

VOLUME II

Chapters Six to Nine and Conclusions.

UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM

University of Birmingham Research Archive

e-theses repository

This unpublished thesis/dissertation is copyright of the author and/or third parties. The intellectual property rights of the author or third parties in respect of this work are as defined by The Copyright Designs and Patents Act 1988 or as modified by any successor legislation.

Any use made of information contained in this thesis/dissertation must be in accordance with that legislation and must be properly acknowledged. Further distribution or reproduction in any format is prohibited without the permission of the copyright holder.

THE PEASANT HOLDINGS

England in the Middle Ages was a land of peasant farms as well as of great estates and manors, but as many authorities have stressed the peasantry were not a homogeneous class,¹ and their classification is rendered difficult by the employment of two discrepant criteria, one of legal status, seen in the antithesis of villein and free, the other of economic condition, farmers and cottagers. In addition, personal freedom or servitude did not always coincide precisely with free or servile tenure for there were cases when a villein holding was in the hands of a tenant who was personally free but who nevertheless rendered the servile services incumbent on the holding, and when a free tenement was in villein hands.² Such distinctions are drawn primarily on the basis of manorial and legal records, and government surveys. The validity of these records in providing an accurate picture of the peasantry has been challenged in recent years by Kosminsky, Postan and Titow.³ In particular, a peasant land market, the action of which was largely ignored by formal extents, provided a medium for the disintegration and re-grouping of nominally indivisible tenements, and as both Titow and Kosminsky point out, any assessment of the man-land ratio in the thirteenth century, must take account of the existence of a largely landless class, who although of unknown size may have been present in substantial numbers. Unfortunately it is virtually impossible to determine what proportion this group formed of the total population.⁴

By utilising the information provided by the Domesday Book and the Hundred Rolls, Lennard and Kosminsky were able to study the stratification of peasant holdings at two periods, 1086 and 1279, and Harley carried this process to its logical conclusion by comparing and contrasting the situation prevailing in 1086 with that of 1279, basing his arguments, as a geographer, on a series of distribution maps.⁵ Such studies as these necessarily depend on the survival of relatively homogeneous documents covering considerable areas. Thus Harley was able to focus his study on two hundreds exhibiting marked contrasts of population structure and land use and which were of a size sufficient to permit regional differences to be established with clarity.

The difficulties of using heterogeneous material such as charters for the basis of generalisations concerning peasant holdings are manifold, and were admirably summarised by F.M. Stenton in his study, Danelaw Charters,⁶ namely, charters do not necessarily give an entire holding, even in the twelfth century, hence they can only record the minimum extent of a holding; there was always the possibility of a man holding additional land from another lord, and finally, statements of area or extent are often vague, and where they are precise, this usually implies that a piece was being added to or detached from an existing unit.

These difficulties of interpretation are magnified when conditions in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries are being considered, because by this date, as a result of subinfeudation, exchange and sale, in

the preceding centuries, landownership patterns had become more irregular and more complex, and furthermore, the use of the charter for conveying even small pieces of land had become a common practice. In areas such as Tanworth, however, where a comparatively great bulk of evidence survives, and where additional documents make it possible to understand the significance of the charters much more fully, the problems of interpretation become less acute. Thus although the studies of peasant holdings presented below are subject to limitations arising from the nature of land charters, providing that they are seen as part of a wider context, they can, as will be demonstrated, form the basis for some generalisations. The bulk of this chapter is based on the detailed evidence from Tanworth parish, but as far as possible examples drawn from other areas have^{also} been utilised.

A major difficulty in using land charters to consider peasant holdings results from the absence of the relatively objective framework provided by surveys or rentals, and the normal criteria of the size of the holding, virgate, half-virgate, fardel or cottage holding cannot be applied when dealing with the heterogenous mass of information provided by the charters; indeed, even when using the Hundred Rolls, the study of freeholdings, such as predominate in Tanworth, is difficult because of their irregular nature, and instability when compared with villein tenements.⁷ The principal problems concerning the study of peasant holdings may in fact be summarised under three headings: first, the need to establish criteria to distinguish the small-landowner from the well-to-do peasants, secondly, to indicate what factors have influenced the selection of a group of

holdings for detailed study, a sample which may not in fact be entirely representative, and thirdly, to examine a general problem arising from the nature of the evidence.

The first of these problems has to a certain extent been solved already in that the small landowners are those families whose holdings exhibit a distinct tendency to develop into manors or sub-manors, and are characterised by large size, the presence of sub-tenancies in some quantities, and, as a result, in most of the cases examined, there is some evidence of a manorial court. As chapter 5 showed, these are criteria which do serve to isolate this group, but nevertheless, as Kosminsky repeatedly stresses, it is important to remember that the line between such small-landowners and well-to-do peasants would tend to be indistinct. The problem can best be illustrated by a specific example drawn from the Tanworth material, the holding of John Wodard, a well-to-do peasant of the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries.

The holding of John Wodard.

In 1315 John Wodard appeared as a juryman concerned with the compilation of the extent of Tanworth for the Inquisition post mortem of Guy de Beauchamp.⁸ The basic data for the study of his holding is provided by a group of seventeen charters ranging in date between c.1270 and 1322 which have been mapped in Figure 37B. Using this map as a guide his holding can conveniently be divided into four parts for the purpose of discussion:

- i) Common field land.

In c.1270-90 (T.a55) he granted thirteen selions of

common arable to William de Barneville for a quit rent of one clove of gillyflower and a consideration of 16s. This transaction probably took place just before 1290, for in 1271 (2 Sept. 1271, T.a101) he had leased for twelve years from Robert de Cimiterio (atte Churchyard) of Ullenhale, twelve selions and ten butts of land lying in the common field. Both of these properties were scattered in parcels, i.e. small blocks, each containing several strips, and he had in addition one parcel of meadowland. Evidently this latter was insufficient for his needs for in a deed of c.1280-1300 he purchased, for a consideration of 4s., additional meadowland in Longmeduwe, in the same locality (T.a106). These purchases involved him in the payment of annual rents to the value of 6d. and 20s. paid in consideration.

ii) Several land (1)

John Wodard was also holding land amongst the old severalties to the north of Tanworth village, severalties created in the late twelfth century. This is known to have consisted of a messuage with an adjacent curtilage, (which passed to his daughter, 19 Sept. 1322, T.b91), a croft called Buddecroft (which is probably the land described as a "plot" in another charter)⁹, a moor called le Morecroft and a fishpond,¹⁰ the location of which property is confirmed by abuttal references (cf. 12 Feb. 1316/7, T.b59).¹¹ In 1299 Buddecroft had been held by a William Wodard¹² from Margery Archer for 1s. 1d. rent but by 1322 it was certainly in John's hands. The survey of c.1446, citing a charter now lost, describes it as a messuage and land containing four acres, the dwelling house probably being added to the croft after 1322.

iii) Several land (2)

In 1300 (30 June 1300, T.a193) John Wodard granted to Robert son of Richard Fulwood eight and a half acres in Tanworth lying to the east of Earlswood as a marriage settlement and the abuttals clearly indicate that Wodard and his son, John, owned yet more land in the vicinity (cf. 18 July, 1346, T.b274). This eight and a half acres was probably new land, the fact that the amount is stated in acres and no field names are given strongly suggests this, and was probably acquired by the Wodards from the Earl of Warwick in the period 1268-98.¹³ In 1310 Wodard sub-granted certain land in the same locality called Hutying Wyngh for a rent of 2s. and there is some evidence to suggest that he was paying a total rent of 20s. for property he held in this area (21 Oct. 1387, T.c118).

iv) Several land (3)

The location of the final property is known only from an abuttal, but Wodard had clearly been sub-granting this, for in 1323 (16 Oct. 1323, T.b101), he granted to Henry de Sydenhale 3s. 4d. annual rent which William de Belne paid him for certain lands and tenements. Later evidence strongly suggests that these comprised Wodard's northern holding.¹⁴

A final reference shows that John Wodard in fact had more sub-tenants, for a transaction between two of them survives; in c.1290-1300 Richard de Alreschawe granted to Matilda atte Lone certain land with Warranty against all men except the dower of the wife of John Wodard after the death of the said John if it so happen". (c.1290-1300, T.a148). The land is two acres in extent and the rent per acre two pence implying reclamation in the second and third decades of the thirteenth century (Table 3). John Wodard's

widow possessed right of dower in this property because he was the owner, de Alreschawe being his tenant, and it is possible that this also formed part of his northern severalties, since the focus of de Alreschawe's main holding lay in this same area as a comparison of Figures 37A and 37B clearly demonstrates. The map also suggests the reason why Wodard was leasing the northern holding, it lay nearly four miles from his house at Budcroft.

Wodard's holding in fact contrasts markedly with those of the small landowners previously examined. All of his common field arable appears to have been disposed of by 1300, and his leasing of extra land in the 1270's, although he possessed severalties, may have been due to the fact that he had young children; John his son, his daughter Joan, and possibly Walter, another son, do not appear in the charters until considerably later. It is possible that while his children were young, Wodard found it easier to increase food production by acquiring more common arable, than he could have done by working his severalties more intensively. For the latter, he may have needed to hire labour as his own capacity for work was limited, and in view of this the communal cultivation of the common arable may have over the short term offered higher returns.

There are no reasons for considering John Wodard to be more than a wealthy peasant, the name "Wodeward" implies a humble origin and although he possessed a considerable holding, consisting of "demesne" land, i.e. his own farm, together with some tenant land, it is exceedingly improbable that he possessed any form of court; certainly none of the evidence suggests this.

He clearly belonged to the upper stratum of peasantry, however, for it is reasonable to assume that he is the juror of 1315, and in 1288-9 he acted as attorney for the Countess of Warwick for the delivery of seisin of Claverdon and Tanworth to William de Beauchamp.¹⁷

John Wodard does not appear in the Lay Subsidy roll of 1327, but a William Wodard does appear, paying 4s. per annum and being one of the two people to pay above 3s. Although no conclusive proof exists it is probable that this William was the eldest son of John Wodard, and inherited his father's main holding. This would explain why John son of John Wodard, known to have been holding land at Hutyng Wyngh, does not pay subsidy, and explain why William Wodard in 1299 was paying rent for what may have been only a part of Budcroft.¹⁸ John son of John had merely acquired land from his father, newly reclaimed land which his father had not inherited and could therefore dispose of freely, and he probably added this to land he had purchased in the area on his own account. (18 July, 1346, T.b274). William, the elder son, had been allotted a portion of the main holding upon which to dwell while helping his father work this. In the course of time, after 1322, the last reference to John Wodard, he came into his inheritance and acquired the entire holding for which in 1327 he was paying 4s. Lay Subsidy. In 1331 he is known to have purchased yet more land near Budcroft (22 Dec. 1331, T.b164).

If this hypothesis is correct, and William Wodard inherited most of the holding shown in Figure 37B, it is curious that he should be paying, as a well-to-do peasant, a Lay Subsidy payment that is only equalled by a member of the Archer family, John IV. The explanation of this anomaly would seem to be that as Lay Subsidy was a taxation on moveables, stock and grain, rather than

static property, dwellings and land, (and hence rents from these), a landowner who sub-let 80% of his land would be taxed considerably less than a man with a holding of similar size who had 80% in "demesne".¹⁹ It is likely that the home farms of the Wodard and Archer families were of comparable size, so that 4s. tax was levied on each, but Wodard lacked the large extent of tenant lands which raised the Archers to the ranks of the small-landowners.

This analysis of John Wodard's holding permits the problem of the distinction between the small-landowner and the well-to-do peasant to be attempted. The most basic difference is probably in the size of their holdings (Figures 36 and 37B), the peasant holding being substantially smaller and having a tendency to be more discrete. In addition a sharp distinction in structure existed, for although many of the small-landowners had substantial "demesnes" much of their land was tenant land. The peasants, on the other hand, even the well-to-do peasants with sub-tenants were obtaining their living directly from the land and not from rents. In Wodard's case there are, on the evidence available, no valid reasons for elevating him to the ranks of the small-landowners, he was a well-to-do free peasant. The bulk of his land was probably "demesne", he held no court, he was not an employer of villein labour, and in all probability family labour was sufficient for working the holding, although the occasional employment of extra-hands cannot be excluded.

The second problem concerning the study of the peasant holdings involves the criteria for the selection of examples for detailed study. Ultimately, this

decision depended on the availability of charter material but while one charter was clearly insufficient for the study of a holding, equally no minimum requirement could be established. In practice, the procedure adopted was to work gradually through all the major holdings, and then consider those smaller holdings which appeared interesting in the light of particular features noted or problems raised; from these a sample has been selected. As the number of deeds per holding decreases the danger of mis-interpretation and of reading too much into insufficient evidence increases, but wherever possible the evidence from charters has been checked against court rolls, rentals, surveys and later material. A fundamental principle, followed throughout the whole study, has been to avoid basing detailed arguments on the unsupported evidence of a single charter. Inevitably this rule has not been easy to follow, anomalies exist, and assumptions must occasionally be made, but the relative completeness of the Archer collection makes cautious assumptions less dangerous than might otherwise be the case. In particular, the deeds are all of known provenance and context, their conditions of survival are known and understood, and even though their original bundles have been broken up, one is aided by the knowledge that they do relate to a finite number of holdings within a known area. For instance, except in a few cases it would be impossible to do work of a comparable nature with the vast heterogenous collection of charters surviving in the Public Record Office, and published, in part, in the six volume Calendar of Ancient Deeds. Furthermore, it would be fair to add, that months of work with a particular body of charters, coupled with a knowledge of the areas to which they relate derived from other

documentary sources and the actual landscape, provides an insight into the material that can never be fully translated into objective terms. Such knowledge can nevertheless be dangerous, it permits unwarranted assumptions to be made, assumptions, that although correct, are unproven. In dealing with such detailed, localised source material, since the reader is never in a position to really assess the evidence, the ultimate problem is one of academic honesty.

A large selection of holdings were initially studied in detail, and from these have been extracted a group to be examined at some length in this chapter. As far as possible the holdings selected are these that will illustrate a number of points, but particular emphasis has been laid on the degree to which the sample holding is representative of a group. They are analysed within a framework that is designed to illustrate the variety of holdings, but the discussion has been given direction by posing a number of specific questions, the answers to which constitute the conclusions of this chapter. In this way it is hoped to avoid presenting a mere catalogue of characteristics and peculiarities. With this fact also in mind, lengthy detailed discussions and assessments of evidence have been cut to a minimum, to examine even one holding fully would be an exceedingly complicated process and the result, for a reader not personally familiar with the material, would be incomprehensible. Some holdings, examined in detail but not specifically discussed in the text, are introduced as examples where they are relevant. Holdings do occasionally occur for which ample charters survive but which add nothing to the general picture, and except as part of the systematic studies of the material in Chapters 3 and 4, these have been ignored. As Table 16 illustrates

forcibly, those holdings which can be discussed in detail do in fact form a minority depending on the fortuitous survival of evidence, but in view of the fact that the Archers, de Sydenhales and de Fulwoods absorbed both large and small peasant holdings during their expansion, it is probable that the sample which can be studied is not unrepresentative of the whole.

A final problem is provided by personal names, for even in the case of the Tanworth small-landowners, where genealogical tables compiled by Sir Simon Archer or Sir William Dugdale survive to aid the student, difficulties occur in allotting charters to the correct individual, although a close examination of the material normally permitted the problem to be satisfactorily resolved. With the more numerous peasantry, however, the chances of an error being made over two men of the same name is appreciably greater. Such errors can, nevertheless, be reduced to a minimum, as a result of the nature of the Archer Collection and the small area considered. It is possible to clearly recognise Tanworth families, and the medieval scribes were well aware of the problems that could arise from men of the same name. 20 In general it may be said that there is no evidence either from charters or other sources to suggest that the identification of personal names in Tanworth is likely to constitute a serious problem, indeed the evidence shows that providing the material exists families can be easily traced and individual members satisfactorily identified.

This chapter is, as has already been stated, necessarily dependent on the Tanworth material, but where possible examples have been drawn from other

parishes within Western Arden. The unusual degree of freedom prevailing in Tanworth has already been indicated, (Chapters 2, 3, 4, and 5) as has the effect of this freedom on personal status, rents and services and forms of alienation. Tanworth in particular was characterised by a greater degree of freedom than most Arden manors, with over 60% of the total income from the manor in 1315 being from money rents. As a result of this the land market on the manor was particularly well developed and the sheer bulk of the land charters that survive bears eloquent testimony of the freedom of alienation. In the last chapter the estates of the small landowners were examined in detail, indicating the agrarian and social conditions prevailing at this level of society in the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. It remains to examine the agrarian and social conditions prevailing at the peasant level and if the mass of detailed information, necessarily involved in the studies of individual peasant holdings presented below, is to be given direction and coherence, four specific problems must be kept in mind:-

- i) how was new land added to existing holdings, and what effect did this have on any tenemental organisation;
- ii) what can be discovered concerning the nature of the peasant holdings, were they compact or discrete, large or small;
- iii) what changes in the nature and form of peasant holdings were taking place as a result of the action of the land market, both in the short and the long term;
- iv) finally what was the effect of any changes resulting from these factors on the social and economic differentiation of the peasantry ?

The study of Wodard's holding suggests that some of the answers to these questions will be forthcoming from the charters.

The Freeholdings.

While in theory three main periods of peasant colonisation can be recognised in Tanworth (Figure 22B) an early period, prior to 1220, a period initiated by the grants of Earls Henry and Thomas in the second and third decades of the century, and a final period initiated by Earl William de Beauchamp (1268-98), in practice the second and third tend to merge, the new land in the period 1268-98 being added to holdings already established in the waste at an earlier date.

The earliest phase of colonisation is but poorly represented, John son of Alard for example in the late twelfth century (c.1150-1180) claimed Little Bancroft on the edge of the common arable (Figure 44) and although he is known to have held land elsewhere nothing more can be stated about him. His second close lay in the south-east of Section 40 (Figure 49) where an area of small closes, with their main hedge-lines running at right angles to the grain of the country can be detected, clearly the result of twelfth century colonisation.²¹ It is arguable, on the basis of geographical proximity that Section 6 also experienced early colonisation, a contention supported by the appearance here of the only Norman-French place-name in the parish, "Beaumont".²² Fortunately, sufficient charters survive to examine two early thirteenth century holdings whose several lands must represent some of the earliest colonisation adjacent to the ancient nucleus of village and common arable core, illustrating their importance in the colonising movement. This common field land, adjacent to Tanworth village, the initial settlement, formed the original nucleus of clearing, a conclusion that is suggested by the general arguments

concerning the early settlement in Warwickshire presented in chapter 1, and by more detailed arguments to be presented in chapter 8.

Gilbert Budde or Gilbert Freeman,²³ probably inherited his land from his father Robert, and there are no reasons for assuming that the family were not denizens of Tanworth, indeed the fact that they held a substantial share in the common arable suggests they were. As Figure 38A demonstrates the following elements can be recognised in the holding:

i) Two messuages, both sub-granted by Budde, one at Budcroft, the other adjacent to Tanworth churchyard. This implies that he possessed a third upon which he was dwelling, (c.1210-20, T.37, T.38).

ii) Parcels of common arable:

a) Nine selions of land in Harecroft, granted to William Archer (c.1210-20, T.36).

b) Land in Shirewoldescroft, granted to the same man, together with other land nearly in Budhelde possibly terminating on the north in Hetbuttes. These two items are on record as being granted finally to Randolf Palmarius (c.1220-29, T.46) and (c.1220-30, T.45, Figure 38B.).

c) A parcel of land in Willeworth.

d) A parcel of land in Whetedysh.

e) A parcel of land and meadow in Churchfield, probably adjacent to the cemetery, items c, d, and e being granted to Robert son of Reginald (c.1210-20, T37).

f) Meadowland in Longmeadow (c.1210-20, T37; c.1220-30, T.45; c.1220-29, T.46) granted to Nicholas Trages, Robert son of Reginald and William Archer.

iii) Several lands;

a) Budcroft, all of which does not appear to have been sub-granted, (c.1210-20, T.38).

b) Budland, land lying to the north of the common field, on the heath of Tanworth, only known from later charters (cf. c.1240-50, T.101) but nevertheless clearly associated with the family. This was probably that land held by Sybil, widow of Gilbert Budde where La Grove Budde is named in c.1229-39, (T.55).

c) "A certain piece" of land which may have lain near Budcroft and was included in a grant to Nicholas Trages (c.1210-20, t.38, cf. c.1220-30, T.45).

d) Finally, in the grant to Nicholas Trages in c.1210-20 (T.37) a "croft of land called Walcroft" was included. The only other known reference to a croft of this name in the Tanworth documents is in an undated charter, (pre 1250 ?) now lost, cited in the name of Robert Forde in the c.1446 survey, and this refers to "a messuage in the township of Aspley, and five selions of land enclosed with hedges lying the furlong (cultura) called Walcroft." The possible implications of this charter are examined in chapter 8 but because of the uncertainty involved no attempt has been made to map Walcroft.

From this holding a number of trends are evident, first, a tendency to alienate the common field land, arable and meadow, forming no doubt the original holding, of the family; secondly the alienation of the messuage and land adjacent to the churchyard is probably to be interpreted as disposing of the original homestead in the village, with a move out to the severalties taking

place, probably to that portion of Budcroft not sub-granted. This and Budland formed the family farm. It would be interesting to know what proportion of their income came from rents for the lands sub-granted brought in 2s. 10d. rent and a total of £2. 18s. 8d. in considerations. The importance of sub-granting to the family is perhaps indicated, when, in c.1230-40, Gilbert Budde granted to Richard Dispensarius "all the land which came to him from his father, with the homage and services of all men who held under his father." (c.1230-40, T.78). Inadequate and limited as this evidence is, it provides a picture of an early colonist, holding property in the core of common arable and owning severalties that in part bear the family name. It is clear that a land market had already developed prior to 1220 amongst the small freemen owning severalties, and that as a result the dissolution of the common field arrangements had already commenced.

It is probable that Budde was a denizen of Tanworth, but judging by his name Randolf Palmer or Palmarius, is either a much travelled local man or an immigrant. As Figure 38B shows, his holding was built up over a period of time, 7 selions, six or more pieces of land, part of a meadow and part of a grove were acquired from Adam son of Pavie for 5d. annual rent and 20s. in consideration (c.1210-20, T.35). The nature and extent of the "pieces" is questionable,^{though} they may have been common field land. The fact that in the case of both the meadow and grove he receives one eighth part suggests the deliberate breaking up of a several holding, but the terminology of the charter is exceedingly ambiguous, for example, four of the "pieces" are described as being "of the same holding (as 2 selions mentioned previously in the charter)

on the river on both sides." He purchased several land in Budecroft, together with more land, probably common arable, in Helde (Budhelde), and meadow in Longmeadow, from Gilbert Budde for 13d. rent and 26s. in consideration. A further grant of land, from Henry, Earl of Warwick, for 2s. rent and 26s. 8d. in recognition, added a substantial area of several land to the holding. This latter, formerly held by Richard Kide, significantly lay adjacent to Budcroft. (P.R.O. A4640, and c.1210-20, T.38).

These two holdings are of considerable importance in that they are the earliest detailed studies that can be made of individual peasant holdings. A number of general points emerge from the analysis:

- i) Common field arable was already available on the land market by the second decade of the thirteenth century (c.1210-20, T.35).
- ii) By the early thirteenth century severalties had been created to the north of the village and were already appearing on the land market.
- iii) There was already a clear emphasis on money relationships and cash transactions, ^{for} the gersumae or considerations can hardly be considered nominal when considered in relation to the annual rents.
- iv) The two holdings studied demonstrate that the action of the land market was allowing the disintegration and the accumulation of holdings within a twenty year period.
- v) Gilbert Budde's disposal of a house within the village suggests that by the early twelfth century peasant colonists were establishing farmsteads on their newly created severalties, away from the old established village nucleus, implying that the move towards the dispersal of settlement had begun.

vi) A final point is based on less evidence, but it is noticeable that in the period 1210-30 a number of transactions (c.1210-20, T.35, c.1210-20, T.34, c.1220-29, T.46) involve land that either appears later as part of the Earl of Warwick's demesne lands, or is several land abutting the demesne; for example, Randolph Palmarius grants to William Archer "land which he holds of Henry, the Earl between Bancroft and Oldbury", (c.1220-29, T.46, cf. Figure 47). This may reasonably be interpreted as demesne land that had been leased in the late twelfth century, a widespread tendency.²⁴ If Randolph Palmer was in fact leasing such land, it suggests that one way in which it was possible for an outsider to get a foothold in a parish such as Tanworth, was to do this. Obviously such a person would need some productive land from which to make a start and as the land market prior to 1200 was probably very limited in extent, this opening for the newcomer may well have been an important one. Once established, he could either purchase new land, or could take advantage of the developing land market to purchase land already reclaimed.

The evidence for the systematic granting of waste-land by the Earls of Warwick was presented in Chapter 3, Table 3, and this data was mapped in Figure 22B. There is little doubt that the first recorded clearings lay on the edge of common arable and were taking place by c.1180, for in c.1184-1204 (T.7) there is a clear reference to "the land called little Bancroft (cf. Figure 44) which John son of Alard claimed." The holdings of Budde and Palmarius represent a slightly later phase of the movement, for it is clear that by the early decades of the thirteenth century numerous severalties had been developed adjacent to the common arable in Section 1 and

in Section 6 (containing Budcroft). This point is only partially brought out by Figure 22B owing to the comparative coarseness of this map, and the fact that equal weight is necessarily given to one or numerous references, but Figure 26A provides a clearer picture of the importance of the area adjacent to the common arable at this date.

By the early decades of the thirteenth century (c.1210-1250) the colonising movement was spreading strongly in a north-easterly direction, and two holdings have been selected as representative of this phase.

The de Wystanescroft family first appears in the late twelfth or early thirteenth century at which date Henry de Wystanescroft ²⁵ was holding a croft, of the same name, from the church and rector of Tanworth for an annual rent of 2s. 6d., land "in Umberslade" but clearly abutting Wystanescroft, for a rent of 6d., and land adjacent to Nuthurst, which he had sub-granted for a rent of 2s., the tenant holding "as freely as Henry de Wystanescroft holds of the church of Tanworth" (c.1200, T.13 and T.14., c.1200-10, T.31). Wystanescroft had formerly been held by William, Henry's father in the late twelfth century, and in the course of time, Henry's son, also called William, inherited his father's holding, and on two separate occasions different rectors of Tanworth confirmed to him Wystanescroft, for a rent of 2s. 6d. and a consideration of five shillings, which in this context must be regarded as a form of relief, payable when a new incumbent was installed (c.1230-40, T.88, c.1240-50, T.107). William acquired more land from Thomas, Earl of Warwick (c.1229-39, T.68, T.69), plainly close to the original holding (Figure 37A), and although this land was not specifically so described there is no doubt that it was waste, especially in view

of the fact that one grant has a warranty clause which excludes warranty against rights of common. This feature almost certainly places the charter prior to 1235, the Statute of Merton, and reflects the fact that at this date, in spite of the so called "Law in Arden" the lord who had sub-granted his wasteland had no effective protection against an action of novel disseisin brought by his freeholders. De Wynstanescroft's acquisitions appear to have totalled some twenty-nine acres some of which may have been sub-granted for there is evidence of at least one sub-tenant, and some of which may have been sold, for in c.1270-80 (T.a91) three acres were granted to Thomas de Hauekesawe for six pence annual rent and a consideration of 10s.²⁶ The holding was consolidated by the purchase of some land from Nicholas de Swansditch abutting the de Wytanescroft holding and "surrounded by a ditch", (c.1230-40, T.87). Figure 37A clearly demonstrates the compact nature of the farm that resulted from these piecemeal acquisitions, a farm that is unusually well documented and whose extent is admirably confined by abuttal references.

William appears to have died early in 1284 (13 Oct, 1284, T.a139) and his lands were inherited by his son Richard who further added to them by acquiring a field with curtilages and houses from Roger atte Berne, the location of which is uncertain, but which probably lay somewhat to the north of the main holding. A number of transactions of a minor nature prove the presence of some sub-tenants, but insufficient information exists for an attempt to be made to assess the rent roll.²⁷ Abuttal references in this period (1280-1300) confirm the existence of the compact holding shown on the map

(Figure 37A) and furthermore prove that de Wynstanescroft was living adjacent to this land.²⁸ This picture of the holding can be amplified by four other charters, two of which relate to common field land, one recording the sale of four parcels of land in Shirwoldeshull to William de Barneville (c.1270-90, T.a50), the other recording de Wystanescroft's ownership of land in Longmeadwe (c.1270-80, T.a73). The map clearly indicates the probable reason for this sale,^{for} by 1280 the family possessed a compact farm unit and the distant common arable was probably not worth maintaining.

An agreement concerning dower dated 13 Oct. 1284 (T.a139) made between Richard de Wystanescroft and Matilda his mother, indicates that wheat and oats were being produced in Wystanescroft, and that Matilda was to receive the rent of the croft, 2s. 6d., together with two quarters of wheat and three quarters of oats. The value of these details will be discussed when the economic background to colonisation is being examined. The picture is enlarged by a final charter; in about 1320 (T.b75) Richard gave to his son Richard, for a rent of 7s. to the chief lord, certain lands in Tanworth, possibly because of his old age,²⁹ and the lands in question may well be a substantial part of the Wystanescroft holding, for although the field names are mostly unique to this charter, not appearing elsewhere, the names are such that they could well relate to the small pieces of land that had been accumulated in the early thirteenth century.³⁰ The grant involves "a piece of land with a grange upon it together with a curtilage lying in Tanworth. Also the cattleshed and sheepfold with all liberties and casements pertaining to the said piece of land. The land called Marleputfeld, the land called the field 'a forn the dore' (?), the land called

Mareschortecroft, the land called the Netherschortecroft, two lands called Morenewelande and Lassenewelande, the land called Swansdyche, a grove called Watmor, and a meadow close called Schortcroftesmedewe, with free ingress and egress to all the aforesaid." 31

The original Wystanescroft appears to have been about 14 acres in size, to which must be added 29 acres from the Earl of Warwick, making 43 acres in all, and this certainly excludes the land acquired from de Swansdych, and some at least of the tenant lands. A reasonable estimate of the extent of the holding would appear to be between 50 and 60 acres, of which at least 50% may be considered to be new land.

The nucleus of the farm was the original grant of about 15 acres of land, probably waste, to the church of Tanworth (rent 2s. 6d., 2d. per acre ?) which was sub-granted by the rector to William de Wystanescroft in the late twelfth century. The addition of more land created a compact farm holding, and resulted in the sale of what may reasonably be assumed to have been the ancient share in the common arable, suggesting that the family was of local origin. This took place in the seventh or eighth decade of the thirteenth century by which date the family were living out on the new farm, (Figure 37A).

The de Wystanescrofts can be classified as well-to-do free tenants, for, although no concrete proof of their status exists, the fact that Henry was making homage to William de Warwick (et homagium mihi fecit) clearly implies this. They had some sub-tenants, but nevertheless in 1327 Richard Wystan was paying 3s. Lay Subsidy suggesting that they possessed a substantial "demesne".

The name Wystanescroft is distinctive enough for its appearance elsewhere in Arden to be of significance. There are no good reasons for believing that the family did not originate in Tanworth, and in view of the proximity of their farm to Nuthurst it is not surprising to find them holding land in this township. Henry de Wystanescroft received from Humphrey Hastang in the late 12th or early 13th century, "a virgate of land and a messuage in Nuthurst that Richard son of Guware held, together with two acres of land between the Portway and the fieldland towards the heath, and a certain "inheg" lying between the heath and the land of the said Henry." ³² It is probable that Henry was a second son of the William who died in 1284. While "virgate" and the term "fieldland" would suggest common arable, it is clear that Henry was obtaining land that was at least in part new land, the "inheg" being a new enclosure, abutting land already in his possession. William de Wystanescroft also held land in Nuthurst and this was sub-granted. ³³

One of the major disadvantages in using charters to study holdings is that they are apt to raise more questions than can possibly be answered. The picture of the de Wystanescroft family presented so far is one of well-to-do freeholders accumulating a several farmstead largely comprised of new land. An undated charter relating to Hampton in Arden, however, raises other issues for by this document William de Culy quit his claim of (.....?) son of Herbert de Hamtona, villein, to William de Wystanescroft for a consideration of 6s. This charter must raise the question of whether or not the de Wystanescrofts were villein owners. The answer is probably in the negative, since William may in fact have been acting as an intermediary in a manumission.

A comparable situation can be seen in a quit claim issued by Thomas Clark in connection with the emancipation of Walter Lovekyn of Shrewley discussed at a later point in this chapter.³⁴ The picture of a well-to-do freehold family appears valid, and they were plainly not of the small-landowner class for they own nothing that could be termed a small manor. The fact that they possessed a share in the common arable suggests that they were denizens of Tanworth taking advantage of the opportunities for expansion. Parallels exist between this holding and that of Gilbert Budde, there is the same process of accumulating several land until a house can be set up away from the village, and in both cases the evidence strongly suggests that this process resulted in the alienation of the common field holding of the family.

To the south-west of de Wystanescroft's farm lay an area that is termed in this essay 'Cherlecote' (Figure 49, Section 3) and which takes its name from a colonist who first appears in the abuttal of a charter granting waste land to William de Wystanescroft in c.1229-39 (T.69). His name suggests that Simon de Cherlecote was not indigenous to Tanworth, but possibly came from Cherlecote in the Avon valley to seek his fortune in Arden. Unfortunately, however, the possibility of the name Cherlecote appearing quite separately in Tanworth parish cannot be wholly excluded.

An examination of the holding accumulated by this family raises a number of interesting points, and provides further evidence towards substantiating hypotheses suggested by the holdings examined already. The earliest reference in the surviving charters is dated to c.1229-39, but a charter which may be earlier is enrolled in the

Archer survey of c.1446 and records that Simon de Cherlecote acquired land in Oldbury from Herbert de Coddebarrow.³⁵ Oldbury, as Figure 47 shows, appears to have been a portion of the demesne which at this date was leased. This, as has been suggested above, was one way in which a colonist could support himself while the reclamation of any new land he had purchased was in progress. || A later charter, dated to c.1280 (T.a127) shows that Joan, the widow of Walter, Simon's son, alienated twenty-four selions of common field arable, which in this case had possibly come into the family's hands in the same way, being acquired by Simon as a means of securing a foothold in the parish.³⁶ Simon was clearly successful in his venture, and it is a reflection of the status of the family that in c.1236-40 his son, Walter, married Joan, the daughter of William Archer. The marriage settlement is worth citing at length in view of the expansionist tendencies of the Archer family discussed in chapter 5. "All the land of the grantor (Simon de Cherlecote) in Tanworth, to hold to the said Walter and Joan and their heirs, saving service to the chief lord, thus, that the said Walter and Joan shall provide the grantor with all necessary food and necessities during his lifetime. The said Joan to continue to do this if the said Walter dies, and if the said Walter and Joan die without issue the said lands to pass to the heirs of the said Walter", (c.1236-40, T.94). It seems reasonable to conclude that Walter had deferred marriage until his father was of some age, and then taken over both the old man's welfare and the working of the holding. There is always a tendency when using source material such as this to read more into it than is strictly warranted, but it is tempting to see in the last clause a reflection

of Simon's appraisal of the expansionary ambitions of the Archers. If he did foresee this he was correct, for in c.1270-80 (T.a71, T.a72) Walter quit his claim of 20d., two iron horseshoes and one clove of gillyflower from four tenants and land in a place called "Wluesedish" (Whetedish ?) to John Archer II, and a William de Cherlecote, probably the son of Walter and Joan, granted to the same John Archer, a fishpond called Cherlecote Pool (c.1280-90, T.a126), land in Longmeduwe (c.1270-80, T.a73) and 2d. rent for land in Polfeld (adjacent to Cherlecote Pool, c.1270-80, T.a74). Ultimately the whole of the Cherlecote holding passed into Archer hands.

While the bulk of this early thirteenth century expansion appears to have taken place in the south-east of Tanworth parish, some grants of wasteland were also made in the north, in the Sponna area (Figure 47, Section 33), and further north at Aldershawes or Alreshawes (Figure 47, Sections 23 and 26). A number of contrasting holdings provide a picture of the development of these areas.

The holding of Richard de Alreshawe has been mapped with that of de Wystanescroft for the purpose of comparison (Figure 37A). The Alreshawe family take their name from the valley in which the original holding lay, which abounded in alder-thickets as the result of damp conditions due to seepage lines at the junction of the drift capping the ridge and the Keuper marl. They were related to the de la Coppes, a freehold family who helped open up the Sponna area further south, for Richard de la Coppe and William de Alrehawe were brothers, both being sons of Nicholas de la Coppe. The original settlement at Alreshawe was probably made

in the second or third decade of the thirteenth century, a charter of c.1270-80 referring to "the old land of Alreshawe" (T.a88). In c.1250 (T.109) Roger de Alreshawe was owning land in Betlesworth and his son Henry acquired from William de Alreshawe (son of Nicholas de la Coppe) what appears to have been the main holding. The full complexities of these transactions need not be discussed; suffice to say that Henry's son Richard inherited from his father the bulk of the Alreshawes holding mapped in Figure 37A.

While his father was still alive Richard acquired a cottage and five acres of waste from the Earl of Warwick for a rent of 26d., (20d. at 4d. per acre for the waste and 6d. for the cottage), suit of court and scutage when due (c. 1268-98, T.a25). The land was in two $2\frac{1}{2}$ acre blocks, one abutting the old Alreshawe holding, the other forming a separate block to the south-west (Figure 37A). When Richard inherited the main holding, possibly as late as 1290, he was left in possession of a compact several farm unit consisting, according to the Archer Survey of c.1500, of thirty-four acres of land, two acres of wood and four acres of meadow together with an unspecified amount of waste.

The examples of the holdings of Budde and Palmarius already cited show that even before 1250 the action of the land market had begun to complicate the structure of holdings, and this influence was felt increasingly during the second half of the thirteenth century and the first half of the fourteenth. Thus Richard de Alreschawe was able to double ^{his} holding between c.1290 and 1330 simply by acquiring land from other peasants. These additions are shown in Figure 37A and comprised, first, three acres of land, at least, between Countess Close

and the highway to Warwick, ³⁷ and secondly, a farm purchased piecemeal from Richard Gower between c.1290 and 1321, consisting of:

- a) a field called the Neweland granted in two separate portions lying on what must have been part of the northern extension of Dickens Heath (cf. Figure 22);³⁸
- b) land called le Gorsthull for which no charter evidence survives but which is mentioned in a court roll of Margery Archer when a charter, now lost, is specifically cited;³⁹
- c) a messuage and land with meadow, moor and pasture acquired in 1321; a piece of le Heyefeld; one piece of moor called Tottelmoose; one piece of meadow, abutting le Heyefeld; one piece of land; and finally 4d rent from Richard Attemedewend for a messuage held of the grantor.⁴⁰

These transactions, as Figure 37A clearly shows, placed Alreshawe in possession of two compact farms. He did not in fact acquire the capital messuage of the northernmost one from Gower, because in a case recorded in the court rolls in 1330 de Alreschawe claimed that William Gower, son of Richard, owed suit of court for the lands he, Richard Alreshawe, had purchased from William's father because William (Gower) still retained the capital messuage; rather surprisingly Gower agreed to this.⁴¹ Richard de Alreshawe's prosperity is well attested by the fact that he paid a tax of 3s. in the Lay Subsidy of 1327, and although he is known to have had at least two tenants,⁴² this relatively high taxation suggests that a large proportion of his holding was in fact "demesne". It is not without significance that the Alreshawe holding survives as a viable farm unit to the present day.

Although in the absence of late twelfth and early

thirteenth century charters such a contention would be difficult to substantiate, it appears probable that in this area of Tanworth parish the original nucleus of clearing was Old Betlesworth (Figure 36) clearly like Tanworth, of Anglo-Saxon origin. There is in this case, however, absolutely no indication of the presence of any common arable, and the importance of Betlesworth can only be demonstrated by inference. The Geryn family, for example, were building up a compact farm unit adjacent to Betlesworth and in a comparable way to the de Alreshawes. A charter dating to the second and third decades of the thirteenth century shows Roger son of Geryn, "of Betlesworth", holding part of the land that was ultimately to become Jerrings Farm, and in fact the farm of today was probably developed by 1300, the boundaries of the main unit remaining substantially unaltered for over six centuries.⁴³ While it would be unwise to base an argument on the statement "of Betlesworth", the reference is not without significance, and Roger son of Geryn may have been a tenant holding part of the older estate.

As might be expected not all of these early colonists prospered,^{for} in some cases there is clear evidence of them getting into financial difficulties and selling their holdings piecemeal to smaller freeholders. The holding of Henry de la Lee provides a good example of this process. In c.1200-10 (T.30) Henry de Ullenhale enfeoffed a Radulf de la Lee in a messuage and a croft formerly held by Godwin Carbonarius of him at La Lae. Radulf married Isabella, the daughter of William Archer, and their heirs, William, Thomas and John de la Lee all appeared to have possessed holdings in the south-east of Tanworth parish, in Section 4 (Figure 47), but because

this particular property, in contrast to that held by Henry de la Lee, survived throughout the middle ages as a compact block, and the few surviving charters only relate to inter-family transactions or the acquisition of small pieces of land, very few details relating to it are known. In common with the de Wystanescrofts the family possessed common field land which was sold in the mid-thirteenth century. For one member of the family, however, considerable information survives, namely, Henry de Lee. Although his relationship to the main line is not known, he was unquestionably owning property in Section 4 and is clearly associated with this family. There were in fact two Henrys, father and son, the father possibly being a younger son of Ranulph and Isabella. ⁴⁴

Henry de Lee, the Elder, established a holding on the basis of three grants which are indicated in Figure 37C; one of eight acres in Sponna from Henry, Earl of Warwick, in c.1204-29 (T.43), and two, one of six acres of heath, the other of three and a half, both in the same locality, from Earl Thomas in c.1229-39 (T.63, T.64). There is little doubt that most of this land was in fact waste land. In addition, Henry is known to have possessed "a certain wedge-shaped piece of land" (T.a38), and his complete holding involved the payment of rents to the value of 3s. 5d. The development of the area is best illustrated by citing the text of two charters, one the original grant of eight acres to Henry de Lee, the Elder, in c.1220-29 (T.43), the second the alienation of the same land by Henry, his son in c.1270-90 (T.a37):

1) "Thomas, Earl of Warwick to

Henry de Lee,
Eight acres in Sponna in Tanworth lying on each side

of the little river between Calvesleia and the road lying between Sponna and the land which belonged to Thomas de Aukeshawe and the great heath and the way lying between "frid"⁴⁵ and Sponna." (Rent 16d., i.e. 2d. per acre).

11) "Henry de Lee to

Nicholas de Lysterley,

Eight acres of land, with crops, in Sponna, beginning from the road leading from Betlesworth towards Henley and lying between the heath of Calvesley and the land held by John son of Nicholas (de Lysterley ?) and extending from a large birch tree on the ditch towards Calvesley as far as the bounds between the land which John son of Nicholas (de Lysterley ?) holds and the land which Thomas son of Roger the reeve (i.e. Thomas del Sponne, of villein origin) held of the grantor as it runs in a straight line, with hedges, ditches and all other appurtenances". Rent 2s. 8d. (4d. per acre). Consideration 10 marks.

