sup> A. Brown, 'London and North-west Kent' (1976), pp. 145-164; ref. to wood for coopering given on p. 146, but the source quoted relates only to woodland clearance for early-modern cask production.

of its significance as an accessible resource for the capital.<sup>26</sup> He suggested that woods such as those in Hayes and in the Cray Valley (both within Ruxley hundred) were deliberately managed to generate surpluses for onward sale to London. He contrasted this with the increased clearance for arable cultivation of the densely wooded areas of the Weald; the Weald was too far from London to make transport of its wood there economically viable.<sup>27</sup>

Galloway, Keene and Murphy studied the implications of London's requirements for wood and wood products in the context of the *Feeding the City* project.<sup>28</sup> Their analysis demonstrated that as London expanded, the city drew timber and firewood from areas close to it, reflecting the relative costs and ease of transport of a heavy product.<sup>29</sup> The study showed that *busca*, firewood, was brought in to the city in two main forms. *Talwode* was used for domestic heating, for certain industrial processes and to make charcoal. Faggots were lighter bundles of brushwood and thin sticks tied together, mainly used as domestic kindling, or in commercial brewing and industrial processes such as brickmaking or tiling. Specific areas within London's hinterland specialised in the production of different forms of firewood. *Talwode*, requiring older, sturdier trees, was produced further away than brushwood faggots; it came into the city from centres around the Thames basin, Surrey, north Kent and Romford in Essex. All these places had access to water transport for at least part of the journey. Faggots, being lighter, could be taken directly into the city by cart. They were mainly sourced from areas lying close by such as Hampstead.

The database used for this analysis drew on samples of manorial demesne accounts and inquisitions *post mortem* (IPMs). As these are scarce for north-west Kent, the study is likely to underestimate the part played by lay demesnes and peasants in Ruxley hundred in the provision of wood for London. The following section therefore explores sources which might show how woodland in the hundred was managed and used, to provide a fuller picture than is possible from the database alone.

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<sup>26</sup> K. P. Witney, 'Woodland Economy', p. 33 f.

<sup>27</sup> Witney, 'Woodland Economy', p. 37.

<sup>28</sup> Galloway, Keene, Murphy, 'Fuelling the City' (1996), pp. 447-472.

<sup>29</sup> Firewood: Galloway et al., 'Fuelling the City', p. 451 ff.

## 2.2.4 Woodland and heathland in Ruxley hundred

In the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, the limited evidence available gives no indication that woodland had been cleared in Ruxley hundred to the extent suggested by Brown.<sup>30</sup> People with specific woodworking skills were present in the hundred, as indicated by occupational bynames such as sawyer, hewer, carpenter, cooper and turner.<sup>31</sup> All of these are represented, particularly in Bexley, Orpington, Wickham, Chelsfield, Farnborough and Cudham (all vills with markets), suggesting individual specialists or perhaps traditional family occupations.<sup>32</sup> This suggests a thriving woodland economy; some skilled workers may have been employed directly by a manor while others may have been working independently.

The availability of resources and skills suggests that surpluses of timber and other wood products could be easily generated. Some would have been sold locally, but the hundred was also close to wharves on the Thames at Dartford and elsewhere and to road links across Kent. There was therefore potential to sell (and to buy) woodland products outside the hundred – in London, but possibly also elsewhere, in Dartford or further afield.

Heathland was also widespread in Ruxley hundred, particularly where young tree-growth was not protected from grazing animals. Broom, gorse, heather and smaller bushes flourished on the thin, infertile soils of the higher ground, interspersed with tree-cover. Heaths were often managed as common land. They offered fuel from brushwood and some wood from the limited tree-cover, as well as grazing for livestock. Once grazing ceased, scrub and woodland could overpower the traditional heathland plants. Examples of heathland can still be found today, providing clues to the earlier landscape.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Brown, 'London and North-west Kent', p. 146.

<sup>31</sup> John le Cu[pe]re (Bexley), John le Turner, Chelsfield, William Carpent' (Cudham), TNA E179/123/5; Geoff. Saghiere, Jn. Saghiere, (sawyer), (N. Cray?), Pet. Saghiere (Chelsfield?), Walter Couper (Cooper), (Farnborough?), Hanley & Chalklin, 'Kent Lay Subsidy', pp. 133, 134 (vills attributed by comparison of names with the corresponding 1301 returns).

<sup>32</sup> Markets: see Chapter 5.

<sup>33</sup> A regeneration project at St Paul's Cray Common, on higher ground between St Paul's Cray and Chislehurst, has seen traditional heathland plants recover: <https://chislehurstcommons.uk/habitats/heathlands> (accessed 12 April 2022). Keston Common is registered as a Site of Special Scientific Interest and a Local Nature Reserve, in recognition of the range of traditional heathland habitat there; <https://friendsofkestoncommon.chessck.co.uk> (accessed 12 April 2022).

To assess whether surpluses were being deliberately produced in the hundred, three aspects of woodland management are examined in detail. First, documentation from ecclesiastical demesnes is used to provide context which may suggest how timber and wood products were produced and sold on lay estates. Second, evidence from the lay manor of Cudham is considered, as this is the only documentation available for a lay estate in the hundred. Other context is provided by accounts for a Surrey lay demesne and landscape evidence from woodbanks. Finally, the 1301 lay subsidy return for Ruxley hundred is examined as a possible source of information about local non-demesne/peasant activity.

### **2.2.5 Woodland management: ecclesiastical demesnes**

The management of woodland on ecclesiastical demesnes provides useful context. Management on the archbishop's demesne estate at Bexley has been considered by du Boulay.<sup>34</sup> He showed that the sale of wood products was an important source of income at £6 17 s 3 ½ d, coming ahead of receipts from the manorial court and sales of hay, livestock, wool, hides and dairy produce, and third after corn sales at £21 3 s 4 ½ d and rents at £16 8 s 1½ d.<sup>35</sup> In the thirteenth century, Bexley manor's woodlands were managed by a local bailiff under the oversight of the archbishop's Council. In 1300 the Steward of the Lands, a member of this Council, selected trees from West Wood – which by 1236-37 was separated off and fenced – for local sale.<sup>36</sup> The involvement of the Steward shows the significance attached to the management and exploitation of the archbishop's woodlands. The records give no information about the destination of the wood or how the bailiff organised sales once the trees had been identified, but show that woodland was fenced, with the maintenance of fences being a significant cost.<sup>37</sup>

Timber and heavier wood products could have been taken by cart to Greenwich or Dartford and sold there for local use, or to wood-mongers who would arrange transport along the river to London. Draper has argued that at this date both Dartford and Greenwich may have

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<sup>34</sup> Du Boulay, *Lordship of Canterbury* (1966); *Medieval Bexley* (Bexley, 1993).

<sup>35</sup> Du Boulay, *Medieval Bexley*, p. 15. The amounts quoted are average incomes over 10 accounts from 1237 and 1270-1350.

<sup>36</sup> Du Boulay, *Medieval Bexley*, p. 11, p. 34; *Lordship of Canterbury*, p. 394.

<sup>37</sup> Du Boulay, *Medieval Bexley*, p. 11.

been centres for ship-building, generating a significant requirement for local wood.<sup>38</sup> Dartford was also developing as a processing centre for a range of goods, including hides and woad to make dye.<sup>39</sup> Barrels were needed by London brewers but were also widely used to transport other items, such as dyestuff and fish.<sup>40</sup> Local wood was available at Greenwich from Lewisham priory's woods, and at Dartford from woodland in adjacent Little and Lesnes and Axtane hundreds, but both centres were easily accessible from Bexley. A John 'le Cu[per]e' is listed under Bexley vill in the 1301 lay subsidy return for Ruxley hundred, suggesting relevant skills were available locally.<sup>41</sup>

Woodland was also important to Canterbury Cathedral priory's manor of Greater Orpington. The demesne contained extensive woodland at Knockholt, high on the North Downs, and at Hockenden, on the eastern slopes of the Cray valley. Knockholt's name indicates the presence of oak-woods.<sup>42</sup> The bedels' rolls for Orpington show how this woodland was managed and used.<sup>43</sup> As at Bexley, woodland was separated off from other land. The priory employed a guardian for the woods at Knockholt; they, and the wood at Hockenden, were protected with ditches, banks, fences and locked gates. 3,300 yards of ditch were dug at Knockholt in 1318 at a cost of £5, and 1980 yards of fencing made for 15 s 10 d.<sup>44</sup> Wood products were evidently reserved for the use of the demesne, with tenants and grazing animals tightly controlled or perhaps entirely excluded.<sup>45</sup>

Large numbers of trees were processed at Knockholt. In 1281, 2,600 oak saplings were felled over a period of nineteen weeks; the sawyer was paid 22 s 2 d at 2 d a day. The saplings were sold at 26 s 8 d per hundred, though there is no information on where or how the sales were made. In 1308 three hundred trees were felled at a cost of 19 s and trimmed for 14 s.

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<sup>38</sup> Draper, 'Timber and iron', in Sweetinburgh (2010), p. 63 ff.

<sup>39</sup> Woad at Dartford: Chapter 3.

<sup>40</sup> Draper notes that the 1334/35 lay subsidy return for Dartford includes a Richard 'le Coupere' (cooper). The earlier 1301 return for Dartford lists a John Carpenter and Adam Carpenter; Adam has unspecified merchandise for sale: TNA E 179/123/4, Coates, 'Valuation of Dartford', pp. 291 f.

<sup>41</sup> E 179/123/5, Bexley.

<sup>42</sup> Knockholt: OE *æ̅t p̅am acholte* = 'at the oakwood', Wallenberg, PNK p. 27,

<sup>43</sup> M. Bowen, 'The Priory Orpington: an account of a working farm based on the Bedell's rolls 1280-1372, 1471' (ODAS Archives, Vol. 24 No. 4, 2002), pp. 56-88.

<sup>44</sup> Bowen, p. 76 f.

<sup>45</sup> Sir Robert Stangrave's tenancy at Hockenden required him to fence the priory's wood there; this provision ended when he made adjacent land available to the priory: Hasted II, p. 119.

The bedel's roll for 1309 shows that nine oaks were felled and prepared at Hockenden and taken on eight hired carts to Dartford for onward shipping to London, while four carts took timber prepared at Knockholt to Greenwich.<sup>46</sup> At Hockenden in 1314 fourteen oaks were felled for 14 *d*.<sup>47</sup> The Hockenden oaks may have been destined for the priory's properties in London, while the timber from Knockholt was used in the construction of fourteen new shops on the priory's land in Southwark.<sup>48</sup> Hockenden timber was taken northwards from the wood while Knockholt timber followed a different overland route further west, though both then continued their journey by water.

Timber was used extensively for building work at the manor site. The *curia* – the enclosure of the manorial buildings – contained a manor hall, chapel, prior's chamber and solar, along with associated buildings such as a kitchen and dairy.<sup>49</sup> Prior Eastry instigated the building of a substantial new hall at Orpington in 1289-90; this was constructed of flint with Reigate stone for doorways and window-openings, but timber was needed for beams, rafters and crown-posts, and for internal fittings such as doors. Wooden hurdles served as scaffolding. Two sawyers worked at Knockholt for nine days to fell trees.<sup>50</sup> A carpenter was paid 24 *s* 6 *d* to construct a new solar from Knockholt timber.<sup>51</sup> The prior's chamber was repaired in 1288-90 and again in 1325-6, when a sawyer worked at Knockholt for six days felling and preparing timber for its re-roofing.<sup>52</sup>

The manor also had outbuildings including barns, a dovecote, pigsties, henhouse and cowsheds, and the enclosure was protected by fencing and a 'great gate'. The timber-framed farm buildings were regularly repaired and renewed, with 6,000 wooden shingles used for the walls of the dovecote and 5,750 for the roof.<sup>53</sup> Knockholt timber was used to

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<sup>46</sup> Bowen, 'The Priory Orpington', p. 75.

<sup>47</sup> Bowen, 'The Priory Orpington', p. 73.

<sup>48</sup> Carlin, *Medieval Southwark* (1996), p. 46. M. Mate 'Property Investment by Canterbury Cathedral Priory 1250-1400' (*Journal of British Studies*, Vol. 23, No. 2 (Spring, 1984)), pp. 1-21, points out (p. 7) that Southwark was the main residence of the prior while he was in London, and that in 1310 Prior Eastry renovated the priory's house and built fourteen new shops at a cost of £ 70 7 *s* 0 *d*; this figure did not include the cost of the timber.

<sup>49</sup> Bowen, p. 61 f.

<sup>50</sup> Bowen, p. 59.

<sup>51</sup> Bowen, p. 60.

<sup>52</sup> Bowen, p. 61.

<sup>53</sup> Bowen, p. 63: Shingles on the dovecote, p. 67 (other farm buildings had tiled roofs).



rebuild the main barn in 1288-90; major repairs in 1328 required 5,000 laths.<sup>54</sup> A carpenter built a new pigsty in 1309-10 which was extensively repaired in 1318-19 with 4,000 laths.<sup>55</sup> The great gate was repaired after damage. The mill was regularly repaired using timber – the priory maintained the building, though it was leased out to a miller. Fencing and gates, sheepfolds, a pillory and fodder racks for the farm were all made by estate carpenters, along with a ‘great table top’ of oak for the hall and chests to store documents.<sup>56</sup> Orpington carpenters sometimes made items for other manors in the Surrey custody, such as a fodder rack for the priory’s Walworth manor, and timber was felled for construction work at Walworth and Cheam.<sup>57</sup>

Despite its extensive sources of supply, the demesne sometimes purchased specialist timber; in 1303 a *doser* (canopy) over the high table on the dais in the hall was made from fifteen *estrichbords*.<sup>58</sup> *Estrichbords* were seasoned oak boards from the Baltic region, imported and sold in London by Hanse merchants.<sup>59</sup> The canopy was presumably intended as an impressive feature of the hall, positioned over the main seat which might be occupied by the prior on his visits. The boards were expensive at 4 s but as substantial, seasoned boards they were unlikely to warp, whereas local wood was normally used green.<sup>60</sup> The records do not say where the purchase was made but it is likely to have been in London. The Hanse merchants were based in Dowgate ward, near the river.<sup>61</sup>

*Talwode* and faggots were prepared for use as fuel in the manor hall and guesthouse at Orpington. They were also sent to the prior’s lodgings in London, the prior’s property at Southwark and to the archbishop’s guesthouse.<sup>62</sup> In 1309 the cost for taking 325 faggots and *talwode* to Dartford by cart from Hockenden was 6 s 6 d, but it then cost only 2 s 2 d for

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<sup>54</sup> Bowen, ‘The Priory Orpington’, p. 64.

<sup>55</sup> Bowen, ‘The Priory Orpington’, p. 64.

<sup>56</sup> Bowen, ‘The Priory Orpington’, p. 73.

<sup>57</sup> Bowen, ‘the Priory Orpington’, p. 75-76.

<sup>58</sup> Bowen, ‘The Priory Orpington’, p. 60.

<sup>59</sup> L. F. Salzman, *Building in England Down to 1540: A Documentary History* (Oxford, 1952), pp. 441-3; 483-5; 478-82.

<sup>60</sup> Bowen, ‘The Priory Orpington’, p. 60.

<sup>61</sup> The Hanseatic merchants were based in the Steelyard (in Dowgate ward) in the city: Barron, *Later Medieval London*, p. 15.

<sup>62</sup> Bowen, ‘The Priory Orpington’, p. 76. The prior had a residence in Southwark. It is not clear where the ‘archbishop’s guesthouse’ referred to was (possibly Lambeth).

transport from Dartford to London by water – showing how much more economical it was to move wood over long distances by water.<sup>63</sup> Faggots and *talwode* were also sold, though it is unclear whether these sales were made on site, at a local market or in London. 7, 500 bundles were produced in 1307, 6,700 in 1319 and 4,100 in 1328, at a cost of between 2 s and 3 s per hundred.<sup>64</sup>

The Orpington estate evidently had ample resources for its own everyday use; it also had sufficient surplus timber to support significant reconstruction work at the manor and on other manors within the Surrey custody or in London. It was able to generate fuel for use in the prior's lodgings in London. On top of this it was able to generate considerable surpluses of both timber and firewood for sale and these were important aspects of its economy. The estate was also prepared to purchase specialist timber where this was felt appropriate for high-status decoration. Unfortunately, similar detail is not available for other manors within Ruxley hundred.

Kemnal, a subinfeudated manor of Chislehurst held by Hornchurch priory in Essex following a grant by king Henry II in 1179, would also have had access to woodland – the name 'Chislehurst' means gravelly woodland and woods are still widespread in the area. The manor's accounts do not survive, but Hornchurch priory had access to timber and firewood from its own demesne at Havering-atte-Bower, so it is unlikely to have looked to Kemnal for supplies. Lesnes priory held Tong, also a subinfeudated manor of Chislehurst, by 1280 and as at Kemnal, woodland would have been a significant element of the manor's landscape.<sup>65</sup> The priory would have needed a significant supply of firewood and wood products in its capacity as a guesthouse for pilgrims on the road to Canterbury; it might also have needed brushwood to provide flood defences around its reclaimed marshland.<sup>66</sup> Tong would have been a useful possession for Lesnes priory on both counts. It may also have been valued as a recreational space.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> Bowen, p. 74.

<sup>64</sup> Bowen, p. 74.

<sup>65</sup> The prior of Lesnes received a grant of free warren on his manor of Tong in 1280.

<sup>66</sup> W. Page (ed.), 'Houses of Austin canons: The abbey of Lesnes or Westwood', in *A History of the County of Kent: Volume 2*, ed. William Page (London, 1926), pp. 165-167.

<sup>67</sup> In 1280 the prior of Lesnes received a grant of free warren in respect of his manor of Tong - see Table 3 below.

### 2.2.6 Woodland management: lay demesnes

It is more difficult to discover how lay manorial demesne estates produced and used timber and woodland products. Like Bexley and Orpington, the larger estates should have been able to service most of their requirements from their own woodland. It is less easy to see whether they were generating surplus wood for supply to London. Some evidence for the value and use of woodland on a large lay estate comes from information about Cudham in the 1271-72 Inquisition *post mortem* (IPM) of William de Say.<sup>68</sup> The de Say family held extensive estates across southern and eastern England; the inquisition lists ten manors, including four in Kent.

The IPM extent for Cudham is summarised in Table 2 below.<sup>69</sup> Some of the demesne woodland evidently lay within the parks of Bertred and Buckhurst.<sup>70</sup> The IPM shows that the most valuable land on the demesne was the 150 acres of underwood in Bertred park that was available for sale. This had a value of 12 *d* an acre, compared with arable land at only 2 *d* or pasture at 3 *d* or 4 *d* per acre. A high value was attributed to pannage, surprising at this date, though it was noted as an unreliable source of income.

The de Say family evidently made use of at least some of the land at Cudham to create parks (as at other manors, including Enfield in Middlesex) but the purpose of these parks is uncertain. They may have been intended as recreational landscapes (see further below) but as the park at Cudham controlled access to the most valuable woodland on the estate, its primary purpose may have been woodland management rather than recreation.

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<sup>68</sup> William de Say, No. 813: 'Inquisitions Post Mortem, Henry III, File 42', in *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem: Volume 1, Henry III*, ed. J E S Sharp (London, 1904), pp. 273-287. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/inquis-post-mortem/vol1/pp273-287> [accessed 25 June 2023].

<sup>69</sup> The extent for Cudham is transcribed in G. S. Steinman, *Some account of the manor of Apuldrefield in the parish of Cudham* (London: J. B. Nichols, 1851), p. 3 f., footnote e.

<sup>70</sup> Buckhurst: OE *bōc* = beech-tree + *hyrst* = wood; Wallenberg, *PNK*, p. 24; Bertred or Bertrey: probably the forerunner of modern Berry's Green, from OE *hryding* = clearing; Wallenberg, *PNK*, p. 23 f.

	Source of income	Item	Total Values
1	Cudham	200 acres arable @ 2d /acre	£2 13 s 4 d
2		104 acres waste @ 1d /acre	8 s 8 d
3	Bertrede [subinfeudated manor within Cudham vill]	164 acres arable @ 2d / acre	£1 7 s 4 d
4		[No meadow specified]	-
5	Park of Cudham and wood of Bokehurst [Buckhurst]	100 acres pasture @ 3d/ acre	£1 5 s 0 d
6	Park of Bertred	30 acres pasture @ 4d /acre	10 s 0 d
7	[Ditto]	200 acres wood, of which: 150 acres underwood 'which may be sold', @ 12 d per acre	£7 10 s 0 d
8		Pannage 'when it happens'	12 s 0 d
9	Rents of assize		£17 0 s 0 d
10	Rents of assize of ploughshares		9 s 4 d
11	Services	Value of services cancelled out by cost of food for workers	-
12	Rents of assize	Wagon	2 s 0 d
13	Pleas and perquisites	'they say' valued at:	£1 0 s 0 d
14	Windmill	9 quarters of maslin	£1 3 s 4 d
15	Church	Patron, William de Say	£20 0 s 0 d
16	'house with herbage'		2 s 0 d
17	Miscellaneous	1 lb pepper, 8 d; ½ lb cumin 1 ½ d, 1 pair gilt spurs 6 d.	1 s 3 ½ d
18	Reliefs owed	£5 + 50 s	£7 10 s 0 d

**Table 2: Inquisition *post mortem* of William de Say, 1271-72: extent relating to the manor of Cudham<sup>71</sup>**

The Cudham landscape has been studied by Sue Harrington, who has identified early woodbanks there.<sup>72</sup> Using placename, map and other evidence she suggests that in the later medieval period much of the land was in fact compartmentalised woodland and open fields (rather than wood pasture), with a specific area of woodland producing surplus for a market economy. Harrington notes similarities with woodland on estates nearby in Surrey, particularly the manor of Farleigh. She suggests the landscape was organised in this way as a 'specialist regime producing a range of woodland products in London's hinterland' and argues that Cudham's woodlands were being managed with London markets in mind.<sup>73</sup>

<sup>71</sup> Source: Steinman, *Manor of Apuldfreifeild*, p. 3 f.

<sup>72</sup> S. Harrington, *A Study in Woodlands Archaeology: Cudham, North Downs* (Oxford: BAR British Series 368, 2004).

<sup>73</sup> Harrington, *Woodlands Archaeology: Cudham*, p. 77 f.

The de SAYS' main residence was on their Deptford manor in West Greenwich. Excavations at the site of the later Deptford dockyard and the early-modern house known as Sayes Court have uncovered evidence of a medieval house constructed from timber.<sup>74</sup> Timber and coppice wood would have been needed for the initial construction and subsequent maintenance of that house and any associated manorial buildings, as well as for household items and fuel. The 1271-72 IPM shows that there was a house at Cudham 'with herbage'; this was presumably the manorial centre from which the estate was managed and would have included outbuildings, some or all of which would have been timber-framed. A significant proportion of the family's woodland resources at Cudham may therefore have been channelled towards construction and maintenance work on the de SAYS' own manors at Deptford and Cudham; the bedels' rolls from Orpington discussed above show how extensive this work could be. However, timber could easily have been transported from Cudham to West Greenwich for onward sale in London. Lewisham priory, a cell of the alien priory of St Peter's, Ghent, had a wharf there next to the de SAYS manor at Deptford. Draper points out that the early-modern wharf there was known as the Woodwharf, which may indicate an earlier use in wood trading.<sup>75</sup>

It is impossible to say how the de SAYS managed their extensive estate manors – for example whether manors were grouped regionally, as with Canterbury Cathedral priory's estates or the holdings of Merton College, or whether each was left in the hands of a local steward.<sup>76</sup> The witnesses to the Cudham inquisition included 'William the reve' – an estate reeve had a role in managing the harvest – and 'Simon the bedell', presumably responsible for producing the Cudham estate's accounts and perhaps for overseeing the onward sale of its wood. Thirty years later, the 1301 lay subsidy return for Cudham lists a William Carpent[er] along with 'Rad[ulphus] son of Robert le Reve' and 'Adam Bedell'; 'Adam Bedel' is also listed in the

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<sup>74</sup> 'The medieval manor house of Sayes Court, constructed of wood, was located at about NGR TQ 36970 78038; the excavators noted it was 'certainly in existence by 1405'. A. Francis, *The Deptford royal dockyard and manor of Sayes Court, London, excavations 2000-2012*, MOLA Monograph 71 (London: MOLA, 2017), p. 15. This may have been the thirteenth-century manor house of the de SAYS, though there are also references to a Deptford 'castle' built by their Maminot ancestors, and to 'stony foundations' of uncertain location (Francis, p. 14). An earlier building with stone or flint walls would still have required timber-framing in its roof and for internal fittings.

<sup>75</sup> Draper, 'Timber and iron', Sweetinburgh (2010), p. 66.

<sup>76</sup> Smith, *Canterbury Cathedral Priory*, p. 100 f.; P. D. A. Harvey, *A Medieval Oxfordshire Village: Cuxham, 1240-1400* (Oxford: OUP, 1965), p. 135.

section corresponding to Cudham in the lay subsidy return for 1334-35.<sup>77</sup> Cudham evidently had people on hand to manage its woodland and to carry out any specialist work required.

Cudham's administration in the later thirteenth century, with a non-resident lord, may have been more formalised than on some other lay estates; similar names denoting administrative functions rarely appear elsewhere in the lay subsidy returns for Ruxley hundred. The de Says presumably held Cudham manor in demesne. The 1271/72 IPM refers to two knights' fees at Cudham, one held by Sir Henry de Apeldrefield, the other by Sir Nicholas Pessun.<sup>78</sup> Sir Henry de Apeldrefeld held the sub-manor of Aperfield, Sir Nicholas Pessun was tenant of the de Say's adjacent manor of Keston. Thirty years later, the 1301 lay subsidy return for Ruxley hundred makes no reference to de Say in the entry for Cudham vill; the first two entries are for Sir William de Hamelton, assessed at £22 8 s 7 d, one of the highest amounts in the hundred, suggesting he may have become the de Says' tenant at the manor, and Sir Henry de Apeldrefeld, at £15 18 s 9 d.<sup>79</sup> It is likely woodland management continued much as before but there is no further information.

Other demesne manors in the hundred would have had wood available for their own use and possibly also for sale, though documentary evidence is lacking. Woodbanks defining woodland can still be identified on St Paul's Cray Common and in the adjacent landscapes of Scadbury and Tong manors in Chislehurst.<sup>80</sup> None of these woodbanks can be dated specifically to the thirteenth/early fourteenth centuries but it is likely they are associated with woodland management from before or around that date. There is no contemporary documentary evidence to show how woodland at these manors was used or managed, but there could well have been scope for the generation of surpluses for sale at the lay holding of Scadbury, as well as at Tong (discussed above). Woodland features have also been

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<sup>77</sup> Handley & Chalklin, 'Kent Lay Subsidy', pp. 58-172, p. 134. Villis deduced by comparison of names with the villis in the unpublished 1301 return for Ruxley hundred, TNA E 179/123/5.

<sup>78</sup> William de Say, No. 813, Inquisitions Post Mortem, Henry III, File 42', in *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem: Volume 1, Henry III*, ed. J E S Sharp (London, 1904), pp. 273-287. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/inquis-post-mortem/vol1/pp273-287> [accessed 4 August 2021].

<sup>79</sup> TNA E 179/123/5, Cudham.

<sup>80</sup> These are visible on a LiDAR survey conducted by NMG for ODAS, 2015, and are identifiable on the ground.

identified at Ruxley manor; these may relate to the park there or may reflect an earlier pattern of woodland management.<sup>81</sup>

### 2.2.7 Non-demesne /peasant activity in the hundred

Christopher Dyer has consistently drawn attention to peasant enterprise as they provided for their families.<sup>82</sup> Below the level of the demesne, lay people in Ruxley hundred were well-placed to sell wood products or firewood to neighbours or even to London. This category could range from individuals of yeoman or even gentry status with large holdings of land, to craftsmen or tradesmen who might also possess small-holdings, or individuals eking out a living with little land and limited means who might gather a bundle of brushwood.

The 1301 lay subsidy return for the hundred throws light on peasant activities, particularly in relation to the availability of surplus firewood for sale. The assets listed in the return include the item *busch'* – i.e. *buscha* or *busca*, usually interpreted as 'firewood'.<sup>83</sup> Willard has argued that for rural areas, assets listed in lay subsidy returns essentially represented surplus goods over and above a minimum level that a household needed to function or a craftsman required to carry out their work. The assessors regarded these surplus items as available for sale and valued them accordingly.<sup>84</sup> If stores of firewood were regarded in this way, a reference to *buscha* should reflect, not a household's store of firewood for its own use, but an estimate of surplus stock that could be sold. As households would have needed some stocks of fuel for their own use, but very few assessments include *buscha*, this is a plausible explanation for the entries in the return; *busch'* may represent stocks deliberately generated for onward sale.

It is not clear from the entries whether *busch'* represented *talwode* or faggots (or both). A single *busch'* is usually valued at a standard amount of 6 *d*, but the return does not indicate what this represents; was it a single bundle of *talwode*, or a standard number of bundles

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<sup>81</sup> The dating of a park at Ruxley is uncertain – see further below.

<sup>82</sup> For example, C. Dyer, *Standards of Living in the Middle Ages, c.1200-1520* (Cambridge: CUP, 1989), pp. 109 ff.; C. Dyer, 'Did peasants need markets and towns? The experience of late medieval England' in M. Davies & J. Galloway (eds.), *London and beyond: essays in honour of Derek Keene*, (London, IHR, 2012), pp. 25-47.

<sup>83</sup> TNA E 179/123/5. Meaning of *buscha*: *bosca*, *busca* = wood material, firewood; R. Latham, *A Revised Medieval Latin Wordlist* (Oxford, 1984), p. 54; Galloway et al., 'Fuelling the city', p.451.

<sup>84</sup> The valuation is a standardised amount.

thought too obvious to need defining? At Orpington, wood was sold for 2 - 3 s per hundred bundles.<sup>85</sup> At a valuation of 2 s per hundred bundles of *talwode*, 6 d would represent around twenty-five bundles.

Firewood is a relatively low-value asset in the 1301 assessment, though not the lowest - hay valued at 3 d is included. Surplus *busch'* in Ruxley hundred could have been intended for small-scale sales to neighbours, but given the demand for fuel in London, *busch'* could have been taken to Greenwich or Dartford for transport up-river to the city or sold in a Ruxley market to a wood-monger who would arrange transport. Those with only a small amount to sell could have joined forces with neighbours.

A summary of the *busch'* listed in the Ruxley lay subsidy return for 1301 is shown in Table 3 below. It is striking that for most villas in the hundred, only a few individuals are listed as having *busch'* and most quantities are small. However, Farnborough, Bexley, Orpington and Ruxley villas are shown as having high totals. Farnborough has twenty-two *busch'*, shared between five residents; Ruxley villa, twenty shared between only two residents; Bexley has nineteen, shared between five residents; Orpington fifteen, shared between six residents. Canterbury Cathedral priory and the archbishop were not assessed for the lay subsidy on their demesnes. The individuals shown for Bexley villa must be tenants of the demesne. In Orpington villa, they will be tenants of Greater Orpington, or the lay manor of Little Orpington, or of the manor of Sandling.

Tenants on the ecclesiastical estates might have followed the example of the demesnes in selling their products to wood-mongers or may have sold firewood to the demesnes, for their own use or onward sale. In Orpington villa, a proportion of the individuals listed will not have been tenants of the ecclesiastical demesne but of the lay manors of Little Orpington or Sandling. The presence of a market in Orpington villa and, after 1253, a fair, may well have been significant; possibly wood-mongers visited to buy firewood, or supplies of fuel were made available for sale there to neighbours.

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<sup>85</sup> Bowen, 'The Priory Orpington', p. 74.



Vill listed in 1301 Lay Subsidy return <sup>86</sup>	Individuals in vill with <i>busch'</i>	Total number of <i>busch'</i> in vill	Market and fair?
Bexley	5	19	by 1315
North Cray		-	No
Ruxley	2	20	No
Footscray		-	No
Chislehurst	1	1	No
Okemore	1	2	No
St Paul's Cray		-	No
Orpington	6	15	Orpington, 1206 (no fair); 'Cray', 1279 (no fair); Sandling, 1253, 1281
Chelsfield	3	4	1290
Farnborough	5	22	1290
Downe	1	1	No
Cudham	4	4	1246, Fair at Bertrey; 1253, market and fair at Aperfield
Hayes	3	6	No
Keston	2	3	No
Wickham	3	3	by 1318
Knockholt	1	1	No
Hever	-	-	No

**Table 3: *Busch'* distribution in Ruxley Hundred, 1301**

The high total in Farnborough vill is likely to reflect its position on the route between London and the Sussex coast, which ran over the North Downs through Sevenoaks. In 1290 Sir Otto de Grandison had received a charter for a market and fair for his manors of Farnborough and Chelsfield, which he held of Edmund, Earl of Kent after the death of Simon de Montfort. A small settlement seems to have grown up at Farnborough, no doubt in response to the opportunities for trade arising from its position on this major route-way (see Chapter 5). The firewood could have been sold to wood-mongers at the market or fair, who could have taken it overland to Greenwich for onward transport by water to London. The firewood could also have been used locally. The individuals in Farnborough with the highest quantities of *busch'* are William de Medeburne, with a high total assessment of £4 19 s 11 d, 8 *busch'* and utensils worth 3 s, and John Thomas, with a total valuation of £1 16 s 2 d, five *busch'*, brass utensils and a lead and tripod. Listed next to John Thomas in the return is Robert Hetheman – an appropriate byname; Hasted noted that Farnborough vill

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<sup>86</sup> TNA E 179/123/5.

contained stretches of heath – with six *busch'* but a lower total valuation of 15 s and no utensils. All three also have some stock and stores of grain. Agnes Willes is listed with only a single *busch'*, a pig and some oats, but with utensils worth 1 s, and Simon de [Dog]elloe has two *busch'*, a horse, grain and beans.

The presence of utensils in the assets of three of the five individuals raises the possibility that they were providing refreshments for travellers and visitors to the market. The 'lead' and tripod may indicate that John Thomas was also brewing ale for sale.<sup>87</sup> Anyone selling food and drink needed firewood to support these activities; they may also have seen an opportunity to sell supplies to merchants passing through.<sup>88</sup>

The position of Ruxley vill, also with a high total, differs from Farnborough; although close to a major route-way, no market was established there or in neighbouring Footscray. Ruxley vill was well-wooded, so timber and firewood would have been plentiful; ancient woodland still survives in Ruxley Wood, overlooking the old Maidstone Road. The road ran across central Kent from Folkestone through Maidstone and on to Footscray, then west through Eltham towards Southwark and London.

The large number of *busch'* listed for Ruxley vill strongly suggests they were being prepared as a consignment for sale elsewhere. Neither individual was listed as possessing utensils (so the firewood was not destined for local preparation of food or ale for sale). John atte Halle, with 12 *busch'*, had a total assessment of 10 s 6 d derived from a lamb, grain and beans. A Thomas atte Halle was reeve for Bexley manor and the atte Halles were a local family.<sup>89</sup> In contrast, John Humfrey, with 8 *busch'*, had a total assessment of £10 10 s 6¼ d – the highest amount in the vill and a significant amount for the hundred. Humfrey had substantial quantities of grain and animals as well as firewood.

Ruxley vill was within easy reach of both Dartford and Greenwich and therefore had access along the river Thames to London. The figures suggest that John Humfrey and John atte Halle were trading in firewood on a large scale. A John Humfrey was assessed in Ruxley vill

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<sup>87</sup> For 'leads', see Chapter 4.

<sup>88</sup> For the market at Farnborough, see Chapter 5.

<sup>89</sup> At Halle: du Boulay, *Medieval Bexley*, p. 41; this family may be the antecedents of the later yeoman family of Halls, who provided a Bexley reeve in 1504-5 and subsequently built Hall Place in Bexley.

in 1334/35 for 1 s 4 *d*. Humfrey is a name that occurs quite frequently in Kent in this later lay subsidy return though nothing more is known about John Humfrey of Ruxley vill.<sup>90</sup> A Richard Humfrey was assessed for the 1301 lay subsidy at Downe, with a high assessment of £4 5 s 8 ¼ *d*. In 1306 a Thomas Humfrey (place of residence not specified), along with John le Ost of Dartford, registered a debt of 5 marks owed to Adam Symoun of London, fishmonger, under a certificate of merchant staple, suggestive of mercantile activity.<sup>91</sup> This might indicate that members of the Humfrey family were operating in London and north-west Kent as merchants – though it cannot be confirmed that Thomas and John were related.

It is worth noting that the wealthy Fivian family, citizens of London, merchants, and with connections to the de Rokesle and Box families, also held property in Ruxley vill.<sup>92</sup> John Fivian appears in the 1301 Lay Subsidy return, assessed in Ruxley vill for the significant amount of £6 4 s 4 *d*. Galloway has identified members of the Box family as London traders in wood along with many other commodities.<sup>93</sup> It is possible that connections between local peasants and city merchants provided a trade route for firewood out of Ruxley; the ready availability of timber and firewood, with local people available to process it, may have been a reason for these families to acquire land in the vill.

The Fivians / Vivians – John Vivian, wife Margaret and son Thomas – acquired property in St Paul's Cray in 1313, from Simon atte Broke of Pauls Creye (in 1346, Simon de Broke was said to hold a fee in the manor of St Paul's Cray alongside Sir Peter de Huntyngheld, and Margaret Fivian is described as holding a half-knight's fee of the manor from them).<sup>94</sup> In

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<sup>90</sup> Handley & Chalklin, 'Kent Lay Subsidy', p. 133 (attributed to Ruxley vill from comparison between entries and those for the 1301 return TNA E 179/123/5); and index to the return, p. 327.

<sup>91</sup> TNA C 241/51/58. John Ost is listed in the 1301 lay subsidy return for Dartford (Coates, 'Valuation of the Town of Dartford', p. 296). Draper suggests 'le Ost' may be indicative of a role as 'host' for alien merchants in Dartford: Draper, 'Timber and Iron', p. 67.

<sup>92</sup> John Fivian has large quantities of grain (wheat, rye, barley and oats), plough animals (five oxen and two *stotti*), a cow, heifer and calf, piglet and vetch (fodder); TNA E 179/123/5, Ruxley. See also Chapter 6.

<sup>93</sup> Galloway et al., 'Fuelling the City', p. 452.

<sup>94</sup> Feet of Fines for Kent, TNA CP/25/1/100/89, No. 220; image at [http://aalt.law.uh.edu/AALT7/CP25\(1\)/CP25\\_1\\_100\\_81-96/IMG\\_0298.htm](http://aalt.law.uh.edu/AALT7/CP25(1)/CP25_1_100_81-96/IMG_0298.htm) (accessed 22/3/2022). J. Greenstreet, 'Abstracts of the Kent Fines (Pedes Finium) Levied in the Reign of Edward II', *Arch. Cant.* II (1877), pp. 305-358, No. 220. For Margaret Fivian and St Paul's Cray manor, see J. Greenstreet, (ed.), 'Assessments in Kent for the Aid to Knight the Black Prince, Anno 20 Edward III', *Arch. Cant.* Vol. 10 (London, 1876), pp. 99-162 (ref., p. 156).

addition to a messuage, 40 acres of land, 2 acres of wood, 2 acres of meadow and rents worth 4 s, the property had 4 acres of *alnetum*, an alder grove.<sup>95</sup> It is unusual to see a specific type of tree referenced in fines rather than the generic term *boscum*, woodland. Alder flourished near water, so the grove is likely to have been on the bank of the river Cray. The tree produced long, straight coppice-poles which when dry were used for scaffolding poles and fencing, but it had specific properties when wet, as it resisted rot; this made it useful for water-pipes and underwater piles. It also made high-quality charcoal.<sup>96</sup> The Fivian family may have found St Paul's Cray land, and particularly an alder-wood, useful for their trading activity in London.

The table shows that other villis in Ruxley hundred contained some seventeen individuals assessed with between one and six *busch'*. They may have sold their surpluses to neighbours, traded at local markets or combined their stocks with others to sell to a wood-monger. It is surprising that Cecily, widow Chapman, is the only person assessed as having wood (four *busch'*) in Chislehurst, a well-wooded area. She may have sold firewood to neighbours in the community for a living - as perhaps her husband had once done.

Only four villis had no *busch'* listed in their return: North Cray, Footscray, St Paul's Cray and Hever. The three small Cray villis lay in the river valley, but all had woodland on the valley slopes (and as noted above, St Paul's Cray had at least one alder grove in 1313). It may be that in 1301 there was no incentive for individuals in these villis to build up stores for sale. Woodland at Hever had once provided acorns for pigs from both Orpington and Bexley manors; it was situated in the Weald, so could also have supplied surplus firewood, but its distance from the Thames riverside would have made transport of wood to London uneconomic.

Table 3 indicates a significant amount of trading activity in Ruxley hundred outside the demesne estates; if added together, the total *busch'* listed as available for sale is considerable. Some of the sales activity may have been linked to markets or fairs and to travellers passing through the hundred. But by the early fourteenth century, merchants

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<sup>95</sup> Latham, *Revised Medieval Latin Word-list*, *aln/etum*, alder timber, p. 16 (Greenstreet translates as 'osier').

<sup>96</sup> O. Rackham, *Ancient Woodland* (2<sup>nd</sup> edn., Dalbeattie: Castlepoint Press, 2003), p. 305-6.

from London such as the Fivians were finding it worthwhile to invest in land there, and their decisions may have been influenced by the opportunity to acquire produce such as timber and firewood for resale in London. The table reflects only a single point in time and leaves many questions unanswered, but without this information from the return of 1301, the involvement of non-demesne producers, whether gentry or peasants, in the sale of firewood would be invisible. This may indicate that they could be active but invisible in other areas of production; if those areas are not recorded in the lay subsidy return, there is little chance of their activity being picked up.

### **2.3: WOODLAND AS A RECREATIONAL LANDSCAPE**

*'The citizens of London were accustomed to hunt ... in Kent up to the water of the Cray...'*

#### **2.3.1 Background**

In the later twelfth century William Fitzstephen, a clerk who had worked closely with Thomas Becket, wrote a life of the archbishop.<sup>97</sup> He was, like Becket himself, a Londoner, and he included a description of the city in his narrative.<sup>98</sup> Fitzstephen included details of popular sports and pastimes, writing that most Londoners amused themselves with falcons, hawks and similar birds, and with hunting dogs in the woods. He added that London's citizens had the right to hunt in Middlesex, Hertfordshire and the whole of the Chilterns, and in Kent as far as the water of the Cray.<sup>99</sup>

The Fitzstephen account was written some thirty years before 1200, outside the time frame of this thesis. However, it provides an unusual reference to Londoners accessing a part of Kent that might have included some of Ruxley hundred, since there is a reference to the river Cray as a boundary. The Cray ran through the hundred from Orpington, joining the

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<sup>97</sup> A. J. Duggan, 'William fitz Stephen (fl. 1162-1174)' in ODNB (Oxford: OUP, 2004), [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/9643, accessed 18 August 2017].

<sup>98</sup> John Stow, 'Appendix: Libellum de situ et nobilitate Londini', in *A Survey of London. Reprinted From the Text of 1603*, ed. C L Kingsford (Oxford, 1908), pp. 218-229. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/no-series/survey-of-london-stow/1603/pp218-229> [accessed 14 May 2020].

<sup>99</sup> 'Plurimi civium delectantur, ludentes in avibus cæli, nisis, accipitribus, et huiusmodi; et in canibus militantibus in silvis. Habentque cives suum ius venandi in Middelsexia, Hertfordscira, et tota Chiltrā, et in Cantia usque ad aquam Crayæ.', 'Libellum', *Survey of London*, para. 36. It is not certain whether Fitzstephen meant to refer to specific birds by the terms *nisus* or *accipiter*. *Accipiter* is usually translated as a bird of prey, a falcon or hawk; *nisus* is usually translated as hawk, sometimes specifically the sparrowhawk).

Darent north of Bexley, at Crayford; it is therefore worth considering whether FitzStephen's comments remained valid in the next century. Hunting and hawking were popular pastimes throughout the Middle Ages, but is there any evidence that Londoners were hunting there between 1200 and 1350, as Fitzstephen claimed for the earlier period?

The remainder of the chapter considers whether there is any evidence to show that local woodland and wetlands in Ruxley hundred were used for recreation and whether Londoners participated in these sports. It goes on to examine the location and role of parks within the hundred and considers the significance of grants of 'free warren' to local landholders.

### **2.3.3 Falconry**

Falconry is, essentially, the training and use of raptors – falcons and hawks – to catch wild birds and small mammals. In later medieval England falconry was especially favoured as a sport by kings and the nobility. It could be an expensive pastime. Both lords and ladies kept birds on their estates. They provided them with dedicated housing, employed specialists to train and care for them and exchanged birds of prey as gifts.<sup>100</sup> For the nobility, falconry was an opportunity for display. Expeditions with friends and family were popular: in autumn and winter, parties set out to hunt with their birds in wetlands where wildfowl gathered to feed, or in the spring and summer visited fields and woodlands where small birds could be found. The prey that was caught could be served to guests at dinner.<sup>101</sup> Falcons such as gervfalcons were used to catch larger birds such as herons, while sparrowhawks might take smaller birds or waterfowl such as teal.<sup>102</sup>

Wildfowl flourished in the wetlands along the Thames riverside from Southwark to Dartford. This landscape would have been easily accessible to Londoners, as Watling Street ran out of the city into Kent, following higher ground broadly parallel to the river, or by boat along the Thames itself. From at least the twelfth century, possibly earlier, ecclesiastical magnates including the Bishop of Winchester, the Prior of Battle Abbey and the Prior of Canterbury

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<sup>100</sup> C. Woolgar, *The Great Household in Later Medieval England* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1999), p. 95, p. 194 f.

<sup>101</sup> U. Albarella & R. Thomas, 'They dined on crane: bird consumption, wild fowling and status in medieval England', *Acta Zoologica Cracoviensia* 45 (2002), pp. 23-38.

<sup>102</sup> Woolgar, *The Great Household*, p. 114 f.

Cathedral Priory occupied substantial residences at Southwark. Secular lords also acquired large town-houses there.<sup>103</sup> These were often moated, with jetties alongside the river bringing both the city and Westminster into easy reach. Southwark offered easy access to the city but was also a convenient base for expeditions into the marshes further east. From 1324-25 a Southwark property, la Rosere, was constructed for King Edward II, possibly as a 'pleasaunce' or royal retreat.<sup>104</sup> Edward III had a property constructed between 1353 and 1356 on the nearby riverside at Rotherhithe; he visited it several times during building work but seems not to have used it subsequently, possibly because it was too small for the royal retinue. The purpose of the building is unknown, though Edward favoured smaller residences. However, the building accounts refer to perching provided for the king's falcons and it has been plausibly suggested that the building was planned to support royal wildfowling expeditions into the adjacent wetlands.<sup>105</sup>

The construction of these properties offers some insight into how the Thames wetlands could have been used by the nobility living in and around London. This environment was also accessible from Ruxley hundred. Ruxley itself lay away from the Thames riverside but had its own rivers, the Ravensbourne and the Cray, along with smaller tributaries such as the Quaggy, Shuttle and Wansunt. The early character of its rivers is not easy to recapture as some stretches are now straightened or culverted, or even lost – water abstraction in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries for cloth manufacture led to the disappearance of the Wansunt - but it is likely that they originally offered extensive habitat for a wide range of wildfowl. In 2007 a 2.4 hectare of wetland near Crayford was restored by LB Bexley, making use of a section of stream identified as the 'lost' Wansunt, to replace nearby habitat destroyed by major road-widening. This is now managed as a wetland reserve. In 2014 it had resident water-rail, mallard and moorhen with teal, snipe and even bittern as regular winter visitors. Occasional visitors included heron, little egret, pochard and shelduck, along with birds of prey including sparrowhawk, kestrel, common buzzard and hobby.<sup>106</sup> It is likely

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<sup>103</sup> Carlin, *Medieval Southwark* (1996), pp. 25-30.

<sup>104</sup> S. Blatherwick & R. Bluer, *Great houses, moats and mills on the south bank of the Thames*, (London: MOLA Monograph 47, 2009), pp. 152-154. Edward II's death in 1327 meant it was little-used.

<sup>105</sup> Blatherwick & Bluer, *Great houses, moats and mills*, pp. 15-38 (falconry perching, p 16.)

<sup>106</sup> A presentation from 2014 of the construction of the wetland – which lies within an unpromising industrialised, built-up area - and the lists of plants, amphibians, reptiles, insects and birds now present can be

that in the thirteenth century, this stretch of the Cray and its tributaries would have included extensive wetland habitat, and that similar habitat would have been found elsewhere. The hundred's rivers are likely to have offered many opportunities for falconry.

Falconry could also be practised in woodland where small woodland birds could be hunted with birds of prey. Peasants might also poach birds to eat or to sell in a market, especially when food was scarce in the early decades of the fourteenth century.

There were clearly landscapes within Ruxley hundred which were suitable for hunting wildfowl, but there is no direct reference to participation in falconry in the limited documentation for Ruxley hundred. Aristocratic families with land in the hundred may have visited their property for sport. The de Say family based at Deptford had easy access to the woodland of Cudham. The 1301 lay subsidy return covering Cudham vill includes an individual with the byname Fauconer (falconer), perhaps an indication of a specialist role on the manor, maintaining and training the lord's falcons.<sup>107</sup> Possibly the de Says visited Cudham to enjoy falconry and local gentry and peasants may have taken advantage of the habitats or poached wildfowl, but it is unlikely that Londoners habitually travelled into the hundred; they are more likely to have practised falconry on the wetlands along the Thames.

#### **2.3.4 Hunting with Hounds**

Fitzstephen's second reference is to hunting with hounds in woodland. There is an extensive literature covering the medieval enthusiasm for hunting with horses and dogs, especially the hunting of deer. This was a sport of the nobility, led by the king.<sup>108</sup> It was supported by a range of specialists - gamekeepers and huntsmen - who organised the hunts and managed the habitat, the hounds and the deer. Venison could not be bought or sold but might be given as a gift.<sup>109</sup> After the Norman Conquest King William established extensive royal

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accessed via the Thames21 website: <https://www.thames21.org.uk/2014/04/the-thames-road-wetland-project> [accessed 25 May 2020].

<sup>107</sup> TNA E 179/123/5, Cudham.

<sup>108</sup> R. Almond, *Medieval Hunting* (Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 2003), p.13 ff.

<sup>109</sup> R. Bartlett, *England under the Norman and Angevin Kings* (Oxford: OUP, 2000), pp. 238-241.



hunting-reserves or 'forests' throughout England. These were tightly controlled; the king alone had access to deer there, though grants of animals might be given to stock parks.<sup>110</sup>

Many magnates established their own reserves or parks to support their interest in hunting. They required special permission to do this within a royal forest, but elsewhere there were fewer constraints and permission was not always required. Parks were a widespread and significant feature of the medieval landscape and their purpose has been much debated. Essentially, a park was a defined rural space, some three hundred acres in area though often larger, with a compact perimeter that was usually roughly circular or oval. The boundary might be protected with high banks topped by fencing constructed of closely fixed wooden planks, known as the park pale. This fencing would contain specially constructed deer-leaps which would allow deer to enter the park but prevented their escape. Within the park boundary there might be a range of habitat: woodland, wood pasture and even cultivated land. A park could offer grazing and protection for horses and cattle, but especially for deer. Fallow deer could not survive an English winter in the wild. The park environment offered the care they needed: a food supply and shelter, with dedicated staff to check on the animals as necessary.

Parks were often situated on poorer land which supported extensive woodland or common grazing. This could be managed as wood pasture. If deer were kept, they had to be kept away from young trees, so the park might be partitioned, with different compartments for different purposes. A park might provide an attractive setting for an aristocratic residence, allowing the property to be viewed to advantage by the visitor and providing entertainment for guests. Establishment of a park demonstrated status. It asserted the dominance of a lord who was able to organise the construction of expensive boundaries and the removal or re-routing of inconvenient paths - or even of habitation - to keep unwanted people and animals out, and who could afford the maintenance of the deer.

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<sup>110</sup> Stamper, 'Woods and Parks', p. 141.

Stephen Miles on has reiterated the primary importance of hunting in the establishment and maintenance of parks, even where the space might also serve other purposes such as grazing and wood-processing.<sup>111</sup> A park's assertion of status was always significant.

As with falconry, a hunt using dogs might provide food for an aristocratic feast as well as offer sport. Game animals – especially park-based deer – might also be taken by servants when the household needed meat. Lower members of society, excluded from aristocratic hunts, might nonetheless hunt smaller game animals in local woodland for sport or for food, and some might deliberately enter parkland to poach; this was a significant risk, as there were heavy penalties for damaging a park's defences or poaching its animals.<sup>112</sup>

### 2.3.5 Parks in Ruxley hundred

Kent contained no royal forest, meaning that deer-parks could be established without specific royal approval; there is therefore only limited documentary evidence of their creation.<sup>113</sup> The former hundred was heavily developed in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, meaning that opportunities to trace landscape features which might indicate the presence of a former deer-park are now limited.

Lamarde's 1596 list of deer-parks in Kent contains no reference to any park in Ruxley hundred.<sup>114</sup> Shirley's 1867 account of deer-parks in Kent mentions a *Domesday Book* refers to a park at Wickham (in Ruxley hundred), but the context suggests this is the large park at Wickhambreaux in east Kent.<sup>115</sup> Only a few parks in the hundred can be identified from contemporary references; these are set out below.

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<sup>111</sup> S. Miles on, *The Park in Medieval England* (Oxford: OUP, 2009), p. 180 f.

<sup>112</sup> J. Birrell, 'Peasant deer poachers in the medieval forest', R. Britnell & J. Hatcher (eds.), *Progress and problems in medieval England* (Cambridge: CUP, 1996), pp. 68-88, discusses deer-poaching in royal forests; there were few deer (if any) in Ruxley parks but illicit access to a park would have been punished.

<sup>113</sup> For Kent's later deer-parks, see S. Pittman, *Elizabethan and Jacobean Deer-Parks in Kent*, unpublished PhD thesis, 2011; <https://www.kentarchaeology.org.uk/17/01/2013/06/000.htm> [accessed 29 May 2020]. The detailed accounts of individual parks include information relevant to earlier periods.

<sup>114</sup> W. Lamarde, *Perambulation*, p. 51.