It is clear that these two charters relate to the same pieces of land, and a number of points emerge; first, the considerable development of the area in the years between 1229 and 1270, a forty year period; secondly, the development of the Lee holding, reflected not only by the crops mentioned, but by the substantial consideration demanded, being fifty times the annual rent in 1270-90, and one hundred times the original rent, the change from 2d. to 4d. per acre reflecting rising land values; and finally, the alienation of the property indicates a new trend in the de la Lee holding in Sponna, its disintegration, for another charter shows Henry granting to Richard de la Sponne "all his land in la Sponna" for 13d. annual rent and a consideration of six marks and 12d. (c.1270-90, T.a39). He grants

the same Richard, for 6d. annual rent and a consideration of $2\frac{1}{2}$ marks, a wedge shaped piece of land; finally, to John Archer III, for a consideration of 5 marks, he disposes of all the rents held by him at Sponna from four free men, his sub-tenants; ⁴⁶

Richard de la Sponne	3s. 11d.
William de Sydenhale	8d.
Nicholas de Lysterley	2s. 8d.
Richard de la Coppe	1s. 6d.

As a whole, his sales of land brought in a total of £15. 14s. 8d.

These transactions could reasonably be interpreted as the sale of a holding for profit were it not for the presence of other evidence that appears to suggest financial difficulties. In 1303 Henry de Lee mortgaged to William Mallory of Botley "the Mill of Lee" (almost certainly Botley Mill on the Alne G.R. SP/145684) for 20s., and a quit claim of 1304 shows that this was never redeemed. ⁴⁷ This example of the disintegration of a freeholding is comparable, on a smaller scale, to the break up of the de Ullenhale estates, but the causes of this again remain obscure.

The charter evidence suggests, however, that this process of the disintegration of a free holding and its apportionment amongst small freeholders was not a common process, indeed the reverse was more normal, namely the absorption of a peasant free-holding by a small-landowner. The case of Nicholas de Lysterley provides a good example of this tendency, which seems to have become particularly common by the latter half of the thirteenth century. As has been demonstrated already in c.1270-90 (T.a37), Nicholas de Lysterley purchased eight acres of Henry de Lee's land and in c.1268-98 he added to this some four acres of waste from the Earl of Warwick. In 1290 he transferred

these four acres to his daughter Agnes (T.a143a) and these, if not all of his holding, were included in her grant to Robert de Sydenhale of "all the lands and tenements which formerly belonged to Nicholas de Lysterley" in 1311/12 (T.b26). Even the "certain land" de Lysterley granted to Simon de Mancetter for the rent of one clove of gilly-flower (c.1270-80, T.a97) was ultimately transferred, together with other land, to de Sydenhale as "all the tenement which the grantor (Simon de Mancetter) had by gift of Nicholas de Lysterley and Isabella his daughter" (c. 1290, T.a149). De Sydenhale never managed, however, to acquire the rents of the four free men, listed above, including the 2s. 8d. from de Lysterley, granted by Henry del Lee to the Archers, but he certainly acquired the entire holdings of three of these men, Nicholas de Lysterley, William de Sydenhale and Richard de la Coppe. As these acquisitions all took place after the Statute of Quia Emptores, de Lysterley, de la Coppe and William de Sydenhale lost their interest in the land, Robert de Sydenhale was substituted in the feudal ladder, and continued to pay the rents to the Archers.⁴⁸ The whole of the Sponna area ultimately passed to de Sydenhale and the descendents of the small freeholders who opened it up became merely his sub-tenants.

An even clearer example of the absorption of a small holding can be cited; in 1300 Roger atte Berne (Figure 39c) gave to his three daughters Edith, Margery and Emma a field of new land in Tanworth, new land no doubt reclaimed by him in the latter decades of the thirteenth century. The field had been reclaimed from part of Yeuelshawe (Ilshawe) Heath, and abutted Yeuelshawe slade (c.1300, T.a188, i.e. Ilshawe valley). Between 1317 and 1320

the whole of this field was gradually passed to Robert de Sydenhale, in small pieces.⁴⁹ The three women had divided the land between them and a close examination of the terminology of the charters suggests a series of unfenced strips, although these are not described as selions and probably contain several plough ridges. One certainly consisted of one and a half acres of land and it is probable that the original field was subdivided on the basis of the plough-ridges within it. Once again the de Sydenhales can be seen benefiting from the labours of a smaller man; it would be interesting to know precisely what pressures Robert was able to bring to bear to induce the three women to sell their holdings to him.

Sufficient examples have been cited so far for an attempt to be made to draw at least some of the threads together and begin to answer some of the questions posed at the beginning of this section, in particular the way new land was added to holdings and what effect this had on the tenemental organisation. The early examples, Budde, Palmarius, de Wystanescroft, and de Cherlecote, all clearly indicate the importance of the common field arable or the leased demesne to the early colonists, providing a springboard for the thrust into the waste and woodland. In the north of the parish it is possible that the estate of Betlesworth, of Anglo-Saxon origin, performed a similar function. By the second and third decades of the thirteenth century, however, the new severalties were becoming independent viable holdings, colonists were living on their farms, while, as was shown on Chapter 4, an increasing market in land, common and several, was making it easier for the newcomer to obtain a foothold. The influx of settlers suggested by Figure 25 and already discussed in Chapter 4 must be seen in the light of this development.

In the first half of the century holdings appear to have grown mainly by the addition of small pieces of land, but by the second half it was possible to acquire substantial properties on the land market, either whole or piecemeal, and although new land continued to be added its effects were diffuse, the increment going mainly to increase the size of existing holdings rather than to create new units. One factor, however, emerges above all others, namely, the importance of the peasantry in the reclamation of new land. As will be shown, except in Coleshill, all the evidence examined in Western Arden points to this conclusion. The demand for new land came initially from the peasantry.

The effects of the addition of this new land to existing peasant holdings was varied; while the earliest holdings were normally discrete, from the second decade of the thirteenth century onwards there was a clear tendency towards the creation of compact farm units, a trend clearly exhibited by the de Wystanescroft, de Arleshawe, and de Cherlecote holdings. Some landowners, however, appear to have been able to do this at a comparatively early date, and then took very little active part in the land market. Such a static holding is particularly difficult to examine because it is virtually impossible to differentiate between "dynamic" and static holdings, in a formal extent, and yet, by virtue of its character, the static holding leaves but little trace in the land charters. Figure 39A, however, shows four such holdings, the boundaries being suggested by a comparison of the surveys of c.1446 and 1500, with the 1842 Tithe Map. The four holdings which have been traced are "Brouns", "Warners", "Hethus", and "Wattures", and the charters clearly indicate that these properties

were already present in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. Brouns is the most completely documented; the land or part of it, was granted in c.1260 by Henry son of Henry de Ullenhale to Peter de Valle, who later sub-granted it to the Broun family (T.a10). In an undated charter (pre 1290) Robert de Ullenhale granted to Roger Broun "land on the heath either side of the entry to the said Roger's house," plainly an addition to the original holding.⁵¹

William son of Robert de Ullenhale added further land by granting $4\frac{1}{2}$ acres in Listerley Heath to Walter son of Roger Broun, and this is probably a portion of the property described as Listerley Field in c.1500 (Figure 39A). In c.1446 and 1500 this field was held by the Chantry Priest of Lapworth and the former survey states that he held a messuage with a field containing ten acres called Listerley Field formerly John de Listerley's and a piece of meadow formerly John Broun's."

In c.1280-1300 Peter de Valle granted to Richard de Fullwood 2s. 10d. rent which Walter Brun "used to pay" for the land which the said Walter and Hugh his brother held. Walter's son John Broun⁵² was in 1299 paying Margery Archer 7s. $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. rent for lands in Markspath and 2d. for lands in Tanworth and Umberslade, while in a court roll of 1330 he acknowledged one messuage, seven fields and other tenements held for a total rent of 12s. $8\frac{3}{4}$ d., scutage and suit of court, probably representing the entire holding mapped in Figure 39A. In view of the fact that no evidence exists for sub-tenants and that in 1327 he was paying 2s. 6d. Lay Subsidy it can be argued that John Broun was holding a substantial farm worked by his own and family labour.

The second of the holdings found in the same section in c.1500 (Figure 39A, Inset) is "Hethus" and at this date was also in the possession of the Chantry Priest of Lapworth. In c.1446 the same holding was described as "two messuages, half a carucate of land, two acres of meadow and two acres of wood, called Hetheland (the complete holding), formerly held by Simon and John de Hethe for a rent of 9s. 10d." A marginal reference relates to a court roll of 2 Edward III,⁵³ where it is recorded that Simon del Heth holds of the lord one messuage with various fields for scutage and suit of court, for which he pays a rent of 7s. 11d. to Master William Archer, for the latter's life. There is no doubt that this is the "Hethus" (i.e. Heath's) of c.1500, for in 1336 (21 April 1336, T.b195) Simon atte Heth demised to his three daughters "a grange called le Cornberne with an adjacent curtilage (stretching) as far as G^oatelane and a field called le Neweland in Tanworth." As the map shows G^oatelane abuts Hethus to the north.⁵⁴ Two other charters indicate (Figure 37A) that Simon had more land on the opposite side of the great Portway.⁵⁵ In common with John Broun he was in 1327 paying 2s. 6d. Lay Subsidy.

Less is known of the two remaining holdings, Wattures (Watiers) and Warners. The latter is probably the land for which Henry le Warner paid 3s. 8d. rent prior to 1346⁵⁶ and the holding probably has its origins in the messuage and six acres of land granted to Henry son of Roger le Warner in c.1290-1300 by Peter de Vale (T.a144), perhaps added to by a grant of $1\frac{1}{2}$ acres of waste from the Earl of Warwick in 1268-98 (T.a32). Wattures was plainly in existence in 1347 when John Watiers appears in an abuttal in this area.⁵⁷

It is probable that all of these holdings were created in the latter part of the thirteenth century, prior to 1290, and it is clear that the de Ullenhales had sub-granted to Peter de Valle a block of land that consisted largely of waste land, Listerley Heath and Hockley Heath, as Figure 18 suggests, may at this period have been continuous. Peter de Valle sub-granted this (at a rate of 4d. per acre cf. c.1290-1300, T.a144) to freeholders, who were able to purchase more land, some heathland and some cultivated to create compact holdings. The evidence for these properties is rather poor in quality, but the studies are valuable in that they do help to indicate the complexity of the colonising movement, and emphasise the dangers of assuming that the periods when seigniorial land-grants were taking place, i.e. 1229-39 and 1268-98, represent distinct phases of colonisation. Important as these grants were, in reality the process of reclamation must have been continuous. The land comprising the four holdings analysed above had initially been sub-granted to the de Ullenhales by the Earl of Warwick in the late twelfth century, and while the earliest evidence for a holding may date from the late thirteenth century, the area must have been developing over a half century prior to this. For example, Peter de Valle confirmed Henry le Warner in his messuage and six acres of land in c.1290-1300 (T.a144), but the text of the charter makes it quite clear that Henry le Warner had acquired this land from another man, who had formerly held of Peter de Valle's father, who first appears in the period c.1230-40. Objective proof is exceedingly difficult to obtain, but it is clear that the retrospect references in this charter carry the history of the holding back to the

middle of the thirteenth century, if not somewhat earlier.

Once again, these four examples emphasise the importance of the peasantry in the colonisation, the demand for new land comes from them, and it is clear that their hands were performing the labour of reclamation. Another significant fact is the persistence of the 4d. per acre rent demanded for waste, although in the case of the Warner holding it is coupled with a cash payment.

While the bulk of the peasant holdings so far examined have proved to be remarkably compact, a few do exhibit a more discrete pattern. For instance, John Elys, held property that was scattered throughout the eastern part of the manor of Monkspath and as Figure 39B demonstrates consisted of a number of distinct and separate units.

The original holding of the family (Figure 39B (1)), comprised $\frac{1}{8}$ th of a knights fee, for which 7s. rent and suit of court every three weeks was owed, and had been granted originally to William son of William Elys in c.1240-60 (T.106) by William Archer. In view of the fact that this grant was made before the purchase of Monkspath by the Archer family, this must be regarded as a particularly ancient freehold originally being in the possession of Roger Archer (chapter 5, Figure 28). To this property John Elys, in 1347, added a messuage and a curtilage lying adjacent to his house (Figure 39B, (2)).⁵⁸ These, together, constituted the main holding, but in addition John probably inherited, from his father Henry, a holding called Waynges Shelley (Figure 39B, (3)), proved to have been in Henry's possession by a gloss on the copy of the 1299 rental

found on the "Fourthe Rolle" citing a land charter now lost. Henry Elys was also holding property at la Lyth (Figure 39B, (4)), but disposed of this in 1318 (1 Jan. 1317-18, T.b70). A court roll of 25 Edward III (1351),⁵⁹ however, shows that John owned more land nearby on Middulmores Heath (Figure 39B, (6)), and the same roll indicates that John was holding property belonging to Nicholas Liber (Freeman). The survey of c.1446 confirms this, suggesting that this property was more extensive than the map indicates, other scattered parcels being associated with it. Finally, two abuttal references show that Henry was owning land at Longelane End (Figure 39B, (5)).⁶⁰

Two main points can be made concerning this holding, first, its late expansion, taking the form of the purchase of viable units from smaller men, and secondly, the result was an exceedingly discrete holding. Significantly, there is no evidence for sub-tenancies in this case, and in 1327, Henry Elys, possessing a holding that included elements 1, 2, 4 and 5 (Figure 39B) was paying 2s. Lay Subsidy.

Hoskins argues that such freeholds rated as fractions of a knight's fee are of very ancient origin.⁶¹ They are certainly a rarity in Tanworth, and the history of the Elys holding would appear to confirm that it was already in existence in the late twelfth century, at which period it was already in Archer hands.⁶² A clear distinction must be made between freeholds that were specifically created as a fractional part of a knight's fee and those upon which the duty of paying "scutage when due" was incident. The fractional fees probably all date from the twelfth century and may antedate the regular payment of scutage, while the

freeholds paying scutage all appear to be of thirteenth century origin.

All of the Arden peasants were not engaged exclusively in agriculture; for example, in 1328 William Broun was holding from the lord one messuage and a field for which he owed suit of court, fealty and six shillings rent per annum. This property lay at Brown's Green (Figure 48) and probably included crofts adjacent to the house, and, if it had not been alienated by 1328, common field arable.⁶³ He also held land in the south of the parish near Dunscroft (c.1290, T.a151) and in 1342 (21 July, 1342, T.b240) William quit his claim of a field of arable land with meadow and appurtenances called Brounrydyng, which appears to have been a portion of a larger Archer croft called Rydding.⁶⁴ The deeds reveal a moderately prosperous peasant, by no means a cottar, but not sufficiently wealthy to be assessed by the commissioners for Lay Subsidy. In 1342, however, William Broun "bound himself to John Archer in respect of 100s. for trading and was to make account thereof, upon sufficient warning, to the said John" (22 July, 1342, T.b241). The precise implications of this are by no means clear, "for trading" may be no more than a euphemism to disguise money-lending activities by the Archers, but the transaction may be quite innocuous Broun being empowered to act in some capacity for the Archers.

One of the more important members of the medieval community was the smith; and Elias Tapping is occasionally surnamed le Smethe, strongly suggesting that he followed this trade, a fact confirmed by the survey of c.1446 terming him "Elias Smyth alias Tapping." In spite of his being a smith he held a substantial holding (Figure 38C), paying 6s. 6d. rent for "all that tenement he held of

the fee of John Archer." The rent of his holding had been acquired by John Archer II in the late thirteenth century for considerations totalling $10\frac{1}{2}$ marks.⁶⁵ Some, if not all of his holding consisted of common field arable,⁶⁶ and in c.1300, Edith Tapping, the widow of Elyas, alienated six selions of land in Pinhull.

Not all of the peasants involved in the colonisation of Arden were free, for the Anglo-Saxon settlements had left behind a legacy in the form of a villein population, which as Figure 7 demonstrates were, in 1086, numerically the largest group. In common with the free colonists, villeins in Arden were able to take advantage of the opportunities available for economic and social advancement. The general effects of the freer conditions on villein rents and services were examined in Chapter 4, and it now remains to discuss some detailed examples.

The Servile Holdings.

The advantages of being a villein on a colonising manor can be briefly summarised as the payment of a high proportion of their rent in money and, conversely, labour services that were either light or virtually non-existent. Legally, however, it was not possible for a villein to exchange or alienate land by means of a charter, an instrument reserved for free men, and hence it was equally impossible for a villein to authenticate a charter with a seal. Work by Postan and Hilton⁶⁷ has shown, however, that in certain cases villeins were conveyancing by means of charters authenticated with seals. There is some slight evidence to suggest that Arden villeins were doing this, but as Stenton points out it is impossible to tell the social status of the maker from the form of the charter.

The Earl of Warwick, a free tenant, or a villein chartermaker, would all cast their document in the accepted common form and this makes it quite impossible to distinguish the charters made by villeins.⁶⁸ In view of this difficulty, the absence of an early rental showing the status of tenants in Tanworth is especially to be regretted.

From a set of charters preserved in the Public Record Office relating to Shrewley, the history of one villein family can be traced in some detail demonstrating how advantage could be taken of the freer conditions in Arden. In 1304 Walter Lovekyn of Shrewley was freed by the Lady of Shrewley, whose bondman he was, through an intermediary, Thomas Clerk (clericus) of Hatton, for a consideration of 18s.⁶⁹ He was free and quit of all bondage, together with a messuage, half a virgate of land and a croft of the "new waste" in Shrewley. This last was probably the piece of land he acquired by charter, lying adjacent to his tenement and for which he paid a consideration of 13s. 4d. and an annual rent of one penny. He also purchased, but before or after his manumission is not certain, six headlands, for a consideration of 5s. and the annual rent of one penny.⁷⁰ Walter Lovekyn's son Thomas, a freeman, was involved in some fifteen charters, all showing acquisitions to this original holding. It has not been possible to map these since they form an isolated sequence, and in the absence of detailed work on Shrewley, comparable to that for Tanworth, they cannot be located, but are summarised in chronological order as follows:-

- 1306/7 Demise for 9 years, from William Bromley
one croft. Conson. 5s. (A10903).
- 1307/8 Gift, from William Bromley, one croft,
Conson. 20s., 3d. rent p.a. to the chief lord.
(A8097).
- 1309 Gift, from John de Dufford, Lord of Shrewley,
one plot of land in the lane leading to
Thomas' house, to build an oven and a house
beyond it. Rent p.a. 1d. to chief lords.
(A11155).
- 1312 Gift, from John de Dufford, Lord of Shrewley,
all the lands and tenements held by Walter
his father, suggesting that Walter lived
till 1312. (A6354).
- 1312 Gift, by Thomas Lovekyn, to Hugh, son and
heir of Bartholomeu of Beausale of all his
goods, chattels and tenements in Shrewley,
which he had by the feoffment of Sir John
de Dufford. These were immediately granted
back by Hugh to Thomas and Anabilia, Hugh's
sister and it must be presumed that this is in
fact a settlement arising from the marriage of
Thomas and Anabilia. In addition Hugh granted
all his own goods, chattels and tenements in
Shrewley all transactions, taking place on the
same day. (A10216, A10215, A6355)
- 1313 Gift, from William de Alveston, of $\frac{1}{2}$ acre
of land in Shrewley field. (A9863).
- 1314/5 Gift, from William de Alveston, of $\frac{1}{2}$ acre of
land in Shrewley field, with a headland.
(A10283).
- 1315/6 Gift, from Warin Warde of Shrewley, of an
unknown amount of land lying dispersed in
Shrewley field (See below) (A6438)

- 1316/7 Quitclaim, by Agnes, the widow of Warin Warde, of her dower in six half acres (3 acres) of land in the field there (i.e. in Shrewley) which Thomas had by the feoffment of the said Warin, i.e. the land granted in 1315/6.
(A8190)
- 1316/7 Gift, from William de Alveston of Hatton, of three half acres ($1\frac{1}{2}$ acres) of arable lying dispersed in Shrewley field. (A7530)
- 1316/7 Gift, from John de Whitchurch and Agnes, his wife, of a messuage. (A8213)
- 1316/7 In 1321 Agnes, then a widow quits her claim of her right to dower in these lands
(9019).
- 1317/8 Demise for six years, from Joan daughter and heir of Warin le Warde, widow, of all the arable land with the moiety of her meadow, except le Dolemedewe, which she had in the fields of Shrewley by hereditary right after the decease of the said Warin her father; to hold from Michaelmas 11 Edward II for six years; the said Thomas during the said term to plough for fallow, relime and plough for sowing and to sow with his seed equally, for a moiety of the sheaves, and to find a moiety of the hoeing and reaping and she the other.
(A8236) 71.

In a period that can hardly have exceeded twenty-five years, and was probably nearer to fifteen or twenty Lovekyn added to his original half virgate holding a further five and a half acres and seven headlands of

common arable, together with meadowland, one messuage, three crofts, one of which was new, a plot of land, and in addition an oven. It is probable that prior to being freed Walter Lovekyn had already been leasing other land, of which no record survives, for he had certainly been able to accumulate the capital needed for his manumission. It is significant that this expansion appears to have taken place with the consent and help of the lord of the manor. Thomas Lovekyn duly appears in the Lay Subsidy for 1327 under the township of Shrewley, paying a tax of only six pence, implying that his moveables were only worth 10s., the taxable minimum.

This holding provides a good example of the engrossing of common field arable, a phenomena to be examined in detail in chapter 8. As was suggested above in the analysis of John Wodard's holding such land was possibly of value for grain production, in this case its fertility was being deliberately maintained by the use of lime, a necessary addition on the rather hungry soil of the Shrewley ridge.⁶⁶ The charters do not suggest why such land was needed, but the acquisition of extra arable and the building of an oven, probably a large oven, would suggest that the nearness of the urban market of Warwick provided Lovekyn with opportunities. It is possible that at certain points adjacent to the town more intensive forms of agriculture had developed, as early as 1086 there had been gardens at Cotan End to the east of Warwick, and an undated charter (13th century) relating to Hatton mentions three garden plots (P.R.O. A8893).

With a detailed study of this type the problem arises of how representative the particular example is. While

there is no doubt that Arden villeins were freer than those of South Warwickshire, there is no evidence for widespread manumission. It is, however, inconceivable that where possible villeins did not take full advantage of the opportunities offered by the frontier area, with its vigorous market in land. Some evidence for this is provided by a rental of 1349 relating to the lands of Lord Grey of Rotherfield in Solihull, which lists some ten persons of villein status.⁷³ Of these ten, however, only three are termed "villeins of the said lord, holding in bondage," the remainder being described as holding by court roll, i.e. copyhold. Seven out of the ten also had freehold tenements. One of the villeins, William Gerard was well-to-do, holding a messuage, with a croft and two fields, together with another field and paying a rent of 12s. 8d., and in addition he held a parcel (of common field land?) for which he paid one penny, owing leyrewyte and all services appertaining to villeinage (et alia sicut nativiis).⁷⁴ The free tenement lay in Shelley, and for this he paid the substantial rent, by freehold standards, of 7s. 4½d. It is extremely likely that he was holding yet more land from other landlords, but no proof exists for this.

The tenants holding by court roll constitute a problem; six held their land by the demise of Richard atte Coppe and Guy Breton, the properties plainly abutting one another, and three more were in the same locality, forming a compact block; they were all smallholders, and of villein status. They were not the villeins of Lord Grey but had all acquired part of a holding that had come on to the land market and been broken up, but it seems probable that in view of their villein status they were, in this particular instance, prevented from holding land by means of a charter, thus demonstrating

how arbitrary could be the whole process of villein "freedom"; it depended on the individual lord of the manor. ⁷⁵

Confused and susceptible to misinterpretation as this evidence is, it shows without doubt that on some manors villeins were able to take advantage of the freer conditions. William Gerad does not appear in the land charters, but such evidence as there is seems to point to the possibility that on Lord Grey's manor villein charters were not permitted. In any case, their legal value was small and it is only under exceptionally favourable circumstances that they were likely to survive. Solihull villeins seem to have owed few labour services, the "alia sicut nativii" seems to have been a mere form. Even on ecclesiastical estates there is evidence of villeins benefitting from new land being available; the Bishop of Worcester for example let assart land on freer terms, the freedom from heriot being the distinguishing characteristic of assart right. ⁷⁶ At Bushwood in Lapworth in 1299 of the twelve customary tenants of the Bishop, (who could be tallaged high or low at his will), seven held assarts for a money rent and minor services that varied greatly between individuals. In Wroxall, the villein and cottar tenants of the abbey were holding small pieces of new land for a money rent and "reaping services with one man". The pieces were all small, the largest being two acres, and were all within the capability of one family to develop. The demand for reaping services "with one man" suggests that some at least of the villeins were wealthy enough to have cottar undertenants. ⁷⁷

There is some evidence from Coleshill of villeins

engaging in land transactions; for instance, in a grant of rights in a meadow by Robert Lord of Wawre (Wavers Marston) he comments that the meadow in question was bought by Roger Hert of Marston, his bondman and serf from Robert Suner and Agatha his wife (W.D. 82). The situation in Coleshill is, however, rather different in that the manor was Ancient Demesne, villeins legally possessed more freedom, and ~~as will be shown in chapter 8~~ & some evidence exists for suggesting that the land in villeinage formed a compact block. ⁷⁸

The use of charter evidence to discuss villein holdings is made difficult by the problem of identification, for, as has been emphasised, the charters themselves give no indication of this, and it is necessary to work from the incidental references to villeins. Traditionally, the manorial reeve was of villein status, and the Reeve family of Tanworth appear to have been no exception to this. The earliest known member is Roger, (c.1210-20, T.39) whose son John is described as a villein (c.1229-1239, T.62) but was certainly holding a free tenement in addition to "land beyond Pirihull" (a retrospect reference c.1260-80, T.a15). In the early thirteenth century Ranulf, or Randolf son of Roger Reeve was granted by the Earl of Warwick to the Archer family (c.1229-39, T.62) and in the second half of the same century, John, son of Randolf called the reeve, by profession a carter, was manumitted by John Archer (pre 1290, T.asd8). Thomas, a second son of Roger, was holding land in two localities; first, adjacent to the demesne of the Earl of Warwick in the south of Tanworth, abutting the original holding of the Archer family, which can probably be interpreted as a portion of the demesne granted in the early thirteenth century to a manorial servant. ⁷⁹ Secondly, Thomas

possessed land in the centre of the parish, near Earlswood, at Sponna (Figure 38) held from Henry de Lee (c.1270-90, T.a37). The original charter has not survived but was present in c.1446 when it was transcribed. The property comprised half of the land lying in le Sponne between "the old ditch of Henry de Lee" and "the ditch made by Nicholas de Lysterley" and "in length from the said ditch on the west towards the same ditch formerly held by Thomas del Sponne son of Roger Reeve." Thomas del Spone, founder of the del Sponne family, is plainly of villein origin. In addition, there is the possibility that the "Reeve" family and the "de Umberslade" family are one and the same; a Roger de Umberslade was holding land in Sponna in c.1229-39 (T.59) and in c.1446 alongside the grant from Henry de Lee to Thomas del Sponne son of Roger Reeve is a grant from Henry de Lee to Thomas son of Roger de Umberslade. ⁸⁰

The course of events seems reasonably clear, the reeve of Tanworth, probably the Earl's reeve (c.1229-39, T.62), was able to acquire some freehold land. His son Thomas ⁸¹ inherited at least some of this land, possibly that adjacent to the demesne, together with more land at Sponna in the north, and was able to add to this by purchasing additional land from Henry de Lee. Although no formal manumission has survived it is probable that Thomas obtained free status, changing his name to de Sponne. His brother Ranulf on the other hand was granted by the Earl to the Archers and continued his father's career as a manorial servant (prepositus), and Ranulf's son, John, was later manumitted by this family. It is possible that this branch of the family may have also been known as "de Tanworth", a Roger son of Randolf de Tanworth was certainly acquiring more land in c.1300 (T.a177, cf. c.1270-80, T.a74).

This particular example of a villein family taking advantage of the opportunities offered by the availability of new land antedates the case of the Lovekyns of Shrewley cited above by at least half a century. Evidence of another kind, however, comes from a group of charters relating to another Tanworth family. In c.1240-60 (T.111) William son of William Waryng granted to John Archer "lord of the said William", a certain piece of meadow to enlarge his fishpond. William Waring, or William son of Waring (c.1230-40, T.77) appears to be the son of Warin Mappel. Warin Mappel and his son, William (son of Warin) were plain villeins (c.1210-20, T.29, c.1240-60, T.105) but there is no evidence of them being emancipated at any stage. It is significant, however, to find that in c.1240-60, William son of William Waring was authenticating his charter with John Archer by means of a seal carrying the inscription "William son of Warin" (S'WILLMI·F' WAR(I)N). Either William son of Warin was emancipated and no record survives, or this is an example of a villein entering into a contractual agreement with his lord. Since the grant to which this seal is appended refers to John Archer as "lord of the said William" (son of William Waryng), the latter case appears to be the more probable. Two examples of manumissions by the Archers are known, one, of John son of Randolf the Reeve already cited, the other, of Roger son of Roger Tole in c.1290 (T.a146), but there is certainly no evidence that this practice was widespread.

In conclusion, although few concrete comments can yet be made on the nature of villein farms, in most cases the evidence is too limited, and no single example has in fact been mapped, it is possible to say that in some parts of Western Arden villeins were able to take advantage of

the freer conditions to raise their social and economic status. It is clear, nevertheless, that this process was very uneven, in character and distribution, and a distinction is observable between the freedom on the non-ecclesiastical manors and the conservatism on the ecclesiastical estates, as Figure 14 and 15 amply demonstrate. Arden lords, particularly lay lords, were anxious to acquire new tenants to fell trees and open up new areas of cultivation, and with a predominantly money economy developing in such areas it comes as no surprise to find both lords willing to sell, and villeins willing to purchase, freedom. It is possible that no small proportion of the persons who migrated to areas such as Tanworth were originally of villein status, who obviously would not reveal their true status. Arden lords in turn, would not be too anxious to insist on a knowledge of their new tenants' status.

In view of the abundant material available for Tanworth it is singularly unfortunate that no detailed extent survives for the manor. A full extent, giving the name, holding and rent of each tenant does, however, survive for another of the Earl's demesne manors, Claverdon, attached to the Inquisition post mortem of 1315. The main distinction between the two manors is that Tanworth is substantially three times larger, and that in Claverdon a lower proportion of the total income was derived from free rents, 42-45% as opposed to 62% in Tanworth. An analysis of this document, however, does throw considerable light on the general pattern of peasant holdings in an Arden manor and their stratification, and provides the basis for using some of the rather intractable Tanworth material comparatively.

Thirteen villein tenants are listed, each holding half a virgate for which the majority owe rents and

services to the value of 5s. 4d. Five of them possess further land for which they pay free rents, one paying one penny, two paying five pence, one 29d. and one 3s. 8d. and in all but one instance suit of court was owed. The apparent regularity of these villein holdings may be a distortion of reality, the extent gives no indication of the degree to which alienation and sub-granting had taken place. However, in view of the fact that in only one case is a villein's freeholding large enough to constitute a separate farm, it is possible that in this instance these formal holdings do in fact reflect reality, and the regular pattern can, therefore, be contrasted with the irregular villein holdings in the Solihull rental.

Seventy free tenants are listed at Claverdon paying money rent; of these 17% (12) are not described as owing suit of court for any part of their holding, six are villeins holding some free land, and another two appear in the list of cottagers. Some 43.5% of these free tenants pay below 11d. rent per annum, 22% between 1s. and 1s. 11d., 13.5% 2s. - 2s. 11d., 8.5% 3s. - 3s. 11d., and 12.5% over 4s. If the rents are considered to be at the rate of 4d. an acre, a reasonable assumption in the light of the evidence cited in Chapter 3, then these rents represent something over 400 acres of new land. This contention is supported by a half illegible marginal note below the heading "Rents of the free tenants" which appears to say "and the cottagers (?) who (ci=cui=qui?) rent new land", three final words being quite distinct. The extent reveals a series of freeholdings, irregular in size, having no regular incidents of tenure and a relationship with the Earl that was entirely pecuniary in character. Had a full extent of Tanworth been drawn up there is little doubt that it would have been very similar in form for it is evident that a comparable

colonising movement was taking place in Claverdon. In particular, a charter dated 1251 between Ela, Countess of Warwick and the Monks of Bordesley Abbey, Worcestershire, refers specifically to "the purprestures and assarts made by the Countess and her men in the common of pasture", clearly indicating individual colonisation of the waste by freeholders.⁸³ Those holdings not owing suit are normally very small and probably form part of a tenement for which suit is owed from another portion, as in the case of the Gower holding in Tanworth in the hands of the de Alreshawes cited above. This would seem to imply the presence of a land market behind the formal facade of the extent.

Claverdon differs from Tanworth, however, in one particularly significant respect, there are no indications of the presence of the small landholder class. Three tenants paid over 5s. rent, but on analogy with Tanworth these can only be regarded as large freeholdings. The Priory of Pinley paid 17s. 10d., but although this holding may be of comparable size to a small manor it is different in character. One of the diagnostic features of small landowners in Tanworth is their association with areas of the parish that bear their names, de Sydenhale or de Fulwood for example, and a similar situation prevailed in Solihull. The only comparable situation in Claverdon is at "Crudeshale" or "Curdeshale" where a family of some substance held a several holding from the early thirteenth century onwards, some of which they granted to Pinley Nunnery.⁸⁴ The property lay to the north-west of Yarningale common and clearly spread into Preston Bagot, for in 1327 Nicholas de Crudeshale is recorded in Preston Whiteley paying 4s. 9d. Lay Subsidy, the largest amount of tax paid by one individual and far exceeding

any paid in Tanworth.

Hasely, the other manor of the Earl of Warwick for which a full extent exists exhibits the same general pattern as Claverdon, but here the social differentiation of the peasantry seems more marked; 30% of the 40 free tenants pay 11d. and below per annum, 25% 11d-1s. 11d., 15% 2s. - 2s. 11d., 10% 3s. - 3s. 11d., and 20% 4s. and above. Of the latter some 10% actually pay over 8s. Tenants are described as holding messuages, which may be interpreted as house and land, cottages, crofts and pieces of land. In five instances the property is described in virgates, suggesting the presence of common arable, and in two instances waste or new land are specified, while in ten cases (25%) cottages only are held. With the exception of five persons, all the tenants owe suit of court, and the exceptions, as far as can be ascertained (parts of the extent being illegible) are those people who own land but no dwelling.

It is clear from these examples that the picture of peasant holdings provided by extents is, in an area where a vigorous land market existed, such as Arden, a purely arbitrary picture resulting from the statement of the lands, rents and services, associated with one particular lordship. The Tanworth material demonstrates that behind the formal pattern of the extent lies an incredible complexity of tenancies and sub-tenancies, but when these are analysed and mapped the result is often a surprisingly compact farm unit. The pattern of tenancies was indeed so complex that a Tanworth rental of the early fifteenth century was compelled to state "Concerning the lands of John, son of Thomas Dolphyn, it is not known where they lie and who may hold them, and they pay in rent per year according to the old rental iijs.".

When the holdings are studied using land charters the complexity of the tenurial relationships makes generalisations such as those for Claverdon and Haseley exceedingly difficult and prevents an objective comparison of the social stratification from manor to manor. In order to attempt to view the Tanworth peasantry as a group rather than individuals the data appearing in the surviving early fourteenth century court rolls was analysed.⁸⁵

In the five court rolls for Tanworth and Umberlade dating between 1328-1330 some twenty-seven separate tenants appear, and in twenty-one cases some details of the holdings are recorded. All owe money rent, sums ranging from as little as 2d. to 17s. 8d. Some 21% pay below 11d. per annum, 27% 11d. to 1s. 11d., 7% 2s. - 2s. 11d., 7% 3s. - 3s. 11d., 3% 4s. - 4s. 11d., and 35% over 5s., in Monkspath, the comparable figures for Tanworth and Umberlade being 25%, 15%, 10%, 5%, 15% and 30%.²⁸ Table A clearly shows that the social differentiation of the peasantry was stronger in Tanworth than either Claverdon or Haseley, and free tenants were on the whole wealthier.

TABLE 28

Differentiation of the Peasantry in Tanworth, Monkspath, Claverdon and Haseley in the early 14th century on the basis of rent (%).

	11d and below	1s - 1s 11d	2s - 2s 11d	3s - 3s 11d	4s - 4s 11d	5s +
Tanworth	25.0	15.0	10.0	5.0	15.0	30.0
Monkspath	21.0	27.0	7.0	7.0	3.0	35.0
Claverdon	43.5	22.0	13.5	8.5		12.5
Haseley	30.0	25.0	15.0	10.0		20.0

(The figures for each manor record the %
of rents in each category.)

In the absence of detailed extents it has not proved possible to produce comparable figures for any other manors, but on the basis of the figures provided by Inquisition post mortem Table 28 has been compiled, and this suggests the strong links between peasant freedom and economic prosperity.

TABLE 29

Average freehold rents on certain Arden manors.

	Average free rent.	% freehold rent/ total income.
Claverdon	2.1s.	42-45%
Haseley	2.5s.	44%
<u>Tanworth</u>	4.6s.	62.5%
Berkswell	2.2s.	22.5%
Lapworth	4.8s.	High % ? (Damaged extent.)
Maxstoke	3.0s.	43.0%
Solihull	4.9s.	78.0%

While many individual irregularities occur, when the holdings described in the Tanworth court rolls are examined as a group, and the common denominators defined, the chaos assumes some order; all pay a money rent, all owe suit of court, (generally for that holding upon which their dwelling house stands), and the majority of the tenants are freemen. Many owe heriot and many more owe relief, but no explanation can be offered for the incidence of these, indeed such an explanation lies beyond the scope of this essay. The intricate patterns of reality can be formalised, and the scribe could well have written of the Tanworth free peasantry as he wrote of those of Claverdon "De Letitia la Warner .ij.d. De Reginald de Strake .xvj.d. & .ij. sectam. ----- De Thomas Bygod .viiij.d. & sect'."

The whole problem of the nature of peasant holdings

is complicated because a man who appears as little more than a cottar in the survey of one lordship could in fact be holding property of considerable extent elsewhere; Simon de la Hethe for example certainly owed suit to the Earl of Warwick's court at Tanworth, but was paying a rent of 7s. 11d to John Archer for lands held from him. This sum would never appear in a formal extent of Tanworth manor. Figure 10 shows the pattern of overlordships; in an area such as Arden where the bonds of society were, by the mid-thirteenth century, already largely pecuniary it was possible for non-feudal institutions to develop within this framework of feudal organisation.⁸⁶

It is now possible to present some conclusions on the four problems indicated at the beginning of this chapter: First, with regard to the addition of new land to existing holdings and its effect on the tenemental organisation; initially the common field arable and leased demesne were of considerable importance, providing the base from which colonisation could take place. It is clear that the bulk of new land was brought into cultivation by the peasants, and that the demand for new land came from them. This new land, acquired frequently by direct grant from the lord, was at first appurtenant to an older holding, but by the early to mid-thirteenth century farmsteads were being established away from the old nuclei. The development of a land market frequently resulted in the alienation of the original common arable holding, causing the breakdown of any regular tenemental system, and the establishment of a series of freehold severalties often exhibiting great complexity of tenurial relationships.

Secondly, the acquisition of waste land some distance from the common arable nuclei created at first a series of

rather discrete holdings. Once a foothold had been established in the waste the alienation of unwanted more distant properties and the resulting land market led ultimately to the creation of compact farm units, although some discrete holdings did persist. This process continued throughout the period, and is clearly illustrated in Tanworth by the survey of c.1446, when a tenant at this date might be holding as many as a dozen small freeholds, which at an earlier period were separate farms. By the third decade of the thirteenth century yet more new land was appearing on the land market permitting greater flexibility in the reorganisation of holdings.

Thirdly, the short term changes resulting from the action of the land market are demonstrated by the whole of the chapter and by the whole situation in Arden as indicated by chapter 4. Peasant colonists migrated to the Arden area, and were able to acquire holdings and so upgrade their social and economic status. Over a larger term, the period 1150 to 1350, there was a clear tendency, revealed by chapter 5, for the richer peasantry to use the land market to create large consolidated holdings, the smaller freeholders losing their initial independence and becoming mere sub-tenants of these wealthier small-landowners. While it would perhaps be an overstatement to say that there was a steady depression of the middle and lower ranks of the peasantry, there was an undoubted tendency for the well-to-do to become richer and the smaller men to become their tenants. This fact cannot be brought out by any analysis of the charters, because it is impossible to objectively distinguish between a freeholder to freeholder transaction and a landlord to tenant transaction, but this point is best illustrated by the change in character of

the transactions in which the Archer family were involved in the period 1299-1349, (Figure 31; compare Figures 28, 29, 30).

Fourthly, the result of these changes was the emergence of a stronger social and economic differentiation of the peasantry, the emergence of the small landowner class and the beginnings of new tenurial relationships in the form of the development of limited tenures, for life, for a term of years and at the lord's will.⁸⁷

These conclusions are comparable with those reached by Kosminsky working with the Hundred Rolls,⁸⁸ and it is remarkable to find that quite independently, on the basis of a very different class of evidence, and using very different techniques, he outlines comparable developments to those described in the last two chapters. One point must, however, be stressed, of all the persons mentioned in the Tanworth charters between 1300 and 1350 some 63% only appear in one charter and 32% in two to five charters. Thus, only a very small proportion of the total number of holdings can be studied in detail, and there is an unavoidable tendency for these to be the larger, better documented properties. The author is of the opinion that the 350 Tanworth charters surviving between 1300-1350 represent no more than between 10-25% of the total number made.

This study of peasant holdings clearly suggests that as a result of the colonising movement folk were moving away from early established nuclei of settlement and establishing isolated farmsteads set amid the newly reclaimed fields. Before considering the economic basis of the colonising movement in some detail, the character of the Arden settlements must now be considered in more detail.

The Peasant Holdings. Notes & Footnotes.

- (1) E.A. Kosminsky, Studies in the Agrarian History of England in the thirteenth century, (1956) pp. 197-8;
R. Lennard, Rural England, 1086-1135, (1959), p. 339 et seq.
- (2) D. R. Denman, Origins of Ownership, (1958) pp. 118-120.
- (3) E.A. Kosminsky, op.cit. pp. 211-214.
Brooke and M.M. Postan, "Cartae Nativorum" Northamptonshire Record Society, vol. 20, (1945-6), Introduction, pp. xxviii-lviii, in particular p. lviii.
J.Z. Titow, "Some Differences between Manors and their Effects on the Condition of the Peasant in the Thirteenth Century," Agricultural History Review, Vol. X (1962), Part 1, pp. 1-13.
- (4) J.Z. Titow, op.cit. pp. 3-4.
- (5) J.B. Harley, Population and Land Use, 1086-1300.
- (6) F.M. Stenton, Documents Illustrative of the Social and Economic History of the Danelaw ("Danelaw Charters") (1920), Introduction, pp. xiii-cxxxviii, where an entirely heterogeneous collection of twelfth century charters are used to throw light on tenurial, economic and social conditions prevailing in the Danelaw.
- (7) E.A. Kosminsky, Studies, p. 224.
The problems of the unreality of the formal patterns presented by manorial extents are discussed by C.N.L. Brooke and M.M. Postan (eds.), "Cartae Nativorum", Northamptonshire Record Society, Vol. XX (1945-6), pp. xli and lviii.