<sup>115</sup> E. P. Shirley, *Some account of English deer parks with notes on the management of deer* (London, 1867, reprinted Glasgow: Grimsay Press, 2007), p. 69; Morgan (ed.), *DB Kent*, [West] Wickham, 5, 25; Wickhambreaux, 5, 124.

## **Bexley**

The archbishop had a park within his demesne manor of Bexley by the later thirteenth century. The 1283-5 Survey undertaken for Archbishop Pecham states: 'Demesne: .... There is here the wood called Westwood and one park.' Later, the survey says: 'The men say that...they had been accustomed to have the feeding of their pigs in the wood in both winter and summer. But now that the woods are partly destroyed and partly lie in the park they have none of these things, and pray that this should be remedied.' The date of the park's creation is unknown. It is possible that the park was an early creation, and that this was long-remembered complaint; archbishops had the right to create deer-parks on their demesne from at least the time of the Norman Conquest, confirmed along with other rights by King Henry II.<sup>116</sup> It is also possible that a park in Bexley predated the Conquest; locations maintained specifically for hunting are known to have been in place from before 1066.<sup>117</sup>

A charter dated AD 814 records that Coenwulf, king of Mercia, granted ten sulungs of land at Bexley to Archbishop Wulfred in AD 814. Although the charter is in Latin, the boundaries of the grant are described in Old English. Nicholas Brooks considered it to be a forgery, produced in the final quarter of the tenth century when the practice of including Old English boundary details was usual.<sup>118</sup> Even at this later date, it offers a useful description of the Bexley estate in the pre-Conquest world. The charter describes the boundary at several points as following or reaching the *haga*, particularly to the east and south. The Old English word *haga* commonly refers to a defensive boundary of ditch and bank, either of an enclosure or of a linear nature. There is a major system of linear dykes/ditches within Joydens Wood – *faesten-dic* – which today lies across the border between Kent and LB Bexley; it is considered to be at least early medieval in date and may represent earlier estate boundary/ies.<sup>119</sup> However the terms *haga* (Old English) and *haia* (Norman French) were also

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<sup>116</sup> F. R. H. Du Boulay, *The Lordship of Canterbury* (London, 1966), p. 283 f.

<sup>117</sup> R. Liddiard, 'The Deer Parks of Domesday Book', *Landscapes*, 4:1(2003), pp. 4-23.

<sup>118</sup> Charter No. 49, 49A in N. P. Brooks & S. E. Kelly, *Charters of Christ Church Canterbury* (Oxford: OUP for British Academy, 2013), Part I, pp. 541-549. Discussed with references by du Boulay, *Lordship*, p. 28 – 'a splendid genuine charter'. Sawyer number: 175.

<sup>119</sup> Historic England listing reference: 'Faesten Dic, a medieval frontier work in Joydens Wood', 1012979. The entry, originally made in 1955, states: 'Faesten Dic is thought to have been constructed between the fifth and sixth centuries AD during which time the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle records tribal warfare in the Bexley area. The dyke is also mentioned in an Anglo-Saxon boundary survey of AD 814. Partial excavation

used specifically to refer to deer-park boundaries, raising the question of whether *haga* carries that meaning in this charter.

Liddiard has argued that parks were more widespread in the pre-Conquest era than previously thought and were not a purely Norman introduction. However, he also notes that fallow deer are now thought to have been introduced into England later than once believed, and that the creation of a park to protect this species might also have been a later feature – possibly as late as the twelfth century.<sup>120</sup> Mileson suggests that hays may have been associated with a wider delineation of hunting-grounds, rather than with park boundaries as these were later understood.<sup>121</sup> It is possible that Bexley manor's eastern/southern border served as a section of the boundary of a pre-1066 hunting-ground, but did not operate as (and was not created as) a park boundary, in which case the park at Bexley was not necessarily an early feature. Witney notes that Archbishop Winchelsey (1295-1313) did not visit his manor of Bexley in eighteen years, and there is no information about how other archbishops used the park.<sup>122</sup> On balance, the role of the park in the thirteenth century and later appears to have been related to woodland management rather than sport.

### **Cudham**

The Inquisition *post mortem* (IPM) of the magnate Sir William de Say, held in 1271-72, contains two references to parks: one in Middlesex, where he held 'common pasture in the park at Enfeud' (Enfield), and one in Kent, where he held 'Codham manor ... including pasture in the wood of Bokehurst and the parks of Codham and Betred'.<sup>123</sup> The de Says were a major barony and hunting would have been an important feature of their lifestyle. Cudham was easily accessible from their residence at Deptford and would have offered family and guests a convenient opportunity for recreational hunting – the estate at Deptford

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in 1941 revealed the existence of a narrow, buried layer of gravel immediately to the east of the bank, interpreted as an associated military walkway.'

<sup>120</sup> Liddiard, 'Deer Parks of Domesday Book', p. 20.

<sup>121</sup> Mileson, *Park*, p. 134 fn.44.

<sup>122</sup> Witney, *Survey of Archbishop Pecham's Kentish Manors*, p. lviii.

<sup>123</sup> 'Inquisitions Post Mortem, Henry III, File 42', in J E E S Sharp, ed., *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem: Volume 1, Henry III*, (London, 1904), pp. 273-287; via *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/inquis-post-mortem/vol1/pp273-287> [accessed 24 May 2020]. The Bertred park contained woodland destined for sale.

was smaller in area than Cudham. It is possible that William de Say created the park, but it may have been in place much earlier.

The boundaries of the Cudham and Bertred parks cannot be reconstructed with certainty and there is no documentation to show how they were used beyond the reference in the IPM to woodland for sale. As discussed above, falconry could have been practised there. The 1272 IPM makes no reference to deer, so it is possible that by that time its main function was to control access to the woodland. In the 1301 lay subsidy return for Ruxley hundred, a resident of Cudham vill is named as Thomas atte Parke, with assets of 32 s 7½ d; he may have been the official responsible for the management of the park, including the management of the woodland and any sales.<sup>124</sup>

### **Ruxley**

The manor of Ruxley was held by the de Rokesle family from the time of the Norman Conquest. No park is mentioned in *Domesday Book* and documentation relating to the de Rokesles' time at Ruxley is thin. Sir Richard de Rokesle's Inquisition *Post Mortem* (IPM) held in Kent in 1321 shows that by that date, the family had acquired extensive property in east Kent, some through direct inheritance, some through acquisition. Richard is described as a son of John de Rokesle and had inherited the manor of Ruxley from his father; there is no mention of a park in the manorial extent.<sup>125</sup> Richard had no male heirs, and Ruxley passed through a complicated inheritance to Sir William Baud.

Sir William Baud's IPM of 1375 is the first direct documentary evidence for a park at Ruxley; it notes that he held the manor of Ruxley 'with its park'. The IPM further records that in 1366, when the estate had passed to Richard Poynings, who inherited as a minor, the manor of Ruxley had been demised to Thomas Mauer for nine years – except for the advowson of the church and 'Rokeslepark'.<sup>126</sup> As Richard Poynings was a minor in 1366, the park must have been created at the latest by his father or by his grandfather (Richard de Rokesle),

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<sup>124</sup> TNA E/179/123/5, Cudham.

<sup>125</sup> TNA C 134/66/23.

<sup>126</sup> A. E. Stamp, J. B. W. Chapman, Cyril Flower, M. C. B. Dawes and L. C. Hector, 'Inquisitions Post Mortem, Edward III, File 255', in *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem: Volume 14, Edward III* (London, 1952), pp. 237-251. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/inquis-post-mortem/vol14/pp237-251> [accessed 10 June 2020].

though if so, it is surprising that it is excluded from the 1321 extent. The Tithe Apportionment Schedule of 1836 for St Paul's Cray parish refers to Great Park Field, Middle Park Field and Further Park Field in an area attributable to Cookham Farm, and these names also occur on an earlier 1810 estate map made for John Thomas Townshend, Second Viscount Sydney, whose family had purchased the farm.<sup>127</sup> The map shows that these fields lay south of the Maidstone Road and the Ruxley manor site, on land now occupied by a golf course and sports centre, and they were presumably part of the former Ruxley manor estate. These boundaries would give a typical, broadly circular, park perimeter.

The de Rokesles were strong candidates to have a park; it seems surprising that the park at Ruxley manor was apparently established only as their line there came to an end, but it is possible that earlier references are now lost.

### **Wickham**

The branch of the Huntyngfeld family which held Wickham acquired the manor in 1274 from the Botiller family, who held it of the Duchy of Lancaster. Sir Peter Huntyngfeld served as Sheriff of Kent but appears not to have lived at Wickham and the Inquisition held following his death in 1308 made no reference to a park there.<sup>128</sup> Hasted states that Sir Walter Huntyngfeld, having inherited West Wickham manor from his father Sir Peter in 1308, obtained grants of a market and of free warren and also a licence to empark Frith Wood. A later writer also refers to a licence to 'impark Frithwood, Ladywood and Court wood etc., in the adjoining parish of Addington, with other woods in this parish'.<sup>129</sup> While the grants for

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<sup>127</sup> Tithe Apportionment, Sheet 11, parish of St Paul's Cray:

<https://www.kentarchaeology.org.uk/research/tithes>, accessed 8 June 2020; James Gudsell estate map (photocopy, whereabouts of original unknown), Bromley Historic Collections. I am grateful to Dr Susan Pittman for alerting me to the significance of these field-names.

<sup>128</sup> J E S Sharp and A E Stamp, 'Inquisitions Post Mortem, Edward II, File 1', in *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem: Volume 5, Edward II* (London, 1908), pp. 1-7. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/inquis-post-mortem/vol5/pp1-7> [accessed 31 May 2020]. The extent comprised a messuage with 250 acres of land and 200 acres of woods worth £7 and two cocks and twenty-two hens a year, with half a mark profit in fines from the Manorial Court; P. Knowlden & J. Walker, *West Wickham Past and Present* (West Wickham: Hollies Publications, 1986), p. 18.

<sup>129</sup> Hasted II, p. 32; J. Farnaby Lennard, 'West Wickham Court' (*Arch. Cant.* Vol. 13, 1880), p. 256.

the market and free warren are easily identifiable in the charter rolls for 1318, there is no specific reference to a park licence, but a park could have been created without a licence.<sup>130</sup>

### ***Other parks***

Documentation shows that parks existed on other manors within Ruxley hundred, including at the manor of Sandling/Okemore (within the parish of St Mary Cray) and at Scadbury manor (in Chislehurst), but the surviving evidence is later than 1350.<sup>131</sup> It is not impossible that these parks were in place before the Black Death but it is likely they were later creations.

### **2.3.6 Grants of ‘free warren’**

Although magnates might decide to establish a park for recreational purposes, hunting could also take place in the wider countryside without the presence of a park. During the thirteenth century there is increasing documentary evidence of awards by successive kings of grants of ‘free warren’, either as a gift or in return for a fine. The grant empowered the owner of an estate to hunt the ‘beasts of the warren’ on his demesne. It was possible, therefore, for a lord or lady to take a hunting party into their fields and woodland without the expense of creating a park, while tenants who worked the same land might be excluded from hunting on the demesne. The beasts of the warren were essentially creatures that were not deer: hares, rabbits, wild cats, polecats, badgers, foxes, pine marten, even wolves, and birds including partridge and pheasant.<sup>132</sup>

In Ruxley hundred, a number of grants of free warren were made to lords from the mid-thirteenth century onwards; these are summarised in Table 4.

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<sup>130</sup> *CChR*, 1300–1326, p. 376

<sup>131</sup> Transcript of BL Add 42715 ‘No. 340 The Manoure of Seynctlinge Okemore’ in J. Bower, *The Wotton Surveys 1557-1560* (2012), <https://kentarchaeology.org.uk/publications/member-publications/wotton-surveys>; it includes details of ‘A peece of wooddelande called Seynctlinge Parke’. A park at Scadbury was in place by the mid-seventeenth century, when an inventory showed it contained ‘a stock of deer and conies’; Hart & Archer, *Scadbury Manor*, p. 6.

<sup>132</sup> L. Cantor, ‘Forests, Chases, Parks and Warrens’, in L. Cantor (ed.), *The English Medieval Landscape* (London: Croom Helm, 1982), p. 82.

Date	Recipient	Place (Ruxley demesnes in <b>bold</b> )
1251 <sup>133</sup>	Sir Robert de Mares & his heirs	Demesne lands in <b>Akemere</b> (Okemore).
1252 <sup>134</sup>	Sir John de Mares	Manors of <b>Sandling</b> and Wychling (East Kent) [awarded with market grant for Sandling]
1253 <sup>135</sup>	Mgr Hugh de Mortuo Mari [Mortimer], Parson of the church of Orpington and his successors	Demesne lands of <b>Orpington</b>
1254 <sup>136</sup>	Thomas le barbur	Demesne Lands in <b>Chislehurst</b> [Frogna]
1280 <sup>137</sup>	Prior of Lesnes	Manors of Lyesnes (Lesnes), <b>Tung</b> [Manor of Tong in Chislehurst] & Acolta
1285 <sup>138</sup>	William de Chellesfield [Chelsfield]	Demesne lands in 'Hallstede (Halstead, Axtane hundred), <b>Chelesfeud</b> (Chelsfield), Schoram (Shoreham, Codsheath hundred), <b>Ockholte</b> (Knockholt, presumably as a tenant of Canterbury Cathedral Priory) and <b>Orpinton</b> ' [identified by Hasted as the manor of East Hall; Hasted, II, p. 105]
1290 <sup>139</sup>	Sir Otto de Grandison	Manors of <b>Chelsfield</b> , <b>Farnborough</b> and Kemsing (Codsheath hundred); awarded at same time as market grant. Manors previously held by Simon de Montfort.
1298 <sup>140</sup>	Sir Robert Staingrave [Stangrave]	Demesne lands on manors of Edenbridge and <b>Hokindene</b> (Hockenden).
1316 <sup>141</sup>	Prior and Convent of Christ Church, Canterbury	<b>Orpington</b> . Fine: 5 mks.
1317-1318 <sup>142</sup>	Sir Walter de Huntingfield	Manor of West <b>Wickham</b> [awarded with market grant].

**Table 4: Summary of grants of free warren for estates in Ruxley hundred.**

<sup>133</sup> *CChR*, 1226-1257, p. 354.

<sup>134</sup> *CChR*, 1226-1257, p. 381.

<sup>135</sup> *CChR*, 1226-1257, p. 435.

<sup>136</sup> '1254, membranes 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1', in *Calendar of Patent Rolls, Henry III: Volume 4, 1247-1258*, ed. H C Maxwell Lyte (London, 1908), pp. 328-349. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-pat-rolls/hen3/vol4/pp328-349> [accessed 23 March 2023].

<sup>137</sup> *CChR*, 1257-1300, p. 246.

<sup>138</sup> *CChR*, 1257-1300, p. 295.

<sup>139</sup> *CChR*, 1257-1300, p. 346.

<sup>140</sup> *CChR*, 1257-1300, p. 471.

<sup>141</sup> *CChR*, 1300-1326, p. 314.

<sup>142</sup> *CChR*, 1300-1326, p. 376.



Archbishops had the automatic right of free warren over all their demesne lands, as Priors of Canterbury Cathedral priory did over theirs. The entry for a grant to Hugh de Mortimer in 1253 is interesting. Mortimer was the rector of Orpington and Chelsfield churches and in this role may have had lodgings in the priory's estate centre at Orpington.<sup>143</sup> He was also a senior official of the church at Canterbury.<sup>144</sup> He used the Orpington estate centre when he had church business in Orpington or when travelling between Canterbury and Lambeth or London.<sup>145</sup>

The first two entries in the table relate to the manors of Sandling and Okemore. Sir Robert de Mares had been a hunting companion of king Henry III; the king awarded him the manor of Meares Assheby in Northampton.<sup>146</sup> He died in 1257. Sir John de Mares had accompanied the king on his military expedition to Gascony and received other favours. The entry for Ruxley hundred in the Kent Hundred Rolls of 1274-75 shows that 'the jurors say that John Marsh [de Mares] holds Scantlind [Sandling] manor of the lord king in chief and it is worth £10 each year' and that 'they say that the Lady Sibyl, wife of Robert de Marais, has warren at Atmere [Okemore] but they do not know by what warrant'.<sup>147</sup>

Thomas le barbur held Frognal in Chislehurst of the king but there is no other information about the demesne there. The grant appears to have been given for support in Gascony.

William de Chelsfield had limited opportunity to enjoy his grant. He was sheriff of Kent in 1286; in 1293-94 he was accused of malpractice and sent to the Tower of London.<sup>148</sup> Otto de Grandison, a close associate of King Edward I, then held the manors of Chelsfield and

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<sup>143</sup> 'Regesta 25: 1256-1260', in *Calendar of Papal Registers Relating To Great Britain and Ireland: Volume 1, 1198-1304*, ed. W H Bliss (London, 1893), pp. 340-374. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-papal-registers/brit-ie/vol1/pp340-374> [accessed 31 December 2020] shows him as papal chaplain to Cliffe, Orpington and Chelsfield.

<sup>144</sup> Smith, *Canterbury Cathedral Priory*, p. 69, fn. 6.

<sup>145</sup> J. R. Scott, 'Charters of Monks Horton Priory', *Arch. Cant.* Vol X (1876) pp. 269-281; the charter on p. 278 refers to Mortimer holding a court in the hall at Orpington, 'in aula rectoris,' in 1270.

<sup>146</sup> 'Parishes: Mears Ashby', in *A History of the County of Northampton: Volume 4*, ed. L F Salzman (London, 1937), pp. 129-132. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/northants/vol4/pp129-132> [accessed 29 June 2023].

<sup>147</sup> B. Jones, *Kent Hundred Rolls Project (KAS: 2007) online at* <https://kentarchaeology.org.uk/sites/default/files/publications/hrproject.pdf> (accessed 26/06/2023). Ruxley hundred: m 13 d, transcript p. 150.

<sup>148</sup> C. Burt, *Edward I and the Governance of England* (Cambridge: CUP 2013), p. 170.

Farnborough from the Duchy of Lancaster, as Edmund Duke of Lancaster had been awarded the estates of Simon de Montfort following de Montfort's death at Evesham in 1265.

The 1316 grant to Orpington priory is a confirmation of an existing right to free warren over all its demesne lands; perhaps the priory paid 5 marks for clarification relating to Orpington, following confusion after de Mortimer's death over whether subsequent rectors had the right to hunt there.

It is surprising not to see Sir Gregory de Rokesle included in the list; he held the manor of Sandling at the time of his death in 1291, though it is unlikely that he resided there. He appears to have held (or at least, had access to) the de Rokesle family manor of Lullingstone in Codsheath hundred for a time, although it was not among his holdings at the time of his death, and received a grant of free warren there in 1279.<sup>149</sup> In 1282 de Rokesle wrote to his friend and colleague John de Kirkeby asking him to send urgent replacements of important official documents which had been left on a table in his chamber, where the tame deer he kept at his residence (*le cerf ke Jo tene en mon hostel* - there is no information as to where this was) had eaten them, undeterred by the parchment and wax seal.<sup>150</sup> Perhaps this took place during a stay at Lullingstone, which is known to have had a large deer park by the later fourteenth century.<sup>151</sup>

## 2.4 CONCLUSIONS

Consideration of woodland management in Ruxley hundred shows how this developed during the thirteenth century. There is documentary evidence that the two major ecclesiastical estates at Bexley and Orpington saw timber and wood products as an important element of their economy. While wood-pasture continued in use, some substantial areas of woodland were managed more intensively: at Bexley manor, this led to the enclosure of West Wood; at Greater Orpington, access to Hockenden Wood and woodland at Knockholt was carefully controlled. Both demesnes had substantial estate

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<sup>149</sup> Hasted II p. 541.

<sup>150</sup> TNA SC 1/30/194; printed in 'Miscellanea', *Arch. Cant* Vol. 2 (1859), pp.233-235. The practice of keeping deer as pets is considered in R. R. Jenkin, "There came a hart in at the chamber door": medieval deer as pets' in *Enarratio* 18 (2013), pp. 23-43.

<sup>151</sup> S. Pittman, *Lullingstone Park: The Evolution of a Mediaeval Deer Park* (Rainham, Meresborough, 1983), p. 30 f.

centres which required timber for the construction and maintenance of residential and agricultural buildings, wood for the production of domestic and agricultural items for everyday use and firewood for fuel. Both demesnes also sold timber and firewood; sales were particularly significant for Bexley manor. The role of Orpington as a guesthouse, where prestigious individuals such as Hugh de Mortimer spent considerable amounts of time and where other senior officials regularly stayed when travelling between Canterbury and London, would have been an important factor in its requirement for fuel and for timber to repair and improve its accommodation. Orpington also supplied the prior's properties in Southwark and London with firewood and timber and generate significant amounts of both for sale – probably for the London market.

Woodland management is also likely to have been significant for the majority of Ruxley hundred's larger lay manors, though direct evidence is hard to find. Cudham manor managed its woodland for use on the demesne and potentially on other de Say estates but was able to generate surplus timber and firewood for onward sales. The manor covered an extensive area; there are indications that it had a local administrative structure in place by the early fourteenth century to manage the estate, including the extensive woodland. Other larger lay manors where woodland was present may have followed a similar path.

There is evidence from the 1301 and 1334-35 lay subsidy returns that a number of individuals in Ruxley hundred, whether wealthier yeomen or poorer peasants with more limited means, were active in managing and selling local wood products. Some have names which suggest specialist skills in tree-management (such as sawyer) while others had craft skills as carpenters, turners or coopers. In the 1301 return a number of individuals are listed with stocks of firewood. Some stocks are low; alongside a low overall assessment, this suggests the sale of small quantities to neighbours to boost their income. Other individuals may have taken advantage of trade on the Rye-London routeway. A few individuals had large stocks and high assessments, suggesting more extensive mercantile activity, with connections to wood-mongers and merchants known to be active in the London wood-trade. This is the first time such activity has been observed in the documentary record.

Overall, the evidence confirms that, far from Ruxley hundred's woodlands being cleared as the population expanded, as suggested by Brown, they were managed intensively to

support local needs and to generate surpluses for sale. London was no doubt the destination of much of Ruxley hundred's wood, but it is difficult to establish the extent to which Ruxley people themselves engaged directly with London markets or London merchants. It is more likely that they sold their produce to wood-mongers who came to the hundred, either through local deals or at local markets and fairs, or possibly it was collected locally and taken to Dartford or Greenwich. Both places could make use of wood products and firewood in local industries, or wood-mongers could organise the onward transport of products to London for sale in the markets there.

It is useful to compare the use of woodland in the hundred as an economic asset with its use for recreation. If those estates containing parks and those where the lord held a grant of free warren are mapped, a large proportion of the total land area of Ruxley hundred is covered. This suggests that the capacity to hunt on their own land was important to aristocratic tenants in the thirteenth century and that grants of free warren were a valued form of patronage, but that there was relatively little interest in establishing new parks which were stocked with deer. By the thirteenth century, a likely pre-existing park at Bexley seems to have been used mainly for the purposes of controlling access to woodland. At Cudham, the presence of a park may indicate that hunting was a factor in the de Sais' early interest in the estate but that the economic benefits of a park to control access to woodland became increasingly significant. The later creation of a park at Wickham may also reflect control of valuable woodland. The space could of course be used for hunting whether or not deer were present.

Both Henry III and Edward I awarded charters enshrining a grant of free warren to aristocratic associates who had specific reasons to warrant personal recognition. The grants may have been offered or deliberately sought; the documentation does not show how the process was initiated. It is difficult to know to what extent either lay or ecclesiastical magnates who received such a grant hunted on their Ruxley demesnes, though they may have valued the right to do so. Few saw their Ruxley manor as their main residence and it is impossible to know how often they visited their demesne. Perhaps they came specifically to hunt there with guests; perhaps they permitted their own tenants and associates to use the land for hunting, as this could remove vermin (foxes).

The interest of kings Edward II and III in making use of the Thames wetlands may have led to renewed interest in falconry in the fourteenth century, but the lack of documentation makes it difficult to establish whether the attitudes of lords to hunting within the hundred changed during this period. Possibly, local tenants and peasants made greater use of both local woodland and wetlands for recreation – with or without their lord’s consent.

Despite the suggestion by FitzStephen, there is no evidence that ‘Londoners’ were specifically engaged in hunting in the hundred in the period from 1200 onwards. None of the lay lords who created parks or received grants of free warren did so because they had connections with London. Much more significant in securing a charter was an association with the royal household or explicit support for the king’s military endeavours.

Gregory de Rokesle was a Londoner with two manors in Ruxley hundred and family links with a third; he had close links with the crown until his death, receiving regular gifts of venison from the king, and was in a position to obtain a grant of free warren for his manors if he wanted one. Hasted says he received a grant for free warren at Lullingstone in neighbouring Axtane but he seems not to have received one alongside a grant for a market at Sandling in 1281. Lullingstone may have been preferred for recreation when he was not in London. He evidently kept a deer as a pet, in line with fashionable aristocratic behaviour of the day, which would have been easier in a rural setting than in London. Both Lullingstone and his Ruxley manors were within easy travelling distance of London and the royal household at Westminster.

## CHAPTER 3: HUSBANDRY IN RUXLEY HUNDRED

### 3. 1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 2 has argued that woodland in Ruxley hundred was being managed to provide timber and firewood for sale, with the likelihood that much of this surplus – particularly firewood – was destined for London. This chapter explores husbandry in Ruxley hundred. Its aim is to establish whether the hundred was in a position to provide local produce to London and whether local production was affected by the presence of the city. It focuses primarily on information about stock and stores of crops held by lay lords and peasants contained in the 1301 lay subsidy return for the hundred but draws on other documentation wherever possible to provide context and comparisons over time. Ways of marketing any surplus produce are considered in Chapter 5.

Agricultural connections between the metropolis and local communities were studied in depth for the *Feeding the City* project.<sup>1</sup> The project database informed an analysis of the city's grain supply, which subsequently supported Bruce Campbell's account of seigniorial agriculture in England and his account of later medieval agriculture in Kent.<sup>2</sup> The database aimed to provide detailed, comparable information over time; it therefore drew mainly on records of seigniorial demesnes. Lay seigniorial households and ecclesiastical institutions routinely maintained detailed records of husbandry practice over long periods, enabling them to call local stewards to account and, as appropriate, to ensure consistency of approach to cropping and stock management. Where detailed accounts are unavailable, Biddick has used lay subsidy information to consider agricultural strategies of peasants and lords in relation to marketing opportunities.<sup>3</sup>

In Kent, detailed records are rarely available for manors other than the large ecclesiastical demesnes. Ecclesiastical lords had limited interest in the wider husbandry activities of their lay tenants, provided their rents were paid and relevant services provided. Lay tenants-in-

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<sup>1</sup> Introduction, p. 10 fn. 27.

<sup>2</sup> B. M. S. Campbell, J. A. Galloway, D. J. Keene & M. Murphy, *A Medieval Capital and its Grain Supply: Agrarian Production and its Distribution in the London Region c. 1300* (Historical Geography Research Series 30, 1993); B. M. S. Campbell, *English Seigniorial Agriculture 1250-1450* (Cambridge, CUP, 2005); B. M. S. Campbell, 'Agriculture in Kent in the High Middle Ages', in Sweetinburgh, (2010), pp. 25-53.

<sup>3</sup> Biddick, 'Peasants and Market Involvement' (1985), 'Missing Links' (1987); see Chapter 1, p. 32.

chief were also concerned primarily with the rental income due from their tenants rather than with their approach to husbandry, though they might have a greater interest in the management of their own demesnes. However, manors in Kent were often tenanted and sub-tenanted by individual families who had less need to maintain detailed records for their own purposes, and records of any kind could be lost when a manor changed hands.<sup>4</sup> The records of the Ruxley hundred ecclesiastical demesnes of Bexley and Greater Orpington were sampled for the *Feeding the City* database, but no information was included for lay demesnes or for wider peasant activity as none was available in the form required.<sup>5</sup>

Campbell recognised these general limitations in relation to Kent, observing:

“Kent contained many other [non-seigniorial] classes of producer whose activities, as yet, remain largely obscured from view. Rescuing the agriculture practised on the estates of lesser lords and the myriad holdings of the occupying peasantry... is...the major challenge confronting historians....”<sup>6</sup>

This chapter explores whether it is possible to gain some insight into the husbandry activity of lesser lords and peasants in Ruxley hundred by bringing together a range of sources. It begins by looking at Pipe Roll information relating to Chislehurst manor in 1166-67 (there is no information for lay husbandry in the hundred for the years around 1200) and moves on to consider Kemnal and Scadbury manors in 1301. It then looks in detail at stock and crops in the hundred more widely, before considering evidence relating to husbandry at Scadbury manor in 1349 – at the end of the period covered by this thesis, but when little other information is available for lay manors.

The 1301 lay subsidy assessment for Ruxley hundred is a core source for the chapter. Context is provided by documentation from the ecclesiastical demesnes of Bexley and Greater Orpington (both excluded from the subsidy return) and from the 1301 lay subsidy assessment for Somerden hundred. Other sources include archaeological evidence from

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<sup>4</sup> The Manorial Documents Register for Kent, recently updated and digitised, reveals how few lay manorial records survive for Kent, and particularly for Ruxley hundred, for the period before the Black Death: <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/finding-records-in-discovery-and-other-databases/manorial-documents-register> (accessed 10/08/2021).

<sup>5</sup> Campbell et al., *Medieval Capital*, pp. 186-7.

<sup>6</sup> Campbell, ‘Agriculture in Kent’ (Sweetinburgh, 2010), quotation on p. 50.

excavations at Scadbury Manor, Inquisitions *post mortem*, the 1301 lay subsidy assessments for Dartford vill and Somerden hundred and a court case relating to debt.

### **3.2 CHISLEHURST, KEMNAL AND SCADBURY MANORS: CASE STUDIES FOR THE HUNDRED**

#### **3.2.1 Chislehurst Manor in 1166-67**

There is no information about lay estates in Ruxley hudred at the opening of the thirteenth century, but an entry for Kent in the Pipe Roll for 1166-67, which sets out information about the restocking of the royal demesne of Chislehurst, provides a starting-point. The Chislehurst demesne was usually let by the Crown to aristocratic tenants but returned periodically to royal control.<sup>7</sup> At the time of the restocking, the manor was under the direct control of the king, but in 1200-01 it was again awarded to aristocratic tenants; there is no information about the later management of the estate.<sup>8</sup> The document's coverage has similarities to the assessments of the 1301 lay subsidy return; only basic animals and crops are included, with standardised valuations. However the restocking of these, set out in Table 2, cost £13 0 s 4 d, representing a significant investment.

The Pipe Roll entry shows that, at the time of the restocking, the demesne operated as a standard mixed farm. It contained cattle: six oxen, a bull and a small herd of cows. There were ten horses. The type of horse is not specified but most likely included stotts, general work-horses used in plough-teams and for haulage.<sup>9</sup> The oxen would have been used for ploughing and could have formed at least two plough teams if combined with the stotts. There were a hundred sheep, a sizeable flock for north-west Kent when compared with later lay subsidy information, which would have provided milk for cheese, wool, and, along with the cattle, manure to support grain crops.

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<sup>7</sup> Webb et al., *History of Chislehurst* (1899), p. 101 ff.

<sup>8</sup> Webb et al., *History of Chislehurst*, p. 102.

<sup>9</sup> Stotts are discussed further below.



Item	Quantity	Value
For horses ( <i>eq's</i> ) & For oxen ( <i>bob3</i> )	10 6	68 s
For cows ( <i>vaccis</i> ) & For a bull ( <i>tauro</i> )	5 1	18 s
For sheep ( <i>ouib3</i> )	100	25 s
For sows ( <i>scrofis</i> )	6	4 s
For the customary payments for ironwork and for the provisions for the serjeant ( <i>custa'm'to' ferra'm'ti &amp; vict' servientu'</i> )	For the whole year ( <i>per totu' annu'</i> )	45 s
For barley ( <i>ordo</i> ) seed & for oat ( <i>aven'</i> ) seed	-	100 s 4 d
TOTAL		<b>£13 0 s 4 d</b>

**Table 5: The re-stocking of Chislehurst manor, 1166-1167.** <sup>10</sup>

Surprisingly, there is no reference to wheat, but seed was purchased to sow barley and oats; perhaps, if wheat was grown on the demesne, seed was available from the estate's own stores. No pulses or hay are listed, nor is there any reference to vetch, and as with later lay subsidy records, there is no reference to poultry. There is no information about why the re-stocking was required or to show how or where the animals would be obtained. While sheep and cattle might have been locally available, the entry for ten horses suggests these would have come from a specialist source.

The Pipe Roll entry says nothing about estate buildings, but presumably the demesne had at least a hall where the manor court could be held, possibly also accommodation for a serjeant, along with appropriate outbuildings such as byres, stables and grain-stores. There is no evidence that any member of the royal family ever visited the manor, although the local wooded landscape offered opportunities for hunting and Chislehurst was easily

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<sup>10</sup> Source: TNA E 372/13, m 1, printed as *The Great Roll of the Pipe for the 13th year of the reign of King Henry II, 1166-67* in *Publications of the Pipe Roll Society*, Vol. 11, (1889), p. 197; <https://www.kentarchaeology.org.uk/Research/05/1166/197.htm> (accessed 13/18/2021). The document is summarised in Webb, *History of Chislehurst*, p.101, fn. 1, but the translation contains errors.

accessible from Westminster. In contrast, at Havering-atte-Bower in Essex, also a royal estate within easy reach from Westminster, the crown had a large deer-park equipped with a substantial palace or royal hunting lodge; this was rebuilt in the mid-thirteenth century by king Henry III at considerable cost, although the king and queen visited only occasionally.<sup>11</sup> Timber from the park was used for the crown's building projects in the Tower of London and Westminster and the deer used for food and for gifts of venison.<sup>12</sup> There is no sign that Chislehurst was used in this way.

A sum is included in the Pipe Roll to provide for *custam'to' ferram'ti & vict' servientu'*. This must refer to customary payments made to a blacksmith to make and repair the ironwork (*ferramentum*) needed on the estate (such as blades for sickles and weeding-hooks, or iron for horseshoes) and for what is presumably a food livery for the *serviens* or serjeant, the local manager of the estate.<sup>13</sup> This brief phrase is the only information about how the Chislehurst estate was managed and is one of the few references to lay estate management in Ruxley hundred as a whole before 1350. It shows parallels with the management of the large ecclesiastical estates of Bexley and Greater Orpington, discussed in section 4.3.6 below. Lay aristocratic estates may have had similar provisions.

### 3.2.2 Kemnal and Scadbury Manors

There is no later information about the Chislehurst demesne in the thirteenth century, when it was granted to lay tenants. However, in 1159, a decade before the restocking, King Henry II had granted land at Hornchurch, within the royal estate of Havering in Essex, to the Monastery of St Nicholas and St Bernard in Savoy, to be used for the foundation of a priory there; he also granted an annual income to the new priory, to be paid out of revenues from land in Havering and Chislehurst.<sup>14</sup> Payments can be identified until 1201-02.<sup>15</sup> At some point the priory took on the direct management of land in Chislehurst, creating the manor of Kemnal; this was managed locally by a steward. Additional land was purchased during the

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<sup>11</sup> M. K. McIntosh, *The Royal Manor of Havering, 1200-1500* (Cambridge: CUP (1986), p. 17 f.

<sup>12</sup> McIntosh, *Havering*, p. 18.

<sup>13</sup> In the later thirteenth century the steward received a livery of grain (wheat, barley, rye and oats) and peas; Webb, *History of Chislehurst*, p. 251.

<sup>14</sup> Webb, *History of Chislehurst*, p. 6 f.

<sup>15</sup> The payments from land in Chislehurst are set out in the Pipe Roll entries for Kent until 1201-02.

thirteenth century.<sup>16</sup> The de Scathebury family may have been tenants of Kemnal manor at Scadbury from around 1200. During the thirteenth century, before the statute *Quia Emptores* of 1290 prevented further manorial division, a sub-manor was created at Scadbury which the family held until the mid-fourteenth century. Members of the de Scathebury family appear as witnesses to the priory's land transactions in Chislehurst from around 1260 but no records from the thirteenth or fourteenth centuries survive for Scadbury manor itself.<sup>17</sup> Fortunately, both the prior of Hornchurch 'at his manor of Kemnal' and John de Scathebury were assessed for the lay subsidy in 1301; it is therefore possible to compare the two adjacent manors and to consider their position in 1301 in relation to the restocking of Chislehurst over a century earlier. A focus on Scadbury Manor also provides an opportunity to link lay subsidy information with archaeological evidence from the manor site, something not possible for any other demesne in Ruxley hundred.

Excavation at the site of Scadbury manor has found no evidence for occupation before the last quarter of the twelfth century at the earliest.<sup>18</sup> The manor site, on a promontory overlooking the Cray Valley to the south, is surrounded by a moat with two associated fishponds; much of the original manorial estate survives within Scadbury Park Local Nature Reserve. The estate lay partly on Thanet Sands, which can support agriculture but are difficult to work, and partly on higher beds of Harwich Formation (sand with black pebbles) which are more suited to woodland and heath.<sup>19</sup> Springs and small streams provide water. Today, grassland in fields surrounded by hedges covers the Thanet Sands while woodland, some of it classified as ancient, covers the higher ground.

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<sup>16</sup> Records for Hornchurch priory, including some of its transactions in Chislehurst, survive in New College Oxford; F. Steer, *Archives of New College, Oxford*, (Chichester: Phillimore for The Wardens and Scholars of New College, Oxford, 1974), p. 308 ff & p. 520. The earliest records relating to Kemnal date from around 1259-60 and mainly concern land transactions (Webb et al., *History of Chislehurst*, pp.8 ff).

<sup>17</sup> Hornchurch priory was sold to William of Wykeham in 1391; he used the revenues to endow New College at the University of Oxford which he had founded in 1379. The priory's records therefore passed to New College. There are no records from Scadbury Manor in the New College Archives. The land transactions which include de Scathebury family members as witnesses, and in one case as a seller of land, are discussed in Webb, *History*, p. 9.f.

<sup>18</sup> Hart, *Excavations at Scadbury, Part 2*, p. 17.

<sup>19</sup> British Geological Survey, Dartford: England and Wales Sheet 271, 1:50,000 Series.



**Fig 4: The Scadbury Manor site across the moat from the south-east.**

The visible structures are from a brick Tudor house demolished in 1738 and partially reconstructed as a garden feature in the early 20th century. The wooden building is an apple store from the early 20th century, when the estate was used for commercial fruit-growing.

Photograph: Janet Clayton.

The assessment for John de Scathebury for the fifteenth of 1301 is set out in Table 6; it is the first entry for Chislehurst vill.<sup>20</sup> The assessment does not include all possible stock, stores of crops or other items which the manor might have possessed, but its value lies in the opportunity to compare the results with other assessments across the hundred, providing a relative view of scope and scale. Assessors for Kent were not appointed before late October 1301, so the list presumably represents John de Scathebury's stock and stores as they were in or after late autumn 1301, possibly even in the spring of 1302. The assessment shows that he operated a substantial mixed farm. The list includes four horses and eight oxen, a further two cart-horses and a range of cattle, pigs and sheep. He had

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<sup>20</sup> TNA E 179/123/5, Chislehurst.

considerable quantities of grain in store, particularly of wheat, and stores of other fodder crops including vetch, peas and hay. The detail of the animals and crops present is similar overall to that shown for the Chislehurst demesne. Additional items are listed, considered further in Chapter 4.

STOCK	Value	GRAIN	Value	OTHER CROPS	Value	OTHER ITEMS <sup>21</sup>	Value
<b>2 cart-horses</b> <i>(equi carectarii)</i>	10 s each [£1 0 s 0 d]	<b>Wheat,</b> <b>30 quarters</b>	4 s 6 d per qu' [£6 15 s]	<b>Peas</b> <b>4 qu'rs</b>	20 d per qu' [6 s 8 d]	<b>1 'Lead'</b> <i>(plumbum)</i>	4 s
<b>4 horses</b> <i>(stotti)</i>	6 s each [£1 4 s 0 d]	<b>Barley,</b> <b>10 quarters</b>	3 s per qu' [£ 1 10 s]	<b>Vetch</b> <b>1 qu'</b>	20 d per qu' [1 s 8 d]	<b>Bronze utensils</b> <i>(In utens' eneis)</i>	3 s
<b>8 oxen</b> <i>(boves)</i>	10 s each [£4 0 s 0 d]	<b>Oats,</b> <b>10 quarters</b>	20 d per qu' [16 s 8 d]	<b>In hay</b> <i>(in fenu)</i>	2 s	<b>In camera</b>	6 s 8 d
<b>2 cows</b> <i>(vacce)</i>	[6 s each] 12 s						
<b>2 steers</b> <i>(boveti)</i>	[5 s each] 10 s						
<b>4 heifers</b> <i>(bovicule)</i>	[2 s each] 8 s						
<b>8 pigs</b> <i>(porci)</i>	2 s each [16 s]						
<b>8 porkers</b>	12 d each [8 s]						
<b>60 sheep</b>	10 d each [£2 10 s 0 d]						
<b>20 lambs</b>	5 d each [8 s 4 d]						
<b>Sub-totals</b>			£ 9 14 s 8 d		8 s 4 d		13 s 8 d
<b>Total Assessment</b>	<b>£ 22 3 s</b>						
<b>Total payable at 1/15<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>29 s 6 d</b> <b>[£1 9 s 6 d]</b>						

**Table 6: Assessment of the assets of John de Scathebury, 1301.**<sup>22</sup>

At £22 3 s, John de Scathebury's total assessment was the highest of the thirty-one assessments for Chislehurst vill, substantially higher than that of Hornchurch Priory's manor

<sup>21</sup> See also Chapter 4.

<sup>22</sup> Source: TNA E 179/123/5, Chislehurst, first entry. The individual values are given in the form shown in the assessment, with totals provided. The assessment for Chislehurst is translated in Webb et al., *History of Chislehurst*, pp. 367-369, this contains minor errors – eg John de Scathebury is shown as having a stock of 'straw' not peas – and although all the entries are included, they are printed in a different order from the original ms.

of Kemnal; it was also the fifth-highest assessment for the entire hundred. The Chislehurst demesne does not appear in the return. Kemnal Manor's assessment, Table 4 below, shows this estate was, like Scadbury, a mixed farm. However there are differences between the two manors: John de Scathebury had specialist cart-horses, not listed at Kemnal; many more sheep (60 sheep plus 20 lambs, only 12 sheep at Kemnal); and a considerably larger stock of wheat (30 quarters, against 4 quarters at Kemnal). Kemnal had no pigs or surplus peas or beans, though both Kemnal and Scadbury had stocks of vetch. Kemnal had no additional items (such as utensils or a 'lead') listed.

STOCK	Value	GRAIN	Value	OTHER CROPS	Value	OTHER ITEMS	Value
<b>2 horses (stotti)</b>	@6 s [12 s]	<b>Wheat, 4 quarters</b>	Per qu' 4 s 6 d [18 s]	<b>Vetch, 1 quarter</b>	20 d [1 s 8 d]	-	-
<b>4 oxen</b>	@10 s [£2 0 s 0 d]	<b>Rye, 1 quarter</b>	Per qu' 3 s 6 d	<b>In hay (in fenu)</b>	4 s		
<b>2 cows</b>	@6 s [12 s]	<b>Barley, 1 quarter</b>	Per qu' 3 s				
<b>3 heifers (bouicl')</b>	@2 s [6 s]	<b>Oats 9 quarters</b>	Per qu' 20 d [15 s 0 d]				
<b>12 sheep</b>	@10 d [10 s]						
<b>12 lambs</b>	@5 d [5 s]						
<b>Sub-totals</b>	£4 5 s 0 d		£1 19 s 6 d		5 s 8 d		
<b>Total assessment</b>							<b>£ 6 10 s 2 d</b>
<b>Payment at 1/15<sup>th</sup></b>							<b>8 s 8 d</b>

**Table 7: Assessment of the goods of the prior of Hornchurch Priory 'at his manor of Kemenhole' (Kemnal, Chislehurst)<sup>23</sup>**

If it is assumed that Chislehurst vill equated broadly to the later parish of Chislehurst, it was one of the larger vills by area in the hundred. The return has thirty entries, making it also one of the more populous vills, though some way behind Bexley and Orpington vills with around 100 and 42 respectively. There is nothing to show which individuals (if any) were linked with which sub-manor; by the end of the thirteenth century there were at least three sub-infeudated manors, Tong, held by the prior of Lesnes by 1280; Kemnal, held by Hornchurch priory; Scadbury; possibly also Frognal, held by Thomas le Barbur in 1253.<sup>24</sup> The

<sup>23</sup> TNA E 179/123/5, Chislehurst vill, second entry. The translation in Webb, *History of Chislehurst*, p. 367, gives *silig'* as 'wheat flour' rather than 'rye'.

<sup>24</sup> Their presence is known from grants of 'free warren' given for their demesnes; see Chapter 2 Table 4.

entries provide no clue to the route of the assessors, other than to show that they started at Scadbury and moved north to Kemnal. Some of the names listed are known from other documentation or from the 1334/35 lay subsidy return for Ruxley hundred.

Only three assessments in the vill are for amounts over £5: those for John de Scathebury, Hornchurch Priory and William Lambyn. William Lambyn's assessment is considered further below. Most of the individual bynames in the return have no connection with any Chislehurst placenames and there are scarcely any occupational names - only Chapman, Cup[r]e (Cooper?) and le Webbe (weaver); these are spread through the list, so there is no obvious sign of a village centre at this date. A Robert clericus is listed; this may be a family name or possibly someone with writing ability linked to the management of demesnes at Chislehurst or Kemnal. The seal of John, son of Richard clericus, either a relative or perhaps serving in a similar role, is known from a land-purchase made by Kemnal manor and dates to around 1260.<sup>25</sup> Robert clericus' 1301 assessment of £1 2 s 8 d covers a calf, pig and porker, with some hay and vetch as fodder, suggesting a smallholding that might be managed alongside a paid role. He also had a 'lead' and tripod; possession of a 'lead' can indicate someone brewing ale for sale to neighbours.<sup>26</sup>

John de Scathebury's assessment is considered in detail below, to see how it compares with that for Kemnal and how it fits into the wider context of husbandry in Chislehurst and of Ruxley hundred as a whole. Stock, arable crops and other crops are considered in turn. The aim is to identify whether the breeding and use of stock or the production of crops at Scadbury or elsewhere might have been undertaken with the London market in mind.

### **3.3 STOCK IN THE HUNDRED**

#### **3.3. 1 Horses and oxen**

The first animals listed in all the 1301 lay subsidy assessments for Ruxley hundred are horses. John Langdon has shown that by the thirteenth century, horses were increasingly taking on work for which oxen had traditionally been used – ploughing and harrowing in the

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<sup>25</sup> Webb et al., *History of Chislehurst*, image of seal from the archives of New College, unnumbered page after page 8.

<sup>26</sup> TNA E 179/123/5, Chislehurst. 'Leads' are discussed further in Chapter 4.

fields and hauling carts on and away from the estate.<sup>27</sup> Oxen remained useful for working heavy soils and tackling difficult terrain; they were cheap to feed and could be fattened for meat at the end of their working life; after death, they provided hides to be tanned for leather-working, but horses offered greater stamina and flexibility. Horses cost more to maintain (in shoeing, type of fodder, and with no possibility of subsequent sales of meat or hides), but they were more versatile, able to take on additional tasks when ploughing was not required. A stott could pull a heavy load for longer than an ox, and if used for haulage away from the estate, was faster and more flexible, so particularly suitable for journeys to a market.<sup>28</sup> A balance therefore had to be struck between local costs and wider benefits. Overall, draught-horses, whether stotts or the smaller affer, were favoured if only one or two animals could be kept. Stotts working without oxen had become widespread in the south-east by the later thirteenth century. However, they did not entirely replace oxen; demesnes in particular might retain both animals.

This is the pattern seen at Scadbury. John de Scathebury was assessed for eight oxen and four stotts; Kemnal manor had four oxen and two stotts. Scadbury manor also had two steers (*boveti*); these younger animals would eventually replace the oxen in the plough-team. In total, twenty-one oxen were recorded for Chislehurst vill, but John de Scathebury, Kemnal manor and William Lambyn alone accounted for sixteen of them.

Stotts were by far the most assessed horse in Ruxley hundred in 1301. At 6 s they were cheaper than an ox (valued at 10 s), though they cost more to feed. Neither John de Scadbury nor Kemnal manor was assessed for the horses known as affers and these are documented less frequently than stotts across the hundred as a whole. Valued at 4 s, they were affordable and suitable for riding, carting and ploughing, so useful for small holdings where they might be the only horse available. Four individuals in Chislehurst had a single affer and no other working animal. Nine individuals (four with an assessment below £1) had no horse of any kind assessed. Other vills show similar results.

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<sup>27</sup> J. Langdon, *Horses, Oxen and Technological Innovation: The Use of Draught Animals in English Farming from 1066-1500* (Cambridge: CUP, 1986); p. 256 ff. He points out (p. 101) that in Kent more than elsewhere in England the terrain appears to have influenced which animals were predominant.

<sup>28</sup> J. Langdon, 'Horse Hauling: A Revolution in Vehicle Transport in Twelfth- and Thirteenth-Century England?' *Past & Present*, No. 103 (May, 1984), pp. 37-66.



In Somerden hundred in 1301, stotts are also the most commonly assessed horse, but only two affers are recorded; this may reflect the difficulty of the terrain and the poor quality of the road system there, which required a larger animal to pull a cart.<sup>29</sup> Langdon notes that *stottus* was 'an alternative term for *affer*, used especially in the south-east' and suggests that both animals were male, so they may have been differentiated by size. No mares or foals are included in the assessments for either Ruxley or Somerden hundreds, suggesting – as at Chislehurst in 1166-67 – that horses were bought from a breeding site elsewhere.

Both Scadbury and Kemnal manors included areas of heavy clay soil. Scadbury also had fields on steep slopes towards the south-east, which oxen would handle more easily than horses. The return for Chislehurst vill shows that oxen were found on the larger estates and the same general pattern occurs in other Ruxley hundred vills. In Somerden hundred, however, roughly half of all individuals assessed possessed at least one ox, either alongside a stott or alone.<sup>30</sup> This must reflect the difficulty of working Somerden's heavy clay.<sup>31</sup>

Overall, Ruxley hundred was in line with the general trend in south-east England for an increasing use of horses. Langdon used the 1301 returns for Ruxley and Somerden hundreds to compare the number of work-horses on peasant estates with those on demesne estates in both hundreds, and then looked at the position in comparison to demesne estates in Kent as a whole (this calculation included both ecclesiastical and lay demesnes). He suggested that in 1301, work-horses represented 61.1 per cent of the total of horses and oxen in Ruxley hundred. On peasant holdings alone, they represented 64.5 per cent, whereas on demesne estates the figure was 53 per cent (evidence from other documentary sources was used to make a broad estimate of the division between demesne and peasant estates). In Somerden, the corresponding figures were 49.4 per cent, 27.3 per cent and 53 per cent.<sup>32</sup> On the demesnes of Kent as a whole, the corresponding figure for the percentage of horses of the total of horses and oxen was 48.7 per cent.<sup>33</sup> The figures therefore suggest that Ruxley hundred was ahead of the average position in Kent and that on peasant holdings,

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<sup>29</sup> TNA E 179/123/6.

<sup>30</sup> TNA E 179/123/6.

<sup>31</sup> Langdon, *Horses, Oxen*, p. 191 shows that Ruxley hundred's lay subsidy return is in line with the county generally in terms of the presence of horses, but Somerden is not, probably because of the terrain there.

<sup>32</sup> Langdon, *Horses, Oxen*, p. 188, Table 24.

<sup>33</sup> Langdon, *Horses, Oxen*, p. 191, Table 25.

horses were replacing oxen to a greater extent than elsewhere. It is important to remember the difficulties in making these calculations, but they provide an impression of the position at the start of the fourteenth century.

### 3.3.2 Carting and cart-horses

Carting – moving produce around an estate or between estates, or taking estate to market – was an important activity. Where there is information about customary services in the hundred, usually from information relating to ecclesiastical estates, carting (*averagia*) is often the service specified. This usually related to the movement of produce or dung around the estate but sometimes related to movement of crops or goods away from the estate and over a long distance.<sup>34</sup> Essentially, tenants of all kinds needed dependable haulage for different functions, whether for their own use or to fulfil their obligations to a lord. Both oxen and horses (whether stotts or affers) could pull a cart but horses were faster, more versatile and could pull the same load for a longer distance. They were therefore more suitable for moving goods off the estate, perhaps to another of a lord's properties or to market. Langdon notes that at the time of *Domesday Book*, horses were mainly regarded as pack-animals, but they became increasingly used to pull loaded carts by the early fourteenth century; as a result, peasants were able to participate in the expansion of markets at that time: 'With its emphasis on light, small-scale hauling, it was just for these lesser, mainly peasant households that the benefits of horse hauling were most relevant'.<sup>35</sup> While any horse was useful for hauling small carts, specialist horses were bred specifically for heavy carting, and evidence for them appears in the 1301 lay subsidy return.

John de Scathebury's assessment lists two cart-horses, valued, like the oxen, at 10 s each. A cart-horse was an animal bred to pull a heavy cart rather than a plough. Cart-horses were larger than stotts and able to pull loads quickly over long distances, but they needed a substantial supply of oats and were expensive to maintain. However if produce had to be

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<sup>34</sup> Services at the Bexley demesne: 'Services of the inlands: [for a grouping of 5 acres] they carry ...the Steward's writs to the nearest manors...hens and eggs to the nearest manors...and do all this without receiving food. General Customs: every household has to carry hay from the fields to the manor court for one day with a cart or wagon, the same as it uses to bring in its own hay, receiving food once a day...' Witney, *Archbishop Pechar's Kentish Manors* (2000), pp. 330 & 339.

<sup>35</sup> Langdon, 'Horse hauling' (1984), p. 65.

moved on a regular basis – especially to a market some distance away – a specialist horse could be a good investment. Campbell notes: ‘it is ... no surprise to find that adoption of the cart-horse [in England by the close of the 14<sup>th</sup> century] proceeded furthest in those parts of the country which most stood to gain from a close involvement with the market’.<sup>36</sup> Those generating produce specifically for onward sale were the most likely to make this investment.

In 1301, only eleven individuals in Ruxley hundred, all identifiable as manorial lords or with comparatively high total assessments, were assessed with one or sometimes two cart-horses. Five of these are listed as having both a cart-horse/s and a cart (see Table 8 below). This suggests that there must have been additional, unassessed carthorses available to pull the carts, or that mixed teams were used; Campbell suggest that three horses were needed.<sup>37</sup> However, the table shows that only wealthier lords were in a position to make the additional investment, whether this was in a single cart-horse, or in an extra animal beyond a minimum. It also shows that only certain lords chose to make that investment; there were others in the hundred who could have afforded to do so but did not. In Somerden hundred, no cart-horses or carts are recorded in the 1301 return. Assessments are generally lower there than in Ruxley hundred, meaning the opportunity for investment would have been lower, but there may also have been less requirement to move goods to a distant market.<sup>38</sup>

The two cart-horses at Scadbury suggest that carting was an important activity for the manor and that goods were regularly being moved for some distance. No *carecta* is specified in the return but the estate must have owned at least one; perhaps this was unassessed, on the grounds that a cart was an essential item for the work of the estate. The *carecta* was the cart most commonly found on demesnes at this time, though other carts were available (some only suitable for oxen) and may have been generally disregarded for tax purposes.<sup>39</sup> In contrast, Kemnal had neither cart nor cart-horses assessed, suggesting carting over long distances was not a major activity. The presence of cart-horses at Scadbury

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<sup>36</sup> Campbell, *Seigniorial Agriculture*, p. 127.

<sup>37</sup> Campbell et al., *A Medieval Capital*, p. 58

<sup>38</sup> TNA E 179/123/6.

<sup>39</sup> Langdon discusses different types of cart and the prevalence of *carecta* on demesnes: ‘Horse hauling’, pp. 48-51.

suggests that John de Scathebury was taking produce to distant markets, so required specialist horses to support this and could afford them, while Kemnal manor was using its produce only for local consumption.

Table 8 shows that some carts are specified as having iron-rimmed wheels (*carecta ferrata*); Roger de Rokesle's cart, without the ironwork, has the same valuation so this may be an accidental omission by the assessor. The varying valuations of apparently similar *carecta* may relate to size or to a feature such as a cover.

Eight of the landholders shown in the table were manorial lords (assuming John de la Doune held the manor of Downe). John de Scathebury was resident in the hundred, but other lords had property elsewhere which might have formed their main residence. The remaining four individuals were not manorial lords. Alexander Molendinarius had the highest assessment in Orpington vill, presumably as the tenant of one of the priory's mills. William Lambyn is discussed below. Hawisia de Leyham is identified as Sir Peter de Huntingfeld's sister and heir, aged 60, in the Inquisition following his death in 1310.<sup>40</sup> She held extensive property in Wickham.<sup>41</sup> Nothing is known about Simon de la Hole. William Lambyn's ownership of a carthorse is of particular interest. His was the final entry for Chislehurst vill, with the third highest assessment of £5 8 s 4 d.<sup>42</sup> He had two stotts and four oxen in addition to the carthorse, but like John de Scathebury, no cart is included. His stock included four quarters of wheat, one of barley, four quarters of oats and four of vetch, suggesting that arable cultivation was the primary activity on his land. The assessment shows the importance of fodder (oats and vetch) for the working animals on his estate. No non-working animals (pigs, sheep, cattle) are listed, or any goods or utensils; this may not have been his primary residence. William Lambyn's possible trading interests are discussed further in Chapter 6.

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<sup>40</sup> Peter de Hunyngfeld, TNA C 134/1/12; No. 12, J E E S Sharp and A E Stamp, 'Inquisitions Post Mortem, Edward II, File 1', in *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem: Volume 5, Edward II* (London, 1908), pp. 1-7. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/inquis-post-mortem/vol5/pp1-7> [accessed 23 August 2022].

<sup>41</sup> 'Layham's Farm': Knowlden & Walker, *West Wickham* 1986, p. 85.

<sup>42</sup> TNA E 179/123/5, Chislehurst.

Vill	Taxpayer	Carts /value	Cart-horses	Comment
North Cray	Sir John de Gatton	-	1 cart- horse	Manor of North Cray
Footscray	Roger de Rokesle junior	1 <i>carecta</i> , 6 s 8 d	2 cart-horses	Manor of Footscray
Chislehurst	John de Scathebury	-	2 cart-horses	Manor of Scadbury
	William Lambyn	-	1 cart-horse	-
St Paul's Cray	Dom. Anthony [Bek]Bishop of Durham	-	1 cart-horse	Manor of St Paul's Cray
Orpington	Alexander Molendinarius	-	1 cart-horse	Tenant of CCP's mill at Orpington?
Downe	John de la Doune	-	1 cart-horse	Manor of Downe?
Wickham	Sir Peter de Huntyngheld	1 <i>carecta ferrata</i> , 4 s	2 cart-horses	Manor of Wickham
	Hawisia de Leyham	1 <i>carecta ferrata</i> , 4 s	1 cart-horse	Sister of Sir Peter Huntyngheld
Hayes	Mgr John de Bastane	1 <i>carecta ferrata</i> , 3 s	2 cart-horses	Manor of Bastane
Cudham	Sir Henry de Apuldrefeld	1 <i>carecta ferrata</i>	1 cart-horse	Manor of Aperfield
	Simon de la Hole	1 <i>carecta ferrata</i> , 3 s	1 cart-horse	-
<b>Totals</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>16</b>	-

**Table 8: Lay owners of carts and cart-horses in Ruxley hundred, 1301.<sup>43</sup>**

The ecclesiastical demesnes of Orpington and Bexley (not included in the lay subsidy return) both owned cart-horses. Bexley had 'an average of two cart-horses'.<sup>44</sup> Orpington also had on average two cart-horses, who carried heavy goods within the manor but also over longer distances; for example, to transport timber to the priory's manor at Walworth for repairs there or to take firewood to Southwark for use in the prior's inn.<sup>45</sup> Both demesnes had carts.

<sup>43</sup> Source: TNA E 179/123/5.

<sup>44</sup> Du Boulay, *Medieval Bexley*, p. 10.

<sup>45</sup> Bowen, 'The Priory Orpington', pp. 70, 74.

### 3.3.3 Non-working cattle

‘Before the Black Death, the contrast between the countryside and the practices of meat eating within aristocratic households could not have been greater. Seignorial husbandry was geared to supplying the best-quality meats for the household, dispatching poorer stock to market.’<sup>46</sup>

Chris Woolgar’s comment provides useful context for consideration of stock management at Scadbury and more generally, in Ruxley hundred. Lords expected the cattle and pigs housed on their demesne estates to deliver high-quality beef and pork to their table, while peasant households often had access only to limited and/or poorer-quality supplies of meat. On the demesne, non-working cattle might be bred as a source of food, but peasants relied on cattle to work, to provide manure for their fields or to give milk. They used animals for meat only when they were no longer able to work or breed replacement stock.

Cows were kept in calf to provide dairy produce (milk, used to make cheese and butter) for the family and potentially also for sale. On demesnes, cheese - made from cows’ or sometimes sheep’s milk - was often provided to those working on the estate as part of their livery or in return for services. For smallholders, cheese was a major source of protein and could be sold to bring in additional income. Little is known about the production of cheese on lay estates in Ruxley hundred, though there is evidence for cheese-making on the ecclesiastical demesnes. Bexley demesne had a *preshouse* for cheesemaking; Orpington employed a cheesemaker.<sup>47</sup>

John de Scathebury was assessed in the lay subsidy for eight non-working cattle: two cows and four heifers. No calves are listed. Kemnal had only two cows and three heifers (no calves). Most households assessed in Ruxley hundred had at least one cow, often with a calf; in Chislehurst vill, all but three assessments included non-working cattle. William

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<sup>46</sup> C. M. Woolgar, ‘Meat and Dairy Products’ in C. M. Woolgar, D. Serjeantson & T. Waldron, *Food in Medieval England: Diet and Nutrition* (Oxford: OUP, 2006), pp.88-101, ref. p. 91.

<sup>47</sup> Bexley: du Boulay, *Medieval Bexley*, p. 7; Orpington: Bowen, ‘The Priory Orpington’, p. 64

Lambyn is one of the three, suggesting he had little interest in meat or dairy products and that his main household was based elsewhere.<sup>48</sup>

The Scadbury estate could have offered grazing for cattle on wood-pasture or open pasture. Cattle provided a valuable source of fertiliser for the estate's arable crops, and this would have been important for the grain yields shown in the 1301 return. John de Scathebury might have been in a position to produce surplus cheese or milk, or even surplus beef, for sale, but there is no documentation to show whether, or where, dairy produce and/or younger animals were sold.

There is no evidence, archaeological or documentary, for byres at Scadbury. The ecclesiastical demesne at Orpington had a cow byre with a tiled roof and a new byre was built in 1316, at a cost of £24 18 s 10 d, as part of the improvements made by Prior Henry of Eastry.<sup>49</sup> There were twelve cows on average in the Orpington milking herd, which had to provide for the many guests arriving throughout the year. The manor had a bull, so presumably bred its own replacement animals, perhaps producing surplus stock for sale. The archbishop's estate at Bexley also had its own bull, along with an average of eighteen cows and seven calves. The demesne sold surplus cattle, hides and dairy produce.<sup>50</sup>

It is unclear how Scadbury and other lay estates in Ruxley acquired their cattle and replacement young stock – whether these were bred on the farm or bought in from a market (or directly from a neighbouring estate). No bull is listed in the de Scathebury lay subsidy return, though possibly the estate had a bull that was not assessed. As Chislehurst manor had a bull in 1167, it may have continued to maintain a bull to replace its own stock and to breed animals for other estates in the vill.

Two bulls are listed in the entire Ruxley subsidy return, in the vills of Hayes and Wickham. An 'estate bull' may have been regarded as essential and therefore not assessed, or possibly a few estates specialised in keeping bulls which were taken to other estates for breeding

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<sup>48</sup> See discussion of Lambyn in Chapter 6.

<sup>49</sup> Henry Eastry's improvements are set out in the *Memorandum Book of Prior Henry of Eastry* (1285-1331), BL MS Cotton Galba E iv f. 107 r: online at [http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Cotton\\_MS\\_Galba\\_E\\_IV](http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Cotton_MS_Galba_E_IV) [accessed 26/06/2023].

<sup>50</sup> Du Boulay, *Medieval Bexley*, pp. 10 & 15. Dairy produce brought in an average income of almost £3 a year, but this was much less than the income from the sales of corn, wood, hay and pasture.

purposes. The bedels' rolls for Greater Orpington show that the manor sold its surplus animals, but there is no information about where they went or how this was organised, and no information survives for lay estates.

Andrew Margetts' work on the evidence for the management and droving of cattle is a reminder of the importance of cattle in the later-medieval economy of south-east England.<sup>51</sup> Everitt had already noted the significance of cattle in the Kent downlands, including in north-west Kent.<sup>52</sup> There is insufficient evidence to show whether any estates in Ruxley hundred specialised in cattle breeding or dairying, but cattle were essential for arable husbandry and the hundred had a landscape which could support them – pasture, including wood-pasture, was widely available.

Table 9 below provides a picture of the working and non-working cattle recorded in the Ruxley hundred 1301 lay subsidy return. An undamaged return for Bexley would likely show higher figures than those included and the overall totals would be proportionately higher. The table nonetheless shows that the highest numbers of cattle were found in the villis of Bexley, Greater Orpington and Wickham; these are also the villis with the greatest number of individuals assessed. High numbers of cattle were also found in Chislehurst and Hayes. Holders of manorial demesnes generally have more cattle than others assessed; this reflects the continued use of oxen and steers as draught-animals on demesnes. Slavin notes that in Blackbourne hundred in Suffolk, the lay subsidy return for 1283 shows that the largest populations of cattle were found in those parishes with high acreages of wheat, as tenants used manure to improve their wheat yields.<sup>53</sup> This parallels the position in Ruxley hundred.

Both Wickham and Hayes, the only two villis to have bulls listed, had relatively large numbers of cattle compared with other Ruxley villis. At Wickham, the bull was owned by Sir Peter de Huntyngfield of Wickham manor, who also had six oxen, six cows and four calves, while at Hayes, the owner was Mgr John de Bastane of Baston manor, with four oxen, one steer, six cows, six heifers and two calves. They evidently had sufficient stock to provide

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<sup>51</sup> A. Margetts, *The Wandering Herd: The Medieval Cattle Economy of South-East England c. 450-1450* (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2021). Margetts discusses the cattle economy of Kent, though his analysis derives mainly from Sussex and Surrey.

<sup>52</sup> A. Everitt, *Continuity and Colonization: the evolution of Kentish settlement* (Leicester: LUP 1986), p. 165 ff.

<sup>53</sup> Slavin, 'Peasant Livestock Husbandry' (2015), p. 18.



meat and dairy products for their own households but it is likely that they were also generating produce for sale (cheese, milk, perhaps also beef and hides) and might also have bred surplus young stock to retain or sell on.

The existence of early route-ways through the hundred merits further consideration. Everitt argued that the term 'shireway' might reflect 'a common stock-drove linking the mother-communities of the Original Lands with their upland pastures'.<sup>54</sup> Margetts points out that cattle-droving to summer pastures could be a significant element of a cattle-based economy, pointing out that this can be reflected in place-names with the element 'green', which can be linked with overnight resting-places for stock on their way to detached pasture.<sup>55</sup> In this context the local names 'Shire Lane', which is still associated with a long stretch of road running from Farnborough towards Downe, and the hamlet of Green Street Green, lying south of Orpington on the route running across the downs towards Tonbridge, may reflect a cattle-droving tradition. It is possible that the well-recognised use of routeways leading to dennis, outlying pig-pastures, in early medieval Ruxley hundred was paralleled by droveways linked to the seasonal pasturing of cattle. However, by 1301, local pasture for cattle was evidently of more importance to the hundred than the use of distant pasture for cattle or pannage for pigs, and the practice of droving animals into the Weald had effectively ceased.

Overall, the table suggests that the presence of cattle was closely linked to the cultivation of wheat, and that surplus cattle were being produced in the hundred for sale, whether for breeding or to be fattened for meat. Cows could generate dairy produce for the household but also for sale. After slaughter, cattle could have provided a source of raw materials including leather, horn and tallow.

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<sup>54</sup> Everitt, *Continuity and Colonisation*, p. 160 f.

<sup>55</sup> Margetts, *Wandering Herd*, p. 81.

	<b>Vill</b>	<b>Individuals Assessed</b>	<b>Ox Bos</b>	<b>Bull Taurus</b>	<b>Steer Bovettus</b>	<b>Bullock Juvencus</b>	<b>Cow Vacca</b>	<b>Calf Vetus</b>	<b>Heifer Bouicula</b>	<b>Total Cattle</b>
<b>1</b>	Bexley	[79]	[29]	-	[14]	[12]	[71]	[31]	[32]	[189]
<b>2</b>	North Cray	20	9	-	3	-	12	1	14	39
<b>3</b>	Footscray	13	10	-	-	3	18	12	4	47
<b>4</b>	Ruxley	19	16	-	1	2	13	8	4	44
<b>5</b>	Chislehurst	32	22	-	-	7	26	7	18	80
<b>6</b>	Okemore	9	-	-	3	-	8	4	-	15
<b>7</b>	St Paul's Cray	18	13	-	-	3	13	14	5	48
<b>8</b>	Orpington	42	17	-	8	7	37	14	18	101
<b>9</b>	Keston	13	6	-	4	-	5	6	5	26
<b>10</b>	Hayes	26	7?	1	5	10	28	10	20	81
<b>11</b>	Wickham	48	28	1	4	10	35	17	[18]	113
<b>12</b>	Farnborough	24	20	-	2	-	18	10	6	56
<b>13</b>	Chelsfield	28	19	-	6	2	23	10	10	70
<b>14</b>	Downe	28	19	-	3	7	26	13	10	68

<b>15</b>	Cudham	25	19	-	2	1	21	10	10	63
<b>16</b>	Knockholt	18	4	-	-	-	15	7	4	30
<b>17</b>	Hever	19	7	-	9	1	8	10	1	36
<b>18</b>	Assessors	10	-	-	11	2	3	-	10	26
<b>19</b>	<b>Totals</b>	[471]	[245]	2	[105]	[67]	[380]	[184]	[189]	[1142]

**Table 9: Working and non-working cattle on lay estates in Ruxley hundred.<sup>1</sup>**

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<sup>1</sup> Source: TNA E 179/123/5. Parts of the return for Bexley are illegible; figures shown in [ ] have been estimated.

### 3.3.4. Pigs

Umberto Albarella notes that after beef, pork was the meat most commonly eaten in medieval aristocratic households, meaning that aristocratic landowners required access to larger numbers of pigs to provide fresh pork regularly for their table. It was also the main meat that could be afforded by peasants, though they frequently consumed it in its preserved form (as bacon or ham) and otherwise had a largely vegetarian diet with protein from pulses and cheese.<sup>1</sup> Albarella describes an overall decline in both pig husbandry and pork consumption during the medieval period, particularly as woodland resources declined, but a pig and piglet remained a feature on many small-holdings. They could be kept in a yard, scavenge food and be slaughtered in November to provide a range of products, from fresh pork for immediate use to processed meat products (smoked or cured ham and bacon, along with brawn and lard) for the coming year.

London's expanding population might have looked outside the city for a supply of fresh pork and processed meat. Pigs were kept in Ruxley hundred; the 1301 lay subsidy return shows that they were either *porci* (fully-grown pigs) or *porculi* (porkers, pigs up to two years old).<sup>2</sup> Boars are not specified, and only two individuals are shown as having sows. In Somerden hundred, with only 104 individuals assessed in total, sows are specified in two entries and pigs possibly of three different ages are listed – *porci*, *porcel'* (porkers) and *porciculi* (piglets).<sup>3</sup> This might simply be a different way of assessing animals, or it might reflect a greater emphasis on pig-breeding in Somerden.

The 1301 lay subsidy return suggests that most households in Ruxley hundred had access to at least one or two pigs, which would have provided mainly processed meat for storage after the pig was killed in November. Wealthier households had access to larger herds which could provide both fresh and processed meat through the year and might have had surpluses for sale. Anthony Bek, Bishop of Durham, who held the manor of St Paul's Cray with the highest assessment in the vill of £15 18 s 1 d, had ten porkers. Bek used his nearby

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<sup>1</sup> U. Albarella, 'Pig husbandry and pork consumption' in C. M. Woolgar, D. Serjeantson & T. Waldron (eds.), *Food in Medieval England* (Oxford: OUP, 2006), pp. 72-87, ref. p. 73.

<sup>2</sup> TNA E 179/123/5.

<sup>3</sup> TNA E 179/123/6.

manor of Eltham as his residence when on business in London; his estate at St Paul's Cray might have supplied fresh pork for the Eltham kitchens. Sir William Hamelton, holder of the manor of Cudham, had no pigs listed; he held many other estates and may have had no need of a local supply of pork. Kemnal Manor in Chislehurst also had no pigs listed – Hornchurch priory could obtain fresh pork from its Essex demesne. In contrast, William Cheyny, with the highest assessment in Keston, had twenty pigs and fifteen porkers, while Alexander Molendinarius of Orpington had fourteen pigs and ten porkers. Herds of this size could have supplied a large household with meat products while also providing live animals and fresh and processed meat for sale. John de Scathebury had 8 pigs and 8 porkers, suggesting some capacity for sale. On the ecclesiastical estates, the Bexley demesne had an average of thirty-three pigs and two sows. The Orpington demesne kept pigs which could provide fresh pork for the guesthouse or be turned into bacon for later use or sold.<sup>4</sup> As usual there is no information on where the animals or produce were sold.

By the thirteenth century, Greater Orpington's pigs were kept locally in sties; the traditional practice of droving of pigs to distant wood-pasture had largely ended. The bedels' rolls list expenditure on a pigsty with two locks.<sup>5</sup> Henry of Eastry's improvements at Orpington included the construction of pig sties at a cost of £5 3 s 2 ½ d.<sup>6</sup> There is no archaeological evidence for pigsties at Scadbury at this date, but they may have been destroyed by later buildings. Pig bones were excavated, of which thirteen bone fragments, representing a minimum of three animals, were from contexts which could be dated to the late-twelfth/early thirteenth centuries; of these, six items could be assigned an age in the range of 2 ½ to 3 years while two were from animals of about 18 months.<sup>7</sup> Another group of bones came from contexts representing occupation from the late twelfth to the mid-eighteenth centuries, though many of the bones will have been residually medieval. The majority of these, many of which were chopped, were from animals killed at around 2-3

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<sup>4</sup> Bowen, 'The Priory Orpington', p. 71.

<sup>5</sup> Bowen, 'The Priory Orpington', p. 77.

<sup>6</sup> *Memoriale Multorum Henrici Prioris (The Register of Henry of Eastry, Prior of Christ Church, Canterbury (d. 1331))* digitised at [http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Cotton\\_MS\\_Galba\\_E\\_IV](http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Cotton_MS_Galba_E_IV) [accessed 26/06/2023]. Orpington at f. 107 r.

<sup>7</sup> Hart, *Excavations at Scadbury*, Part 2, pp. 32-33.

years. Hart suggests that this age-pattern indicates a degree of management (ie housing in sties rather than woodland roaming), though the sample is too small for firm conclusions.<sup>8</sup>

Overall, pig husbandry in Ruxley hundred seems to have focused on the requirements of individual households, with only a few wealthier individuals engaged in pig-breeding and the production of surplus animals or of pork, whether fresh or processed, for use on their other estates or for sale. It is possible that some of this surplus was sent to London but it may have been intended for local consumption.

### **3.3.5. Sheep**

John de Scathebury's sheep flock (sixty sheep and twenty lambs) was the largest lay flock listed in the 1301 lay subsidy return for Chislehurst vill and one of the largest in the entire hundred.<sup>9</sup> The re-stocking details for Chislehurst manor (above) showed that in 1166 the manor, despite not being on downland, had a flock of a hundred sheep, suggesting sheep were already well-established locally. In 1301 in Chislehurst vill, most other individuals had only a few sheep or a couple of lambs; Richard Goldwyne had twenty sheep and twelve lambs, but others had none (including William Lambyn).<sup>10</sup>

In the remaining vills, sheep were the most numerous animals listed in individual assessments in Orpington vill, and in the downland vills of Cudham, Chelsfield, Downe and Knockholt. Residents in other vills had sheep flocks of varying sizes; some were relatively small, perhaps 10 sheep and a few lambs, and the detached Hever vill in the Weald had only two lambs in total. However wealthier landholders throughout the hundred had larger flocks. Sir Peter de Huntyngheld at Wickham and Sir William de Hamelton at Cudham each had 100 sheep and 20 lambs; like John de Scathebury, Robert Middleton at Farnborough had 60 sheep and 20 lambs; Sir Henry de Apuldrefeld in Cudham, 60 sheep and 10 lambs. Ecclesiastics from outside the hundred also made use of grazing in Ruxley hundred: 56 sheep and 15 lambs on the meadowland of St Paul's Cray, held by Anthony Bek, bishop of

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<sup>8</sup> Hart, *Excavations at Scadbury*, Part 2, pp. 32-33.

<sup>9</sup> TNA E179/123/5, Chislehurst.

<sup>10</sup> TNA E179/123/5.

Durham, and 30 sheep and 6 lambs at Luxted Manor in Cudham, held by the Prior of Merton.

	Vill	Individuals assessed	Breakdown of Sheep /lambs	Total Sheep + lambs
1	Bexley	[79]	[276/148]	[424]
2	North Cray	20	34/9	43
3	Footscray	13	124/16	140
4	Ruxley	19	53/22	75
5	Chislehurst	32	161/78	239
6	Okemore	9	[56/21]	[77]
7	St Paul's Cray	18	164/53	217
8	[West] Wickham	41	178/60	238
9	Hayes	26	75/34	109
10	Keston	13	68/27	95
11	Orpington	42	[166/54]	[220]
12	Farnborough	24	131/58	189
13	Chelsfield	28	249/80	329
14	Downe	28	244/106	350
15	Cudham	52	374/147	521
16	Knockholt	18	63/41	-
17	Hever	19	0/2	-
18	Subsidy Assessors	10	90/0	-
19	<b>TOTAL</b>	472	2506	3462

**TABLE 10: Sheep on lay estates in Ruxley hundred in 1301.<sup>11</sup>**

The aggregate of all sheep and lambs listed for lay holdings in the hundred in 1301 was around 3500 (Table 10). The total number of animals on these holdings may have been higher, depending on how the assessors defined the numbers of sheep to be taxed. In contrast, the Wealden landscape of Somerden hundred was less suited to sheep and the 1301 return shows that sheep were included in only four assessments.<sup>12</sup> By the thirteenth century, sheep were a significant presence in England. In grain-producing areas flocks were folded overnight on arable land to fertilise the crops, offering a form of integrated

<sup>11</sup> Source: TNA E179/123/5. Some entries are illegible: figures incomplete or estimated are indicated by [ ].

<sup>12</sup> TNA E179/123/6.

agriculture seen most commonly in the Midlands and East Anglia; tenants were expected to fold their sheep on the lord's land.<sup>13</sup> Sheep also provided milk and the production of cheese was an important element of local husbandry.<sup>14</sup> Older animals could be slaughtered and sold for meat and their hides used for vellum. Increasingly, however, sheep were kept for their wool. By the later thirteenth century Italian merchants were coming to England to purchase high-quality wool which would then be sold for cloth-making in continental Europe.<sup>15</sup>

By the thirteenth century sheep were present throughout Kent, particularly in the east of the county. Canterbury Cathedral priory was increasingly engaged in the wool trade, working with Italian merchants through the port of Sandwich, and at its highest point, in 1322, had around 13,370 sheep in total.<sup>16</sup> 10,000 of these were attributed to its custodies in east and mid-Kent. The Surrey and Essex custodies also had sheep-flocks, with the Surrey custody, to which the manor of Greater Orpington belonged, providing 2,600 sheep towards the total. 350 were attributed to the Orpington demesne, the highest number from a single Surrey or Essex custody estate.<sup>17</sup>

The bedels' rolls for Orpington provide some information about the sheep kept.<sup>18</sup> The estate employed a shepherd, paid 3 s 6 d, who received a fleece or a lamb each year. Around half of the flock were wethers (castrated lambs) kept for wool. The remainder were ewes kept for milk for cheese. Crones (older ewes with worn teeth) were sold for meat. Surplus lambs were also sold. From 1308/9 the estate ceased producing its own butter and cheese, including cheese from sheep's milk; the cows and ewes were hired out with their calves or lambs for dairy production for the estimated value of their milk.<sup>19</sup>

The Orpington bedels' rolls show that wool was an important commodity for the estate, though less so than wheat; it was particularly significant in the fourteenth century but

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<sup>13</sup> Campbell, *English Seigniorial Agriculture*, p. 154.

<sup>14</sup> Campbell, p. 154.

<sup>15</sup> T. H. Lloyd, *The English Wool Trade in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: CUP, 1977), p. 60 ff.

<sup>16</sup> Smith, *Canterbury Cathedral Priory* (1943), Sandwich: p. 150; numbers: p. 151 f.

<sup>17</sup> Smith, *Canterbury Cathedral Priory*, p. 151-153.

<sup>18</sup> Bowen, 'The Priory', pp. 71, 75.

<sup>19</sup> Bowen, 'The Priory, Orpington', p. 75.



declined after 1322. The archbishop's demesne at Bexley was also a significant producer of wool. The demesne at Bexley had on average a flock of 184 sheep of all kinds.<sup>20</sup> The estate employed a shepherd, paid 2 s, and had at least one permanent, covered sheepfold.<sup>21</sup>

By the early years of the fourteenth century both lay and ecclesiastical landholders in Ruxley hundred were grazing significant numbers of sheep and lambs on their land. This supported local arable production but also reflected the increasing income available from sales of wool. However successive outbreaks of disease, especially scab, and the lack of fodder following years of poor harvests, combined with the outbreak of war with France, embargos on wool exports and high wool duties, must have had an impact on the flocks and reduced their economic benefit.<sup>22</sup> By 1349, there was a flock of only 24 sheep at Scadbury (see below, Table 11) and their value, at 4 d each, was considerably lower than in 1301.

### **3.3.6. Poultry, pigeons, rabbits, dogs**

The 1301 lay subsidy return provides information about a limited range of livestock. Documentation for the ecclesiastical estates shows a wider range. Geese, peacocks and swans were kept at Greater Orpington; the geese were often given as liveries, while peacocks and swans were served to important guests; swans were sometimes sent to Canterbury.<sup>23</sup> Two hens and a cock were kept for eggs. Many people in the hundred must have kept poultry; this is largely unrecorded, but the provision of hens and eggs features in service requirements at Bexley.<sup>24</sup> Eggs could be sold in local markets when available.

The Orpington bedels' rolls also refer to large numbers of pigeons – eighteen dozen hatched in 1289 of which thirteen dozen were sold.<sup>25</sup> The estate centre had a large timber dovecote with a lock on the door.<sup>26</sup> Other manorial estates in the hundred must have had dovecotes;

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<sup>20</sup> Du Boulay, *Medieval Bexley*, p. 10.

<sup>21</sup> Du Boulay, *Medieval Bexley*, p. 10. Shepherd's stipend: Witney, *Archbishop Pecham's Kentish Manors*, p. 341. There was a flock of 200 ewes at Bexley in 1283-84.

<sup>22</sup> Mate argues that in the 1320s the cathedral priory and others with sufficient resources quickly restocked, and flocks recovered, but in the 1330s, the high duties on wool meant restocking was uneconomic for some farmers. M. Mate, 'Agrarian Economy', pp. 89, 92.

<sup>23</sup> Bowen, 'The Priory Orpington', p. 72.

<sup>24</sup> 'Every household [in the vill of Bexley] owes 1 hen at Christmas and eggs at Easter, if it has hens and eggs'; Witney, *Archbishop Pecham's Kentish Manors*, p. 339.

<sup>25</sup> Bowen, p. 72.

<sup>26</sup> Bowen, p. 62.

one is recorded at the manor of Sandling in the 1291 Inquisition *post mortem* held for Gregory de Rokesle.<sup>27</sup> Pigeons were a useful source of food in the winter months. Some demesnes doubtless had warrens where rabbits were bred for the table.<sup>28</sup> Some might have been bred for sale, but many peasants would have had access to them only through poaching. There must also have been working dogs in the hundred, whether used for hunting or for guard duties; shepherds are likely to have had a dog with them when out on the downs.<sup>29</sup> However their presence is unrecorded.

### 3. 4 CROPS IN THE HUNDRED

#### 3.4.1 Wheat

John de Scathebury grew wheat in 1301.<sup>30</sup> Analysis of the charred grain sample from the Scadbury manor excavations, which may date from earlier in the thirteenth century, showed that both spring-sown wheat (*triticum aestivum*) and winter-sown rivet wheat (*triticum turgidum*) were then present on the estate.<sup>31</sup> This suggests that the manor was growing wheat in an intensive rotation with little fallow, meaning the presence of sheep and especially cattle for manure, and the use of crops such as vetch, were important (vetch discussed at 4.3.4. below). The sample also provides evidence of arable weeds – including corn marigold, a weed of spring-sown wheat, and cleavers, a weed of winter-sown wheat.

John de Scathebury's store of thirty quarters of wheat, valued at 4 s 6 d a quarter giving a total of £6 15 s, was considerable, suggesting that it was intended for sale. A cart could carry only around three quarters of wheat, so transporting the grain to market was a significant task.<sup>32</sup> Only one other lay individual is assessed with as much as thirty quarters of wheat, Sir William de Hamelton at Cudham. He is not shown with a cart although there may have been one (unassessed) on the demesne; otherwise, there is a high correlation between large

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<sup>27</sup> TNA C 133/60. John de Scathebury was on the jury for the Sandling inquisition.

<sup>28</sup> Warrens were used to breed rabbits for food, often sited in parkland and actively managed by the park-keeper; T. Williamson, *The Archaeology of Rabbit Warrens* (Princes Risborough: Shire, 2006).

<sup>29</sup> A group of shepherds, shown with sheep and a small dog, is shown observing the natal star in the *Holkham Bible Picture Book*, dated to c 1327-1335 and thought to have been produced in London: BL Add MS 47682 f. 13r; image at [https://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/Viewer.aspx?ref=add\\_ms\\_47682\\_fs001r](https://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/Viewer.aspx?ref=add_ms_47682_fs001r) [accessed 01/15/2023].

<sup>30</sup> TNA E 179/123/5, and above Table 6.

<sup>31</sup> J. Georgi, 'The Sieved Biological Remains', in F. A. Hart, *Excavations at Scadbury Part 2*, (2011), pp. 34-41.

<sup>32</sup> Campbell et al., *A Medieval Capital* (1993), p. 58.

stores of wheat and the ownership of carts and cart-horses. The wheat would have been used for household liveryes but the amount in store suggests some must have been destined for sale. In 1271-72 William de Say had 364 acres of arable land worth £4 0 s 8 *d*, valued at 2 *d* an acre in Cudham and Bertrey (a sub-manor of Cudham); he also had a windmill for grain processing.<sup>33</sup> The area of John de Scathebury's estate is not known. It is likely to have been considerably smaller than the de Say estate, but it is possible that a higher proportion of the land in Chislehurst supported arable cultivation. Much of the de Say estate was devoted to woodland management (see Chapter 2 Table 2).

Others listed in the subsidy return had stores of wheat, mainly but not entirely manorial lords; but the majority of those assessed with wheat had one or two quarters, or only a few bushels. Many individuals had no wheat in store at all. Wheat was extensively grown on the ecclesiastical demesnes of Bexley and Greater Orpington. At Bexley, average income from corn sales totalled over £21, the highest source of income for the demesne.<sup>34</sup> At Orpington, around a third of the demesne's wheat production was sold each year; in 1316 this achieved the highest sale amount recorded, of £32 10 s 0 *d*.<sup>35</sup> The remainder was used for liveryes or in the guesthouse and wheat was sometimes given as gifts to royal servants, perhaps to avoid larger amounts being seized. Over 100 quarters could be harvested in a good year. However, after 1338 harvests were increasingly hit by bad weather and the wheat acreage was significantly reduced.<sup>36</sup>

### **3.4.2 Rye, barley and oats**

No rye is mentioned in John de Scathebury's 1301 assessment, although a trace of rye was found in the thirteenth-century charred grain sample.<sup>37</sup> Rye is not listed in Ruxley's lay subsidy entries as frequently as wheat, barley and oats, which are widespread across the hundred; it is, however, listed at Kemnal Manor and in six other Chislehurst assessments. Valued at 3 s 6 *d* a quarter, it was cheaper than wheat.

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<sup>33</sup> IPM of William de Say, 1275, extent translated in G. S. Steinman, *the manor of Apuldfefeld, in Cudham*, p. 3 f., footnote e.

<sup>34</sup> Du Boulay, *Medieval Bexley*, p. 15 (the figure does not distinguish wheat from other grain).

<sup>35</sup> Bowen, 'The Priory Orpington', p. 71.

<sup>36</sup> Bowen, 'The Priory Orpington', p. 66.

<sup>37</sup> J. Georgi, 'The Sieved Biological Remains', p. 35.

Rye was used to make bread. It was customarily used for manorial liveries and grown for local consumption, but Campbell observes that by 1300, workers were increasingly demanding wheat.<sup>38</sup> Rye was hardier than wheat, more resistant to disease and in demand as a cheaper alternative to wheat but transport costs could make it a less successful product.<sup>39</sup> Ruxley hundred growers of rye do not seem to have been aiming at the London market, as quantities are relatively small on both lay and ecclesiastical holdings.<sup>40</sup>

John de Scathebury had ten quarters of barley valued at 3 s a quarter and the charred grain sample from Scadbury contained barley.<sup>41</sup> Barley could be used for bread flour but was often grown to be malted for brewing. John de Scathebury owned at least one 'lead', a large brewing vessel, so this was no doubt its main use at Scadbury; possibly malted grain from the hundred was destined for sale, as it was in high demand in London. Dredge or drage, a mixture of barley and oats, could be used as a cheaper option for brewing and was often sold to commercial brewers.<sup>42</sup> In the 1301 lay subsidy return, dredge is included in four assessments in Chislehurst vill and occasionally elsewhere.<sup>43</sup>

Oats, valued at only 20 d a quarter in the 1301 lay subsidy return, were widely grown as a fodder crop, fed to pigs but particularly to horses. Oats could also be malted if barley was not available.<sup>44</sup> In Chislehurst, both Scadbury and Kemnal manors had considerable stocks of oats which would have been needed for the stotts and cart-horses during the winter months. At Orpington, the cart-horses were each fed half a bushel a night; the stotts were fed two or three bushels a night.<sup>45</sup> The majority of individuals assessed in Ruxley hundred had at least a few bushels of oats to serve as fodder for the family pig or horse.

The Greater Orpington demesne grew significant amounts of oats, as reflected in the *Feeding the City* database. Campbell pointed out that London needed oats for its increasing number of horses and also as malt, and that places within easy access to the city were best

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<sup>38</sup> Campbell, *English Seigniorial Agriculture*, p. 219.

<sup>39</sup> Campbell, *Seigniorial Agriculture*, p. 219 f.

<sup>40</sup> Greater Orpington grew only small amounts of rye; Bowen, *The Priory Orpington*, p. 65.

<sup>41</sup> J. Georgi, 'The Sieved Biological Remains', p. 35.

<sup>42</sup> Campbell, p. 226.

<sup>43</sup> TNA E 179/123/5.

<sup>44</sup> Campbell, p. 245.

<sup>45</sup> Bowen, 'The Priory Orpington', p. 67.

placed to export the grain as low transport costs would balance the low price.<sup>46</sup> However at Orpington, the increase is more likely to have reflected the increasing demand for local fodder to support its function as a guesthouse; visitors regularly arrived accompanied by servants and their horses had to be stabled and fed.<sup>47</sup>

### 3.4.3 Arable weeds



**Fig. 5: Thirteenth-century iron weeding hook excavated at Scadbury**  
Photograph: ODAS.

Weeds must always have been a problem in arable fields and some weeds, such as corncockle, were poisonous if eaten. Contemporary estate manuals advised: ‘Cause your corne to be cleansed and weeded after mydsomer for before that time it is no good season...’.<sup>48</sup> Contemporary images show how weeds were tackled. A forked stick was used to hold the weed down, then a weeding hook – an iron blade attached to a wooden handle

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<sup>46</sup> Campbell et al., *Feeding the City*, pp. 34, 160 f.

<sup>47</sup> Campbell, ‘Agriculture in Kent’, p. 35; On guests’ horses, Bowen, ‘The Priory Orpington’, p. 68.

<sup>48</sup> D. Oschinsky (ed.), *Walter of Henley* (Oxford: OUP, 1971), c. 52 (p. 323).

– was used to cut the stem.<sup>49</sup> An iron weeding-hook from the early thirteenth century has been excavated at Scadbury and would have been used on the arable weeds identified in the excavated sample (Fig. 5).<sup>50</sup> This is similar in form to contemporary tools identified as weeding-hooks from sites elsewhere in England but is the only one to have survived from Ruxley hundred.<sup>51</sup>

There is no other information about the agricultural equipment used on lay estates in the hundred, though the bedels' rolls for Orpington refer to the purchase of a number of items including ploughshares, shovels and spades with metal edges, and to the construction of wooden carts and wagons.<sup>52</sup> The Ruxley hundred lay subsidy return includes no assessments for equipment, even for wealthy demesnes which must have had good supplies of tools; these must have been regarded by the assessors as essential and non-taxable.

#### **3.4.4 Other field crops: vetch, peas, beans, hay**

The 1301 lay subsidy return shows that vetch and peas were grown at Scadbury, most likely for fodder along with oats. Vetch is recorded on estates and smallholdings throughout the hundred and peas and beans were also widely grown. Vetch and traces of pea were found in the thirteenth-century grain and seed sample recovered from Scadbury manor.<sup>53</sup> On seigneurial estates, peas were fed to pigs housed in sties, and peas and vetch were fed to horses; peas could also be included in pottage, eaten by peasants or given to servants.<sup>54</sup>

Vetch, like peas and beans a leguminous plant, provided nitrogen to the soil. Its cultivation permitted a more intensive crop rotation with less use of fallow. It spread throughout south-east England over the later medieval period and Kent estates were at the forefront of this development.<sup>55</sup> The 1301 lay subsidy return demonstrates this trend in Ruxley hundred,

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<sup>49</sup> A misericord in Malvern Priory has a carving of a man using a weeding hook in this way: Hart, *Excavations at Scadbury Part 2*, p. 29.

<sup>50</sup> Hart, *Excavations at Scadbury Part 2*, p. 28 f.; evidence for arable weeds, J. Georgi, 'The Sieved Biological Remains', in *Excavations at Scadbury Part 2*, p. 37.

<sup>51</sup> I. H. Goodall, *Ironwork in Medieval Britain: An Archaeological Study* (London: Society for Medieval Archaeology Monograph 31, 2011), p. 92-93.

<sup>52</sup> Bowen, 'The Priory Orpington', p. 76.

<sup>53</sup> J. Georgi, 'Sieved Biological Remains', p. 36.

<sup>54</sup> Campbell, *Seigniorial Agriculture*, p. 229.

<sup>55</sup> Campbell, *Seigniorial Agriculture*, p. 228 ff; 'Agriculture in Kent', p. 32 f.

as vetch is widely recorded. The benefits of continuous crop production would have been advantageous to an estate such as Scadbury, which was producing large quantities of wheat (see above). Vetch was also grown with beans at the Greater Orpington demesne, where it was used as animal fodder.<sup>56</sup>

John de Scathebury's assessment includes hay valued at 4 s, representing a significant amount; where hay is included elsewhere in the hundred, assessments are usually lower. Scadbury evidently had meadowland within the demesne. Excavation has recovered evidence from samples of charred and waterlogged plant remains of a range of typical grassland or meadow plants such as buttercup, self-heal, ribwort and sedges, all of which could be associated with hay meadows.<sup>57</sup> Kemnal also had stores of hay.<sup>58</sup> The 1301 return for Chislehurst vill has hay listed in five out of thirty assessments; however, six vills have no entries for hay, including the downland vills of Keston, Downe, Cudham, Chelsfield and Farnborough, and none of the ten assessors has hay assessed.<sup>59</sup> In contrast, in the return for Footscray vill (which had land alongside the river Cray), six out of thirteen assessments include hay, and in Hayes (with land along the Ravensbourne), ten out of twenty-six have hay.

No individual from either Orpington or Bexley vill is assessed with hay, though the Orpington demesne evidently had hay available and maintained two hay wagons costing 8 s.<sup>60</sup> The cost of mowing is regularly recorded in the bedels' rolls, often in an area described as 'Craye' so near the river.<sup>61</sup> The prime areas for hay meadows in both Bexley and Orpington were evidently retained primarily for demesne use.

### **3.4.5 'Garden' produce including vegetables, dyeplants, flax, fruit**

It is difficult to find information about non-standard crops in the hundred as they are not included in the lay subsidy assessments and there are few alternative sources. Produce was

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<sup>56</sup> eg CCA DCc-BR/Orpington-5\_r1; DCc-BR/Orpington-16\_m1v.

<sup>57</sup> J. Georgi, 'Sieved Biological Remains', p. 37.

<sup>58</sup> Table 7 above.

<sup>59</sup> TNA E 179/123/5.

<sup>60</sup> Bowen, 'The Priory Orpington', p. 77.

<sup>61</sup> Eg CCA DCc-BR/Orpington-1\_r2, where mowing 3 acres of meadow at Craye and 4 acres at Orpington cost 3 s 4 d.

no doubt grown in gardens, vegetable plots or orchard, whether by smallholders or on larger estates; it is worth considering whether any was grown for onward sale to London.

Many Londoners had gardens of their own; this is evident from references to disputes with neighbours over boundaries and 'nuisance'.<sup>62</sup> They were able to grow fruit and vegetables for the family and some would have had a surplus to sell to neighbours. Allotments were allocated outside the walls for the same purpose. Fruit might also have been on sale in Southwark. But as the city expanded there would have been pressure to look further afield for supplies. Martha Carlin notes that the occupation of fruit-seller was recorded in Southwark from 1377; it is possible that this was an earlier activity, using produce grown in Southwark itself or brought in from growers in nearby Surrey and Kent.<sup>63</sup>

Dyer has pointed out that while aristocratic estates (including ecclesiastical estates) may well have had gardens with fruit trees and vegetables to provide produce for their own use, many peasants also had access to gardens which they used to grow food for their families. Enterprising peasants could have gone further and grown a surplus to take to market.<sup>64</sup> Dartford and Southwark, with established routes for provisioning London, and the markets of the city of London itself, were all accessible from Ruxley hundred.

Manorial records show that the ecclesiastical demesnes of Bexley and Greater Orpington had gardens. The garden at Greater Orpington produced beans, pears, apples and vines; the apples were regularly made into cider.<sup>65</sup> The garden supplied the guesthouse and may not have been expected to yield surpluses for sale; but if surpluses did occur, there were local markets where they could be sold to neighbours.<sup>66</sup>

Campbell notes that teasels, madder, woad, vegetables, nuts and fruit are documented on lay estates in thirteenth- and fourteenth-century England.<sup>67</sup> Teasels and madder were used in the processing and dyeing of cloth. It is impossible to establish whether any of these

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<sup>62</sup> Barron, *London in the Later Middle Ages*, p. 252.

<sup>63</sup> Carlin, *Medieval Southwark*, p. 170.

<sup>64</sup> C. Dyer, 'Gardens and Garden Produce in the Later Middle Ages', in C. M. Woolgar, D. Serjeantson, T. Waldron (eds.), *Food in Medieval England: Diet and Nutrition* (Oxford: OUP, 2006), p. 37-39.

<sup>65</sup> Bowen, 'The Priory Orpington' p. 68.

<sup>66</sup> Markets are discussed in Chapter 5.

<sup>67</sup> Campbell, *Seigniorial Agriculture*, p. 313.



crops were grown on either lay aristocratic estates or peasant smallholdings in Ruxley hundred, but it seems likely that some would have been present; whether they were deliberately produced for sale in London is harder to judge. In 1271-72 there was a garden at the de Say property at Cudham - 'a court [presumably the court lodge for dealing with manorial business] with garden, herbage and other advantages' worth 2 s.<sup>68</sup> The extent for Sandling in the 1291 Inquisition *post mortem* for Gregory de Rokesle refers to a messuage with garden at the manor.<sup>69</sup> As neither tenant-in-chief appears to have been resident on their estate, the gardens must have been used to provide produce when they visited, or to supply to the main residence, or enjoyed by a tenant, but there is no information about what was grown or how it was used.

There is no reference to 'garden' produce in the 1301 Somerden lay subsidy assessment. In the Dartford assessment there are references to small plots of what may be dyestuffs – *sandix*, woad, producing a blue dye, and scallions, *pori*. This term can also mean leeks, so *pori* may have been grown for food; but as scallions produce a green dye, it is more likely that the purpose of their cultivation, and the reason for their taxation alongside woad, arose from their use in dyeing cloth. As imported dyestuff from Picardy reduced in the later thirteenth century, following the wars with France, it is likely there was increasing demand for home-grown dyes. Produce from Dartford could have been sent on to London or used by local cloth-makers. Individuals with names relating to cloth and clothing, *Textor* (weaver) and *Cissor* (tailor), are listed in the Dartford assessment.<sup>70</sup>

Weavers and tailors were also present in Ruxley hundred; in the 1301 lay subsidy return the byname 'Le webbe' (weaver) occurs in the developing villages of Bexley, Farnborough, Wickham and St Mary Cray.<sup>71</sup> Weavers produced cloth (linen or woollen) or canvas (for sarplers, sacks for wool), whether this was for sale in local markets or further afield. They would have needed sources of yarn and dyes. There is no direct evidence that dye-plants were grown in Ruxley hundred between 1200 and 1350 but it is possible they were present.

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<sup>68</sup> IPM of William de Say, 1275, extent for Cudham in G. S. Steinman, *Some account of the manor of Apuldefeld*, p. 3 f., footnote e. and Table 2.

<sup>69</sup> TNA C 133/60.

<sup>70</sup> TNA E 179/123/4.

<sup>71</sup> TNA E 179/123/5.

Hemp – used for canvas sacking – was valued in the Dartford lay subsidy return and may also have been grown in Ruxley hundred, although it is not listed there.

Flax was needed to produce linen. There is no information about flax as a crop in the 1301 lay subsidy return, but a chance reference in Canterbury Cathedral Archives refers to the processing of flax on a lay estate within the hundred. In the late thirteenth century Sir Philip de Maleville, then a tenant of the de Rokesle family at Little Orpington, made an agreement with the priory to rent land and water adjacent to their millpond in Orpington.<sup>72</sup> The agreement provided access to the millpond for the purpose of retting flax (the process of soaking and softening the stems, which would make it possible to extract the fibres for spinning into thread and then weaving into cloth). The extent of local flax-growing elsewhere in the hundred is unknown and it is impossible to assess whether the crop was being produced mainly for local use or for sale further away from the manor. It is a useful reminder, however, that lay lords, and especially peasants, grew and processed crops for which only chance evidence survives.

### ***Apples and Pears***

There is little direct information about the cultivation and use of apples in Ruxley hundred. However, the Greater Orpington demesne grew apples and pears. Early apples were usually less sweet than modern varieties and needed cooking to make them palatable; fermentation produced an alcoholic drink as an alternative to ale or wine. ‘Garden fruits’ were used at Orpington to make cider for sale, either apples alone or a mixture of apples and pears.<sup>73</sup> Cider-making may have been commonplace elsewhere in the hundred.

The early placename ‘Perry Street’ in Chislehurst suggests that pear trees were cultivated locally.<sup>74</sup> Perry Street seems originally to have been a hamlet in Chislehurst on the boundary between Kemnal and Scadbury Manors, in the area of the present road named Old Perry Street. ‘Perry’, pear-tree, appears quite frequently in English placenames; it is assumed to

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<sup>72</sup> CCA DCc-ChAnt/O/112.

<sup>73</sup> Examples of ‘garden fruits’ used to produce barrels of *ciser* (cider) for sale: CCA-DCc/BR/Orpington-17 (1316-17), BR/Orpington-18 (1317-18). See also fn. 79 below.

<sup>74</sup> Bowen, ‘The Priory Orpington’, p. 77.

be derived from the Old English *pirige*, pear.<sup>75</sup> In Chislehurst, the bynames *del Perer* and *de Piro* occur in the names of witnesses in deeds relating to Kemnal Manor, which stood to the north of Perry Street: Adam del Perer and Henry and Edward de Piro in 1259; Edward atte Pirie in 1265 and 1259.<sup>76</sup> Local placenames are recorded later: 'Piryfelde' in 1511 and in 1518, 'messuages in Piry Street' and 'Peristrete' are named in references of 1518 to boundaries of the manor of Kemnal.<sup>77</sup> However the only similar byname in the 1301 Lay Subsidy assessment for Ruxley hundred is *att Pire*, in Knockholt vill - a considerable distance from Chislehurst and presumably unrelated to Perry Street. The name does not occur in the Ruxley hundred assessment for 1334/35. Perry Hall Farm stood further south in Orpington until the twentieth century, but nothing is known about its origins.

Wild pears were tall, distinctive trees with sought-after hard wood.<sup>78</sup> The early hamlet of Perry Street might have developed near such a tree but it is more likely there were pear orchards in Chislehurst, perhaps also at Perry Hall in Orpington. Commercial apple and pear orchards were planted at Scadbury in the twentieth century, so the land could support fruit-growing.

Pears were popular with the later medieval aristocracy, who were prepared to go to some lengths to obtain them. Medieval varieties such as warden pears were smaller and harder than the modern dessert fruit and required slow cooking to make them palatable, but they kept well. They could be stewed, baked in pies or boiled down to a paste and combined with raisins to form a sweetmeat, and crushed and fermented to create the alcoholic drink perry or mixed with apples in cider.<sup>79</sup> Pear trees offered attractive blossom in spring; King Henry III

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<sup>75</sup> M. Gelling, *Place-names in the Landscape*, (London: Dent, 1983), p. 219

<sup>76</sup> Webb, *History of Chislehurst*, p. 206.

<sup>77</sup> Webb, p. 206 f.

<sup>78</sup> Rackham explains that wild pear were often solitary trees found in hedgerows or free-standing (and therefore noticeable), which fruited rarely but had exceptionally dense timber. He quotes the herbalist Gerarde, who in 1597 said that they grew in woods, the borders of fields and near to highways, but should not be eaten 'because their nourishment is little and bad' – though perhaps Gerarde was referring only to uncooked pears. O. Rackham, *Ancient Woodland* (2<sup>nd</sup> edn.: Dalbeattie: Castlepoint Press, 2003), p. 356.

<sup>79</sup> J. Morgan, *The Book of Pears: the definitive history and guide to over 500 varieties* (London: Ebury Press, 2015), p. 49-58, discusses medieval pear growing, including on the manors of Christ Church Priory in east Kent which provided food for the priory. She comments (p. 57) that both pears and apples may have been grown primarily for conversion into alcoholic drinks, perry and cider respectively, or mixed to form cider.

planted a hundred at the royal retreat near Woodstock in 1265.<sup>80</sup> In July 1265, when Eleanor de Montfort was based at Dover Castle while her husband was on campaign William de Marshal from her household was paid 3 *d* to travel to Canterbury to purchase 300 pears costing 10 *d*. More pears were purchased in August for 9¾ *d*.<sup>81</sup> In 1308, 900 pears were purchased by the king's fruiterer for the coronation banquet of Edward II, held at Westminster.<sup>82</sup>

King Edward II's household might have been able to draw on pears grown on royal properties, but supplies could also have been purchased in London or Southwark markets which were supplied by local growers. Edward II's royal palace at Eltham (earlier held by Anthony Bek, bishop of Durham) was not far from Chislehurst, so pear-growing at Perry Street for sale to local aristocrats, or even the royal household, is a possibility.

Galloway and Murphy suggest that magnates had gardeners who cultivated fruit and vegetables, including pears, specifically for the London market.<sup>83</sup> They show that the bishops of Winchester sold fruit from the early thirteenth century onwards, making use of a large garden at their property in Southwark, and in 1267 spent 19 *s* on 43 apple trees and 100 pear trees to plant there. Entrepreneurial peasants may have grown pears or produced perry for onward sale locally or in London. Possibly Hornchurch priory expected its Kemnal estate – close to Perry Street – to provide supplies of perry for its use.