- (8) P.R.O. C134/49-51.
- (9) Archer Colln. St.on A., Tanworth, 19 Sept 1322
T.91; B.M. Add. Mss. 28024, 103r.
- (10) Note that in c.1220-1230 (T.a45) Budcroft was
part of a holding with common field land in Helde
(Budhelde), (c.f. John Wodard's grant to de
Barneville, c.1270-90, T.a55) which holding also
had land in Longmedwe. Belonging to Gilbert
Budde originally this holding is examined in some
detail below.
- (12) Although no conclusive proof can be cited it is
probable that William was the son of John Wodard,
a point to be examined later in the chapter.
- (13) The $8\frac{1}{2}$ acres was later known as Marlefeld,
cf. 18 July 1347, T.b274, 29 May 1407, etc.
- (14) This land is vaguely described, but the abuttals
seem to suggest the north of Tanworth manor, and
since in the likely locality the Archer survey of
c.1500 records the feld name "bellun" it is
probable that the location on Figure 37B is correct.
- (15) A wife's right to a life tenancy of her husband's
lands after his death was called dower, and this
consisted of the right to one third of the lands
of which her husband was solely seised during the
marriage. This rule, probably orginating in
the military tenures, but spread into socage tenure.
See A.W.B. Simpson, An Introduction to the History
of the Land Law, (1961), pp. 65-6.

- (16) There is no evidence for the decline or persistence of co-aration in Tanworth, it may well have survived in the common fields even after the regular tenemental system had decayed; if so, such land may have required less expenditure of time and energy to cultivate than the severalties.
- (17) This one entry must raise certain questions concerning the status of John Wodard. The deeds provide a clear picture of his holding, a picture that places him securely among the ranks of the well-to-do peasantry, but this one reference to him performing a task of some responsibility raises doubts as to the reliability of the evidence. The most likely explanation is that Wodard had been a manorial servant of the Earl, in Tanworth, possibly even the bailiff in charge of the Earl's demesne, indeed the name "Woodward" implies an officer appointed to safeguard the lord's woods and plantations. (H.S. Bennett, Life on the English Manor, 1960, Cambridge, p. 182).
- (18) Bodleian Library, MSS. Top. Warwick, C1. A comparable situation occurred in the cases of the Archer and the de Fulwood lands.

John Wodard the Elder

/	/	/	/
(1) William	(2) John the Younger	(3) Etc.	(4)
(Main holding)	(Assart land)		

- (19) J.F. Willard, Parliamentary Taxes on Personal Property, 1290-1334, Cambridge, Massachusetts (1934) especially pp. 73-85.

As a result of this situation in areas where sub-granting was frequent it is particularly dangerous to use Lay Subsidy payments as an indication of prosperity, the small-landowners were taxed for no more than their "demesne" farms.

- (20) A.L. Poole, The Obligations of Society, (1946), p.10.
- (21) Archer Collection, St.-on.A. Tanworth, c.1184-1204, T.9.
- (22) P.N.D. Warwickshire, p. 292.
- (23) He is variously described as Gilbert fitz Robert, Gilbert Budde and Gilbert Freeman, but a close examination of the charters leaves no doubt that only one person is involved. The compiler of the Archer survey of c.1446 clearly thought they were one and the same, as did the compiler of the 1299 rental copied by Sir Simon Archer (Bodleian Library, MSS. Top. Warwick, c.1.)
- (24) This phenomena is discussed in M.M. Postan, "The Chronology of Labour Services," Trans. Royal Historical Society, 4th Series (1937), vol. 20, pp. 169-93.
- (25) The name Wystanescroft was shortened to Wystan in the late thirteenth century, and Bishop Wulfstan's Register at Worcester (St.on A. Saunders MSS. Tanworth, pp. 56-59, citing Reg. Wolstan, v.1. f.396) in the record of the appropriation of the Church and Parsonage of Tanworth to ~~Luxstoke~~ Luxstoke Priory in 1342 it is recorded that "the sayd vicars for the tyme being shall have and receve an yearly rent of ijs. vjd. to be payd for the lands and tenements

of Thomas Wyston, the wch. was granted of old tyme for that purpose and entent." This without doubt refers to Wystanescroft, the location of which, suggested by the charters, is confirmed by the presence of the field name "Wistons" appearing in 1825 on a sale catalogue of the Umberslade estates to be found in the Birthplace Library at Stratford upon Avon. In 1842 the field, called Twelve Acre Close is 14 acres Or. 28 p. in extent (T.A.1671).

- (26) Of the twenty-nine acres, $4\frac{1}{2}$ paid a rent of $13\frac{1}{2}$ d. or 3d. per acre, but the fifteenth century copy which records the grant of $24\frac{1}{2}$ acres from Earl Thomas (c.1229-1239, T.69) demands a rent of £8 and a consideration of 20s. Plainly there is an error, but no obvious explanation fits the known facts.
- (27) Archer Collection, St. on A. Tanworth, c.1280-1300, T.a115, c.1270-80, T.a78 and cf. c.1270, T.a99).
- (28) Archer Collection, St. on A. Tanworth, c.1298-1315, T.a158; 6 Oct. 1311, T.625; 16 Jan. 1322-3, T.693; 12 June 1328, T.6132.
- (29) Examples of this occur sporadically throughout the charters; in 1236-40 (T.94) Simon de Cherlecote granted all his land to Walter his son; in 1332 Walter atte Hethe of Lapworth granted Geoffrey his son and Agnes Geoffrey's wife all his "existing goods and chattels moveable or immoveable except only such draught-horses, colts, oxen for the plough and heifers

as may sustain me by their labour in honour and comfort so long as I shall live." (Lapworth Charity Deeds, B.R.L. No. 184962 12).

- (30) The original twenty-nine acres of waste would have been sub-divided probably into units of 2-4 acres, so that taking into account other acquisitions the nine separate pieces named need cause no problems. The fact that the holding did not break up during the period prior to 1350, but survived as a unit, would explain the absence of other charter references to these particular closes.
- (31) The economic significance of this charter will be examined in chapter 8. The significance of the field 'a forn the dore' is not known.
- (32) Archer Collection, St. on A. Nuthurst, pre 1290.
- (33) Archer Collection, St. on A. Nuthurst, pre 1290, where Alice d. of Stephen de Nuthurst quits her claim to William de Wystanescroft of all that land Stephen her father held from William.
- (34) P.R.O. Anct. Deeds, A8184, A8269, A9856, A9718, A9637. The last four of these charters are all issued in connection with a manumission through an intermediary and it is likely that A9856, the release by Thomas Clerk, the intermediary, of all his right and claim against the said Walter by reason of purchase (ratione empcionis navietatis sue) is a precise parallel to the document involving de Wystanescroft.
- (35) Archer Collection, St. on A., Archer Survey of c.1446, under Simon de Cherlecote. Cf. c.1220-29, T.46.

- (36) It is exceedingly difficult to decide if a particular family is in fact indigenous to Tanworth or from outside. In the case of the de Wystanescroft's, since they do appear to take their name from the croft, it has been assumed they are denizens of the parish, but some doubt must remain. Clearly as the name Cherlecote suggests an immigrant, the place name "cottages of the churls" (P.N.D. Warwickshire, p.250) need not necessarily be derived from the parish of that name.
- (37) Archer Collection, St. on A. Tanworth, c.1290-1300, T.a148; c.1293, T.a152; 29 Sept. 1293, T.a153; 18 Mar 1329/30, T.b146.
- (38) Archer Collection St. on A. Tanworth, c.1290-1300, T.a147; 11 Nov 1314, T.b36; an undated court roll of Margery le Archer, c.1299-c.1315 (?) (Bodleian Lib. MSS. Top. Warwickshire C1, 33r) states unequivocally that the first piece of Newland was bought (perquisivit) from Richard Gower.
- (39) Bodleian Lib. MSS. Top. Warwickshire C1, 33r.
- (40) Archer Collection, St. on A. Tanworth, 28 March, 1321/2, T.b90.
- (41) Archer Collection, St. on A. Tanworth, Court Rolls, Markspath Tue. 26 June, 1330, cf. Bodleian Lib. MSS. Top. Warwickshire C1, 41r.
- (42) Archer Collection, St. on A. Tanworth c.1290-1300, T.a148; and 28 March 1321/2, T.b90.
- (43) Archer Collection, St. on A. Tanworth c.1210-20, T.40; c.1250, T.109; c.1250, T.a1; c.1268-98,

Ta24; c.1268-98, T.a30; c.1280-90, T.a125; c.1300, T.a188; 15 Feb. 1310/11, T.b23; 17 July 1317, T.b67; pre 1290, T.Add a6. The property is described in the Archer Survey of c.1500 in Document C under the lands of William Benford, in Document Di, the property of Simon Benford, and in Dii under Benford.

- (44) The argument for there being a father and son called Henry can be outlined as follows; Henry de la Lee first appears in a charter dated c.1220-29, and a man of the same name appears in charters dated c.1229-39, c.1270-90 and 1300-1304. He was dead by 1324 when his widow was mentioned. Clearly if one man was involved he lived a remarkably long time, even if errors of dating occur. The most feasible and simple explanation of these facts is that there were two Henrys, father and son, the hiatus in deeds between c.1239 and c.1270 representing the change.
- (45) The author is of the opinion that "frid" lay in the south of section 37 or 38. See Archer Collection, Tanworth, c.1229-39, T.54; c.1229-39, T.56, T.57; c.1240, T.74.
- (46) Archer Collection, St. on A. Tanworth, c.1270-90, T.a38, T.a42, T.a43. The grant to John Archer III is the reason for the survival of the early charters relating to this holding, Richard de la Sponne's holding appears in the Archer survey of c.1446 and the survey of c.1500 lists the rents in document Bi.

- (47) Archer Collection, St. on A. Tanworth, 4 Aug. 1303, T.612; 2 March 1303/4, T.613, cf. 8 March, 1322/3, T.697; c.1287-8, T.a141; 1324-5, T.6108; 3 Oct. 1325, T.6121. M.M. Postan in "Cartae Nativorum", Northamptonshire Record Society, vol. XX (1945-6), p. lvii discusses what is termed a "beneficiary lease" a lease accompanying a loan of money, by which the creditor became the lessee and thereby claimed not only the security for his loan, but also payment of principle and interest out of the land's income.
- (48) Archer Collection, St. on A. Tanworth, c.1280-1300, T.a110; c.1300, T.a110. The Archer survey of c.1500 (Document Bi) indicates that de la Coppe's land was acquired.
- (49) Archer Collection, St. on A. Tanworth, 24 April 1317, T.663; 16 April 1318, T.671; 23 July 1318, T.673; 4 June 1318, T.672; 6 July 1320, T.677; 9 June 1320, T.676.
- (50) The Coleshill evidence is examined in chapter 3, where evidence is presented for seigniorial assarting on a substantial scale.
- (51) The land is described as "descending from the highway from Henley to Birmingham".
- (52) P.R.O. Anct. Deeds, A10669, (T. Add b8).
- (53) In view of the fact that his holding was in Markspath it is surprising to find Broun paying suit to a court in Tanworth (Thur. 9 June, 1328) in spite of the fact that separate courts were being held. No reason for this peculiarity can be suggested.

- (54) Archer Collection, St. on A. Archer Survey, c.1500, Document Bi; 13 May 1332, T.6167; 30 Sept. 1347, T.6288, 8 July 1349, T.6315.
- (55) Archer Collection, St. on A. Tanworth, 29 Sept. 1309. P.R.O. Anct. Deeds, A.10669.
- (56) Archer Collection, St. on A. Tanworth, 27 Sept. 1346, T.6278, (cf. 8 May 1349, T.6307).
- (57) 30 Sept. 1347, T.6288; 8 July 1349, T.6315.
- (58) Archer Collection, St. on A. 14 Nov. 1347, Add 617.
- (59) Bodleian Library, MSS. Top. Warwickshire, C1, 50v.
- (60) 29 Sept. 1309, T.617; P.R.O. Anct. Deeds. A10669, (T. Add 68).
- (61) W.G. Hoskins, Devon (1954), p. 78.
- (62) See chapter 5.
- (63) Archer Collection, St. on A. Tanworth Court Rolls, Thur. 9 June 1328 (cf. Bodleian Lib. MSS. Top. Warwickshire, C1, 37r.); 2 Sept, 1308, T.616; c.1270-80, T.a83; c.1300, T.a172.
- (64) This is suggested by the abutments and the field boundaries on the Tithe map of 1842, (T.A. 1962, 1963, 1979). A memorandum on the reverse of the sketch map of the area by John Archer in c.1500 (Document Biic) suggests that the holding preserved its identity till this date, though added to and part of a larger unit.

"Memorandum that brouns meys wt ij croftes lyyng bytueyn a grounde caulde pyryhull and a greyn caulde brouns greyn in breyd in lenthe

bytueyn the fordrowe of Pyryhull and a growe of John Archerrus (Shepcote grove of c.1500, see Figure 44) Item ij croftus caulde brouns croftes lyyng bytweyn duncrofte and a grounde of John Archeres in the accures and accur meddo. Of Clarkesun." In the survey of c.1446 Thomas Clerkeson is recorded as holding Brouns tenement.

- (65) c.1270-80, T.a96; T. Add a17; T.a60;
c.1280-1300, T.a117.
- (66) c.1270-80, T.a75; c.1300, T.a172.
- (67) Brooke and M.M. Postan, "Cartae Nativorum",
Northants Record Society, Vol. XX (1945-6),
Introduction, pp. xxviii-xxxiv.
R. H. Hilton, "Gloucester Abbey Leases of the
Late Thirteenth Century", University of Birmingham
Historical Journal, Vol. IV, No. 1 (1953), p. 12.
- (68) F. M. Stenton, "Gilbertine Charters," Lincolnshire
Record Society, Vol. 18 (), Introduction,
pp. xxxiii-xxxiv.
D. C. Douglas in The Social Structure of Medieval
East Anglia (1927), pp. 85-6, discusses villein
contractual agreements.
- (69) P.R.O. Anct. Deeds, A8269, A9637, A9718, A9856,
cf. also A8184, probably some years earlier.
- (70) P.R.O. Anct. Deeds, A8699, A10982.
- (71) The summary of the texts of land charters provided
by the Descriptive Catalogue of Ancient Deeds
(H.M.S.O. Record Publications, 44-1024 Vol. No. O.
6 vols.) does not give abuttals and it has not
proved possible to examine the actual documents.
The summaries are, however, quoted in full and

provide some impression of the difficulties of unravelling the complexity of relationships revealed by the charters, and in this context no attempt is being made to locate the documents. The translations vary considerably, however, by no means always citing the rent and consideration. For this reason no attempt has been made to assess even the minimum expenditure by Thomas Lovekyn.

- (72) B.H. Slicher von Bath, The Agrarian History of Western Europe, AD.500-1850, states that there is no reference to marling in the (medieval) documents except in times of high cereal prices. It seems to have been fairly common practice, however, in Arden, the earliest reference appearing in Tanworth in c.1270-90 (T.a54). In this case the translators clearly thought that tone lime was meant (caketa ?). If so, the nearest supplies of this lay in the Feldon to the south-east of Shrewley, from the escarpment of the Lower Lias Limestone. This would seem to be an early reference, for Baxter's Medieval Latin Word List, cites c.1324 as the earliest reference to lime (p. 58).

- (73) Archer Collection, St. on A. Solihull, Rentals and Surveys; the document consists of five strips of vellum sewn together at the head, of which 1) 6.8" x 19.25", 2) 7" x 19.25", 3) 5.1" x 21.5", 4) 6.1" x 21.75" and 5) 9.25" x 30.0". Numbers 1 and 2 seem to be exact copies, and 3 and 4 are substantially the same. Number 3 bears the date E.III vicesimo secundo. On the reverse of 1 is what seems to be an unfinished bailiff's account.

- (74) Leyrwite or Leyrewyte was the fine imposed by the lord for incontineny, "whenever one of the bondswomen is unchaste of her body whereby my lord loseth the sale of her." The woman who lost her virginity was of less value, the market price paid for her would be lower and she was therefore fined for depreciating her lord's property ! H.S. Bennett, Life on the English Manor, (1937), pp. 217 and 246. A fuller discussion of this payment is to be found in G.G. Coulton, Medieval Village, Manor and Monastery, Harper Torchbooks, 1960 (originally 1925), Appendix 17, pp. 477-478, where it is clear that men were also subject. This payment is also found in Wroxall, P.R.O. Rentals and Surveys, No. 697.
- (75) It is possible that these men are in fact free men of cottar status holding villein land on somewhat favourable terms. Clearly they hold for a period of years, a life in all probability, a plot of land that is merely a cottar's small holding. They may in fact be free but landless farm labourers settled on an available holding subdivided for this purpose. The possibility is intriguing, but in the absence of further evidence cannot be developed. The situation may be compared with the granting of small pieces of demesne land to farm servants as shown by Postan ("The Famulus", Economic History Review Supplement, 2. pp. 15, 23, 36, et seq.).
- (76) M. Hollings, "Red Book of Worcester" Worcester Historical Society, 1934-50, Introduction, Part IV, p. vii, cf. the entries for Lapworth, pp. 254 and 480.

- (77) This is a problem that is worthy of greater attention, but insufficient information has been gathered to warrant a closer examination of this topic in Western Arden. The point is made by M. M. Postan in Cartae Nativorum, p. xl, and by Kosminsky in Studies, p. 79. A further example is to be found in Wroxall, (P.R.O. Rentals and Surveys, No. 697) where both villeins and cottars are expected to bring one man to reaping. This demand is also found at Claverdon (P.R.O. C134/51, C134/90(16)), Beausale (P.R.O. C134/90(16)) and Shirbourne (P.R.O. C134/49).
- (78) Birmingham Reference Library, Wingfield Digby Collection, No. 209.
- (79) See footnote 75 above.
- (80) This suggestion is based on no more than a feeling by the author. In c.1446 two deeds are cited with reference to Richard Sponne, both relating to Sponne; one mentions Thomas del Sponne son of Roger Reeve, the other mentions Thomas son of Roger de Umberslade, and both clearly lie in the same locality. Is coincidence to be excluded, or is this a case of one man going by several names? Was Thomas del Sponne attempting to avoid all traces of his humble origin by changing his name? No answer is possible.
- (81) While it has been generally assumed that primogenitive prevailed in the transactions discussed in this study, this was not necessarily the case. At Stratford there survives a series of notes in the hand of Sir Simon Archer headed, rather

incongruously "Greyhoundes and Houndes". They consist of a series of extracts from court rolls, and represent an attempt to summarise the customs of the manor, the first entry referring to the keeping of dogs. Citing a court roll of 1539-40 (31 Henry 8) Sir Simon notes "It' (i.e. Item) by the same court it (is) presented yt (that) where any customary tenant did dye the lande should discend to his youngest sonne as his heire", plainly indicating the presence of ultimogenitive or Borough English amongst the villeins of the manor.

(82) P.R.O. C134/51.

(83) P.R.O. Anct. Deeds, D150.

(84) E.G. Wheeler-Galton, Claverdon, (1934). MSS.
C.R.O. Warwick, p. 9.

W. Dugdale, Monasticon Anglicanum, ed. Caley, Ellis & Bandinel (1846), p. 114. See also the Wellstood MSS. Claverdon, St. on A. Birthplace Library.

(85) The originals of these are to be found in the Archer Collection at Stratford, but transcripts by Sir Simon Archer are to be found in the Bodleian Library, MSS. Top. Warwickshire, C1.

(86) Lay Subsidy rolls have proved of comparatively little use in producing this chapter. They are, it is clear, valuable for producing broad areal generalisations, but as R.E. Glasscock states ("Distribution of Wealth in East Anglia in the Early Fourteenth Century", Institute of British Geographers, No. 32 (1963), pp. 113-114) "it is an inescapable fact that every tax roll, medieval or modern, conceals the malpractices of both taxers and taxed." As has been suggested in

the foregoing chapters, when a list can be examined in detail it is clear that the amount of tax paid bears some relation to the size of the person's 'demesne', his own farm, but it is equally clear that other persons escaped taxation.

- (87) This point is illustrated by Table 20 in chapter 4, and is also examined by R.H. Hilton in "The Stoneleigh Leger Book", Dugdale Society, Vol. 24, Introduction, p. xxxviii.
- (88) E.A. Kosminsky, Studies, pp. 252-255.

SETTLEMENT FORMS AND PATTERNS

In recent studies of settlement two trends have been clearly evident, first, a greater awareness of the danger of arguments concerning medieval settlement forms based essentially on evidence derived from later periods, and the need for developing techniques for revealing what contemporary evidence can show concerning early patterns; secondly, the realisation that although certain forms may be old established features of a landscape, they are by no means static, and reflect closely the changing political, social and economic conditions of which they are a part.¹ This chapter is an attempt to isolate and examine the various forms of settlement that were present in Western Arden in the Middle Ages, and to place them in their chronological and socio-economic contexts.

It has long been recognised that within Warwickshire two major settlement regions can be recognised, the Feldon or "champion" country of the south and east, and the Arden or woodland zone of the north and west. In practice it was also possible, as early as 1086, to recognise certain refinements of these two major divisions, and the most important of these, from the viewpoint of the settlement geography of the county, is the great valley of the middle Avon, which divides Arden from Feldon. The river did not, as Leland thought, form a linear boundary between the two major regions, but rather formed a third major division itself, exhibiting certain regional characteristics not to be found either to the north or south.²

Post-medieval sources show that the characteristic form of settlement in south-eastern Warwickshire - the Feldon, was the nucleated village, often of substantial size, surrounded by open common fields which occupied the majority

of the township.³ An individual parish in the Feldon may consist of either one such unit, or of a group of two, three or more somewhat smaller units. While it is possible that some isolated farms may have been present in the middle ages, many of these can be proved to result from Tudor or eighteenth century enclosures of open fields. The Avon valley was also characterised by nucleations which on the whole tended to be somewhat smaller and more numerous than those of the Feldon. Once again open common fields predominated, but it is probable that in parts of this zone irregularities, in the form of single farms, were more common. Finally, Arden was characterised by a wide scatter of dispersed settlements, farmsteads and hamlets, within which an occasional nucleation of a larger size does appear.⁴

It was such distinctions as these that were referred to by William Harrison as early as the sixteenth century when he stated, "It is so, that our soile being divided into champaigne ground (i.e. Feldon, field-land) and woodland, the houses of the first lie uniformelie builded in everie towne together, with streets and lanes; whereas in the woodland counties, except here and there in great market townes, they stand scattered abroad, each one dwelling in the midst of his own occupieng."⁵ There is little doubt that these fundamental regional distinctions are deep rooted, but it is nevertheless unwise to uncritically project such patterns back into the middle ages. It is probable that by 1086 the nucleated villages of the Feldon and Avon valley were already in existence and Harley tacitly assumes this by claiming that in the Feldon "a distinctive settlement pattern had evolved by 1086 taking the form of three lines of villages."⁶ He shows that the larger settlements within the hundreds of Stoneleigh and Kington were, in 1086, to be found south of the Lower Lias scarpment, in the south-east of the county pointing out that this was

an early settled zone. Such evidence as is available, already discussed in Chapter 1, suggests that Prehistoric and Roman settlement was densest in the middle Avon valley, and although in Anglo-Saxon times the region did continue as an area of active settlement, the colonisation of the Feldon to the south proceeded with increased momentum from Romano-British times. Harley concludes that "the regional differences in population geography that were so marked a feature in 1086 would appear to stem mainly from differences in the Anglo-Saxon settlement." By 1279 in terms of pattern, the major lineaments of the eleventh century settlement had been maintained. In the case of villages and hamlets which made their appearance after the eleventh century, it is clear that the locational pattern they assumed, had, for the most part, intensified and reinforced the earlier pattern, at the junction of contrasted geological formations, and onto the lighter drift deposits of the Avon valley.

The distinction between these two southern zones of Warwickshire and Arden is clearly demonstrated when the distribution of cultivated land is considered, for by 1086 54% of the townships in the Feldon hundred of Kineton had over 60% of their township area cultivated. In contrast, Stoneleigh Hundred in Arden, had 77.3% of its townships with the cultivated acreage less than 30% of the total area. The causes of these differences are to be found in the late settlement of Arden, its low population densities in 1086, and the survival of the extensive tracts of woodland enumerated in the Domesday Book. The succeeding centuries between 1086 and 1279 were to see an intensification of this pattern, an intensification which took two forms, first the addition of new dwellings to existing settlement nuclei and secondly the establishment of new settlements away from the old centres. These new settlements took many forms, and the resulting patterns clearly reflect the variations in territorial lordships and social organisation suggested by

Figures 8, 10, 14 and 15. While it is not possible to produce an actual map of medieval rural settlement based on contemporary data, although Figure 6 could possibly be adapted to do this, Figure 40 is an attempt to map the major landscape elements in Western Arden, prior to 1350, that is, the basic features of settlement and land use. Using this map, it is possible to distinguish four principal elements of the medieval settlement pattern which have to be considered, villages, hamlets, isolated farmsteads and settlements with urban features.

Villages and hamlets.

The nucleated settlements mapped in Figure 40, are graded, on a purely subjective basis, according to size, using the Ordnance Survey field sheets dating from between 1810-1820.⁷ Deferring for the moment an assessment of the validity of this data for mapping medieval nuclei these maps constitute the earliest complete and accurate survey of the whole area being examined, and clearly show that by 1810-20 nucleations were the dominant settlement form to the south of a line between Budbroke and Henley, and were composed largely of what have been classified as medium and small nucleations. To the north of this zone nucleations were the exception rather than the rule, such as were present lying mainly in the Blythe valley. With the exception of Coleshill and Solihull, both special cases, only Shustoke, Hampton in Arden and Tanworth are nucleations of a size comparable to those in the south of the area. The remainder were either small or consisted only of a church, two or three farms and perhaps a few cottages, classified on Figure 40 as a church hamlet. Table 30 analyses the distribution of these nuclei within Western Arden.

Table 30

Western Arden: Distribution of nucleated settlements
in the post-medieval period.

Northern Group	Parishes	Large	Medium	Small	Church Hamlets	Total
	12	1	2	4	7	14 (36%)
Central Group	16	1	1	3	5	10 (25.5%)
Southern Group	13	1	5	5	4	15 (38.5%)
						<hr/> 39 (100%)

This table demonstrates admirably the contrasts; in the two northern groups church hamlets form 50% of all nucleations, while in the south only 27% of the nucleations are church hamlets. ⁸

In spite of the volume of pre-1350 documentary evidence available for Western Arden nothing has been discovered which provides the basis for any generalisations concerning the nature of these settlements in the middle ages, or indeed proves conclusively that they existed. However, a number of pieces of indirect evidence do permit their presence before 1350 to be reasonably established, and provide some justification for the use of a nineteenth century source for mapping medieval conditions.

An examination of the Ordnance Survey field sheets, or indeed any other large scale topographic maps, quickly shows that in Western Arden the settlement bearing the parish name is normally a nucleation, and those are the settlements

shown by such early cartographers as Speed and Saxton. In the early nineteenth century all but two of the twenty-five "original" parishes that existed within Western Arden (Figure 11, Inset) possessed one or more nucleations. The two exceptions were Packwood and Hatton, the former being merely a very small church hamlet consisting of a church and one large moated farmstead, while the latter was represented by an isolated church, which may have originally been the nucleus of a small settlement. Where a parish possessed a nucleation additional to that bearing the parish name, then these were associated with chapelries of some antiquity, those associated with Hampton-in-Arden for example, or with hamlets of ancient foundation, such as the hamlets in Bickenhill parish, clearly present by 1086.

This information can be stated in another form, of the forty nucleations shown on Figure 40, all but eleven are associated with place names of Anglo-Saxon origin and are referred to in Domesday Book. Of the remaining eleven, five, (Balsall, Middle Bickenhill, Hampton on the hill, Gilson and Tanworth) were probably grouped under other headings in 1086, Gilson under Coleshill, Tanworth under Brailes for example, while four are not represented in 1086 because of a subsequent site change and hence probable depopulation of the former site, Alspath, for example, appears in Domesday Book, but Meriden developed at a subsequent date and is the nucleation appearing in Figure 40. Finally, two of the eleven nucleations are entirely new entities, Solihull and Knowle, and it is significant that both bear middle English names, and are hence probably of post-Domesday foundation. This evidence suggests, beyond reasonable doubt, that the nucleations are an early feature of the settlement pattern, and represent expansion from the initial settlements in the Anglo-Saxon period whose precise form and size are as yet open to doubt.

When the sites of these primary nuclei are examined in detail, three types are found to be particularly frequent, spur sites, ridge sites and valley side sites. In the two former cases, the selection of the top or side appears to depend purely on micro-relief considerations, while in the latter cases, the siting is clearly related to the presence of minor bench and terrace features. For example, Tanworth, Hampton in Arden and Church Bickenhill all occupy small hills, even though the two latter project from the lower valley of the Blyth while the former is merely a projection of one of the spurs of the Portway plateau (Figure 1). Balsall on the other hand occupies a small terrace feature adjacent to the river Blythe.

It is noticeable, however, that whatever site the nucleation occupies, and whatever geological formation prevails within a particular parish, the nucleation frequently lies on or adjacent to a small extent of lighter better drained soil, a terrace, a patch of glacial sand or gravel, or an outcrop of Arden sandstone. For example, Wootton Wawen is sited on an extremely small outcrop of Arden sandstone, while Langley, Wolverton, Rowington and Preston Bagot all lie on one of the many small escarpments formed by this formation. The Avon valley was clearly an area of early settlement, and such villages as Hampton on Avon, Sherborne, and, formerly, Fulbrook occupy sites just on or adjacent to the terraces, while, further north, Balsall lies on a slight rise above a terrace. In this latter case, however, it is probable that the particular attraction of the site lay in the fact that the Templars were able to dam a shallow valley and create several large fishponds. ¹⁰ Of particular importance is the frequent association of the early nuclei with small areas of lighter better drained drift soils, for example Snitterfield, Norton-Lindsey, Claverdon and Langley all lie on or adjacent to patches of

such soils, as do Haseley and Hampton on the Hill (Budbrooke). In the north of Western Arden where drift is more extensive, this correlation is more difficult to demonstrate, but nevertheless there is a clear tendency for settlements to lie at the junction of drift and Keuper Marl, or Keuper Marl and Arden Sandstone, adjacent in fact to soils that were lighter in character than the typical Worcester series developed on the Keuper Marls. Such locations may well have had certain advantages for a water supply, and Thorpe has demonstrated in his analysis of the location of "green" villages in County Durham that similar sites were selected in that county. ¹¹

In the middle ages a nucleated settlement had a function that was intimately associated with the fields that surrounded it, and an examination of Figure 40 quickly reveals a strong relationship between the nuclei and the presence of open common fields. These latter will be examined more fully in Chapter 8 but at this stage it is relevant to point out that while in Arden as a whole there was a clear tendency for the areas of common field to be on the heavier Keuper Marl and boulder clay soils, it is noticeable that adjacent to the old established nuclei there was frequently a small extent of common arable lying on the patch of lighter soil. It seems probable in fact, that in Western Arden as a whole, the smaller a tract of common arable was, the more likely it was to lie almost wholly on a light soil, avoiding the heavy Keuper Marl. A detailed comparison of Figures 40, 3 and 16 will confirm these remarks.

Coleshill parish (Figure 43) provides a good example of these relationships; the fields of Coleshill, as Figure 43 demonstrates, were extensive, but nevertheless, immediately adjacent to the settlement there occur small areas of lighter, warmer soils developed on Arden Sandstone and sandy

drift, and these, closely associated with a dry ridge-top suitable for habitation, must have been particularly attractive to the original settlers, and in view of this it is not surprising to find the vill mentioned in a charter as early as 799.¹² Gilson, a hamlet of Coleshill (Figure 43) was no doubt established at a later date than the main village, but the field called "Gilson Field" lies wholly on light sandy drift soils as does the small field associated with the hamlet of Hawkswell. Similarly, at Longdon (Figure 19) the area of common arable lies on the area of glacial sand and gravels capping the ridge on which the original settlement of "Longdon Green" lay. Skipp, doing detailed work on Sheldon and Bickenhill,¹³ came to the conclusion that in these parishes also the earliest common fields, adjacent to the original settlement nuclei, lay on lighter soils developed on sandy drift.

While the extensive areas of common field developed in the southern part of Western Arden and in the Blythe valley lie for the most part on medium to heavy soils, as a comparison of Figures 40 and 16 will readily demonstrate, where the presence of but a small area of common arable can be proved to have formerly existed, at Tanworth, Lapworth and Preston Bagot for example, these are developed almost entirely on the lighter better drained soils developed on sandy drift or Arden Sandstone.

These arguments lead towards the conclusion that the common field arable in Western Arden represents the earliest phase of colonisation, a conclusion reached by Stedman when considering Feckenham in Worcestershire, and the nucleated settlements clearly have a close relationship with this common arable. Table 31 demonstrates this relationship:-

Table 31

Western Arden: The relationship of nucleations to common field-arable.

Size of nucleation	Number	Extensive C/F	Extensive C/F (fragmentary)	Small C/F	Present (size unknown)	Not proven
Large	2	2	0	0	0	1
Medium	8	4	2	1	1	0
Small	15	3	5	0	3	4
Church hamlet	15	1	0	4	2	8
No nucleation	14	0	1	1	5	7

Without doubt, the large and medium sized nucleations are associated with extensive areas of common arable, while those townships possessing either only a church-hamlet or having no known nucleation are those where the evidence available suggests that common arable was either too limited in extent or completely absent. The settlements classified as small tend to fall between these two extremes.

The evidence presented here is far from conclusive, and although the arguments have been supported as far as possible by evidence relating to the Middle Ages, inevitably certain liberties have had to be taken, in particular Figure 40 depends heavily on post-medieval sources. Nevertheless, it would be carrying scepticism too far not to conclude that first, the nucleated settlements of Western Arden are

of ancient foundation; secondly, they are normally associated with an area of common cultivation; and thirdly, these early nuclei are associated with areas of light soils, and finally, the evidence of Figure 40 suggests that some relationship exists between the extent of the common arable and the size of the nucleation. With regard to the size grading in Figure 40, while no proof can be offered that early nineteenth century conditions reflect those of the Middle Ages, the analysis of the relationship between nucleations and common field does suggest that the large and medium sized nucleations are associated with the larger extents of common arable and the small nucleations and church-hamlets with the small extents. Furthermore, as will be demonstrated in a later section of this chapter it is the large nucleations of the Ordnance Survey field sheets that do exhibit urban features in the Middle Ages. It has to be admitted, however, that no real measure exists for the size of a nucleation in the Middle Ages, and in this context it is relevant to point out again, that in spite of the wealth of material available for Tanworth parish, nothing survives which throws any light on the nature and form of Tanworth village either before 1350, or in the centuries between this date and the Tithe Map of 1842. In view of the evidence presented in this section, however, it seems reasonable to conclude that ^{not} only _Λ were the nuclei present in Western Arden in the Middle Ages, but they represent an early established element of the human landscape.

On the basis of these points it is reasonable to conclude that the church-hamlets and small nucleations together with the small areas of common arable associated with them represent a form of settlement whose development was arrested by changing political, economic and social circumstances, in particular those resulting from the Norman Conquest of 1066. Recent work by European scholars

is suggesting that this form of settlement, a hamlet associated with an arable field sub-divided into strip holdings, was dominant in Central and Western Europe in the early Middle Ages, and that in favoured areas population expansion led to the addition of further arable units, which under the influence of partible inheritance and pressure of population on available land resources resulted in a field system resembling ^{that of} the "classic" English nucleated village with open common fields. ¹⁴ Figure 40 makes it clear that such hamlets with small areas of common arable did exist in the central portion of Western Arden in the Middle Ages, and it is probable that they can be regarded as Anglo-Saxon settlement farms fossilised largely as a result of the differing concepts of land tenure introduced in the eleventh century by the Normans. ¹⁵ In contrast, in those areas of Western Arden where settlement took place in the early Anglo-Saxon period, in particular the Avon and Blyth valleys, the early hamlets were able to develop into nucleated villages associated with large communally worked arable fields. ¹⁶

Uhlig has pointed out that in Europe the common arable field was frequently an infield, and was associated with various forms of outfield cultivation. ¹⁷ In spite of the comparatively rich evidence for early conditions in Arden it is clear that if such practises were followed, they had completely disappeared by the thirteenth century, for no trace of them has survived. It would indeed be exceedingly convenient to explain the great heath tracts of medieval Arden as the result of this practice, but unfortunately no evidence survives to permit this conclusion.

"Green" Hamlets.

A second type of hamlet, which is quite distinct from those established during the pre-Conquest colonisation of

Arden, appears in the form of a small cluster composed of one or two small farms and a number of cottages, generally adjacent to a small piece of waste land and containing the element "green" in the place-name. While the majority of these settlements are first referred to in eighteenth or nineteenth century sources, others, Longdongrene in Solihull and Brouns Green in Tanworth for example, appear in earlier documents, the two examples cited appearing respectively in c.1290 and 1342.^{18a} These settlements are particularly well shown on the Ordnance Survey field sheets of the early nineteenth century and^{on} these several forms can be distinguished:

i) Greens are frequently associated with a small patch of open waste land which in some cases may be of considerable extent, while in others may be no more than a slight broadening of the roadside verge.^{18b}

ii) Greens are also associated with points where a number of roads meet, with a consequent increase in the extent of roadside waste.¹⁹

iii) A small number of greens lie on the edges of great tracts of common land.²⁰

Although in a few instances a green bears the name of the parish or township within which it lies, this settlement is clearly a secondary settlement subsidiary to a nucleus of the same name which possesses the parish church.²¹

A detailed examination of these maps suggests that the term "green" was applied to a settlement that rarely rose above hamlet size, and was invariably subservient to a larger nucleation.

The term "green" clearly refers to the small patch of waste or common land adjacent to the settlement and Smith defines "grene" as a "grassy spot, a village green."²² In an Arden context, however, a green can better be defined "as a small patch of waste land an integral part of, or peripheral to, a hamlet settlement." It is probable that

this open area was common pasture, for the settlement form is comparable to certain settlements with open greens described by Thorpe, in particular the "Drubbel", and "Brink" and "L'habitat de rejet" farms, where he suggests this parallel and implies that they may be the result of squatting on wasteground. ²³

As has been indicated, certain greens appear in the documentary record as early as the late thirteenth century, but in some cases the element "green" is plainly added to an earlier place name, for example Kinton in Solihull and Mappleborough in Studley appear in AD.972 and 848 respectively but have the element "green" added at a later date.

Table 32 provides an analysis of the green names appearing in the Place Name Dictionary and other sources.

Table 32

Warwickshire "Green" settlements.

	Group 1 P.N.D.	Group 2 Other sources	Total
"leah" names	9	7	16
Family names	36	-	36

Others	43	53	96
	88	60	148

P.N.D. Greens mentioned in the Place Names Dictionary,
Warwickshire.

Other sources. Greens appearing on the Ordnance Survey
Field Sheets (1810-20) and the First Edition
one inch O.S. map.

Although the "leah" names associated with the suffix "green" (Group 1) all appear in the record before 1309, it is clear that only one is a true "green" name, "la Grene de Bordesley" appearing in 1285.²⁵ "Leah" (ley) names represent a stage of colonisation beginning in the Anglo-Saxon period and continuing in all probability until about 1200,²⁶ and it seems likely in these cases that the termination "green" was added at a time when "true" green settlements were in existence because the earlier forms already established were similar to the late forms. This process of adding the termination "green" was clearly taking place by the late thirteenth century.

The class of "greens" incorporating a family name are far more numerous. Evidence from Tanworth suggests that in general it was the family who gave their name to the green but the converse cannot be eliminated. There is little doubt, for example, that Brown's Green and Waring's Green in Tanworth took their names from these families, but John de la Coppe or atte Coppe may well have taken his name from the place known as Le Coppe Grene. Of the 36 greens likely to have had their names derived from a family, 19 appear before 1400 (53%) and the earliest reference to a green containing a personal name is Edriches grene in Haseley mentioned t.Ed.I (1272-1307).

The majority of the remaining greens appear mainly in sources of sixteenth, seventeenth, eighteenth, or, more commonly, early nineteenth century date, but, nevertheless, a few do appear earlier; thus Hall Green in Folshill and Potter's Green in Walsgrave are recorded in 1411, Tainter's Green in Solihull in 1332 and Moor Green or Moor End Green in Aston in the late thirteenth century.²⁷ They occur in association with a wide variety of topographical names involving direction, Eastern Green, Lower Green; relief features, How Green, Winsor Green; vegetation, Waste Green,

Moor End Green; parish names, Rowington Green, Keresley Green; and economic activities, Tilehouse Green, Tainter's Green, Potter's Green and Cheswick Green. ²⁸

This general analysis provides the basis for the proposition that while greens undoubtedly first appear in the late thirteenth century and many clearly date before 1400 it is probable that many are in fact post-medieval in date, i.e. post 1500. Although a number exist within the parish, the Tanworth evidence is rather unhelpful in appraising "greens", for only one is recorded before 1350, Brown's Green being mentioned in 1342 (T.b246, 15 Dec. 1342). This green is associated with a widening of the Beoley-Hockley Heath road (Figure 49) and in 1830 only one farm, Brown's Green farm was standing. ²⁹ In 1603 it is recorded that the green had an area of some ten acres and was listed under the commons and wastes of the manor, ³⁰ while a sketch plan of the area by John Archer in c.1500 reveals the existence of "one messuage" standing at the junction of the cross roads. Furthermore, at this date, 1500, a second green, Colyn's Green stood somewhat further to the east. This evidence combines to suggest that Brown's Green comprised the cross roads and the strip of waste land, some ten acres in extent, running to the west.

Charter evidence together with rights of way surviving today suggest that one or more roads originally joined the green, in particular "the lane of Pirihull" running eastwards from Tanworth village. ³¹ Sir Simon Archer states that a parish cross stood at the cross roads, and this is illustrated on one version of the plan of c.1500. ³² A memorandum by John Archer describes "brouns meys (messuage) wt (with) ij croftes lyyng betueyn a grounde caulde pyryhull and a greyn caulde brouns greyn in breyd (breadth) in lenthe bytueyn the fordrowe (fordrove) of Pyryhull and a growe (grove) of John Archerrus." In 1500 the property

was held by a tenant called Clarkson, whose family held it in c.1446 when it was termed Brounscrofts, but unfortunately at this date no details are given. In 1332 however (31 Aug. 1332, T.b170) a William Broun was living in the area, and in 1308, the messuage of William Broun, in all probability Broun's Green Farm, was referred to as abutting the messuage of Hugh de Pinhull (2 Sept.1308, T.b16). This evidence clearly points to the existence of two messuages at Brown's Green in the early fourteenth century (c.1300-10, T.b7). A charter of c.1270-80 (T.a83) records the gift of a certain piece of land with buildings, gardens, hedges and appurtenances, adjacent to Pinhull and the land of William Broun,³³ and a cottage held by William Taleboth appears as an abuttal, while in another charter (c.1260-80, T.a17) John Archer of Tanworth granted to Henry de la Sponne and Christiana Broun, daughter of William and Mathilda Broun "one messuage and croft which Randolf Walrant held." The Walrands were villein tenants of the Archers (T.a7. c.1250-70) and the abuttals show that their messuage also lay at Brown's Green. Broun de Pinhull, de Sponne and Walrant were all certainly tenants of the Archers.