### 3.4.6 Managing the demesne

A final area to consider in relation to husbandry at the manors in Chislehurst and elsewhere in the hundred, is how they were managed. A substantial demesne required staff to run it; there was usually a serjeant or steward to oversee estate business throughout the year, a reeve with responsibility for the harvest, possibly other staff with specific responsibilities for

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<sup>80</sup> P. Stamper, 'Woods and Parks', in G. Astill & A. Grant, *The Countryside of Medieval England* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1988), pp. 128-148 (p. 136).

<sup>81</sup> L. Wilkinson (ed. & trans), *The Household Roll of Eleanor de Montfort, Countess of Leicester and Pembroke, 1265*, British Library, Additional MS 8877 (Woodbridge: PRS & Boydell Press, 2020), p. xciv and HR, Nos. 462, 511.

<sup>82</sup> C.C. Dyer, 'Gardens and Garden Produce' in Woolgar, Serjeantson, Waldron (eds.), *Food in Medieval England*, p. 35.

<sup>83</sup> J. A. Galloway & M. Murphy, 'Feeding the City: Medieval London and its Agrarian Hinterland', *The London Journal*, Vol. 16, No. 1 (1991) pp. 3-14; pears, p. 8.

stock and related activities such as cheese-making. If surpluses were deliberately generated for sale, this would require forward thinking and appropriate liaison with markets or individual merchants (woodmongers, cornmongers) and transport organised to move commodities such as grain and timber, either to a market or to a wharf.

Du Boulay suggests that at the archbishop's demesne at Bexley, surviving accounts from the period 1270-1350 show that the wages, stipends, expenses of estate officers and repairs and upkeep to estate buildings totalled an average of £9 2 s 0 d a year, including payment to a blacksmith.<sup>84</sup> The survey of Bexley manor provided for Archbishop Pecham shows that the demesne employed a reeve to collect rents and other monies, a keeper of the granary and a beadle.<sup>85</sup>

Similar arrangements were in place at Canterbury Cathedral priory's manor of Greater Orpington. The demesne was managed day-to-day by a serjeant supported by a beadle. The serjeant was paid 2 d a day except for four or five weeks in the autumn, when he was 'at the table of the lord' and received free food. His wages totalled between 50 s and 75 s. He was also paid an additional fixed stipend of 13 s 4 d a year. The beadle was paid 1½ d a day, up to 38 s a year, and a fixed stipend of 6 s 8 d. The estate also employed two ploughmen, two drivers of the plough-team and a carter, a shepherd, cowherd, swineherd and dairy worker or cheesemaker (*casiator*). In some years a hayward or a reap-reeve was also paid.<sup>86</sup>

There are no such detailed records for lay estates. Cudham may have had a local beadle and the de Says might have managed their affairs in a similar way to the ecclesiastical establishments.<sup>87</sup> No doubt other demesnes, especially those held by non-resident lords, also employed a local serjeant or reeve in line with standard seigneurial practice at the time, but this is difficult to see in the surviving documentation, and even more difficult to confirm whether there was any form of specialised structure in place to support the buying, transporting or selling of crops or stock.

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<sup>84</sup> Du Boulay, *Medieval Bexley*, p. 16.

<sup>85</sup> Witney, *Archbishop Pecham's Survey*, p. 341.

<sup>86</sup> Bowen, 'The Priory Orpington', p. 63 f.

<sup>87</sup> See Table 2, p. 63.

### 3.5 LATER HUSBANDRY IN THE HUNDRED

#### 3.5.1 Extents of debt as a source

As the 1334-35 lay subsidy return does not provide any details of individuals' possessions, it is difficult to assess how the hundred responded to external events, such as the periods of bad weather, poor harvests and animal diseases which affected England in the early decades of the fourteenth century. However, court cases related to debt can offer useful insights.<sup>88</sup> If a loan was not repaid, the plaintiff could seek redress through the court where the loan had been registered, and the court would require an investigation into the debtor's assets. The resulting assessment - known as an 'extent' – was set out in court documents and a decision made on the plaintiff's case; he could be awarded up to half of the debtor's assets.

An extent from 1349 provides new information about the Scadbury Manor estate at the end of the time-period covered by this thesis. This allows a comparison to be made with the stock and crops on the manor in 1301.

#### 3.5.2 John de Scathebury's estate in 1348-49

In 1348 a debt was registered at the Court of Common Pleas in London in relation to John de Scathebury (the son or possibly grandson of the John de Scathebury assessed for the lay subsidy in 1301), along with Richard Moryz and Simon de Malmesbury. The debt was for £200, owed to John de Chichester, citizen of London and goldsmith.<sup>89</sup> Registration indicated that a payment had been advanced against future supply of a commodity, or repayment; no action was taken by the court unless the debt was not repaid as agreed. The commodity was often the future supply of wool. Wool or possibly grain may have been behind this transaction; if the wool could not be delivered, the advance had to be repaid. Evidently John

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<sup>88</sup> Extents as a source are discussed in J. Langdon, 'Bare Ruined Farms? Extents for Debt as a Source for Landlord versus Non-Landlord Agricultural Performance in Fourteenth-Century England', in M. Kowaleski, J. Langdon, P. R. Schofield (eds.), *Peasants and Lords in the Medieval Landscape: Essays in Honour of Bruce M. S. Campbell* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2015), pp. 59-82.

<sup>89</sup> TNA CP 40/359; image available at [http://aalt.law.uh.edu/E3/CP40no359/aCP40no359mm1toEnd/IMG\\_8676.htm](http://aalt.law.uh.edu/E3/CP40no359/aCP40no359mm1toEnd/IMG_8676.htm), (accessed 08/08/2021). I owe this reference to an index of Common Pleas cases by plaintiff name for 1349 prepared by AALT volunteer Rosemary Simons, available at <https://waalt.uh.edu/index.php/CP40/359> (accessed 08/08/2021).

de Scathebury could not repay the advance. A further document from August 1349 shows that only £140 of the £200 loan had been repaid and the court had therefore asked for an extent to be compiled.<sup>90</sup> Simon de Malmesbury initially claimed to have no assets, but the document indicates that he was later found to possess a cart. Richard Moryz was assessed as having a house and curtilage in Chislehurst, along with two cottages and four acres of land valued at 18 *d* per acre. In contrast, John de Scathebury had extensive assets listed.

The resulting assessment is not necessarily an accurate record of all of the debtor's assets; some extents include land, but this extent relates only to certain movable assets. The procedure looks similar to that used for lay subsidies in rural areas, in that personal possessions for normal household use appear to be excluded. It is not clear whether all stock and all stores of crops were considered or only surpluses which could be sold. Since debtors could be required to pay up to half of the assessment to the plaintiff, it is likely that all of their stock and stores were included.

The details for stock, crops and household items listed for John de Scathebury in 1349 are set out in Table 11 below, alongside the 1301 lay subsidy information. There are some significant differences. The total calculated for 1349 is considerably lower than that for 1301 and fewer items are included – for example, no items from the kitchen or chamber. Both assessments were made in late autumn.

It is notable that the estate has no oxen and fewer horses in 1349, and the horses listed are the smaller, cheaper affers rather than the heavier stotts - though the affers are valued at slightly more than in 1301. No cart-horses are listed. Calves are absent, as in 1301.

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<sup>90</sup> TNA CP 40/359.

<b>John de Scathebury's Assets: 1301 (After 24 October) <sup>91</sup></b>	<b>John de Scathebury's Assets: 1349 (November) <sup>92</sup></b>
<b>Stock</b>	<b>Stock</b>
8 oxen @ 10 s each,	-
6 horses (2 carthorses @ 10 s each, 4 <i>stotti</i> @ 6 s each)	3 horses ( <i>afferi</i> ) @ 3 s 4 d each
1 cow @ 6 s 6 steers ( <i>bovet'</i> ) @ 5 s each 4 heifers ( <i>bouicul'</i> ) @ 2 s each	1 cow @ 3s 6 steers ( <i>bovet'</i> ) @ 5 s each -
8 pigs @ 2 s each 8 porkers @ 1 s each	1 sow, 6 pigs @ 2 s each 6 porkers @ 1 s each
60 Sheep @ 10 d each 20 lambs @ 5 d each	24 sheep @ 6 d each -
<b>Stores of Crops</b>	<b>Stores of Crops</b>
30 qu' wheat @ 4 s 6 d per quarter	2½ qu' wheat @ 6 s per qu'
10 qu' barley @ 3 s per quarter	1¼ qu' winter barley @ 3 s per qu
10 qu' oats @ 20 d per quarter 4 qu' peas @ 20 d per quarter	- -
1 qu' vetch @ 20 d per quarter	-
hay valued at 2 s	-
<b>In the house</b>	<b>In the house</b>
1 'lead' [vessel for brewing] @ 4 s	-
Copper alloy items @ 3 s	-
[Items valued at] 6 s 8 d 'in the chamber'	-
<b>Other Items</b>	<b>Other Items</b>
-	1 cart with iron wheels @ 4 s
<b>Total value of assets</b>	<b>Total value of assets [excluding assets listed in Table 12 below]</b>
<b>£22 3 s 0 d</b>	<b>£4 17 s 1 d</b>

**Table 11: Comparison of de Scathebury assets in 1301 and 1349.**

There are fewer non-working cattle. There are also many fewer sheep than in 1301 and they have a lower value. The stocks of wheat and barley are lower than in 1301. However, by

<sup>91</sup> Source: TNA E 179/123/5 (Chislehurst).

<sup>92</sup> Source: TNA CP 40/359.



1349, a quarter of wheat had increased in value from 4 s 6 d in 1301 to 6 s, though barley (specified as winter barley) remains at the same valuation. No oats or other fodder crops such as pulses, vetch or hay are included. The reference in 1349 to a cart with iron-rimmed wheels may confirm that the estate had always had at least a single cart, which in 1301 was not liable for tax so was not listed. Carting, and the ability to trade, remained important to the de Scathebury family in 1349, even if specialist cart-horses were no longer maintained.

The overall impression is of an estate in a much worse position than in 1301, though its wheat would have had a higher value if sold. The low numbers of stock and high wheat valuations shown in the extent may reflect the wider crisis of supply. Stock numbers might have fallen compared with 1301 following decades of disease and poor harvests but had recovered elsewhere in Kent by the 1340s.<sup>93</sup> It is possible the increase in wool duties and embargo on wool exports in the 1330s might have made wool production less profitable for the estate than wheat production, leading to a general reduction in sheep numbers.

It is likely that by 1349 the estate had been affected by the Black Death, which had appeared in England in 1348; by the end of 1349, the country is thought to have lost around half of its inhabitants.<sup>94</sup> Mate suggests that in Kent most places lost around a third of their population.<sup>95</sup> Crops could not be sown or harvested as usual because of the lack of workers; bad weather also caused poor harvests in 1349-50. Wheat prices increased while other grain prices fell, perhaps indicating a continuing or even growing market among survivors for better-quality bread to eat.<sup>96</sup> There is no contemporary information to show what happened in Ruxley hundred. It is possible that its dispersed settlement reduced the chance of infection, but those working with London merchants or travelling to London were at risk. The onset of plague may have been a significant factor in John de Scathebury's failure to

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<sup>93</sup> Introduction, p, 21 f.

<sup>94</sup> Slavin notes that the years 1348-51 were excessively damp with harvest failures in 1349, 1350 and 1351, caused by the lack of harvest labour and bad weather ('Climate, Pathogens and Mammals' in M. Muller (ed.), *Medieval Rural Life* (2022)). He suggests that the estimate that England lost around 46 per cent of its population may be too low, with losses nearer 60 per cent (p. 163). London is thought to have lost around 50 per cent of its population, with high numbers dying between February and March 1349 (p. 164).

<sup>95</sup> M. Mate, 'The Economy of Kent, 1200-1500: The Aftermath of the Black Death', in Sweetinburgh (2010), pp. 11-24 (ref., p. 11).

<sup>96</sup> Survivors demanding better quality grain: Mate, 'Economy of Kent', p. 11.

supply promised goods or to repay the £200 loan. He is not referred to as ‘deceased’ in the documentation but nothing further is known about him.<sup>97</sup>

### 3.5.3. Grain Processing at Scadbury

If John de Scathebury wished to sell surplus grain in 1301, he would need to process it. Kemnal Manor and other assessed individuals in the vill also had grain stocks, albeit at lower amounts than at Scadbury, so this must have been a local issue. Processing grain for others created a valuable income stream for any lord who owned a mill. There was no watermill in Chislehurst vill, which lay at some distance from the river Cray. Watermills had operated on riverside estates in neighbouring vills since at least the time of the *Domesday Survey* - notably at Bexley, St Paul’s Cray, Sandling and Orpington; at Bexley and Orpington the mills belonged to the ecclesiastical demesnes.

From the later twelfth century, windmills were an option for grain processing, meaning lay lords in Ruxley hundred who had manors on higher ground away from the rivers, could construct them on their demesnes. At Cudham, a windmill had been constructed by 1272. William de Say’s Inquisition *post mortem* states: ‘The issues of the windmill are worth per annum...30 s at 3 s 4 d each quarter ... and there are costs of the said mill per annum of 6 s 8 d, wherefore ... the worth of the said mill is 23 s. 4 d. per annum’ – so a sizeable gain overall. The costs must relate to repairs of stones or other components such as sails.<sup>98</sup>

An entry in the 1349 extent throws some light on milling at Scadbury manor. A large quantity of different kinds of timber, valued at over £44 in total but with the elements valued individually, was assessed in detail in the extent, as set out in Table 11. It is clear from the terminology that the timber constitutes many of the elements of a windmill. The inclusion of a re-used central post shows that the timber related to a post-mill. Post-mills were built around large central posts, normally of oak, which could be up to three feet in diameter. The post was linked to a beam which allowed the mill to be turned so that the

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<sup>97</sup> See also Chapter 6, p. 231.

<sup>98</sup> Inquisitions *Post Mortem*, Henry III, File 42 (No. 813), in *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem: Volume 1, Henry III*, ed. J E S Sharp (London, 1904), pp. 273-287. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/inquis-post-mortem/vol1/pp273-287> [accessed 12 June 2018]. The full extent relating to Cudham, including the details of the mill, is translated by G. S. Steinman, *Some account of the manor of Apuldefeld, in Cudham* (London: J. B. Nichols, 1851), p. 3 f., footnote (e).

sails would face into the prevailing wind. This internal mechanism was constructed from wood and metal. A wooden frame was then placed around the outside of the mill and this housing was covered with weatherboarding, termed ‘shotboards’.<sup>99</sup>

The types of wood are specified. Oak was plentiful at Scadbury and elsewhere in Ruxley hundred so was presumably obtained locally. Fir is likely to have been imported from the Baltic, so would have been purchased from London, where the Hanse merchants had a base.<sup>100</sup> The list includes none of the metal gearing and other mechanisms required in a mill; it also makes no reference to sails or to the stones used to grind the corn.

Item	£	s	d
700 large squared boards of oak @ 1 s per board	35	0	0
1 post from [a former] windmill [ <i>una postem per quo[n]dam molendino ventritico</i> ]		13	4
200 large shotboards @ 8 s per 100		16	0
1800 small shotboards @ 4 s per 100	3	12	0
200 ledges [leggys] of oak @ 2 s per 100		4	0
6 bundles oak laths @ 4 s per bundle <sup>101</sup>	1	8	0
15 bundles fir laths @ 3 s 4 d per bundle	2	10	0
<b>Total value:</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>

**Table 12: John de Scathebury’s timber assets, 1349.**<sup>102</sup>

The central mill-post is described as from a former (‘quondam’) mill. There is nothing to show whether John de Scathebury had purchased the timber with the aim of building a new mill (a substantial item such as the mill-post might well have been recycled from another building) or whether this a stock of timber from a dismantled mill which he proposed to sell. Despite this uncertainty the list of the mill elements and their values is of considerable interest, as so little detail is known about the costs and construction of contemporary windmills in Ruxley hundred at this date, or indeed in Kent as a whole.

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<sup>99</sup> Windmills are discussed in J. Langdon, *Mills in the Medieval Economy: England 1300-1540* (Oxford: OUP 2004); see especially on post-mills, pp. 108-112 and 118-125, which explains some of the terminology.

<sup>100</sup> Barron, *London in the Later Middle Ages*, p. 86 f.

<sup>101</sup> The total given suggests there must in fact have been 7 bundles of oak laths.

<sup>102</sup> Source: TNA CP 40/359.

There is no other evidence for a windmill on the core estate of Scadbury manor. However at some time before 1343 the family had evidently purchased additional land in St Paul's Cray which John de Scadbury the younger inherited from his father along with the original manor; the details of this inheritance refer to a mill and a house in St Paul's Cray.<sup>103</sup> By 1346 (but possibly much earlier) the 'heirs of John de Scathebury' (presumably his widow Mabel and son John, perhaps under-age when the fee was obtained), held a share of the fee of the manor of Kechyngrove in St Paul's Cray.<sup>104</sup> A field named 'Kitchengrove' is shown on old estate maps of Scadbury Manor showing it lay in St Paul's Cray parish on the west side of the river Cray, in an area of high ground. The inherited mill may have been a windmill which stood on this land.

The court papers from 1349 suggest that at the end of the case, Richard Moryz was required to pay a sum from his assets to John de Chichester and that Simon de Malmesbury, after being locked up for a while, was also required to make a contribution.<sup>105</sup> John de Scathebury - if still alive - appears not to have paid anything, though debtors were normally charged half the value of their assets.

There appears to be no documentary reference to John de Scathebury after 1349. The date of his death is unknown. It is possible he died from the plague, but if so, Christina survived and had remarried before 1369, when she and her second husband Nicholas Heryng transferred the manor of Scadbury to her nephew John de Hadresham, along with Richard

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<sup>103</sup> Webb et al., *The History of Chislehurst*, p. 352, gives the transcription of a Fine from Kent, 19 Edw. III (CP25/144/104, 1343), thought to be the 1343 marriage settlement for John de Scathebury the younger and his wife Christina following the death of his father John the elder. John junior inherits half of the manor of Scathebury with its appurtenances, and one house, one mill, 43 acres of land and 6 ½ acres of meadow, in Paulynescrey [St Paul's Cray], Leuesham [Lewisham], and Bixle [Bexley]. The remaining half was settled on Mabel, the elder John de Scathebury's widow, for life. The location of the Lewisham and Bexley land is unknown. The St Paul's Cray land can be deduced from estate maps, such as that produced in 1810 by James Gudsell (original lost - a photocopy is held in Bromley Historic Collections), to have lain to the west of the Scadbury estate, alongside what became the present St Paul's Cray Hill. The land slopes from the hill-top towards the river Cray, with flatter areas which could have supported a windmill and millhouse and were sufficiently high to catch the wind. An image of the fine is at [http://aalt.law.uh.edu/AALT7/CP25\(1\)/CP25\\_1\\_103\\_129-144/IMG\\_0445.htm](http://aalt.law.uh.edu/AALT7/CP25(1)/CP25_1_103_129-144/IMG_0445.htm).

<sup>104</sup> J. Greenstreet, 'Assessments in Kent for the Aid to Knight the Black Prince, Anno 20 Edward III' in *Arch. Cant.* Vol X (1876), pp. 99-162; ref., p. 156. Greenstreet shows that the assessments often incorporated earlier information. The Aid states that John de Pulteney, Thomas Lyston and the heirs of John de Scathebury held half a fee between them which William de Cray held in Crey.

<sup>105</sup> Simon de Malmesbury of Chelsfield evidently operated as a merchant. In 1347 he is named in a recognisance owing £20 to a London potter; TNA C 241/126/156 (see also Chapter 6).

Northwych and John Aleyn, chaplain.<sup>106</sup> They were presumably appointed as feoffees for the estate. There is no evidence for surviving children from either of her marriages, and no further documentation relates to Scadbury Manor until 1424, when it was acquired by Thomas Walsingham, a wealthy London merchant.<sup>107</sup>

### 3. 6 CONCLUSIONS

This survey of husbandry in Ruxley hundred suggests that there were potentially large surpluses of both crops and stock available in 1301, particularly from demesne estates. Some producers had substantial stores of wheat, notably John de Scathebury in Chislehurst and Sir William Hamelton in Cudham. Surpluses of other grains were also present, although not on so large a scale. Grain from lay demesnes or peasant holdings was invisible to the *Feeding the City Project*, but it is quite possible that some wheat at least was being sent to London in the early fourteenth century and possibly earlier. Table 6 shows that John de Scathebury had specialist cart-horses in 1301, suggesting he had at least one cart available, though none is listed in his assessment, and he and other owners of carts and cart-horses would have been able to move grain to a wharf at Dartford or Greenwich for onward transmission to London. The documentation relating to timber from a windmill at Scadbury from 1349 and the evidence that the estate had a mill by 1343 suggests it was worthwhile for the de Scathebury family to invest in grain processing. This may well have supported the sale of grain outside the hundred.

It is possible that vegetables and fruit in the hundred were grown for sale as well as for household use, though there is little direct evidence. Pears may have been grown as a specialist crop in Chislehurst, sold for aristocratic consumption or fermented as perry. It is also possible that the hundred was generating cloth for sale, or at least, providing crops

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<sup>106</sup> Webb et al., *History of Chislehurst*, pp. 109-110. Webb concluded that John junior had died circa 1346, but this may be based on a misunderstanding of the documentation relating to the Aid for the Knighting of the Black Prince; this was compiled in 1346 but often makes use of earlier information relating to fees. The reference must be to the death of John de Scathebury senior, probably before 1343 when his son married Christina de Hadresham – possibly after inheriting the estate. In an earlier chapter (p. 12) J. Beckwith states, without giving a source, that ‘John de Scathebury’ died ‘circa 1356’, possibly an error for Webb’s estimate of 1346, or an unsourced reference to the death of the son, whose whereabouts is not known after 1349.

<sup>107</sup> J. Clayton, *A Fifteenth-Century Merchant in London and Kent: Thomas Walsingham (d.1457)*. Masters thesis, University of London, 2014; online at <https://sas-space.sas.ac.uk/5776>.

such as flax for textile production, along with plants for dyeing cloth. While there is byname evidence to suggest that weavers and tailors were working locally, it is difficult to tell whether they could have generated cloth for sale beyond their own communities.

There was evidently surplus stock within the hundred. Cattle could have been sold for meat and hides (and other products) and replacement cattle may have been specifically bred on some demesnes. Pigs were generally limited to an individual household but some individuals had surplus pigs to sell or to provide fresh or processed pork for sale. There was capacity to produce dairy products for sale but no evidence that this took place.

There were no sheep flocks on the scale seen in Lincolnshire or the Cotswolds, but sufficient sheep grazed on the downland and elsewhere in the hundred to make the sale of wool a possibility; wool from individual producers could be gathered for sale, though this was not considered as high-quality as wool from specific flocks. However, wool available through the *collecta* system could still be desirable, especially if high-quality wool was in poor supply elsewhere. This is considered further in Chapter 6.

There is evidence that some individuals were prepared to invest in specialist cart-horses and carts, which meant produce could be moved to markets some distance away. The investment is visible primarily on demesnes but there may have been a general capacity to move goods to markets outside the hundred; horses suitable for riding, or for pulling small carts, were evidently widely available in addition to specialist cart-horses. Generally, horses were replacing oxen for ploughing, but oxen were still maintained on many demesnes, sometimes in mixed plough-teams. This is in line with changes seen elsewhere in the south-east, but contrasts with the continuing widespread use of oxen at all levels in the heavy Wealden fields of Somerden hundred. The move towards greater use of horses in Ruxley hundred is supplemented by greater use of vetch as a fodder-crop; vetch supported more intensive use of the land. Overall, both demesne and peasant husbandry in the hundred is seen as in keeping with wider trends, allowing surpluses to be generated which could be sold. The ways in which surplus produce – whether wool, stock grain, or ‘garden’ items – might have been sold are discussed further in Chapter 5.

Finally, the discussion of John de Scathebury’s estate in 1349 provides an insight into conditions in the hundred at the time of the Black Death. It shows a reduction in stock and

crops but a higher valuation for wheat, so those who had grain to sell might have benefited if they were able to avoid infection. There is no comparable information for other lay estates and no information about the impact of the plague in Ruxley hundred on lay landholders and peasants generally. Some families such as the de Rokesles were still active in later decades, but other family names disappeared.

## CHAPTER 4: MATERIAL CULTURE

### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter explores the material possessions owned by people in Ruxley hundred, to see what light they might throw on the relationship between the rural hundred and the city of London. There is little evidence of manufacture within Ruxley hundred itself and items whose production required specialist skills – such as ceramic or cast metal vessels, luxury goods, fashionable clothing and shoes – had to be sourced elsewhere. Options for this are considered in Chapter 5.

Christopher Woolgar has explored the material culture of aristocratic families, showing how information about their possessions and the ways in which these were acquired might be recovered from documentary sources such as household accounts.<sup>1</sup> These sources do not survive for Ruxley's manorial households, although some information is available for the ecclesiastical demesnes. Lay tenants-in-chief such as the de Say family did not make Ruxley hundred their primary residence, though they may have used their estates there for recreation. The material culture of the hundred is unlikely, therefore, to have included high-status items of great value. Most permanent residents in Ruxley hundred were members of the lesser gentry or peasants and it is their material possessions that are relevant for this thesis.

The relative wealth revealed by the 1334-35 lay subsidy assessment suggests there would have been sufficient resources available to provide a range of material items.<sup>2</sup> Chris Dyer draws on inventories, wills, manorial documentation and archaeological evidence to explore the possessions owned by medieval peasants and to illuminate their living standards.<sup>3</sup> By looking closely at what individual peasants owned he has been able to offer a detailed picture of peasant lifestyle; far from surviving in abject poverty, he argues that most peasants lived in relatively well-equipped homes with a range of kitchen utensils, tools for craftwork and agricultural implements available. Even poorer peasants had a few

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<sup>1</sup> C. M. Woolgar, *The Great Household in Late Medieval England* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1999).

<sup>2</sup> Chapter 1., p. 48 ff.

<sup>3</sup> C. Dyer, *Standards of Living in the later Middle Ages* (1989), p. 151 ff., especially pp. 169-175.



possessions, while most owned household equipment ranging from flesh-hooks through ceramic jugs for ale to cast metal alloy cooking pots. Dyer observes, however, that in rural communities - such as Ruxley hundred - the value of stock and crops was usually many times that of goods within the home.<sup>4</sup>

Dyer's analysis of peasants as consumers is likely to apply to (many of) the inhabitants of Ruxley hundred, though his sources are more plentiful for the later fourteenth century onwards. Wills and probate inventories were not widely available before 1350 and escheators' inventories, used in a recent project to explore an untapped resource covering a wide social group, were not produced before around 1360.<sup>5</sup> The chapter therefore has to consider untapped documentary sources such as lay subsidy returns, and make use of relevant finds from archaeological excavations. Physical evidence for material culture in the hundred is also limited, however, as the area of the former hundred was intensively developed before modern planning requirements and archaeological techniques were in place; many potential sites have been destroyed.

#### **4.1 1 Sources used**

The core documentary sources are the 1301 lay subsidy return for Ruxley hundred, with the 1301 returns for Dartford vill and Somerden hundred as comparators and information from the ecclesiastical manors of Bexley and Greater Orpington as additional context.<sup>6</sup> The 1301 returns include some limited information about personal possessions; this is in no sense comprehensive. In Ruxley hundred, the entries relate essentially to metal items of relatively high value along with unspecified items 'in the chamber'; a greater variety of metal items is listed in the Dartford return, again with unspecified items 'in the chamber', while the Somerden return includes only a generic term for metal vessels. The returns provide information lacking from the archaeological record; they can also be supplemented with information from ecclesiastical documentation. The archaeological material considered is mainly from the excavations at Scadbury Manor and the 'Walsingham School' site in St

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<sup>4</sup> Dyer, *Standards of Living*, p. 173.

<sup>5</sup> C. Briggs, Forward, A., Jervis, B., & Tompkins, M. (2019), 'People, possessions and domestic space in the late medieval escheators' records', *Journal of Medieval History*, 45 (2) (2019), pp. 145-161. <<https://doi.org/10.1080/03044181.2019.1593624>> [accessed 07/03/2023].

<sup>6</sup> TNA E 179/123/4, /E 179/123/5, E 179/123/6.

Paul's Cray. Scadbury Manor has been discussed in the Introduction.<sup>7</sup> The St Paul's Cray site, on the west bank of the river Cray and to the south of the Scadbury Manor site, was excavated in 1995 in advance of development; it revealed evidence for a previously unknown farmstead consisting of a domestic dwelling and ancillary buildings, likely to have been relatively high-status, with a timber box-frame set on dwarf flint foundation walls.<sup>8</sup> The excavators thought the site was settled at the middle/end of the twelfth century and abandoned in the early thirteenth century, after which it became farmland, with some later activity indicated by pottery sherds from the fifteenth-sixteenth centuries. These two sites are supplemented with information from the 'Joyden's Wood' site, just over the Ruxley hundred border to the north in Axtane hundred; this was also a domestic site, possibly the manor of Ocholte, held by a lay tenant of Lesnes priory. Outbuildings were excavated in 1938 and a building identified as a hall in 1957-58.<sup>9</sup> Minor excavations elsewhere in the hundred and in Dartford have added to a general understanding of material culture in the hundred in the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries.<sup>10</sup>

The excavated material complements that from the lay subsidy returns, as it covers ceramic items which were ignored by the assessors but which can provide useful information about households and trading patterns. None of the 1301 returns from north-west Kent provides the detail contained in some surviving urban returns, notably that from Colchester, which includes information about furnishings, clothing, and textiles in the home such as sheets and towels.<sup>11</sup> This information is also absent from the local archaeological record. Bringing the documentary and archaeological evidence together, however, gives some insight into the households of gentry and wealthier peasants in the hundred. This provides a starting point for considering where, and how, their possessions were acquired, and the role that London might have played in this process; issues which are explored in Chapter 5.

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<sup>7</sup> Introduction, p.3 f.

<sup>8</sup> M. J. Saunders, 'The Excavation of a Medieval Site at Walsingham School, St Paul's Cray, Bromley, 1995', *Arch. Cant.* Vol. 117 (1997), pp. 199-226; discussion of function and dating, pp. 220-224.

<sup>9</sup> H. Colvin, 'Excavations in Joydens Wood, Bexley', *Arch. Cant.* Vol. 61 (1949), 133-134. P. J. Tester & J. E. L. Caiger, 'Medieval Buildings in the Joyden's Wood Square Earthwork', *Arch. Cant.* Vol 72 (1958), pp. 18-40.

<sup>10</sup> D. C. Mynard, 'Medieval Pottery from Dartford', *Arch. Cant.* Vol. LXXXVIII, 1973 (Ashford, 1974), pp. 187-199.

<sup>11</sup> See below, p. 168.

## 4.2 MATERIAL POSSESSIONS FROM RUXLEY HUNDRED

Four types of material possession are examined for which documentary and/or archaeological evidence survives. These are: metalwork used in the home or in agricultural work, including both ironwork and items of cast metal alloy; ceramics, used primarily in a domestic setting; other household items (some of which might have been regarded as luxury goods); and finally, stone mortars and rotary querns.

### 4.2.1 Metalwork

Metal items were important for a medieval rural community, whether used as tools and equipment in the fields or in a craft setting, or as cooking vessels in the home. The main metals available were forged iron and cast alloys of brass, tin and lead.

Metal objects in use can be seen in contemporary images such as those in the manuscript known as the 'Luttrell Psalter'; they are also widely known from the finds of archaeological excavations.<sup>12</sup> Although images or parallels from sites elsewhere can serve as a guide to the metalwork available in Ruxley hundred, it is more difficult to establish what was actually used there. Unwanted metal objects do not survive well, as they may rust away or be melted down and recycled; little archaeological evidence survives. No items from the hundred for the period 1200-1350 are recorded on the Portable Antiquities Scheme database.

#### *Ironwork*

Iron was the metal most widely used in the thirteenth century. It was fashioned into agricultural and woodworking tools such as scythes or hammers and provided the shoe that edged wooden spades and shovels. It was also used to make nails to hold roof-tiles in place, forged into shoes for horses and oxen, or worked to form metal rims for cartwheels and the hoops which held together the staves of wooden barrels and buckets. Iron implements were

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<sup>12</sup> Kitchen and dining scenes showing metal utensils can be seen in *The Luttrell Psalter*, BL Add MS 42130, online at: <[http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Add\\_MS\\_42130](http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Add_MS_42130), for example spits, f 206 v, kitchen knives and other utensils, f. 207v. Metal items recovered from archaeological excavations in London are illustrated in G. Egan, *The Medieval Household: Daily Living c. 1150-1450* (London: Museum of London, 1998). Although the finds are from an urban centre, many items would also have been used in a rural setting.

used in the home: firedogs on the hearth, hooks and chains to suspend cooking pots over a fire, trivets to support pots in the embers, knives from the kitchen. Iron rushlights or candle sticks provided lighting. Specialised iron tools (or components of wooden tools) were also needed for any industrial and craft work that might be undertaken in a rural community - tanning, making leather goods, weaving cloth.<sup>13</sup>

Ruxley hundred's inhabitants would have needed most of these items. Iron goods are not specifically assessed in the 1301 lay subsidy return for the hundred; they were low value and were presumably disregarded for tax purposes as essential for the household's daily life or for an individual's work. Some may be encompassed by the general reference to 'utensils', discussed further below. The production of basic ironwork could be undertaken by a local blacksmith. Demesnes often employed their own smith to make and repair tools and to shoe horses.<sup>14</sup> The byname *faber* (smith) is not conclusive evidence that the person so named worked as a smith at the time (and someone might work as a smith without this byname), but it provides a clue to local smithing capacity. Four people named *faber* are listed in the 1301 lay subsidy return for Ruxley hundred, in Wickham, Farnborough, Bexley and Downe villis.<sup>15</sup> The first three villis were crossed by or adjacent to major routeways and by 1318 all three had been granted weekly markets, so travellers as well as local people were passing through, potential purchasers of goods and with horses needing a farrier. Downe had no market, but was relatively well-populated, with twenty-eight individuals assessed.<sup>16</sup> The 1334-35 lay subsidy return for the hundred also records people named *faber* in the Wickham and Farnborough sections of the return.<sup>17</sup> In Chislehurst, Richard and Hugh Faber are listed in the section of the return which may relate to Chislehurst.<sup>18</sup> William Fayrwar', farrier, is assessed in the Bexley section of the 1334-35 return. These names suggest there was capacity to provide routine ironwork for the local community.

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<sup>13</sup> I. H. Goodall, *Ironwork in Medieval Britain: an Archaeological Study* (London: Society for Medieval Archaeology, 2011) illustrates a range of the iron tools and implements found in both urban and rural communities.

<sup>14</sup> For blacksmiths on ecclesiastical and lay estates, see Chapter 3, 3.1.1.

<sup>15</sup> TNA E179/123/5.

<sup>16</sup> Markets: Chapter 5.

<sup>17</sup> Hanley & Chalklin, 'Kent Lay Subsidy', p. 134. The entries for individual villis are estimated by reference to similar names in the 1301 return (TNA E 179 123/5/).

<sup>18</sup> Hanley & Chalklin, 'Kent Lay Subsidy', p. 134, 135.

Blacksmiths needed a supply of iron, either scrap-iron which could be melted down and reused, or prepared iron cut from blooms or pre-prepared bars, along with wood or charcoal for fuel.<sup>19</sup> Fuel was available locally, but iron ore was not, so scrap or prepared iron had to be acquired. Iron was widely exported from the Forest of Dean and by the fourteenth century iron bars were imported into London from Spain.<sup>20</sup> Iron was also manufactured in the Weald of Kent using local ore.<sup>21</sup> In 1334-35 a Richard Ferour (farrier, iron-smelter) and a John Neylere (the byname possibly indicating specialisation in nail-making) were assessed working within the Lowy of Tonbridge.<sup>22</sup> Draper has drawn attention to the production of iron tools at the forge in Tonbridge castle, which also produced thousands of nails and clenches for shipbuilding which were sent to Portchester in Hampshire by sea via the river Medway. Iron manufacture and metalworking were also taking place in the town.<sup>23</sup> Tonbridge iron could have reached Ruxley hundred by road to Farnborough, or indirectly by water, along the Medway and the Thames to Dartford.

Iron imported from Spain, France and Sweden could have been acquired in London or possibly obtained in Dartford.<sup>24</sup> In 1301 the Dartford lay subsidy return lists a John Ismongere (trader in iron) assessed with unspecified merchandise valued at 2 marks, a relatively high amount for merchandise in that return.<sup>25</sup> The byname is not listed in Dartford in 1334-35 but occurs in the return for Shamwell hundred, which covered Hoo, Strood and the west bank of the Medway, where iron for London may have been taken for onward shipment.<sup>26</sup>

The Bedels' rolls show that the ecclesiastical demesne of Greater Orpington purchased iron as a raw material for use by a blacksmith on the manor.<sup>27</sup> Items made from iron were also

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<sup>19</sup> Goodall, *Ironwork*, p. 3.

<sup>20</sup> J. L. Bolton, *The Medieval English Economy*, reprint with supplement, (London: Dent, 1988) p. 287.

<sup>21</sup> J. Hodgkinson, *The Wealden Iron industry*, (Stroud: The History Press, 2008), p. 44.

<sup>22</sup> Hanley & Chalklin, 'Kent Lay Subsidy', p. 116. The byname 'neylere', which does not occur elsewhere in the county: p. 366.

<sup>23</sup> Draper, 'Timber and Iron', Sweetinburgh (2010), p. 76.

<sup>24</sup> Iron imports: J. Geddes, 'Iron', in J. Blair & N. Ramsey, *English Medieval Industries* (London: Hambledon Press, 1991), p. 168.

<sup>25</sup> Coates, 'Valuation of the Town of Dartford' (1874), p. 294.

<sup>26</sup> Richard Ismonger: Hanley & Chalklin, 'Kent Lay Subsidy', p. 132. John, William and Roger Faber are also listed in Shamwell.

<sup>27</sup> Bowen, 'The Priory Orpington', p. 76

purchased, such as ploughshares, ironwork for hinges, iron-work for window bars when a new window was put into the hall, and in 1309, an iron mechanism to enable louvres in the hall roof to be opened and closed.<sup>28</sup> There is no information about where these purchases were made. The manor also paid for large quantities of standard items, such as shoes with their nails for horses and oxen and the thousands of nails needed when roofs were retiled, though again there is no information to show whether these were local purchases or made further afield.<sup>29</sup>

Nails are the most widespread ironwork from excavated sites, found in clusters at the 'Walsingham School' site which might indicate an element of timber-framing at those points.<sup>30</sup> At the Joyden's Wood site, excavations of outbuildings revealed iron nails associated with roof-tiles. A report of later excavations of the hall noted that 'iron nails from the destroyed superstructure littered the site'.<sup>31</sup> Iron nails and a weeding hook (Chapter 3, Fig. 5) were excavated at Scadbury Manor.<sup>32</sup> These items could have been made by a local blacksmith.

Specialist metalworking skills were needed to fashion security devices such as iron locks, keys and bolts. These items are well-known from urban settings, but they were also used in rural communities.<sup>33</sup> The demesne of Greater Orpington purchased numerous locks for its gates and buildings, including the gate to its woodland at Hockenden and the gates to its fields, the pigsty and pound which each had two locks, and the watermill. The chamber used by the prior and other important visitors had a lock and a key for the hall was purchased in 1317-18 for 2 *d.*<sup>34</sup> There is no information about where the purchases were made. In St Paul's Cray, three iron keys dated to the thirteenth/early fourteenth century were

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<sup>28</sup> Bowen, 'The Priory', p. 60, p. 76.

<sup>29</sup> 17,000 nails were purchased for tiling in 1325-26: M. Bowen, 'The Priory Orpington', p. 61.

<sup>30</sup> D. Richards, 'Metalwork', in Saunders, 'Medieval Site at Walsingham School' (1997), p. 217.

<sup>31</sup> Colvin, 'Excavations in Joydens Wood,' (1949), p. 134; Tester & Caiger, 'Medieval Buildings in the Joyden's Wood Square Earthwork', (1958), p. 26.

<sup>32</sup> Hart, *Excavations at Scadbury, Part 2*, (2011), nails, p. 29; weeding hook, p. 28 f. Weeding hook parallels in Goodall, *Ironwork in Medieval Britain*, p. 80.

<sup>33</sup> London: Egan, *Medieval Household*, pp. 88-1120; Britain: Goodall, *Ironwork*, pp. 231-295.

<sup>34</sup> Key for the hall, 1317-18: CCA-DCC-BR/Orpington\_18, M. 2 r.

excavated at the St Paul's Cray Walsingham School site, adjacent to alignments of stone. The excavators suggest their position might indicate the position of doorways.<sup>35</sup>

At the Joyden's Wood site, a lock bolt of a relatively simple design was excavated in the area of the hall; the excavators assumed it was a door-bolt, but Goodall suggests it would have been used on a wooden chest alongside a flat lockplate.<sup>36</sup> A manor would use a chest to store court rolls and important documents, but peasants also used locked chests to store valuable items.<sup>37</sup> Churches used them to store legal documents, vestments and valuables such as patens and chalices.<sup>38</sup> Sometimes there were multiple locks, so that several people had to be present before the chest could be opened.

Simple locks could have been made by a local blacksmith, but more complex locking mechanisms required a specialist.<sup>39</sup> A Thomas Locsmyth is named in the lay subsidy return for 1334-35 for Axtane hundred, suggesting that someone relatively close to Ruxley hundred possessed these skills.<sup>40</sup> However London was a more likely source for complex locks and bolts, either made by craftsmen working there or imported from continental Europe.<sup>41</sup>

The 1301 lay subsidy return for Ruxley hundred includes unspecified 'utensils' which may have been of iron.<sup>42</sup> In Orpington vill, of forty-two assessments in total, six included 'utensils', with values ranging from 6 *d* to 6 *s* (three entries had been added in a different hand, suggesting the original assessor had been uncertain about whether to include

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<sup>35</sup> Richards, 'Metalwork' in Saunders, 'Medieval site at Walsingham School', p. 217; fig. 8, p. 218.

<sup>36</sup> Tester & Caiger, *Medieval Buildings in the Joyden's Wood Square Earthwork*, pp. 30-31, drawing at Fig. 4.30; bolt deposited in Maidstone Museum; Goodall, *Ironwork*, p. 235; drawing, p. 259. Similar examples from London: Egan, *Medieval Household*, p. 110.

<sup>37</sup> Dyer, *Standards of Living*, p. 173, suggests that in peasant households, chests were used in kitchens to store grain and in the chamber to store textiles.

<sup>38</sup> C. Pickvance, 'Kentish Gothic' or imported? A group of tracery-carved medieval chests.' in *Arch. Cant.* Vol. 138 (2017), pp. 105-128, discusses the use of chests in the Middle Ages.

<sup>39</sup> Goodall, *Ironwork*, p. 231; see also Egan, *Medieval Household*, pp. 88-91. Most locks were of iron but some were of copper alloy or were coated to appear to be made of copper alloy, so were not the work of a blacksmith: Goodall, *Ironwork*, p. 242.

<sup>40</sup> Hanley & Chalklin, 'Kent Lay Subsidy', p. 145. Axtane hundred included Darenth, a market centre close to Dartford, but it is not known where in the hundred Thomas Locsmyth lived. Richard Locsmyth is assessed in the hundred of West in Milton, p. 167, and Alic' Loksmyth and Widow of Ellis Loksmyth in the hundred of Borden in Milton, suggesting local craftsmen (possibly related) were working in the Milton area.

<sup>41</sup> Egan, *Medieval Household*, p. 90, suggests most copper alloy padlocks were imported from continental Europe.

<sup>42</sup> TNA E 179/123/5 (*in utensilis*)

them).<sup>43</sup> The term is not defined and there is a separate category in the return of cast metal alloy utensils (see below); they must have been especially numerous and/or complex to reach a value of 6 s. It is possible that security items were included here, if several examples were owned; it is perhaps more likely that the term refers to iron implements used in the kitchen, such as trivets, knives and flesh-hooks, if these were present in quantity and identified as surplus to basic needs. No examples of iron kitchen equipment have been identified from excavations in the hundred, but parallels are well-known from sites elsewhere.<sup>44</sup> Many more households than those identified with 'utensils' must have owned basic iron goods which were not assessed.

### ***Cast metal alloy vessels/utensils***

The 1301 lay subsidy return for Ruxley hundred uses further terms to refer to metalwork: *in utensilis eneis, in eneis* and '*plu[m]b[um]*', which sometimes has *cu[m] tr[i]p[o]d'* added.<sup>45</sup> In the return for Downe, for example, which contains twenty-eight assessments, utensils (presumably of iron) are assessed for two individuals at 2 s while one has utensils valued at 1 s. A further two have an assessment *in utensilis eneis*, valued at respectively 2 s and 4 s. One is assessed *in eneis* valued at 5 s. This is John de la Doune, whose assets totalling £11 2 s 2 d, the highest sum in the vill; he is likely to be Christ Church priory's tenant at the manor of Downe.

The term *enea* refers to items made of copper or bronze - so becomes used for cast copper alloy vessels, such as cauldrons, pots, bowls, plates and dishes which could be used for preparing, cooking and serving food. A valuation *in eneis* must relate to vessels of this kind.<sup>46</sup> In the Ruxley hundred return the terms *utensiles enea* or *in utensilis eneis* might refer to kitchen utensils such as skimmers which were made of cast metal alloy, or perhaps to specific types of metal vessel.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> TNA E 179/123/5, Orpington.

<sup>44</sup> Excavated examples of iron utensils are shown in, for example, Goodall, *Ironwork*, 'Household Ironwork' pp. 297-337, and Egan, 'Miscellaneous household equipment', *The Medieval Household*, pp. 152-155.

<sup>45</sup> TNA E 179/123/5.

<sup>46</sup> DMLBS: *eneus* = 'copper or bronze'; *utensilia* = 'things for use'. C. Blair & J. Blair note that medieval terminology and medieval alloys were more variable than modern definitions might suggest: 'Copper alloys', in Blair & Ramsay, *English Medieval Industries*, p. 81.

<sup>47</sup> For the term's use in relation to metal goods, see Egan, *The Medieval Household* (1998), p. 158 ff.



The main alloys used in the Middle Ages were bronze, an alloy of copper and tin, and brass, an alloy of copper and zinc, though lead was often also incorporated.<sup>48</sup> Metal alloys were produced and worked by specialists known as *ollarii* (also known as potters), who had access to the metals required and knowledge of the technology of metal alloy production. They routinely cast a range of items from church bells to small cooking pots. London was a centre of production, though some items were imported.<sup>49</sup> There is no evidence that cast vessels were made in Ruxley hundred. It is more likely, however that owners of copper alloy vessels and implements acquired them through purchase in a market in London, or possibly via a trader who brought specialist produce out from London and sold it locally.

The Greater Orpington estate centre possessed what were evidently cast alloy vessels of varying kinds, including two vessels costing 2 s 3 ½ d, a bowl costing 3 s and a cauldron which was repaired at a cost of 2 d.<sup>50</sup> The records do not say where the vessels were obtained. Cast metal vessels have only rarely been identified in excavations within the hundred. A vessel described as an ‘enigmatic’ copper alloy bowl, possibly a crucible, was found at the Walsingham School Site, but no cast metal alloy vessel has been found at Scadbury manor and there are no examples from the Joyden’s Wood site.<sup>51</sup> Cast metal vessels were expensive, so damaged vessels would have been repaired rather than discarded. If a vessel was no longer required, it could be sold, or the metal melted down for re-use.

The entries for *enea* in the Ruxley hundred return do not provide any detail to show the range of vessels that local people might have owned, but a useful comparison is the 1301 lay subsidy return for Dartford vill, which gives greater insight into what a household might have owned. Details of cast metal vessels from Dartford are shown in Table 13.

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<sup>48</sup> Blair & Blair, ‘Copper alloys’, p. 81 f.

<sup>49</sup> Egan, *Medieval Household*, p. 158.

<sup>50</sup> Bowen, ‘The Priory Orpington’, p. 76.

<sup>51</sup> Saunders, ‘Excavations at Walsingham School’ (1997), p. 217.

Vessel	<i>Pocinnetus</i> Posnet (cooking pot)	<i>Patella</i> Dish, plate, skillet	<i>Olla enea</i> Cast metal pot <sup>52</sup>	<i>Lavacrum cum pelve</i> Ewer-and-basin
Total number listed	19 (2 attributed to one owner)	15	49	9
Value	1 s	1 s	2 s	1 s 6 d
Material specified?	No	'bronze' specified for 3 items	Yes ('bronze')	No
Function?	Cooking pot used on trivet/in embers of hearth	Frying pan? Large serving dish?	Large container for brewing ale?	Handwashing for family and guests at table
Owners also have items 'in the chamber'?	16	14	47	9

**Table 13: Cast metal vessels identified in the 1301 lay subsidy return for Dartford vill.** <sup>53</sup>

Table 13 shows the four types of vessel included in the Dartford return: *pocinnetus*, a posnet or cooking pot, valued at 12 d; *patella*, a dish or skillet, also valued at 12 d; *olla enea*, a bronze pot valued more highly, at 2 s; and *lavacrum cum pelve*, a ewer-and-basin set (considered as a single item), valued at 18 d. The material is specified only in relation to the pot and three of the *patelle*. The possible function of the bronze pot is discussed below. If the return reflects only surplus items, many more households would have owned an example of one or other of these vessels.

The high value given to the nineteen posnets suggests that they are cast metal alloy cooking-pots, usually with three feet, a lid and a long handle, which could sit on the hearth.<sup>54</sup> Roberta Gilchrist suggests that by 1350, most peasant households possessed at least one metal cooking pot, and 'these expensive pieces are likely to have featured amongst the wedding gifts or items of dowry', so these must be additional to a treasured wedding gift.<sup>55</sup> Dyer observes that 'by far the most expensive items' in a peasant kitchen were the metal cooking pots, valued at around 3-5 s.<sup>56</sup>

<sup>52</sup> 'Olla' is usually translated as 'pot', essentially an undefined cooking vessel or other container, though Cromarty & Cromarty suggest it means 'bowl' (*Wealth of Shrewsbury*, glossary, p. 79).

<sup>53</sup> E 179/123/4; Coates, 'Valuation of Dartford', pp. 285-298.

<sup>54</sup> Egan, *Medieval Household*, p. 162.

<sup>55</sup> R. Gilchrist, *Medieval Life: Archaeology and the Life Course* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2012), p. 127.

<sup>56</sup> Dyer, *Standards of Living*, p. 173.

The material of twelve of the fifteen *patelle* is not specified but there is one entry for a 'bronze' dish, *patellam eneam*, while another entry lists two 'bronze' dishes, *patellas eneas*, belonging to John Ismongere. There is no difference in value compared with the other entries for *patelle* so it is likely that all those listed were of cast metal alloy. The term *patella* generally refers to a shallow dish or plate but it can also mean a skillet, a shallow pan with a long handle similar to a frying pan, and it may be this type of vessel that is referred to here.<sup>57</sup> Most people identified as owning one of these four assessed items also owned a second vessel of a different type, but only one individual is listed as owning three different types of vessel - Sybilla, widow of Richard the Tanner, with a total valuation of £10 14 s 2 d.<sup>58</sup>

Ewer-and-basin sets, valued at 18 d in the return, were used at the table for handwashing. Again, at this valuation, they are likely to have been cast metal alloy items.<sup>59</sup> The ewer was probably a simple handled jug with a spout.<sup>60</sup> Nine (4%) individuals of the 218 assessed in Dartford are recorded as having such a set; five of these were assessors. All nine had an additional assessment for unspecified items 'in the chamber', indicating they had a home of some size with a range of furnishings. Table 13 shows that these ewer-and-basin sets were less commonly assessed than other cast metal vessels, suggesting either that few households had more than one set, or that a single cast metal set was regarded as surplus to basic requirements, since ceramic ewers and basins were also available (see further below).

No cast metal ewer-and-basin sets are specified in the 1301 return for Ruxley hundred, presumably reflecting local assessment practice. Possession of a ewer and basin of any kind, metal or ceramic, indicated that a family had a commitment to certain standards of behaviour in the home. Owning a cast metal alloy set, or a distinctively decorated ceramic aquamanile, showed the family wished to display their taste at the table. Metal sets might

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<sup>57</sup> R. Latham, *The Medieval Latin Word List*.

<sup>58</sup> Coates, 'Valuation of Dartford', p. 296.

<sup>59</sup> Egan, p. 162.

<sup>60</sup> A metal ewer with a spout is shown in Egan, p. 162. See below for ceramic forms of ewer.

well have been in use in some Ruxley hundred households but disregarded for tax purposes, or possibly ceramic vessels were easier for local residents to obtain.

### **'Leads'**

A specific form of cast metal vessel listed in the 1301 lay subsidy return for Ruxley hundred is a 'lead' - *plub'* (*plumbum*).<sup>61</sup> Peter Brears suggests that 'leads' were not, despite their name, vessels made entirely of lead, but a particular form of large cast alloy vessel used for brewing ale, which many households of the time would have possessed.<sup>62</sup> Ale could be prepared successfully at home, but without hops as a preservative it did not keep well and regular brewing was required to maintain fresh supplies.<sup>63</sup> Brewing was also undertaken on a commercial basis, often by poorer women who might be widowed or single, who would sell ale from their home to neighbours or to market visitors.<sup>64</sup> Bynames related to brewing are not obviously present in Ruxley hundred, but the production of ale for sale must have been as commonplace there as elsewhere in medieval England.

'Leads' were relatively expensive possessions, usually valued in the return at 3 s, or 5 s if they were *cu' tr'pod'*, 'with tripod/ three feet', so perhaps meaning a vessel with three feet attached directly to the base, or with a three-footed stand.<sup>65</sup> The values attributed are significantly higher than the ewer-and-basin sets listed in the Dartford return; the 'lead' alone is also valued higher than the unspecified pot (*olla*) valued in Dartford. It is therefore assumed here that the reference is to a large vessel for heating liquids, with some means of placing it over a fire, which would be used mainly for brewing.

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<sup>61</sup> TNA E 179/123/5.

<sup>62</sup> P. Brears, *Cooking and Dining in Medieval England* (Totnes, 2008), p. 101, p. 104.

<sup>63</sup> J. M. Bennet, *Ale, Beer, and Brewsters in England: Women's Work in a Changing World 1300-1600* (Oxford: OUP, 1996), p. 19.

<sup>64</sup> Bennet, *Ale, Beer and Brewsters*, p. 24 f.

<sup>65</sup> Cast alloy cooking-pot with three feet and a handle: Egan, *Medieval Household* (p.163), iron trivet, p. 153.

	Vill	Individuals with 'lead' or 'lead with tripod'	Total assessment £ s d	Other utensils or vessels?	Market in vill?
1	Bexley	John de Upton 1 + tripod @ 5 s Robert Wolston 1 + tripod @ 5 s Agnes de Bladindon* 1 @ 3 s Custance atte Halle* 1 @ 3 s	12 16 4 1 12 11 ¾ 18 16 0 8 7 0	Yes - Yes Yes	by 1315
2	Footscray	William de Setecoppe 1 @ 5 s	2 18 0	-	No
3	Chislehurst	John de Scathebury 1 @ 4 s	22 3 0	Yes	No
4	Orpington	Alex Molendinarius 1 + tripod [- ] [illeg]de Bekenham 1 @ 3 s Walter Godmed 1 + tripod @ 5 s [?William] le Yunge 1 + tripod @ 5 s Gilbert [illeg] 1 @ 3 s	18 18 3 3 0 3 2 9 10 1 11 1 1 1 7	Yes Yes Yes Yes -	Yes
5	Hayes	Mgr John de Bastane 1 @ 10 s Sibyl de Bycenore* 1 @ 3 s Robert atte Stanpete 1 + tripod @ 5 s	23 7 8 1 1 7 19 6 ½	- - -	No
6	Wickham	Richard Kebbel 1 @ 5 s Thomas Duning 1 @ 5 s	3 12 6 [illegible]	Yes Yes	By 1318
7	Farnborough	John Thom' 1 + tripod @ 5 s John Lanerke 1 @ 3 s Richard de Po[illegible] 1 @ 3 s Robert de Paneta 1 @ 3 s John Fleming 1 + tripod @ 5 s	1 16 2 12 0 7 12 0 5 0 0 1 0 8	Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes	Yes
8	Downe	Sampson Ate Prete 1 + tripod @ 5 s Robert Rolfe 1 @ 5 s	5 15 11 ¼ 3 5 8	- Yes	No
9	Chelsfield	[Illegible] 1 + tripod @ 5 s Ffraunce 1 + tripod @ 5 s	1 13 5 3 19 2	- -	Yes
10	Cudham	Simon ate [illegible] 1 + tripod @ 5 s Agnes, widow Stoyl* 1 + tripod @ 5 s	13 0 5 13 2	- -	Yes
11	Hever	John ate Boure 1 @ 3 s	3 10 5	Yes	No

Table 14: 'Leads' in Ruxley hundred in 1301. Females marked \*.<sup>66</sup>

major function. The term is not used in the returns for Dartford vill or Somerden hundred. The term 'lead' might have been used for any large metal vessel which could be used to boil meat and other food items or to heat water for tasks such as washing clothes or dishes, but brewing is likely to have been its primary function.

Table 14 shows that in 1301 twenty-eight individuals in Ruxley hundred were assessed for possession of a 'lead', in eleven of the sixteen vill in the hundred. Four of these vill had documented market charters by 1301, with two further vill having charters awarded a little

<sup>66</sup> Source: TNA E 179/123/5.

later which might reflect existing market activity. No 'leads' are listed for North Cray, Ruxley, St Paul's Cray, Keston or Knockholt, all small villis with no market.

The listing of a 'lead' should indicate that it was regarded as a surplus vessel that could be sold; many others in the hundred could therefore have owned a 'lead' but would not be identifiable. Conversely, the absence of a surplus 'lead' in a high assessment of a known manorial lord might indicate that the lord and his extended household were not normally resident and did not need extra vessels.

Ten of those assessed with a 'lead' have total assessments of over £5, of whom five - John de Upton, Agnes de Bladindon, John de Scathebury, Alexander Molendinarius and John de Bastane – were notably wealthy. John de Upton is shown in Archbishop Pecham's 1283-85 survey of Bexley as a landholder at Upton, so was likely to be resident there. Agnes de Bladindon was of the same family as John of Bladindon (Blendon), who had been the archbishop's reeve at Bexley in 1284, so is likely to have lived at the site which later became Blendon Hall.<sup>67</sup> Custance ate Halle was presumably a member of the at-Hall family who lived in the vill and later owned Hall Place in Bexley. In Chislehurst vill, John de Scathebury held, and resided at, the manor of Scadbury; his total assessment was the fifth highest in the hundred.<sup>68</sup> In Orpington vill, Alexander Molendinarius was likely the wealthy tenant of Orpington mill. All could have afforded, and had a use for, an additional lead in their kitchens.

In Hayes, Mgr John de Bastane held the manor of Baston. Nothing further is known of Robert de Paneta and Richard de [illegible] of Farnborough, or of Simon ate Prete or Agnes, widow of Stoyl of Cudham. A Richard Stoyl was named as the serjeant reporting the account for Greater Orpington in 1317-18 until 1335 and was assessed for a tax payment of 2 s in Cudham in 1334-35, suggesting the Stoyls were a significant local family there.<sup>69</sup> John ate Boure in the detached vill at Hever was the wealthiest individual assessed there.<sup>70</sup> Again,

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<sup>67</sup> Du Boulay, *Medieval Bexley*, pp. 21, 23.

<sup>68</sup> See Chapter 3.

<sup>69</sup> Richard Stoyl: Hanley & Chalklin, 'The Kent Lay Subsidy', p. 134; as serjeant for Orpington, CCA-DCC BR/Orpington\_18 m 2 r. Surviving manuscripts name him as the presenter of the manor's accounts from 1316 to 1320 and then again from 1331 to 1335.

<sup>70</sup> The remainder of Hever parish was within Somerden hundred: Hasted III, p. 190.

it is plausible that all of these individuals were resident, with family and staff to provide for and guests to entertain.

However, a number of the wealthier individuals in the hundred are not assessed with a 'lead' and may have been present infrequently if at all. Sir Otto de Grandison, holder of the manors of Chelsfield and Farnborough, assessed in 1301 for his manor of Chelsfield, had multiple estates elsewhere, whether in Kent or further afield, and had responsibilities which occupied him away from Kent for much of his time.<sup>71</sup> Sir Peter de Huntyngfeld, holder of the manor of Wickham in the late thirteenth century, made his base on his East Anglian estates, though his son Walter settled at Wickham in the early fourteenth century.<sup>72</sup>

Four of those assessed with a 'lead' are women. However, it seems unlikely, given their relatively high total assessments, that Agnes de Bladindon, Custance ate Halle or even Agnes Stoyl were local brewsters who sold ale for an income. Nothing is known of Sybil de Bykenore. The remaining lead-owners in Chelsfield, Cudham, Downe, Farnborough, Footscray, Hayes, Orpington and Wickham had total assessments below £5. Four were below £1 - three of these were in Farnborough. It is possible, even likely, that they owned a second lead because they were brewing ale for sale. They may have run a local alehouse; some names are listed close to one another in the return, suggesting that they lived in a village or hamlet where an alehouse might have been based. Some were also assessed with utensils, so may have been preparing food for sale; perhaps they ran an inn providing accommodation for travellers. Farnborough developed as a market centre on a major route (see chapter 5), and it is possible that the presence of travellers meant that all three lead-owners with assessments below £1 could make a living from brewing.<sup>73</sup> The assessments in Orpington vill may reflect the growing expansion of St Mary Cray village within the vill.

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<sup>71</sup> De Grandison regularly travelled to continental Europe on diplomatic missions for the king and spent time in Wales during Edward's campaigns there; he was also frequently in London. J. R. Madicott (rev'd), 'Grandson [Grandison], Otto de, (c. 1238-1328), soldier and diplomat', *ODNB* (2004).

<sup>72</sup> Peter de Huntyngfeld: Knowlden & Walker, *West Wickham*, p. 18; his Cambridgeshire property: J. E. E. S. Sharp & A. E. Stamp, 'Inquisitions Post Mortem, Edward II, File 1', in *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem: Volume 5, Edward II* (London, 1908), pp. 1-7, no. 12, *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/inquis-post-mortem/vol5/pp1-7> [accessed 23/08/2022].

<sup>73</sup> Table 14.

Footscray vill had no market but lay on a cross-Kent route between Southwark, Maidstone and the Channel ports at Hythe and Folkestone. The hamlet of Sidcup stood at the top of a long hill running towards the river-crossing over the Cray; the hamlet of Footscray developed at its base at the crossing-point of the Cray. Either location was a likely stopping place for travellers, horses and carts and a suitable location for an alehouse or inn, which William de Setecoppe may have run.

There were evidently different types of 'lead'. Thirteen individuals have the more expensive kind with three feet/a tripod stand. Nine have leads valued at 3 s with no tripod specified. Six have a lead, no tripod specified, but nonetheless valued at 5 s; John de Scathebury's lead is valued at 4 s; Mgr John de Bastane's single lead is valued at 10 s. These differences may reflect errors in the assessment (10 s could relate to two leads), but it may also reflect differences in size, or even of the use to which the lead was put, or uncertainty about how to value these items.

Since 'leads' are listed in Ruxley hundred as high-value household items, it is interesting to compare the entries with the 1301 lay subsidy returns for Dartford and Somerden.<sup>74</sup> Neither of these returns identifies 'leads' as a separate category. It is possible that the *olla enea* valued in the Dartford 1301 return at 2 s (Table 13) refers to a cast metal vessel that could be used for brewing. The Somerden return contains only a generic term relating to all cast metal items, *vasa enea*, so it is not possible to identify separate functions.<sup>75</sup>

The cast vessels and utensils owned by Ruxley hundred residents (and probably also those in Dartford and Somerden hundreds) must have been purchased in London or brought to a local market by a trader. Local networks evidently existed in the hundred which might have facilitated access to cast metal vessels, but they can rarely be observed. A charter of 1329 shows John atte Rose, described as citizen of London, *ollarius* (maker of cast vessels) and merchant, transferring lands in Chislehurst to 'John son of William le ffaber of Wilmington in Dartford and to the younger William and Emma, children of the same William'.<sup>76</sup> The charter is unusual in giving details of John atte Rose's status and occupation. Possibly the

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<sup>74</sup> TNA E 179/123/4, E 179/123/6.

<sup>75</sup> TNA E 179/123/6.

<sup>76</sup> Kent History and Library Centre: U36/T187.



Chislehurst lands were family lands (a local family of this name is known from other land transactions); maybe John Rose had worked in Dartford with William ffaber at an earlier stage in his metal-working career. Margery Potteres is listed in the 1334-35 lay subsidy assessment for Blackheath hundred.<sup>77</sup> In 1347, Simon de Malmesbury of Chelsfield registered a debt of £20 owed to Simon de Heathfield, citizen and potter of London.<sup>78</sup> Simon de Malmesbury was working with John de Scathebury and Richard Moryz in 1349, taking out a loan from John de Chichester of London.<sup>79</sup> He was evidently active as a merchant with connections in the city; perhaps he imported cast vessels and exported grain.

#### 4.2.2 Ceramic Vessels

There is nothing to indicate that ceramic goods, whether pottery or tile, were made in Ruxley hundred; no kiln sites are known and bynames such as 'le crockere' are absent from the 1301 and 1334-35 lay subsidy returns for the hundred. The 1301 return contains no specific reference to ceramic vessels, presumably regarded as essential household items and too cheap to be worth identifying for tax purposes.<sup>80</sup> Archaeological evidence for ceramic vessels used in the hundred between 1200 and 1350 is limited, coming mainly from the Walsingham School site, Scadbury Manor and a few small excavations in Bexley and Chislehurst. Material from the Joyden's Wood site adds further context.<sup>81</sup>

Few kiln sites have been excavated and published for the Greater London area, making it difficult to determine where some forms of pottery originated; whether London itself was the source of manufacture and distribution, whether they were manufactured outside

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<sup>77</sup> The term 'potter' usually referred to a person who cast metal pots; whether Margery was working as a female potter in this sense (or was running a family casting business) in 1334 is uncertain. Women worked as smiths, and at a later date, London widows also continued their husband's bell-founding businesses, so it is not impossible. Geddes, 'Iron', Blair & Ramsey, *English Medieval Industries*, p. 186; Barron, *Later Medieval London*, p. 265 fn. 187.

<sup>78</sup> TNA C 241/126/156.

<sup>79</sup> Chapter 3.

<sup>80</sup> TNA E 179/123/5; Hanley & Chalklin, 'The Kent Lay Subsidy', pp. 133-135. McCarthy & Brooks note that the absence of potters from most early fourteenth-century lay subsidy returns 'is probably a fair indication that they were too poor to be taxed': M. R. McCarthy & C. M. Brooks, *Medieval Pottery in Britain AD 900-1600* (LUP: Leicester University Press, 1988), p. 76.

<sup>81</sup> I am grateful to Dr M. Still, Curator at Dartford Borough Museum, for enabling me to examine finds from the Dartford Antiquarian Society's 1938 excavations. Dr P. Richards, curator at Maidstone Museum, kindly searched the catalogue and store but was unable to trace any pottery from the 1957-58 KAS excavations. The pottery from the 1957 excavations was recorded in G. C. Dunning, 'Report on Medieval pottery from Joyden's Wood, near Bexley' in Tester & Caiger, 'Medieval Buildings in Joyden's Wood', pp. 31-40.

London but distributed via the city, whether they were manufactured outside London, possibly at several kiln sites, and distributed directly to local communities with no city involvement. These issues have been much debated. Museum of London Archaeology (MOLA) and its predecessors have carried out studies of pottery forms and more recently, of fabrics, to progress understanding of these issues for the city and its hinterland, but uncertainties remain about where and how people in Ruxley hundred obtained the pottery they used.<sup>82</sup>

Three broad types of ceramics from the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries are found in published excavations from Ruxley hundred: coarsewares, greywares and London-type wares. Comparisons across sites can be difficult to make, as earlier excavation reports (and the published reports from the Joyden's Wood site) pre-date the standardised classification system established by MOLA which is now used in published reports.<sup>83</sup> Essentially, the MOLA classifications are now based on a scientific examination of fabrics to determine the source of the clays used, rather than basing dating and provenance purely on appearance, as was formerly the approach. This can help determine the source of the clays used; pots similar in appearance may be manufactured in very different places within the Greater London area.

It would be helpful to see a specialist review undertaken of pottery from the hundred and more generally from north-west Kent, since there is a considerable risk of circularity when fabric analyses are not available. At present, it is difficult to establish whether much of the pottery – particularly coarsewares and greywares - found in the hundred has origins in Surrey, wider Kent or within Greater London; a review of these industries in relation to London has suggested that traditional linkages of certain greywares with the kilns at Limpsfield, for example, may need to be reconsidered. This has significant implications for any work on how pottery may have been traded. For the purposes of this thesis, the

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<sup>82</sup> Particularly relevant to Ruxley hundred are J. E. Pearce, A. G. Vince & M. A. Jenner, *Medieval Pottery: London-Type Ware*, LAMAS Special paper No. 7 (1985); L. Blackmore & J. Pearce, *Shelly-sandy ware and the greyware industry* (London: MOLA, 2010).

<sup>83</sup> MOLA Medieval and Post-medieval pottery codes were published in 2014: links to these are online at <https://www.mola.org.uk/medieval-and-post-medieval-pottery-codes>.

ceramics considered are first, London-type wares, and second, 'imported' wares from elsewhere in England and abroad.

### ***London-type wares***

Dunning considered that the pottery assemblage at Joyden's Wood covered a relatively short time-period, with a range from about 1280 to 1320 and a central date of 1300.<sup>84</sup> Within this were glazed jugs 'of the high quality of jugs found in London', largely made of grey or buff sandy wares, sometimes of light red fabric with white slip.<sup>85</sup> The majority are described by Dunning as covered in a green glaze, thinning out from the rim to the base, decorated with plain applied strips, diamond rouletting, bands of combed lines, horizontal bands of white slip and elongated hollow bosses with a V-stamp on the outside. The description sounds similar to what are now identified as London-type vessels with Rouen-type decoration.

London-type wares are wheel-made glazed earthenwares, decorative and non-porous, suitable for use with liquids. They are widely found in the form of jugs, dishes and drinking vessels, and would have been put on display and used at the table with family and guests. The examples found in Ruxley hundred are decorated with slip and glaze. A number are identified as having what is known as 'Rouen-type' decoration, derived from French originals. The manufacture of these wares is now dated to the later twelfth/early thirteenth centuries. This could push the earliest settlement date at Joyden's Wood to around a century earlier than Dunning's estimate, possibly also dating at other sites.<sup>86</sup>

London-type ware with Rouen-type decoration was identified in St Paul's Cray at the Walsingham School site.<sup>87</sup> Its presence led the excavators to suggest the site had been occupied from the late twelfth century. It was also found in the neighbouring hundred of Little & Lesnes at a high-status lay residence excavated at Erith on the Thames riverside, believed to date from the late 12<sup>th</sup> century. This property is thought to have belonged to Sir

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<sup>84</sup> G. C. Dunning, 'Report on Medieval pottery from Joyden's Wood, near Bexley' in Tester & Caiger, 'Medieval Buildings in Joyden's Wood', pp. 31-40; dating discussion, p. 38 f.

<sup>85</sup> Dunning, 'Medieval pottery from Joyden's Wood', p. 34 f.

<sup>86</sup> Blackmore & Pearce, *Shelly-sandy ware & greyware*, p. 74.

<sup>87</sup> J. Timby, 'The Pottery', in Saunders, 'Excavation at Walsingham School', p. 212 f.

Richard de Lucy, who founded neighbouring Lesnes Abbey after the martyrdom of Archbishop Thomas Becket, in which he was implicated.<sup>88</sup>

At Scadbury Manor, London-type wares have also been found, including distinctive sherds from glazed jugs with early Rouen-type decoration; these, found with sherds of early medieval shelly wares and Limpsfield-type wares, were in a drainage ditch which is thought to be associated with the earliest phase of settlement at the site. Hart suggests the site was first settled from the late twelfth century onward.<sup>89</sup> London-type wares continued to be manufactured until the mid-fourteenth century and later examples have been excavated at Scadbury; the early Rouen-type decoration was replaced with new designs.



**Fig. 6: London-type ware with Rouen-type decoration from Scadbury Manor.**

(Photograph: ODAS)

For many years, the production site of London-type ware was not known; the pottery was widely present in London but there was no proof that it was manufactured there and no

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<sup>88</sup> B. Philp, 'The Great Norman Manor-House at Erith 1994' in *Archaeology on the Front Line*, (Dover: KARU, 2022), p. 174-176; M. Bennell, *Under the Road, Archaeological Discoveries at Bronze Age Way, Erith*, (Bexley Council, 1998), p. 36, 39-40.

<sup>89</sup> Hart, *Excavations at Scadbury Part 2*, pp. 17, 27.

evidence of where in the surrounding area it might have originated. The traditional assumption was that the wares were taken into London from an external kiln and sold in the city; this would have meant that any London-type ware found in Ruxley hundred was sourced from London itself, perhaps by local traders who visited the city or London traders who brought wares out into the countryside.

However a possible production site for London-type ware has now been identified at Woolwich, close to the Thames riverside.<sup>90</sup> The presence of kilns at Woolwich may be reflected in the 1334-35 lay subsidy return for Blackheath hundred, where 'Simon Crockere' is assessed for 8 *d* (vills are not named in this return and there is no return for 1301 for Blackheath).<sup>91</sup> As the excavation report for the Woolwich kiln/s has not been published, it is not possible to be certain that London-type ware found in Ruxley hundred originated there, The nature of any relationship with the manufacture of local unglazed greywares has not yet been established; it is possible that some greywares thought to have come from kilns in Surrey, particularly those at Limpsfield, were also made in the Woolwich area.<sup>92</sup> Greywares are a frequent presence at sites such as Scadbury Manor.

London-type wares made in Woolwich could have been taken to London markets along the river or sold from the kiln to London traders. They could also have been distributed directly into Ruxley hundred, bypassing London.<sup>93</sup> Pottery could have been taken to local fairs or markets for sale. Some Ruxley people might have chosen to travel to Woolwich or even to London to make their own selection. The presence at a site of glazed London-type wares with striking, colourful decoration suggests that their owners were keen to impress guests with the latest designs and may have been prepared to take trouble to achieve this.

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<sup>90</sup> J. Cotter, 'Medieval London-type ware kilns discovered at Woolwich', *Medieval Pottery Research Group News* 61, (2008), pp. 3–5. A final report on this discovery has not yet been published.

<sup>91</sup> A. D. F. Streeten noted the names 'le crockere' and 'le pottere' in combination in Blackheath hundred as possible evidence of pottery manufacture there, when combined with later evidence of pottery kilns at Woolwich and documentary references to later tile kilns: 'Potters, kilns and markets in medieval Kent: a preliminary study' in P. E. Leach (ed.), *Archaeology in Kent to AD 1500* (London: CBA Research Report No. 54, 1982), p. 88; Hanley & Chalklin, 'Kent lay subsidy', (1964), p. 137 & p. 138.

<sup>92</sup> Blackmore & Pearce, p. 246.

<sup>93</sup> Plumstead had a weekly market on a Tuesday, granted by king Henry III in 1270 to the Abbot of St Augustine's, Canterbury, who held the manor of Plumstead (*CChR*, 1257–1300, p. 138). Plumstead also had a fair, held on 6 December, the feast of St Nicholas.

### ***'Imported' wares***

At the Joyden's Wood site, Dunning identified a piece of grey sandy ware covered by a thick dark green glaze as representing the two hind legs and genitals from an aquamanile (a container for water) in the form of an animal.<sup>94</sup> The surface of the body area above the legs was 'decorated with applied scales and splattered with rough-cast'. In light of similar examples from Scarborough and Chester, Dunning identified the animal as a ram, the clay applications on the body representing wool.

Ceramic aquamaniles were used at mealtimes to hold water for handwashing. They were often made in the form of an animal, either a stag or a ram, with the water poured out through a hole in the animal's nostrils or mouth. It is likely that the Joyden's Wood ram was an example of Scarborough ware, manufactured on the coast of Yorkshire and widely exported around Britain.<sup>95</sup> Scarborough ware could have reached Joyden's Wood from London, or from nearby landing-places such as Dartford. Aquamaniles of this type are likely to have come from the homes of lesser gentry or wealthier peasants; aristocratic households displayed and used decorative aquamaniles at the table, but these were more likely to be made of cast metal alloy, often in the form of a knight on horseback.<sup>96</sup> Simpler cast metal ewers and basins were also used for washing at the table as discussed above.

The aquamanile from Joyden's Wood shows that pottery from elsewhere in England was being imported to hundreds along the Thames riverside. In 1959 part of a similar aquamanile was found in a ditch in Dartford High Street, adjacent to Watling Street, along with other medieval pottery including a 'knight jug'. This was similar in design to

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<sup>94</sup> Dunning, 'Report on Medieval Pottery from Joyden's Wood', in Tester and Caiger, 'Medieval Buildings in Joyden's Wood' (1958), p. 37 f.

<sup>95</sup> Decorative ceramic aquamaniles in the form of animals, usually stags or rams, were made at a number of kiln sites, those from Scarborough being widely exported along the North Sea coast: M. R. McCarthy & C. M. Brooks, *Medieval Pottery in Britain AD 900-1600* (Leicester: LUP, 1988), pp. 94-6 and pp. 228, 230. A complete Scarborough ware ram covered in a green glaze is illustrated in J. Alexander & P. Binski (eds.), *Age of Chivalry: Art in Plantagenet England, 1200-1400* (London: Royal Academy, 1987), catalogue no. 548, p. 439. See below for another Scarborough ware vessel found in the Dartford area. Aquamaniles of London-type ware are also known, though these are thought to be rare: J. E. Pearce, A. G. Vince, M. A. Jenner, *Medieval Pottery: London-type Ware*, (LAMAS Special Paper No. 6, 1985), p. 45.

<sup>96</sup> A late 13<sup>th</sup> century copper aquamanile of a knight in armour on horseback, thought to be of English manufacture, is shown in Alexander & Binski, *Age of Chivalry*, catalogue no. 154, p. 256. A ceramic aquamanile in the form of a rider in civilian clothes on horseback, possibly a huntsman, is at no. 183, p. 266.

Scarborough ware jugs but was thought to have been manufactured at an unidentified site in the North Midlands.<sup>97</sup> Knight jugs, so-called from their distinctive decoration of knights on horseback, might have been transported from Scarborough or from a Midlands production centre such as Nottingham by using rivers and the North Sea coastal routes; they could have been taken to London directly, or via an intermediate port such as Lynn or Faversham. It is also possible that the North Sea route brought them along the Thames to Dartford for onward transmission, whether to London or within Kent.

The Dartford knight jug and associated finds were recovered following building work on the High Street but it was not possible to recover information about the surroundings of the ditch. The pottery might have come from a well-equipped home, or from an inn that used decorative wares, or perhaps the ditch contained rubbish from a trader's property, where pottery unloaded at the nearby wharf was stored or sold. Dartford bynames do not indicate specific activity by potters or traders in ceramics, but Draper noted William Puttenheth in the 1334-35 lay subsidy return and suggested his byname might derive from quay where pots were thrown or transported.<sup>98</sup> William Long, chapman, Ralph le chapman and John le Haukere (Hawker), all names from the 1334-35 lay subsidy return for Dartford vill, could have taken pots delivered to Dartford out into the surrounding countryside - including to Joyden's Wood or to a neighbouring market.<sup>99</sup> However pottery from elsewhere in England, such as this decorative pottery from the Midlands, has not been found in Ruxley hundred. This may reflect the limited opportunities for excavation. It is possible that the pottery was simply not available to Ruxley residents; perhaps the knight's jug was in Dartford on its way to somewhere else, perhaps to London, rather than intended for local sale, and was broken in transit.

Imported pottery from continental Europe, such as the distinctively-decorated Saintonge ware from Gascony, has been identified in the hundreds closer to the Thames riverside. Saintonge ware was excavated at Lesnes Abbey in the 1950s.<sup>100</sup> It has been suggested that

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<sup>97</sup> G. C. Dunning, 'Appendix, Knight Jug', in D. C. Mynard, 'Medieval Pottery from Dartford', *Arch. Cant.* 88 (1973), pp. 195-8 and Plate 1. The jug was sold in 1989; since 2014 has been in the Walters Art Museum, Baltimore, USA: <https://art.thewalters.org/detail/93392/jug-with-knights> [accessed 30/9/2022].

<sup>98</sup> Draper, 'Timber & Iron', p. 67.

<sup>99</sup> Hanley & Chalklin, 'Kent Lay Subsidy', p. 143.

<sup>100</sup> Lesnes Abbey: [https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/H\\_1988-0406-1](https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/H_1988-0406-1) [accessed 30/9/2022].

Saintonge ware, often found as jugs and tableware, came into Southampton along with imports of wine from Gascony. As quantities of wine were imported into Southampton, the pottery also became widely available and became considered almost as a 'local' form.<sup>101</sup> No Saintonge ware has yet been identified in Ruxley hundred. It is difficult to know whether this is significant. It may reflect the lack of a local resident aristocracy who would have had access to a wider range of imported goods, or may be a result of the limited excavation undertaken in the hundred.

#### 4.2.3 Goods *in camera*

Several individuals in Ruxley hundred are assessed in the 1301 lay subsidy return for [goods] *in camera*. It is possible this reflects a change in rural assessment practice. As discussed in Chapter 1, urban assessments might include personal possessions within a household which were felt to indicate the general standard of living and therefore the householder's tax status. Detailed valuations of numerous items assessed in this way are provided in the return for Colchester for 1301; some items are included in the returns for Shrewsbury in 1306.<sup>102</sup> In other urban locations, the assessors did not value specific possessions but classes of assets. The urban return for Bedford for 1297 contains valuations linked to *camera* (chamber) along with *lardaria* and *focalia* (larders and hearths), suggesting assessments associated with goods in different household locations rather than with individual items (though the editor believed these terms identified particular types of house rather than the contents).<sup>103</sup> The term *cameram* also occurs in the assessment of Dartford for 1301, and again implies an assessment of unspecified valuable items in the chamber, though the editor thought the term related to the value of the building itself: 'The house ("cameram") is a very variable item. One alone was worth a mark (13s. 4d.) per annum ...fifty-seven of the persons assessed are not charged for any house; possibly their cottages were so poor as to escape

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<sup>101</sup> D. H. Brown, *Pottery in Medieval Southampton c. 1066-1510* (London: CBA, 2002) p. 130.

<sup>102</sup> Extracts from the Colchester return are included in 'Introduction', *Yorkshire Lay Subsidy 30 Ed. I (1301)*, ed. William Brown ([s.l.], 1897), pp. vii-xix, *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/yorks-arch-soc/vol21/vii-xix> [accessed 7 February 2022]; they include mazers (maplewood drinking vessels), textiles such as napkins and towels and furniture including a bed. The sums range from 18 *d* for a napkin and towel to 20 *s* for two robes; a bed might be valued at 3 or 4 *s*. Cromarty & Cromarty, *The Wealth of Shrewsbury*, p. 91 f., provides the example of John de Lodelowe of Shrewsbury's jewellery, mazer cups, silver cups and clothes:

<sup>103</sup> Gaydon, *Taxation of 1297*, p. xxxv. Biddick refers to the asset called 'house', levied only in the borough of Bedford, which included chambers, larders and hearths ('Missing Links' (1987), pp. 287, 291.



the tax'.<sup>104</sup> However, Willard considers *camera* and other locational terms to be generic indicators of goods found in that location, since lay subsidy assessments are focused on movables, not buildings.<sup>105</sup>

In rural returns, domestic possessions other than cooking vessels and utensils are not normally valued even in generic form, though carts – which relate to rural activity – are sometimes listed (see Chapter 3, Table 8 and discussion). However in Bedfordshire, while *camera* is not found in the surviving rural returns for 1297, it appears in 1301 in two assessments in the return for the rural hundred of Shillington.<sup>106</sup> The term *in camera* is also found in the 1301 Somerden hundred return.<sup>107</sup>

There is no information about which possessions in the chamber were valued. One possibility is that the assessors were looking for items of gold and silver which would be kept there, in the form of cups or spoons, or jewellery, or specifically, coin. The rise in rents paid in cash rather than in services suggests that rural lords might have had cash at home despite the difficulties experienced with the supply of coin at the time, meaning that many rural lords would have had a source of income that was not being assessed. Hadwin noted that from 1296 'treasure', meaning 'money', was no longer formally exempted from rural assessments, but he found no examples of rural valuations of coin. Items of gold and silver were also largely absent, though silver spoons were sometimes identified. He concluded that the assessors in rural areas continued to apply older exemptions.<sup>108</sup>

If not specifically related to 'treasure' or coin, the term *in camera* must relate to goods in the chamber of a house which were regarded as surplus to the basic running of the household, including luxury items which would add to the comfort, decoration or status of the chamber and therefore of the family. The assessors could have identified and summarised what was actually present, including money and plate, but perhaps also textiles such as napkins, towels and garments, especially if these were expensive imported items;

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<sup>104</sup> Coates, 'Valuation of the Town of Dartford', p. 285 f: Later examples include the 1304 assessment for Cuxham, a village: Harvey, *Cuxham Manorial Records*, p. 712.

<sup>105</sup> Willard, *Parliamentary Taxes*, Ruxley and Somerden, p. 74; Dartford, p. 76.

<sup>106</sup> Gaydon, *Taxation*, p. xxxv f., p. 109.

<sup>107</sup> TNA E 179/123/6.

<sup>108</sup> Hadwin, 'Treasure', p. 148.

additional furniture; hangings for walls; and drinking vessels such as mazers. They could also have taken a view on the likely value of the assets there, based on their general knowledge of the family.

Costly items in the chambers of Ruxley hundred are likely to have been specialist products sourced in London, or possibly acquired in Dartford as goods were transported around the coast on their way to London. Basic textiles for bedding, table-covers and towels might have been available locally, but the finest-quality linen which might warrant an assessment was imported from Rheims in France.<sup>109</sup> An account of local custom tolls shows linen from Rheims arriving in Dover before 1230, along with luxury items ranging from spices to squirrel fur.<sup>110</sup> The documentation does not show what happened to the goods once they had arrived in Dover; they were probably taken by a smaller vessel around the coast to London, where they would have been made available for onward sale, or taken inland by road. Whether these goods found their way directly to Ruxley hundred is debatable.

It is possible that individuals listed in Ruxley hundred with high assessments overall, but who are not identified with goods *in camera*, did not use their Ruxley estate as their main residence and had no need for (or were not taxed on) valuable possessions there. John de Gattone, for example, was assessed with assets valued at £14 10 s 2 d 'in his manor of North Creye', the highest assessment in North Cray vill; but North Cray was only one of many manors he held. Cast metal vessels were valued in the kitchen but no additional goods were identified in the chamber. In contrast, John de Scathebury, with the highest assessment in Chislehurst vill of £22 3 s, had no other property outside the hundred; Scadbury was his home. His house was evidently well-equipped; he had goods *in camera* valued at 6 s 8 d along with his 'lead' and cast metal utensils in the kitchen.

Table 15 shows that in Ruxley hundred in 1301 thirty-three individuals out of around 480 had goods *in camera* assessed, only around 7 per cent of the total, with a range from 1 s to 10 s. In Somerden hundred, fifteen individuals out of 104 had goods *in camera* assessed, some 14 per cent of the total, of whom only four were in Cransted vill. The range was from

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<sup>109</sup> Local flax production and weavers: see Chapter 3.

<sup>110</sup> Karn, 'England's trade with the Continent' (2020), pp. 306-334; ref. p. 327.

14 *d* to 6 *s* 8 *d*.<sup>111</sup> In contrast, some 53 per cent of individuals assessed in Dartford vill have items *in camera*.<sup>112</sup> The valuations range from 12 *d* to 13 *s* 4 *d*, a wider range than in the rural hundreds. It is difficult to know whether this reflects a real difference in the ownership of surplus personal possessions as between urban and rural communities in north-west Kent or a difference in the approach taken by the assessors.

It is likely that *in camera* assessments indicate a deliberate intention to widen the tax base in rural areas. Assessors recognised that many rural landholders increasingly had wealth which was not represented solely by their stock and crops, whether from trading activity or from rents paid in cash, and took steps to reflect this in the payments due.

Vill	Total number of assessments in vill	Assessments of goods <i>in camera</i>	Range of valuation of goods <i>in camera</i>
Bexley	79 [approx]	14	1 <i>s</i> - 6 <i>s</i> 8 <i>d</i>
North Cray	20	2	2 <i>s</i> - 3 <i>s</i>
Footscray	13	1	6 <i>s</i> 8 <i>d</i>
Chislehurst	30	1	6 <i>s</i> 8 <i>d</i>
Okemore	9	-	-
Ruxley	19	6	6 <i>s</i> 8 <i>d</i>
St Paul's Cray	18	1	2 <i>s</i>
Orpington	42	2	6 <i>s</i> 8 <i>d</i> - 10 <i>s</i>
Hayes	26	1	6 <i>s</i> 8 <i>d</i>
Keston	13	-	-
Wickham	41	3	2 <i>s</i>
Downe	28	1	6 <i>s</i> 4 <i>d</i>
Chelsfield	28	-	-
Farnborough	24	1	3 <i>s</i> 2 <i>d</i>
Cudham	52	-	-
Knockholt	18	-	-
Hever	19	-	-
Assessors	10	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>480 [approx]</b>	<b>33</b>	-

**Table 15: Ruxley hundred vills: assessments which include goods *in camera*.**<sup>113</sup>

The *in camera* valuations in Ruxley hundred are standardised and their coverage is uncertain. Nonetheless, they show there were at least seven per cent of residents with

<sup>111</sup> TNA E 179/123/6 (some entries illegible).

<sup>112</sup> TNA E 179/123/4.

houses large enough to have well-appointed chambers. This throws some light on property in the hundred at the time. Others must also have had chambers, but with fewer assessable goods. It seems unlikely that no Ruxley hundred assessor had a house with a chamber, but none is assessed with goods *in camera*.

#### 4.2.4 Stone rotary querns and mortars

Dyer suggests that kitchen equipment often included a hand-mill or rotary quern and a stone mortar.<sup>114</sup> If a mill existed on a manor, tenants were expected to use their lord's mill to grind corn they had grown themselves - paying a toll for the privilege.<sup>115</sup> However, by no means all the manors in Ruxley hundred had access to watermills and there is limited evidence for the presence of windmills or horse-mills. Small hand-operated rotary querns were an alternative method of preparing grain. Holt suggests that peasants could be fined for using hand-mills but lords might sometimes grant the right to use them.<sup>116</sup> Langdon argues that in practice, some 20 per cent of the grains milled in England were processed using hand-mills, and that this included milling for profit, not simply for domestic use. He also suggests that operating a hand-mill was usually an occupation for women.<sup>117</sup> Hand-mills might of course have been operated without permission.

There is no documentary evidence for rotary querns in the hundred, but archaeological evidence suggests they were used, especially where there was no river access. The excavation at the Walsingham School site in St Paul's Cray produced several pieces of a type of lava obtained from the Mayen-Nierdermendig quarries in the Eifel Hills of the German Rhineland and as this lava was traditionally used to make rotary querns, the pieces have been identified as quern fragments.<sup>118</sup> The site stood up-hill from the river and would not have had a watermill of its own. At the Joyden's Wood site over the border in Axtane hundred, pieces of Nierdermendig lava were identified as fragments of rotary querns.<sup>119</sup> No

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<sup>114</sup> Dyer, *Standards of Living*, p. 173.

<sup>115</sup> R. Holt, *The Mills of Medieval England* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1988), p. 35 ff.

<sup>116</sup> Holt, *Mills*, p. 39 f.

<sup>117</sup> J. Langdon, *Mills in the Medieval Economy: England 1300-1540* (Oxford: OUP, 2004), p. 126 f.

<sup>118</sup> Saunders, 'Excavations at the Walsingham School site' (1995), quern fragments, p. 219.

<sup>119</sup> Tester & Caiger, 'Medieval Buildings in the Joyden's Wood Square Earthwork', ref., p. 24. The pieces came from Building C, identified as a domestic building.

quernstone has been found in the excavations at Scadbury Manor, which also lay some distance from the river Cray. Scadbury had its own windmill by the fourteenth century (Chapter 3).

The stones for rotary querns were smaller than millstones but were still significant items to move; they would have been purchased from specialist suppliers. They may have been sourced outside the hundred or brought in for sale at a market or fair.

Stone mortars were also commonly used in medieval kitchens, either set into the floor or standing upon it. Wooden pestles were used to pound grains and other foodstuffs.<sup>120</sup> Fragments of a stone mortar were excavated at the Walsingham School site; these were identified as from the Upper Greensand series, possibly from west Surrey or Hampshire.<sup>121</sup> The fragments included a part of a broad flat rim with a portion of curved smooth inner surface and a section of wide rib from the outside of the vessel. Although other examples have not been identified, similar mortars must have been used in many Ruxley households.

Stone from the Upper Greensand was quarried at sites in Surrey near to Merstham, an estate belonging to Christ Church priory.<sup>122</sup> The quarried stone was taken to the Thames riverside at Battersea where it was sold. Stone mortars were manufactured for sale in London and other urban centres. Suitable stone was not readily available in Ruxley hundred, so local mortars must have been sourced in London or brought into the hundred by traders. At Leigh, near Tonbridge, excavation of a moated site revealed part of a stone mortar which had been re-used as building rubble.<sup>123</sup> Its position in the rubble enabled it to be dated to 1260-1290. This mortar was made from *Paludina* limestone, a local rock, suggesting it had been produced and sold locally. It is possible that mortars sourced from the Tonbridge area could have been brought to Farnborough market for sale, but no examples have yet been identified from the hundred.

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<sup>120</sup> Brears, *Cooking and Dining in Medieval England*, p. 209.

<sup>121</sup> D. Williams, 'The Stone', in Saunders, 'Excavations at the Walsingham School site', p. 219.

<sup>122</sup> Tim Tatton-Brown (2001) 'The Quarrying and Distribution of Reigate Stone in the Middle Ages', *Medieval Archaeology*, 45:1, 189-201, DOI: 10.1179/med.2001.45.1.189 [accessed 28/06/2023].

<sup>123</sup> G. C. Dunning, 'Mortar of *Paludina* Limestone' in J. H. Parfitt, 'A moated site at Moat Farm, Leigh, Kent', *Arch. Cant.* No. 92 (1977), pp. 173-201, ref. at pp. 182- 185.

### 4.3 CONCLUSION

This chapter has identified that assessed residents in the hundred had access to a wide range of metal, ceramic and stone goods and also to valuable possessions in the chamber such as comfortable furnishings or luxury items. There is no evidence for local manufacture of most of these goods. In the absence of any evidence for local furnaces, cast metal vessels or locks must have been acquired in London, though whether this was by direct purchase, or whether they were brought into local markets by specialist traders, is unknown. Utilitarian items such as rotary querns and mortars do not feature in the tax records; they would also have been sourced as specialist items, either directly in London or brought in by traders. Possibly some could have been sourced in Tonbridge or Surrey markets.

There is little direct evidence for luxury goods in the hundred. Some residents might have owned fashionable leather shoes, furs, fine linen sheets and tablecloths, but these have not survived and are not separately recorded for tax purposes. Luxury items could have been acquired in the London; some would have been made or finished there, such as fine leather shoes, while spices or fine wine or luxury fabrics would have been imported into London from continental Europe. Some goods may have been acquired in a centre such as Dartford, either directly or by middlemen, if they were unloaded at the hythes there before transshipment to London. The issues around trading and markets are discussed in chapter 5.

Archaeological evidence shows that ceramic vessels were widely available in the hundred in a range of fabrics and forms; mainly utilitarian items, but also decorated London-type wares. However there is now considerable uncertainty about their source. Without a specialist project to review the pottery from north-west Kent generally, which would re-assess attributions given in older excavation reports and assess excavation material from kiln sites which have not yet been fully recorded, it is difficult to reach any firm conclusions about how and where Ruxley people obtained their pots. Those they used could have been acquired relatively easily, though an assumption that many came from Surrey may have to be re-thought in favour of Woolwich and the Thames riverside.

## CHAPTER 5: BUYING AND SELLING IN RUXLEY HUNDRED

### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

Earlier chapters have identified that people living in Ruxley hundred were potentially generating produce for sale and also had access to consumer goods which were not produced locally. This chapter focuses on how residents might have sold their produce and acquired the goods they needed. It considers the evidence for the operation of markets and fairs in the hundred between 1200 and 1350.

A royal charter had been granted for at least one regular, formal market in Ruxley hundred by the early thirteenth century. The number of royal grants for markets and fairs then appears to have increased significantly from the middle of the century until around 1320, meaning the hundred potentially had a high density of regulated markets and fairs in place before 1350. On one view, the presence of charter markets should indicate a community with a developing commercial focus, building on informal trading that might already be taking place.<sup>1</sup> On another view, many of these markets are an ‘illusion’ and were never established, or operated for only a short time.<sup>2</sup> The chapter therefore explores whether indirect evidence, particularly from lay subsidy returns, can help to establish what trading activity was taking place in the hundred, where this might have been carried out, what commodities might have been bought and sold and who might have been involved.

#### 5.1 1 Historical Context

The *Gazetteer of Markets and Fairs in England and Wales to 1516* defines markets and fairs as ‘trading events or institutions that met at regular intervals’.<sup>3</sup> There is a general consensus that traditional markets had long operated in towns or ports in England without specific central controls, often on sites which pre-dated the Norman Conquest. Over time they

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<sup>1</sup> For example, R. Britnell, ‘The Proliferation of Markets in England, 1200-1349’, *EcHR* .34:2 (1981), pp. 209-221: ‘the grant of a market does not signify the origins of regular trading in a village: it indicates that that trade had become or might become large enough to benefit from more formal organisation’ (p. 211).

<sup>2</sup> B. A. McLain, ‘Factors in Market Establishment in Medieval England: The Evidence from Kent 1086-1350’, *Arch. Cant.* 117 (1997), pp. 83-103; charter markets as an ‘illusion’: p. 93 ff.

<sup>3</sup> ‘Basic Introduction’, S. Letters, <*Online Gazetteer of markets and fairs in England and Wales to 1516*> <https://archives.history.ac.uk/gazetteer/gazweb2.html> [accessed 10/03/2023], hereafter abbreviated as *Gazetteer*. The following historical summary draws on this Introduction.

might attract supporting infrastructure and be subject to an increasing degree of supervision; local regulations might cover the quality of goods sold, arrangements for redress if a debt was not paid and the level of rents and tolls to be levied on traders. Town authorities or rural lords would benefit from any income raised.

Fairs were also an important aspect of traditional trade in England. By the twelfth century, large fairs operated which supported international trade, notably those at St Ives (Huntingdonshire) and Boston (effectively, the port of Lincoln).<sup>4</sup> These were held in rural areas with space to expand; they were accessible both to local people and to traders from London and continental Europe. However as urban markets expanded, international trade increasingly moved into the cities, especially Bristol and London, and the large rural fairs declined.

From the time of King John, lords or town authorities who wished to set up a new market or fair on their land and to retain control of income from these events (such as trading tolls and rents for stalls) required a royal charter to do so.<sup>5</sup> These permissive charters set out when and where the proposed new market or fair could be held, usually given as weekly on a named day 'on the manor'. The county sheriff could be asked to publicise the details. A proposal could be challenged; the lord seeking the grant had to demonstrate that a new foundation would not be detrimental to markets already operating nearby.<sup>6</sup> Foundation disputes were considered in the king's courts. A charter grant could attract a fee, but charters could also be granted without charge if the king viewed provision of a grant as a useful benefit for their supporters. Charters often gave permission for both a market and a fair, but markets could be granted without a corresponding fair and a fair granted without a

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<sup>4</sup> R. Bartlett, *England under the Norman and Angevin Kings, 1075-1225* (Oxford: OUP, 2000), p. 362 f.

<sup>5</sup> Where a specific reference is not given, the summary in the following paragraphs is based on that given in the 'Introduction', *Gazetteer*.

<sup>6</sup> The medieval law treatise known as *Bracton* advised that new markets should be sited at least six miles from an established venue (on the basis that travel to a market for a day's trading was reasonable within a radius of a little over six miles) but this was not invariably followed. The timing of the market might be more important than distance. In a rural area, the presence of several markets within easy travelling distance might be beneficial in attracting customers and merchants from further afield. *Bracton* acknowledged this, as long as the older market was held first and the newer market was not held before the second or third day afterwards. *Bracton Online: Bracton: De Legibus Et Consuetudinibus Angliæ*, (Bracton on the Laws and Customs of England (attributed to Henry of Bratton, c. 1210-1268), p. 198 f., <<https://amesfoundation.law.harvard.edu/Bracton/Unframed/English/v3/198f.htm>> [accessed 16.07.2022].



market. A local fair would usually be held on the 'vigil and feast-day' (vf) or the 'vigil, feast day and morrow' (vfm) of a specified saint. Some fairs could last for a week or more while others were held only on the feast-day itself.

Royal grants for markets and fairs were normally recorded in letters patent or charters, though there are gaps in the surviving coverage. Lords operating a rural market or fair on their land could be challenged to demonstrate their authority to do so. Such challenge is documented in *Quo Warranto* proceedings instigated by King Edward I; if a royal charter was claimed, it had to be produced for inspection. The record of that process – often undertaken many years after the original grant was made – can provide useful information about charters which were granted but have not survived.

The introduction of central control through a system of grants and charters led to an increase in local oversight. In a town, the nature of regulation and infrastructure would be determined by the town authorities. In the countryside, a lord might see advantage in a formal market on his manor, taking note of the advice set out in *Seneschaucy*: 'Manorial produce which could be sold should not be taken away by anybody but all is to be shown and bargained for in public at fairs and markets'.<sup>7</sup> However, the benefits of investment in a formal market setting had to be weighed against the costs of infrastructure and regulation. A market was not necessarily a profitable venture though it might offer convenience.

There has been extensive debate about the function of rural markets and fairs and their role in the commercialisation of the medieval countryside.<sup>8</sup> James Masschaele saw local markets as elements of a hierarchical network operating at a regional level.<sup>9</sup> In this model, the presence of a local market enabled surplus produce to be collected from smaller outlets and ultimately delivered to a large urban centre at the core of its region; middlemen (such as

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<sup>7</sup> *Seneschaucy*, c. 25; translated in D. Oschinsky (ed.), *Walter of Henley and Other Treatises on Estate Management and Accounting* (Oxford: OUP, 1971), p. 271.

<sup>8</sup> Including: Britnell, 'Proliferation of Markets' (1981); J. Masschaele, *Peasants, Merchants and Markets: Trade in Medieval England, 1150-1350*, (New York: St Martins, 1997); R. Britnell, 'Markets Revisited' in M. Davies & J. A. Galloway (eds.), *London and beyond: Essays in honour of Derek Keene* (London: University of London Press/IHR, 2012), pp. 49-66; C. Dyer, 'Did peasants need markets and towns? The experience of late medieval England', in Davies & Galloway (eds.), *London and Beyond*, pp. 25-47; J. Davis, 'A Reassessment of Village Markets in Late Medieval England' in M. Kowaleski, J. Langdon & P. R Schofield (eds.), *Peasants and Lords in the Medieval English Economy: Essays in Honour of Bruce M. S. Campbell* (Turnhout, 2015), pp. 273-291.

<sup>9</sup> Masschaele, *Peasants, Merchants and Markets*, p. 231.

cornmongers or wool-traders) would manage a collection process by travelling out to local markets and purchasing goods there.<sup>10</sup> Middlemen might also bring specialist products, not normally produced or available in the countryside, to a local market for local sale.

Masschaele suggested that a core of larger commercial centres, closely linked to local transport routes, would be accessible within a radius of some twenty miles; these would attract interest from merchants, who would travel to smaller markets to buy or sell. In Kent, Canterbury would be such a centre for east Kent, while London would in effect be a core centre for the north-west of the county (and so for Ruxley hundred). Smaller market towns and villages would then serve their immediate neighbourhoods. Markets in such a network would serve different functions and relate to different customers; they would not be in direct competition, but complementary. Masschaele's model offers a possible explanation for the expansion of charters for rural markets in north-west Kent (including Ruxley) which is visible from the thirteenth century onwards. These markets might have served as the components of a wider inland trading network looking towards London, with London merchants travelling into the countryside to buy produce – and therefore encouraging local suppliers to generate surpluses – for onward transmission, or to sell consumer goods which originated in the city, whether manufactured there or imported.

*The Gazetteer of Markets and Fairs* provided a more complete database of markets and fairs than had previously been available for study. Emilia Jamroziak used this to explore patterns of grant-giving in the thirteenth century, showing an increase in grants coinciding with Henry III's expedition to Gascony in 1253-54; grants were given to close associates of the king and to a wider circle of knights who went on the campaign.<sup>11</sup> A further increase coincided with the period of reconciliation following the Second Barons' War, when lesser knights and gentry were the most numerous recipients. Jamroziak suggests that establishing a market enabled the gentry to maximise the income from their estates, but also to enlarge their portfolio of manorial rights; grants were often given with other rights, including free warren. Holding market rights also signified prestige, confirming their position in the local

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<sup>10</sup> Masschaele, p. 165 ff.

<sup>11</sup> E. Jamroziak, 'Networks of Markets and Networks of Patronage in Thirteenth-Century England' in M. Prestwich, R. Britnell, R. Frame (eds.), *Thirteenth-century England X* (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2005), pp. 41-49.

community. Lesser knights with little or no direct access to the king might obtain a grant through a client relationship with an aristocrat who enjoyed that access, enabling the king to extend the network of patronage more widely. The increase in grants in the mid-thirteenth century therefore resulted from combined economic, political and social trends.<sup>12</sup>

Greater interest in the participation of peasants and others in a local market economy has led to studies of markets in the countryside. Royal charters are often the only documentary evidence for markets and fairs in rural areas; the increasing number of charters granted to lords by successive kings has been thought to show that the countryside was becoming increasingly commercialised during the thirteenth century and beyond. In rural areas for which little other documentation survives, however, there is no easy way of checking whether a market specified in a charter related to an entirely new foundation or the regularisation of an existing arrangement. Michael Postan observed that while urban or larger village markets were likely to attract formal charters, some trade would always be carried on informally in the countryside as a part-time activity alongside agriculture. He suggested that village markets, where peasant producers brought their surplus products to sell, were often 'concealed from our view' by their informal nature, meaning that charter evidence alone could not provide a full indication of trading activity in the countryside.<sup>13</sup>

Christopher Dyer has argued that peasants in the later medieval countryside needed access to markets to sell their produce, enabling them to obtain the cash they needed to pay rents and taxes, and to buy to goods and services (using their cash), which they might be unable to provide for themselves or which might be more effectively delivered by a third party.<sup>14</sup> The poorest might be unable to participate in market activity but many peasants and lesser gentry were in a position to generate produce for sale. They would also have an interest in owning a range of possessions, ranging from colourful clothing to specialist kitchenware or tools and raw materials; including some items, such as hand-querns, imported from

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<sup>12</sup> Jamroziak, 'Networks', p. 49.

<sup>13</sup> M. M. Postan, *The Medieval Economy and Society*, (Harmondsworth: Pelican Books, 1975), pp. 233-4.

<sup>14</sup> C. Dyer, 'Did peasants need markets and towns?' (2012), p. 26 f.

continental Europe. Their market involvement could therefore be greater than had previously been realised, contributing indirectly to international trade.<sup>15</sup>

It is not straightforward to assess whether the presence of a 'charter market' (as opposed to an informal market) made any impact on commercialisation in a rural community, or how far peasants were engaged in the buying and selling of goods. James Davis has questioned whether the grant of a market charter made any significant difference to local commercialisation. He pointed out that many charter grants might simply regularise an existing arrangement and so would not add to overall market density or offer new commercial opportunities. Many villages already had a 'smith, miller or carpenter' who worked and sold their products successfully without the presence of a formal market.<sup>16</sup> He also suggested that research was now showing that 'better-off peasants... with substantial surpluses to sell, were travelling to urban markets on a regular basis to seek the best prices, rather than disposing of their goods in the local rural market'.<sup>17</sup> This would mean that local markets in a rural setting might continue to provide a convenient mechanism for selling local produce, but commercial enterprise on any larger scale might have moved elsewhere.