This material demonstrates clearly that in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth century Brown's Green was a hamlet settlement comprising at least four messuages, i.e. small farm houses, and a cottage inhabited by tenants of the Archer family. The amalgamation of these small holdings gave Clarkson the property he was holding in c.1446, which was probably farmed from Brown's Green Farm. As early as 1342 this settlement was termed Broun's Green, and obviously took its name from the family of that name.

This is but one green out of at least 150 for which chance has fortunately preserved sufficient information to permit a reconstruction at an early stage.³⁴ While such

evidence cannot provide the basis for any broad areal generalisations, it can provide a fuller understanding of the settlement form associated with the term "green".

The next stage of analysis is to examine the distribution of these features in Western Arden, and, while recognising that as a group they relate to a wider period than is strictly being considered in this study, for want of a better convention all the settlements that contain the terminal "green" have been included in Figure 40.41[?] It is immediately clear from this map that their distribution is complementary to that of the other settlement farms known to have existed in the Middle Ages, in particular nucleations and moated sites. Largely absent from areas of nucleated settlements and common field land they clearly relate to those parts of Western Arden which experienced the colonising movement between 1150 and 1350, and in view of the fact that some greens can be proved to be of late thirteenth century date, it is reasonable to associate them with this movement. Furthermore, a comparison of Figure 40 with Figure 10 shows that greens are almost entirely absent from those areas where ecclesiastical landownership predominated, and were most common on those lay manors characterised by a large amount of free tenure, in particular Tanworth, Solihull and Berkswell. In view of this distribution, the evidence presented concerning the chronology of their development, and the detailed picture available for Brown's Green it is clear that originally "greens" consisted of a small hamlet settlement, which was the result of the congregation of a number of small tenant farmers and cottagers at a favourable point, determined by the availability of a small patch of waste land which could be used as pasture. While their numbers have undoubtedly been added to in the post-medieval period, it is clear that in origin they are to be associated with the

thirteenth century colonising movement in Arden.

The final stage in analysis is to examine the distribution of "greens" within the whole county, and in Figure 41 this map is placed alongside one showing the distribution of moated sites. The two distributions are at first sight strikingly similar, but it is evident greens are more closely confined to Arden than moated sites. With very few exceptions greens appearing in the Place Names of Warwickshire and those mapped from late cartographic sources are intermingled in such a way as to clearly suggest that they are one and the same feature, while the detailed Tanworth evidence suggests they were originally even more numerous.

Three main concentrations occur (Figure 41), one around Coventry, one in Erdington, near Birmingham and a lesser one in the south between Preston Bagot and Rowington. The lower portions of the Blythe, Tame and Rea valleys are remarkably free, and the great heath tract of Balsall also stands out as a hiatus. While small numbers do appear around the headwaters of the Alne and Arrow, greens are largely limited to those parts of the plateau surfaces above four hundred feet in height.

The pattern strongly confirms the close association of greens with the Arden area but permits the argument concerning their origin to be taken a little further, for it is now possible to make the general statement that greens, like moats, were more numerous in those areas where freehold tenure was dominant. In the area to the east of Coventry, for example, in 1279 freeholders farmed some 60-89% of the total recorded peasant population.³⁵ It must be stressed again, however, that not only do these settlements have a wide chronological range, but that the term "green" is clearly applied to features having a wide diversity of origins. In view of the paucity of evidence and its late date much must remain obscure³⁶ but it seems

possible to recognise three groups:

i) early settlements of Anglo-Saxon origin such as Ulverley and Mappleborough whose development was arrested as a result of changing political, social and economic conditions, and to which the "green" was appended at a later date; ³⁷

ii) settlements established in the Middle Ages (circa 1150 to 1400) ³⁸ and which consisted of the houses of small tenant farmers, together with a few cottages, grouped together at a favourable point, often near an area of roadside waste;

iii) groups of true squatting settlements established largely illegally on a small piece of waste, or at the edge of a common, in the post-medieval period. ³⁹

The first group are interesting in that they constitute a form transitional between the true church-hamlet, or a parochial centre, and the true "green" or secondary hamlet established later. Had the Norman Conquest not brought changes it is probable that such greens as Ulverley and Langdon would have developed into church-hamlets; indeed, as a priest is listed at the former in 1086 it is probable that this is a church-hamlet which declined as a result of the establishment of the borough of Solihull, an event, which, as will be demonstrated, probably took place in the late twelfth or early thirteenth century.

Isolated Farmsteads.

The third element of the medieval settlement pattern is the isolated farmstead, of which two categories can be recognised. The first of these is clearly recognisable, for the buildings are enclosed by a moat, generally water-filled, which may range in shape from round, sub-rectangular to perfectly square; the second group is more difficult to isolate and identify, the single farm of medieval date

but lacking a moat. The change from collective to individual colonisation and agricultural practice that took place in the late eleventh, twelfth and early thirteenth century is characterised by the appearance of the isolated farmstead, set out in the assarted holding, often in remote situations. This factor, together with the social factors involved in fashion, led to the establishment of moated farmsteads.⁴⁰

In Figure 41 moated farmsteads are mapped alongside "greens" for comparison, and moats clearly have a wider distribution, reflecting considerable variations in function and social status.⁴¹ As a group, however, these sites are particularly associated with those portions of Warwickshire that in 1086 were but sparsely settled. Figure 40 reveals some of the complexities of this distribution,⁴² moated sites are clearly associated with those areas that can be interpreted as the severalties resulting largely from individual colonisation. However, considerable variations occur in density from manor to manor; in particular, they are less numerous on ecclesiastical estates and the greatest concentrations appear on those manors where particularly free conditions are known to have prevailed in the Middle Ages,⁴³ at Solihull, Tanworth and Lapworth. The tendency for them to have a distribution complementary with that of greens has been commented upon earlier.

Archaeological evidence from the Midlands demonstrates that moated sites range in date from the late twelfth to the fifteenth century, the majority probably being dug before 1350.⁴² In view of this evidence, and their distribution, they can be reasonably associated with the colonising movement in Arden from the twelfth to the early fourteenth centuries. They vary greatly in form, from a simple rectangular earthwork to a highly complicated

feature involving numerous ponds and overflow channels. A few, such as Weoley Castle, Worcestershire and Maxstoke castle were fortified by the addition of corner towers, gateways and curtain walls.

The particular problem with regard to moats lies in their social range, for while many represent the manor houses of the aristocracy, it is common to find parishes with very large numbers of sites, such as Solihull with twenty-four, and it is unlikely that all can represent residences of "lords of the manor".⁴³ Moats in Arden, as Figure 40 clearly indicates, tend to be associated with those portions of the parish that were once the most remote and wild, away from the areas of primary settlement.⁴⁴ Any enquiry into their origins is again severely limited by the almost total lack of specific references in documents prior to 1350, but nevertheless, the extremely detailed nature of the Tanworth evidence does permit certain conclusions to be drawn, and the data is presented in Figure 36 where small manors and moated sites are mapped together. Of the five small manors mapped within Tanworth manor, four have moated sites forming their capital messuages, ^{while} one small manor, that of Robert de Sydenhale has two, clearly as the result of its division into two moieties in 1340,⁴⁵ The northernmost moat in this particular estate, known today as Salter Street Farm (GR SP/122742) is clearly described in the partition as follows: "the said William and Joanna to have and to hold for their own a hall, with rooms, a kitchen and cattleshed together with a certain portion of the court-house (curia) as in future it was to be divided there with all ditches and water standing within." (20 Sept. 1340, T.b225). The moated site associated with the estate of Henry de Sydenhale still carries the name Sydenhales Farm, but there are no early references to this. No moats are visible on the ground today either at Umberslade Hall or

Clay Hall respectively, the capital messuages of the Archers and the de Fulwoods, but a note by Sir Simon Archer makes it clear the former was moated, and John Būman writing in 1930 plainly thought that Clay Hall had formerly possessed a moat. ⁴⁶

Two moats in Tanworth cannot be reasonably associated with one of these families of small landowners, of which the one in Ladbroke Park, an extremely small site, is perhaps best interpreted as a hunting lodge (Figure 47). The site adjacent to the Blythe in the extreme north-east of Tanworth manor is more difficult to explain, for although no charters for this property survive in the Arden collection, Dugdale citing a deed then in Sir Simon Archer's possession states that a certain Simon de Mancetter "settled himself within the Lordship of Tanworth, where a certain large moated place (though the buildings be gone) beareth yet the name of his habitation." ⁴⁷ This was in all probability the site on the Blythe near Monkspath Bridge (GR.SP/145757), or alternatively that known as Elliott's Hall to the north of the river (GR.SP/135761), described by John Archer in c.1500 as a "prynsypall meys wt a motte f ij poollus." In the absence of further evidence no conclusive answer can be given to this problem of identification.

As a whole the moated sites in the manor of Monkspath present a problem; the double moat at Cheswick, described in c.1500 as a "messe (i.e. messuage) wt (with) to mottes (two moats)" was clearly the manor house of the Broughtons of Cheswick, that "sumtym was calude broughton cheswyke." The moated site near Light Hall in the north, already deserted by c.1500, may reasonably be associated with the farm of the de la Litte family who first appeared in the parish in the period c.1270-90 (T.a44, a45, cf. 1280-90 T.a123) and were holding land in the area in 1317-18 (1 Jan. 1317-18, T.b70). Jerrings Hall, clearly associated with the Gerin family was also probably moated. ⁴⁸

Although the evidence is circumstantial, and surprisingly limited in extent, it would, in the light of the evidence provided by Figure 36, be carrying scepticism too far not to conclude that the moated sites in Tanworth were the capital messuages of the small manors already examined in the chapter on "The Small Landowners". It is evident that a moat had a social as much as a defensive significance, and those families who were able to climb socially by acquiring a holding in the waste demonstrated this fact by investing capital in what was probably largely unnecessary ostentation. The moat would undoubtedly have provided some small measure of defence against the occasional marauder, man and beast; it would have provided certain facilities for watering stock, and maintaining fish; it may have helped drain the farmyard, but the evidence strongly suggests that the element of fashion was an important one.

Confirmatory evidence for these conclusions is forthcoming from several other parishes; in Longdon, Figure 19, it has proved possible to outline a considerable proportion of the late surviving heath, and the resulting pattern is extremely striking, the moated sites being clearly associated with the assarted severalties. Little documentary material is available to support this contention in detail, but once again circumstantial evidence is strong. For example, the moat in the extreme south-west of the manor is clearly the capital messuage belonging to the "two furlongs according to the great measure of Arden" (duarum culturarum per magnam mensuram de Arden) granted to William de Parles in about 1230.⁴⁹ Although it has proved impossible in this case to associate each moat with a particular free-holding family, it is extremely probable that once again these sites represent the houses of the small-landowner class. The large number of moated sites within Solihull parish (at least 24) emphasises their association with free conditions.

Where detailed evidence fortuitously survives elsewhere this association of moats with assorted severalties and the small-landowners is confirmed. Bushwood Hall in Bushwood, the outwood of the Bishop of Worcester, is associated with Sir John de Bissichopeston, a tenant of some considerable pretensions, a small knight; Ford Hall and Botley Farm in the north of Wootton Wawen parish are to be associated with the de la Ford and Mallore (or Mallory) families respectively; the moat at Castle Hills in Bickenhill is associated with the section of the township of Church Bickenhill where thirteenth century assarting was taking place. ⁵⁰

It would, however, be a fallacy to claim that all moats represent the dwelling places of small-landowners. Many were clearly the manor houses of manors in the hands of the larger landowners, Coleshill manor house/set within the park, for example, (Figure 43); Longdon manor house (Figure 19); the "capital messuage enclosed with water" mentioned on the Earl of Warwick's manor of Fulbrook in 1324-5; and the manor house of the de Arden family at Hampton-in-Arden. There was, significantly, no moated manor house belonging to the Earl at Tanworth, although a "capital messuage" is mentioned in the extent of 1315. This is probably Bickerscote Farm, the home farm set in the demesne, the site of which was clearly never moated. The distinction probably lay in the fact that ^{as} Tanworth was a reeve-controlled manor, it had no need of a pretentious manor house. This fact can probably be also invoked to explain many of the minute vicissitudes in the history of moated sites as revealed by excavation, when a lord was resident rebuilding and restoration would take place, when he was absent, a decline might be experienced.

Moats in Arden have two functions, first, they form the manor houses for every type and size of manor, and

secondly, the capital messuages of the wealthier freemen involved in the colonisation of the waste. The advantages of the moated ^{site} as a form of settlement, particularly pioneer settlement, may be summarised as defence, drainage, water supply for stock, fish production, and, if archaeological evidence is any guide, a rubbish dump. To these factors has to be added the element of fashion; a social class such as the small-landowners, aware of their often lowly origin would be prone to such ostentation. ⁵¹

Within Arden today there exist many hundreds of isolated farmsteads without moats and many of these undoubtedly have their origin in the Middle Ages. They are, however, a particularly difficult feature to examine, except at the level of extremely detailed discussion and a broad areal view of their distribution is at present impossible. The purpose of this section is simply to briefly establish the fact that non-moated farmsteads and cottages were present in Arden before 1350, "lying dispersedly."

In 1180 Roger de Ullenhale was granted a licence by the Earl of Warwick to construct a pool below his house (T.4). The location of this pool is known, and the house almost certainly lay up on the ridge above the valley where the pool was built. It is possible that the house was in fact moated, but none of the evidence available suggests it was, and it is therefore probable that a non-moated dispersed farmstead had already been established in Tanworth prior to 1180. It has not proved possible to attempt to map the references to houses, cottages and messuages in the Tanworth charters ⁵² but the most cursory examination suggests that these were scattered throughout the whole parish, where colonisation and settlement had taken place. Three examples will be ample illustration of this point; at some date prior to 1290 John Archer granted to Geoffrey de Middlemor an acre of land of

which one abuttal was "the road leading from Middlemor towards the house of Henry Rivale" (Pre 1290, T.Add a9); in c.1300 Simon Prat granted a certain marlpit "opposite his house and adjoining Fenshawebroc." (c.1300, T.a173); a cottage was associated with the five acres of waste granted by the Earl of Warwick to Richard de Alreshawe (Figure 37A). These examples could be multiplied many times, and together they clearly indicate that by the late thirteenth century at least there were numerous small farms and cottages scattered throughout Tanworth parish. It is probable that they were also present in varying numbers in other parishes, particularly those where free tenure predominated. ⁵³

Urban Settlement.

By 1350 as a result of the colonising activity described in detail in the preceding chapters, a complex pattern of rural settlement was present in Arden. One form remains to be considered, however, that resulting from the process of urban colonisation, by which a lord attracted settlers by offering them franchises, protection, and commercial facilities, and attempted to establish a borough. The motive for the creation of a town by the lord of a manor, at some commercially strategic spot on his land, was largely financial. He hoped, as trade increased in his new town, to enjoy an ever-growing sum of ready money in the form of burgage rents and of tolls from the markets and fairs held there. In the history of colonisation the founded town has an important place, the normal process being either to convert an existing village into a town or build an entirely new entity. The former inhabitants continued to cultivate the land whilst the new population, endowed with very small holdings, comprising, for example, a house and garden gave themselves up to industry and commerce. ⁵⁴

In view of the opportunities available it is not surprising to find more than one attempt to establish towns within Western Arden. Inevitably, however, such attempts have to be considered in relation to the other urban settlements in the area, notably Warwick, Coventry, and, at a later date, Birmingham, and the beginnings of urbanisation in the county have been outlined by Harley.⁵⁵

In 1086 the only town in the county was Warwick and there are reasons for believing that this town, strongly under the control of the Earls of Warwick, stagnated during the early middle ages. On the other hand, Coventry expanded rapidly as the result of extensive immigration from the local area and further afield. An entirely rural population of approximately 350 in 1086, had by 1280 reached a possible total of nearly 4,000, and the poll-tax returns of 1377 would seem to suggest a total of 7,000. This expansion was accompanied by the acquisition of constitutional and commercial privileges; the borough charter was granted to the town by the end of the twelfth century, and its market-rights and fairs were obtained by the first decades of the thirteenth. Harley stresses, that commercial activity in the form of a market or fair was essential for the growth of a town, but the presence of these did not necessarily lead to the formation of a borough. The majority of Warwickshire markets and fairs, for example, were in fact established in villages, and their existence was mainly a reflection of the success of particular lords in obtaining economic privileges. In addition, the growth of a particular settlement might well depend on the inhabitants themselves, for a factor of considerable, possibly of decisive, significance in the growth of midland towns was the competitive spirit in which settlements vied with each other in efforts to promote their well being by attracting migrants. Thus, although Birmingham acquired a market charter as early as

1166 and a grant of two fairs about a century later it was never able to compete with Coventry, where in the late twelfth century the Earl, probably under pressure from some of the inhabitants granted the town the privilege of burgage tenure, together with other rights.⁵⁶ The right to hold a market was obtained by the lords of the manor in Alspath, Fillongley, Hampton in Arden, Snitterfield, Packington, Balsall and Beaudesert, in each case together with a yearly fair, but none of these settlements ever developed beyond village status.⁵⁷ Seigniorial encouragement had in fact to go a step further by conferring upon the inhabitants of the settlement certain franchises, the most important of which was burgage tenure. The essential features of this were a fixed money rent, and mobility, that is to say, the freedom of the burgess to devise, sell or otherwise alienate his tenement at will. This was undoubtedly the main inducement to migrants. Tait considers it possible that in some cases a market grant may have led to the introduction of burgage tenure or features of that tenure, without any formal act by the lord of the manor.⁵⁸ Within Western Arden three settlements exhibit some or all of the features outlined above, Henley, Coleshill and Solihull.

Henley is first mentioned in the early eleven eighties and it is probable that the vill developed as a trading centre for Beaudesert, having the advantages of a less constricted site and being located on the via regis (king's highway) running between Stratford and Birmingham.⁵⁹ The growth of the town was encouraged by the de Montforts, for in 1220 Peter de Montfort had a charter for a weekly market at Henley, on Mondays, and a yearly fair on the eve and day of St. Giles's feast. Six years later, when he had come of age, the same rights were granted to Peter for Beaudesert, suggesting strong links between the two settlements.⁶⁰ The little town clearly prospered and

by 1265 the fairs brought in £15 and the tolls and escheats 5 marks (£3. 6s. 8d) annually, but this growth was sharply arrested in that year by the burning of the town, perhaps in revenge for de Montfort's part in the rebellion against the King. Recovery took place and by 1296 there were 69 burgesses who paid a total of £7. 18s. 10d. rent, the pleas and perquisites of court being valued separately at £1. 18s. In 1326 some £10. 5s. rents were due from the burgesses, with tolls and other liberties, a figure which when compared with that of 1296 (£9. 16s. 10d.) strongly suggests that by the early fourteenth century active growth had ceased. Nevertheless, in 1336 the "good men" of Henley obtained leave from the King to take market tolls for three years to pay the cost of paving the streets, and in 1343 and 1383 this patent was renewed for periods of three and five years respectively.

It is clear that by 1296 burghage tenure had appeared in the settlement but whether by grant or prescription is not known. The town developed as a linear settlement, running north and south along the main road with a central, somewhat broader, market place. Termed "in Arden" as early as 1343, it was plainly the market town serving much of the south-western part of the plateau.

Coleshill, in the north of Western Arden (Figures 11 and 40) appears to have been a less successful attempt at urban colonisation, ^{for} although it ~~seems~~ to have possessed all the necessary conditions it never developed into a borough, and the extent of 1316 ⁶¹ gives no indication of any urban features. In 1086 Coleshill had ten burgesses in Tanworth, and was at this date a royal manor. By the late twelfth century it had been granted to the de Clinton family (W.D. 8, 9.) and in 1207 Osbert de Clinton was granted by John the right to hold a weekly market on Sunday, and an annual fair on the vigil and day of the Apostles Peter and Paul (28th and 29th June, W.D. 96).

While Coleshill is normally referred to in the charters as a vill, there is, significantly, one reference to a burgage tenement. (W.D. 59), granted in association with an assart at some date prior to 1290. It is perhaps also significant that references to the Market Place, ^{and} High Street, do not become numerous until the early fourteenth century, the former first being mentioned in 1329 (W.D.197) when John de Clinton granted to Richard le Newcomen of Sheldon, dearly a colonist, "a plot of land for building upon in the donor's market place of Coleshill." The rent is 12d. at four terms, attendance twice at the donor's court of Coleshill for view of frankpledge, and a heriot "if they have any living animals, in lieu of all services." In 1335 (W.D.226) he granted to Roger Cadel, "a plot of building land in the donor's market of Coleshull next to the shop of Adam le Chapman on the east side." There is a strong suggestion that the site was in process of being laid out and developed for the description continues "as by metes it is there bounded." The rent was 2s., with two views of frankpledge, ~~but no [unclear] was [unclear]~~, ~~probably because the grant was in fee tenet.~~ || The earliest charter of this type seems to ~~be~~ be a grant from John de Clinton to Richard, his tailor ("cissori meo") of "a messuage in the vill of Coleshill: to hold of the donor: sale to religious men and Jews forbidden; with husbote and haybote by view of the grantor's Forester; 'tacfre and tolfre' and with all common liberties regarding the said messuage; ⁶² rent 2s. silver at the four terms in lieu of all services except foreign services and two attendances at the free court of the said John to be made annually upon reasonable summons." (W.D.88). This charter clearly dates to before 1290, and in form is comparable to the grants of assart land described in detail in Chapter 3. What "all common liberties relating to the said messuage" were is an open question, but slender as the evidence is,

it seems certain from these charters that the de Clinton's did take some steps towards establishing a borough. ⁶³

This was clearly unsuccessful for reasons which lie both outside the area and the period of study. Signs of this failure are perhaps present in the documents, in particular two charters, dated respectively 1333 and 1337 (W.D.220,232) clearly refer to the same piece of land, described as a building site and abutting the market place; if the terminology used is to be relied upon the land had not been built upon between 1333 and 1337. The external causes of this failure are not far to seek, ^{for} by 1280 Coventry was a thriving town of 4,000 people, and Birmingham, although considerably smaller was still of some importance. ⁶⁴ The venture was ill-timed and doomed to failure, for Coleshill possessed few if any locational advantages, the site being somewhat constricted and the lower ground prone to flooding. Another factor that probably had some bearing on the failure of the venture at Coleshill was the presence of another founded town some miles to the south-west, Solihull, and although yet again the late foundation precluded any great success, this venture was somewhat more fortunate.

It has long been realised that a site change had occurred in Solihull parish, the old settlement of Ulverley declining and a new one, Solihull appearing in the late twelfth century. P.E. Martineau in his "Introduction to Pemberton's Solihull and its Church (1905) surmised, correctly, that the new settlement, the town of Solihull, came into being as "a mart or place of trade deliberately established, to fill a definite need." Solihull was in fact a founded or "planted borough" analogous to the town of Stratford upon Avon which in about 1196 was laid out by the Bishop of Worcester on his demesne land. ⁶⁵ This particular new town, Stratford, took the form of six streets, three running parallel with the river Avon and three

running roughly at right angles to it. On these streets were laid out the plots of land of uniform size for the houses and gardens of the new burgesses. Immediately to the west of this newly-planned area the ancient parish church of Holy Trinity is still to be found situated in a district which was already being called "Old Town" as early as the thirteenth century. This, beyond any doubt, represents the site of the original settlement of Stratford. In 1196 the bishop secured for his town the grant of a weekly market, and in 1214 a further royal charter conferred upon it the right to hold a three day fair.

Several close analogies occur between Stratford and Solihull. First, the original settlement in Ul~~l~~verley was probably in the district later termed Olton,⁶⁶ and it is significant that as far as can be ascertained the open common fields of the manor of Ulverley - Solihull, i.e. the original nucleus of clearing, lay within the section of the parish away from Solihull town. Secondly, the plan of Solihull presents a certain degree of regularity and compactness consisting basically of two east-west streets linked by three shorter north-south streets. The buildings, however, tend to be grouped at the western end of this grid,⁶⁷ and a detailed examination of the pre-1350 charters suggests that this was also the case in that period, the buildings being mainly confined to the area of High Street and Dog Lane in the west. The eastern section was clearly, however, considered part of the borough for a charter of 1306 (6 May, 1306, St. on A. 43) refers to "one piece of land within the borough of Solihull lying in breadth between the land of Andrew Otheyn and the highway running from Birmingham towards Warwick and in length between the highways ad verumque capud" surely implying land lying adjacent to the Warwick road and abutting on two other roads at each end. This land clearly was not built upon, and must represent a building plot which had not been utilised. Like Stratford,

Solihull obtained by royal charter the right to hold a market and fair, for in 1242 William de Oddingseles and his heirs were granted a weekly market on Wednesday, at his manor of Solihull, and of a yearly fair there on the Vigil, the Feast and the Morrow of St. Alphege, 18-20 April. ⁶⁸

Finally, it is clear that burgage tenure, the free socage tenure of the town, was present in Solihull. The earliest reference is in a charter dated c.1279-90 (St. on A.D.18) by which William de Oddingsele granted to Thomas de Elmdon and Alice his wife "a burgage ⁶⁹ containing six perches (33 yards) in length, and four perches ($38\frac{1}{2}$ yards) wide in the centre." The land is to be held "freely according to the customs of free market usual at Birmingham, ⁷⁰ but unfortunately no rent is recorded. An undated charter (post 1290) grants a moiety of a burgage and refers to the "borough township of Solihull", while a number of other documents testify to the presence of a small land market in burgage tenements between 1300 and 1350. ⁷¹ The "liberties and customs merchant of the market of Birmingham" are referred to in several charters, and it is clear that by 1242 the market of Birmingham was sufficiently developed to form a model for the new borough. ⁷²

There is always a tendency to read more into limited evidence than is strictly justified, but it seems completely reasonable to regard Solihull as a clear example of urban colonisation under seigniorial encouragement. The bulk of charter evidence is great enough to warrant this conclusion, even though the extent attached to the Inquisition post mortem of William de Oddingseles in 1295 ⁷³ makes no mention of a borough or burgesses, merely listing freehold rents. The basic problem however, is to suggest a date for the establishment of this new settlement. It is clear that the borough was already present by 1279-80, the date of the first charter reference to burgage tenure, since market rights had been obtained by 1242 ⁷⁴ Solihull first appears

as a place-name in the Red Book of the Exchequer, and although the entry is undated, it is probably of late twelfth century origin. By the late twelfth century the name Olton was in current use as a personal name, and one form can be dated to 1198, while according to the author of the Victoria County History late twelfth century work occurs in Solihull church, St. Alphege's. This evidence strongly suggests that the move to the new site was probably made at some date prior to the late twelfth century and as the evidence presented in chapter 3 implies that it is unlikely that vigorous colonisation began in Western Arden much before the accession of Henry II, 1154, a date between 1154 and 1198 may be tentatively suggested for the change in site. Whether or not a borough was established at this time must remain an open question, for it is difficult to explain the delay in acquiring market rights until 1242 if the new borough was in fact founded in the late twelfth century.

A number of points must remain unknown, but the existence of a planted borough is clearly proven. It remains to consider why the lord of Ulverley decided to change the site of his new town and not develop the existing village, such as took place at Birmingham. The new site, whatever small scale factors were involved, possessed one great locational advantage; Solihull lay at the junction of two important highways: the road from Warwick to Birmingham, and that from Worcester, via Droitwich and Bromsgrove to Coventry.⁷⁵ In addition a branch of the Stratford-Hockley Heath road swung northwards through the town, leading ultimately to Coleshill, and the Cole crossing. The site possessed in fact unique advantages for a market town serving the northern part of Arden. It is to be regretted that no data survives that will permit an estimate of the population to be made, for there are no indications to

suggest that the town ever showed any signs of becoming of more than purely local importance,^{as} it was overshadowed continually by its larger neighbours to the north and north-east, Birmingham and Coventry. In view of this, however, it can be regarded as a tolerably successful venture in urban colonisation.

Market rights also existed in Western Arden at Fillongley, Alspath, Balsall and Snitterfield, but in these cases there is no surviving record of any attempts to establish boroughs, for although the development of an active local market appears to have been essential to the growth of a town, such grants were usually purchases made by manorial lords from the crown, a facility created by political authority rather than a response to the natural opportunities for trade. As Harley has shown, in Warwickshire as a whole, without ignoring the exceptionally favourable sites and situations of some centres, a close correlation existed between the status of landowners and the successful acquisition of commercial rights. Undoubtedly, this commercial expansion was associated with the period of vigorous expansion in the thirteenth century, for the dates of the charters indicate clearly that the thirteenth century was the hey-day of market foundation in the county. ⁷⁶

This analysis of Figure 40 suggests that evidence exists for two quite distinct formative periods in the landscape of Western Arden; first, the Anglo-Saxon period, represented by the primary nucleated settlements and associated blocks of open common arable fields; secondly, the early medieval colonising movement, associated with two characteristic forms of settlement, isolated farmsteads, of which those belonging to the wealthier classes were moated, and hamlet settlements, "greens", consisting of a cluster of small tenants' farms and cottages. One

problem remains, what was the effect of the colonisation on the old established nuclei? Did hamlets grow into villages, and did any of the common fields continue to expand during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries? How much of that common arable shown in Figure 40 was in fact created before the Norman Conquest? In areas dominated by common field systems expansion was accompanied by a subdivision of land resources, but on a colonising manor, Tanworth for example, the reverse might be expected to occur, namely the accumulation of former strip holdings into larger units.⁷⁷ These questions will be examined in the chapter to follow on the economic basis of the colonising movement.

Footnotes

- (1) The following studies illustrate these points;
 G.R.J. Jones, "Some Medieval Rural Settlements in North Wales" Trans. Inst. Brit. Geogrs., 19 (1953), pp. 51-72
 G.R.J. Jones, "The Pattern of Rural Settlement on the Welsh Border", Agricultural History Review, 8 (1960), pp.66-81.
 E.M. Yates, "History in a Map", Geog. Journal, CXXVI, Part 1 (Marsh 1960), pp. 32-51.
 M.W. Beresford, "Dispersed and Grouped Settlement in Medieval Cornwall", Agricultural History Review, XII, Part 1 (1964), pp. 13-27.
 A.R.H. Baker, "Open Fields and Partible Inheritance on a Kent Manor", Economic History Review, Second Series, XVII, No. 1, (1964), pp. 1-23.
 H. Thorpe, "The Land and the Landscape", Volume jubilaire M.A. Lefevre, 1964.
- (2) L. Toulmin Smith (ed), The Itinerary of John Leland (1906-10), 2. pp. 47-51., 5. pp. 155-6.
- (3) The first edition of the Ordnance Survey one inch maps (various dates) provide the earliest and most accurate picture of settlement contrasts in Warwickshire before the effects of ^{urban} colonisation in the north were experienced. The majority of the common fields had, however, already been enclosed when these appeared, see
 W.E. Tate, "Enclosure Acts and Awards relating to Warwickshire", Trans. Birmingham Arch. Soc., LXV, (1943 and 1944), pp. 45-104.
- (4) A detailed analysis of settlement forms and patterns in Warwickshire has yet to be made. Many villages

possess, or have formerly possessed greens for example. D.J. Pannett in his work is producing much of the raw material for an extremely valuable and detailed study, since there is no settlement study yet made which makes extensive use of early manuscript maps. One of the few attempts to consider the settlement of the county as a whole is to be found in A.W. McPherson, Warwickshire, Land Utilisation Survey, Part 62. (1946), pp. 766 - 777.

- (6) This quotation is to be found in G.C. Homans, "Men and the Land in the Middle Ages", Speculum, Vol. 11, (1936), p. 339.

- (6) J.B. Harley, Population and Land Use, 1086-1300 P.

P. Vinogradoff, English Society in the Eleventh Century, (1908), pp. 264-273, discusses generally the nature of settlement patterns in 1086.

- (7) Copies of these are available in the map library of the Department of Geography, Birmingham, and in the Birmingham City Reference Library.

- (8) The composition of the groups of parishes is as follows (Figure 11):

Northern Group: Coleshill, Shustoke, Maxstoke, Fillongley, Corley, Meriden, Great and Little Packington, Hampton-in-Arden, Bickenhill, Elmdon and Sheldon;

Central Group: Solihull, Knowle, Barston, Berkswell, Balsall, Tanworth, Packwood, Lapworth, Baddesley Clinton, Rowington, Shrewley, Hatton, Haseley, Beausale and Honiley.

Southern Group: Wootton Wawen, Bearley, Preston Bagot, Beaudesert, Langleigh, Claverdon, Wolverton, Norton Lindsey, Budbrooke, Sherborne, Fulbrook, Snitterfield, Hampton on Avon (Hampton Lucy).

- (9) It is not proposed to discuss the problems of the forms of Anglo-Saxon settlements exhaustively in this essay, but the topic has necessarily to be considered in order to explain certain features of the medieval landscape.
- (10) There are no grounds for considering the site of the Preceptary as the original site of Balsall. A possible site for such a settlement is Balsall Farm (GR. 42/222769), sited on the south side of a ridge capped with glacial sands and gravels, with heavy clay and bottom land available nearby.
- (11) H. Thorpe, "The Green Villages of County Durham," Transactions, Institute of British Geographers, Vol. 13, (1949). pp. 155-180, See Figure 5, p. 167.
- (12) P.N.D. Warwickshire, p. 42.
- (13) V.H.T. Skipp, Discovering Sheldon, (1960), (Birmingham University, Dept. of Extra-Mural Studies) pp. 9-15. Discovering Bickenhill, (1963), pp. 11-20. Evidence for common field cases in the midlands is to be found in R.H. Hilton, Old Enclosure in the West Midlands: a hypothesis about their late medieval development. Geographie et Histoire Agraires: Publiees par la Faculte des Lettres et des Sciences humaines de l'Universite de Nancy. Memoire no. 21. (1959), pp. 272-83.
R.H. Hilton, "Stoneleigh Leger Book" Dugdale Society, Vol. 23 (19), Introduction.
M. Stedman, The Forest of Feckenham in 1591. An unpublished article on a map of Feckenham, Worcestershire, 1591.

R. Hebden, "The Development of the Settlement Pattern and Farming in the Shenstone Area".

Lichfield and South Staffordshire Archaeological and Historical Society, Transactions. Vol. III. (1961-2), p. 27.

- (14) Staffan Helmfrid, "Morphogenesis of the Agrarian Cultural Landscape," Geografiska Annaler, Vol. XLIII, Nos. 1-2 (1961).
- (15) It is hoped to demonstrate in the course of the next two chapters that the post-Conquest development of a given manor depended on two factors, first, the degree of development achieved by 1066 and, secondly, the policy of the new Norman lord towards the manor. Where a village community was strongly established by the time of the Conquest it was more difficult for the lord to influence its subsequent development, than on a manor which in 1086 consisted largely of woodland.
- (16) A significant corollary follows from this conclusion, namely that the great nucleated villages of the Feldon can be regarded as early ~~settlement~~ hamlets where settlement took place at an early enough date and geographical conditions, in particular the availability of potential arable land, were favourable enough for a population expansion to occur, with the result that furlong after furlong had been added to the original nucleus; but it is well to point out that, in the words of H.C. Darby, "we do not know enough about the conditions, under which the swarming off from established was begun and conducted, and we cannot speculate with any certainty". ("The Economic Geography of England, A.D. 1000-1250," in H.C. Darby (editor), Historical Geography of England before 1800, 1936, p. 182). A full discussion of the problems

involved in this aspect of the study lies outside the scope of this thesis, but the process of the settlement of the Feldon of South Warwickshire is envisaged by the author as follows:

- i) the establishment of primary settlement, small nuclei, cultivating a small area of arable land, probably on somewhat light soils adjacent to the settlement.
- ii) the expansion of population led to the addition of further land to this nucleus, and to the establishment of daughter settlements where land was available.
- iii) the advent of Christianity saw the grouping of these settlements into proto-parishes, which in their turn broke up as population rose, and the tightening of seigniorial control on some manors produced contrasts in social organisation and perhaps settlement form.
- iv) wars, devastations and famines took their toll, creating in some parishes a unitary settlement adjacent to the church, while in others the original townships persisted.
- v) these misfortunes also resulted in the establishment of regular field systems in some townships and parishes, assuming that these were not necessarily an original feature. Here it is probable that seigniorial influence was also felt, thus two field systems prevail on the manors of the Bishop of Worcester.

The Arden arrangements can be interpreted as representing a situation where this development was arrested at an early stage. It is possible that it may be occasionally possible to detect the original case of a common field system, for example, as Figure 44 shows the largest furlong of Tanworth Field was called "whetedysh" i.e. "Wheat-edish", "the wheat-field".

- (17) Uhlig, "Old Hamlets with Infield and Outfield Systems in Western and Central Europe", in Morphogenesis of the Agrarian Cultural Landscape, Geografiska Annaler, Vol. XLIII, Nos. 1-2, (1961), pp. 285-312. No evidence has come to light suggesting the presence of outfield

cultivation within Arden, but the large discrepancies found in 1086 between the number of ploughs present and the plough lands available (Berkswell $5\frac{1}{2}$ ploughs lacking, Hampton in Arden 7, Alspath $5\frac{1}{2}$, Shrewley $8\frac{1}{2}$, Ulverley 12, and Ullenhall 9), the presence of large tracts of cut-over ground, i.e. heath by 1200, and the fact that some of these tracts bear names of Anglo-Saxon origin, for example, Calvesley Heath in Tanworth, and Beltesley Heath in Coleshill, might be interpreted as evidence of outfield cultivation. See W.G. Hoskins and H.P.R. Finberg, Devonshire Studies (pp. 317 and 323).

R. Hebden in "The Development of the Settlement Pattern and Farming in the Shenstone Area", Lichfield and South Staffordshire Archaeological and Historical Society, Transactions, Vol. III (1961-2), p. 27, claims to have found evidence of "joint enclosures" associated with small open-fields. The latter were permanent, but the former "varied their position within the landscape." The arrangements clearly consisted of an infield and an outfield, and the infield was in fact a common arable field of the type found in Arden.

(18a) Langdongrene; Archer Collection, Stratford on Avon, Solihull Charters, pre 1290, D.8.
Brounesgrene; Ibid. Tanworth Charters, 15 Dec. 1342, T.6246.

(18b) Chapel Green in Fillongley, Hazelwood Green in Preston Bagot (Shakespeare's Green) and Reaves Green in Berkswell for example. The survey of Tanworth manor in 1603 (St. Bp. Lib.) records that at this date Brown's Green was 10 acres in extent.

(19) Pinley Green in Rowington, Danzey Green in Tanworth, Escote Green in Barston and Ulverley Green in Solihull are examples of this type.

- (20) Tilehouse Green in Solihull and Norton Green in Knowle, for example.
- (21) For example, Rowington Green, Preston Green (Preston Bagot) and Haseley Green.
- (22) A.H. Smith, English Place Name Elements, Cambridge, (1956), Vol. 1. p. 209.
- (23) H. Thorpe, "The Green Village as a distinctive form of settlement on the North European Plain", Bulletin de la Societe Belge d'Etudes Geographiques, Tome XXX (1961), No. 1. pp. 93-134; inparticular pp. 108-112.
- (24) The two main sources used in addition to the Place Name Dictionary were the Ordnance Survey Field Sheets, 1810-20, and the First Edition one inch map, based on these.
- (25) Place Name Dictionary, Warwickshire, p. 34.
- (26) A.H. Smith, English Place Name Elements, Cambridge, (1956), pp.
- (27) Place Name Dictionary, Warwickshire, pp. 189, 74-5, and 34.
- (28) Ibid, How = hoh, a hill (p. 97);
Winson = Wine's dun, a hill (p. 40); and
Cheswick = Cheese-wic, a farm (p. 293)
- (29) Ordnance Survey Field sheets, Dept. of Geography, Birmingham University.
- (30) Bodleian Library, Ms. Warwick Top,d,2, mm.269-273, mm. 273.
- (31) Stratford upon Avon, Archer Collection, T.a15, c.1260-80.
- (32) J. Burman, The Story of Tanworth in Arden, Birmingham, 1930, p.5.
The survey of John Archer is in the Archer Collection at Stratford on Avon, to be found in the box labelled

"Surveys and Rentals". The rental of c.1446 and the survey of that date are to be found in the same box and are all clearly labelled.

- (33) The William Broun of 1308 and the William Broun of c.1270-80 may safely be regarded as father and son.
- (34) The Ordnance Survey 1st (1st Ed.) indicates that Cheswick Green, in Monkspath manor, consisted in 1831 of two farms and two cottages. In c.1500 it is clear that in addition to the moated manor house of Broughton Cheswick there were four separate small farmsteads, two probably being the predecessors of those present in 1831.
- (35) J.B. Harley, Population and Land Use, 1086-1300, Fig.
- (36) It is probable that certain hamlet settlements with the element "End" in the name have a similar origin, indeed Danzey Green is referred to as "Denseyes Yende" in 1535. V.C.H. Warwicks, Vol. III, p. 214. Thorpe's paper (op.cit) indicates clearly that this settlement form needs to be considered as part of a broader pattern.
- (37) Place Name Dictionary, Warwickshire, pp. 72 and 226.
- (38) This chronology must be regarded as tentative, but since it is clear that some greens were present by 1350, and there appears to have been a deceleration in the colonising movement after this date, it is probable that this suggestion is correct. It is clear that by 1450 many of the smaller farms had been consolidated (as proved by the survey of c.1446) and the rising population from the 1460's and 1470's no doubt initiated squatting on the much reduced areas of waste land. The documentary material is available for the study of this problem in the Archer Collection.

- (39) These settlements, so similar in form to the earlier features would naturally be termed "greens".
- (40) In view of the fact that the author has published three articles on moated sites, this section has been reduced somewhat in length. In particular, no attempt has been made to analyse the archaeological evidence for their date as this is unnecessary for the purpose of this essay. The main arguments are presented, however, together with certain detailed material not in print. The three articles in question are B.K. Roberts, "Moated Sites" Amateur Historian, Winter (1962), pp. 34-38, B.K. Roberts, "Moated Sites in Midland England", Translations of the Birmingham Archaeological Society, Vol. 80 (1965), pp. 26-37.
- (41) Chronologically moated sites range from ponds constructed in this form in the eighteenth century to circular moats of Anglo-Saxon date, for example, Sulgrave in Northamptonshire where a ring-motte was dated by coins of Ethelred to the early 11th. century, (ex. inf. Mr. Adrian Oswald).
- (42) An analysis of all the moated sites excavated in the Midlands, presented in detail in the Transactions of the Birmingham Archaeological Society, indicated the following chronology:-
- i) The earliest sites in all cases consisted of a sub-rectangular moat defended by an earthen rampart, in some cases flanked by a wooden palisade, and dating from the twelfth or early thirteenth century. The evidence cited above, from Sulgrave in Northamptonshire suggests that the form has its origin in the Anglo-Saxon period.

ii) Between c.1250 and c.1320 there is a tendency for these simple moats to be replaced by more elaborate structures incorporating stronger defences. It is probable that more work may limit this period more closely, possibly to c.1250 to c.1280, but whether this reflects a specific need for defences or is the result of the general economic expansion of the period it is not possible to say. It is tempting to invoke the Barons' War as at least a part cause.

(iii) In the early fourteenth century there occurs a period of purely domestic development, which may terminate as early as c.1400 or continue till the present day. This is characterised by the construction of larger, and no doubt more comfortable dwelling-quarters, kitchens, farm buildings and chapels, military considerations being far less in evidence. Changes of form, often of a very native, took place on many moats. At two sites, Weoley Castle and Durrance Farm, and possibly also at Gannow Green, a mid- to late-thirteenth century reconstruction was accompanied by the building or reconstruction of a fishpond complex.

Few moated sites appear to have been constructed after 1500, and the Archer Survey of c.1500, shows that at least one Tanworth site, Light Hall moat, had already been deserted, the new house being built nearby on a drier site.

(43) The de Clintons of Coleshill possessed a large moated manor house, as did the de Ardens at Hampton in Arden, and the manor house at Baddesley Clinton was moated. No doubt when the lord was in permanent residence there was a tendency to elaborate the site, while a bailiff or reeve-controlled manor may have had no true manor house; there is no indication of

- a manor house at Tanworth for example. This fact probably accounts for many of the vicissitudes that appear in the archaeological record of many sites.
- (44) For example, Tanworth, Solihull, Berkswell, Coleshill and Wootton Wawen.
- (45) The moated site at Codborough was clearly the capital messuage of the de Codborough family but so few charters survive that its history is very uncertain. The survey of c.1500 clearly suggests that the property at this time consisted purely of the moated site and two fields, together with other lands scattered throughout the manor of Tanworth. The survey of c.1446 confirms this. The estate has not been distinguished on Figure 36, probably being associated with the de Montforts, overlords of Fulwood. It was purchased by Sir Simon Archer in 1611 from Sir Edward Mountford his kinsman. (P. Styles, "Sir Simon Archer", Dugdale Society Occasional Papers, No. 6, p. 13.)
- (46) J. Burman, The Story of Tanworth, (1930), p. 62. The Archer Survey of c.1500 refers to two pools by Fulwood's house, the dam of one still remaining in part today. Burman who regards Umberslade Hall as a former moat (p. 62). There is a note on p. 547 of Hamper's copy of Dugdale's Antiquities of Warwickshire in the British Museum, possibly by Sir Simon Archer which states "The Manor place of Umberslade called Umberslade Hall hath bin motted about with a gate-house and bridge over the moat; but my father did fill up the forepart of the moat and so it contynueth to this day."
- (47) Victoria County History, Warwickshire, Vol. IV, p. 168.

- (48) No proof exists for this statement, which is based on little more than a feeling that Jerring's Hall, established by the mid-thirteenth century and occupying a site comparable to that of Sidenhal's Farm, Elliott's Hall, and Cheswick manor house probably had a moat. An examination of the ground neither confirms or invalidates this, but it is clear that the site could have possessed a moat.
- (49) Archer Collection, Stratford upon Avon, Solihull charters, 1, c.1230.
- (50) The Victoria County History, Warwickshire, Vol. III, p. 261, associates, correctly, the de Bishopsdon, with Bushwood Hall. In 1299 John de Bishopsdon was holding lands in Bishopsdon, Fladbury, Shottery, Wilmcote and Stratford town itself (Red Book of Worcester pp. 244, 126, 246, 496). In 1313 he enlarged his manor house, and the detailed agreement with a mason and local quarry owner has survived. (cited in "Moated Sites in Midland England", Transactions of the Birmingham Archaeological Society Vol.80, 1965, p.35). The estate in Aspley, Wootton Wawen, Known as Forde Hall was granted in about 1275 by Sir John de Somery to Roger de la Forde, and similarly, in about 1275 Robert de Strafford gave lands in Botley to Geoffrey Mallory (Victoria County History, Warwickshire, Vol. III. p. 214). The grant of half a corncote in Hargrave in Bickenhill for the purpose of assarting is to be found in "Warwickshire Feet of Fines", Dugdale Society, Vol. 1. No. 575.
- (51) It would be interesting to know to what extent the proliferation of moated sites after 1150 was the result of the civil war of 1135-1154, for it is quite clear that although a licence was needed to crenellate moated sites, i.e. construct curtain walls and towers

as at Weoley Castle (Birmingham) and Maxstoke Castle, Warwickshire, anyone who could afford to do so had the right to construct a moat around his house, and archaeological evidence strongly suggests that this was frequently accompanied by the building of an earthen rampart around the island. There is a clear corelation on the Midland sites between the remodelling of moat defences and the Barons' War of 1264-5. It is improbable that such defences were designed to do more than discourage stray bands of marauding soldiery who as J.J. Jusserand points out in "English Warfaring Life in the Middle Ages" (p. 154) frequently considered the rest of society to be legitimate prey, and for whom the home of a wealthy fanklin must have provided more attractive pickings than the cottages of the peasantry. In addition, it is possible that in the mid-thirteenth century, there was still sufficient woodland in Arden to provide cover for outlaws, cuthroats and lordless men.

(52) This is less a matter of practical difficulties than of time. Provisional maps were in fact created utilising the method of mapping on the basis of a quarter kilometre square of the National Grid (cf. Figure 26), and the results were promising. To establish the validity of the method, however, and to fully analyse the results so obtained would be a lengthy process. Suffice to say that the tentative conclusion at the end of this section is partially based on these experiments.

(53) It is probable that a combination of the technique outlined in note 43 and a careful analysis of the

farmsteads appearing on the Ordnance Survey field sheets of 1810-1830 would produce useful results. The problem is immensely complicated, the Archer Survey of c.1500 reveals the degree to which the pattern of smaller farms has changed, some persisting, others disappearing without trace, while new ones were established. The reasons why groups of small farms occur in one area but not in another depends on the minutiae of estate history to a greater degree than on any other factors. Once again this is a field that would probably repay detailed examination.

- (54) M. W. Beresford in "The Six New Towns of the Bishops of Winchester, 1200-55", Medieval Archaeology, Vol. 3, (1959), pp. 187-215, discusses six planted towns. Recent work by the same author, as yet unpublished, suggests that in the late 12th and 13th centuries some 120 towns were founded in England and 80 in Wales. An earlier view is to be found in T.F. Tout, Medieval Town Planning. (1934).
- (55) J.B. Harley, Population and Land Use, 1086-1300. PP.
- (56) M. de W. Hemmion, Burgage Tenure in Medieval England, Harvard Historical Studies, (1914) discusses fully the nature of urban tenures. A useful appraisal of the problems is to be found in C. Petit-Dutaillis, Studies and Notes supplementary to Stubb's Constitutional History, Vol. 1, chapter VIII, "The Origin of Towns in England", pp. 67-90. A general discussion of urban origins is provided by C. Stephenson, Borough and Town, (1933). The two principal characteristics of burgage tenure were the payment of a money rent, usually in discharge of all services and the right to free alienation.

D. R. Denman, Origins of Ownership (1958), chapter 7, pp. 158-181 discuss the legal aspect of boroughs and burghal privileges.

- (57) J.B. Harley, in "The Settlement Geography of Early Medieval Warwickshire", Trans. I.B.G. 34 (1964) pp. 115-130, has a map of markets in Warwickshire, Figure 4, while a map of markets and fairs in four midland counties in 1307 (Warwickshire, Leicestershire, Rutland and Northampton) appears in R.H. Snape, England, a Social and Economic History, Book II (formerly published as Piers Plowman Social and Economic Histories) p. 121. This latter is drawn up mainly from the records of royal grants of markets and fairs down to 1307 and may not include all "held by prescription". Harley's map appears to be the fuller of the two, but nevertheless Snape's map credits a number of Arden settlements with fairs, and suggests that much work has still to be done on this aspect of the geography of the county. In addition to the market of Coleshill the following grants of market rights and a fair were made to settlements within Western Arden.

	Day.	Date of grant
Alspath (Meriden)	Tues.	1318
Balsall	Thus.	1268 (2 fairs)
Beaudesert	Mon.	1227
Fillongley	Mon.	1301
Hampton in Arden	Tues.	1251
Snitterfield	Wed.	1257
Solihull	Wed.	1242

(Source Cal. Charter Rolls.)

Packington, Great

1256/7

(Dugdale, Monast. Angl. ed. Caley, Ellis and Bulkerley, Vol. III, p. 194.)

- (58) J. Tait, British Borough Charters, 1216-1307, ()
Introduction, p. li.
- (59) The earliest Tanworth charters of circa 1180 refer
to the "Kings highway between Stratford and
Birmingham".
- (60) Victoria County History, Warwickshire, Vol. III,
p. 208.
- (61) P.R.O. C.134/47/11.
- (62) The author is unable to comment upon these two liberties.

- (63) Two other charters, W.D.213, and W.D.216, relate to the alienation of similar "messuages" abutting the market place.
- (64) R.A. Pelham, "The Growth of Settlement and Industry c.1100-c.1700" in M. Wise ed. Birmingham and its regional setting, British Association Handbook, (1950), pp. 135-144, summarises the development of the plateau prior to 1500. In this context, it is perhaps significant that the Lay Subsidy payments in Henley, Coleshill or Solihull exhibit no differences in patterns or levels of payment when compared with other settlements.
- (65) W.G. Hoskins, Local History in England, (1959) pp. 78-79, discusses Stratford-upon-Avon very briefly. A discussion of the origin of Solihull based on work done by Extra-Mural students is to be found in V.H.T. Skipp "The Planted Borough", Solihull Magazine, April (1964), pp. 33-35, and further material collected by the group is to be found in B.R.L. LW92.6. This is additional to the material used by the author from the Birthplace Library at Stratford.
- (66) The precise location of Olton is open to some doubt, but Olton End appears on the map appearing in Dr. Thomas's edition of Dugdale's Antiquities of Warwickshire in 1730. This was surveyed between 1722 and (Victoria County History, Warwickshire, Vol. IV, Frontpiece). Dugdale records that as late as the seventeenth century traces existed of a castle and park (1939).
- (67) This plan is shown quite adequately on the First Edition Ordnance Survey one inch maps of the area. (Warwickshire No. LIV, 1831), but a plan illustrated in Pemberton, Solihull and its church, dated 1819, provides a clearer picture.

- (68) Cal. Ch. R. i, 268. Cf. iii, 417.
- (69) This was clearly a rather irregular shape.
- (70) This process of a new town modelling its customs and franchises on those of an already established centre was a common one, and Miss Batson has shown that at least seventeen towns of England, Wales and Ireland, perhaps twenty-five, were modelled on the Norman town of Breteuil, one of which was possibly Stratford-upon-Avon, C. Petit-Dutaillis, Studies Supplementary to Stubbs, Vol. 1. p. 88.
- (71) Cf. Archer Collection, Solihull Charters, c.1279-80 D.18, post 1290 D24, 9 April 1326 D59, 21 Dec. 1340, D76, 27 Jan. 1347/8 D87; P.R.O. Anct. Deeds C1942, C3465, C484, C293.
- (72) Further references to the liberties and customs merchant can be found in P.R.O. Copy no. 1319 C146-5067 (B.R.L.) and P.R.O. Anct. Deeds C1269.
- (73) P.R.O. C133/73(2).
- (74) Cal. Charter Rolls, Vol. 1. (268).
- (75) The Worcester Coventry road appears on the Gough Map dating from the first half of the fourteenth century (H.C. Darby, ed. Historical Geography of England before 1800, pp. 260-1).
- (76) It must be remembered that these charters were a source of much needed royal income. Strictly, a borough is a town possessing a corporation and privilege conferred by royal charter, but as D.R. Denman points out (Origins of Ownership (1959), p. 158), the ancient documents and medieval writers scatter the word "borough" too promiscuously for any investigator to say, "here is the typical borough". There is no essential quality common to all boroughs, no irreducible

minimum of liberties. Solihull is first described as a borough in an undated early fourteenth century charter (Archer Collection, Stratford on Avon, D.24. post. 1290) which refers to "the borough township of Solihull".

- (77) This is clearly implied by Uhlig's paper in volume xliii of Geografiska Annaler, (1961).

Chapter 8

THE ECONOMIC BASIS OF THE COLONISATION

In a consideration of the economic basis of the colonising movement described in the last four chapters three stages of analysis will be used; first, by means of taxation records an assessment will be made of the general distribution of agricultural wealth in Western Arden in the Middle Ages; secondly, using more detailed evidence, the three major units of agricultural production not so far examined fully will be discussed, the manor, the township, and the peasant farm; finally, an attempt will be made to synthesise the various categories and types of information available to produce an assessment of the economy of the Arden area in the Middle Ages. The final chapter will conclude the study with an account of one highly specialised aspect of the economy of Western Arden, ^{namely} fish production in ponds.

There are four surviving valuations that relate to Western Arden before 1350 and which provide some indication of the general distribution of agricultural wealth, but, as will be demonstrated, they also reflect the presence of many other variables, frequently of a non-agricultural character. The first of these valuations is provided by Domesday Book, and Figure 42 includes a map based on this valuation in 1086, calculated on the basis of shillings per thousand acres of parish. ¹ Two points emerge from this map, first, the higher valuations of the Avon valley manors, and to a lesser extent those of the south-easterh plateau fringe, and secondly, the relatively uniform valuation of the plateau surface manors and those of the Blythe valley, all being consistently below 20s. per thousand acres. Those manors of the Eastern Arden plateau on the other hand,

Fillongley and Corley, have a slightly higher valuation at this period, but it is difficult to see why. This pattern, however, clearly reflects in general terms the settlement history of Western Arden as outlined in Chapter 1.

Chapter 3 demonstrated that by the late thirteenth century the colonising movement had spread vigorously over the plateau surface and a valuation for this date might be expected to reflect this fact. In 1291 a taxation of one-tenth of clerical incomes was levied on the mandate of Pope Nicholas IV to aid Edward 1 on a crusade.² This purports to be a "verus valor" (i.e. true valuation) made by the assessors on the oaths of rectors, vicars and parochial chaplains. Returns were made for two sources, first, the spiritualities, the taxable clerical incomes from the ecclesiastical parishes which were derived from the agricultural produce by way of tithes. Frequently there was a small additional income from mortuary fees and various oblations which tend to obscure the simple relationship with the soil, but in rural areas it is unlikely that these formed a large proportion of the income. Secondly, there were the temporalities, those incomes derived from the demesne manors in ecclesiastical hands, and probably based on manorial bailiff's account rolls. The map of the 1291 valuation (Figure 42) is based only on the assessment of income derived from the spiritualities, and a sharp contrast is immediately evident between those parishes in the diocese of Coventry and Lichfield and those in Worcester diocese. Solihull for instance, was assessed at some 36.4 shillings per thousand acres, Berkswell at 33s. and Coleshill at 41.5s., while Tanworth, Lapworth and Rowington were respectively assessed at 71s., 80s., and 74s. These differences are hardly likely to be the result of different degrees of economic development, and this sharp

contrast between the two dioceses must necessarily raise questions concerning the accuracy of the assessment. These problems cannot be fully answered in this essay, but, as analysis of the Nonae Returns made below clearly suggests, the contrast between the north and south of Arden in 1291 was probably a function of the accuracy of the valuation.

With this fact in mind four points can be made concerning the distribution of agricultural wealth in 1291; first, the Avon valley assessments are still the highest in Western Arden, but with one exception, the plateau fringes and the Alne valley exhibit generally uniform assessments, if the difference between the two dioceses is discounted; secondly, a belt of lower valuations was to be found on the southern section of the Eastern Arden plateau, possibly extending into Claverdon; thirdly, no great differences in assessment occur in the northern part of the area, but somewhat lower values appear in those parishes of the Eastern Arden plateau within the area of study, and extend into the Blythe valley; finally, in view of the inaccuracies known to exist a comparison with conditions in 1086 is exceedingly difficult, but it is nevertheless clear that while parishes such as Tanworth, Lapworth and Hampton in Arden had developed enormously in the period between 1086 and 1291, the dominance of the Avon valley had not been seriously challenged.

It is impossible to divorce studies of the Taxatio Ecclesiastica of 1291 from the next great assessment of this type, i.e. using the parish as a unit, the Nonarum Inquisitions of 1342.³ In 1291 the simple relationship with the soil was somewhat obscured by the mortuary fees and other items of clerical income, but with the Nonae returns this tendency is redeemed. The tax relates to a grant by Parliament to Edward III, in 1342, to assist him in his wars, of one ninth of the value of wool, lambs and

corn produced in the kingdom. The value of these items was assessed parish by parish, and since the ninth was to be collected after the tithe had been collected, the tax was in fact one ninth of nine-tenths of the total value of the produce, and therefore identical with the tithe. For this reason the collectors of 1342 had before them the assessment of 1291, and parishioners from every parish declared on oath before the veditors and assessors of the crown the true value of the ninth of corn, wool and lambs for the past year; then they stated the value of the church according to the taxation of Pope Nicholas, and when the ninth did not exceed that amount they gave as a cause that the glebe of the church, the tithe of hay and other small tithes and offerings had been reckoned in the valuation in 1291.⁴

It is unfortunate that the Warwickshire section of the Nonae only cites a lump sum for the value of the ninth of sheaves, fleeces, and lambs, but this data has been mapped in Figure 42. Although based on the 1291 survey the Nonae was not compiled on a diocesan basis and, significantly, fails to reveal the sharp break indicated by the former record. The main contrasts in 1342 were between the parishes of the Avon and Alne valleys together with those of the southern plateau fringe, and the parishes of the main plateau and the Blythe valley zone to the north. It is possible that the slight decline in importance of the Avon valley was the result of pressure of population on available agrarian resources. In particular the evidence from Hampton on Avon suggests this, thus, in 1086 some 22 villeins, 9 bordars and 4 serfs were listed, and by 1299 the numbers were 17 villeins, 14 cottagers and 5 free-holders.⁵ While an increase in absolute wealth between 1086 and the late thirteenth and early fourteenth century

might be expected, it is probable that after the late thirteenth century a certain amount of stagnation took place, a phenomenon noted by Harley in other parishes in south Warwickshire.⁶

To the north of this more prosperous belt extended a tract of country where assessments were extremely uniform, at a moderate level of prosperity. It is significant that the somewhat lower values on the East Warwickshire plateau persist between 1291 and 1342. Nevertheless, on the basis of the data mapped in Figure 42 it is exceedingly difficult to obtain any comparative measure of prosperity in 1086, 1291 and 1342. The differences in agricultural wealth suggested by these maps were probably in fact less sharp than appears at first sight, for as Figure 17 clearly shows the parishes of the plateau and Blythe valley still retained much woodland and waste in the early fourteenth century while such reserves had long disappeared from the parishes of the south. It is exactly where assessments appear lowest that waste and woodland survived in the greatest quantities (Figure 17). To obtain a true comparison the area of this negative zone would have to be subtracted from the total parish area when calculating the value in shillings per thousand acres. In practical terms the large amount of waste in Tanworth in 1291 and 1342 would reduce considerably the value per thousand acres, and the area of developed land may in fact have been both more extensive than that which existed in Hampton on Avon, and, acre for acre, of greater value. Furthermore, this waste was not in actual terms negative, for as Chapter 5 showed it was in itself a valuable resource, the absence of which must have been a decided economic disadvantage in Hampton on Avon. If such a map were possible the value of the assessment per thousand acres of improved land would present a truer and more balanced picture of agricultural wealth. In the light of this point, it is probable that

by 1342 any contrasts that formerly existed between the older settled areas and the newly colonised zones had been largely ironed out, and indeed it is reasonable to suggest that this state of affairs had already been achieved by 1291.

To no small degree the incidence of all medieval taxation depended on the extent to which the assessors were able to prove the presence of wealth and extract the money from the persons concerned. This would obviously be an easier task in the more strongly manorialised areas where the administrative documents were both in existence and tended to approximate more closely to the actual conditions than in the newly colonised zones. In addition to those already examined one other class of source material permits an overall assessment of wealth to be made prior to 1350; Lay Subsidy Rolls, in particular that of 1334 have been used to map variations in prosperity by "assuming that the tax paid bore some relation to the ability of an area to pay."⁷ This tax, on non-ecclesiastical property, consisted of a grant by Parliament to the Crown, of a proportion of the value of a man's moveable goods (principally crops and stock) as distinct from his fixed possessions (land and dwelling). In rural districts, moveables usually meant the larger domestic animals, grain, and some peas and beans. Excluded from taxation were the peasant's household goods, food in his larder, his plough, small carts, rakes, spades, and clothing, and it appears to have been a general rule that a man was not to be so amerced as to deprive him of the tools he must have if he was to continue to earn a living, a state of affairs normally summed up by the phrase in the Magna Carta "saving his tillage."⁸ The peasant in fact appears to have been taxed purely on his saleable surplus, but it is by no means clear if the beasts that were taxed excluded the necessary plough teams. While

the precise nature of the tax varied from time to time, and variations probably occurred from area to area, Lay Subsidy broadly represents a tax on the "demesne" of persons above a certain level of wealth, i.e. those with moveables worth ten shillings or more per annum.⁹ Prior to 1334 the method of taxation was to assess directly the possessions of each individual, but in 1335, as a remedy to persistent corruption, this system was replaced by that of agreement by negotiation on the sum each community was to pay. It is therefore possible that the 1334 quotas are nearer the truth than their predecessors, and for this reason the sum demanded by the 1334 assessment has been mapped in Figure 42.¹⁰ Two difficulties must be stressed, first, the basic assumption that the tax bore some relation to the ability of the area to pay, and secondly, the assessments are clearly not based on the total wealth of each parish. The best that can be hoped is that they do form a guide to the distribution of relative wealth. The distribution revealed by Figure 42 is strikingly like that revealed by the Nonae; some slight variations appear, but the general distribution of wealth is essentially that revealed in 1342 and to a lesser degree in 1291.

From this analysis only one clear point really emerges, namely that it is impossible to produce any clear cut correlation between the pattern indicated by the valors of 1291 and 1342 together with the Lay Subsidy Roll of 1334 and the known details of each parish. A general conclusion would appear to be that such choropleth maps are only of value when they deal with an area as large as a county, and even then their reliability must be suspect. Harley's success with this data possibly depended on the fact that Stoneleigh and Kington do exhibit particularly strong contrasts, and in terms of area are somewhat larger than Western Arden.

Lay Subsidy rolls, however, can be used to make one further point that appears to have more significance; although in Figure 42 the roll for 1334 has been used, the distribution would have been substantially the same if the map had been based upon that of 1327,^{for} the figures only vary by a very few shillings. Thus, in 1334 Tanworth was assessed at 119s. 0d. and in 1327 at 110s. 0d., a negligible variation in terms of Figure 42. However, this particular tax was based on the direct assessment of the value of a man's moveable goods (principally crops and stock) as distinct from his fixed possessions (land and dwelling). With the wealth of detail available for Tanworth it is possible to assess the degree to which the Lay Subsidy did in fact reflect the prosperity of the individuals who were liable for tax. This point has already been raised in Chapter 5, where it was concluded, with reference to the small landowners, that Lay Subsidy Rolls in fact afforded no evidence for the presence of this group in the form of noticeably higher payments. The entry for Tanworth in the roll of 1327 is unfortunately damaged, the missing persons probably being members of the Archer family and the de Cherlecotes.¹¹ John Archer IV is not mentioned, but as one of the persons in the damaged portion pays the large tax of 4s., it is reasonable to infer that this is John Archer. The size of the Archer holding may be compared with that of William son of John Wodard (Figures 32 and 37) who was also paying 4s. tax. In contrast Robert de Sydenhale and Henry his brother, both owners of small manors, (Figure 34), were only paying 2s. each; John de Broughton, owner of the Cheswick sub-manor, was only paying 1s., and William de Fulwood, another small-landowner was taxed at 2s. (Figure 33). In contrast, Richard Wystan and Richard and William de Alreshawe were paying respectively 3s., 3s., and 3s. (Figure 37), and John atte Berne and John Broun (Figure 39) 3s. and 2s. 6d. in

spite of considerably smaller tenements than John Wodard for example, was holding. Thus, the size of holding plainly bore no relationship to the amount of tax levied, and in Chapter 5 it was suggested that in practical terms the tax on moveables was a tax on the profits of the "demesne", the land farmed by the landholder himself. If the land was sub-granted or sub-let it escaped tax, and this fact will probably account for the discrepancies in the amounts paid, for the home farm of a family such as the Archers need have been no larger than that of a peasant proprietor such as John Wodard. On the other hand, charter evidence suggests that where two holdings were of comparable size and structure, they were similarly taxed, for example, the de Wystanscrofts (Wystan) and the de Alreshawe holdings both paid 3s. tax in 1327.

These tentative conclusions would imply that in an area such as Arden, or indeed elsewhere, the reliability of Lay Subsidy Rolls in indicating even relative prosperity is very limited, for some parishes have a reserve of wealth denied to the tax gatherer by his very terms of reference. To test the truth of this conclusion outside the Arden area lies beyond the scope of this study, but the points made above must lead inevitably to the conclusion that Lay Subsidy rolls are unreliable guides to the distribution of prosperity in the Middle Ages, as indeed are all of the general valuations mapped in Figure 42 when a relatively small area is being considered. The next stage of analysis is to examine the various units of agrarian organisation present in Western Arden before 1350.

In Chapter 5 the manor was defined as an agrarian estate normally directly or indirectly under the control of one lord. Its coherence frequently lay in this fact, it was in the hands of a single lord, and was administered by a court to which his free and customary tenants owed

namely that

suit. Except in cases of extreme fragmentation, however, this court dominated the life of the township, for as Kosminsky indicates, little is known of the nature of non-manorial assemblies in central England in the thirteenth century.¹³

Within the manorial framework a hierarchy of units of agricultural production can be recognised, from large groups of manors whose agricultural organisation was given coherence by allegiance to one lord, the honor, through various sizes of manor, to ultimately the basic unit of rural production, the peasant farm. Closely associated with these units, and indeed in many cases quite inseparable from them was the communal farm-unit of the township.

The Honor.

The only estate within Western Arden which it is pertinent to consider in this essay as part of a larger manorial grouping is that of the Earl of Warwick, Holmes has indicated the way in which the production from honors was related to their geographical proximity to the caput honoris, and Fox demonstrated in detail the complex organisation of the Honor of Leicester.¹⁴ It is known that by the early fifteenth century the Warwick estates in the Midlands were organised as a group,¹⁵ and as Harley argues it is inconceivable that the vast estates of the Earldom would not by 1300 have possessed a comparable organisation.¹⁶ Thus, by the early fourteenth century the Honor of Leicester was divided up into a number of bailliwicks, the composition of which were decided by the geographical location of the different vills, "for it was obviously to the advantage of the bailiffs and of all other officials for a number of vills lying within a given area to be regarded as a bailliwick for administrative purposes irrespective of shire or hundred divisions".¹⁷ Unfortunately,

the only surviving receiver-general's accounts for the Earldom of Warwick date from the early fifteenth century and are merely stray survivors from what must have been a great series.¹⁸

At this date (1340) the administration of the honor was largely dictated by geographical convenience. The main block of English estates in the Midlands and south was responsible, manor by manor, to the Earl's principal official, the receiver-general. As Ross points out, however, the Earl was no mere figurehead, no constitutional monarch; he retained full and active control in the administration of his great landed inheritance.¹⁹

This situation, where the estates were all under the control of one receiver-general, the pivot of the whole estate and financial organisation, may be contrasted with that of the Duchy of Lancaster, ~~where~~ the estates of which were organised into a series of separate honors and receiverships.²⁰

It is distinctly probable then that as early as 1300 the manors of the Warwick Earldom were grouped in some comparable way on a local basis, and in this context Figures 12, 13, 14, and 15 have been prepared from the extents attached to the Inquisition post mortem of Guy de Beauchamp in 1315.²¹

It is clear that the relative importance of free and villein rents on the Earl's demesne manors reflects the regional contrasts between Arden and Feldon, a fact already brought out in the discussion of rents and services in Chapter 4, and the pattern within Worcestershire is similarly explicable.²²

However, there is no obvious correlation between the proximity of a given manor to Warwick or Worcester, both of which may be regarded as a caput, especially Warwick, and the degree of development of demesne agriculture. This may be due to the unreliability of the data, but the extents are probably accurate enough to reveal such a correlation if it existed. In view of this fact the demesne farms of the Earl must now be examined in relation to those of other Arden landowners.

The Demesne Farms.

The term "demesne" has three meanings; normally it is that cultivable land which in the fullest sense is the lord's own, his home farm, his "economic" demesne; the king's courts, however, considered that a lord was legally "seised in demesne" of his villeins' lands, his "legal" demesne; and finally, a tenant as against his feudal superiors may be said to hold "in demesne" a complete vill or manor, of which portions were nevertheless permanently alienated to freeholders, his "feudal" demesne.²³ While in this discussion the first sense is implied, it is important to realise that the manors for which extents survive are demesne manors in the third or feudal sense. It is however the large home farms which are the concern of this section.

Figure 13 shows the variations in the importance of the income derived from the demesne farms of the tenants in chief within Western Arden. The figures are derived principally from the income from the demesne arable and meadow, together with the small sum derived from the capital messuage, probably garden and orchard produce. The position is summarised by the following table:²⁴

Table 33

Western Arden: Incomes from the Demesne Farms as a % of

	<u>Total Income.</u>									
	55%+		36-55%		16-35%		15%		Total	
Total for the Earl of W. (Wks. & Worcs).	3	15%	3	15%	9	45%	5	25%	20	
Western Arden, manors of the Earl	1	16%	1	16%	2	33.3%	2	33.3%	6	
Western Arden (remainder)	2	13%	3	20%	7	47%	3	20%	15	
Western Arden (total)	3	13%	4	19%	9	43%	5	23%	21	

This table suggests, first, that the structure of the estates of the Earl of Warwick, both in Western Arden and the remainder of Warwickshire together with Worcestershire, did not differ radically from those other manors for which evidence is available; thus, the manors of the Earl are in no way distinctive in terms of the importance of the demesne as an item of income (Figure 13). Secondly, on only 32% of all the manors in Western Arden, for which figures exist, did the demesne income exceed 35% of the total. Since this figure is related to the amount of rent on a given manor, this emphasises the importance of rents upon all the manors, not merely those within Arden, a point made by Harley. ²⁵

Demesne farms then accounted for something under one third of the income derived from most manors, but, nevertheless, a comparison of Figures 12 and 13 suggests that no correlation existed between the proportion of income derived from this source and the size of the manorial unit. In themselves, however, the demesne farms of the tenants in chief varied considerably in size, and the following table analyses the acreages recorded in the extents:

Table 34

Western Arden: Size of Demesne Farms in terms of
Recorded Arable. ²⁶

Acreage	0 - 99	100 - 199	200-299	300-399	400+	Tot.
Warwick E'dom	1 4.5%	6 2.8%	10 48.0%	3 14.0%	1 4.5%	21
Warwick E'dom (West. Arden)	1 16.0%	2 33.3%	2 33.3%	1 16.0%	0 0	6
West. Arden (remainder)	6 37.5%	5 31.0%	3 18.5%	0 0	2 12%	16
West. Arden (total)	7 32.0%	7 32.0%	5 23.0%	1 4.0%	2 9%	22

In this case the manors of the Warwick Earldom have a clear tendency to possess the larger demesnes, some two thirds being over 200 acres in extent. On the Earl's Western Arden manors this percentage is lower, (49.3%) but is still appreciably higher than the remainder, amongst which only one third (30.5%) have demesnes of over 200 acres. In Western Arden as a whole some 62% of the demesne farms fall below 200 acres in extent. The recorded acreages of the demesne arable are mapped in Figure 27, which stresses the comparative rarity of the very large arable demesne within Western Arden, and emphasises the wide range of sizes which did occur in practice. It is significant, however, that the three largest demesnes, Hampton in Arden, Temple Balsall and Berkswell are all within the late settled zone of central Arden suggesting that the availability of land may have been one factor in determining the size. If the agricultural potential was present it was clearly easier for a lord to increase his demesne where waste was available rather than to dispossess tenants already in possession on a manor where settlement was already firmly established,

Although the figures must be regarded as highly conventional the Taxatio Ecclesiastica of 1291 provides some measure of the size of demesnes on ecclesiastical estates in the form of the record of the temporalities,²⁷ and these have also been mapped in Figure 27. Of these, 50% were below 80 acres in extent (one carucate), and only two (20%) were above 240 acres (three carucates). This last was the demesne of the manor of Hampton on Avon, owned by the Bishop of Worcester, and in 1299 the survey in the Red Book of Worcester gives a demesne acreage of $288\frac{1}{2}$ acres.²⁸ The figures for ecclesiastical demesnes also exclude the great 500 acre demesne of the Knights Templar at Balsall.²⁹

As a group, however, ecclesiastical demesnes fall in the same size range as do the demesnes of lay lords.

These demesne farms, however, were not static, they fluctuated in size, new land was added and subtracted, and new land was leased. The period from the mid-thirteenth to the mid-fourteenth century saw both the full flowering and the beginning of a decline in demesne agriculture. The manor of Berkswell provides some material to illustrate the fluctuations in the size of the demesne, there being four Inquisitions post mortem in the period 1300-1325. The significant figures are summarised in the table below:³⁰

Table 35

Berkswell: Variations in the size of the Arable Lands
of the Demesne, 1300-1325.

<u>Acreage</u>	<u>Old land</u>	<u>New land</u>	<u>Other land</u>	<u>Total</u>
Dates				
1300 - 1301	180	-	-	180
1315 (Oct. 9th)	210	140	-	350
1315 (Nov. 6th)	220	122	-	342
1324 - 1305	180	120	153	453

In detail, the accuracy of an extent is questionable, so that the significance of the minor variations must be open to doubt, but the main trends seem clear; there is an old demesne of some 200 acres upon which the villeins of the manor owe labour services, ploughing and reaping; to this in the early fourteenth century was added about 120 or more acres of new land. No labour services were owed upon this latter, but it was clearly valuable, for while the old land was worth 2d per acre, the new was worth 3d. The situation in the last extent was unusual, for an extra

153 acres were in the lord's hand "because of the incapability of the tenants; it lies fallow, and it is not possible to let it to farm; it is worth nothing as pasture because of the murraine amongst the beasts in the neighbourhood", (et iacent frisohec et non possunt affirmari et nichil valent per annum ut in pastur' propter morina bestiarum in patria).³¹

In the second decade of the fourteenth century this situation could be considered a purely temporary arrangement, but the next half century saw the situation becoming more and more common, lords being left with land on their hands.³² The economic decline of the late fourteenth century, however, lies beyond the scope of this essay, and a significant feature of these figures is that they suggest that the expansion of the demesne arable at Berkswell continued until the third decade of the fourteenth century, indeed this expansion seems not to have been confined to the demesne, for in 1324-5 the villein tenants are described as holding "forlands of assart" (fforlond de novo assarto). This expansion was not only confined to the estates of the Earl of Warwick, and is discussed by Holmes who demonstrates that in the early decades of the fourteenth century a policy of piecemeal expansion was to be found on many estates.³³ This involved not only the acquisition of new properties but also additions to old ones, and he cites Berkswell as a specific example; thus, the Beauchamp Cartulary shows that "during the tenure of Earl Guy, from 1298-1315 the purchases of new pieces of land, additions to manors rather than new manors, were very numerous, especially in Warwick and its suburbs and the manor of Berkswell, where some of the pasture and waste seems to have been enclosed in 1306-7".³⁴

The evidence for this is to be found in a series of charters relating to Berkswell by which nine tenants of the Earl quit their claim of rights of pasture in the "close

called Haukaresmore" and "certain pieces of waste land in Blackenhale and Leewode." This may have been a process of enclosing part of the manorial waste for pastoral purposes, for in 1315 pasture in "Haukeresmore" was valued in the extent. Clearly the demesne lands were being extended, at least partially for pasture, but probably also for tillage. The same process appears to have been taking place in Claverdon where in 1324-5 some 30 acres of new land is mentioned,³⁵ while demesne expansion was also taking place on some ecclesiastical demesnes at the turn of the century; for instance, in 1299 new land was listed on all but five of the demesne manors of the Bishop of Worcester in that county. However, none was listed for any of his Warwickshire manors except Lapworth, where it was in tenants' hand.³⁶ As Miss Hollings comments "the last quarter of the thirteenth century was an age of expanding settlement (and) the investment of capital in land."³⁷

The figures cited in the discussion above give some indication of the variations in the total size of demesnes within Western Arden, but throw no light on the character of these lands, whether they were scattered in open field strips throughout the township, or forming a compact severalty. In 1299 the demesne of the Bishop of Worcester at Hampton on Avon was described as consisting of 288½ acres lying "divided in two fields, one called Upper field, the other called Lower field", (Et Dividitur dominicum in duos campos unus vocatur Overefelde et alter vocatur Netherfelde).³⁸ A comparable situation probably existed at Wootton Wawen where of the 60 acres of demesne in 1308-9 40 were worth 6d. per acre and 20 were not valued because they lay in fallow (iacent ad warrectum).³⁹

It is probable, however, that the majority of the demesne farms within Arden were compact severalties,^{and} this was clearly

the case at Coleshill (Figure 43) Longdon (Figure 19) and Tanworth (Figure 47). The Tanworth evidence, once again, permits a more detailed appraisal of the composition of a demesne farm. In 1315 the demesne farm of Tanworth was described as consisting of about 200 acres of arable land, one extent stating precisely $217\frac{1}{2}$ acres, the other giving 202 acres "more or less".⁴⁰ Appurtenant to this was some 27 acres of meadow, together with a further $3\frac{1}{2}$ acres in the park, together with certain items of pasture. A new assart of 13 acres in the outwood (i.e. Earlswood) was probably pasture, while in addition a number of closes were specifically described as being pasture, le Buttes, Godinggeslond, Le Berneyerd, le Oldeclos and Redeford. For obvious reasons the demesne closes tend to appear only very infrequently in the charters, but by using such references as do occur, together with the earliest bailiff's account roll of 1377 and a rental of c.1430, it has proved possible to produce a map of the demesne closes of Tanworth (Figure 47).⁴¹ The farm was very compact, and occupied land sloping down into the Alne valley on some of the heaviest and best land in the parish, focussing on the unit called Bickerscote (Figure 49). Set out in the waste was a separate block, Countessclose, originally termed in the seventh and eighth decades of the thirteenth century "The Close of the Lord Earl", and which was probably claimed in the period 1268-1298 on the orders of Earl William de Beauchamp, for it was also termed "The Close of Earl William."⁴²

A number of the demesne closes cannot be located, but may have formed part of the Bickerscote block (Figure 47) or part of the area indicated in Figure 47 with the question mark. A check on the acreage of the demesne based on this map, and the acreages given in the Tithe Award, suggests

that while the assessment of 1315 is probably an under-assessment it is not unreasonably so.⁴³ Bickerscote, together with the adjoining closes of Kankes and Knollesbury, consisted of about 134 acres of potential arable land, with 34 acres of potential meadow. In addition most of the area indicated in Figure 47 by a question mark may have been arable, 67 acres in all, together with the whole of Countessclose, some 52 acres. These two latter areas also account respectively for a further 19 and 13 acres of potential meadowland. This makes the total amount of potential arable land some 253 acres, and the potential meadowland some 66 acres, so that the figure of 202 acres "more or less" would seem to be a reasonable estimate in view of the demesne resources available. The 27 acres of meadowland mentioned in 1315 is probably to be associated with the 34 acres available at Bickerscote in 1842 in terms of pasture,^{for} some 46 acres of named pasture closes can be accounted for, and as Figure 47 suggests, it is probable that as many again existed. In addition the lord had rights extending over minimum of about 800 acres of woodland, common, and wasteland, and in the early fourteenth century this figure may have been substantially higher.⁴⁴

In spite of the large scale development of the Archer lands it is probable that in 1315 Tanworth demesne farm was still the largest agricultural unit within the whole manor, and it is particularly regrettable that no early bailiffs' account rolls have survived. The extent of 1315 is, however, invaluable in that it was probably based on either an account roll or an existing survey of the manor, and is the only source extant which gives any indication of conditions on the demesne farm before the period of the reorganisation of the manorial economy in the latter half

of the fourteenth century. Faced with the rising cost of labour as a result of the population decline, the lord was compelled to gradually abandon demesne agriculture as the fourteenth century passed, so that by 1377 demesne cultivation had been completely abandoned, and the demesne closes appear under the sale of pasture.

The material, therefore, is not available for a full discussion of demesne farming in Tanworth, but in order to place this material in something of its context it is perhaps not out of place to cite the four distinct phases of estate development during the fourteenth century recognised by Holmes:

Period I was the conclusion of the great age of economic activity and fluctuation in the late thirteenth century and ends in 1325. At this time lords were still expanding their demesnes by purchasing land of peasants as well as by developing waste land, for demesne agriculture was still exceedingly profitable.

Period II was a period of stability, when profits, prices and the ratio between the different manorial activities and sources of income were all stable. Except on manors with very large demesne, rents provided the largest item of profits.

Period III, from 1349-1370, a period of difficulty and recovery dominated by the Pestilence.

Period IV, from c.1370 until the end of the century, a period of increasing difficulty for the landlord associated with the leasing out of the former demesne lands.⁴⁵

The expansion of the demesne lands within Arden is associated with period I, the period in which the extent of 1315 falls, while the change from an arable demesne to a leased demesne suggested by a comparison of this extent and the earliest bailiffs' account roll of 1377 falls in period III.⁴⁶

The Township.

Despite the process of feudalisation, there are strong indications that the township remained throughout the Middle Ages a coherent unit of agricultural production, of organisation, and administration, based on the village. This was particularly noticeable in villages under divided lordships where coherence was frequently derived from the fact that the manorial organisation had not destroyed the unity of the economic unit upon which, in this case, it had been superimposed, and agricultural organisation was still related to one field system. In this context the village was a communal farm unit, worked and organised by the villagers rather than the administrative machinery of the manor. In areas where the manor and vill tended to coincide, however, the organisation of communal agriculture was firmly controlled by the seigniorial court.⁴⁷ The situation in Arden was rather different, for in addition to the irregularity of the field systems, already described by both Hilton and Harley,⁴⁸ these systems only rarely occupied more than a small proportion of the township or parish, and in terms of importance were subsidiary to the large quantity of several holdings which were the result of individual clearance. However, these common fields were important in that although they were a form of agrarian organisation very different from the enclosed severalties, they clearly represent a distinct, probably earlier phase of colonisation, a phase possibly associated with communal clearing. This examination of the field systems of the Arden area will commence with an appraisal of the physical form of the fields.

a) The Form of the Fields.

Figure 24 is a map of the field patterns within the

Arden parish of Lapworth, and this can be seen to consist of three elements: ⁴⁹

first, two, possibly three, areas where common field cultivation can be proved to have taken place abutting the church-hamlet bearing the parish name; ⁵⁰

secondly, a tract of small several closes, characterised by small size and irregular form, in many cases being demonstrably the product of medieval clearing; ⁵¹

finally, in the extreme east and south of the parish, two groups of somewhat larger more regular closes, one group resulting from the late enclosure of an area of late surviving waste, the second being the result of the enclosure of a small park, possibly in the seventeenth century. ⁵²

Charter evidence from Lapworth reveals the presence of two small common fields, Churchfield and Murihull, the former field extending eastward from the church, the limit being suggested by the field name Stockings Close, clearly a severalty, while Murihull (or Merehull) lies to the west of the church and was limited by two known several closes, Cold Ridding and the Brockshawe. ⁵³ While it does seem probable from the surviving charters that these fields were more extensive to the north and south than is suggested by the field names of c.1843, it is probable that the total area of the two fields never exceeded 150 acres. To this must possibly be added a southern field, to the south of the church, part of which survived in c.1843 as Clay Croft, still subdivided into strips. ⁵⁴ It is improbable, nevertheless, that common arable in Lapworth ever exceeded 10% (200? acres), of the total area of the parish.