### **5.1.2 Markets and Fairs in Kent**

These debates provide context for the consideration of markets and fairs in Kent and specifically in Ruxley hundred. Large seasonal fairs were not a feature of trade within later medieval Kent, where both inland and international trade were conducted mainly through developing urban settlements. Markets in the county in 1350 are shown in the Appendix, Map 4, p. 239. Before 1200, markets operated in the emerging towns of Canterbury and Rochester and in smaller urban centres on or close to the Channel coast, including Dover, Hythe, New Romney and Sandwich. Markets were also developing at sites not yet considered fully urban, such as Faversham, Fordwich or Malling.<sup>18</sup> Produce from Italy, France, the Low Countries or Spain could be brought across the Channel in large vessels, which could not berth in London but could access a port such as Dover or Sandwich. Their

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<sup>15</sup> Dyer, 'Peasants', p. 46 f.

<sup>16</sup> Davis, 'Reassessment', p. 282.

<sup>17</sup> Davis, 'Reassessment', esp. p. 282 f.

<sup>18</sup> Lawson & Killingray, 'Markets in the Medieval Period', *Historical Atlas of Kent*, p. 50.

contents would then be transferred to smaller vessels which could negotiate the Wantsum channel and the Thames to reach London, or might be transported overland to an inland market for subsequent dispersal.<sup>19</sup> Kent's own produce, notably grain, could be gathered from inland estates, taken to a centre on the coast such as Faversham and then transported along the river to London or taken across the Channel for export to continental Europe.<sup>20</sup> Transshipment and the resulting movement of goods along the Kent coast and the Thames estuary became commonplace.

In north-west Kent, early traditional markets operated at Lewisham in Blackheath hundred (the market possibly situated on Lewisham priory's land on the Thames riverside at Greenwich), and at Darenth in Axtane hundred.<sup>21</sup> Dartford, accessible from Ruxley hundred, may have served as a hub for the onward distribution of both international and local produce. *Domesday Book* shows the settlement already had 'two *hedae* [hythes] or two *portus*' in 1086.<sup>22</sup> Morgan translates *portus* as 'harbours', but the term could also refer to trading areas; Dartford had quays along the river Darent (rather than harbours on the Thames) and may have had trading areas close by, perhaps associated with specific products which were unloaded there. A charter market is not recorded for Dartford until 1307; in 1321 the market was granted to Edmund, Earl of Kent.<sup>23</sup>

Draper has pointed to byname evidence from the 1334-5 lay subsidy return for Kent and other documentation which suggests shipbuilding was taking place at Greenwich and sites along the Thames riverside by the fourteenth century, and that commercial activity was well-established at Dartford. Placenames and other evidence suggest that embarkation points at sites such as Rotherhithe (in Surrey), Greenwich, Woolwich and Erith offered transport along the Thames - towards London to the west, but also along the coast to

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<sup>19</sup> Customs arrangements for goods into and out of Dover are documented by the 1230s: N. Karn, 'England's trade with the Continent (2020); vessels entering the port of Sandwich: H. Clarke, S. Pearson, M. Mate, K. Parfitt, *Sandwich: The 'completest medieval town in England', a study of the town and port from its origins to 1600* (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2010), p. 55.

<sup>20</sup> Campbell et al., *A Medieval Capital*, p. 175; G. M. Draper, 'Fields of food for London? Supplies from the Hoo Peninsula, Kent, in the Middle Ages', *TLAMAS* 67 (2016), pp. 197-208.

<sup>21</sup> *Gazetteer*. The sites are shown in Lawson & Killingray, *Historical Atlas of Kent*, p. 50.

<sup>22</sup> Morgan, *DB Kent*, 1.

<sup>23</sup> *Gazetteer*, Dartford.

Dartford and further east.<sup>24</sup> Foodstuffs for London could be loaded at these sites and other produce unloaded for sale in locally.

Wharves along the Thames could also be used by pilgrims and travellers wishing to cross the Thames from Essex, or to move along the coast between London and Canterbury or ports on the Channel such as Dover.<sup>25</sup> St Augustine's Abbey, Canterbury, owned land at Plumstead on the Thames riverside, giving it river access.<sup>26</sup> Lesnes Abbey is known to have operated a ferry from Erith across to Essex at a later date, which may have been in place earlier.<sup>27</sup> A route across the Thames to Erith would have been used for travel between the monks of Hornchurch priory and their manor at Kemnal in Chislehurst.

## 5.2 MARKETS AND FAIRS IN RUXLEY HUNDRED

At the opening of the thirteenth century, Ruxley hundred was a dispersed community of hamlets and smallholdings. No markets or fairs are recorded from within its boundaries but local, informal markets no doubt operated there (as elsewhere) without documentation.<sup>28</sup> Traditional markets at Lewisham or Darenth (near Dartford), or even in Southwark or London, could be reached by road from Ruxley hundred, and markets elsewhere were also accessible. The main route between Southwark and Maidstone and on to Folkestone and Hythe crossed the river Cray at Footscray; the main route between Southwark, Bromley, Sevenoaks, Tonbridge and on to the Channel ports of Rye and Hastings ran across the hundred through Farnborough.<sup>29</sup> There were therefore good connections by road and along the Thames for those who wished to use them. It is unlikely that either the Cray or the Ravensbourne rivers were fully navigable, although punts and rowing-boats could have been used to move goods for short distances or used as ferries at crossing-points.

In practice, most residents must have relied on undocumented local trading in hamlets around the hundred, or made use of chapmen, intermediaries who traditionally brought

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<sup>24</sup> Draper, 'Timber and Iron', p. 62,

<sup>25</sup> Draper, p. 62.

<sup>26</sup> Hasted, II, p. 206 f.

<sup>27</sup> Draper, p. 62, discusses the significance of placenames along this stretch of riverside incorporating the element 'hithe' and evidence for crossing-places over the Thames.

<sup>28</sup> The *Gazetteer* shows no entries for Ruxley markets before 1200.

<sup>29</sup> These routes – the forerunners of the A20 and A21 trunk roads across Kent – can be seen on Philip Symonson's map of Kent of 1596; see Appendix, Map 2, p. 228.

goods from more distant markets to isolated farmsteads or small hamlets. In 1301 'Chapman' occurs as a byname in the lay subsidy returns for Chislehurst and Bexley vills, and is also listed in the return for Dartford vill, suggesting there were people in the wider locality who undertook this role or whose families had undertaken it in the recent past.<sup>30</sup> In 1334 the name still appears in Dartford vill and in Blackheath hundred.<sup>31</sup> However a local market or fair which met at a predetermined time and place and could be reached by anyone within a reasonable distance on foot or with a horse and cart, potentially offered greater choice and trading opportunities. A regular, accessible venue also offered social benefits: the opportunity to meet people from further afield, to exchange news, perhaps to arrange the sale of land or to obtain an offer of work. Making contacts in this way could be important for a scattered community.

During the thirteenth century there was a significant rise in the number of royal grants for markets in rural areas of Kent. Examination of grants for markets and fairs in the hundred shows a significant increase by the end of the thirteenth century, with further grants provided in the early fourteenth century. On Masschaele's analysis, this should indicate that commercial activity was increasing in the hundred, with the markets forming part of a regional network. However Bradley McLain's study of the development of Kent's markets, using charters as the main source, drew different conclusions.<sup>32</sup> He identified a significant growth in markets in Kent by 1350, particularly in the north-west, meaning that Kent had a much larger increase in market foundations during the thirteenth century than the three neighbouring counties of Surrey, Sussex and Essex, despite apparently having few differences in population or commercialisation.<sup>33</sup> If all the known charters had been put into effect, west Kent would have had 'an intense concentration of trading venues'.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Bexley: William Chapman; Chislehurst: Cecily, widow Chapman, TNA E179/123/5. Dartford: William Chepman, Coates, 'The Valuation of the Town of Dartford', p. 29.

<sup>31</sup> Hanley & Chalklin, 'Kent Lay Subsidy', Blackheath hundred: Geoffrey Chapman, Adam Chapman, p. 137; Dartford vill: William Longe, Chapman; Richard le Chapman; Ralph le Chapman; p. 143.

<sup>32</sup> B. A. McLain, 'Factors in Market Establishment in Medieval England: The Evidence from Kent 1086-1350', *Arch. Cant.* 117 (1997), pp. 83-103.

<sup>33</sup> McLain, 'Factors in Market Establishment', p. 89.

<sup>34</sup> McLain, p. 90

McLain then looked in detail at two clusters of market grants in north-west Kent.<sup>35</sup> One to the north comprised charters for Lesnes, Charlton, Plumstead and Eltham, all thirteenth-century grants for markets which would have been only some 2.5 miles apart. He argued that 'further congestion' in this group occurred with grants for markets at Dartford, Erith and Bexley. His second cluster lay further south, comprising charters for Orpington, St Mary Cray, West Wickham, Farnborough and Chelsfield (all in Ruxley hundred) and Eynsford, Farningham and Ash in neighbouring hundreds. Of this apparent increase, only the north-west Kent markets at Dartford, Bexley and St Mary Cray were still active by the end of the Middle Ages.<sup>36</sup>

McLain suggested that the proximity of London meant local markets were less necessary in north-west Kent than further east, that economic factors alone could not be responsible for the significant rise in the number of grants there. He suggested that while older, usually prescriptive, markets in Kent continued to be successful, many charter markets, particularly in north-west Kent, never operated, their charters being a sign of patronage awarded by successive kings to recognise their close associates or others connected with the royal household. While the grants were welcomed by their recipients as tokens of recognition, in practice, they were rarely acted upon.<sup>37</sup> McLain's view is pessimistic and is not borne out by a closer examination of individual markets or fairs in Ruxley hundred.

### **5.2 1. Individual fairs and markets in Ruxley hundred**

#### ***Fairs***

The earliest grant for a fair was made to William de Say, tenant-in-chief of the manor of Cudham, at Bertrey in Cudham, without a corresponding market grant.<sup>38</sup> Grants for annual fairs were included in the market charters issued for Sandling, Aperfield, Chelsfield, Farnborough, Bexley and West Wickham. On the other hand, no fair was included with the grants made to Canterbury Cathedral Priory for markets at Orpington in 1206 or 'Crey' in

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<sup>35</sup> McLain, p. 91.

<sup>36</sup> McLain, p. 91. 'Factors in Market Establishment', p. 90. His list omits Sandling and Aperfield, and assumes without discussion that the market at 'Crey' was located at St Mary Cray and was distinct from the market at Orpington (see further below).

<sup>37</sup> McLain, p. 93.

<sup>38</sup> *CChR*, 1226–57, p. 294. The *Gazetteer* records a fair at Bertrey but gives the location as 'unknown'.



1279, suggesting the priory had little interest in establishing local fairs. All the fairs were to take place from July to September, with four held in August. The saints' feast-days specified for the fairs were usually those of the saint to whom the local parish church was dedicated, providing an opportunity for church celebrations to be linked to the secular celebrations of a fair. There are some exceptions where the fair was not linked to the local saint/s: the fairs at Bertrey and Aperfield (the parish church at Cudham was dedicated to SS Peter and Paul, feast day, 29 June); at Chelsfield, where the earliest known dedication is to St Martin of Tours (11 November); and at Bexley, where the dedication was to the Blessed Virgin Mary (15 August).<sup>39</sup>

Grant Date	Date of Fair	Length/Feast Day	Site of Fair	King/Grantee
1246	10 August	Vfm St Laurence	Bertrey (Cudham)	Henry III / William de Say
1253 With market	15 August	Vf Assumption of BVM	Aperfield (Cudham)	Henry III / Henry de Apuldrefeld
1253 With market	15 August	Vf Assumption of BVM	Sandling	Henry III/ John de Mares
1281 With market	15 August	Assumption of BVM	Sandling	Edward I / Gregory de Rokesle
1290 With market	25 July	Vfm St James	Chelsfield	Edward I / Otto de Grandison
1290 With market	1 September	vfm St Giles	Farnborough	Edward I / Otto de Grandison
1315 With market	14 September	Vf Exaltation of Cross	Bexley	Edward II/ Archbishop
1318 With market	22 July	Vfm St Mary Magdalen	Wickham	Edward II/Walter de Huntyngfeld
1344 With market	1 September	Vf St Giles + 8	Farnborough	Edward III / Edmund Duke of Lancaster

**Table 16: Grants for fairs in Ruxley Hundred, 1200-1350 (chronological order).<sup>40</sup>**

<sup>39</sup> Saints' feast days from C. R. Cheney (ed.) & M. Jones (revised), *Handbook of Dates*, (Cambridge: CUP, 2000), pp.64-87.

<sup>40</sup> Source: *Gazetteer*. The *Gazetteer* gives the saint's day for both Aperfield and Sandling fairs as that of St. Hypolitus, 13 August, referencing the Rolls Gascons and the Patent Rolls. However, the Patent Rolls entries relate the dates of both fairs to the Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary on 15 August (*CPR, 1247-58*, pp. 246 & 258). The parish church at St Mary Cray was dedicated to St Mary the Virgin. Aperfield had no church of its own.

Ruxley's fairs were timed for the summer and autumn. The medieval Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary fell in mid-August, known as Lammas (from *hlaf maesse* = loaf-mass in Old English), so fairs at that time coincided with and traditionally celebrated the beginning of the wheat harvest. Grain continued to be harvested into September, so late summer/early autumn fairs at Farnborough and Bexley took place once the harvest was gathered in.<sup>41</sup> Early summer dates could fit with haymaking and sheep-shearing, while autumn dates might also allow for the sale of fattened stock before the winter. Any summer date would be suitable for the purchase of consumer goods such as cloth or clothing or cast metal cooking-pots or ceramic vessels, if these items were available.

There were few fairs in neighbouring hundreds. Plumstead had a winter fair, held on 6 December, from 1270.<sup>42</sup> In 1276 the archbishop was granted a fair at Croydon in Surrey, to be held over nine days focused on the feast of St Botolph (17 June). This was an unusually long period, possibly reflecting a wider pattern of extended trading generally at Croydon. In 1314 an additional fair was granted for late September.<sup>43</sup> In Ruxley hundred, the second Farnborough grant of 1344 lengthened the late September St Giles fair to ten days, providing the longest trading period in the hundred.

### **Markets**

Table 17 sets out the ten market grants identified for Ruxley hundred between 1200 and 1350.<sup>44</sup> Each charter market and fair at a particular site is considered below, to see whether it is possible to identify from indirect sources whether they were founded and if so, how they functioned and what produce might have been available. It also aims to throw light on the early development of St Mary Cray.

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<sup>41</sup> Hutton notes that Lammas was the formal opening of the harvest season and the main period of holding fairs, which lasted until October. His exploration of the customs and celebrations throughout the year covers a later time-period (beginning in 1400) but gives an indication of the earlier roots of the festivities. Harvest suppers were always an important celebration throughout the later medieval period. R. Hutton, *The Rise and Fall of Merrie England: The Ritual Year 1400-1700*, (Oxford: OUP, 1994), p. 44 f.

<sup>42</sup> *Gazetteer*, Plumstead.

<sup>43</sup> *Gazetteer*, Croydon.

<sup>44</sup> The charter information is taken from the *Gazetteer*. The vill is supplied from the 1301 lay subsidy return for Ruxley hundred, TNA E 179/123/5.

Date	Market Site	Market Day	Vill	King / Grantee
1206 <sup>45</sup>	<i>Apud Orpinton</i>	Wednesday	Orpington	John / archbishop and monks of Canterbury Cathedral (CCP)
1253 <sup>46</sup>	Sandling manor	Wednesday	Orpington	Henry III / Sir John de Mares
1253 <sup>47</sup>	Aperfield manor	-	Cudham	Henry III / Henry de Appledorefield
1279 <sup>48</sup>	'Crey'	-	Orpington	claimed by CCP in <i>Quo Warranto</i> proceedings
1281 <sup>49</sup>	Sandling manor	Wednesday	Orpington	Edward I / Sir Gregory de Rokesle (in 1332-33, claimed as being held at <i>Sentlyng Crey B[ate] Marie</i> )
1290 <sup>50</sup>	Chelsfield manor	Monday	Chelsfield	Edward I / Otto de Grandison
1290 <sup>51</sup>	Farnborough manor	Tuesday	Farnborough	Edward I / Otto de Grandison
1315 <sup>52</sup>	Bexley manor	Tuesday	Bexley	Edward II / Archbishop
1318 <sup>53</sup>	Wickham manor	Monday	Wickham	Edward II / Walter de Huntyngheld
1344 <sup>54</sup>	Farnborough manor	Monday	Farnborough	Edward III/ Henry, earl of Lancaster

**Table 17: Grants issued for markets in Ruxley hundred (chronological order).**

<sup>45</sup> *Gazetteer*: reference, *R Ch*, p. 163 b.

<sup>46</sup> *Gazetteer*: reference, *Roles Gascons*, 1242–54, no. 2131; *CPR*, 1247–58, p. 246. To be held at the manor.

<sup>47</sup> *Gazetteer*: reference, *Roles Gascons*, 1242–54, no. 2248; *CPR*, 1247–58, p. 258. To be held at Appledorefield (Aperfield in Cudham vill).

<sup>48</sup> *Gazetteer*: reference, *QW*, p. 348, which indicates the prior of Christ Church claimed a market at Cley each week of the year. ['Cley' for 'Crey'].

<sup>49</sup> *Gazetteer*: reference, *QW*, p. 317, stating that in 1332–33, Reginald de Rokesle was summoned to answer why he had a weekly market (*mercatum*) on Wednesday at Sentlyng Crey B[eat]e Marie in the hundred of Rokesleye. Reginald stated that King Edward I had granted to Gregory de Rokeslee, his ancestor, a Wednesday market at the manor of Sandlyngg and he showed the charter. The charter does not survive but a market at Sandling is referred to in Gregory de Rokesle's IPM held in 1291, TNA C 133/60/9.

<sup>50</sup> *Gazetteer*: reference, *CChR*, 1257–1300, p. 346. To be held at the manor.

<sup>51</sup> *Gazetteer*: reference, *CChR*, 1257–1300, p. 346. To be held at the manor.

<sup>52</sup> *Gazetteer*: reference, *CChR*, 1300–26, p. 289. To be held at the manor.

<sup>53</sup> *Gazetteer*: reference, *CChR*, 1300–26, p. 376. To be held at 'Westwicham' manor.

<sup>54</sup> *Gazetteer*: reference, *CChR*, 1341–1417, p. 32.

## ***Orpington***

The earliest recorded market charter in Ruxley hundred was awarded to the archbishop and monks of Christ Church, Canterbury in 1206, for a weekly Wednesday market at Orpington (*apud Orpinton*) on the standard condition that neighbouring markets were not harmed.<sup>55</sup> No fair was included. The market was not specified as to be held 'on the manor'.

The manor of Greater Orpington was the Cathedral priory's only demesne estate in north-west Kent. It was managed as part of the 'Surrey' custody, which included, in addition, Meopham in mid-Kent, the Surrey manors of Merstham, Cheam, Walworth and Newington, and further manors in Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire.<sup>56</sup> The priory expected its manors to provide its food supply, either in kind or in cash. Those closest to Canterbury, in east Kent and in west Kent/ the Weald, provided grain and sometimes other produce to fulfil this demand. They were also expected to raise cash through the sale of surplus produce at Canterbury.<sup>57</sup> However during the thirteenth century, the more distant custodies, including Surrey, were required to sell their surplus produce locally for cash; this would then be delivered to Canterbury, where food would be purchased for the priory's use. An emphasis on the local marketing of produce for cash became a major feature of Prior Henry Eastry's administrative reforms in the later thirteenth century.<sup>58</sup> This suggests that local sales were thought to be both feasible and profitable.

In the previous year, King John had given a grant to the Bishop of Rochester for a market at the small settlement of Bromley in the neighbouring hundred, but there was no other market nearby or any 'market town' close to the Orpington demesne.<sup>59</sup> The 1206 charter might have been sought to ensure that the demesne's use of a local market profited the monks of Canterbury rather than those of Rochester. It is quite possible that the 1206 charter recognised an existing informal local trading arrangement and that this had demonstrated to the monk-wardens at Canterbury that local sales were feasible.

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<sup>55</sup> *Gazetteer*, Orpington; ref. *ChR* 1199-1216, p. 163.

<sup>56</sup> The administration of the priory's manors is discussed in Smith, *Canterbury Cathedral Priory* pp. 100 ff.

<sup>57</sup> Smith, *Canterbury Cathedral Priory*, p. 132.

<sup>58</sup> Smith, *Canterbury Cathedral Priory*, p. 128 ff, esp. p. 130-132. Eastry was elected as prior in 1268 and remained at Canterbury until his death in 1331.

<sup>59</sup> *Gazetteer*, Bromley.

It is notable that the priory established no other charter market within its Surrey custody until 1338.<sup>60</sup> The priory's manors in Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire could have accessed town markets within the county; the Kent estate at Meopham was close to Rochester and Maidstone; the manors in eastern Surrey were not far from Croydon, a demesne of the archbishop, where an early prescriptive market operated.<sup>61</sup> Produce could also be sold 'at the farm gate', thereby avoiding other lords' tolls and regulation; Slavin argues that Norwich Priory preferred to sell its goods in this way rather than through a formal town market.<sup>62</sup> Overall, however, the approach adopted at Orpington appears to differ from that taken elsewhere in the custody, reflecting local needs and opportunities.

The 1206 charter market must have been aimed at products other than timber, which the estate did not channel through a local market (see Chapter 2). The surviving bedels' rolls for Greater Orpington show that much of the demesne's stock and crops was reserved for use in the estate centre, to support its function as a guesthouse. Surpluses and unwanted stock were regularly sold but there is no indication of where or how this took place. The rolls also show the range of items purchased, ranging from ointment and tar to prevent sheep-scab to millstones.<sup>63</sup> The demesne evidently purchased goods in London if necessary (the millstones were purchased there; tar may also have been imported by Hanseatic merchants from the Baltic) but it is difficult to know whether buying goods in the city was a frequent occurrence; the place of purchase is not given unless the costs for lifting, carrying and so on had to be set out and millstones were unusual in this respect. There are no obvious references in the rolls to market infrastructure, such as the repair of a market-house or the provision of market stalls, nor any indication of rental income from a market, suggesting the bedel did not have any role in the market's regulation.

The 1206 grant specifies that it was to be held *apud Orpinton*; it does not say whether this would be on the manor or elsewhere in the vill. A market could have been held on priory land near the main estate centre, which stood on a hillside above the source of the river

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<sup>60</sup> No references are given in the *Gazetteer* for any markets established by the priory in the counties of Surrey, Buckinghamshire or Oxfordshire until the market at Merstham in Surrey was founded in 1338.

<sup>61</sup> Markets in Surrey, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Kent: source, *Gazetteer*.

<sup>62</sup> P. Slavin, *Bread and Ale for the Brethren: The Provisioning of Norwich Cathedral Priory 1260-1536* (Hatfield, 2012), p. 26.

<sup>63</sup> Bowen, 'The Priory Orpington', p. 63, p. 76.

Cray, close to the parish church higher up the hill, or in fields in the valley below. There may have been a hamlet in the valley which could have supported a market-place but Orpington does not seem to have contained a substantial village at this date.

However, it is possible that the market was not located close to the estate centre, but elsewhere within the wider vill. The village of St Mary Cray formed at a river-crossing of the Cray near the church of St Mary the Virgin and on the boundary between St Mary Cray and St Paul's Cray parishes. The church was regarded as a chapel of Orpington church, so the priory might have used land around the church as a market site.<sup>64</sup> A traditional route (now a footpath) led from the Orpington estate centre to the main routeway along the east bank of the river Cray, so travelling on horseback or driving stock to a market in St Mary Cray village was certainly feasible. In 1279, in response to challenge, the priory claimed to have a traditional market at 'Crey'.<sup>65</sup> The *Gazetteer* assumes without comment (or evidence) that this refers to St Mary Cray; this may be correct, although it is also possible that 'Crey' was elsewhere along the river.<sup>66</sup> If the 1279 documentation was a reassertion of the original 1206 foundation, then it suggests that the 1206 market *apud Orpinton* was established at 'Crey' - wherever this was.

The long gap from 1206 until another charter was issued for a fair (1246 at Bertrey) or a market (1253 at Sandling) in Ruxley hundred may reflect the period of uncertainty which followed the first baronial war, the death of King John and the minority of King Henry III. It is difficult to gauge the effect of these events locally. Lords with lands in the hundred supported the baronial cause, including the de Says, de Gattons, de Crevequers and the de Rokesles, and this may well have delayed further grants.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Hasted II, p. 121.

<sup>65</sup> *Gazetteer*, St Mary Cray, referencing *Quo Warranto* proceedings, p. 348.

<sup>66</sup> The bedels' rolls contain references to a mill at 'Creve' and to mowing on land at 'Creve'; this could have been at any point along the river, but they may be linked to land close to St Mary's church.

<sup>67</sup> In 1215 Robert de Rokesle and Hamo de Gatton were imprisoned and sent to Wallingford after the surrender at Rochester; K. Major, 'The 'Familia' of Archbishop Stephen Langton' (*EHR* XLV111 (2), 1933), pp. 529-553, ref. p. 546. John de Mares was sent to Northampton; N. Vincent, 'King John's Diary & Itinerary', *The Magna Carta Project* [https://magnacartaresearch.org/read/itinerary/John\\_tours\\_the\\_lands\\_of\\_rebels](https://magnacartaresearch.org/read/itinerary/John_tours_the_lands_of_rebels), Fn. 4: RLP 161. [accessed 10/06/2023].

### ***Sandling and 'Crey'***

In 1253 King Henry III rewarded knights from Ruxley hundred who accompanied him on his Gascony campaign. A charter was granted to Sir John de Mares to hold a weekly Wednesday market 'on his manor of Sandling', along with a fair on the evening and morrow of the feast of the Blessed Virgin Mary (15 August).<sup>68</sup> A similar grant for a market and fair at Aperfield in Cudham was awarded to Sir Henry de Apulderfeld. The two knights had travelled to Gascony in 1253.<sup>69</sup> Both were also given exemption for life from service on assize, juries or recognitions.<sup>70</sup> John de Mares' market grant followed a grant in 1252 permitting free warren on his demesnes at Sandling and Wychling (in east Kent).<sup>71</sup> Sir Robert de Mares, who had travelled to Gascony in 1252, John's father, also received a grant of free warren on his manor of Okemore in Ruxley hundred, but no market grant.<sup>72</sup> He also received exemption from service on juries and assizes and from other administrative roles.<sup>73</sup>

Both John de Mares and Henry de Apulderfeld held manors elsewhere in Kent for which no market grants were awarded, suggesting that the grants for Sandling and Aperfield were made in response to specific requests. The context of the Gascony campaign may have led lords to expect recognition and to feel able to request charters; their tenants may have asked them to secure a market grant, perhaps in return for their own support. An estate map from 1726 of St Lyne Okemore (a later name used for the combined manors of Sandling and Okemore) suggests that Sandling's manorial centre, later known as Manor Farm, stood close to the river on the west bank of the Cray, while Okemore lay further west on higher

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<sup>68</sup> *Gazetteer*, Sandling; *CPR*, 1247–5

<sup>69</sup> *Gazetteer*, Cudham.

<sup>70</sup> '1253, membranes 20, 19, 18, 17, 16, 15, 14, 13, 12', in *Calendar of Patent Rolls, Henry III: Volume 4, 1247-1258*, ed. H C Maxwell Lyte (London, 1908), pp. 241-260. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-pat-rolls/hen3/vol4/pp241-260> [accessed 23 March 2023].

<sup>71</sup> See Chapter 2 Table 4.

<sup>72</sup> '1253, membranes 20, 19, 18, 17, 16, 15, 14, 13, 12, 11, 10', in *Calendar of Patent Rolls, Henry III: Volume 4, 1247-1258*, ed. H C Maxwell Lyte (London, 1908), pp. 160-195. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-pat-rolls/hen3/vol4/pp160-195> [accessed 28 June 2023].

See Chapter 2 Table 4.

<sup>73</sup> '1253, membranes 20, 19, 18, 17, 16, 15, 14, 13, 12', in *Calendar of Patent Rolls, Henry III: Volume 4, 1247-1258*, ed. H C Maxwell Lyte (London, 1908), pp. 241-260. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-pat-rolls/hen3/vol4/pp241-260> [accessed 23 March 2023].

ground.<sup>74</sup> Both locations would have supported hunting, but Sandling was more suitable for a market, being near the river-crossing and routeways along the Cray valley.

*Sentlinge* (Sandlings; later, Sandling) appears in *Domesday Book* as a lay estate assigned to Bishop Odo but does not feature as a vill in the 1301 lay subsidy return for Ruxley hundred.<sup>75</sup> Okemore is not listed in *Domesday* but appears as a separate vill in the return, despite having only nine individuals assessed.<sup>76</sup> Although Sandling was already a lay manor in 1086, Canterbury Cathedral priory included *Saendlinge* (Sandlings) in a list of its manors recorded in *Domesday Monachorum*.<sup>77</sup> This suggests that Canterbury had held Sandling before the Norman Conquest; the priory must have hoped to recover it, as the estate lay close to the manor of Greater Orpington, but was evidently unable to do so. Sandling's population must have been assessed within Orpington vill for lay subsidy purposes, presumably reflecting the traditional link with the priory. Orpington vill contained forty-three assessments in 1301.<sup>78</sup>

*Domesday Book* records a further Ruxley estate assigned to Bishop Odo at *Sudcrai*, South Cray, which had fourteen villeins, meadow and woodland but no church (though *Domesday Book* does not necessarily record all churches existing at the time).<sup>79</sup> No land named South Cray is attributed to the priory in *Domesday Monachorum* and this area seems always to have been a lay estate. It is not listed as a separate vill in the 1301 lay subsidy return, so again, must be included within the return for Orpington vill. Hasted assumed that the *Domesday* South Cray was the earlier name for, and predecessor of, the village of St Mary Cray, which was to become the major settlement in this part of Kent. Modern writers have followed his example, regarding Sandling as a forgotten rural backwater.<sup>80</sup> Yet in 1086 Sandling was more highly valued and had a larger population.

South Cray may have been situated further south on the eastern bank of the Cray, perhaps focused on the hamlet of Reynolds (earlier, Reynes) Cross, separated from the main village

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<sup>74</sup> KHLC, U1823 /P14. The associated terrier does not survive.

<sup>75</sup> Morgan, *DB Kent*, 5, 38.

<sup>76</sup> TNA E 179/123/5.

<sup>77</sup> D. C. Douglas, *The Domesday Monachorum of Christ Church Canterbury* (London: RHS, 1943), p. 17, p. 81.

<sup>78</sup> TNA E 179/123/5, Orpington.

<sup>79</sup> Morgan, *DB Kent*, 5, 24.

<sup>80</sup> Hasted, II, p. 112. Morgan, *Domesday Book: Kent*, 5, 24.



of St Mary Cray until subsumed within it in the early twentieth century. This location was named as South Cray on nineteenth-century Ordnance Survey maps. It has produced evidence of Romano-British and early medieval settlement.<sup>81</sup> In contrast, there is no trace of pre-*Domesday* settlement in the core of the later village of St Mary Cray, although evidence of early settlement may have been lost through the nineteenth-century development of roads, railway, a large paper factory and housing for factory workers.

The later medieval village of St Mary Cray developed around the site of the parish church and then spread out along the banks of the river. The present church structure includes thirteenth-century fabric; it is presumably the successor to the *Domesday* church of Sandling, although no archaeological investigation to confirm this has been undertaken. The church stands near the boundary between St Mary Cray and St Paul's Cray parishes. There is evidence for later medieval settlement close by. Opposite the churchyard, on the High Street but within the parish of St Paul's Cray, a jettied timber-framed building dated to the later fifteenth/early sixteenth century still stands; excavation within its footprint has revealed foundations and a hearth from an earlier building on a different alignment.<sup>82</sup> Archaeomagnetic dating of the hearth indicates that this earlier building was in use towards the end of the twelfth century, suggesting that new settlement was being established around that time.<sup>83</sup>

Hasted notes that after Odo's demise, the manors of Sandling and South Cray came into the possession of the Peverel barony. He adds that by 1211-1212 John de Mares held the manors of both Sandling and Okemore of Jeffrey de Peverel for knight's service at Dover Castle.<sup>84</sup> Members of the de Mares family certainly held both Okemore and Sandling manors by the middle of the thirteenth century, along with other property in Kent and the manor of

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<sup>81</sup> F. A. Hart, 'Excavation of a Saxon grubenhaus and Roman ditch at Kent Road, St Mary Cray', *Arch. Cant.* 101 (1984), pp. 187-216., reports on an excavation of an early Anglo-Saxon sunken-featured building adjacent to ditches containing late Roman pottery.

<sup>82</sup> The surviving building, 5/7/9 St Mary Cray High Street, is of elm so cannot currently be dated by dendrochronology. Within it were the flint foundations of a differently aligned earlier building, with associated evidence for a hearth. (ODAS, unpublished report).

<sup>83</sup> Archaeomagnetic dating of the hearth by Museum of London Archaeology indicated a firing date between 1130 and 1250 (MOLA for ODAS, unpublished report).

<sup>84</sup> Hasted II p.144.

Meares Assheby in Northampton.<sup>85</sup> By 1256 John de Mares had let Sandling to Mgr Hugh de Mortimer, official of the archbishop, senior administrator at Canterbury and rector of Orpington church, suggesting the family's interest in the manor had waned; this may have been an attempt by Canterbury to gain control of the Sandling market. However by 1281, Gregory de Rokesle, merchant of London, alderman and mayor of the city, held the manor of Sandling directly from the king, possibly following the death of Mortimer.<sup>86</sup> His Inquisition *post mortem* of 1291 lists Sandling manor, including a mill and market, among his extensive property outside London.<sup>87</sup> In 1332-33, when his descendant Reginald de Rokesle was asked why he held a weekly market and a fair on the feast of the Assumption at 'Sentlyng Crey B[eate] Marie in the hundred of Rokesleye', Reginald replied that this had been granted to his ancestor by king Edward I 'at his manor of Sandlyngg'. He is said to have shown a charter awarded to Gregory de Rokesle in 1281.<sup>88</sup> At the time of his death Gregory de Rokesle also held manors in Sussex, elsewhere in Kent (including Footscray in Ruxley hundred) and Surrey, but Sandling was the only one for which he received a market grant.<sup>89</sup>

The *Gazetteer* attributes Gregory de Rokesle's 1281 charter to 'St Mary Cray' with no reference to Sandling; it makes no link to the 1253 charter for Sandling and has no entry for a market at Sandling after 1253. But Reginald de Rokesle's market and fair, following on from Gregory de Rokesle's (lost) charter, must have been held on the Sandling manor, and this is confirmed in Gregory de Rokesle's 1291 Inquisition *post mortem*.<sup>90</sup> By the fourteenth century, 'Sandling' and 'St Mary Cray' were essentially the same place, as the village had

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<sup>85</sup> The King gave land to Robert de Mares around 1242: 'Parishes: Mears Ashby', in *A History of the County of Northampton: Volume 4*, ed. L F Salzman (London, 1937), pp. 129-132. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/northants/vol4/pp129-132> [accessed 28 June 2023].

<sup>86</sup> It is possible that the de Mares family, traditionally supporters of the king, lost land as a consequence of a later connection with a supporter of de Montfort. The Inquisitions which might answer this question unfortunately do not survive for Ruxley hundred. A member of the family was an assessor for the 1301 lay subsidy return for Ruxley hundred (see Chapter 1) and the family remained connected with Wychling and Shelve, so they did not lose all of their lands. Possibly they had no interest in Sandling's market; John de Mares received (or sought) no market grant for his other manors.

<sup>87</sup> TNA C 133/60/9.

<sup>88</sup> *Gazetteer*: St Mary Cray, referencing *Quo Warranto* p. 317.

<sup>89</sup> TNA C 133/60/9 lists his other property: Surrey, land at Hatcham and Rotherhithe; Sussex, Manor of Angmering; Kent, land at Northfleet, La Greenstrete (Green Street Green), Chelsfield and Orpington, and the manors of Sandling, Footscray and Haukeswelle. La Greenstrete, Chelsfield, Orpington, Sandling and Footscray were all in Ruxley hundred. None of the manors has an early market attributed to de Rokesle. The *Gazetteer* attributes no other market to him.

<sup>90</sup> TNA C 133/60/9.

expanded. The ‘Sandling’ market had, by this time, presumably replaced or subsumed the priory’s market at ‘Crey’, of which nothing further is heard.

The 1291 IPM for Sir Gregory de Rokesle includes an extent giving details of the manor. This refers to a ‘capital messuage with garden, dovecote and a marketplace [*forum*] valued at 40 s’.<sup>91</sup> There is nothing to show how the market was organised and regulated. It continued to function successfully; Gregory de Rokesle’s heirs held the manor until later in the fourteenth century, but in 1372 Sir Robert Belknap, later Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, became holder of the manor, along with extensive other property in England.<sup>92</sup> He appears to have rebuilt the manor house there. In 1388 his lands were taken from him after his disgrace and exile to Ireland, but his wife Juliana appealed for the right to retain the manor of Sandling as her residence. In a landmark case, this was permitted, and her son Hamo later inherited the manor. Hamo died in 1429 and Sandling manor was inherited by his son John, a minor, and Hamo’s widow Joan. An inquisition from 1429 sets out the dower arrangements for Joan. This shows that she retained a third of the ‘capital messuage’ or manor house, along with outbuildings including a ‘markethous’ and a garden.<sup>93</sup> The reference suggests the market site had remained on the manor, presumably in the same area as Gregory de Rokesle’s *forum*, and had attracted investment in its infrastructure.<sup>94</sup>

A survey of the bounds of the manor of ‘Seynctling Okemore’ made for the Wotton family between 1557 and 1560 describes the Sandling marketplace as being 1 acre 1 yard in size, lying between the watermill and miller’s house, the manor site, Churchfield and Churchmead. The survey gives the first description of the physical appearance of the market:

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<sup>91</sup> TNA C 133/60/9, inquisition held at Sandling: ‘cu’ foro vallet p’ annu’ xl so’.

<sup>92</sup> J. L. Leland (ed.), ‘Sir Robert Bealknap (d. 1401), justice’ *ODNB* (2004).

<sup>93</sup> E-CIPM 23-236: Joan Widow of Hamon Bealknap, Esquire [CCIR 1422-1429. 0.241]. <<http://www.inquisitionspostmortem.ac.uk/view/inquisition/23-236>> [Accessed 29 July 2016]. This includes the ‘extent’ describing the premises and lands allocated to Joan.

<sup>94</sup> Although the manor-house was demolished in 1936 and the site built on with no archaeological investigation, much of the oak timber-framing from the house was rescued. This was reused by Hugh Marsham-Townshend in his reconstruction of a medieval hall at Scadbury Manor, Chislehurst. Following the purchase of the Scadbury site by LB Bromley, the timbers – which had been vandalised – were removed to the Weald and Downland Living Museum (WDLM). WDLM commissioned a report into the dating of the timbers by dendrochronology; this showed that felling most likely took place around 1370 (date provided to ODAS by Dr R. Harris of WDLM). This suggests that the original manor-house had been rebuilt by Belknap.

‘In the east part of the piece of land called the Market place of St Mary Cray is one long tiled house, meet for butchers to lay and sell flesh in: wherein are twelve several stages or rooms; in the south part ...of the land is one other tiled house apt for the like purpose’ [modernised spelling].<sup>95</sup>

This suggests a focus on a stock market. It is possible this was also a function of the market in the thirteenth century. The Greater Orpington demesne could easily have sold its surplus stock there; hides could have been sold on to tanneries elsewhere. Tanning and associated crafts were prominent activities in Dartford; the bynames of several tanners (a tanner’s widow had one of the highest assessments in the vill) and a cobbler (*sutor*) occur in the 1301 lay subsidy for Dartford vill.<sup>96</sup>

It is notable that although Gregory de Rokesle also held the manor of Footscray in Ruxley hundred, he received (or sought) no grant for a market there. As a successful London merchant, he might have seen the potential to develop the Sandling market further. By 1281 he had extensive interests elsewhere, both in the city and in the service of King Edward I, although the investment was still relevant. The development of the market may have been driven forward by a steward or tenant.

If, as suggested above, the 1301 lay subsidy return for Orpington vill includes people living within St Mary Cray village, the entries for the village must come towards the end of the assessments. The first name in the return, Alexander Molendinarius, is likely to have been the tenant of the priory’s mill at Orpington (his name does not appear in connection with their mill at Croy). If so, the assessors would presumably have started their work close to the Orpington estate centre and then moved northwards along the Cray valley, passing through South Cray, finishing in the area of the village near St Mary Cray church and at Sandling on the west bank of the river. The assessments from number twenty-nine onwards include the bynames *Cissor* (taylor), *Bokeler* (maker of buckles or girdles), *Carpentar* and *le Webbe* (weaver), though no-one is shown as having ‘merchandise’ for sale.<sup>97</sup> In the 1334-35

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<sup>95</sup> BL Add 42715, transcript, J. Bower, *The Wotton Survey*, <https://kentarchaeology.org.uk/publications/member-publications/wotton-survey> [accessed 8 June 2023].

<sup>96</sup> TNA E 179/123/4.

<sup>97</sup> TNA E 179/123/5: Orpington.

assessment, where villas are not identified, a block of names that appears to be attributable to Orpington vill includes the names *Cissor* (taylor), *Pistor* (baker), *Gerdler* (girdler) and *Tixtor* (weaver), reflecting the names in the earlier return.<sup>98</sup> Both sets of names suggest local involvement in the manufacture of cloth, clothing and accessories, along with the provision of services such as carpentry and baking, focused on what became the village of St Mary Cray. The cultivation of flax in Little Orpington has been discussed above (Chapter 3) and may have been woven into linen in the village; local sheep supplied wool; there was plenty of grain available locally to supply local bakers. These activities would have taken place in permanent settings, whether a kitchen with a baking oven, a workshop area, or a small space for a loom within a house. They were not necessarily dependent on a market for sales, but they would have benefited from the presence of outsiders on market-day.

The central location of Sandling suggests that stock and produce from elsewhere in the hundred – Chislehurst, St Paul's Cray, the villas to the south – could easily have been brought to a market or fair. There could well have been a local stock market, as discussed above. Grain may have been on sale, unless cornmongers preferred to make deals directly with producers; the presence of watermill/s at Sandling suggests that the manor would have had surplus grain to sell.<sup>99</sup> Local smallholders could have sold cheese, eggs, honey and garden produce such as fruit and vegetables. Consumer goods from outside the hundred could have been brought in to sell – maybe this was where local people purchased their ceramic kitchenware or cast alloy cooking-pots.

Sales of grain and stock, and possibly of external commodities, might have been better suited to an annual fair than a weekly market. The 1253 grant for a Sandling market also permitted a fair to be held at Lammas, the start of harvest, and an opportunity for linked

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<sup>98</sup> Hanley & Chalker (eds.), 'The Kent Lay Subsidy of 1334/5', entries on p. 133 f.

<sup>99</sup> TNA C 133/60/9 (IPM, Gregory de Rokesle, 1291). The entry for the inquisition at Sandling states that there were eight watermills (*viii molend' aquatic'*) at Sandling valued at 16 s a year. Although the numerals are clearly written, this seems highly unlikely. At later dates there was a single mill at Sandling. The inquisition held to assess de Rokesle's holdings at Footscray, further down-stream so possibly with a greater flow of water, valued the two watermills (*duo molend' aquatica*) there at 30 s a year. In 1429 the IPM for Hamo de Belnap valued the watermill at Sandling at 40 s, though in 1436 it was said to have fallen down and to be worth nothing (M. Tompkins, 'The Structure of the Milling Industry, 1427-37' in M. Hicks (ed.), *The Later Medieval Inquisitions Post Mortem: Mapping the Medieval Countryside and Rural Society* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2016), pp. 115-135, ref. p. 133). The 1436 assessment may be inaccurate, perhaps to draw attention away from sources of income, though it is possible that repairs were needed to keep the mill operational.

celebrations at the parish church. In contrast, the priory appears to have had no interest in holding a fair at its market site. The Sandling fair is not mentioned in documentation after 1253 and is not valued separately in Gregory de Rokesle's Inquisition *post mortem*, but the term *forum* used there may refer to the site of both the market and fair.

To sum up: it appears that a market, closely associated with St Mary Cray village and a factor in its continuing expansion, was held on Sandling manor land following the grants of 1253 and 1281; a fair was also granted in 1253 and may have continued to function alongside the market. The de Mares family and then Gregory de Rokesle were in a position to obtain these grants from successive kings; the grants must have been deliberately sought for Sandling, as grants were not given for their other manors. The Sandling market appears to have replaced or absorbed the priory's market at *Crey/Orpington*, despite the tenancy of the manor by Mgr Hugh de Mortimer. Possibly it spread over more than one site (for example, stock could have been penned away from foodstuffs), though there was evidently a marketplace (*forum*) on the manor by 1291. The formal market may have replaced a traditional, informal trading arrangement in St Mary Cray village which had attracted the attention of the priory before 1206, and the monks' market may have developed sufficiently to attract the interest of Gregory de Rokesle by 1281. Gregory de Rokesle himself is unlikely to have had much time to devote to Sandling and there is no indication that he ever lived there, so a tenant or steward may have been closely involved in the market's management, but he may have wanted to see it as a local outlet for London trading.

### ***Aperfield and Bertrey/Bertrede (Cudham vill)***

In 1253 charters for a market and fair to be held at Appeldorefeld were granted by King Henry III to Sir Henry de Appeldorefeld.<sup>100</sup> Appeldorefeld (also written as Apuldrefeld, Apulderfeld) is the later Aperfield, one of two knight's fees in Cudham; the other was Bertrey or Bertrede, possibly the area now called Berry's Green.<sup>101</sup> Aperfield was situated on the downland south of Orpington, near present-day Biggin Hill. By the thirteenth century

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<sup>100</sup> *Gazetteer*: Aperfield. McLain did not include Aperfield in his list of markets.

<sup>101</sup> Hasted says that Cudham had two knight's fees held of the barony of Maminot. The 1272 IPM of Sir William de Say, a descendant of Gilbert de Maminot, shows that the two fees were held at that time by Sir Nicholas de Pessun at Keston and Sir Henry de Apuldrefeld at Aperfield. Bertrede or Bertrey was held in demesne by de Say.

the de Say family, descended from Gilbert Maminot, held the barony and the fees were held by tenants.<sup>102</sup>

In 1252 Henry de Apuldfeld was given protection, along with knights including Sir Robert de Mares, for travel to Gascony.<sup>103</sup> He, or possibly his tenants at Aperfield (he had other estates in Kent), may have been keen to establish a market which could serve Aperfield manor and bring in revenue. Sir Henry's support of the king provided a route to securing a charter which also included a fair; he later received exemption from service on assizes and juries.<sup>104</sup> He did not receive a market grant for his other estates, or a grant of free warren at Aperfield, but he already had a park at his estate of Broxham in the Weald.<sup>105</sup>

The 1253 grant is the earliest indication of a market within Cudham vill. The 1253 charter specified that the fair at Aperfield would be held on the eve and morrow of 15 August, the feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the same date as the Sandling fair (see above) and the start of the harvest.<sup>106</sup> The new fair at Aperfield may have replaced that at Bertrey, which was nearby. The 1272 Inquisition *post mortem* for Sir William de Say contains no reference to a fair at Bertrey, which may show it was no longer operating then.<sup>107</sup>

Aperfield appears today to be a remote location for a market, but it was well-placed for people living locally in Cudham vill or in nearby Downe and Knockholt. It was also accessible from the Surrey/Kent borders around Oxted and Limpsfield, which could have included traders in ceramics from the Surrey kilns. In 1301, the lay subsidy return for Cudham vill includes two adjacent individuals with unspecified merchandise: John Moris, with merchandise worth 2 s 6 d and a pig and piglet, and Simon [name illegible], also with a pig and piglet, merchandise worth 5 s, and a 'lead' with tripod valued at 5 s, suggesting he brewed and sold ale.<sup>108</sup> The merchandise and ale may have been sold in the market. As

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<sup>102</sup> Hasted II, p. 69.

<sup>103</sup> See Tables 16, 17.

<sup>104</sup> '1253, membranes 20, 19, 18, 17, 16, 15, 14, 13, 12', in *Calendar of Patent Rolls, Henry III: Volume 4, 1247-1258*, ed. H C Maxwell Lyte (London, 1908), pp. 241-260. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-pat-rolls/hen3/vol4/pp241-260> [accessed 23 March 2023].

<sup>105</sup> G. S. Steinman, *Some account of the manor of Apuldfeld*, p. 7.

<sup>106</sup> The *Gazetteer* gives the date as the Feast of St Hypolitus, as for the Sandling fair, but the Patent Rolls entry gives the date as the Feast of the Assumption and this ties in with the church dedication.

<sup>107</sup> See Chapter 2, Table 2.

<sup>108</sup> TNA E 179/123/5: Cudham.

shown in Chapter 3 the return also shows that three individuals in Cudham vill were assessed with carts and/or cart-horses, suggesting an interest in buying and selling surplus produce. They were Sir William Hamelton, 'on his manor', holder of a knight's fee in Cudham from the de Says, and Sir Henry de Apeldrefeld himself, consecutive entries at the opening of the return; and Simon de la Hole, of whom nothing else is known. All three had considerable stocks of grain and Hamelton and de Apeldrefeld had sizeable flocks of sheep. The Prior of Merton also had had stores of grain and a flock of sheep on his Cudham manor of Luxted.

It is likely that the grant for this market and fair was deliberately sought and that both were founded to provide outlets for local produce. The grant may have regularised an existing informal market. There is no documentation relating to the operation of either the market or fair, and they may not have survived beyond the early years of the fourteenth century.<sup>109</sup>

### ***Chelsfield and Farnborough***

In 1290, King Edward I awarded charters to Sir Otto de Grandison for markets and fairs to be held on his adjacent manors of Chelsfield and Farnborough. The traditional de Grandison seat in England was at Ottery St Mary in Devon and the family retained lands in France, but Otto de Grandison gained further extensive property holdings in England through his position as an advisor and friend of King Edward I. In Kent. These included the manors of Seal and Kemsing in Codsheath hundred in addition to the Ruxley hundred manors. A prescriptive market had operated at Kemsing from 1219 and in 1285 de Grandison received a grant for a market and fair at Seal; an earlier charter for a market and fair at Seal had been granted by King Henry III to his sister Eleanor as early as 1233, when she was countess of Pembroke.<sup>110</sup> Farnborough, Chelsfield, Kemsing and Seal, held of the honour of Newbury, passed to Eleanor after the death of her first husband and were included in her dower on her marriage to Simon de Montfort. The estates reverted to the crown following de Montfort's death at Evesham in 1265.

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<sup>109</sup> A market at Westerham had been granted in 1227: *Gazetteer*, Westerham.

<sup>110</sup> *Gazetteer*: Seal.



Sir Otto de Grandison senior was assessed for the 1301 lay subsidy at his manor at Chelsfield.<sup>111</sup> Chelsfield was well-placed for travel across Kent to the Channel coast and Farnborough was on a key route to the Sussex ports. It is possible that he stayed at the manors when travelling to continental Europe on diplomatic missions or on personal visits to the family lands in Savoy, though he is unlikely to have spent much time at either Chelsfield or Farnborough.

The grants for the markets and fairs were given to de Grandison at the same time as a grant of free warren on the manors of Chelsfield, Farnborough and Kemsing.<sup>112</sup> They could have been awarded as a form of patronage with no presumption as to their use (the Seal market charter was evidently a renewal). However, it is more likely that the grants for markets in Ruxley hundred were specifically sought following interest from local tenants or estate stewards; de Grandison was ideally placed to obtain a charter on their behalf. The adjacent entry to de Grandison's in the 1301 lay subsidy return for Chelsfield vill is for Reginald Herlison, whose assessment was the highest in the vill. Herlison lived at Caldecote (in the vicinity of what is now Cacket's Lane in Chelsfield); he was a member of a family actively engaged in the wool trade (discussed in Chapter 6). He or other family members may have been instrumental in obtaining a market grant for Chelsfield, possibly also for Farnborough.

The 1290 grant specified that Chelsfield's market was to be held weekly on a Monday, and a fair on the evening, feast and morrow of the feast of St James (25 July). In the 1301 lay subsidy return for Chelsfield vill, there is an assessment of unspecified merchandise of 3 s along with a 'lead' and other two other assessments include 'leads'/tripods.<sup>113</sup> These leads are likely to have been used to brew ale for sale to neighbours and market visitors. A further individual is assessed with merchandise worth 6 s 8 d. There are few clues from bynames to the presence of local craft-workers, though a John le Turner is listed. The 1334-35 lay subsidy return contains no obvious craft names.<sup>114</sup> Overall, however, the entries from the 1301 return suggest that the market (and presumably the fair) had been founded following

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<sup>111</sup> TNA E 179/123/5, Chelsfield. De Grandison's is the penultimate entry in the return, next to Reginald Herlison. Herlison is discussed further in Chapter 6.

<sup>112</sup> See Tables 16, 17.

<sup>113</sup> TNA E 179/123/5.

<sup>114</sup> Hanley & Chalklin, 'Kent Lay Subsidy', entries identified as from Chelsfield vill, p. 134.

the grant, perhaps at a site where local exchange already took place, and that both continued to operate successfully, most likely as an outlet for local produce. Whether they were still functioning in 1350 is unknown.

The 1290 grant to de Grandison also specified that a market could be held at Farnborough on a Tuesday, with a fair held on the vigil, feast-day and morrow of the feast of St Giles (1 September). The parish church was dedicated to St Giles the Abbot.<sup>115</sup> In 1344 King Edward III awarded a new grant for a market and fair at Farnborough to his son, Edmund, Duke of Lancaster, then the tenant-in-chief of both Chelsfield and Farnborough manors.<sup>116</sup> The length of the fair was extended to ten days (the eve and feast-day of St Giles plus eight days), making it by far the longest-lasting fair in the hundred; possibly by this time, other fairs at Aperfield or Chelsfield no longer functioned. An early September fair offered relaxation after the bulk of the harvest had been brought in along with opportunities to sell the grain, possibly also to sell stock and to buy stores before winter.