A comparable extent of common arable can be proved to have existed at Longdon in Solihull (Figure 19), where it appears to have comprised about 15% of the total area of

the township.⁵⁵ Consisting of four main elements, Beryefeld, Sydefurlong, Whatcroft and Hemfeld, this common arable formed a compact block to the north of the Blythe, and like Lapworth appears to have been closely surrounded by severalties. Skipp was able to prove the presence of comparable small areas of common arable in Hill and Church Bickenhill, Middle Bickenhill, Marston Culy, Lyndon and Sheldon, in most cases forming a somewhat larger portion of the township than was the case with Lapworth.⁵⁶ In Sheldon he suggested a complicated pattern of small isolated blocks of common arable surrounded by severalties, such as are shown at Feckenham, Worcestershire, by a map of 1591.⁵⁷

Coleshill lies immediately adjacent to Sheldon, but when the medieval evidence is closely examined in the light of a map of 1780, it presents a marked contrast.⁵⁸ Two common field systems, at least, were present, one associated with Coleshill, the other with the adjacent hamlet of Gilson (Figure 43). In addition there is fragmentary evidence for small areas of common arable at Hawkswell, Kingshurst, and perhaps Aldcote,⁵⁹ together with other peculiar isolated areas of common arable interdigitated with several closes. In all common arable must have formed some 40% of Coleshill parish.

In Tanworth, as Figure 44 clearly shows, the charter material is sufficient to permit a reconstruction of the detailed pattern of the common field at three periods, the Archer survey of c.1500 providing a clear cut picture on which the earlier reconstructions can be based. This map provides a starting point from which to examine medieval conditions more closely than in the brief outline above. In c.1500 the common arable in Tanworth was confined to one large field, Hemfield, which was surrounded by a close

pattern of hedged several closes, the largest of which was a "ground called Pyrryhyll", equal in size to Hemfield itself.⁶⁰ Wygenhull was specifically described as a furlong, and it may reasonably be deduced that Whetedysh, Apulton Common and Shirwoldeshull were all units, or furlongs, within the field.

Figure 44 A has been compiled using the charters surviving between c.1300-1350, and frequent references to selions and "doles" within Pirihull, or more specifically "the field of Pirihull"⁶¹ show that at this date Pirihull was part of the common fields. Hemfield is also referred to, and Whetedysh and Wykenhul (cf. Wygenhul in c.1500) were also common in the early fourteenth century. With the exception of Pirihull, the pattern of several closes around the field was essentially the same as in c.1500, and this impression is confirmed by the picture in c.1250-1300, but at that date the western half of the field was known as Karswellefeld. Shirewoldeshull also appears at this date, but another charter contains an isolated reference to "Shirewoldescroft", suggesting that several land, implied possibly by the term croft, had become part of the common field. On the other hand, this may be no more than a slight variation in terminology.⁶²

Figure 44 C attempts to project the picture back to the early thirteenth century, and while a comparison of the three maps does suggest that the field contracted slightly during the period 1250-1350, it is clear that no really radical changes took place during this period. Thus, it is reasonable to conclude that as far back as the charter evidence carries us, Tanworth possessed some 200 or more acres of common arable, in this case forming only about 4% of the whole manor of Tanworth, and barely 2% of the whole parish. The evidence for the late twelfth

is too scanty to map, but there is little doubt that the common arable was then present and must be regarded as an extremely ancient feature of settlement. The evidence presented in Chapters 3, 5 and 6 showed that from the late twelfth century onward assarts and clearings were not incorporated within the arrangements of the common field but were held in severalty yielding a rent payable by the individual himself. It seems evident that this individual clearing was preceded by a period during which co-operative colonisation was more usual, co-operative colonisation which resulted in the establishment of common field cores such as those at Lapworth, Tanworth and Longdon. Stedman when discussing Feckenham came to the same conclusion, and when describing the pattern of common field core surrounded by severalties he concluded, "A possible explanation of this pattern is that the open fields developed and spread around the earliest settlement..... and..... by the time the forest further from the original centre began to be cleared open field cultivation had gone out of fashion at any rate to the extent that no new open fields were being formed..... It seems reasonably certain that the inner area occupied by open fields and common meadows represents the end of one stage in the expansion of settlement into the surrounding forest." ⁶³

Clearly it is not possible to trace the history of all the common arable in Western Arden in such detail as that for Tanworth, evidence rarely survives in sufficient quantity for this to be done, but Figure 40 is presented in an attempt to obtain a basic distribution. ⁶⁴ The common field mapped here is based on three principal sources: first, the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century enclosure awards relating to common field arable. It is reasonable to

assume that this represents such common arable and meadow as survived from the Middle Ages, and in some cases, Coleshill, Preston Bagot, Wootton Wawen and Snitterfield, for example, sufficient medieval charters survive to afford some measure of the extent of the common fields prior to 1350. The possibility of the expansion of common fields after 1350, and indeed before, will be considered below, but this appears to have been limited. Secondly, in certain parishes, the extent of the medieval common fields has been reconstructed using contemporary evidence, the author himself has done this for Tanworth, Longdon and Lapworth, and for Sheldon, Bickenhill and Elmdon the work of V.H.T. Skipp has been used. Finally, on the basis of material prior to 1350 all certain or possible areas of common arable have been plotted by a range of symbols. ⁶⁵

The result is a distribution which although it would be unwise to affix a specific date to it, does show striking variations and probably affords some measure of conditions as they were in the Middle Ages. Three principal regions can be clearly distinguished; first, the south, characterised by large expanses of common field land and clearly to be associated with the tract of common field country found in the Avon valley as a whole, and in the Feldon; ⁶⁶ secondly, in the north, the Blythe valley was characterised by generally smaller acreages, more irregular forms, and occasionally the fields may even break down into a series of discrete blocks; thirdly, between these two regions was a zone characterised by generally very small, isolated areas of common arable.

This brief analysis raises a number of specific problems concerning the common fields within Western Arden which may be summarised as follows:

- 1) what can be deduced about the origins of this common field land and what physical, social or economic factors caused the variations visible in Figure 44;
- 11) what evidence is there for the nature of the field systems, the tenemental structure within them, and the systems of rotation;
- 111) does any evidence survive to suggest changes in either the size or the structure of the fields in the period 1086-1350;
- 1V) what is the significance of these areas of common field in relation to the colonising movements ?

b) The Origins of the Common Arable.

It seems reasonably certain on the basis of the evidence so far presented to conclude that the area of common fields represents ~~the~~ one stage in the expansion of settlement into the surrounding waste. As will be shown, the evidence for the expansion of common fields after 1200 is very limited, an important point, for the change from common to several clearing implies a radical change in landownership concepts, in particular, it is to be associated with the rise of the idea that the manorial waste was the property of the lord, and that his sanction had to be sought before it could be cleared. This crystallization of seigniorial rights was strengthened by the Norman Conquest and generally by the early thirteenth century the common lands and wastes had passed into the ownership of the manorial lords.⁶⁷ In Arden this may well have occurred at a far earlier date, for as was established in Chapters 1 and 2 part, at least, of the Arden waste may well have already been sub-divided amongst lordships in the Anglo-Saxon period.

Figure 44 provides the basis for a number of tentative conclusions concerning the origins of the common field land, first, the larger areas of common arable were normally associated with those settlements that bore the parish name, and this, almost invariably, was a nucleation of at least hamlet size. The exception is Solihull, but Solihull itself is of late foundation, and the common field land was associated with the two early townships, Longdon and Ulverley where hamlet settlements may have been present (Figure 19); ⁶⁸ secondly, as a corollary of this distribution, common arable was associated with the earliest settlements of Anglo-Saxon foundation, and with those settlements recorded in Domesday Book. A comparison of Figures 5, 6, 7 and 44 will bear out this contention, and it is reasonable to conclude that the common field nucleus represents the area cleared by Anglo-Saxon colonists. For instance, where the Anglo-Saxon settlement was relatively early, the Avon valley, and the Alne and Blythe valleys, open common fields achieved considerable importance, whereas in those parts of Western Arden where settlement was retarded, i.e. in those parishes on the plateau surface, these highly complex forms never developed fully, since their development was truncated at a relatively early stage.

|| In Chapter 1 it was postulated that the great open common fields of the Feldon developed from simple ancient cores to which furlongs were added gradually, and it was suggested that by 1086 this pattern of large common fields was already well developed in the south of Warwickshire. ⁶⁹ Conditions in Arden were retarded, but nevertheless, some Anglo-Saxon settlement had taken place, as Figures 5, 6 and 7 show clearly, and it is likely that common field nuclei were established within the woodland. It is the author's view that these ancient cores appear in fossil form on Figure 44

as the small, rather isolated extents of common field such as at Tanworth, Longdon or Lapworth. Had the Anglo-Saxon settlement been permitted to run its course unhindered, it is likely that Arden, like the Feldon, would have been a landscape dominated by common fields, but the changing concepts of landownership in the period 1086-1200 terminated any further expansion, so that the cores of common arable and meadow appearing in the documentary record after 1200 are in fact fossil features. ⁷⁰

It is tempting to carry this argument a stage further by relating the known extent of certain of the common fields of Western Arden to the degree of development indicated in 1086 by the Domesday Book, for it is a logical step to argue that the ploughlands enumerated in 1086 are in fact the ploughlands of the common field cores. The following table is compiled partly from Figure 44 and partially from Domesday Book:

Table 36

Western Arden: Relationship of Domesday Statistics to Area
of Common Field Arable.

Parish or Township	1 area in 000s of acres	2 Ploughs 1086	3 Approx. acreage	4 Ploughlands 1086	5 Approx. acreage	6 % of parish tilled in 1086	7 Area of common field	8 % of parish	9
Barston	1.9	11	880	11	880	46.5	400	21.2	-
Brearley	0.85	6	480	5	400	47.0	800	94.0	++
Bickenhill Church	0.74	2	160	4	320	43.0	322	43.5	=
Bick. Hill and Middle	0.9	3.5	280	4	320	36.0	470	53.0	++
Bick. Mar- ston Culy	0.5	4	320	3	240	46.0	255	49.0	=
Bickenhill Kineton	0.9	2	160	2	160	17.0	160	17.0	=
Coleshill	6.2	16	1280	-	-	20.0	900	14.6	(-)
Langley	1.1	4	320	2	160	14.5	605	55.0	++
Lapworth	2.9	-	-	1	80	2.7	130	4.5	(-)
Longdon	2.85	2	160	2	160	56.0	166	58.5	=
Hampton on Avon	3.2	26	2880	22	1760	47.5	1400+	44.0	(-)
Alspath (Meriden)	3.0	2.5	200	8	640	21.0	389	13.5	(-)
Norton Lindsey	0.6	4	320	2	160	27.0	600	99.0	++
Packington, Little	1.0	4	320	3	240	24.0	285	28.5	(+)
Preston Bagot	1.3	3.5	280	6	480	37.0	156	12.0	-
Sheldon	2.5	3	240	5	400	16.0	575	23.0	(+)
Sherbourne	1.0	3.5	280	6	480	48.0	837	83.7	++
Snitter- field	3.7	8	640	14	1120	30.0	1200	32.5	=
Wolverton	1.3	13	1040	7	560	43.0	470	36.5	(-)
Wootton Wawen	8.7	14.5	1160	42	3200	37.0	1900	22.0	(+)

Following Harley, a plough, and indeed a ploughland, has been considered to represent 80 acres of cultivable land, but the percentage of the parish under tillage in 1086 has been calculated from the number of ploughlands cited in Domesday Book since it is probable that this figure represents the amount of land reclaimed for cultivation as against that which was actually in cultivation in the rather unsettled post-Conquest period.⁷¹ The approximate area of the common field land has been derived from the enclosure award or with a planimeter from Figure 40. A comparison of columns 6 and 8 of this table might be expected, if the assumption that severalties are a post-Conquest creation is correct, to reveal any expansion of the common fields after 1086. An examination of Table 36 quickly shows that while some fields undoubtedly expanded, others have remained static, while others have contracted. These changes can be ranked as follows:

++	Increase 10%+	.....	Bearley, Langley, Norton Lindsey, Sherbourne, Hill and Middle Bickenhill.
(+)	Slight increase	....	Marston Culy, Snitterfield, Lapworth, Longdon, Little Packington and Sheldon.
	0 - 10%		
=	Static	.....	Church Bickenhill and Kington (Lyndon).
(-)	Slight decrease		Coleshill, Hampton on Avon, Alspath and Wolverton.
	0 - 10%		
-	Decrease 10%	.....	Preston Bagot and Barston

The conversion unit of 80 acres to the ploughland is likely to be near the minimum, but a figure of 100 or even 120 acres might well apply in certain cases.⁷² This would have the effect of negating the slight increase suggested for certain parishes and of increasing the decreases in area given above.

This method of analysis cannot be considered to be statistically defensible; in particular, two major sources of error exist, first, the calculations based on the Domesday Book afford a wide margin of error, the original data is suspect, and no conversion figure is really acceptable; secondly, the figure giving the acreage of the common field in a given township is at best only a guide to conditions prevailing in the Middle Ages, but, nevertheless, might be expected to afford some indication of the minimum extent of common arable. In view of these deficiencies, it is remarkable that the objective ranking above suggests the same pattern of expansion and contraction that a subjective judgment would have outlined.

If the extreme variations according to this ranking are examined it is clear that the only area where common fields are likely to have expanded vigorously is the Avon valley and some of the townships fringing it, where vigorous communities practising communal agriculture had been long established by 1086, while a contraction of common field lands had taken place in central Arden. Two exceptions occur to this generalisation, first, Hampton on Avon, where a slight decrease in the extent of common field land appears to have taken place after 1086. Such a decrease may, however, be purely apparent, the result of the inaccurate data, and a static situation would be well in accord with the economic stagnation suggested in Chapter 4 on the basis of population data. Secondly, the increase of common field land in Hill and Middle Bickenhill is anomalous, but this township lay within the early settled Blythe valley, and it is possible that lordship was never strong enough within Bickenhill to alter the direction of development. ^{73a}

It is tempting to attempt a closer analysis of Table 36 but this would be unwise in the face of the, frankly, unreliable statistics upon which it is based. It is advisable to be content with the limited objective of suggesting that post-Domesday expansion of common arable fields did occur within Western Arden, but that this was limited to those areas where strong communities had been established in the pre-Norman period, to the Avon valley in the south, and, to a lesser extent, the Blythe valley in the north.

A close examination of Figure 40 with reference to Figures 5, 6 and 11 will show that in addition to common arable and meadow cores associated with nuclei of early foundation, there are others, designated on the maps by a circular symbol, but generally being much smaller in size, and appearing in isolation, not linked with any nucleus. In Solihull, for instance, there is pre-1350 evidence of common arable at five localities within the parish, two of which are associated with the pre-1086 nuclei at Longdon and Ulverley, while a third at Lyndon, was probably associated with the Kineton of 1086. The remaining two, at Olton and Shelley were small patches of common arable set out in the waste, and are both associated with localities that have Anglo-Saxon place-names. These may reasonably be interpreted as incipient nuclei, whose expansion was arrested at a very early stage of development.⁷³ Examples of comparable features at Coleshill have already been discussed.

In summary, the variations in the form and extent of the common field land in Figure 40 are a function of the period of colonisation; where common fields were early established they were likely to have persisted, and even expanded during the later Middle Ages, finally being enclosed

in the post-medieval period. In contrast, where late settlements took place, common fields took the form of small nuclear cores, in themselves relatively early established. As the Tanworth evidence to be discussed below, shows, these cores were frequently subject to early enclosure. Evidence for the chronology of the development of common fields is limited, but in general the Norman Conquest, with its sharp break in traditions of landownership, may be taken to mark the critical transition period, prior to which communal clearance was normal, but after which, the expansion of common arable only took place where it was already strongly established.⁷⁴

c) The Nature of the Arden Field Systems.

Two aspects of the Arden field systems have to be examined, first, the organisation of the field systems, and secondly, the tenemental arrangements within these. Hilton writing on Arden field systems points out that there were two principal peculiarities, the multiplicity of fields and the frequency of enclosure.⁷⁵ The second of these points has already been discussed at some length in Chapter 3 and the complexity of the common field arrangements within Arden is evident from Figure 40, where it is clear that the large extents of open common field are to be found in the Avon valley rather than in Arden. Thus, it is no surprise to learn that the demesne arable of Hampton on Avon was divided between two fields, and hence was probably subject to a two-course rotation. Unfortunately, within the period of study very little information has come to light concerning the organisation of the field systems; the case of Wootton Wawen demesne has already been cited and it was apparently divided between three fields. If the extensive fields of the Avon valley are excluded it is possible to recognise three principal types of common field structure within Western Arden:

first, fairly regular systems, such as Coleshill and the Bickenhill townships, where several main fields can be distinguished (Figure 43); secondly, townships with a small compact block of common arable, Tanworth and Longdon (Figures 44 and 19) for instance, where although broad divisions such as Karswellefeld and Pirihull in Tanworth can be distinguished it is rarely possible to detect clearly a division into two or three great fields; finally, within certain townships the common arable is divided up into a series of quite separate distinct, often quite widely separated blocks.

Gilson in Coleshill shows this tendency (Figure 43), but the best example is Sheldon where Skippp discovered seven separate units, none of which was large enough to be termed a field.⁷⁶ The Feckenham map of 1591 clearly reveals such a pattern. No information survives to suggest under what system of rotation these units were worked, and the tenemental structure of these fields amply endorses this impression of irregularity.

Coleshill, for instance, appears from Figure 43, to have had three major fields, but of the fifty-four charters between 1200 and 1350 referring to these by name, only three mention more than one field, and these reveal an uneven distribution of selions between each field. Two of these will illustrate the point:

Coleshill		Number of Selions				
		Parkfield	Blythefield	Grimshill Field		
W.D. 246	1340	4	:	2	:	1
W.D. 247	1340	1	:	5	:	1

It would, however, be incorrect to argue from this evidence alone that there was no regular layout of tenements at an earlier period, the charters merely imply that common field land was never alienated "en bloc". Nevertheless, it

may be argued that since people were willing to acquire disproportionate amounts of land within one field, then a regular rotational system, if one had ever existed, must have already broken down.

The same remarks could well be applied to Tanworth, for although in this case the broad division into Karswellfield and Pirihull can be recognised (Figure 44), holdings alienated by charter tend to be concentrated in one part of the field. There are, nevertheless, occasional pieces of evidence which suggests the regular distribution of strips within a furlong or block of arable; for instance, a Tanworth charter of c.1270-90 (T.a55) describes "three separate selions in Schirewoldescroft of which one lies between the land which Alexander Burn held and the land which Robert who was called le Stockere held, and another selion lying between the land of the said Robert le Stockere and the land formerly held by Henry Tove, and a third selion lying between the land held by the said Robert le Stockere." The consistent appearance of Robert le Stockere suggests a regular disposition of selions throughout the furlong, but this evidence is to some degree unreliable in that, as will be shown below, by 1270 the engrossing of common field holdings had already begun.⁷⁷ A Solihull charter of 1325 contains an even more striking example of this, but the same objection can be raised.⁷⁸ None of the very early Tanworth charters throw any light at all on the field system or the disposition of tenements within the field, all are concerned with irregularly scattered selions. The only part of Western Arden where a regular tenemental layout seems fairly securely documented is Snitterfield, where in a charter of 1333 no less than twenty-two half acre strips are described in detail, scattered throughout a number of

arable units, and from the regular succession of abuttal references it is clear that a regular disposition of strips occurred; furthermore, this charter is not merely an isolated example.⁷⁹

The irregular nature of the Arden field systems is clearly indicated by a reference in Tanworth to a "certain furlong (cultura) with meadows and hedges pertaining to it, as it is surrounded by a quick hedge" (T.a151). Such examples could easily be multiplied, there was reference in c.1270-80, for example, to "selions lying in Shirewoldes-croft" (T.a55). It is relevant to point out that in Tanworth there are no references to the virgate, the normal measure of common field land, and although virgates do appear in some parishes, Lapworth for example, it is by no means certain that these in fact do relate to common field holdings of the conventional type.⁸⁰ In the case of Lapworth, a high proportion of the free tenants of the manor held virgates, and these men are more likely to have been holding severalties than common field land.⁸¹

It would appear that the common fields of Western Arden ranged from true open fields in the south and north, through hybrids, in which some furlongs were separate and hedged, to systems that in practice consisted merely of a group of hedged closes with an internal division into selions, such as Hilton has been able to prove existed at Feckenham and Stoneleigh. This pattern has to be interpreted partially in the light of the arrested development of many of the systems, and partially in the effects of the action of the land market whose influence will be discussed below. The Tanworth evidence presented in Figure 44 shows that terminology was far from uniform or static, and indeed must have varied with the whim of the individual scribe who was putting into writing the details being given to him by the

various parties. A local scribe would no doubt refer quite happily to selions within a croft, whereas a scribe more familiar with conventional open field terminology would tend to impose this upon a system that was radically different, and use a word such as "furlong" where there was no real justification. ⁸²

d) Changes in the Common Fields, 1150-1350

As a result of such human factors the principle that it is unwise to argue too closely from the wording of one charter, or indeed from the unsupported evidence of one charter only, is particularly true with respect to the common arable land; name changes and name variations seem to have been very frequent and as a result of this, although Figure 44 does clearly suggest some variations in the extent of common arable in Tanworth, any discussion of these changes soon tends to dissolve into a complex assessment of the meaning of individual phrases and words. One illustration of this will be sufficient; in c.1210-20 (T.37) a parcel of meadow in Tanworth called Longmeadow was granted as part of a holding, and the use of the term parcel seems to suggest common meadow, as does the context of the reference. In c.1220-30 the same meadow was referred to as "all his part of his meadow in Longmeadow which he held of the Earl of Warwick" (T.45), an ambiguous statement, while a later reference, not to the same holding, mentions a certain meadow in a field of Tanworth called "le Longmeadow" (T.91, c.1230-40). As an examination of Figure 44 will quickly reveal, by c.1500 Longmeadow was a several close in Archer hands, but what was the precise position in the early thirteenth century? It would be rash to venture a firm opinion on this point, the phras-eology used in the charters is far too ambiguous to warrant

certainty. Similar problems exist with regard to Shirwoldeshill and Shirewoldescroft (Figure 44); they may have been separate entities, but there is a clear reference to "three selions lying separately in Shirewoldescroft" (T.a55, c.1270-90), and the author is of the firm opinion that they were one and the same, being a furlong within Hemfield in Tanworth.

Nevertheless, the very presence of charters recording the alienation of common arable land proves that some changes were taking place in the fields of Tanworth, and that a market in common arable land existed. An examination of the direction and nature of this market may be expected to throw some further light on the character and significance of the common arable cores. Once again, while the bulk of the evidence is derived from Tanworth where possible, material from other parishes is included in the discussion to obtain a more balanced picture.

An analysis of the parties involved in transactions concerning Tanworth common field land in the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries reveals the following pattern:

c.1250-1300;

20 parties appear in one charter only;

2 parties appear in 2 charters only;

Robert and John de Cimiterio appear in 3 charters;

William de Barnvile appears in 7 charters.

(The Archer family are parties to one charter only, and the de Sydenhales and de Fulwoods do not appear at all).

c.1300-1350;

4 parties appear in one charter only;

6 parties appear in two charters only;

Henry de la Sponne appears in three charters only;

William Archer appears in 6 charters only;

Simon son of Simon Archer appears in 9 charters only;
John Archer IV appears in 10 charters.

This analysis reveals significant variations in the market in common field land between the two periods, and shows that in each period, particularly c.1300-1350, only a limited number of individuals were involved. In order to see the significance of these variations it is necessary to examine the estates of those individuals engaging most vigorously in the market

The holdings of William de Barnvile and Simon Archer.

All of the charters involving William de Barnvile fall between c.1270 and 1290, and in eight of the nine that relate to him he is the donee. Without doubt he was accumulating common field selions as they appeared on the land market, and building up compact blocks of land. Thus, in c.1270-80 (T.a81) he purchased "three selions of land lying separately in a field called Shirewoldeshull, one lying between the land formerly belonging to Alexander de Mora and the land held by the said William (de Barnvile), another lying between the aforesaid land held by the said William and the land held by Nicholas son of Osbert, and the third selion lying between the land of the said William". The bulk of his acquisitions as Figure 46 reveals, lay in the Western part of the field, but in the eastern half he held a compact block of strips called "Barnvillesdole". In the deed quoted above there was no need for the scribe to describe the final selion in more detail for it completed yet another block.

De Barnvile is only donor in one charter, and this is worth citing in full, for not only does it record the

passing of de Barnvile's accumulated lands to the Archer family, it is also particularly revealing concerning the process of the engrossing of holdings; thus, de Barnvile granted to Simon Archer "All the land which the grantor bought from Thomas de la Lee in Stervenhale and Apelton, and also four parcels of land in Shirewoldeshull which the grantor bought from Richard de Wyston, and five selions in Longhurst and all lands which the grantor bought from John Cimiterio of Ullenhale, (who also appears to have been accumulating land on a small scale), in the field called Shirchefeld of Tanworth, and six selions in a field called Whetedych and two selions bought from the same John in a field called Wyggenhull" (T.a50, c.1270-90).

As far as can be ascertained from the surviving charters these purchases involved a minimum expenditure of 91s.6d. and in reality the sum must have been substantially higher. Once again, however, the charter material can only carry the argument to a certain stage, and both the source of de Barnvile's capital, and the reason why he was accumulating common arable selions must remain matters for speculation. There is evidence, however, that prior to 1302 de Barnvile was holding for life, certain lands and tenements from the Archers in their Leicestershire manor of Overton Saunce (11th June, 1302, T.b11), and in 1277 (28th March, 1277, T.Add.a15), for the sum of twenty marks he purchased 19s. 9½d. annual rent in Monkspath from Robert de Ullenhale.⁸³ In addition this also brought him all profits of waste lands and fisheries, together with the reversion of "all that becomes due from the men of Margery widow of William de Ullenhale (the father of Robert) in Monkspath after the death of the said Margery". In payment for this de Barnvile was merely committed to 1d.

at Easter in lieu of all secular services, exactions, demands and suit of court whatsoever. De Barnvile's relationship with the Archer family is nebulous, but he was certainly married to Christine Archer, who seems to have been the daughter of William Archer I (Appendix III A). It is this relationship which may help to explain the grant of Overton Saunce to him, and possibly also the sale of much of the common field holding he accumulated to Simon Archer (Figure 46).

The analysis of this holding has suggested a number of points, first, that the accumulation of common field land by enterprising individuals was taking place within Tanworth by the second half of the thirteenth century, secondly, as a corollary, that common field land was available on the market, thirdly, that it was worth acquiring, and finally, that some at least found its way into Archer hands.

Prior to the large grant from de Barnvile to Simon Archer cited above, there is comparatively little evidence of Archer activity actually in the common fields between 1250 and 1300. Nevertheless, three interesting and important charters exist for the period c.1240-60 which record the granting of common field land to Simon Archer I, one from John Archer III consisting of "all the land of the grantor in the field of Budhelde" and two from Isabella de la Lee, one granting "all those parcels of my land that lie in those furlongs (culturas) called Apelton and Stervenhale", and the other a capital messuage with lands in Pirihull. These are mapped in Figure 46. There is some slight possibility of confusion between Simon Archer I and Simon II his son, who appears to have inherited his father's holding, so that the two have been mapped together in Figure 46.⁸⁴ A close examination of this map reveals

that father and son were without doubt deliberately engaged in engrossing common field holdings, and while some of this land had already been in the hands of the Archer family for some years, the bulk of the acquisitions were in fact small holdings, either bought directly from their owners, or purchased from de Barnvile.

The result of these activities was ultimately the enclosure of much of the common field, especially the eastern half, by the end of the fourteenth century. There is no evidence that any other family was engaged in this activity, indeed the fact that by c.1500 the bulk of the common field area was in Archer hands supports this contention. The sources of this land have already been discussed, in Chapter 4, when the origins of land on the market were examined in general terms, and, in Chapter 6, when individual peasant holdings were being analysed. It was clear from such holdings such as de Wystanescroft's, and de Cherlecotes, that common field land was alienated when it was no longer economically viable, so that a landholder who possessed a compact farm unit formed of assart land was unlikely to be interested in maintaining land which was separate from the main unit, and which may well have been, at least in part, still associated with a common agrarian routine.

At this point it is possible to formulate certain conclusions on the basis of the Tanworth evidence; first, by the early thirteenth century any regular field system, if one had ever been present, had broken down, and by the middle of that century, if not earlier, the engrossing of holdings was taking place; secondly, although in the late thirteenth century the Archers were not involved, directly at least, they dominate this activity in the first half of the fourteenth century; thirdly, the fact that they were

willing to do this suggests that this accumulation offered opportunities for sub-granting at a profit, a process for which no evidence exists, or for farming it themselves, a process which seems likely in view of the fact that in c.1500 the area was undoubtedly part of the Archer demesne closes (Figure 44).⁸⁵

It is difficult to begin to assess how general trends of this type were because of the very detailed character of the Tanworth material, but Skipp, using comparable detailed methods, was able to suggest that by 1377 some engrossing of common field strips was taking place in Sheldon, but his other work, on Bickenhill, provides no data concerning this process, and it is significant that the Bickenhill fields survived to be enclosed in the post-medieval period.⁸⁶ In other Western Arden townships, however, there is evidence of a market in common field selions before 1290, in Longdon and Solihull for example, and although the sample is inevitably very much smaller than that for Tanworth it does suggest that engrossing was taking place, especially in Shelley in Longdon.⁸⁷ Such material as survives for Lapworth is perhaps less reliable in that it relates only to property which fell into the hands of the charity trustees, but there is nevertheless clear evidence for the presence of a market in common field land, and the fact that Lapworth fields seem to have been enclosed at an early date provides some confirmatory evidence.

A group of charters relating to the parish of Hatton reveals that in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth century Simon atte Green was acquiring land from nine separate individuals, while a number of other charters from the same period clearly show the existence of a vigorous market in selions scattered amongst the furlongs of Hatton fields. For example, in the late thirteenth century Simon

son of Simon Bertulmeu of Hatton granted to Elias de la Green of the same, "land in Hatton, part lying on the furlong called Benhul extending to Benhulsciad, part on the same furlong extending from the Wellebrok to Benhulsclade, part on the furlong called Middelfurlonk, adjoining le Havedwey, part on the furlong called Thornhul, extending to Ulmeresiche, part upon Nepfurlonk by Hemehavedes, extending from Fildenwey towards Kurlyesgrove, and part on Mulnebrokfurlonk extending from land formerly held by the prior of Stodley, as far as le Mulnebrok".⁸⁸

The presence of a land market at Snitterfield is suggested by nine charters, all dating from the early fourteenth century, and all concerned with common field land, but this sample is too small to base any firm conclusions on it, especially in view of the fact that in a number of cases internal evidence suggests that the same land is involved, and the material merely records the successive alienations of one holding. Common field arable survived in Snitterfield into the late eighteenth century, and it is clear that if engrossing did take place, it did not result in early enclosure and the system remained a working unit.⁸⁹ A comparable situation existed at Coleshill, where there is undoubted evidence of a late thirteenth century market in common land, but in spite of this there is no evidence of actual engrossing, and the fields survived to be enclosed in the late eighteenth century; indeed, there is some evidence for the expansion of common fields during the Middle Ages to be discussed below.

In conclusion, it is fair to say that while there is evidence within Western Arden for the engrossing of common field strips as early as the mid-thirteenth century, this process was most vigorous within the smaller, more irregular, cores of common arable, set deep within the late colonised

area and surrounded by compact farm units based on enclosed severalties. In such circumstances there can have been little to encourage the maintenance of a system of common cultivation. There is insufficient evidence to permit any attempt to assess the areal variations of this process, but the fact that in some parishes common open fields survived in the post-medieval period shows that the trend was not universal, and it remains to consider now those systems which seem to have actually expanded during the period between 1086 and 1350.

In his studies of Bickenhill and Sheldon Skipp claims that expansion of common arable took place in both parishes after 1086, but in neither case was he able to present direct evidence of this, basing his argument on an examination of conditions in 1086 and the picture suggested by fourteenth century material.⁹⁰ The general analysis of common field in Western Arden presented above in Table 36 suggests clearly that such expansion as did occur was most vigorous on the fringes of the Arden area. It is not surprising then in the light of this general conclusion, to find that the detailed charter evidence for Coleshill provides an example of the expansion of a common field in the late thirteenth century.⁹¹ One field, called Marchesfeld, is mentioned by name in five charters, was clearly divided into selions, and appears to be one of the irregular areas of common field appearing in Figure 43 to the west of Coleshill park. An analysis of the charters shows that eleven separate tenants held land within it, three of which were members of the March family after whom the field was named; indeed the name "Marchesfeld" would seem to imply that the area was once a severalty, owned by a member of this family, and it seems probable that it has been subdivided into selions, becoming indistinguishable

from the more ancient common arable. Some support for this hypothesis is to be found in another charter, undated, which records a grant from William March to Roger son of Richard the Deacon, "of a half acre of land in that assart which Simon March bought from Thomas de Clinton, knight, lying between Holewelle and the assart of Adam Fullo. Rent 2d. silver. Consideration 2s." The author feels confident that this is in fact a grant in the proto-Marchesfeld, and some confirmation is to be found in the fact that Roger the deacon is known to have been one of the tenants holding land in Marchesfeld at a slightly later date. While it is impossible to prove conclusively that the same land is involved, it is stretching the bounds of credibility to claim that it is not.

Marchesfeld was one of the irregular patches of common arable that are such a feature of Figure 43, and these can now be explained as several assarts which have broken up under the influence of a land market. Confirmation for this is to be found in the fact that some, Sandridding for example, have names which clearly imply late assarts.⁹² In his work on the Vale of York, T.A.M. Bishop recognised the existence of such a process,⁹³ and it seems reasonable to interpret all the irregular pieces of common arable shown in Figure 43 in the light of this conclusion. Although detailed evidence is lacking, and a full elucidation of the process is not yet possible, many of the irregular small common fields found in the Blythe valley section of Western Arden may well fall into this category. One other detailed example can be cited, however, this time from the central tract, at Baddesley Clinton.

In Chapter 3 reference was made to the granting of rather small parcels of waste land in Baddesley Clinton. Six grants in particular (Table 6, Nos. 16, 17, 18, 19,

29 and 36) all relate to the same area of the parish, all are small in extent, the largest being two and a half acres, the smallest being half an acre, and all abut on to what seem to be comparable pieces, without any references to hedges and ditches. For example, Thomas son of Adam atte Fen received "two and a half acres of waste land in Baddesley Clinton, between the land of Adam son of Adam atte Fen on the one hand, and the land of Thomas Robynes on the other, and extending in length from the land of Thomas de Stoke as far as the road leading towards Wytemarleput" (B. Cl.18). In all, some fifteen people can be proved to have held land in the area, all in small pieces. The absence of hedges and ditches, together with the smallness of the parcels and the obvious fragmentation of the tenurial pattern indicates the creation of a landscape that may well have resembled a common field, but it must be admitted that there is no conclusive proof as to the shape of these properties, either in the charters, or in later evidence. The fragmentation can be seen from the following example, Roger atte Wood (de Bosco) was granted "two acres of wasteland belonging to the said James (de Clinton) in Baddesley, one acre lying between the land of Thomas Gamel on the one hand and the waste on the other, and extending in length from the said wasteland as far as the wood of John Pecche. The other acre lying between the land of Thomas Gamel on the one hand and the Road from Warwick towards Birmingham on the other and extending in length as the other." This could reasonably be considered to relate to strips. ⁹⁴

In the first of the charters cited above reference was made to "the Whitemarleput" a feature which appears in another grant in the same locality. This is a significant reference; the grants tell of piecemeal colonisation of a waste tract in the north of Baddesley Clinton parish,

waste that must have been a southward extension of Netherwood Heath in Temple Balsall, "the waste of the Templars" of the Baddesley charters. The soils on this ridge vary greatly, as a comparison of Figures 11, 1 and 16 will reveal, but are often very light in texture. The marlpit may reasonably be seen as a means of improving these soils, by adding a slightly calcareous clay element, a process that was happening elsewhere in Arden from the thirteenth century onwards. The evidence must lead to the conclusion that in the early fourteenth century, in the north of Baddesley Clinton, a field system was being created which in terms of form must have closely resembled common open field. Thus it comes as no surprise to learn, in 1408-9 (B. Cl. 165), a reference to "six selions in a field called Wyth'Marlputfeld".⁹⁵

The distinction between such a feature, common open field developed as a result of either the break up of a several assart, or by piecemeal grants of waste, in severalty, and a true "common open field" resulting from communal clearance and farming practice, presents a fascinating problem, but one on which the author has at present virtually no evidence upon which to base a discussion. The material presented in this chapter would suggest that the distinction is a valid one, but many problems must remain unanswered, for example, a true "common open field" would have been subject to common rights and regulations of the type described by Seeböhm, but how were these applied in the other case?⁹⁶ The question is not purely an academic one, the distinction has real significance, but, the problem cannot be discussed further here.

At the beginning of this discussion certain questions were raised, and at this point it is now possible to draw some of the threads of the argument together and answer these. The first point was concerned with the origins of

the common arable, and the variations in the pattern as revealed by Figure 44; it was concluded that, in general terms, the common fields, as Stedman suggested, represent the earliest clearing in the area, and are probably to be associated with a phase of Anglo-Saxon colonisation before the Norman Conquest. The variations in extent and importance, indicated to some degree by Figure 44, are partially a reflection of the chronology of colonisation,^{for} the earlier an area was settled the more likely common cultivation was to take a hold and survive throughout the Middle Ages, and partially a result of their subsequent history since foundation, which must necessarily depend upon a host of imponderable factors such as the influence of lordship.

Secondly, it was established that these same factors could be used to account for a number of variant systems within Western Arden, but in general the field systems of the area were characterised by irregularity of form and arrangement, and were not, within the period c.1150-1350, characterised by a regular tenemental system. In this period there is evidence for two types of change, on the fringes of Western Arden, particularly in the Avon, Alne and Blythe valleys, some evidence survives to indicate that new furlongs were added to the common fields, in one case at least in the form of several assarts which were then subdivided; on the other hand, from the mid-thirteenth century onwards, there is evidence to prove that in central Arden the engrossing of common field selions occurred, with enterprising individuals taking advantage of a market in such land. This latter had clearly developed as the result of pressures created by the appearance in many central Arden townships of compact, several farm units in the waste. Although there is some proof that these trends were widespread, the case of Baddesley Clinton warns against

rash generalisations, and in detail each township must be considered separately.

This brings the argument to the final point, namely, the importance of the common arable cores in the colonising movement between c.1150-1350. No one answer can be given, ^{for whereas} [^] the common fields of the Avon and Blythe valleys tended to possess a life and vitality that in many cases sustained them into the eighteenth century as functional units, but the smaller cores of the Western Arden plateau had only a transitory importance, as for example at Tanworth, where, as Chapter 6 showed, the common arable formed the springboard from which the attacks on the woodland and waste was launched. At first, as the only cultivated land, these cores must have been of pre-eminent importance, but as the thirteenth century progressed, and newly created farms became viable units, their importance declined, a market in common land developed, and men such as Simon Archer and Simon atte Green were then able to engross selions and eventually enclose these.

Such arguments, concerned with the formal aspects of certain units of production, can, however, only tell part of the story, and it remains now to draw together the exceedingly scanty evidence for the economy of Western Arden in the Middle Ages, in both the common fields and the severalties.

A singular dearth of evidence exists concerning the economy of the various units of production within Western Arden, information being almost as scarce for the large holdings as for the small holdings. For example, the earliest Tanworth bailiff's account dates from 1377, and the only document extant which gives any indication of conditions in the manor before the period of the reorganisation of the economy between 1350 and 1377 is the extent of

1315, since by 1377 demesne cultivation had been completely abandoned. Thus, the account roll of 1377 indicates that, by this date, trends normally to be expected were present, the leasing of the demesne, the commutation of labour services, a decline in land values and rent income, and a contraction in the amount of cultivated land.⁹⁷

There is little doubt that prior to 1350 the farming system of Arden was designed primarily to produce grain for subsistence purposes, grain to feed the rapidly growing population. The pattern must in fact have varied in detail from manor to manor, but unfortunately no information has survived that will provide an assessment of the regional variations in the distribution of arable land in the period after 1086, and even the Tanworth material is unable to provide any information on this topic. Arable land may be presumed to have been a vitally important element in the land utilisation pattern, and with this must have been linked the all important appurtenant meadowland, for providing the precious hay to feed the stock throughout the winter months. It is reasonable to assume that the bulk of the common field land shown in Figure 44 was under arable and meadow in the period before 1350 (cf. Figure 7B), but the unknown factor is the amount of arable in the newly created severalties. Grain produced on the demesne was always an item of some importance in the income of most lowland manors; for example, the calculations concerning the demesne of Tanworth given earlier in this chapter suggest that in 1315 most of this several farm unit was under arable cultivation, but the rather special character of this unit must raise questions as to how far one can generalise from such evidence. In order to resolve this question, two approaches will be used, first, to see what can be learnt

about the economy of the severalties within Western Arden from the detailed charter studies, and secondly, the original problem will be re-phrased to ask, can any evidence be presented to suggest that the entire Arden economy was not wholly orientated towards subsistence grain production.

Charters prove to be singularly unsatisfactory for providing the basis of an assessment of the economy of the area within the period of study, and only rarely are details given which provide any indication of the economic basis of particular holdings. Thus, references to crops, stock and agricultural techniques are infrequent, and are usually quite incidental to the main purpose of the document. The de Wystanescroft holding, for example, has already been examined in some detail in Chapter 6 (Figure 37); in 1284 (13th Oct. 1284, T.a139) Richard, the son and heir of William de Wystanescroft agreed that Matilda, William's widow, was, for the rest of her life, to have "from Wystanescroft 2 quarters of wheat, 3 quarters of oats and 2s. 6d., that is, at Michaelman (29th Sept.) and the Feast of the Purification (2nd. Feb.) 1 quarter of wheat ~~and~~ 12 strikes of oats, and 15d. These are to be paid every year at the house of the said Richard who pledges his word that if he fails to perform this in any way, he shall pay 20s. to the King, and 30s. towards the fabric of Worcester church, and 40s. to the chief lord of Tanworth to be collected by the Bailiffs". There is no reason for doubting the statement that the wheat and oats came "from Wystanescroft".

In 1320 (T.b75) Richard passed his holding to his son Richard, including "the cattleshed and sheepfold with all liberties pertaining". This information is tantalising in its deficiencies; it suggests the existence of a mixed farm, engaging in both subsistence agriculture and sheep

production, but to go beyond this is mere speculation. Without doubt the severalties were producing a variety of grain crops, thus, a charter of 1325 (25th Nov. 1323, T.b103) mentions a corrody of six strikes of wheat, six of rye, eight of maslin and two of oats, all derived from one farm unit in Monkspath in Tanworth; another Tanworth charter involves a corrody of five strikes of wheat, and five of oats to be rendered at Michaelmas (T.asd6, c.1285).

In 1316 (14th May, 1316, A.D. A4659) Sir Henry de Lodbroke granted to John son of Richard des Aspes of Astley, for his life, arable lands and meadows in Tanworth together with pasture sufficient for supporting two cows and two bullocks, with a room and a barn near the gate for his grain and beasts, with four oxen, two for carting and two for ploughing, each worth one mark. The issue of these oxen were to go to Sir Henry. In addition four other oxen, each worth eight pence seem to have been granted. Although this is not specifically stated, this document sounds very much like a device for setting up a manorial servant in a small holding, perhaps a retired manorial servant. In payment for this grant John was to render the third sheaf of the said lands, two shares (loads ?) of hay from the meadows, and was also to cart this hay. Thirty pence was due yearly to the chief lord of the fee. In addition, if John marled or reclaimed land from the waste the first crop was apparently to be his. ⁹⁸

If this holding was anything approaching a normal peasant holding it was remarkably well stocked with beasts, but, nevertheless, it is made quite clear that of the twelve beasts granted only four are working animals, and it appears that the issue of these alone belonged to Sir Henry. In spite of these numbers, however, there are clear indications that the arable land of the holding was

of considerable importance, and once again it is reasonable to conclude, as in the case of de Wystanescroft, that a mixed farm was being dealt with.

In view of the large number of folk known to have been living in Tanworth parish between 1300 and 1350, and the large number of small subsistence farms which must have been present, it is likely that a high proportion of the severalties were under arable cultivation. That this is not reflected in Figure 45 need occasion no surprise, for such references as do occur to land use are only incidental. The meadow resources along most of the streams appears to have been developed (Figure 45), but little can be said about the references in the charters to pasture as this is normally mentioned in the general list of rights appurtenant to a holding and is not specifically isolated, possibly implying that although pasture closes may have been an integral part of the normal holding, common rights were still a vital adjunct.⁹⁹

An indirect measure of the importance of arable land within Western Arden and the intensity of use is to be found in the references in the charters to the practice of marling. Slicher van Bath associates this practice with periods of high cereal prices, i.e. when the pressure of population on available resources of arable land caused cereal prices to rise.¹⁰⁰ This pressure was in part responsible for the colonising movement discussed in this thesis, and as colonisation frequently led to the tillage of marginal land, which in time meant falling yields, marling was one way of alleviating the problem of manure shortage and improving soil structure. Broadly speaking marl was typically chalk or clay which were added to rather light land, either mixed or quite separately, in order to

improve the tilth and fertility.¹⁰⁰ Thus, in Arden the slightly calcareous Keuper Marl was dug out and spread on the rather sandy and gravelly drift soils, already described in detail in Chapter 3. As early as c.1270-1290, in Tanworth, a clause was incorporated in a charter permitting the donee to "take enough marl to marl the said land from the field of the grantor without impediment" (T.a54, c.1270-1290); significantly the field in question was called "Overhethel". In Tanworth marlpits were most typically dug in a valley side, at a point where the drift cover was of negligible thickness, and the marl was then carted up on to the sandier soils of the ridge top. This location is clearly implied in the description "meadowland with adjoining marlpits" in one charter (T.a125, c.1280-90).

To claim that references to marlpits are frequent in the charters would be to overstate the case, but they occur regularly enough for them not to be unusual.¹⁰¹ Marlpits appear (normally) as abuttal features, or are mentioned when a specific point has to be made, thus, in Lapworth in the late thirteenth century a donee was given the "liberty of bringing marl to the said land through Richard's land".¹⁰² The case of John son of Richard des Aspes has already been cited above, and this indicates that marling was considered to be an improvement well worth making. One case can be cited when a lessee of a field was required to marl as a condition of the lease; thus, Thomas (de Scerdemor' in Solihull) was to ditch, inclose and hedge the said land, and to apply marl, and to sow the same with hard wheat and to manure the same".¹⁰³

In view of this detailed evidence and in the light of the general situation, economic and demographic, known to have prevailed in Arden as a whole, it is reasonable to

conclude that arable farming was an important part of the economy of Western Arden, and indeed under an economy that was basically concerned with subsistence this must have been the case. What cannot be stated is the degree to which the economy was in fact producing some grain for the market. Neither do the documents used afford a measure of the man-land ratio to permit an assessment of the pressure of population upon agrarian resources. The charters leave one with the impression of vigorous mixed farming at the level of the peasant farms, but on the basis of the material available it is impossible to carry the argument further.

Turning to the second approach to the problem, namely, the extent to which it is possible to prove that the entire economy of Western Arden was not orientated towards subsistence grain production; enough has already been cited from the extents attached to Inquisitions post Mortem to show that these give a highly conventional picture of the demesne farms of the lords of the manor. They provide a picture in which the arable land forms an important element, ranging from 1% of the total manorial income to over 80% with the median value lying at 32% of the total.¹⁰⁴ It is normal for the extent simply to state the acreage of the demesne arable lands and meadows, giving the value per acre, and the sum total, but providing only rarely further details, such as a variation in value because one part of the arable land lies in the fallow field. This information, like Domesday Book "gives us so much and yet so little".¹⁰⁵

The Western Arden manor of la Grove Culy, in Budbrooke, however, is unusual in that two extents survive for it, and the second contains uncommon information. In 1316 this manor was held by Theobald de Gayton, and consisted of 200

acres of arable land, 30 acres of meadow, common and several pasture, a wood called Wedgenock, together with free rents to the value of £5. 6s., and the pleas of the court. By 1327 the manor had fallen into the hands of Hugh le Despencer, Earl of Winchester, and his Inquisition post mortem records that he had stocked the manor with 24 oxen, 8 cows, 5 bullocks, 6 calves, 3 horses and 140 sheep. The jury stated that all these oxen and beasts were stolen by John son of Henry le Mareschal and others unknown ! ¹⁰⁶

The extent then continues to list the grain, hay and forage that were seized by a John Murdak, that is to say, 20 quarters of wheat, 5 quarters of peas, and 30 quarters of barley, together with hay and forage worth 20s., and two ploughs bound with iron. The jurors say that all the grain, hay and forage were removed from the said manor by the said John Murdak and still remain in his hands.

The precise situation is by no means clear; the manor had been granted to Hugh le Despencer by Edward II, who had seized it from Julianne, wife of Sir Thomas Murdak, and Escholace, widow of Geoffrey de Meaux, coheiresses of Theobald de Gayton. ¹⁰⁷ John Murdak, the son of Sir Thomas, however, had entered the manor and held it for sometime before the said Hugh's decease, and John alienated it to Thomas Hastang who held the main manor. John son of Henry le Mareschal was probably John Murdak's steward, and was acting on Murdak's orders. Be this as it may, the second extent quite clearly lists the seed and stock of the manor, the moveables, which it was feasible to seize and hold, and without which the lands of the estate would be useless; these represented the not insubstantial sum of £24. 18s. 8d. That the disputed goods were listed rather than the actual lands was ^{an} extremely unusual state of affairs, but, in this case, it was clearly the implements of tillage,

the seed and the stock which interested the escheators rather than the lands.

These moveables have to be viewed in the light of the conventional extent of 1316, and it becomes quite clear that a mixed farm is being considered, with possibly a slight emphasis being placed on arable farming. The 24 oxen probably represent the working teams, the cows, bullocks and calves being carried to provide replacements, meat and milk, while the horses were no doubt riding animals, or were possibly used for such work as harrowing. In terms of value (£7.) the sheep were clearly of some importance.

This pastoral element of the manorial economy is hidden in the extent of 1316, which merely gives the total value of certain several and common pastures. The valuation of pasture is a frequent entry in all extents, normally forming only a very small proportion of the total, but usually the entry is unqualified or is specified as relating to several pastures.¹⁰⁸ Valuations vary from £4. 16s. 8d. at Temple Balsall to merely 1s. at Shrewley.¹⁰⁹ Thus, several pastures were mentioned at Berkswell, Claverdon, Coleshill, Fulbrooke, Hampton on Avon, Hampton in Arden, Sherbourne, Shrewley, Shustoke, and Tanworth, indicating that this feature was not merely limited to the manors of the plateau surface. Furthermore, in many instances, the valuation of the park indicates that it had some value for pasturing beasts, and, although in some cases these were specified to be deer, it is clear that parks were also used for ordinary grazing.¹¹⁰ The extent of Hampton in Arden illustrates the nature of these entries,^{for} in 1276 the several pasture was valued at £1. 3s., the common pasture at nothing; there were two parks the herbage of which was worth £1.6s.8d., and the pannage at £1. 6s. 8d.^{110b}

The most detailed evidence for pastoral activity in Western Arden comes from the manor of the Knights Templar at Balsall, which, when surveyed in 1338, possessed some 500 acres of arable land, 120 acres of meadow land, and pasture to the value of £4. 16s. 8d. together with an item worth £3. 0s. 0d. termed "profits of the beasts".¹¹¹ At Barston the Templars' other manor in Western Arden, pasture for 300 sheep was specified worth 16s. 8d.

In 1338, these two manors were in fact in the hands of the Knights Hospitaller, who had received them from the crown after the dissolution of the Knights Templar in 1308.¹¹² Between 1308 and 1314 the Templars' estates were in the king's hands, and in the Public Record Office there survives a series of enrolled bailiff's accounts, concerned with the administration of these estates. These accounts are extremely detailed, and it has not been possible to begin to examine them fully, but, nevertheless, they do show clearly that on the Warwickshire estates of the Templars there existed a highly integrated system of stock production.¹¹³ At Balsall alone, the permanent staff of farm servants comprised one carter, six ploughmen, one cowherd, one "keeper of the young oxen", a "studherd", a swineherd, a dairymaid, a shepherd, and a "boy for making the farm labourers' potage". It is clear from these accounts that Balsall was the stock-breeding centre, and that the other Warwickshire manors, were used for "bringing on" the animals, which consisted mainly of sheep. In addition, Balsall may also have been the central clearing house for fleeces, for, in 1308, some 90 fleeces were sent from Wolvey to Balsall.¹¹⁴

In the period between 10th January 1308 to 20th May 1308, there were on the manor of Balsall, 24 oxen, 1 bull, 22 cows (of which one was sent to Wolvey), 24 young cattle (of which

one was sent to Studley), 33 calves, 287 breeding ewes (of which 122 had been sent to Balsall from Fletchampstead for lambing, in return for which 196 lambs were sent to Fletchampstead from Balsall), 212 lambs (196 sent to Fletchampstead), two boars, five sows, 39 pigs, 26 young boars (hogetts), 19 piglings, and finally 5 rams who were sent to Fletchampstead early in the year to serve the breeding ewes. Also mentioned in the account are cart-horses, doves, peacocks, swans, asses, mules and foals!

While it is clear from the survey of 1338 and the account rolls that arable farming was an important feature of the Templars' estates, it is equally clear that stock raising was of considerable importance, and was highly organised. Further evidence for this is to be found in an agreement between the Preceptor of Balsall and the Abbott of Coombe in 1226 which indicates that, at this date, the Templars were raising sheep on their Warwickshire manor of Wolvey, and it was agreed that their sheepfold, sited significantly upon a heath, should be thrown down. We learn that the Abbott had the right tonrun one thousand sheep on the pasture in question, again a significant point. It is probable that stock raising at Balsall had an equally long history, and this fact, associated with the restrictions on colonisation imposed by ecclesiastical landownership, would help to explain the presence of the exceptionally large area of heath and waste in Balsall (Figures 11 and 17), which survived well into the post-medieval period. ¹¹⁵

Stock production no doubt played an important part in the economy of other ecclesiastical manors in the Arden area, for in this region, as elsewhere, the Cistercian abbeys played a prominent part in the wool trade, and at the end of the thirteenth century, Bordesley, Stoneleigh, Merevale and Coombe kept about 20,000 sheep between them. Much of this wool was sold to foreign merchants travelling between

monasteries and purchasing the clip on the spot.¹¹⁶ In 1291 the profits from stock form important elements in the valuation of the temporalities on the Prior of Kenilworth's and Bishop of Worcester's manors at Maxstoke and Pakington, while in 1299 the Bishop of Worcester had a flock of 540 sheep at Hampton on Avon.¹¹⁷

With the exception of those for the Templar estates few figures are available for Western Arden giving the actual numbers of stock, and a crucial point would seem to be the number of sheep that were present. Harley stresses the significance of sheep within the two hundreds he examined,¹¹⁸ and concluded that within Arden the emphasis on the peasant farms was less on arable farming and more on pastoral production. This slight difference in emphasis must of course be viewed in relation to the contrast in field systems between the Feldon and Arden; the former was dominated by "the fields", the great open common fields, with townships that were essentially communal farms, producing grain crops for subsistence. Pastoral activities were necessarily relegated to an inferior place, and the relatively rigid system of common field husbandry was inevitably associated with a vicious circle, in which an increase in the intensity or extent of arable farming meant less pasture available. In contrast with the Feldon, Arden still had large extents of common pasture in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, and although this was by no means superabundant, when associated with the slightly more flexible several fields of Arden, it meant that it was possible for pastoral activities to play a more important part in the economy.

Pelham was clearly of the opinion that on the plateau surface "the abundant grazing grounds were a stimulus to pastoral farming, and a plentiful supply of wool and hides

were therefore available long before the enclosure movement of the sixteenth century", ¹¹⁹ and in support of this statement he was able to point to the widespread distribution of textile and leather workers in southern Staffordshire in 1380. Without doubt, by the early fourteenth century, Warwickshire was already producing wool in some quantity, having 180 sheep per 1000 acres in 1341 in comparison with the most densely sheeped county, Norfolk, with 390, and the most lightly sheeped county division, the West Riding, which had only 47 sheep per 1000 acres. ¹²⁰ Unfortunately, the earliest surviving aulnage accounts for Warwickshire which give any detailed information fall between 1397 and 1398, and show that by this date, in terms of cloths exposed for sale, Coventry was of outstanding importance within the county, with Birmingham, although a very long way behind, coming next. The figures for the smaller markets are very insignificant as the table shows; ¹²¹

Table 37

Warwickshire: Cloths Exposed for Sale, 1397/8.

Market	Whole cloths	Dozens
Coventry	1443	3,285
Warwick	-	38
Henley	-	24
Stratford	-	27
Alcester	-	38
Southam	-	24
Birmingham	-	88
Coleshill and Solihull	-	32

If this table is compared with the distribution of markets within Warwickshire before 1350, ^{as mapped} by Harley, the almost complete pre-eminence of the Arden area can be seen, Southam being the only town with recorded cloth sales to

the south of the river Avon. ¹²² Nevertheless, the middle and late fourteenth century, with the great changes in economy which then took place, is a period across which it is impossible to "project" arguments, and all that can be stated here is that sheep husbandry may have been of some considerable importance in early fourteenth century Arden, a conclusion supported in part by the information from certain of the demesne farms.

Furthermore, in this respect it is important not to overlook the peasant farms, for as Hoskins has pointed out, the average peasant farmers' flock of sheep may well have been small, but a numerous peasantry, each with a small flock, would between them own flocks that may have considerably exceeded the numbers kept by the great ecclesiastical and lay lords. ¹²³ A great deal more must be known about peasant farming before the real history of medieval sheep farming, or indeed animal husbandry can be clarified. The main difficulty is well illustrated by Chapters 5 and 6 of this study, ^{namely,} the shortage of documentary information of a reasonably direct kind. Thus, while land charters can reveal a great deal about peasant holdings, their history, form, composition and nature, they reveal but little about their economy as the examples cited in this chapter amply demonstrate. In fact, few sources do throw any light on this problem, which for the moment, at least, is insoluble.

The heterogeneous and fragmentary evidence presented so far suggests that while the basic economy of Western Arden was subsistence grain husbandry, producing wheat, rye, barley and oats from both common open field arable, the extent of which is perhaps indicated by Figure 40, and severalties, the extent of which must remain unknown, in addition there was probably animal husbandry on a scale

that can only be guessed. In this context one fact is particularly relevant, the relatively large amounts of common heath and waste, common pasture, known to have survived in Arden in the Middle Ages. Given a demand for animal produce, meat, wool and hides, it is inconceivable that this source of wealth was not put to full use. ¹²⁴

The examples of tenants defending their common rights cited in Chapter 3 indicate that, even in the thirteenth century when waste must have been considerably more extensive than the eighteenth century survivals mapped in Figure 17 indicate, the peasantry appreciated its value, and were willing to litigate to defend their rights. Furthermore, the arguments presented in Chapter 3 concerning the creation and maintenance of "heath" tacitly assume that grazing animals were present in sufficiently large numbers to have a considerable effect.

It is tempting, in conclusion, to suggest that much of the capital, so evident in Western Arden in the thirteenth century, came from the profits of wool production. As Harley argued, the wool produced in Arden would find a ready outlet in Coventry and to a lesser extent in Warwick. ¹²⁵ Not only could the waste provide pasture, a Tanworth court roll of the time of Elizabeth ordered that "none shall keep in ye common ffeelde but according to ye quantity of his tenure, and that none after ye rogation week shall keep in ye lanes above XX sheep, sub pena XXs.". ¹²⁶ Flocks could be folded on the fallow strips in the open fields and the broad green roadways afforded a considerable quantity of grazing. ¹²⁷

Sufficient evidence has been cited in this study to prove the presence of substantial investment in land within Western Arden by the mid-thirteenth century, and demonstrate

that many landowners had considerable cash resources available; it is probable that this was derived in some way from the land, but the conclusion presented above indicates the difficulty of giving any real explanation of its origin. The key to the whole problem no doubt lies in the several farms of the well-to-do peasants and small landowners, which, while basically being subsistence units, had a flexibility and adaptability that was lacking from the common fields, and which could respond rapidly to both the pressure of an increased population and to market demand. Before concluding this study it is proposed to examine one final manifestation of the amount of capital available in Arden, capital that was not being reinvested in land, but put into commercial fish production.

Footnotes.

- 1) The Domesday valuations have been obtained from V.C.H. Warwickshire, Vol. II, and the method of calculating this value in terms of shillings per 1000 acres of parish follows J.B. Harley, Population and Land-Utilization, 1086-1300, Figures 14, 16, etc. The method is perhaps more realistic than the figure of pence per acre used by E.M. Yates in "Medieval Assessments in North-West Sussex", Trans. Brit. Geographers, No. 20 (1954), pp. 75-92.

As Harley argues, the valuation in 1086 probably affords some measure of the degree to which the agrarian resources of a particular manor had been developed, but R. Welldon Finn, in An Introduction to Domesday Book (1963), pp. 225-240, concludes that "we cannot satisfactorily map the statistics (of valuation), for the lack of uniformity in their presentation prevents us from knowing how to allot them". There is uncertainty as to what the valuations represent, Maitland thought that what guided those responsible was their judgement of "what will this estate bring in, peopled and stocked as it is?" This definition is probably adequate for our present purposes, but Welldon Finn's qualification of this must be noted.

The parish boundaries used throughout this study have been mainly derived from a series of one inch Ordnance Survey maps in the Birmingham Reference Library which have super-imposed upon them the boundaries derived from the Tithe Maps of the early nineteenth century (B.R.L. 42951 etc.). The remaining boundaries have been derived from the O.S. $\frac{1}{2}$ " Administrative map published in 1894. This map,

which was surveyed in 1882-86, is the earliest map showing accurate parish boundaries and acreages. The parish acreages have been derived in part from this map, and part from the former series with a planimeter, and for the purposes of this study acreages have been expressed in thousand acre units, and tenths, e.g. 1423 acres becomes 1.4 thousand acres. It is considered that this figure is accurate enough as only major variations are being sought, and for the purpose of determining the range of values to be mapped under each symbol the variations have been graphed first of all.

- 2) Vide R. Graham, "The Taxation of Pope Nicholas IV", English Historical Review, Vol. 23 (1908), pp. 434-56.
J.B. Harley, Population and Land-Utilization, 1086-1300, pp. 128-9.
J. Caley and S. Ayscough (eds.), Taxatio Ecclesiastica Angliae et Walliae auctoritate Papae Nicholai IV circa 1291, Record Commissioners (1802), pp. 218-9, 226, 229, 242.
- 3) Vide G. Vanderzee (ed.), Nonarum Inquisitiones in Curia Scaccari, Record Commissioners (1802), pp. 440, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448. The use of this document is discussed by J.B. Harley, op.cit., and E.M. Yates, op.cit., and also by R.A. Pelham, "Some Medieval Sources for the Study of Historical Geography", Geography, Vol. XVII (1932), pp. 32-38.

The preamble to the tax, printed in G. Vanderzee op.cit. provides an account of the basis of the assessment.

- 4) Vide F.L. Cross (ed.), The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, (1957), pp. 1361-2, where the distinction which existed between the great tithes, i.e. the tithe derived from the major crops, wheat and oats, etc., and the small tithes, those derived from lambs, chickens, eggs, hay, etc.

- 5) V.C.H. Warwickshire, Vol. II, f
M. Hollings (ed.) "The Red Book of Worcester",
Worcester Historical Society (1934-50), pp. 263-78.

- 6) J.B. Harley, Population and Land Use, 1086-1300,
pp. 87-88.

- 7) The basic discussion of Lay Subsidy Rolls is to be found in
J.F. Willard, Parliamentary Taxes on Personal Property, 1290-1334, (1934), and the majority of the discussion of the incidence of this tax is based on this work. A recent geographical treatment is to be found in an article by
R.E. Glasscock, "The Distribution of Wealth in East Anglia in the Early Fourteenth Century", Trans. Inst. Brit. Geographers, No. 32 (1963), pp. 113-123, who cites a very useful reference by M.W. Beresford, "The Lay Subsidies", The Amateur Historian, Vol. 3 (1958), pp. 325-8, and Vol. 4 (1959), pp. 101-9.
The author is indebted to Mr. M.J. Stanley, formerly of the Department of Geography, the University of Birmingham, now in the Department of Geography at Edinburgh, for his help and advice on Lay Subsidy Rolls, in particular for providing much information verbally on the problems relating to these.

- 8) C.B. Adams and H.M. Stephens (eds.), Select Documents of English Constitutional History, clause 20, p. 45.

9) When speaking of the lesser tenantry of a manor it is not strictly correct to use the term "demesne" to signify that land which they held and worked themselves, but it is difficult to find a term which is more suitable as "home-farm" carries the same connotations. The term "demesne" has always been put in inverted commas when used in this context.

10) W. Carter and E.A. Foy, "Warwickshire Lay Subsidy Roll of 1327", Midland Record Society, Vols. 1-6 (Supplement 1899).

The figures for 1334 have been obtained from a transcript of an abatement of c.1430 in Historical Records of the City of Coventry, Vol. 1 (c.1839-40), Birmingham Ref. Lib. 297838, and rely on the fact that after 1334 a fixed annual sum was levied from each bill, variations in ability to pay being accounted for by abatements.

11) J. Burman, The Story of Tanworth in Arden, (1930), p. 65 suggests that the missing names are probably Archers, the relevant entry being as follows:

Simon le Archer	2s.
- le -	3s.
- le -	4s.
- -	1s.

It is probable that one at least of the missing persons is John Archer IV, paying either 3s. or more, probably 4s., the person paying 3s. may have been Simon son of Simon Archer, or even Margery le Archer. As the de Cherlecotes are obviously absent it is possible that they are to be linked with the final gap.

12) An example of a detailed correlation between the

assessments in 1086, 1291 and 1342 is to be found in an article by

E.M. Yates, "Medieval Assessments in North-West Sussex" Trans. Inst. Brit. Geographers, No. 20 (1954), pp. 75-92, but in this case the figures for 1342 were more detailed.

Glasscock, op.cit., dealt with the Lay Subsidy figures for the whole of Eastern England and over such an area the figures may be more reliable.

- 13) E.A. Kosminsky, Studies, p. 75.
- 14) L. Fox, The Administration of the Honor of Leicester in the Fourteenth Century, (1940).
G.A. Holmes, The Estates of the Higher Nobility in Fourteenth Century England (1957), especially Chap. IV.
- 15) Vide C. Ross, "The Estates and Finances of Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick", Dugdale Society Occasional Papers, No. 12 (1956).
R.H. Hilton (ed.) "Ministers Accounts of the Warwickshire Estates of the Duke of Clarence, 1479-80", Dugdale Society Publication, Vol. XXI (1952).
Ross, pp. 20-23 summarises the extent of the Warwick Earldom in 1436 and it is reasonable to deduce from this that the Warwickshire and Worcestershire estates may have formed one or two units.
- 16) J.B. Harley, Population and Land-Utilization, 1086-1300, note 80, p. 62.
- 17) L. Fox, op.cit.
- 18) C. Ross, op.cit. p. 1.
- 19) C. Ross, op.cit. p. 6.
- 20) L. Fox, op.cit.

- 21) Derived from P.R.O. C134/49-51; see also Cal. Inq. p.m.
- 22) Descriptions of the historical geography of Worcestershire is to be found in
R. Buchannan, "Historical Aspects of Land Use in Warwickshire", Land Utilisation Survey, Vol. 68, pp. 490-495, and
H.C. Darby and I.B. Terrett, The Domesday Geography of Midland England (1954), pp. 215-269, Worcestershire".
- 23) Vide T.A.M. Bishop, "The Distribution of Manorial Demesne in the Vale of Yorkshire", English Hist. Review, July (1934), p. 386, where three definitions of manorial demesne are given.
- 24) The derivation of these figures has been described in an earlier chapter, and the revelant figures are to be found in Appendix IIB, where the six principal elements of manorial income are each expressed as a percentage of a false total obtained from the total value of the six. The income from the demesne consists of the small sum derived from the capital messuage, together with the income from the arable land and meadow land.
- 25) J.B. Harley, Population and Land-Utilization, 1086-1300, p. 201.
- 26) Derived from the Inquisitions post mortem listed in Appendix IIB.
- 27) J. Caley and S. Ayscough (eds.), Taxatio Ecclesiastica Angliae et Walliae auctoritate Papae Nicholai IV. circa 1291, Record Commissioners (1802), pp. 218, 219, 229, 226, 242.

- 28) M. Hollings, "The Red Book of Worcester", Worcester Historical Society (1934-50), p. 263.
- 29) Strictly by 1338 this estate, to be discussed in more detail later in the chapter, had passed to the Hospitallers, vide L.B. Larking (ed.), The Knights Hospitallers in England, Camden Soc. (1857), p. 179.
- 30) P.R.O. C134/49 (2 extents)
C134/90 (16)
C133/100 (1).
- 31) P.R.O. C134/90 (16).
- 32) Vide M.M. Postan, "Some Economic Evidence of a Declining Population in the Later Middle Ages", Economic Hist. Rev. 2nd Ser., Vol. II, No. 3 (1950)p.1.
G.A. Holmes, The Estates of the Higher Nobility in Fourteenth Century England (1957), p. 90.
L.C. Latham, "The Manor and the Village" in Social Life in Early England (ed. G. Barraclough), (1960) pp. 45-49.
- 33) G.A. Holmes, op.cit., pp. 113-4. For a comment on the term "forland" see
P. Vinogradoff, The Growth of the Manor (1905) pp. 330-1, who implies that this may well have been a small portion of the demesne.
- 34) G.A. Holmes, op.cit. pp. 113-4, citing the de Beauchamp cartulary, British Museum, Add.Mss. 28.024, ff. 87-88.
- 35) P.R.O. C134/90 (16), where the new land is specifically described as being in demesne.
- 36) M. Hollings, op.cit.

- 37) Ibid, Introduction, p. viii.
- 38) Ibid, p. 263.
J.B. Harley, Population and Land-Utilization, 1086-1300, Fig. 41, has a map of the known field systems in Warwickshire in the middle ages, and draws attention to the fact that the two field system was normal on the estates of the Bishop of Worcester, while on the estates of Coventry Cathedral Priory the three field system was normal, a distinction that underlies the difficulty of fully understanding areal variations in field systems. The work by Mr. D.J. Pannett on the field systems of Warwickshire after 1700 may, however, be expected to provide the essential basis from which to begin a study of medieval systems.
- 39) P.R.O. C135/51 (7).
- 40) P.R.O. C134/51 (72).
- 41) Archer Collection, Stratford upon Avon, Bailiffs' Account Rolls, 1377, which lists many of the demesne closes separately. Amongst the miscellaneous rentals in the Archer collection is one headed "Corne Rentals of the Manor of Tanworth" transcribed by Sir Simon Archer. The same document, again in Sir Simon's hand, is bound with the Tanworth court rolls in the Bodleian Library (Ms. Warwick Top. c.2. pp. 6-10). Vose tentatively dates this to 1430 but a note by Sir Simon on the Bodleian transcript suggests t.Ed. III. The detailed work necessary to date this has not yet been done, but a cursory examination suggests a late fourteenth or early fifteenth century date. The rental clearly relates to the whole of Tanworth manor, and concludes with an entry headed "The Farm of the Demesne Lands". (This is but one illustration of

how much work remains to be done on the Tanworth material, for in addition to the documents cited and used in this study there is a detailed survey of the manor in 1571 in English, together with a more summary valuation in 1603. In the time available to the author it has been impossible to do the work of detailed correlation between the various rentals, surveys and charters, and indeed, the possibility of such a correlation only became evident in the final stages of the present thesis, by which time the significance of the various documents was, at least partially, understood.)

See also Saunders Mss., Stratford upon Avon, under Tanworth where a translation of the "Appropriation of the Church and Parsonage of Tanworth" is given, and a number of demesne meadows are specifically mentioned.

- 42) T.a20, c.1268-90; T.a104, c.1275-1300; T.a105, 26 March, 1279.
- 43) The author has come across nothing to suggest that the acre referred to in the Tanworth charters differed from the statute acre, but as was indicated in Chapter 1 it is certain that customary measures did exist within the Arden area.
- 44) Archer Collection, Stratford upon Avon, Rentals and Surveys, Tanworth, Survey of 1603. The final section lists the commons and wastes in the manor:

Earlswood and Earlshurst	250 acres
Aspley Heath	030 acres
Ilshaw Heath	020 acres
Hockley Heath	020 acres
Shirley Heath	030 acres
Browns Green	010 acres

Total	360 acres.
-------	------------

A brief survey of Tanworth in 1693 included in a letter by Ed. Ludkin (or Ladkin), 1st April, 1693, lists at least 437 acres of woodland in Tanworth.

- 45) G.A. Holmes, The Estates of the Higher Nobility in Fourteenth Century England (1957), p. 88.
- 46) Mention must be made of one further topic which is worthy of closer examination, namely the supply of labour for the demesne. In view of the very light labour services demanded in Arden, a topic already discussed in Chapter 4, lords must have depended considerably on the hired services of lesser freeholders, although some may have maintained a large permanent staff, for example, evidence will be cited in detail later in this chapter to show that the Knights Templar had at Balsall a permanent staff of 14 together with an unknown number of famuli. In this connection it is significant first, that the villeins of Claverdon are recorded in 1315 as hay-making in the park with the help of the lord's farm-labourers (cum auxilio famulorum domini), P.R.O. C.134/51, and furthermore many of their services are to be performed with the help of one additional man, brought by them. Examples of this practice could be multiplied, the same demand was made at Sutton Coldfield.
- 47) For a discussion of the complex relationship between manor and vill see
P. Vinogradoff, Villeinage in England (1892), pp. 354-408.
E.A. Kosminsky, Studies, pp. 73-80.
- 48) J.B. Harley, Population and Land-Utilization, 1086-1300, pp. 210-213.

R.H. Hilton, "The Social Structure of Rural Warwickshire in the Middle Ages", Dugdale Society Occasional Papers, No. 9, Appendix, pp. 22-25, on "The North Warwickshire Field System."

- 49) The author is indebted to Mr. H. Gentleman for giving him access to his copy of the Lapworth Tithe map of 1843. The original is to be found in Warwick County Record office.
- 50) Vide R. Hudson, Calendar of Deeds of the Lapworth Charity Trustees, c. 1190-1502, Mss. B.R.L. 184962. As late as 1904 land at Claycroft was still under open-field cultivation. V.C.H. Warwickshire, Vol. V. p. 109.
- 51) Ibid.
P.N.D. Warwickshire, pp. 288-290, 377-8.
V.C.H. Warwickshire, Vol. V. p. 108.
- 52) The enclosure awards for Kingswood (1808), and Harborough Banks (1860) in Lapworth, together with Bushwood (1815) are all to be found in Warwick County Record office. The author is indebted to Mr. D.J. Pannett for supplying him with information derived from these.
Vide W.E. Tate, "Enclosure Acts and Awards Relating to Warwickshire", Trans. Birmingham Archaeological Society, Vol. LXV, (1943 and 1944), pp. 45-104 for a general account of this material for Warwickshire.
- 53) R. Hudson, op.cit. Nos. 4, 13, 36;
P.N.D. Warwickshire, pp. 288-290, 377-8.
The Catalogue of Ancient Deeds also contains some Lapworth material, in particular A4660, A4544, A4264, A4380, A11165.

Once again the difficulty of utilizing the material available has prevented a more detailed study being made, for example, the majority of the entries in the Catalogue of Ancient Deeds, although they vary very greatly, are only abstracts, and tend to omit all locational details. The author is of the opinion that Lapworth had a tenurial structure that was, if anything, more complex than Tanworth, for no one lord and no one family appear to have been able to gain complete control before 1350. Conditions in the parish are worthy of a closer examination and sufficient material would appear to be available.

54) The reason for survival of this feature is interesting, the strips present in c.1843 were all the property of the charity trustees, and had been granted to them at an early date. A trust is an obligation binding a person (trustee) to deal with property over which he has control for the benefit of other persons (beneficiaries), and hence the alienation of such land is a difficult process. In the event of the charity trustees not being able to purchase the remainder of Clay Croft, it was inevitable that the strips should persist.

55) Archer Collection, Stratford upon Avon, Longdon, D.13, Pre. 1290; D.14, Pre. 1290; D.31, Post 1290; D.39, 2 May, 1299; D.40, 25 Jan. 1301/2; D.50, 7 Nov. 1316; D.51, 7 Nov. 1316; D.53, 28 July, 1317; D.75, 19 Jan. 1340/1; D.80, 1 March, 1342/3; D.88, 3 Dec. 1348.

A singularly fortunate discovery aided considerably the reconstruction of Longdon; a history of

Solihull was compiled in 1905 by R. Pemberton, Solihull and its Church, and this was accompanied by a singularly perspicuous introduction by P.E. Martineau discussing the forest of Arden. This was clearly based on detailed knowledge of the area, and the author was fortunate enough to discover in the map collection of the Department of Geography at Birmingham 10 six inch sheets which had been used by P.E. Martineau for working notes on the history of Solihull parish. The history of these is unknown, but they were apparently discovered by Dr. Eversley in a Birmingham second hand shop and donated to the Department. One of these maps has on the reverse the name P.E. Martineau, with the address Bently Manor, Knowle, although on the front of the map is the name Edgar (?) Martineau. The maps bear a wealth of information, including the extent of common field (in general terms), heaths, known severalties, moated sites, and other miscellaneous data. The author has checked this in relation to the other material available, the charters, the Tithe Award in the Warwick County Record office.

- 56) Vide V.H.T. Skipp, Discovering Sheldon, Department of Extra Mural Studies, Birmingham (1960).
Ibid, Discovering Bickenhill, Ibid (1963).
- 57) This map has been discussed by M. Stedman in an unpublished article, and the author would like to express his thanks for being given access to this. R.H. Hilton uses this map in his article "Old Enclosure in the West Midlands", Geographie et Histoire Agraires, Nancy (1959), pp. 272-283. The original is in the British Museum.

However, in a recent Pelican edition

G.M. Trevelyan, Illustrated English Social History, Vol. 1 (1964), part of an identical map is reproduced as Figure 125, and a note on this, p. 303, refers to an owner, Dr. Edward Lynam. The author is uncertain if this is in fact the map in the B.M.

- 58) The author is indebted to Mr. Pannett for his reconstruction of Coleshill common fields based on the Inclosure Award of 1780 (Warwick CRO QS.75), to which no plan is attached, and a map of Coleshill parish in 1783 in the Birmingham reference library (B.R.L. 278469), together with a plan of estates in Sheldon and Coleshill (B.R.L. 435851) in 1756. Without this information it would have been difficult to interpret the charter evidence derived from the Wingfield-Digby collection.
- 59) These last three identifications are dependant on three charters, thus in W.D. 128 there is a specific reference to "the common field of Hawkeswell called Ruyecroft" a name which clearly implies a field that comprised common selions within an enclosed croft. The other two are perhaps less certain, in W.D. 122 an acre of land was granted of which one abuttal was "the ancient field of Kingshurst called le Muchelfeld", while finally, in W.D. 270, there is a reference to "a field called Aldecotefelt", which must surely be an area of common arable.
- 60) This is mapped in Figure 44, the final map of which is derived from the Archer survey of c.1500.
- 61) It is impossible to cite fully all the references relating to Pirihull, but a few examples may be given:

T. a70, c.1270-80.

" Gift 1) John de Mora of Tanworth

2) William de Barneville and Christine
his wife,

18 selions of land with appurtenances lying on the
cultura (furlong) called Pirihull."

This is clearly the same land as that referred to
in a charter of 17 May, 1331 (T.b159) in an abuttal
"Two selions of arable land in Pyrihull lying in
length between the land of John le Archer called le
Barnevillesdole etc."

In c.1270-80 (T.a70) there was a specific
reference to "the common feld called Pyrihull",
while at the same date (T.a75, c.1270-80) was a
reference to "Stonifurlong above Pyrihull".

62) Once again, in view of the bulk of possible references,
this section cannot be referenced fully, and the
reader must be referred to the Archer collection.
The Archer survey of c.1500 provides a key, and the
change from Kasewellfeld to Henfield is revealed by
a discontinuity in the charter references.

As an illustration of the material the following
charter may be cited:

T.a53, c.1270-90.

"Gift 1) John son of Robert de Cimiterio of

Ullenhall,

2) William de Barneville and Christine

his wife.

Land in the common field of Tanworth called
Kasewellefeld, lying in parcels, i.e. four selions
lying in a place called Whetedish, and two selions

lying upon Wyggenhull, three selions lying on Willewrth in two places, four selions and 10 butts extending in a meadow called Carsewellemedewe with another parcel of meadow."

Changes in the name of the principal field units were normal, see

F.G. Emmison, Some Types of Common-Field Parish, (reprint of Types of Open-Field Parishes of the Midlands, Historical Association, 1937), (1965) p. 10.

- 63) M. Stedman, op.cit. (Note 57).
- 64) The author is indebted to Mr. D.J. Pannett for permitting him to utilize a map of common field land in Warwickshire in c.1700 compiled on the basis of Enclosure Awards, Tithe Maps and Private Estate Maps. In view of the known and proven trends towards the early enclosure of common fields within Arden (R.H. Hilton, op.cit., note 48 above) this map may reasonably be assumed to indicate the minimum extent of common field arable in the Middle Ages, while recognising that it may have been considerably more extensive in practice.
- 65) A great range of background material has been used to compile this map, in particular, all the charters relating to Western Arden prior to 1350 printed in the Catalogue of Ancient Deeds, Vols. I-VI (1890-1915) and the material in the Birthplace Library at Stratford upon Avon.
- 66) This relationship is revealed on a map compiled by D. J. Pannett.
- 67) This point has already been examined below in Chapter 3.

- 68) In this respect a charter in the Archer Collection is relevant,
D.8, Pre 1290.

"Gift 1) Robert de la Forde of Longdon (in Solihull)

2) Robert his youngest son,

8 selions of land, 6 of which lie in Watcroft (one of Longdon's common fields), and 3 of these six selions lying in length from Longdon grene as far as the meadow of William Albert etc."

This clearly suggests the presence of a small hamlet nucleation. Similarly in Ulverley, for although this is a settlement listed in 1086, it is probable that the appearance of Solihull borough in the late 12th century and the appearance of the name Olton ("Old-town") adjacent to Ulverley are to be linked together, and the latter name related originally to the site of the original nucleus.

P.N.D. Warwickshire, pp. 67, 71-2.

- 69) J.B. Harley, Population and Land-Utilization, 1086-1300, p. 88 suggested that by 1086 the south of Warwickshire - the Feldon - had already "reached near saturation level relative to the technical organisation of agrarian resources", basing this conclusion on the fact that in some parishes of the Feldon between 1086 and 1279 population remained static or actually decreased. As there are reasonable arguments for concluding that by the late thirteenth century the area was dominated by open common fields (Figure 41, Harley) it is logical to conclude that in some form these were present by 1086.
- 70) This view could be in accord with the material presented in the Vadstena conference in 1960;

vide J. Thirsk, Review of "The Morphogenesis of the Agrarian Cultural Landscape", Agricultural History Review, Vol. XI, Part 1 (1963), pp. 62-3.

- 71) Vide R. Welldon Finn, An Introduction to Domesday Book (1963), pp. 105-115, who discusses the possible significance of the statements of ploughlands and ploughs in Domesday Book. Finn accepts a definition by Darlington concerning ploughlands, namely they were "a rough estimate of the number of plough-teams of eight oxen which could be employed on the estate if it was being fully exploited". W.G. Hoskins, in Devon (1959), p. 55 clearly regards the number of ploughlands as an assessment of potential arable land, and suggests that where, for example, four ploughlands appear on a manor but only one plough, an infield-outfield was being dealt with. A generally valid conclusion would seem to be that ploughlands represent the amount of potentially productive land on a given estate, while the ploughs indicate what might be termed the "tillage capability" of the vill. The relationship between the two was clearly both complex and variable, and for the present purpose the figure of the number of ploughlands seems to be the more realistic.

The figure of 80 acres to the ploughland must be considered as but a convention, and for this reason no attempt has been made to argue in quantitative terms.

- 72) J.B. Harley, Population and Land Use, 1086-1350, Table 18.

- 73) V.C.H. Warwickshire, Vol. IV, pp. 35-37.

- 73b) An isolated reference to selions can raise problems

for example,

T.a76, c.1270-80.

"Gift, 1) Robert son of Henry Waring of Tanworth to
2) William son of Adam Colling,
of 3 selions of land in Fenshawe lying in length and
breadth between the land of the grantor and the road
from Fenshawe and the heath of Calvesley in a
circle (per circuitum)."

This is an isolated reference, and there is no
reason for postulating on early nucleus, for the
abuttal "the land of the grantor" clearly suggests
that this charter involved the subdivision of a piece
of land, logically based on the number of plough-
lands or ridges within it. This isolated entry may
be compared with an example for Shelley in Solihull,
one of several:

Archer Collection, D.30, Pre 1290.

"Gift, 1) Thomas le Large of Shelley in Solihull to
2) Robert son of Adam Brabesun of Shelley,
of 25 selions of land, of which 14 selions with
headland and hedges lie between the land of the
grantor on both sides in breadth, and in length
between the land of the said Robert and the land of
Edwin le Cras, 7 selions lying between the land of
the grantor on both sides in breadth, and in length
between the land of the said Robert and the road
leading towards the land of John Brabsun with headland
and ditches, 4 selions lying between the lane leading
towards the land of Simon de Coppe and the land of
the grantor in breadth, and in length between the lane
of John Brabesun and the moor of Simon de Coppe with
the headland pertaining to the same."

Although a limited number of landowners are

involved the situation revealed by this charter is complex enough to warrant a small common field core being sited at Shelley. The reference to common field land at Olton is unambiguous, "6 selions in the field of Olton" (P.R.O. C.4142), and this area may well be linked with either Kineton or Ulverley of 1086.

Vide R. Hebden, "The Development of the Settlement Pattern and Farming in the Shenstone Area", Lichfield and Staffordshire Archaeological and Historical Society, Vol. III (1961-2), p. 27 for an account of comparable common field cores to the north of Arden, in the vicinity of the Forest of Cannock. In this case the presence of a shifting outfield is attested, but no evidence at all has come to light to suggest the presence of outfields in Arden.