Farnborough developed as a settlement on a main route between London and the Sussex coast at Rye/Hastings, the forerunner of the turnpiked route that became the modern A 21 trunk road.<sup>117</sup> It was well-placed to attract and service visitors and traders travelling between London and the coast. The route south from Farnborough was steep and difficult, running via Rushmore Hill over the North Downs, down Star Hill and then on to Sevenoaks, Tonbridge and ultimately, towards Hastings, Winchelsea or Rye. North from Farnborough it ran north through Green Street Green before turning out of Ruxley hundred into Bromley, then on to Lewisham and Southwark.

In 1301, five assessments show residents with 'leads', some with relatively low assessments such as John Fleming, with two cows, two piglets, a lead/tripod worth 5 s and utensils worth 3 s, or John Lanerke, with a piglet, a quarter of wheat four bushels of barley, a lead worth 3 s and utensils worth 2 s.<sup>118</sup> Their ownership of leads and other utensils suggests they and possibly others were providing refreshment for visitors to the market or fair. The 1301

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<sup>115</sup> Hasted, II, p.52.

<sup>116</sup> *Gazetteer*, Farnborough (referencing Quo Warranto proceedings – see Table 17above).

<sup>117</sup> The present road has been re-routed to avoid the ascent over the Downs.

<sup>118</sup> TNA E 179/123/5: Farnborough.

return also includes Roger le Webbe (weaver) and Simon Faber (smith). In the lay subsidy return for 1334-35 the block of names that may relate to Farnborough includes two people named Webbe and two more named Faber and Couper (barrel-maker). These could be family names, but they suggest craft activity relevant to the market and fair. A Robert Marchaunt (merchant?) is also listed.<sup>119</sup> Travellers could be provided with accommodation for themselves and for their horses; they could purchase local produce (such as wool, grain or other foodstuffs) or bring in goods for sale, such as ceramic or cast metal vessels.

Farnborough may also have offered a fish-market. Traders from Rye known as ripiers transported fish by packhorse to London through Farnborough in the later fourteenth century, but whether fish were transported in this way before 1350 is uncertain.<sup>120</sup> Draper suggests that ripiers could have been operating by 1340, possibly earlier.<sup>121</sup> An overland trade from Sussex via Farnborough was certainly possible. The journey required changes of horses, which Farnborough was well-placed to facilitate. Fishermen were active along the Sussex coast at Rye and Winchelsea in the thirteenth century; fishermen from the Cinque ports, including Rye and Winchelsea, also operated in the North Sea in the autumn, selling their catch at the Yarmouth Herring Fair and at Scarborough.<sup>122</sup> By the middle of the thirteenth century Winchelsea was providing the royal household with plaice, whiting, sole, conger, dories, haddock and cod, as well as herring, though some species may have reached the household from Scarborough or Yarmouth rather than Sussex.<sup>123</sup> Draper noted the presence of Lambyns in Rye and as fishmongers in London from the thirteenth century (the name is unusual, suggesting a possibly family link). Lambyns were also present at Yarmouth.<sup>124</sup>

The household accounts of Hugh de Audley, Lord of Tonbridge, show that in April 1320 food for the lord and countess was purchased in Farnborough, including salt pork, salt beef, fresh

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<sup>119</sup> Hanley & Chalklin, 'Kent Lay Subsidy', p. 134.

<sup>120</sup> Ripiers from Rye were regulated by the city of London from 1381, so were already operating by then. It is possible that fish were being transported from Sussex to London much earlier, but this is not recorded.

<sup>121</sup> Draper, 'Timber and Iron', Sweetinburgh (2010), p. 61; G. M. Draper, *Rye, a History of a Sussex Cinque Port to 1660* (Stroud: Phillimore, 2009), p. 154, 243 fn. 3.

<sup>122</sup> A. J. F. Dulley, 'The Early History of the Rye Fishing Industry', in *Sussex Archaeological Collections* 107 (1969), pp. 36- 64 (refs., pp. 38-39, 43); Williams, *Medieval London*, p. 164.

<sup>123</sup> Dulley, 'Rye Fishing Industry', p. 38 f.

<sup>124</sup> Draper, *Rye*, p. 243; Williams, *Medieval London*, p. 164.

pork and mutton, and fish including herring, cod and mullet.<sup>125</sup> Pork, beef and mutton could be obtained from suppliers around Farnborough but the source of the fish is harder to establish. A wide range of sea-fish was eaten in aristocratic households before 1350, including fresh and dried cod, while preserved herring was often provided for customary workers at harvest-time.<sup>126</sup> In Ruxley hundred, the only reference to fish consumption is to herring purchased for the *customarii* undertaking ploughing services at Christ Church priory's demesne at Orpington, but the documentation gives no information about where they were purchased or caught.<sup>127</sup> Herring could be caught off the Sussex coast and sold fresh or preserved; other sea-fish were available in coastal waters there and also in the Thames estuary, but cod destined for London were usually caught in the North Sea or purchased dried as stockfish from Hanseatic merchants.<sup>128</sup>

Nightingale has suggested that Dartford and other Kent towns along the Thames estuary were providing fish and grain to London from the 1290s, noting the presence of debtors from Dartford, Greenwich, Woolwich and Plumstead.<sup>129</sup> A John Lambyn was active in Dartford by 1301 and Lambyns were still present there in the 1330s; if they had originated as fishmongers, they were likely to be using their vessels to export grain or wool.<sup>130</sup>

Farnborough's market and fair were accessible to people from a wide surrounding area. The village had the means to service an overland trade to London and also an inland trade in fish. It is feasible that by the later thirteenth century onwards, sea-fish from Greenwich or Dartford, even from London, in fresh and/or preserved form, were taken to Farnborough for

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<sup>125</sup> TNA E 101/372/4. I am grateful to Maureen McLeod for this reference.

<sup>126</sup> D. Serjeantson & C. M. Woolgar, 'Fish Consumption in Medieval England', in Woolgar et al., *Food in Medieval England*, pp. 102-130 (ref. p. 118 f.); C. Dyer, 'Changes in Diet in the Late Middle Ages: the Case of Harvest Workers', *AgHR* 36:1 (1988), pp 21-37 (ref., p. 25). Fish formed an important element of the harvest workers' allowance at Sedgeford, Norfolk, from 1256-1341.

<sup>127</sup> Examples from the Bedels' Rolls: CCA DCc-BR/Orpington-1\_r2, DCc-BR/Orpington-3\_v3, DCc-BR/Orpington-7\_r2 (when 200 were purchased for 16 *d.*).

<sup>128</sup> J. Galloway, 'Fishing in Medieval England', in M. Balard (ed.), *The Sea in History: the Medieval World* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press for Oceanides Association, 2017), pp. 629-42 (pp.638 ff); Barron, *London in the Later Middle Ages*, p. 87

<sup>129</sup> P. Nightingale, *Enterprise, Money and Credit in England before the Black Death* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), p. 116.

<sup>130</sup> John Lambyn, assessor for Dartford vill in 1301, TNA E 179/123/4; John Lambyn of Dartford, debtor to London citizens in 1332-35, TNA C 241/104/98, C 241/105/219, C 241/105/70, C 241/108/36. In 1334-35 Walter Lambyn is assessed in Dartford for the low sum of 8 *d.*, as is John le Fisschere; Handley & Chalklin, 'Kent lay subsidy', p. 143.

sale, or that fish from the Sussex coast were sold there on their way to London before the formalisation of ripier activity. Whether the fish purchased for Hugh de Audley, or the herring bought for the Orpington ploughmen, came from Sussex, or from London or Dartford, remains uncertain.

### ***Bexley***

The manorial survey undertaken for Archbishop Pecham in 1283-85 refers to the use of markets by the archbishop's demesne at Bexley: '[Each yoke] has to undertake 4 *averagia* [carrying services] to ... the nearest markets, as the work arises...; if seed is lacking at Bexley every man of the vill must go for it to ... the nearest markets...'<sup>131</sup> Moving goods to and from other manors held by the archbishop or 'the nearest markets' was vital for the demesne and a proportion of the costs of providing carts and labour to do this was passed on to tenants. The 1301 lay subsidy return for Bexley vill lists a Stephen Carectar' (carter), suggesting some local expertise.<sup>132</sup>

At the time of the survey, Archbishop Pecham held no charter for a market at Bexley so it is not clear which markets the demesne would have regarded as the 'nearest'.<sup>133</sup> It is possible there was already an informal market in what became Bexley village. Markets outside the hundred, at Plumstead, Erith and Darenth, and any trading at the hythes of Dartford, were accessible from Bexley and it was possible to reach Lewisham/Greenwich, Southwark and London along the former Watling Street route. By 1315, there were markets available within Ruxley hundred itself.

A formal market and fair at Bexley were not granted until 1315, when King Edward II awarded a charter to Archbishop Reynolds.<sup>134</sup> The market was to be held on a Tuesday, the fair on the vigil and feast day of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross (14 September) plus a

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<sup>131</sup> Witney (ed.), *Survey*, p. 330 f. & p. 340.

<sup>132</sup> TNA E 179/123/5, Bexley.

<sup>133</sup> The archbishop had seventeen manors in Kent in 1283-85. The Survey refers to carrying goods (seed, drink or unspecified items) to or from markets at only six of these: Aldington (pp. 223-4), Bexley (pp. 330 f & 340), Charing (p. 257), Lyminge (p. 327), Northfleet (p. 244), Saltwood (p. 133) and Teynham (p. 201-4). Market stalls and rentals are referred to only at Charing. K. P. Witney (ed.), *Survey of Archbishop Pecham's Kentish Manors, 1283-85* (Maidstone: KAS, 2000).

<sup>134</sup> *Gazetteer*, Bexley.

further three days. The date makes this a late fair, after the harvest had been gathered in and possibly when the sale of stock was being planned before the winter.

Bexley was a large vill; the charter may have confirmed an existing informal arrangement which served the north of the hundred. There is no information about its location or whether any infrastructure, such as stalls, was provided. Du Boulay, suggested the income from rents and tolls was minor, so it may have continued informally.<sup>135</sup>

The 1301 lay subsidy return for Bexley vill lists four individuals with unspecified 'merchandise'; two of these have the byname *Webbe* (weaver), one the byname Cornmonger, another, *Pistor* (baker). Others are assessed with utensils, leads or leads and tripods; some of these may have been used for neighbourhood brewing, but others may simply reflect the prosperity of the person assessed. There is no obvious grouping of these names in a single location.<sup>136</sup> The portion of the 1334-35 return relating to Bexley vill includes two people with the byname Cornmonger and one named Carter, confirming the earlier evidence for a wider trading interest.<sup>137</sup>

If these bynames relate to current or recent family occupations they would tie in well with the sale of produce from the archbishop's demesne; du Boulay suggests that between 1270 and 1350, the demesne's main source of income was corn sales (he does not distinguish between different grains), totalling an average of £21 3 s ½ d a year. Livestock, wool, hides and skins produced a total average income of £3 17 s 1 d, while dairy produce provided an average of £2 19 s 4 ½ d. These are all items which could have been sold at a local market or fair in the vill, but grain may have been taken for sale to a larger market elsewhere or sold locally to a cornmonger buying for resale in London. Produce could be taken to Dartford and shipped along the Thames to London or on to a port for sale in continental Europe.

### **(West) Wickham**

In 1318 King Edward II awarded a charter to Sir Walter de Huntynfeld for a market and fair at the manor of West Wickham, along with a grant of free warren on his lands at Wickham,

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<sup>135</sup> Du Boulay, *Medieval Bexley*, p. 15.

<sup>136</sup> TNA E 179/123/5, Bexley.

<sup>137</sup> Hanley & Chalklin, 'Kent Lay Subsidy', p. 133.

Padlesworth (in Kent) and Little Linton (in Cambridgeshire).<sup>138</sup> It is notable that no grant for a market or fair was made for the other two manors. The market was to be held on a Monday (the same day as the Chelsfield market, and from 1344, also the day of the Farnborough market). The fair was to be held over the feast of St Mary Magdalen (22 July), the dedicatee of the parish church.

Sir Walter was descended from the aristocratic Huntyngfeld family of East Anglia. His father, Sir Peter de Huntyngfeld, was sheriff for Kent for 1282-84 but did not base his shrievalty at Wickham and seems not to have resided there. Walter inherited Wickham in 1308; the grants for a market and for free warren suggest it became his main residence. The 1301 lay subsidy return for Wickham vill in 1301 contains only two individuals with occupational bynames, *faber* (smith) and Tanner; there are no additional occupational names in the 1334-35 return.<sup>139</sup> It is possible the sale of stock was a focus; the vill had a high number of cattle (see Chapter 3).

In 1344 Walter and Hugh de Huntyngfeld (Walter senior had died by then), along with other men of West Wickham, assaulted bailiffs who had been appointed by Archbishop Stratford to collect toll and other profits from a fair at his manor of Croydon in Surrey. Croydon was not far from Wickham; the assault suggests that the Croydon fair was seen as a threat to the fair at Wickham.<sup>140</sup> However, a fair at Wickham was still operating in 1580.<sup>141</sup>

### 5. 3 THE PRACTICAL OPERATION OF MARKETS AND FAIRS IN RUXLEY HUNDRED

There is no contemporary information about infrastructure or regulation in relation to markets and fairs within Ruxley hundred.<sup>142</sup> Some comparative detail about rents and premises survives from 1285 for a prescriptive market at Charing, one of the archbishop's

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<sup>138</sup> *Gazetteer*: Wickham.

<sup>139</sup> TNA E179/123/5, Wickham.

<sup>140</sup> Knowlden & Walker, *West Wickham, Past into Present*, p. 18 f.

<sup>141</sup> Knowlden & Walker, *West Wickham*, p.19.

<sup>142</sup> Regulation of the market at Balsham in Cambridgeshire is discussed in C. Briggs, 'Peasants, Lords and Commerce: Market Regulation at Balsham, Cambridgeshire, in the Early Fourteenth Century', in Kowaleski, Langdon & Schofield, *Peasants and Lords*, (2015), pp. 247-272. He suggests that the local population may have wished to secure a market grant to ensure regulation was in place which would protect their interests. There is no documentation which can throw light on whether or how any of the 'charter markets' in Ruxley hundred were regulated, or on local views about such control (or the lack of it). Possibly the apparent struggle for control of the market at St Mary Cray reflected differing views on regulation.

rural manors in east Kent.<sup>143</sup> This shows rents for stalls in two locations, and rents for permanent premises around the marketplace.<sup>144</sup> These included sites rented by a laundress and an ale-wife, a wine store, an inn, a garden, an enclosed garden, a site next to the entry and a site next to the market gate.<sup>145</sup> Henry Carbonel (a charcoal-maker; the survey shows he owned local woodland where charcoal could be made) rented a stall at Ray; he also paid 6 *d* for the wine store and half the 12 *d* rent for the inn in the market place, where his charcoal could have been used for heating and cooking.<sup>146</sup>

The Charing evidence shows how the presence of a market and fair could influence settlement and activity within a village. The combination of temporary and permanent premises allowed flexibility with year-round services such as inns, or permanent workshops for certain crafts, while smallholders could rent a stall for seasonal produce. Both regular and occasional trade could be accommodated. Different areas might also be designated for different functions – one might be a stock market with animal pens, another might have stalls selling foodstuffs depending on availability. It is possible to envisage similar arrangements in at least some sites within Ruxley hundred, most likely from an early date at St Mary Cray/Sandling, perhaps later at Farnborough and Bexley.

The presence of visitors encouraged a demand for local services. Inns and alehouses provided refreshment and accommodation for travellers and fodder for their horses. The additional work for cooks, bakers, brewers, ostlers and general servants and meant that those without land of their own could gain an income. Women, including those who were unmarried or widowed, could sell ale on market-day in addition to any regular brewing undertaken for neighbours. They could also sell surplus in-season produce from a small-holding. Overall, the presence of a market meant that cash became more widely available, benefiting tenants who paid rent in cash rather than through service.<sup>147</sup>

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<sup>143</sup> Witney, *Pecham Survey*, p. 202.

<sup>144</sup> Witney, *Pecham Survey*, p. 201, text and fn. 1.

<sup>145</sup> Witney, *Pecham Survey*, p. 202-204.

<sup>146</sup> Witney, *Pecham Survey*, p. 204. Witney suggests the byname means 'charcoal-maker'.

<sup>147</sup> C. Dyer, *Making a Living in the Middle Ages: the People of Britain 850-1520* (London: Yale University Press, pb, 2009), p. 176.



## 5.4 CONCLUSIONS

Overall, it is reasonable to assume that the Ruxley hundred charters were all put into effect; most markets continued to operate well into the fourteenth century. The fairs may also have done so, though there is less evidence for this. Several markets were particularly successful, notably at St Mary Cray, Farnborough and Bexley, but even those at Aperfield, Chelsfield and Wickham operated for a reasonable period; they provided a local service the hundred needed. The charters demonstrated patronage on the part of the king extended to those he regarded as his supporters, but they were neither general in their application nor random in the sites named. They focused on specific places where markets were wanted, and perhaps already operated; in contrast to grants of free warren, grants were not necessarily awarded in respect of other demesnes held by the lord. This suggests that they were made in response to a specific request from the lord, whether this reflected his own interests or the interests of a key tenant or steward, who could see the commercial potential of a site and sought the lord's support. It is likely that many charters regularised and reinforced existing trading arrangements.

Ruxley hundred's markets and fairs were spaced across the hundred, linked to local access. Given the geography of the main routeways, they were not necessarily in competition, even if located closer to one another than the customary six miles. There may have been specialist functions in some locations, as a stock- or fish-market, while other centres provided a local point of exchange.

In contrast to Ruxley hundred, Somerden's population was less well-served by formal markets. A prescriptive market was recorded at Tonbridge in 1296 and may well have functioned earlier, and a market had been granted for Edenbridge (nearby, but in Westerham hundred) in 1227, but anything closer to hand must have been informal.<sup>148</sup> There is nothing in the 1301 lay subsidy return for Somerden to provide clues to the presence of local trading.<sup>149</sup> This may also reflect a real difference in the nature of local

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<sup>148</sup> *Gazetteer*, Tonbridge, Edenbridge.

<sup>149</sup> TNA E 179/123/6.

trading activity. Dartford residents, in contrast, were significantly influenced by the opportunities for local manufacturing and trading, as shown by the high number of bynames connected with the manufacture and sale of produce of many kinds. Traders' ability to buy and sell these items in Dartford itself, in neighbouring markets and in London was evidently a major factor in the vill's development.

The market in St Mary Cray went on to become a major centre of trade in north-west Kent in later centuries. The apparent tension between Canterbury Cathedral priory and lay lords during the thirteenth century suggests this was always a focus of trading. It is likely to have attracted the attention of Gregory de Rokesle for this reason. The next chapter explores the interests and networks of a number of individuals in Ruxley hundred who were involved in trading, including de Rokesle.

## CHAPTER 6: NETWORKS

### 6. 1 INTRODUCTION

Earlier chapters explored possible trading interactions with London, the produce that might have been available and the routes by which goods might have been exported to and from Ruxley hundred. This chapter explores who might have been involved in trading activity within the hundred and whether there were connections with London.

#### 6. 1. 1. Identifying debtors and creditors in the hundred

Nightingale has outlined the relative significance of cash and credit in the economy of the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. By the opening of the fourteenth century, credit was financing around half of the country's goods and services, provided largely by overseas merchants, as English investors, with less access to coin or to supporting financial institutions, were more cautious as lenders.<sup>1</sup>

Evidence for credit transactions is limited. Small loans might be informal and leave no trace; transactions could be registered in manorial courts, but little manorial documentation survives for Ruxley hundred. Larger transactions might be registered through Chancery Close Rolls and examples from Ruxley hundred can be identified (see for example the discussion of the Herlison family, p.226 below). More information is available from an improved enforcement process introduced by the Statute of Acton Burnell of 1283 and its subsequent revision, the Statute of Merchants of 1285. The new process meant that creditors were increasingly prepared to make capital loans or to offer advances to purchase wool for export. Nightingale has analysed recognisances made under the Statute Merchant provisions, concluding that, although available to anyone, the new process was used mainly for larger debts, particularly those relating to the wool trade, and that merchants using the London registry (which also served surrounding counties, including Kent) preferred to use this system rather than to register debts through the Close Rolls.<sup>2</sup> The associated documentation,

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<sup>1</sup> P. Nightingale, *Enterprise, Money and Credit in England Before the Black Death, 1285-1349* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), p. 3 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Nightingale, *Enterprise*, p. 28.

held at The National Archives, should therefore provide a starting point for identifying debtors and creditors in Ruxley hundred.

### ***Information from Certificates of Merchant Staple***

Although a significant number of registration certificates survive, limitations in the information they provide makes it difficult to relate them to a specific location. The National Archives Discovery database of certificates for the period 1285-1350 shows that while personal names and county names are usually given, along with the amount of the debt, the date when repayment is due and the date when missed repayment is registered, more detailed locational information is rarely available for rural debtors or creditors. The documentation also records that the case has been sent to the relevant local sheriff to pursue repayment. It is not possible to estimate how many transactions took place where repayment was made on time and no enforcement was needed.

A database search using the term 'Ruxley hundred' brings up only nine records. The hundred name has been added by the cataloguer, presumably from other sources (though none is given). 'Ruxley' appears only once as a location in the original documentation, where it refers to Ruxley vill.<sup>3</sup> For comparison, a search for 'Dartford' in the Discovery database for the same period yields forty entries of debtors and creditors. Dartford's status as an emerging town means that the identification is often made in the original documentation rather than as an addition by the cataloguer.

A search using "of Kent" brings up 962 records, though the county name is sometimes added by the cataloguer. Scrutiny of these shows that over seventy entries contain personal names which could relate to Ruxley hundred based on other documentation. Familiarity with local sources such as the lay subsidy returns helps with identification, as it means more names can be recognised, but recognition does not guarantee a link. Some names are known to be held by more than one individual, while some individuals are known to hold other property in Kent (or outside) and it is not possible to be certain where the transaction took place. Nonetheless, of the seventy-two, perhaps twenty-one debtors can be identified as having a

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<sup>3</sup> TNA C 241/126/167 'William Vyman of Ruxley (Rokesle) of Kent'. Vyman must be a transcription error for Vivian.

strong connection with the hundred, some with multiple certificates. Some six creditors can be identified, some appearing only once, others multiple times, particularly in relation to loans in Essex. Debtors sometimes borrow from a creditor from the hundred but more often from London merchants, clerks or Italian merchants. A few names appear as both debtors and creditors.

Names which appear more than once as debtors include Sir Simon de Cray and his son Simon in 1288 and 1291, described as 'of Essex' ('of Kent' is added by the cataloguer).<sup>4</sup> The debts may relate to wool from their manor of Ramsden Crays in Essex rather than to the de Cray lands in St Paul's Cray so it is possible they should not be counted. Elisabeth de Say (widow of William de Say) is a debtor in 1295, 1301 and 1308.<sup>5</sup> The de Say family held fees in Cudham and Keston in Ruxley hundred and extensive property elsewhere. Roger de Bexley, assessed in the 1334-35 lay subsidy for Ruxley hundred, is a debtor in 1336 and 1337.<sup>6</sup> Reginald Walkelyn 'of St Paul's Cray' appears twice in 1348; the Walklins were assessed there in 1334-35.<sup>7</sup>

Single entries include Geoffrey son of Geoffrey de la Hewete of Kent (Hewitts was a sub-manor of Chelsfield) in 1308; John de Mears of Mears Ashby in Northants in 1309 (formerly of Sandling, now holding manors elsewhere in Kent); Bartholomew atte Sole and Geoffrey Waldyn of Kent (Waldens was a name closely associated with St Mary Cray) in 1309; Nicholas de Pirie of Kent (from Perry Street in Chislehurst?), in 1310; Isabel widow of Richard Kebbel of Wickham of Kent (Richard Kebbel was assessed for the 1301 lay subsidy in West Wickham).<sup>8</sup>

Otto de Grandison, holder of Chelsfield and Farnborough manors in Ruxley hundred and of other Kent manors, is listed as a creditor. His nephew Otto, who inherited the Ruxley hundred manors, is listed in 1346, lending to 'John de Beauchamp called clerk of Hayes next to Bromley in Kent' (Hayes vill lay in Ruxley hundred).<sup>9</sup> The parson of Chelsfield church,

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<sup>4</sup> TNA C 241/2/75, 241/2/94, 241/2/115.

<sup>5</sup> TNA C 241/49/269, 241/36/211, 241/70/84.

<sup>6</sup> TNA C 241/109/297, 241/109/62; Hanley & Chalklin, 'Kent Lay Subsidy', p. 133.

<sup>7</sup> TNA C 241/126/322, 241/126/312; Hanley & Chalklin, p. 133.

<sup>8</sup> TNA C 241/72/41; E 179/123/5, Wickham.

<sup>9</sup> TNA C 241/63/157; C 241/121/30.

Master Bartholomew Florentyn, appears once as a creditor, although the form of the place-name is not recognised as Chelsfield in the catalogue.<sup>10</sup> Sir Walter de Huntyngfield, holder of the manor of West Wickham, appears as a creditor but is attributed in the catalogue to Beeston in Bedfordshire.<sup>11</sup> Gilbert de Maleville (assessed in the 1334-35 lay subsidy in Orpington) is listed as a debtor with John de Horton (holder of Crofton manor in Orpington) in 1340 and alone in 1345.<sup>12</sup> Reginald and son William de Rokesle of Sandling, Richard de Esthalle, Simon de Malmesbury of Chelsfield and William Vivian of Ruxley all appear more than once, some several times, some as both debtors and creditors, and are discussed in more detail in section 6.2 below.

Appearing more than once as both debtors and creditors are Reginald Herlisoun (as a creditor, with a significant number of debtors in Essex and a much smaller number in Ruxley hundred), William Herlisoun and John de Esthalle the Elder. They are also discussed below.

There must be uncertainty about some of the links suggested with Ruxley hundred but overall, the certificates indicate that a number of residents from the hundred were active in trading relationships, mainly as borrowers but also as creditors, from the later thirteenth century onwards. There is no information in the certificates about the purpose of the loans or why they was not repaid. Nightingale suggests that many transactions recorded on the certificates relate to forward payments for wool, particularly the larger sums. If a debtor could not meet their contractual commitment because the wool was not available, it was unlikely they would have the resources to repay the advance. It is likely, given the surpluses available in the hundred, that many of the Ruxley hundred certificates relate to forward payments for wool or possibly for grain.

### ***Information from the Court of Common Pleas***

Information about non-repayment of debts is found in the rolls relating to the Court of Common Pleas. An index of cases by location has been printed for 1327-28 which provides a snapshot for Kent.<sup>13</sup> Over 500 cases are listed for Kent, including eleven where a name can

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<sup>10</sup> TNA C 241/63/184.

<sup>11</sup> TNA C 241/72/31.

<sup>12</sup> TNA C 241/112/171, 241/128/205; Hanley & Chalklin, 'Kent Lay Subsidy', p. 133.

<sup>13</sup> H. Maxwell Lyte (ed.), *Index of Placita de Banco Preserved in the Public Record Office AD 1327-28*, Part 1, Bedford to Norfolk, (London: Public Record Office 1909, Kraus Reprint Corporation, 1963), pp. 229-253.

be linked to Ruxley hundred. Three of these relate to debt and have as plaintiffs, the executors of the will of John Aleyn of Dartford, defendant Reynold de Rokesle; the prior of Christ Church Canterbury, defendant, Sir Walter de Huntyngfeld (holder of West Wickham manor); and Paul, parson of Rokesle, defendant, John Clerk of Dartford. The cases suggest a small pool of Ruxley hundred people making appearances in the courts, some already known from certificates in the C 241 series, but they throw little light on wider trading activity.<sup>14</sup>

## **6.2 PEOPLE**

This section looks in detail at some of the individuals named in the certificates of Statute Merchant and in other documentation who participated in trading activities and had close connections with Ruxley hundred. It explores links with London and possible networks.

### **6.2.1 Gregory de Rokesle of London, Reginald de Rokesle of Sandling and Footscray**

A key byname when considering links between London and Ruxley hundred is that of de Rokesle, 'of Ruxley'. In Ruxley hundred the name is linked from an early date with the manor of Ruxley. By the thirteenth century numerous individuals with the name appear in London documentation. Williams comments: 'The Rokesles were a Kentish family...For two generations the city records are full of Rokesles...It is almost literally impossible to turn a page of the civic records... without coming across some member of the family'.<sup>15</sup> The family were clearly successful in the city; did their success build on links with their home hundred, and did it bring any benefit to the hundred?

Sir Gregory de Rokesle became one of the city's wealthiest merchants in the thirteenth century. He held senior positions in the city's government, serving as alderman for Dowgate ward, sheriff and then as mayor on eight occasions, before resigning in 1286.<sup>16</sup> Alongside his position in the city, de Rokesle became closely identified with the royal household and increasingly with the policies of king Edward I, serving in government posts and making loans to the king.<sup>17</sup> His career is significant for any study of the city and the crown in the

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<sup>14</sup> *Index de Placita de Banco*, Vol. 1, pp. 229, 232, 248.

<sup>15</sup> Williams, *Medieval London*, p. 331 (text and fn.6).

<sup>16</sup> His office-holding is recorded in Barron, *London in the Later Middle Ages*, pp. 318 ff.

<sup>17</sup> F. Lachaud, 'de Ruxley, Gregory (d. 1291)', *ODNB* (2004).

later thirteenth century, but he is also an important figure in the development of Ruxley hundred; when he died in 1291, an Inquisition *post mortem* of his extensive property holdings in three counties outside London (Kent, Surrey and Sussex) showed he held two manors in Ruxley hundred as tenant-in-chief.<sup>18</sup> It is therefore worth considering how he used these manors and whether he retained any connection with the hundred in his mercantile activities.

Williams assumed that de Rokesle already held the demesnes of Ruxley (in Ruxley hundred) and Lullingstone (in Axtane hundred) when he arrived in London, and stated he had 'leased Ruxley to a dependent by 1264'.<sup>19</sup> This is a possibility; the sequence of holders of Ruxley manor in the mid-thirteenth century is difficult to establish. De Rokesle had an interest of some kind in Lullingstone in 1279, when he apparently received a grant of free warren for his demesne there (Chapter 2). However, neither of these manors is listed in his 1291 IPM, which instead ascribes to him the Ruxley hundred manors of Sandling and Footscray along with other land in the hundred, mainly in Goddington and Chelsfield. The traditional manors of the de Rokesle family would have come to Gregory only as an eldest or only heir, unless they were gavelkind land.

The de Rokesle family had held Ruxley manor since the Norman Conquest; their ancestor Mauger was a tenant of Bishop Odo of Bayeux in 1086 and after Odo's demise, of the de Crevequer barony.<sup>20</sup> In 1086 Mauger also held a third of a knight's fee at Orpington as a knight of the archbishop (the manor of Little Orpington), along with further land of Odo in Axtane hundred at Lullingstone, Farningham and Petham. Little Orpington was subsequently let to a tenant (the de Maleville family, who also held nearby Halstead from the archbishop).<sup>21</sup> During the First Barons' War, the de Rokesles' opposition to the king lost them their lands and Robert de Rokesle was imprisoned. He subsequently recovered the estates

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<sup>18</sup> de Rokesle's IPM relating to land outside London: TNA C 133/60/9; 'Inquisitions Post Mortem, Edward I, File 60', in *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem: Volume 2, Edward I*, ed. J E S Sharp (London, 1906), pp. 498-507. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/inquis-post-mortem/vol2/pp498-507> [accessed 14 January 2020].

<sup>19</sup> Williams, *Medieval London*, p. 331. Williams deduces this from an injunction in the Close Rolls preventing supplies from Ruxley manor reaching him following the Second Barons' War, but the background to the injunction is unclear.

<sup>20</sup> Morgan, *DB Kent*, Ruxley, 5,22; Orpington, 3,22 (attributed to Axtane hundred).

<sup>21</sup> Du Boulay, *Lordship of Canterbury*, p. 347.



and served Archbishop Winchelsey as his Steward of the Lands for around ten years.<sup>22</sup> Links with Canterbury and with the de Crevequers in East Kent remained significant. The family used them to increase their holdings in mid- and east Kent during the thirteenth century. By 1321, Richard de Rokesle held four manors (including Ruxley manor) along with property in Canterbury and elsewhere, and like his ancestor had also served as the archbishop's steward.<sup>23</sup>

How Gregory de Rokesle fitted into the family is uncertain. He may have been a younger grandson of Robert de Rokesle and therefore unlikely to inherit the manors which were held in fee. He was active as a merchant by the late 1250s; in 1258 he was selling wax purchased at St Botolph's Fair at Boston to the royal household and he went on to trade successfully in wool and wine, serving as royal butler from 1275 to 1278.<sup>24</sup> Williams observes that he was 'considered by the men of the Cinque Ports to be the leading wine merchant in England'.<sup>25</sup> It is possible that other de Rokesle family members had already moved into the city and that Gregory was born in London, but it is more probable that he moved there from Ruxley during the mid-thirteenth century. It is unlikely that he inherited Ruxley manor, as Williams thought, though he seems later to have had access to family land at Lullingstone, which he used for recreation.<sup>26</sup>

Trade in wax suggests a connection with Hanseatic merchants who brought commodities from Germany and the Baltic regions into London, including timber, furs and wax.<sup>27</sup> The Hanse guildhall was situated in Dowgate, a ward with Thames river-frontage and a dock; their ships, like other ships which berthed along the Thames, would have been serviced by

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<sup>22</sup> K. Major, 'The "Familia" of Archbishop Stephen Langton', *The English Historical Review* Vol. 48, No. 192 (Oct. 1933), pp. 529-553 (p. 540 f., 545 f.), Du Boulay, *Lordship*, p. 393.

<sup>23</sup> J E S Sharp and A E Stamp, 'Inquisitions Post Mortem, Edward II, File 67', in *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem: Volume 6, Edward II* (London, 1910), pp. 157-171. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/inquis-post-mortem/vol6/pp157-171> [accessed 13 November 2021]; Steward of the Lands in 1313, du Boulay, *Lordship*, p. 394.

<sup>24</sup> P. Nightingale, *A Mercantile Community*: (1995), p 86. Nightingale suggested that Gregory de Rokesle was a corder, though in the later *Enterprise, Money and Credit* (p. 113) she follows Beaven's unsourced attribution of him as a goldsmith.

<sup>25</sup> Williams, *Medieval London*, p. 330.

<sup>26</sup> His pet deer is discussed in Chapter 2.

<sup>27</sup> A. Sapoznik, 'Bees in the medieval economy: Religious observance and the production, trade and consumption of wax in England, 1300-1555', *EHR* 72 (4), (2019), pp. 1152-1174. On the Hanseatic merchants in London after 1270, Nightingale, *Mercantile Community*, p. 87 ff.

the corders, rope-makers who provided rigging and other equipment to shipping coming into London. Many corders lived in Dowgate and an area there was known as *La Corderie* (The Ropery).<sup>28</sup> Over time, corders increasingly traded in the commodities brought in by the ships they serviced.<sup>29</sup>

It is likely Gregory de Rokesle began his career as a corder. He had acquired extensive property in Dowgate ward by the time of his death. Many other de Rokesles from Dowgate ward were identified in city documentation as corders. He served as city sheriff in 1263-64 and 1270-71; by 1273-74 he was representing Dowgate ward as an alderman, continuing in that role until 1291.<sup>30</sup> In the 1270s his brother Robert also served as an alderman, in Limehouse ward.<sup>31</sup> Gregory served as mayor eight times. He also became closely identified with the financial policies of king Edward I, holding a series of positions including Master of Exchange in 1278; he worked with the Riccardi and administered loans for the king.<sup>32</sup> His royal connections continued alongside his tenure as mayor. He resigned as mayor in 1286, apparently to enable him to oppose Edward's policies for the city, but he subsequently oversaw the sale of the houses of expelled Jews in 1290 and, as a leading merchant and financier, was personally able to lend money to the king, including a loan of £1000. De Rokesle moved to a substantial property in the commercial centre of Cornhill, though he kept his extensive property in Dowgate.

Gregory's will of 1291, which relates to his London property, shows that he had extended family in the city with whom he kept in close touch. This included two nephews, his sister's sons Roger and Walter, and their children and grandchildren.<sup>33</sup> Gregory and his wife Avice, who pre-deceased him, had no surviving children of their own. His nephew Walter inherited the mansion in Cornhill that formed the focus of his London trading while Roger inherited

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<sup>28</sup> Dowgate ward, the guildhall of the Hanse and the Ropery can be seen on the map *Medieval London: The City, Westminster and Southwark* (Town & City Historical Maps, The Historic Towns Trust, 2019).

<sup>29</sup> Nightingale, *Mercantile Community*, discusses Hansard activity in London and the implications for the corders and pepperers: p. 86 ff.

<sup>30</sup> J. McEwan, 'The Aldermen of London, c. 1200-80: Alfred Beaven Revisited', *TLAMAS* (2011), pp. 177-204, ref. p. 196, a later date than Beaven's 1265.

<sup>31</sup> McEwan, 'The Aldermen of London', p. 196 (Limehouse Ward, 1279-92, Sheriff, 1284-85).

<sup>32</sup> Lachaud, 'de Ruxley, Gregory'; Williams, p.330.

<sup>33</sup> CLRO Roll 20 (50), 'Wills: 19 Edward I (1290-1)', in *Calendar of Wills Proved and Enrolled in the Court of Husting, London: Part 1, 1258-1358*, ed. R R Sharpe (London, 1889), pp. 95-103. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/court-husting-wills/vol1/pp95-103> [accessed 28 June 2023].

property in Dowgate ward. His brother Robert de Rokesle is not mentioned in the will but William de Rokesle and his wife Sarah, likely Robert's children, received property in Rotherhithe. The Inquisition *post mortem* held in relation to Gregory's extensive property outside London, in Surrey, Sussex and Kent, names his nephew Roger (de Rislepe) as his heir; Roger seems then to have taken the de Rokesle name.<sup>34</sup>

His 1291 Inquisition *post mortem* shows that Gregory held two manors in Ruxley hundred in chief, Sandling and Footscray, along with further land in the hundred at Green Street Green and Chelsfield, but there is no reference to Ruxley manor or to Lullingstone in Axtane hundred.<sup>35</sup> The manorial extents show that both Kent manors had messuages; Sandling had a garden and dovecot, along with a market-place and watermills. Footscray manor had a dovecot and two watermills but no garden.<sup>36</sup> Both manors may have come to de Rokesle following the Second Barons' War. Footscray had earlier had a link with the de Crevequers, tenants-in-chief of the manor of Ruxley (the de Crevequers supported the baronial cause and lost their lands for a time) as it had been held by one of their tenants.

Gregory was in a position to receive favours from the king and he subsequently received a further market grant for Sandling manor.<sup>37</sup> Sandling must have suggested opportunities to him as a corder and merchant; he would have been aware of the monks' control of a market at Creye and may have seen the chance to challenge this. Sandling manor could have offered him (and his wider family in the city) an opportunity to develop links with Dartford and other wharves along the Thames which were transshipping goods to London, both to take grain, hides, wool and firewood out of the countryside to the city, and possibly to bring in imported goods for sale without going through the city's own customs arrangements. By establishing a market at Sandling, he provided a resource for fellow merchants. It is unlikely that he spent time in Sandling himself.

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<sup>34</sup> The *ODNB* entry and Williams (p. 330) identify Roger as his sister's son and heir. Brown and Nightingale follow Williams and assume he arrived in London already holding manors in Kent (Brown, 'Development of a Land Market', p. 148; P. Nightingale, *A Medieval Mercantile Community: The Grocers' Company & the Politics & Trade of London* (London: Yale University Press, 1995), p. 89.

<sup>35</sup> 'Inquisitions Post Mortem, Edward I, File 60', in *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem: Volume 2, Edward I*, ed. J E S Sharp (London, 1906), pp. 498-507. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/inquis-post-mortem/vol2/pp498-507> [accessed 14 January 2020].

<sup>36</sup> TNA C 133/60/9 includes the extent.

<sup>37</sup> See Chapter 5 for a discussion of Sandling (p. 185 ff.).

Gregory de Rokesle's career, as a merchant and financier, in the government of London and in his service to the crown, was exceptional. He cannot be taken as representative of the transition from countryside to city, nor of a city trader who subsequently acquired land in the country. However his mercantile experience was to prove significant in terms of commercial activity within Ruxley hundred and for the future of St Mary Cray village.

Roger de Rokesle, Gregory's heir in Ruxley hundred, was also a London citizen and corder. In the 1301 lay subsidy return he paid the fifteenth at his manor of Footscray.<sup>38</sup> His son Reginald de Rokesle is shown as a debtor on six occasions from 1308 to 1311; his creditors were London merchants.<sup>39</sup> Reginald still held a market in Sandling in 1332-33. He appears as a plaintiff in the Court of Common Pleas in 1327-28, in relation to land in Chislehurst and St Paul's Cray, where the defendant is Margery widow of William de Cray, and to the manor of Footscray, where the defendant is Sir William Vaghan.<sup>40</sup> William, described as 'son of Reginald de Rokesle of Kent, merchant' is a debtor in 1329 and also appears as a defendant in the Court of Common Pleas in relation to land elsewhere in Kent in 1327-28.<sup>41</sup> Sandling manor remained with the family.<sup>42</sup>

### 6.2.2 The Fivian/Vivian family of London and Ruxley

The Fivian or Vivian family have already been identified as potentially instrumental in the trade of firewood (and possibly timber more generally) from Ruxley hundred into London (Chapter 2). Like the de Rokesles, the Vivians were London corders; John Vivian is named as a citizen and corder in city documentation and is listed in the London subsidy returns for Dowgate ward for 1292 and 1319.<sup>43</sup> Ekwall noted the close connection between the Vivians

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<sup>38</sup> TNA E 179/123/5, Footscray.

<sup>39</sup> TNA C 241/59/5, 241/59/24, 241/59/34, 241/63/156, 241/63/32, 241/174/170.

<sup>40</sup> *Index of Placita de Banco, Part I*, pp. 244, 248.

<sup>41</sup> TNA C 241/100/1; *Index of Placito de Banco*, p. 244.

<sup>42</sup> The 1346 Inquisition *post mortem* of Emery de Rokesle, Roger's descendant, shows that Sandling was then held in chief by John de Pulteney, another successful London merchant: 'Seintlyng in the town of Seintemaricreye: The manor ... including a market every Wednesday in the above town, held of John de Pulteneye, knight ...', J. E. S. Sharp, E. G. Atkinson and J. J. O'Reilly, 'Inquisitions Post Mortem, Edward III, File 80', in *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem: Volume 8, Edward III* (London, 1913), pp. 459-469. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/inquis-post-mortem/vol8/pp459-469> [accessed 29 May 2020].

<sup>43</sup> 1311, J. Vyvyan, corder, Letter-Book D, p. 147; 'Subsidy Roll 1319: Dowgate ward', in *Two Early London Subsidy Rolls*, ([s.l.], 1951) pp. 217-222. *British History Online* <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/no-series/early-london-subsidy-rolls/pp217-222>, refs, FN 8.

and the de Rokesle family, indicated by a bequest in John Vivian's 1320 will to 'William, son of Vivian de Rokesle'.<sup>44</sup> He suggested that the family name might have been taken from Vivian de Rokesle; possibly John Vivian had served as Vivian de Rokesle's apprentice or assistant. The will does not name William's father (it leaves money for a priest to celebrate a mass for William and for his wife Sarah), but William and John, described as sons of Vivian de Rokesle, were bequeathed property in Dowgate ward in 1270-71 by Richard de Rokesle, perhaps an uncle and brother of Vivian de Rokesle.<sup>45</sup> John Vivian may have been the brothers' contemporary and worked with them.

John Vivian held land in Ruxley vill by 1301 – a John Fivian is listed in the lay subsidy return for the vill – and it is likely that his holding originated as a de Rokesle tenancy.<sup>46</sup> John Vivian's interests in Ruxley woodland are discussed in Chapter 2.<sup>47</sup> Vivian became wealthy from his activities as a corder and merchant; Williams observes that he 'bought the town of Dartford' with his profits.<sup>48</sup> The scale of his wealth suggests he was trading primarily in wool. In 1318, Sir William de Grandison and his son Sir Peter de Grandison, acknowledged that they owed Vivian £1000. The debt was accepted as paid when William and Peter agreed to hand over 'for two years the rent of 46*l.* 6*s.* 3¼*d.*, with suit of court and all other appurtenances, that they have in Derteford, and if they pay to him at the end of that term at his house in London £200.'<sup>49</sup> William de Grandison's Inquisition *post mortem* of 1335 shows that the rents had been returned by then (Vivian had died in 1320) and were from 'divers tenants' in Dartford and Cransted (a vill in Somerden hundred), held by William and Sybil his wife of the king in chief in gavelkind.<sup>50</sup> There is no information about the purpose of the

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<sup>44</sup> 'Wills: 15 Edward II (1321-2)', in *Calendar of Wills Proved and Enrolled in the Court of Husting, London: Part 1, 1258-1358*, ed. R R Sharpe (London, 1889), pp. 289-295. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/court-husting-wills/vol1/pp289-295> [accessed 14 June 2023].

<sup>45</sup> 'Wills: 56 Henry III (1270-1)', in *Calendar of Wills Proved and nrolled in the Court of Husting, London: Part 1, 1258-1358*, ed. R R Sharpe (London, 1889), pp. 10-12. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/court-husting-wills/vol1/pp10-12> [accessed 28 June 2023].

<sup>46</sup> TNA E179/123/5, Ruxley.

<sup>47</sup> Chapter 3.

<sup>48</sup> Williams, *Medieval London*, p. 157.

<sup>49</sup> de Grandison's debt: 'Close Rolls, Edward II: May 1318', in *Calendar of Close Rolls, Edward II: Volume 2, 1313-1318*, ed. H C Maxwell Lyte (London, 1893), pp. 608-616. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-close-rolls/edw2/vol2/pp608-616> [accessed 18 February 2023].

<sup>50</sup> Dartford vill paid a total subsidy of £14 3 *s* 7 ½ *d* in 1334/5; Hanley & Chalklin, 'Kent Lay Subsidy', p. 143. William's IPM: J E S Sharp and A E Stamp, 'Inquisitions Post Mortem, Edward III, File 43', in *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem: Volume 7, Edward III* (London, 1909), pp. 458-469. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/inquis-post-mortem/vol7/pp458-469> [accessed 25 May 2023].

payment to de Grandison but its size suggests it represented advance payment for a consignment of wool.

John Vivian evidently had a considerable interest in Dartford to make the risk of this transaction worthwhile. The hythes there may have been a significant factor in his own trading success; the failure to repay the loan gave him the opportunity to gain control of them. Nightingale notes the increasing appearance of Dartford, along with other Kent towns, in certificates of professional merchants supplying London between 1311 and 1329. She noted that Kent merchants had long been able to supply grain and wool directly to continental Europe, giving them an alternative to the London market.<sup>51</sup> London corders also traded in dyestuffs such as woad, which are known to have been imported from Picardy (and also grown and processed) at Dartford.<sup>52</sup> It is possible that Vivian played a significant role in the transshipment of a range of goods brought in from or exported to continental Europe from Dartford.

In 1315 John de Hadham, potter (potar'), maker of cast metal vessels, of London registered a debt of £50 to Vivian.<sup>53</sup> Potters such as de Hadham may have been the source of the cast metal vessels reaching Dartford and Ruxley hundred. John Vivian's wife Margaret was the daughter of the corder Hamo Box and his wife Benedicta, giving him a close link to the wider Box family of corders in London. In 1332-33 Hamo's widow Benedicta's own will left property in London to Margaret Vivian (by then a widow herself) and her son Henry.<sup>54</sup> Hamo Box traded in timber, so might have had an interest in timber and firewood shipped from Ruxley hundred. Nightingale identifies him as a wool merchant, as was William Box.<sup>55</sup> Ruxley hundred offered access to wool as well as to wood.

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<sup>51</sup> Nightingale, *Enterprise*, p. 235.

<sup>52</sup> Chapter 3.

<sup>53</sup> Calendar of Close Rolls 1315-1318, p. 615.

'Close Rolls, Edward II: September 1320', in *Calendar of Close Rolls, Edward II: Volume 3, 1318-1323*, ed. H C Maxwell Lyte (London, 1895), pp. 326-329. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-close-rolls/edw2/vol3/pp326-329> [accessed 28 June 2023].

<sup>54</sup> 'Wills: 6 Edward III (1332-3)', in *Calendar of Wills Proved and Enrolled in the Court of Husting, London: Part 1, 1258-1358*, ed. R R Sharpe (London, 1889), pp. 371-381. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/court-husting-wills/vol1/pp371-381> [accessed 18 February 2023]. After the deaths of Margaret and Henry, the property was to be sold and half distributed among the 'daughters of William de Bidyk'

<sup>55</sup> Timber: See Chapter 3, p.75. Wool: Nightingale, *Enterprise*, p. 75, p. 126.

In 1321 a court case was brought relating to a payment of £500 made by John Vivian and William Bedyk to the brothers John and Richard de Esthalle of Ruxley hundred; this substantial sum is likely to have been an advance payment for a consignment of wool. The Esthalles could not meet the commitment or repay the debt. As John had recently died, a claim for repayment was made by Vivian's executors, his wife Margaret, William Bedyk and Hervey de Forges.<sup>56</sup> The extent setting out the Esthalles' considerable assets, presented in October 1323, showed that Richard de Esthalle held 300 acres of arable worth 4 *d* an acre, 200 acres of pasture worth 2 *d* an acre and 6 acres of woodland worth 2 *d* an acre, in East Hall in Orpington vill and in St Mary Cray vill, while John had 100 acres of arable worth 4 *d* an acre in Keston vill. Half of the total 606 acres was given to John Fivian's executors. The trading activities of the Esthalle brothers are considered further below.

In 1334-35 Peter Fivian – John and Margaret's son – was assessed in Ruxley vill as owing a subsidy payment of 13 *s* 4 *d*, one of the highest sums in the hundred; Thomas Fivian, another son, was assessed in Chislehurst vill for 2 *s*.<sup>57</sup> A Peter Fivian was also assessed for subsidy of 4 *s* in London in 1332, in Dowgate ward, suggesting he also traded in the city.<sup>58</sup> In 1337 William Vivian (transcribed in the catalogue as 'Vyman') 'of Kent' owed a debt of £60 to Nicholas de Coltishall, a London merchant, and in 1348 William Vivian 'of Ruxley' is listed with a debt of £60 to John Gaunt of Barking, citizen and draper of London deceased.<sup>59</sup> This suggests that Vivian descendants continued to operate as merchants in Ruxley hundred until the Black Death struck. The link with a draper suggests they were providing wool to London merchants.

### 6.2.3 The de Esthalle family of Ruxley hundred

The advance payment made in 1321 by John Vivian and William Bedyk to Richard and John de Esthalle suggests this Ruxley hundred family were active as wool-traders. In 1324, six months after the brothers had lost half of their assets to John Vivian's executors, a John de

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<sup>56</sup> TNA C 131/1/37.

<sup>57</sup> Hanley & Chalklin, 'Kent Lay Subsidy', p. 133 ff.

<sup>58</sup> 'The London lay subsidy of 1332: Account of subsidy collectors', in *Finance and Trade Under Edward III the London Lay Subsidy of 1332*, ed. George Unwin (Manchester, 1918), pp. 61-92. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/manchester-uni/london-lay-subsidy/1332/pp61-92> [accessed 28 June 2023] (Fivian transcribed as Finian).

<sup>59</sup> TNA C 241/113/87, C 241/126/167.

Esthalle and his wife Matilda sold a messuage, 200 acres of land, over an acre of meadow, 40 acres of pasture, 20 acres of wood and 16 s 6 d in rents, with appurtenances in Keston, Downe and Hayes, to Stephen de Asshewy and his wife Margaret. It is possible this is not the debtor John, brother of Richard, but his father, as there are references to 'John senior' in other documentation from the same year. In 1329 Ancelinus Simonetti of Lucca was evidently working with John de Esthalle the elder, who registered a debt of £60 to be levied, in the event of default, on his goods and chattels in Kent. The debt was cancelled on payment.<sup>60</sup>

The sale to Asshewy indicates the scale of the Esthalle landholding in the hundred and gives some insight into their connections. Stephen de Asshewy must have been the Londoner Sir Stephen Asshewy. At some point before 1349 he had enfeoffed property in Dowgate ward in London to John de Preston, a wealthy corder, identified by Williams as a client of the de Rokesles, so possibly Asshewy was himself a corder.<sup>61</sup>

The Esthalle family originated from East Hall, described by Hasted as a manor of Orpington. In the later thirteenth century John and his son David de Esthalle appear as witnesses in a court baron held at Orpington, suggesting they held the manor as tenants of Canterbury Cathedral priory.<sup>62</sup> Adam de Esthalle served as an assessor for Ruxley hundred for the lay subsidy levied in 1301.<sup>63</sup> Brothers Richard and John, and John senior, presumably their father, were evidently active as merchants in Ruxley hundred in the late 1320s. There is no definitive information about the produce they traded but it is likely it was predominantly wool.

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<sup>60</sup> 'Close Rolls, Edward III: September 1329', in *Calendar of Close Rolls, Edward III: Volume 1, 1327-1330*, ed. H C Maxwell Lyte (London, 1896), pp. 568-570. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-close-rolls/edw3/vol1/pp568-570> [accessed 29 May 2023].

<sup>61</sup> Asshewy's enfeoffment: 'Wills: 13 Edward III (1339-40)', in *Calendar of Wills Proved and Enrolled in the Court of Husting, London: Part 1, 1258-1358*, ed. R R Sharpe (London, 1889), pp. 430-436. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/court-husting-wills/vol1/pp430-436> [accessed 27 May 2023]. De Preston as a corder: Williams, *Medieval London*, p. 158; Nightingale, *Medieval Mercantile Community*, pp. 186, 205 (suggesting that the corders might have set up their own mistery by 1353).

<sup>62</sup> [CCA-DCc/ChAnt/O/111](#) (undated, attributed in catalogue to later thirteenth century from the script). John is referred to in another document (undated, but which references prior Henry Eastry, so 1285-94), [CCA-DCc/EC/II/5](#).

<sup>63</sup> TNA E 179/123/5, m. 10, Schedule of assessors.



North-west Kent is not an area normally linked with the wool trade – the sheep did not produce wool of the quality found in the Cotswolds or even of east Kent– but the 1301 lay subsidy return shows there were sufficient sheep across the hundred to produce wool for sale (see Chapter 3). The Esthalle land in Keston, Down, Orpington and Hayes included downland suitable for grazing sheep. The brothers John and Richard were receiving payments by 1309 likely to have been advances made for wool. They were working with the vicar of Orpington church, William le Blound, and John de Farnbergh, chaplain. Nothing is known of William le Blound in his role as vicar, but the le Blunds were a long-established and prominent city family, connected by marriage to many others.<sup>64</sup> The Esthalles, le Blound and John de Farnbergh acknowledged a debt to Mgr Reymund de Pynibus, rector of the church of Orpington, of 360 marks.<sup>65</sup> This debt must have been cleared (presumably the wool was provided), but the following year there were difficulties. The chaplain, now Sir John de Maneby, received £110 from de Pynibus (the de Esthalles are not mentioned) but the money could not be repaid – presumably the wool was not available. A part-payment of £20 was made to de Pynibus by the ‘fermor’ of the church who was responsible for its finances.<sup>66</sup> Whether the balance was paid is not recorded.

Mgr Reymond des Pins/de Pinibus was a cleric who held a diplomatic role, liaising between King Edward I and the Pope. He was given the post of rector of Orpington (along with similar posts elsewhere to a total of £100) as a source of income.<sup>67</sup> Equipped with these appointments De Pinibus was able to make advance payments for wool and as rector of Orpington, must have known the vicars (who he would have appointed to carry out the church’s responsibilities to its congregation) and the de Esthalles as members of the church.

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<sup>64</sup> Williams, *Medieval London*, pp. 75 & 322.

<sup>65</sup> ‘Close Rolls, Edward II: August 1309’, in *Calendar of Close Rolls, Edward II: Volume 1, 1307-1313*, ed. H C Maxwell Lyte (London, 1892), pp. 221-229. <*British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-close-rolls/edw2/vol1/pp221-229>> [accessed 29 May 2023].

<sup>66</sup> ‘Close Rolls, Edward II: April 1310’, in *Calendar of Close Rolls, Edward II: Volume 1, 1307-1313*, ed. H C Maxwell Lyte (London, 1892), pp. 254-257. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-close-rolls/edw2/vol1/pp254-257> [accessed 29 May 2023].

<sup>67</sup> ‘Regesta 55: 1307-1308’, in *Calendar of Papal Registers Relating To Great Britain and Ireland: Volume 2, 1305-1342*, ed. W H Bliss (London, 1895), pp. 32-49. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-papal-registers/brit-ie/vol2/pp32-49> [accessed 27 June 2018].

In 1309, Richard de Esthale 'of Kent' owed Reginald Herlisoun 200 marks.<sup>68</sup> The de Esthalles may have been selling wool on behalf of the priory's demesne estate at Orpington. The manor sold fleeces regularly, although the records do not show who purchased them.<sup>69</sup> They could also have assembled wool from their own flocks and from neighbouring lay demesnes and peasant smallholdings – the *collecta* – and sold it in bulk to wool-merchants. The Esthale family do not appear in the lay subsidy returns for Ruxley hundred for either 1301 or 1334-35. John de Esthale the Elder 'of St Mary Cray of Kent' is registered as a debtor (for £50) in 1331 and as a creditor (for £10) in 1336.<sup>70</sup>

#### 6.2.4 The Herlison family of Caldecote in Chelsfield

The Herlison family were also dealing in wool in the early fourteenth century, possibly continuing a pattern from the later thirteenth century. In 1301, Reginald Herlison had a mixed farm in Ruxley hundred; the lay subsidy return shows that he was assessed in Chelsfield vill with goods worth £7 10 s 8 d, from four plough horses, a few cattle and pigs, twenty sheep and ten lambs, wheat, barley, oats and vetch.<sup>71</sup> His was the final assessment listed for the vill, after that of Sir Otto de Grandison, and as de Grandison held a fee at Caldecote in Chelsfield, it is likely Herlison held the tenancy there.<sup>72</sup> Possibly he served as de Grandison's steward.

Herlisons had been acquiring land in Chelsfield from at least the mid-13<sup>th</sup> century. It is likely they moved into Chelsfield from London, where the Herlizun/Herlicon family can be placed by the later twelfth century, possibly earlier. John Stow's *Survey of London* lists John Herlison as a bailiff or sheriff in 1189.<sup>73</sup> A group of shops and other property known as 'the Herlison

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<sup>68</sup> TNA C 241/63/74.

<sup>69</sup> Bowen, 'The Priory Orpington', p. 70; Chapter 3.

<sup>70</sup> TNA C 241/103/168, C 241/109/297.

<sup>71</sup> TNA E 179/123/5.

<sup>72</sup> J. Greenstreet (ed.), 'Assessments in Kent for the Aid to Knight the Black Prince, Anno 20 Edward III', Arch. Cant. Vol. 10 (London, 1876), pp.99-162; entry p. 157.

<sup>73</sup> John Stow, *Survey of London*, (ed. C.L. Kingsford), John Stow, 'Temporall government', in *A Survey of London. Reprinted From the Text of 1603*, ed. C L Kingsford (Oxford, 1908), pp. 147-187. *British History Online*<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/no-series/survey-of-london-stow/1603/pp147-187> [accessed 19 November 2018]; J. McEwan, 'The Aldermen of London, c. 1200-80: Alfred Beaven revisited' in *TLAMAS*, Vol. 62 2011 (London, 2012), pp. 177-203; entry for John son of Herlizun p. 188 and fn. 107, corrects the date to 1188.

Fee', which survived at Honey Lane/Cheapside in London until the Great Fire of 1666, is said to have belonged to John son of Robert son of Herlicun.<sup>74</sup>

In 1250 William Herlicon, described as 'of London', so likely to be a member of this family, acquired seven acres of land in a field called *Sehelde* from William de Norsted. Norsted manor was a subinfeudation of Chelsfield, lying to the north of Cackets Lane. The precise whereabouts of *Sehelde* is unknown but it is described as near a wood of Robert de la Lese and 'the grove of William Herlicon', suggesting the family already had woodland nearby.<sup>75</sup> Also around 1250, William Herlicon of London acquired a tenement held by Walter de Norsted from Margaret, formerly wife of Thomas *Linipanarius* (draper) of London; the acquisition suggests a link with the drapers' community of London.<sup>76</sup> Further land transactions were conducted by William Herlicon around 1270, one being a grant to his son Reynold (Reginald) of 20 acres of land and 20 acres of wood, with witnesses to the grant including Richard 'de Pulcro Arbore' (Belarbre) and his brother John.<sup>77</sup> In 1271, William Herlichun acquired further land in Chelsfield in the form of Brome Field, transferred to him by Robert de Belarbre. Robert's son, Hammund de Belarbre, described as an '*aurifaber* (goldsmith) of Farnborough' (so presumably a merchant, as many goldsmiths were), subsequently transferred a property known as *le Brome* to William Herlicun of Chelsfield.<sup>78</sup>

The Belarbres do not appear in the 1301 lay subsidy return but their name is preserved in the name of Fairtrough Farm at Chelsfield. Broom Wood and Little and Great Broom Field are shown on the Tithe map for Chelsfield of 1840. By 1301, therefore, a branch of the London Herlicons had built up a considerable holding, including woodland, at Caldecote and Norsted in Chelsfield vill.

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<sup>74</sup> The descent of this property through the family is tracked by D J Keene and V. Harding, 'All Hallows Honey Lane 11/1', in *Historical Gazetteer of London Before the Great Fire Cheapside; Parishes of All Hallows Honey Lane, St Martin Pomary, St Mary Le Bow, St Mary Colechurch and St Pancras Soper Lane* (London, 1987), pp. 10-15. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/no-series/london-gazetteer-pre-fire/pp10-15> [accessed 21 November 2018].

<sup>75</sup> KHLC U1450/T7/91.

<sup>76</sup> KHLC U1450/T7/92.

<sup>77</sup> Details taken from the Essex Records Office Catalogue: D/DL T8/36. The catalogue ascribes a date of c.1270.

<sup>78</sup> KHLC U 1450/T4/21; KHLC U1450/T4/20. William is said to be 'of Cliffsend' in the KHLC catalogue but this must be 'of Chelsfield'.

It is likely that by 1301 Reginald Herlison was already trading in wool and wool may have been behind the family's earlier links with London drapers. There were surplus sheep in Ruxley hundred by 1301, in Chelsfield and also at Okemore, which Herlison had acquired by 1309.<sup>79</sup>

A Reginald Herlisoun provided credit to a range of clients from 1305 until 1311, most of whom were based in Essex. The TNA catalogue adds 'clerk of Kent' to his name where no location is given, sometimes adding 'deceased', but while three entries are labelled 'clerk' in the original document, and entries in 1309 for Reginald Herlison as a debtor are labelled 'of Kent', it is not certain that all entries relate to the same person.<sup>80</sup> Reginald Herlison of Chelsfield is not referred to as a clerk in other documentation, although it is possible this reflected his role on the manor. A Reginald Herlisoun is known to have been active in London, petitioning in relation issues including the office of Usher of the Exchequer and London property.<sup>81</sup> He may have been a Chelsfield Herlison, but it is possible another family member of the same name, possibly a clerk, in London was lending to debtors in Essex. Alternatively, the names could relate to a father and son at Chelsfield.

Evidence for the Chelsfield Herlisons' involvement in the wool trade is strongest in the late 1320s and 1330s when William Herlison, Reginald's son (or possibly grandson), registered a series of debts to Italian merchants which are recorded in the Close Rolls. In August 1329, William Herlison (no location given) acknowledged a debt of £200 to Master Pancius de Controne and Asselinus Simonetti of Lucca.<sup>82</sup> The debt was to be levied, in default of payment, on his lands and chattels in Kent, so this is a Herlison from Chelsfield, presumably Reginald Herlison's son or grandson; it was later cancelled on payment. In November 1329

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<sup>79</sup> Chapter 3 Table 10, p. 119; Okemore, KHLC U1450/T4/38.

<sup>80</sup> Reginald Herlisoun as a creditor: TNA C 241/49/239, C 241/50/126, C 241/55/208, C 241/59/53, C 241/86/9, C 241/86/16, C 241/86/14, C 241/59/54, C 241/70/69, C 241/70/74, C 241/81/208, C 241/81/2 (all debtors in Essex); C 241/69/307, C 241/63/74, C 241/63/75, C 241/63/136; as a debtor in 1309: TNA C 241/82/108, C 241/82/198.

<sup>81</sup> TNA SC 8/10/473, SC 8/165/8219, SC 8/113/5641(undated but thought to date between 1300-1310).

<sup>82</sup> Close Rolls, Edward III: July 1329', in *Calendar of Close Rolls, Edward III: Volume 1, 1327-1330*, ed. H C Maxwell Lyte (London, 1896), pp. 555-566. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-close-rolls/edw3/vol1/pp555-566> [accessed 29 May 2023].

he acknowledged a further debt to de Controne and Simonetti, of £50, again linked to lands and chattels in Kent.<sup>83</sup> The purpose of the loan is not stated.

Asselinus Simonetti is recorded in the Close Rolls making payments to leading churchmen and aristocrats, often of many hundreds of pounds.<sup>84</sup> He often worked with a partner. In 1321 Simonetti and Giovanni Marsopini had lent £200 to have first refusal on the goods of Pipewell Abbey, when these were sold off because the abbey could not provide wool or meet its debts.<sup>85</sup> He also worked with his brother and often with de Controne, evidently also making advance payments for wool. In addition to his mercantile activity, de Controne had a role in the royal household; king Edward II had appointed him as his physician, and after the king's death he held the same role for king Edward III.<sup>86</sup> De Controne's status in the household gave him an annual income sufficient to support a retinue of three and three horses. He gained valuable estates through royal favour and in 1321 was awarded the benefice of Chevening (near Chelsfield and Sevenoaks in Kent), though he exchanged it for St Mary at Bow in London. He acted as a royal financier, lending large sums to the king.<sup>87</sup>

In 1329 ecclesiastical clients across England registered debts to Simonetti and da Controne, including the prior of St Gregory's, Canterbury, the abbot of Waverley, Thomas L' Archer, prior of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem in England, and John, bishop of Winchester.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> CCR, *Edward III*, November 1329; British History Online <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-close-rolls/edw3/vol1/pp570-580#>, accessed 23 March 2018

<sup>84</sup> On the same date in August 1329 as the debt registered by William Herlison (above), the abbot of Waverley registered a debt of £100 to Simonetti and his brother Nicholas. In April, the bishop of Winchester registered a debt of £800 to Simonetti, but then in May, Simonetti put Pancius de Controne in his place to prosecute the debt: 'Close Rolls, Edward III: April 1329', in *Calendar of Close Rolls, Edward III: Volume 1, 1327-1330*, ed. H C Maxwell Lyte (London, 1896), pp. 534-539. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-close-rolls/edw3/vol1/pp534-539> [accessed 29 May 2023]. The size of the debts suggests forward payments for wool.

<sup>85</sup> A. R. Bell, C. Brooks, P. R. Dryburgh, *The English Wool Market c. 1230-1327* (Cambridge: CUP, 2007), p. 104.

<sup>86</sup> J. S. Hamilton, 'Some Notes on Royal Medicine in the Reign of Edward II', in ed. C. Given-Wilson, *Fourteenth Century England* Vol. 2 (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2002), pp. 33-43, ref. p. 35.

<sup>87</sup> Fryde notes that in 1339, a company in the Netherlands could channel money destined for Edward III through de Controne, rather than passing it directly to the king himself. E.B. Fryde 'The Financial Resources of Edward III in the Netherlands 1337-1340', *Studies in Medieval Trade and Finance* Vol. 13 (London, 1983), p. 1185.

<sup>88</sup> 'Close Rolls, Edward III: April 1329', in *Calendar of Close Rolls, Edward III: Volume 1, 1327-1330*, ed. H C Maxwell Lyte (London, 1896), pp. 534-539. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-close-rolls/edw3/vol1/pp534-539> [accessed 29 May 2023].

Subsequent documentation in the Close Rolls shows a similar pattern in the 1330s.

Individual payments could reach over £1000.

By 1333, William Herlison 'of Kent' was in debt to Henry Wymond and William Box, London merchants, for £200, and to William Box for £18.<sup>89</sup> Nightingale identifies Wymond and Box as wool-traders.<sup>90</sup> The Herlisons, like the Esthalles, may have been able to provide wool from local sheep to fill the gap left by suppliers elsewhere, but sheep in Ruxley hundred were not immune from disease or lack of grazing. The drop in sheep numbers at Orpington after 1320 is likely to be a consequence of lack of fodder and disease.<sup>91</sup> The bedels' rolls from Greater Orpington show that tar and ointments were bought for use on the demesne's sheep.<sup>92</sup> There is no information about the condition of sheep on lay estates in Ruxley hundred, but no doubt similar issues arose, making it difficult for William Herlison to fulfil his contracts.

In the 1334-35 lay subsidy return for Kent William Herlison is assessed for 2 s. *Asselin Luc'* is also listed, assessed for 4 s.<sup>93</sup> This suggests Asselinus Simonetti had received land in Chelsfield to clear a debt. In 1337, the Close Rolls record the enrolment of a general release by William Herlison to Asselin Simonetti, merchant of Lucca, and the following day William acknowledged the release.<sup>94</sup> In 1334 William Herlyson of Kent also registered a debt to Henry Purdomme, citizen and fishmonger of London, of 40s, and Henry acknowledged a debt of the same amount to William.<sup>95</sup> Herlison was evidently still trading in the 1330s but nothing further is known about him. The Inquisition post mortem for Sir Otto de Grandison, holder of extensive lands in Kent and other counties, showed that in 1359 the quarter-fee at

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<sup>89</sup> TNA C 241/66/43, C 241/104/193.

<sup>90</sup> Nightingale, *Enterprise*, p. 269.

<sup>91</sup> Smith, *Canterbury Cathedral Priory*, p. 156.

<sup>92</sup> Bowen, 'The Priory Orpington', p. 76, and see Chapter 3.

<sup>93</sup> Handley & Chalklin, 'Kent Lay Subsidy', pp. 134 (in Chelsfield vill, based on comparison with the 1301 lay subsidy entries – E 179/234/5, Chelsfield).

<sup>94</sup> 'Close Rolls, Edward III: July 1337', in *Calendar of Close Rolls, Edward III: Volume 4, 1337-1339*, ed. H C Maxwell Lyte (London, 1900), pp. 141-151. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-close-rolls/edw3/vol4/pp141-151> [accessed 29 May 2023].

<sup>95</sup> 'Close Rolls, Edward III: August 1334', in *Calendar of Close Rolls, Edward III: Volume 3, 1333-1337*, ed. H C Maxwell Lyte (London, 1898), pp. 327-332. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-close-rolls/edw3/vol3/pp327-332> [accessed 29 May 2023]. Prodhomes, fishmongers (financiers) in London importing wool and wine: Williams, *Medieval London*, p. 164.

Caldecote in Chelsfield was held by Sir Stephen Asshewy, who had already acquired land in the hundred from the Esthalles (see above) following their failure to repay debts.<sup>96</sup>

### **6.2.5 The Lambyn family of London and Chislehurst**

William Lambyn's possession of a cart, suggestive of trading activity in the later thirteenth century, has already been discussed.<sup>97</sup> The Lambyn family were identified by Williams as merchants in London, fishmongers in origin but dealing in a wide range of commodities, and key players in support of de Montfort and opposition to king Henry III in 1263-65.<sup>98</sup> The family's connections with Rye and Dartford are discussed in Chapter 5 (p. 203 f.). The William Lambyn with land in Chislehurst in 1301 may have been a member of the London family. The lack of a cow, utensils and items 'in the chamber' in Chislehurst, despite a healthy total assessment, suggests his main home was elsewhere. A William Lambyn was assessed in Bridge Ward – convenient for departure into Kent – in 1292 and 1319 for the substantial sums of 25 s 20 s. A John Lambyn was alderman of Bridge ward in 1319, assessed for 26 s 8 d.<sup>99</sup> William's cart may have been used to take grain or wool from Chislehurst to London, or perhaps to Dartford or Greenwich (in Blackheath hundred) for onward transmission by water. Unlike John Lambyn of Dartford, he does not feature as a debtor or creditor in the Merchant Staple certificates.

### **6. 2.6 John de Scathebury of Chislehurst**

A further example of an individual from Ruxley hundred whose name appears in a London context is John de Scathebury. Chapter 3 showed that in 1348/49 John de Scathebury had borrowed £200 from Sir John Chichester of London which he could not repay. But much earlier in the century, in 1310, John de Scathebury and his son John (so maybe the John of 1349 and his father, or possibly more likely, his father and grandfather) can be seen in London in relation to two different court cases.

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<sup>96</sup> TNA C 135/144/11.

<sup>97</sup> Chapter 3, p. 108 f..

<sup>98</sup> Williams, *London*, p. 164.

<sup>99</sup> TNA E 179/123/5; 'Subsidy Roll 1319: Bridge ward', in *Two Early London Subsidy Rolls*, ed. Eilert Ekwall ([s.l.], 1951), pp. 211-216. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/no-series/early-london-subsidy-rolls/pp211-216> [accessed 28 June 2023].

The first documentary reference to the de Scathebury family in Chislehurst dates to around 1259-61, when Daniel and John appear as witnesses to land transactions conducted by Hornchurch priory and Alicia sells land to the priory.<sup>100</sup> The manor was a sub-infeudation of Kemnal and the family are likely to have been Kemnal tenants, possibly since the previous century. In 1291, John de Scathebury – perhaps the son of the earlier John? – is named as a juror in the Inquisitions *post mortem* held at Sandling (one relating to Sandling manor, one to Footscray manor) following Gregory de Rokesle’s death.<sup>101</sup> He is next shown assessed for the 1301 lay subsidy in Chislehurst vill.<sup>102</sup> In 1311, a commission of oyer and terminer was set in train ‘on complaint by William de Craye that John de Scathebury and his son John, with others, while he was absent in Scotland on the king’s service and under his protection, took away his goods at Paulinescraze, co. Kent and assaulted his men and servants’.<sup>103</sup> This may be the John de Scathebury who was witnessing land transactions in the 1260s and his son, but it is perhaps more likely to be his son and grandson. Sir William de Craye held land in St Paul’s Cray vill but served with the king in the wars in Scotland, including as Admiral of a fleet from the Cinque Ports. He was evidently away on service in east Kent or Scotland and de Scathebury must have decided to take advantage of this. In July the following year William de Cray made a further complaint, that he had been assaulted in London by John de Scathebury and his son.<sup>104</sup> A lengthy court case followed both allegations.<sup>105</sup>

It is likely that John de Scathebury and his son John were seeking to acquire land in St Paul’s Cray adjacent to Scadbury manor. This would have been good agricultural land, possibly more suited to arable farming than much of the core Scadbury manor estate. A fine from 1325 shows John de Scathebury continued to extend his estate, buying a messuage and ten acres of land in Chislehurst from Philip le Hot, although Philip was to hold it for his lifetime.<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> Webb et al., *History of Chislehurst*, p. 9 f.

<sup>101</sup> TNA C 133/60/9.

<sup>102</sup> TNA E 179/123/5, Chislehurst.

<sup>103</sup> *CPR 4 Edw II Part II*, p. 371.

<sup>104</sup> Cal. Pat. Rolls 4 Edw II Part II, p. 530.

<sup>105</sup> JUST 1/557/5, special oyer & terminer roll and file, London and Kent, of fifteen rolls, 6 Edward II (1312-1313). Most of the material concerns the administration of the case and there are no details of the case for the prosecution or defence.

<sup>106</sup> Webb et al., *History of Chislehurst*, p. 107, p. 352; Greenstreet, ‘*Pedes Finium Kent*, 19 Edw II’, No 878.



A further fine from 1343 records a settlement which followed the marriage of John de Scathebury with Christina Haddrisham (Hadresham, Hathersham).<sup>107</sup> This fine suggests that John the elder had died and that his son John, having inherited, had recently married, but it is possible that an extra generation should be fitted in. The John de Scathebury who failed to pay the debt to John de Chichester (discussed in Chapter 3, p. 134 ff.), may have been John, husband of Christina, named in the fine, but the grandson, rather than the son, of the John of the earlier court cases. He is not heard of further after 1349.

The Hadreshams or Hathershams were a Surrey family. Christina's father, John de Hathersham, was MP for Surrey, 1339-1355. Her mother Nicola de Neville was daughter of William de Neville, a member of the baronial Neville family. The de Hadreshams held part of the manor of Combe in Surrey, inherited from the Nevilles, and other land in Surrey.<sup>108</sup>

The Patent Rolls record that in April 1310, before the attack on William de Cray's land, John de Scathebury had been given protection 'going beyond seas' until Michaelmas.<sup>109</sup> The reference suggests he expected to be engaged in mercantile activity in continental Europe over the summer. The giving of royal protection may mean he had a role in supplying the royal household. It is possible he was exporting wool or grain, perhaps also importing wine, although nothing further is known about his activities.

It is notable that the de Scathebury links appear to have been with a leading Surrey family rather than with any families (merchants or gentry) from Ruxley hundred or London. The de Scathebury family may have become acquainted with the Hathershams through connections with the royal household, but there are no obvious clues.

### **6.2 7 Links with London?**

The evidence of certificates of merchant staple which name people with possible links to Ruxley hundred, and investigation of several individuals for whom more documentation is

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<sup>107</sup> Chapter 3, p. 140.

<sup>108</sup> Webb's *History of Chislehurst* gives an account of Christina's family with a family tree which is corrected in C. Rawcliffe, 'Hathersham, John I (d.c.1394), of Lingfield and Crowhurst, Surrey' although Christina is named Katherine, in J.S. Roskell, L. Clark, C. Rawcliffe, (eds.), *The History of Parliament: the House of Commons 1386-1421*, (Woodbridge, Boydell & Brewer, 1993), online at <https://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1386-1421/member/hathersham-john-i-1394>. The article indicates Nicholas Heryng was an associate of the Hathersham family.

<sup>109</sup> *Cal. Pat. Rolls 4 Edw II Part II*, p. 220.

available, makes it possible to observe connections between the hundred and London over several decades. In the later thirteenth century, there is only limited evidence for credit relationships. Londoners acquired property in the hundred: the Herlisons at Chelsfield, de Rokesles at Sandling and Footscray, possibly the Lambyns on a smaller scale at Chislehurst, the Fivians at Ruxley and later, St Paul's Cray. There is no evidence for local creditors in the hundred at that time, but debtors include the de Crays, de Says and de Pessuns, though it is not certain that their debts relate specifically to their properties in Ruxley hundred. By 1301 the lay subsidy return shows evidence for surplus firewood, stock, wool and grain, which could be sold to London merchants at local markets or at Dartford; wool and grain may have attracted London credit, and from 1290 until 1311 there is evidence for financial transactions which may relate to the sale of wool from the hundred. They include debtors such as Geoffrey de Hewete of Chelsfield, Elizabeth de Say of Cudham and Keston and de Esthalles – all downland areas which supported sheep; their creditors included London merchants. The de Rokesles had their own market at Sandling and were working with London merchants, possibly in products other than wool. Reginald Herlison was operating as a creditor, possibly for wool, but it is not certain that all the certificates bearing this name relate to Reginald Herlison of Caldecote.

By the 1330s, Nightingale suggests that London had widened its reach for food and fuel from its immediate hinterland, following the drought and disease of the 1320s which had affected crops and stock. Kent had recovered relatively well from these crises and was now providing more produce to London than Essex.<sup>110</sup> In the 1330s and 1340s, no local creditors can be identified in Ruxley hundred, but the range of debtors widened. London merchants and Italian merchants were lending to Gilbert de Maleville, John de Esthalle the Elder, William Herlison, William Vivian and John de Scathebury along with others. These families were largely gentry who had consolidated their position through mercantile activity in earlier in decades rather than members of the aristocracy. They could provide grain, wool and firewood. Nightingale argues that London merchants were now lending to knights and landowners to the south of Canterbury rather than to merchants in smaller coastal towns

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<sup>110</sup> Nightingale, *Enterprise*, p.267 f.

such as Dartford.<sup>111</sup> The certificates suggest that landowners in Ruxley hundred continued to be seen as partners by both Londoners and Italians, though they are rarely explicitly identified with Ruxley hundred in the documentation and the totality of the loans may not be as great as those in inland east Kent.

### 6.3 CONCLUSIONS

This chapter has used lay subsidies and other evidence to throw light on links that existed between individuals trading in London and Ruxley hundred. The produce traded out of the hundred included firewood, grain, possibly cattle (including hides) and particularly wool. Firewood and leather would have been sent to London, probably transshipped from Dartford. Wheat might have gone to provision London or for export to continental Europe when stocks elsewhere were low following poor harvests. Wool might also have been destined for continental Europe, transported directly from Dartford or taken to London (or transshipped to a port such as Faversham or Sandwich) for onward export. The quality of Ruxley wool might have proved acceptable when animals elsewhere were struck by disease or lack of fodder.

Within the thirteenth-century city, trade was facilitated by family links, especially between corders living in Dowgate ward, and by wider city networks with other merchants including fishmongers. Interactions between city and countryside were also facilitated through family links, evident in the connections between the de Rokesles and Fivians in London and Ruxley hundred. The nature of financial support within the hundred (for example, whether family members provided credit to one another) is rarely documented. Surviving documentation shows that credit was more obviously available from unrelated city merchants, city clerks and alien merchants, and that over time, this credit was extended to a wider range of individuals within the hundred. It is difficult to establish with precision how many certificates related to landholders in Ruxley hundred, whether as debtors or creditors, as the hundred is rarely named in the documentation, but it is possible that over forty certificates concern individuals who had a close link to the hundred (out of a total of 962). The figures are low in the late thirteenth century but have increased by the 1330s.

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<sup>111</sup> Nightingale, *Enterprise*, p. 268.

It is likely that the de Scathebury family were engaged in trade in wool and wheat, but beyond the late debt of 1348, there is nothing to link them closely to London merchants. Chislehurst was a royal manor and they may have had a role in supply to the royal household. It is difficult to trace their activities in documentation, but the family evidently secured sufficient wealth and status to invest in a prestigious and well-equipped property, situated on a promontory looking out over the Cray valley. Their home was surrounded by a moat which offered a dramatic setting as well as controlling access. They had the resources to extend their estate in the fourteenth century and were able to marry into a leading Surrey family related to the Nevilles. Yet by the middle of the century their fortunes were declining and they disappeared from the local scene. Similarly, few of the families discussed in this chapter were still active in the hundred after 1350. This may be a consequence of commercial failure but it may also be an indication of the local impact of the Black Death.

## CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSIONS

### 7.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter draws together the threads of earlier chapters and considers how far the research questions posed in the introduction have been answered. The questions focused on how the rural hundred of Ruxley – in particular, lay lords and peasants within the hundred – related to the developing city of London between 1200 and 1350. The *Feeding the City* project had already explored the relationship between London and its hinterland, using databases built from manorial accounts. For north-west Kent, the databases drew mainly on data from ecclesiastical demesnes as almost no manorial documentation survives from lay manors; this meant that for any progress to be made in understanding the experience of the lay lords and peasants of Ruxley hundred, new sources of information had to be found.

The unusual survival of a detailed lay subsidy assessment for Ruxley hundred, relating to the fifteenth of 1301, suggested a possible approach. This document has some damage, but most of it is legible; all the villis in the hundred are included, and each individual assessed is assigned to a vill. This makes it possible to look at the locality at a level of detail which is not available in the surviving return for Kent from 1334-35, which lists individuals by hundred rather than by vill and gives no detail of how their assessment was reached. The thesis has therefore explored how the 1301 return might be used to throw light on the hundred in the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. It has sought to link the data contained in it with other sources, such as documentary information from inquisitions *post mortem* and archaeological information from local excavations. It has been understood throughout that there would be difficulties with this approach; the aim has been to see whether at least some light could be thrown on activity in the hundred, accepting that this might be impressionistic and open to interpretation. Fortunately, similarly- detailed returns survive for Dartford vill and Somerden hundred. These offered contrasting information from a vill on the Thames riverside which was not yet a town, but showed signs of developing into one, and from a thinly-populated rural area in the Weald close to Tonbridge; this provided useful context. Further context was provided by documentation from the two ecclesiastical demesnes in the hundred of Greater Orpington and Bexley.

## 7.2 MAIN FINDINGS

This approach has produced useful results. First, it has been possible to gain a better understanding of the resources of the hundred and how they were used. Second, it has provided an insight into local material culture, some aspects of which will have originated in London. Third, it has confirmed a strong local market network with a particular focus at St Mary Cray and Farnborough. Finally, it has identified a number of merchants active in Ruxley hundred, some from within the hundred itself and some from London. It has identified networks and family relationships which linked them to the hundred and shown the significance of connections with the Thames riverside wharves, particularly at Dartford.

The resources available included the hundred's woodland and the produce of its husbandry. Ruxley hundred's woodland is considered in Chapter 2. Analysis of the 1301 lay subsidy return identified assessments for stores of firewood, an item not included in the returns for Dartford or Somerden, showing that a number of peasants had small stores of firewood (which could be sold to neighbours) but others had much larger stores which could have been sold on a wider scale. The return also showed the potential for links with London woodmongers. John Fivian or Vivian, a citizen of London and corder, was assessed in Ruxley vill in 1301. As a corder, he would have had an interest in timber and wood products; his family connections in London showed that his father-in-law was a wood-monger.

It was evident from the analysis of the return that peasants were collecting and selling firewood and could benefit from available timber and from London's need for fuel. It was not possible to establish from the returns how they sold their firewood, but this is likely to have been at the wharves at Dartford or Greenwich where city merchants could purchase local materials for onward transport by water. John Vivian had a significant financial interest in Dartford and this may have included its role in the transport of wood and other products to London. Any timber destined for London could have been sold by manorial lords in the same way, but it could also have been used directly in Dartford or Greenwich for local ship-building and coopering.

Ecclesiastical documentation had already shown that woodland was managed for sale at Bexley and Orpington, but it is useful to have the practice of peasants and lay lords confirmed through the entries in the return and other documentation. However woodland

was a popular landscape for recreation; Chapter 2 therefore also addressed whether it was possible to identify recreational usage of woodland and wetlands in Ruxley hundred, and indeed whether Londoners made use of their nearby hinterland for recreation. On balance, there is nothing to show that Londoners came into the hundred for this purpose, but it is clear that the recreational opportunities of the hundred were appreciated by local lords, particularly in the thirteenth century. A number of lords received grants of free warren for their Ruxley estates. They were close associates of successive kings, who followed Henry III to Gascony or supported king Edward I after the Second Baronial War. There is no specific evidence that deer were kept at this date, but hunting of other animals (such as fox or hares) would have taken place through woodland and heathland; Ruxley would have been an attractive environment for lords and their guests. Parks may have originated as hunting areas but by the later thirteenth century were increasingly used as a way of controlling and managing the most valuable trees for sale (as at Cudham and Bexley).

The 1301 return offers new insights into the produce of the hundred; this is discussed in Chapter 3. Campbell has pointed out that the activity of the lesser lords and peasants in Kent 'remain largely obscured from view'. The use of the 1301 return has not completely resolved this difficulty; the return relates to a single point in time and is highly standardised in coverage and valuations. The information contained nonetheless provides significant new information about crops and stock in the hundred: it is possible to assess the presence of horses as compared with oxen, to observe the presence of vetch, to see whether there were differences in animal numbers in different localities and so on. It shows where surpluses were generated. Importantly, this information relates primarily to lesser lords and peasants – the gap that Campbell identified.

The return suggests that while most individuals assessed had stores of grain, usually barley or oats with some wheat and occasionally rye, the largest stores were of wheat, held by a few demesne lords. Wheat needed processing if it was to be sold and other sources show that lay lords without access to a watermill had invested in windmills. The estates of Cudham and Scadbury, both with substantial wheat stores, had windmills. A number of demesnes had carts and/or specialised cart-horses, suggesting that moving grain and other produce to markets some distance away was an important activity worth investment. Some individuals who did not hold demesnes – for example, William Lambyn of Chislehurst – also

had specialist cart-horses and were likely to have been engaged in merchant activity in the city. Generally, horses were widespread in the hundred and most of those assessed had the means to get to a market, an important factor when the population was scattered and village development was at an early stage.

Oxen were still used for farm-work, particularly where there was heavy clay, but horses were more prevalent. The return makes an interesting comparison with Somerden, where oxen were widely used, reflecting the difficulty of the terrain. Surplus cattle were present in some Ruxley hundred vills. A surplus would have been needed to provide replacement working animals in the hundred but others might have been bred for meat or dairy. When slaughtered, cattle provided hides for leather. Dartford had a number of tanners listed in its 1301 return, suggesting a leather-processing industry existed there. This might have processed leather from London, as the city imported fine leather from Spain and sent some of it out for tanning or tawing before bringing it back to be worked into fashionable shoes, but it might also have processed hides from Ruxley hundred, which could then be sold on to London for finishing or used within the vill itself – the byname *souter* (shoemaker) is listed in the return for Dartford.

The 1301 return does not cover all possible crops. Conditions in Ruxley hundred were suitable for fruit-growing and local demesnes had gardens; orchards might have provided apples and pears for cider and perry. Placenames (*Perry Street* in Chislehurst) suggest the possibility of pear orchards. Pears could be processed for perry or added to apples for cider, or prepared as a sweetmeat and exported to London. Chance records show that flax was grown on the lay estate of Little Orpington (so possibly also elsewhere) and the Dartford vill return suggests that plants (woad, shallots) were being grown there to produce dyes, so might also have been grown elsewhere. Again, Dartford was well-placed to send dyestuff, yarn and even cloth to London. Bynames indicating the presence of weavers can be found in both Ruxley hundred and Dartford. Local people needed cloth and clothing, so this may have been an entirely local activity, but it is a reminder that yarn or cloth might have been available for sale to the city.

An important finding from the 1301 return is that Ruxley hundred's lay lords and peasants had around 3,500 surplus sheep on their estates and smallholdings, in addition to the sheep



available on the priory's Orpington demesne. Local wool was not regarded as of high quality and would have been available for sale only through the *collecta* system, where wool from small flocks was amalgamated. This was not a popular method with purchasers as the quality of the wool and its processing by individual producers (washing the fleeces before sale, ensuring damaged fleeces were not included and so on) could be variable. However Ruxley hundred's small flocks may have been less susceptible to infection from scab and other diseases. In the early fourteenth century, local merchants can be seen supplying wool to known Italian wool-merchants, though the deals were not always successful. Canterbury Cathedral priory's injunction to its more distant demesnes, to sell produce locally for cash, would have applied at Orpington, so access to wool-traders was important; Ruxley merchants such as the de Esthalles, priory tenants, may have sold the priory's demesne wool along with that of other tenant producers. Ruxley hundred was well-positioned for access to London or to the Channel ports, using river-access along the Thames. This benefited Italian merchants, especially when better-quality wool was unobtainable elsewhere as a result of famine and disease. The wool-trade was evidently a significant element of the hundred's economy in the early fourteenth century.

Chapter 4 considered the material culture in the hundred. What possessions did people living there own, and were any of these obtained in London? The 1301 lay subsidy return provides information about particular items that were assessed but are rarely excavated— notably cast metal alloy vessels and utensils, and items identified as 'leads'. Cast metal goods were expensive and the metal could be recycled, meaning items had a strong resale value. These items are likely to have been made in, or imported into, London. The Dartford return lists a greater variety and number of cast vessels than the Ruxley return lists; the Somerden return uses only a single generic term. As the assessors were expected to identify surplus items that had the potential to be sold, it can be assumed that more vessels existed in the hundred than are recorded; most families would have had at least one metal cooking-pot. There is some evidence for links between London potters (manufacturers of cast metal pots) and the hundred, and also with Dartford, suggesting possible routes by which the London pots could have reached local markets.

It is interesting that 'leads' – valuable at 3 s or 5 s – are separately valued in the return; possibly these denote additional large vessels used for brewing. Some surplus leads are

owned by people whose overall assessments are modest, suggesting they owned extra vessels because they were brewing for sale to neighbours. The returns provide an opportunity to think about where individuals were living; adjacent names mean adjacent people. It is possible to see groups of names which include crafts or service activities (baker, weaver, girdler) as well as lead-owners. This suggests clues to the whereabouts of developing villages – particularly relevant in Farnborough vill, which was situated on the main route from Southwark to Sussex and the Channel ports. Visitors would pass through, needing accommodation and refreshment; Farnborough might be a useful stopping-place before moving on to London. Other groupings of names can be seen in what may be the developing settlement of St Mary Cray. ‘Leads’ and metal utensils also feature in other places where market charters were awarded. Almost nothing is known about the development of villages in Ruxley hundred in the thirteenth century, so the return provides new information.

The 1301 return makes no reference to ceramic items, but archaeological excavation provides information about pottery available in the hundred. In terms of understanding the relationship with London, however, it is important to understand where different fabrics were made and how they might have been traded. There are no known kilns in Ruxley hundred, so all ceramic items will have come in to the hundred from elsewhere. Were these items taken to London from a kiln outside the city and sold in its markets? Traditionally, it had been assumed that some greywares found in Ruxley hundred came from kilns in Surrey, especially kilns in and around Limpsfield. It is now thought that fewer pots reached north-west Kent from this source but there is no certainty on an alternative route. Similar issues arise with coarsewares. It is difficult to see how progress can be made on sources for either coarsewares or greywares without a detailed re-evaluation of ceramic finds from older excavations, bringing in material from elsewhere in Kent and Surrey.

For London-type ware, however, a kiln source in Kent has been identified at Woolwich, but the site has not been published. For Ruxley hundred the possibility of a Woolwich source is particularly interesting. London-type ware has been found in the hundred, including at Scadbury manor, and is a distinctive, decorative ware that would have been used at the table rather than for cooking and storage. It had previously been assumed that decorative ware of this kind was sourced in London, wherever it was made, but a Woolwich kiln might

mean that the pottery could have reached the hundred without being purchased in London – if there were traders to bring it directly to local markets, or if Ruxley people were able to travel to Woolwich to buy it.

Ruxley homes seem to have been reasonably well-equipped; though the lay 1301 subsidy return gives no insight into the lives of people too poor to be assessed. There is little known about hamlet and village properties from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries as most will have been destroyed by development in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The excavated sites, such as Scadbury Manor and the Walsingham School site, are relatively high-status; yet Scadbury has not produced any striking pottery from elsewhere in England or from continental Europe. This may be related to the difficulty of recovering material from the earliest phase of settlement which was built over by later occupants, but it is possible that these items simply did not reach the hundred. John de Scathebury (possibly several individuals of that name, fathers and sons) evidently did travel to London, so they had the opportunity and the resources to buy items there that might not have been available locally; unfortunately it is difficult to trace any examples.

Chapter 5 considered how and where people in the hundred might have sold produce to gain cash, and bought items they needed – whether food, pottery, tools or everyday items such as clothing. It is evident that the hundred had a number of thriving markets and fairs in the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries; charters for them may have recognised existing informal trading. Most are likely to have focused on the needs of the immediate locality but some, like Farnborough, would have served travellers moving between London and Sussex. In the case of the Crey and Sandling markets, there appears to have been competition between the priory and lay lords to gain control of trade in a key central position, with a lay lord – Gregory de Rokesle – being ultimately successful. St Mary Cray developed as a major ‘market village’; Symonson’s map of 1596 showed it as the major centre in the local area, rivalled only by Dartford (see Appendix, Map 2, p. 237).

Merchants within Ruxley hundred can be seen working with Londoners and Italian merchant and city merchants can be seen acquiring land in the hundred. Some of the important links in the early fourteenth century can be traced back to family links going back several generations. De Rokesles evidently left Ruxley manor for the city; did John Fivian (or his

father or grandfather) also move to the city from a smallholding in Ruxley vill? The networks of corders were close, strengthened by marriage and inheritance. Gregory de Rokesle ensured his extended family benefited from his own property and wealth. Many of the names seen in merchant transactions registered in the courts are of corders and their family links can often be traced. It is clear that much of the surplus produce identifiable from the 1301 lay subsidy return for Ruxley hundred – firewood and timber, wool, leather – was of interest to London corders and that many corders had traditional links with Ruxley hundred. They were also closely involved in activity at Dartford. It would be worthwhile to investigate links with Dartford more fully.

### **7.3 LONDON'S HINTERLAND?**

There is no doubt that Ruxley hundred was part of London's hinterland, certainly by the later thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, with the capacity to provide resources to the city and to benefit from the goods it could provide. It is less certain that people in the hundred engaged with the city directly. It seems likely that much of the contact was mediated through city merchants and that the Dartford hythes may have been a place where business was contracted. A few Ruxley merchants were involved in these trading networks but most people will have passed their firewood or wool on to someone else to aggregate and sell in bulk. Some people evidently visited London, but the Sandling market or the Farnborough fair may have been where most people obtained goods sourced from London.

This thesis aimed to explore whether sources such as lay subsidy assessments could fill gaps where other documentation was lacking. Ruxley hundred was fortunate that an unusually detailed return was submitted to the Exchequer in 1301 and retained there. Despite the acknowledged issues with using material of this kind, the return provides an insight into Ruxley hundred that is not otherwise available. It has been possible to link bynames in the return with other documentation and to build a fuller understanding of life in the hundred. The survival of similarly detailed returns for Somerden hundred and Dartford vill make it possible to observe differences between the three areas. Somerden hundred, further from London and with fewer entries, presents a more limited picture of activity. Dartford vill offers a different picture again – with bynames showing evidence of extensive craft and

trading activities which are also apparent in the surviving return from 1334-35. The differences between the returns suggest that the assessors were making judgments which reflected different local circumstances.

The 1301 lay subsidy return has provided information about Ruxley hundred which would otherwise be invisible and helps to interpret other information which might be meaningless on its own.

#### **7.4 FUTURE LINES OF ENQUIRY**

The analysis and conclusions presented in this thesis suggest the work begun for Ruxley hundred could be taken forward in several ways. First, there is no doubt that the 1301 lay subsidy return has proved useful as a source. This suggests that it would be worthwhile to have a closer look at the 1301 returns for Somerden hundred and Dartford vill, to see whether these could offer new information or interpretation for those areas.

Somerden has been little studied; it would be useful to understand more about this Wealden community which lay close to Tonbridge and to the archbishop's estate at Otford. The area of Somerden was traditionally used for seasonal pasture by estates in Ruxley hundred and elsewhere in north-west Kent. Its use in the early medieval period has been considered by Witney, but the transition to the later medieval period has had little attention. The 1301 return may offer a starting-point for thinking about its development.

Draper has already shown how the 1334-35 lay subsidy return can offer insights into activity at Dartford; the 1301 return potentially offers a way to explore the settlement a generation earlier. It is evident that there was considerable interaction between corders from London and other merchants from Ruxley hundred, and the London corders evidently had a keen interest in the hithes and expanding settlement at Dartford. Williams identified John Fivian's interest in the town but the implications of this have not been developed. Is it possible to find further evidence of corder involvement in Dartford? How does it compare with involvement at other hithes along the Thames? Did corders have links with other hithes, for example at Erith or Plumstead (held by St Augustine's Abbey), or did they focus on a Dartford – and indeed Ruxley – link? It would be useful to see the significance of the Thames riverside, and the area lying behind it, recognised in wider work on both London and Kent.

Finally, it was not the aim of this thesis to investigate the workings of Canterbury Cathedral priory's estate at Greater Orpington, but to use information from the estate to help inform an understanding of Ruxley hundred's lay estates. However the work has shown wider activity in relation to the wool trade in the hundred, and in relation to the development of the Sandling market, which have implications for Greater Orpington. It is possible that the successive market grants for the priory in Orpington and at 'Crewe', and for John de Mares and Gregory de Rokesle at Sandling, could be linked with prior Henry of Eastry's injunction that its more distant manors should sell their produce locally. The success of the local market may have persuaded Eastry that this policy was feasible; an awareness of the prior's policy may have been a reason for the struggle for market supremacy in St Mary Cray.

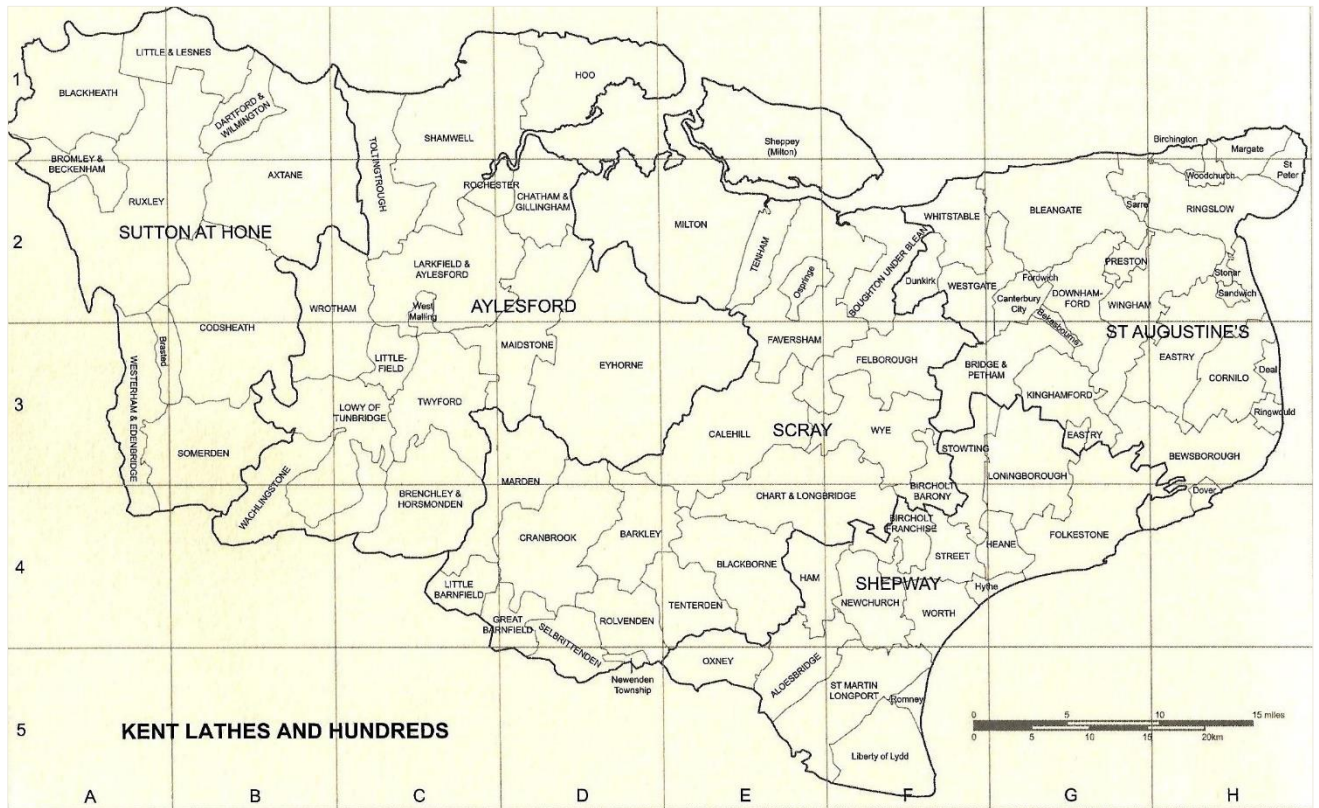
### **7.5 THE 'OUTREACH' VALUE OF THIS RESEARCH**

An underlying aim of this thesis was to support the public presentation of two publicly-owned heritage sites in the former hundred: primarily the moated manor site of Scadbury Manor, a scheduled monument, but also the Grade-2\* listed building which belonged to Canterbury Cathedral priory in Orpington, known as The Priory. The aim was to provide a better context for the early history of both sites. The lack of documentation means that gaps and questions still remain, but the thesis has provided considerable relevant contextual material which can be developed to improve their presentation; this would have remained invisible without the use of the 1301 lay subsidy return and the micro-historical approach adopted.

This new material will be helpful for the volunteers who currently organise public Open Days at both sites. It should give the public a better experience and hopefully lead to greater appreciation of the unusual survivals that these sites represent within Greater London.

# APPENDIX

## MAPS



**Map 1: Map of the county of Kent showing the Lathes and Hundreds**

Dartford vill and Ruxley and Somerden hundreds all lie within the Lathe of Sutton at Hone.

Source: Lawson & Killingray, *An Historical Atlas of Kent* (endpaper)





**Map 2: Ruxley hundred (original outline picked out in red) in 1659.**

Extract from *A New Description of Kent: by the travayle of Phil Symonson of Rochester gent.* Printed and sould by P. Stent at ye White Horse in Giltspure Street 1659. This edition follows Symondson's original map of 1596 closely. It shows the three main routes crossing Kent: Watling Street, the route via Maidstone to Folkestone and Hythe and the route over the North Downs towards Hastings and Rye on the Sussex coast. St Mary Cray and Dartford are the largest settlements.



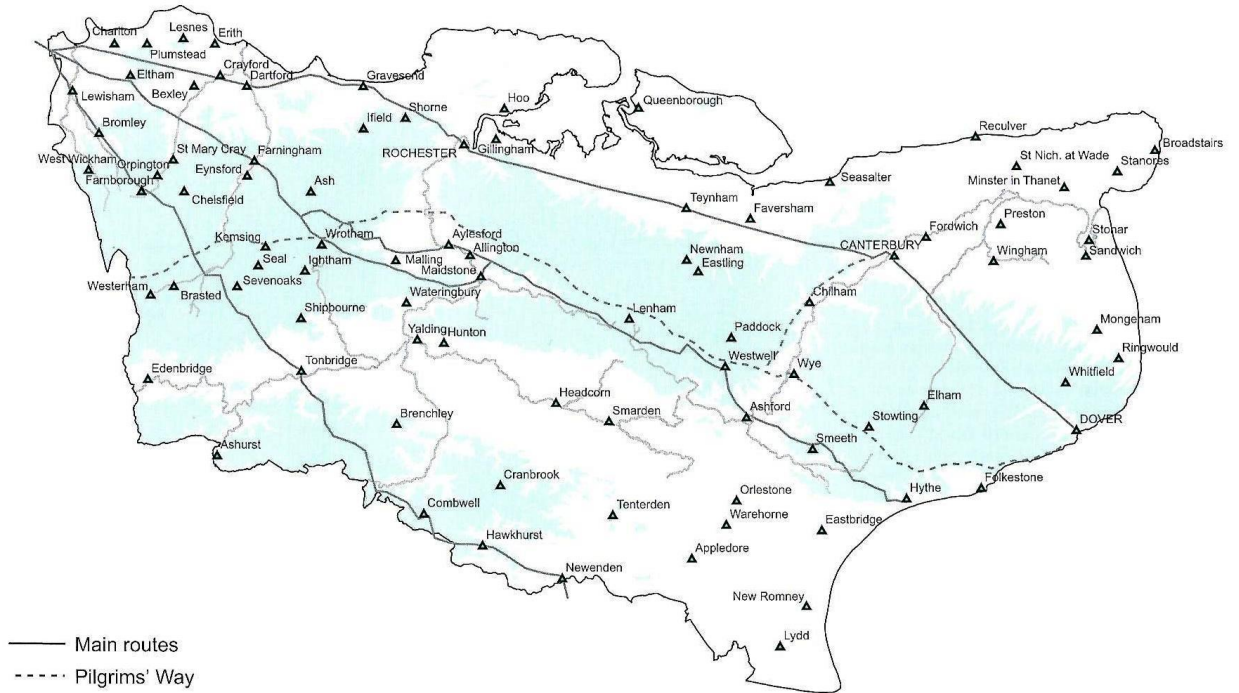


**Map 3: The Hundred of Bromley and Beckenham and the Hundred of Ruxley**

Produced for Edward Hasted's *The History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent*, first edition, 1778, this map shows the woodland cover at the time.

Scadbury is marked north-east of Chislehurst.

## Distribution of Markets 1350



**Map 4: Distribution of markets in Kent in 1350**

Source: Lawson & Killingray, *An Historical Atlas of Kent*, p. 51.

(Note: this map does not show the market at Aperfield, which should lie to the west between Farnborough and Westerham)

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