- 74) A recent discussion concerning the origins of the common arable is to be found in an article by J. Thirsk, "The Common Fields", Past and Present, 29th Dec. 1964.
- 75) R.H. Hilton, op.cit., note 48 above.
- 76) V.H.T. Skip, Discovering Sheldon, University of Birmingham, Extra Mural Dept. (1960), pp. 8,9, 18-23.
- 77) An appearance of regularity can result during the final stage of the engrossing of common field selions by a few men, for a charter recording the alienation of a few selions within such an area would inevitably show consistency in abuttal references.
- 78) Archer Collection, Stratford upon Avon, Solihull

Charters, D.56, 27 Jan. 1324/5.

"Gift, 1) Robert le Wodeward of Lyndon to

2) Thomas son of Thomas Lyne of Kynton and

Alice his wife of

5 selions lying in a field called Smalbrokesfeld of which 2 lie in breadth between the land of John le Blound on the one hand, and the land of William Border on the other, and extending in length from the land of the lord of Lyndon as far as the land of Thomas son of Robert Water, one lying in le Goldifurlong in breadth between the land of John le Blound on the one hand and the land of Robert le Taylor on the other, and in length between the land of the lord of Lyndon and the land of William de Brockhurst, one lying in length between the land of the lord of Lyndon as far as the meadow (?) of Smalbroc and in breadth between the land of John le Blound on the one hand and the land of Robert le Taylor on the other, and one lying in breadth between the land of Thomas de Haywode on the one hand and the land of Alice Border on the other and in length between the land of William de Brockhurst and the meadow called Stonimedewe."

79) Stratford upon Avon, Miscellaneous Charters, Snittersfield, 10 July, 1315.

80) P.R.O. C.133/88 (6), an extent which is unfortunately partially illegible.

Lapworth Charity Deeds, No. 1.

Only scattered ambiguous references are found in Coleshill and Solihull.

81) P.R.O. C.133/88 (6).

The author would like to do more research on this problem as it is particularly pertinent to the

question of the origin of the common arable. If the thesis concerning the significance of the common arable cores is valid, then distinctions, sharp distinctions, should exist between this core and the later colonised land both common and several, in terms of rents and services.

|| The case of villeins in Claverdon only owing labour services on the old demesne has already been cited. For example, it might be possible to prove that it was only this core that was virgated, or that villein land in Arden was originally confined to this core, or that the villein families owing the heaviest labour services were in fact the original tenants of this land. Thus in N.W. Germany only the old established farmers ("Altbauern") originally had a right to a number of "Langstreifen" or an "Esch". Vide H. Uhlig, "Old Hamlets with Infield and Outfield Systems in Western and Central Europe", in Geografiska Annaler, Vol. XLIII (1961), Nos. 1-2, p. 286. R.E. Dickinson, "Rural Settlements in the German Lands", Annals of the Association of American Geographers, Vol. XXXIX, No. 4 (1949), p. 246.

- 82) It is difficult to achieve the right balance between reading too much into the minutae of the charters and using an explanation, such as is given here, as an excuse for avoiding an issue. Nevertheless, the author feels that the point is valid, it was the irregular character of the social and economic arrangements in contrast to the Feldon of south Warwickshire that gave rise to many difficulties and irregularities of terminology within the charters.
- 83) William Archer I married Margery, daughter and co-heiress of Sir John Sawcey of Overton Sauncey, Co.

Leicester, who brought the manor into the Archer family, where it remained until the reign of Henry VIII.

J. Burman, The Story of Tanworth (1930), p. 44.

- 84) A close examination of the charters suggests that while it is possible to distinguish between the father and son, and there is evidence that Simon II inherited his father's lands. Thus in 1339 (8 Aug. 1339, T.b142) Simon II granted to Henry, his son "one messuage and all lands and tenements with appurtenances which the grantor held by gift and feoffment from Simon Archer his father." The close link between the holdings is indicated by a charter of 1325-6 (T.a122, 19 Ed.II) a quitclaim from Margery de Tracy, widow of John le Archer III to Simon le Archer the elder and Simon the younger, of all claim whether by reason of dower or other reason which the said Simon the elder claims to hold of John le Archer (IV) son of the said Margery by a charter of feoffment from the father of the said John".
- 85) The "field of Pyrihull" was described as a pasture in c.1500, but it is probable that the area was in fact used as arable in the early fourteenth century.
- 86) Vide V.H.T. Skipp, Discovering Bickenhill, University of Birmingham, Department of Extra Mural Studies (1963), pp. 51-59 - fully referenced.
- 87) Cf. Archer Collection, Stratford upon Avon, Solihull Charters, D.8, Pre 1290; D.14, Pre 1290; D.13, Pre 1290; all suggesting engrossing in Longdon fields by Robert de la Forde. Similarly D.51, 7 Nov. 1316; D.50, 7 Nov. 1316; D.53, 28 July

1317; D.75, 19 Jan. 1340/1; D.88, 3 Dec. 1348 which suggest that Henry Gybun was engrossing lands in the same fields.

- 88) Some 36 charters of a pre 1350 date are to be found in the Catalogue of Ancient Deeds; the one cited is number A6377. The nine relating to Simon atte Green are as follows, A11999, A9594, A7020, A6392, A11179, A6189, A7145, A7053, A6984, A7261, A6947, A6779, A8995, A8831.
- 89) Archer Collection, Stratford upon Avon, Miscellaneous Charters, Snitterfield.
Vide W.E. Tate, op.cit. (note 52 above), p. 80.
- 90) V.H.T. Skipp, Discovering Sheldon (1960), pp. 9, 15 and 17; Discovering Bickenhill (1963) pp. 13-20.
- 91) Wingfield-Digby Collection, W.D. 28, 29, 35, 48, 51, 102.
- 92) Ibid, W.D. 40, 66, refers to Oldrydding; W.D. 53, 218, 207, 40, refers to Sandrydding.
- 93) T.A.M. Bishop, "Assarting and the Growth of the Open Fields", Economic History Review Vol. VI, No. 13 (1935).
- 94) These charters are listed in Chapter 3, Table the one cited here is B. C1. 16, c.1300.
- 95) Even in Tanworth there are insufficient charters, as the following table shows, to really establish the chronology of the market in common field land.

Period	Number of Charters	% of Total Number	Average per Decade
c.1200-40	5	5.7	1.25
c.1240-90	18	11.0	3.6
c.1290-1310	4	5.0	2.0
c.1311-1320	1	1.6	1.0
c.1321-1330	8	12.0	8.0
c.1331-1340	8	11.0	8.0
c.1341-1350	2	2.0	2.0

Thus, in all, charters relating to common field land only form a very small percentage of the total number surviving between c.1150 and 1350 (7.5%) a fact which underlines the unimportance of the common fields in Tanworth parish, and the variations, although suggesting that the market was most vigorous between 1321-1340, are too slight to really establish a chronology.

- 96) F. Seebohm, The English Village Community (1883), particularly Chapters 1 and 2.

The distinction between

- a) true common field, the result of communal clearing and farming practice from an early period, and
- b) "common field" which is the result of the break up of a several assart, is not purely academic, in view of how little is really known about the origin and expansion of the common fields. It would be particularly interesting to know how the whole community acquired rights of common within the severalty; one possible explanation is that these were in fact never extinguished, and that, by custom, when an area of the common waste was enclosed by an individual, albeit with his lord's

consent, the right of common was only enforced within the period between harvest and new sowing, or at such times as the area was fallow. Some indication of the complexity of arrangements in such cases comes from Maxstoke in Western Arden: "And also the said William, Earle of Huntingdon, caused the Castell of Maxstock to be made at his proper cost, and there as the Parke is nowe, was at that time an outwood and common to all the ffreeholders of Maxstock pertayning to their ffreehouldes, and at the request of the said William, Earle of Huntingdon, the founder, the said ffreeholders releazed theirre Common in the said Outwood, whereupon the sayd William, Earle of Huntingdon inclosed the said outwood and ymparked it by the agreement betwixt him and the said ffreeholders as hereafter is recyted. Whereupon the said John Clynton being then Lord of Maxstock by his deede under sealle of armes granted to the Prior at that time and to his convent forever the ffield called the Brodefeld, at that time being as an ffield and not severed, reserving unto certayne freeholders named in the said dede (Wm. Kingsforth, Rychard Kingsford, John Slade, and Wm. Corneville) common at certain tymes of the yeare as in the said dede more playnly it doth appear; Also as it hath bin before recited that the said Broadfeld was oon field at the first time that it was graunted, and so alwaies used as oon ffield unto on Prior Greene in King Henry his day the vjth. severed it and made two ffields thereof, and the common to be used. And occupied after this manner, After the Corne wheare carryed out of the said ffield, then to be common,

and the third yeare fallowe, and so after that manner both ffields to be occupied: And if any of them lie in pasture than always common at Lammas (Aug. 1) and the third yeare common." Saunders Mss. Stratford upon Avon, ff.47-55, 60-80. cf. V.C.H. Warwickshire, Vol. IV, p. 140, note 89. The original document is late fifteenth or early sixteenth century in date. Some of the original charters mentioned above survive in the P.R.O. B2521, B2522, D1234. The field, Brodefield, appears to have been a severalty, but, nevertheless, the charters reveal that at least three people, not related, had once had the right to cultivate, "plough and till" land within it. This particular example would probably repay closer examination.

R.H. Hilton, Victoria County History of Leicestershire, Vol. II, p. 158, accepts the process of the sub-division of a several assart as normal, "The sequence of events seems to have been that the land was taken into cultivation from the forest in severalty, and later subdivided as a result of some process of alienation by sale, lease or gift. In this process it must have become indistinguishable from the other cultura of the village open-field system".

97) G.A. Holmes, op.cit.

98) A summary translation of this document is given in the Catalogue of Ancient Deeds, A4659, but the author has a photostat of the original, which is in Norman-French, and although the translation has given some difficulty, the sense seems clear.

- 99) Thus, in 1313 (3 Nov. 1313, T.b30) John Malore gave to Reginald Malore his son "a tenement in Bottele (Botley in Wooton Wawen) and Tanworth without any reservations with all appurtenances in mills, fisheries, pastures, hedges, meadows, pastures and feedings with all rents and easements pertaining to the same".
- 100) Vide G.E. Fussell, "Marl: An Ancient Manure", Nature, 24 Jan. 1959, pp. 215 ff.
H. Evershed, "Farming of Warwickshire", Journal Roy. Agricultural Society of England, Vol. 17 (1856), p.492.
- 101) There are 8 references in the Tanworth charters, the earliest being c.1270-90 (T.a54); in Baddesley Clinton 8; 8 in Solihull; 2 in Coleshill.
- 102) P.R.O. A4388.
- 103) Archer Collection, Stratford upon Avon, Solihull Charters 4 July, 1294, D.36.
- 104) Vide Appendix IIB.
- 105) R. Welldon Finn, op.cit. p. 278.
- 106) P.R.O. C.134/47 (13), C.145/105.
- 107) V.C.H. Warwickshire, Vol. III, p. 66.
- 108) Vide Budbrooke, C.134/47 (13), where the value of the several pasture was 6s. 8d., and the common pasture 3s. 4d. At Hampton in Arden (C.133/15 (5)) in 1276 the several pasture was valued at £1. 3s., the common at nothing.
- 109) Vide L.B. Larking, "The Knights Hospitallers in England", Camden Soc. (1857).
P.R.O. C.133/106 (16).

- 110a) In Tanworth in 1315 (C.134/51) pasture "in the park" was valued along with the other pastures, while at Berkswell in 1324/5 the value of the pasture in the park "for stinting beasts" was given (C.134/90 (16)), although an extent of the manor in 1300/1 values the park together with the underwood and herbage for feeding deer (C.133/100 (1)).
- 110b) It is surprising that there is not more evidence of pig rearing in Western Arden, but apart from this particular reference to pannage, only one other is known, at Berkswell in 1300-01. In the economic geography of Domesday England the association of pig-rearing with woodland is an outstanding fact (R. Lennard, Rural England, 1086-1135, (1959), p.260) and more evidence of this might have been expected from Arden. A stock list for Temple Balsall in 1338, to be cited below, mentions two boars, five sows, 39 pigs, 26 young boars and 19 piglings suggesting that pigs could be raised in the Arden area, but apart from this reference the author has no other material upon which to base an account of pig-rearing.
- 111) L.B. Larking, "The Knights Hospitallers in England", Camden Society (1857), p. 179.
- 112) V.C.H. Warwickshire, Vol. IV, p. 88.
Ex. inf. Mrs. Eileen Gooder, to whom the author is deeply indebted for much material concerning the Templars in Warwickshire, in particular for the loan of a microfilm of the enrolled bailiffs' accounts.
- 113) P.R.O. E358/19.
- 114) Ibid, membrane 40.
Ex. inf. Mrs. E. Gooder.

- 115) It is difficult to be certain how many beasts were produced for sale, probably this was comparatively few, for in Mrs. Gooder's words "it is clear that some were used to feed the household". Nevertheless, on the basis of the accounts she feels able to state that "it is clear that Balsall was the stock-breeding centre and that the other (Warwickshire) manors were used for bringing-on sheep", and in the same account the author has noted entries under the "Sale of Stock".
- 116) The part played by monastic producers in wool production is discussed by R.A. Pelham, in H.C. Darby (ed.), An Historical Geography of England before 1800 (1951), pp. 239-246. See also R.A. Donkin, "Some Aspects of Cistercian Sheep Farming in England and Wales", Citeaux, Commentarii Cistercienses, Vol. XIII, n.4, (1962), pp. 296-310.
The estimate of the number of sheep on the four monastic estates is derived from R.H. Pelham, "The Growth of Settlement and Industry c.1100-c.1700", in Birmingham and its Regional Setting, British Association (1950), p. 136.
- 117) J. Caley and S. Ayscough (eds.) Taxatio Ecclesiastica Angliae et Walliae auctoritate Papae Nicolai IV circa 1291, Record Commissioners (1802), p. 242.
M. Hollings, "The Red Book of Worcester", Worcester Historical Soc. (1934-50), p. 263.
- 118) J.B. Harley, Population and Land-Utilization, 1086-1300, pp. 223.
- 119) R.A. Pelham, op.cit, pp. 136-9.

- 120) R. Trow-Smith, A History of British Livestock Husbandry to 1700, pp. 140-141. The figures quoted in the text have been derived from the table on p.141.
- 121) R.A. Pelham, "The Cloth Markets of Warwickshire during the Later Middle Ages", Trans. Birmingham Arch. Soc. Vol. LXVI (1945 and 6), pp. 131-141. The table is derived from this source. A whole cloth was normally 24 yards long, while a half length cloth was called a "dozen".
- 122) J.B. Harley, "The Settlement Geography of Early Medieval Warwickshire", Trans. Institute British Geographers, No. 34 (1964), p. 124, Figure 4.
- 123) W.G. Hoskins, "Sheep Farming in Medieval England", Provincial England (1963), pp. 8-10; see also R. Trow-Smith, op.cit. pp. 146-148.

Hoskins cites the case of certain Wiltshire villages where evidence exists to show that while the monastic lords had about 1600 sheep, the peasantry had about 7000, a proportion of 1:4. He cites 19 as an average for the peasant flocks in the same area.
- 124) No material can be cited to indicate the value of hides, but leather was widely used throughout the Middle Ages, while the growing urban centres of Coventry and Birmingham would have needed meat.
- 125) J.B. Harley, Population and Land-Utilization, 1086-1300, pp. 205-206.
- 126) Archer Collection, Stratford upon Avon, notes by Sir Simon Archer headed "Greyhoundes and Houndes" and consisting of extracts from court rolls. The entry cited is from a court coll of 20 Elizabeth, and continues "And Galford Lea did take in sheepe

and opresse ye commons with them, in mercy 4d. and if he offended any more to forfayt 20s."(34 Elizabeth).

- 127) This conclusion is in many ways unsatisfactory, but the evidence to carry the arguments further is simply not available. To leave the reconstruction at this point is both inconclusive and undesirable, and yet in the absence of source material speculation can only have a very limited value. However, in 1961 a paper was read at the Annual Conference of the British Agricultural History Society entitled Accounts of Farmers before 1800 as Sources for Agricultural History. The author was B.H. Slicher van Bath, the Director of the Department of Rural History, at the Agricultural University of Wageningen in the Netherlands, and in the writer's view this paper contained points that are distinctly relevant to the present problem, the economy of Arden within the Middle Ages. Slicher van Bath was in this paper primarily interested in filling the gap in agricultural history between the fifteenth and the eighteenth centuries, and based his study on a series of detailed farm accounts and diaries, ranging from the accounts of Thierry d'Hiercon, a politician and later Bishop of Artois, and countess Machteld of Artois, drawn up between c.1318 and 1343, and the farm accounts of Robert Loder, 1610-1704. He claims that as early as the fourteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, a long time before the New Husbandry, there were "farmers of quite a modern type, precursors in an age, which as many historians, sociologists and economists will make us believe, was only traditional and uniform." He lists some 14 characteristics of this

new husbandry, including a capitalistic spirit, the wish to make big profits in a rational way; heavy manuring and marling of the arable, and the employment of hired labour, all of which are probably applicable to Arden.

Vide B.H.Slicher van Bath, "Accounts and Diaries of Farmers before 1800 as Sources for Agricultural History", A.A.G. Bijdragen, Vol. 8 (1962), pp. 5-33.

FISH CULTURE IN WESTERN ARDEN

In the course of this study evidence has been presented to suggest that substantial amounts of capital were available for investment to both the small landowners and the peasants of Western Arden, and although, as Chapter 8 showed, the source of this cannot yet be adequately demonstrated, sufficient evidence has come to light to show that not all of this capital was re-invested in land. Some at least was put into a highly specialised form of production, the rearing of fish in ponds.

Fishponds have long been recognised as a feature of the medieval landscape, usually as an appurtenance to a manor house, or large ecclesiastical foundation,¹ but the Arden evidence reveals that they have a far wider distribution within the region than has hitherto been suspected. Within Western Arden, in fact, fishponds constitute the physical remains of an extensive fish producing organisation which developed before 1350, and which, in some instances at least, was organised on a commercial basis. The evidence for the presence of fishponds comes from a wide variety of sources, the more important of which are briefly summarised below.

The Evidence for Fishponds.

a) Extents and Surveys.

The demesne fishpond is a recurrent feature in manorial extents and surveys, where they are clearly distinct from river fisheries found, for example, on the Severn, Avon, Blythe and smaller rivers. Of the twenty-four manors in Western Arden for which detailed extents survive, fishponds are mentioned upon thirteen, excluding the piscarium at Hampton on Avon, which was probably a river fishery, and

the Blythe fishery at Hampton in Arden, where a fishpond also appears. At Berkswell and Fillongley the fishpond and mill were valued together, while at Fulbrook the fish were specifically described as being in the moat of the manor house (literally "the water round the capital messuage").² Solihull had two ponds, while a single pond mentioned at Claverdon in 1315 is described as being "in the park". The Red Book of Worcester, in addition to providing much information on the bishop's river fisheries, also mentions fishponds; thus, at Alvechurch he had two ponds in his park, with islands, the pasture of which was valued at two shillings. In fact, an examination of manorial extents and surveys, and indeed bailiff's account rolls, for both Warwickshire and Worcestershire reveals that fishponds formed regular items of income on many manors.

b) Land Charters.

References to fishponds are frequent within the various charter collections examined, and three groups may be recognised; the first results from the fact that almost invariably fishponds were sited in valleys, and in many cases the stream within this valley would be a property boundary. Thus, the water dammed up to form the pond could easily encroach upon another's land, necessitating an agreement between the two landowners. An early reference of this type comes from Tanworth and consists of a grant in c.1180 (T.4) by William, Earl of Warwick, to Roger de Ullenhale of a "licence to firm a certain pool, under (or below, subt^a) his house", ⁴ which pool was on the boundary between his and the Earl's land (Figures 48 and 35). The boundary in question was clearly the Tanworth/Monkspath manor boundary, and this pool must have been the precursor of what was later termed "Betlesworth Great Pool". A century later this pool

was driving a mill, but it may also have been a fishpond. ⁵

Two more examples of this type of reference can be drawn from Tanworth parish, the first possibly illuminating the single valuation of both mill-pond and fishpond found in the extents at Berkswell and Fillongley. An examination of the Tithe Map reveals that only a small section of Tanworth parish lay south of the river Alne, and this section had its origin in two grants by which Earl Henry (c.1204-1220) acquired land from Roger de Romeshull, in one case for the building of a fishpond, and in the other land for the water-course of Tanworth mill. A field examination of the site does in fact reveal the presence of two ponds. ⁶

A second example illustrates the nature of this group of references particularly well; in 1332 (25 Oct. 1332, T.b168) Roger de Middeldmore granted to John Smith of Monks-path, for an annual rent of 3d. silver, "an open ditch belonging to the said Roger in order to make a large pool (capud stagnum), the said ditch extending in length between le Heye and a certain road leading through the middle of a wood belonging to the said Roger, as determined by its boundaries, reserving the trees growing on the said land to the said Roger".

A second group of references, somewhat rarer than either the first or the third groups, involves direct grants of fishponds. Thus, in c.1280-90 (T.a126) William de Cherlecote granted to John Archer "a vivarium called Cherlecotepol in Tanworth, lying in length and breadth as it is defined by certain metes and bounds and surrounded by a ditch. ⁷ In 1332 Walter son of John Wodard granted to Thomas, Earl of Warwick, a plot of land, a fishpond, and a moor, giving sufficient details for the site to be located in the field using the document, while in 1340 (30 Sept. 1340, T.b229) Henry de Sidenhale granted the large pool (capud stagni)

of Ilshawe to William de Fulwood, which reference can be reasonably associated with a large dam across Ilshaweslade, just before it joins the Blythe (Figures 4 and 49).

The third group consists of incidental abuttal references and are by far the most numerous. To cite but two examples, in a charter relating to the consolidation of the Archer lands in c.1240-60 (T.111), reference is made to the fishponds (vivaria) within the park (Parthum) of John Archer, while a sixteenth century perambulation mentions two fishponds, one at Codbarrow, and another at Pynkmore, and this latter was in fact first mentioned in 1336 (1 April, 1336, T. b194). Examples of such references from both Tanworth and other manors could be multiplied.

c) Cartographic Evidence.

In locating many of the fishponds maps have frequently provided valuable clues, thus, the 2½" and 6" maps of the Ordnance Survey occasionally show fishponds in Old English lettering (cf. O.S.2½" SP17/138707), or ordinary lettering (O.S.6" SP07.SE/093719). Ponds are occasionally picked out by the surveyed contours, for example at Claverdon (O.S.2½" SP16/198638), Oldbarrow (SP16/123661), or Honiley (SP27/154723), the Claverdon pond being the one mentioned in the extent of 1315. Large isolated pools (SP16/110678 and SP16/165692) or clear evidence of the presence of a flight of pools is always worth investigating, as are unusual variations in the courses of streams (SP16/1563), while earthworks cutting across a stream often prove to be breached dams (SP17/138754 and SP17/142777). In only two cases have earlier maps been of much use, in particular, Totlesmos Pool in Tanworth appears on Greenwood's map of 1822 and Betlesworth Great Pool appears on Henry Beighton's map of 1728, but Tithe maps can be useful. The field name "Pool

Meadow" is a useful indicator and in Tanworth the precise location of both Totlesmos Pool and the capud stagni of Ilshawe could be confirmed in this way.

d) Field Evidence.

An examination of fishpond sites in the field has provided much of the material used below for discussing the various forms and types of pond. The remains of ponds were often discovered quite by chance, thus a routine examination of a valley at Bettlesworth in Tanworth revealed the dam of a pond that was later discovered to be mentioned in the Archer survey of c.1500. At Aspley (SP17/103703) and Temple Balsall (SP27/206762) the nature of the roads clearly indicated that they were running over dams, and a comparable example is to be found in Rowington (SP26/206691). In the case of Pynkemore Pool, and the Wodard family's fishpond, it proved possible to locate the remains in the field by using the details given in land charters (SP17/142707 and SP17/113713). So far, no archaeological excavations of fishponds have been undertaken in the Arden area, but this would be a most interesting exercise, particularly in the case of the better documented royal fishponds to be described below.

The Forms of the Pools.

The specific examples cited so far make it clear that fishponds were already present in Western Arden prior to 1350 in some numbers; in fact in the case of Tanworth, of the 21 ponds known to exist in the parish some 15 appear in the documentary record before this date, and many of the remainder are probably of the same period. In general, the earlier a pool was mentioned the more likely it was owned by a person of some rank, but by the mid-thirteenth century

small landowners, such as the Archers, already possessed ponds, and by the early fourteenth century they were not unknown amongst the well-to-do peasantry. The example of the Wodards' pool has already been cited, while in Solihull, as will be shown below, the de Blossville's, a family of comparable status, possessed a pond of their own. The large number of ponds present in Tanworth clearly represents the outlay of substantial amounts of capital, and in order to assess what this might involve, it is proposed at this stage to discuss their forms, construction and siting, using mainly field and post medieval documentary evidence.

a) Dammed Valleys.

The majority of Tanworth fishponds, and indeed the bulk of those so far examined in Arden, consist basically of an earthen dam thrown across a valley at a favourable point. Many of the Tanworth pools, in particular those of the Archers, have clearly experienced post-medieval alterations, but sufficient examples survive to permit some tentative comments on their forms. The simplest form, that at Old Betlesworth for example, appear to have consisted simply of a dam across a valley with an overflow either at one side or, as was probably the case at Aspley and Pynkmore, in the dam. However, more elaborate arrangements do occur, for example, and at the demesne pool to the south-east of Tanworth village (SP17/119703) what may well be an original arrangement has been preserved, the general principle of which was common to many medieval fishponds. A valley was chosen with a moderate slope to the sides, a fairly flat bottom, and, ideally, a slight constriction where the dam was to be placed. The stream was diverted to one side by means of a trench cut deeply into the valley side, so that it by-passed the pool. This trench may have been 15 or 20

feet deep, and the overflow from the pool probably found its way into it, the flow being controlled by a system of sluices.⁸

The principle was common medieval practice to be found on many sites, for example at Weoley Castle,⁹ Weatheroak,¹⁰ and Durrance Farm in Worcestershire,¹¹ and at the latter site no less than six pools lined a valley, each with a complex system of overflow channels and sluices. The Bishop's fishpond at Alvechurch in Worcestershire used this method, which is to be seen at its most impressive at Kenilworth, where the Great Mere, constructed by Geoffrey de Clinton in the twelfth century, formally defended one of the greatest lake fortresses in England.¹² Complex systems of channels and sluices to control overflow were particularly necessary where the pool was placed so as to command a substantial catchment area, and it is probably significant that Pynkmore pool with a small catchment, shows no traces of such an arrangement.

With reference to dam construction, earth taken from the overflow channel and the sides of the valley no doubt formed the principal constituent, there being no need in the Midlands to introduce clay from elsewhere, but in some cases the material must have come from quarry pits that would be indistinguishable from an ordinary marl pit. Such a pit can be seen in Tanworth adjacent to Ilshawe pond. Isaac Walton, writing on "Fish-ponds and how to order them", advises "when you have drained the ground, and made the earth firm where the head of the pond must be (i.e. the dam), that you must then, in that place, drive in two or three rows of oak or elm piles, which should be scorched in the fire, or half burnt, before they be driven into the earth; for being thus used it preserves them much longer from rotting. And having done so, lay fagots or bavins of smaller wood

betwixt them, and earth betwixt and above them: and then, having first very well rammed them and the earth, use another pile in the like manner as the first were; and note, that the second pile is to be of or about the height that you intend to make your sluice or flood-gate, or the vent that you intend shall convey the overflowings of your pond, in any flood that shall endanger the breaking of the dam".¹³

Mortimer gives similar advice, stressing the ramming down of the earth, and advises that six feet of water in the pond is sufficient, a depth that is compatible with field observations.¹⁴ Clay was probably packed between the faggotts to provide a secure core, and the inner side of the dam may well have been faced with puddled clay.¹⁵

Such seepage as did occur would decline as silting took place.

In a charter cited above, Cherelcote pool was described as being "surrounded by ditches", and some light is thrown upon this problem by a field examination of "Smithspool" in Tanworth, which had its origin in the grant of an "open ditch" to construct a "large pool" cited above. The site can be securely located from the Archer survey of c.1500, and an examination of the ground in this case reveals no massive dam, merely a flat valley floor bounded by large "hedgebanks" with their ditches on the upslope side so that stream and field drainage could be diverted around the shallow depression. Cherlecote pool "surrounded by a ditch" may originally have taken this form, although today a substantial pool is ponded back by a modern concrete dam which in turn replaced a brick one.¹⁶

b) Fisheries associated with mill-ponds.

There is no doubt that fish were actually produced in mill-ponds; references to this clearly occur in the extents,

and the Red Book of Worcester refers, quite unambiguously, to "the fishery below Alvechurch, which is the mill-pool".¹⁷ As has been indicated, a fishpond occurred in close association with Tanworth mill, a fact underlined by a bailiff's account of 1480 "And 26s. 8d. from the farm of the water-mill, with a certain pool (stagno) called Tanworth Pole".¹⁸ A fishery on the Blythe at Monkspath clearly depended on the level of the river being maintained by flood-gates associated with a mill, the fish probably being taken at this point (c.1250-? T.Add. a2, and 3 Aug. 1339, T. Add. b16).

c) Marlpits.

In an area where marl was frequently dug for agricultural purposes it is not surprising to find that the pits were used for fish; thus, in c.1300 (T.a190) a "marlpit in the fields of the donor with the water and fish in the same" was the subject of a grant, and in 1346 (18 July, 1346, T. b273) "the pond which was formerly a marlpit" was mentioned, while fishing rights in a marlpit were mentioned in a charter of 1336 (T. b198).

d) Tanks.

Although no field or documentary evidence exists to suggest the presence of tanks in Western Arden, they do occur elsewhere in the county and it is convenient to mention them at this point; they consist of small, shallow rectangular depressions, arranged in rows or parallel, and seem to consist of breeding tanks. One example, from near Nuneaton, was at least partially stone built, and highly complicated examples of this type of feature are illustrated by Allcroft.¹⁹

e) Ponds associated with moats.

The case of Fulbrook, where the fish were actually

kept in the moat, has already been cited, but true fishponds in close association with moated sites are a common feature of the Midlands. In the Archer survey of c.1500 Eliott's Hall near Cheswick in Tanworth had two ponds associated with it, "a moat and two pools", while complex valley moats often have multiple pools, the most complicated example yet known being Durrance Farm in Worcestershire where no less than six ponds occur.²⁰ Such sites may occupy well over half a mile of the valley floor.

f) Natural Pond.

There is little doubt that natural ponds were used as fishponds, and a case in question may be Totlesmos pool in Tanworth. The pond is first mentioned in the period c.1260-1290 (T. a18), and although there is no conclusive proof that it was a fishpond, it may have been so used.

The Medieval Evidence, post 1350.

Sufficient evidence has now been cited to indicate the presence of fishponds in Tanworth during the Middle Ages in some numbers, and although the Coleshill charters have not revealed any, there are indications that these features were numerous within the central parts of Arden.²¹ It is now necessary to consider the nature of the fish produced in these pools. Mortimer, writing in 1721, suggested that carp and tench should be raised, but also mentions pike and perch.²² However, a certain amount of light is fortunately thrown upon this problem by a series of bailiff's account rolls for Baddesley Clinton, Warwickshire, falling between 1443 and 1458.²³ The series is unfortunately not entirely complete, but sufficient material survives to provide a picture of

the scouring, repairing, and re-stocking of a flight of demesne fishponds. Three pools were involved, Lydyatepole, Milnepole, and Blackpole, and are probably represented today by the pools adjacent to Baddesley Clinton Hall.

The majority of the payments incurred were to labourers engaged in clearing the mud from the ponds which had in places accumulated to depths of four and six feet. While this work was in progress, two men were at work repairing the "fflodyates of the pool" and payment is recorded to a carpenter "making and positioning a pipe in Blackpole". The duration of this work is uncertain, but clearly took some time; the rolls suggest that it was carried out slowly between 1443 and 1448, for the account dating from the latter year has no entry, and the work would appear to have been completed by this date. An undated roll records the mending of a dam, and the employment of men and a cart to raise another. Remarkable as it may seem, the pools were clearly drained and repaired together, thus incurring the maximum loss, but suggesting that they were all part of one closely integrated complex. As might be expected, the accounts record that the fishery produced no profit over the period of repairs, but indicate that they were normally let to farm for 36s. 8d. Formerly the lord of the manor had found it more profitable, for his own purpose, to farm the ponds rather than work them himself, but one is tempted to wonder if the substantial repairs by the lord during the period 1443-1448 indicate that he was going to take over the management himself.

The most interesting section of the accounts occurs in the undated roll, which, since it involves the re-stocking of the ponds after the repairs, was no doubt the last of the series. The relevant entry is tabulated as follows:

2 "closse barelles" bought for the carriage of fish each ten gallons	.....	3s. od.
Payment of a carter for the transport of fish from Shirford to Baddesley	.....	2s. 0d.
Paid, to John Oaken, for 8 bremes each 2s	.....	16s. 0d.
Paid, for 1 "panyere" for the carriage of two bremes from Coventry as far as London	.....	4d.
Paid to John Boter, for 7 tenches, each 5d		2s. 11d.
Paid, to the Mill of Alston, for roaches	.....	2s. 0d.
Paid to John Park of Escote, for 10 "bremettes" ...		6s. 8d.
Paid to Thomas Boter of Berkswell for 2 bremes ...		3s. 4d.

The picture this provides of both the variety of fish, and the methods of transporting stock over substantial distances is interesting. The main emphasis was clearly on breme, tench and roach, the former being markedly more expensive. The industry was clearly organised, for fish were being transported large distances, Berkswell and Escote, respectively ^{being} six and five miles from Baddesley, while Alston and Shirford may both be very much further, ²⁴ not to mention the two bremes taken from Coventry to London.

The scouring of ponds was a regular practice; Mortimer advises "I would very often have ponds cleansed; the mud whereof doth commonly more than pay the charge". ²⁵ This last point can be explained by the fact that mud was a valuable fertiliser, and Gervase Markham writing in 1611 advises the casting out of the "mudde and filth (which is a singular compasse for land)", ²⁶ while Rowland Vaughan, writing in 1610, states that the mud may be carried "to your wheat land or your Garden or to better any barren ground that yeeldes no profit". ²⁷ Some slight evidence suggests that the medieval ponds at Alvechurch were scoured

every five years, ²⁸ while the Baddesley material suggests a more major and infrequent operation, for mud to the depth of four to six feet would take some time to accumulate. It is worth pointing out that one foot accumulation of mud would produce ten cubic yards of mud per square perch of pond, 1600 cubic yards per acre, and the Tanworth ponds vary in size from a quarter of an acre to three acres. If the numerous ponds within Arden were scoured regularly in the Middle Ages the effect of this fertiliser, even if it were not deliberately used as such, must have been appreciable.

The Medieval Evidence, prior to 1350.

In the light of the evidence discussed briefly above it is possible to understand more fully the full significance of a series of early references to fishponds. No early evidence survives for the actual construction of a pond, except perhaps a charter relating to Solihull. Dating to 1280 (19 June, 1280, A.D. C3526) this consists of an agreement by which John de Soutford of Solihull granted to John de Blossmeville of the same, "a licence to construct a watercourse (gutteram) in the grantor's road at "Hertis-pittes" whenever he wishes to fish or dig marl there, the grantee undertaking to build a bridge over the said water course, so that carts and other weights may cross it safely, and to dam up the said water course with the same marlpit or fishpond (cum ibidem marliavero vel piscavero); the said parties bind themselves to the King in 100s. each to observe this agreement". The translation cited is taken from the Catalogue of Ancient Deeds, and an examination of the original document suggests that it is indeed literal; nevertheless, it clearly does not make sense as it stands, and interpretation is necessary as well as translation. A rental of 1349 mentions a Blossmevillepool, ²⁹ and it is

reasonable to interpret the charter as an agreement for the construction of this pond, the "gutteram" probably being the overflow channel, with the dam being constructed so as to carry a road, a common feature, as was indicated above. The "marlpit" of the document may well have been a quarry pit, but the name "Hertispittes" suggests that the valley had already been cut about by marlpits. Unfortunately it has not proved possible to locate this pool with any accuracy, and check this interpretation in the field.

Material for a discussion of the organisation of fish-production before 1350 is provided by two charters; one, dated 1317 (10 Edw.II, A.D. A9631) consists of an acquittance by Henry de Sydenhale to Sir John de Dene, Robert de Crowenhale, William Wodard, and John le Fisscher of Warwick, for 20 marks, "wherein they were bound to him for fish bought of him from Sydenhale Pond." This sum, £13 6s. 8d. may be compared with the freehold rents due from the manor of Tanworth in 1315, in all £20. Clearly substantial amounts of capital were involved in fish production. The pond in question may well be the "capud stagnum of Ilshawe" mentioned above.

The second document is a lengthy agreement in Norman-French, which speaks for itself; the following is a paraphrase: ³⁰

"Counterpart of an indenture being the memorandum of the sale by Sir John de Bisschoppesdon to John de Pesham of Rowington and William de Charindon for 20 marks, of the fishing of Lapworth pond, from the feast of St. Gregory, 3 Edward III (12th March, 1329) to the morrow of Easter following (24th April, 1329). Of the 20 marks, half are to be paid, part after the feast of St. Ambrose, part after the making of the charter, and the other half to be paid the Friday of Easter week. To be paid at Lapworth.

Reserving to the said Sir John four brace of pike (luz), two brace of the best and two brace of the second best; four brace of breme, two of the best and two of the second best; four brace of tench, two of the best and two of the second best; and two dozen brace of perch and roach. In each case, half of the best and half of the second best were to be retained (demorrunt - demorez - retained -?) for the re-stocking of the said pond. And reserving to the said Sir John day by day (daily, 'de jour en jour') after the commencement of the lease one pike (luz) or a gross of pickerel (little pike), ³¹ a breme, a large eel and four "menes" (minnows or fry ?) and a dozen perches or roaches for his sustenance until the morrow of the Close of Easter aforesaid. And reserving to the said Sir John all the pickerel that are not longer than twelve inches (literally "thumb's breadths"), all the bremes that do not exceed seven inches, all the tenches that do not exceed five inches, and all the perches and roaches that do not exceed three inches which are reserved for the restocking (?) of the aforesaid leased pond (?). And the said John and William that Sir William can have a man of his own (seons - "of his own people") to attend the fishing, the handling and sale of the fish, and to be guardian of the money that they receive for the said fish: the money to be put in a box and sealed with their seals until the rent has been paid to the said Sir John. If the fishing is worthless, the said Sir John is to remit one mark of the 20. If John and William honour their payment then the bond for £40 in the hands of Sir John is void. If they default it stands in full force. Sealing Clause."

The variety of fish mentioned implies that more than one pond was involved, and the goup in question may well be those in Lapworth park (Figure 24), where two large and two

small fishponds occur. ³² The lease ran for the duration of Lent, explaining the reservation of fish by Sir John "pour sa vyande tannqa a lendemayn de la Cluse Pasch", for his sustenance until the morrow of the Close of Easter.

The most remarkable feature of the document is the variety and quantity of fish involved; it is significant that all of the fish mentioned was in fact reserved for Sir John, and this quantity, together with the 20 marks involved, implies that there was a possibility of obtaining large quantities of saleable fish from the stews. Careful provision was made for the maintenance of the stock, and it is clear that a large amount of capital was ultimately involved in the whole transaction, much was invested in the construction and maintenance of the pools and in the provision of a wide variety of stock. Hence there is every reason to assume that an organisation comparable to that found at Baddesley Clinton in the fifteenth century was already in existence at Lapworth by the early fourteenth century. The Tanworth evidence also suggests a comparable organisation, but in this case the capital was being invested by men of lower social status, the small-landowners and well-to-do peasants, in addition to men of knightly rank.

This point can be illustrated by the case of John Smith of Monkspath; the charter of 1332, already cited at length, granted him rights over an open ditch belonging to the said Roger (de Middeldmore) in order to make a large pool (capud stagnum) and a deed of 1373/4 (5 Jan. 1373/4, T. c68) confirms that this was in fact a fishpool. In 1339 (3 Aug. 1339, T.Add 616) it was agreed between Walter de Swansditch and John Smith of Monkspath "that John and his heirs should make and repair the bridge called Munkespathebrugg (on the Blythe) at his own cost as often as it might be necessary during the lifetime of the said Walter, and preserve the

said Walter from any expense on this account, for which the said Walter granted to the said John and his heirs during the lifetime of the said Walter half of the fishery in the river flowing towards the mill of the said Walter (the Blythe), so that the said John and his heirs might freely catch and take away fish at their pleasure from the said half fishery as aforesaid and also half the fish at the gates called the Floodyaten." The mill lay on the Blythe, and the river still has floodgates at about this point. Once again the charter material will only carry the argument to a certain point, but John Smith's acquisition of a fishpond and a fishery within a short time has to be seen in the light of the rest of the evidence presented in this section, and there seems little doubt that he was producing fish for more than his own needs. Moreover, the charters do not suggest that he was anything more than of peasant status.

Some small amounts of information concerning pond management can be gleaned from the entry concerning the Bishop's fishpool at Alvechurch.³³ The fishpond was a large one, and is still clearly visible today. The entry in the Red Book states "The Bishop has a fishery in the park, which is worth, together with the fishing of the moat (- aquarum infossatarum, literally - of the dug out waters), besides the stock of fish which are left to increase stock, 25s. every five years, and so 5s. yearly." Below Alvechurch he has another fishery, the mill pool; "if it were cleansed (mundatum fuerit) and stocked it would be worth 3s. yearly". At Hartlebury the bishop had four fishponds "which are valued at 100s. every five years, and so yearly 20s." This probably implies that while the bishop drew fish from the pools for his own use, every five years they were drained, scoured, and the surplus fish sold.

The most consistent source of information concerning medieval fishponds is the Close Rolls, comprising the orders to the bailiffs, keepers, and constables in charge of the royal fishponds and some comment upon these will serve to illuminate the scope of the industry. Two royal ponds, Feckenham and Kenilworth lie in or near Arden, the latter only remaining in royal hands till 1248 when Henry III granted it to his sister, Eleanor, the wife of Simon de Montfort together with the castle. The references can be grouped into three categories: ³⁴

- a) First, grants of fish by the king to a second party, specifying the royal pond from which they were to be taken, their numbers, kind, and occasionally condition. In a few cases the pond to which they are to be taken is named; thus, in 1231 the Constable of Kenilworth was directed to give Lord Grey de Crowcumb 200 live bream for the stocking of Atherstone-on-Stour pond. In the same year, thirteen bream from Feckenham were granted to William de Putot for putting in his pond at "Meingodesfeld", Mangotsfield, near Bristol; in 1240 the Abbot of Evesham was granted six female bream (matrices brevias) from Feckenham for stocking his pond at Evesham, while in 1252 the Abbot of Pershore received four live bream for his pond at Broadway. Such entries could be multiplied; quantities of fish range from two or three to two hundred, and while pike, roach and eels are mentioned the majority of entries refer to bream. By the early thirteenth century it is clear that live fish were being transported considerable distances.
- b) Secondly, fish taken from the ponds for the king's own use (ad opus regis), the entry taking the form of an order to the fisherman to take a specified number of fish, normally bream. The production from Feckenham, as recorded in the Close Rolls, is summarised as follows:

Table 38

Production of fish from Feckenham Pond, 1229-1272.

Year	No. of bream	Others
1229	10	
1230	13 (f)	
1231	213	
1232	340	4 pike
1233	10 (f)	
1234	40 (20f)	
1235	Repairs recorded	
1238	24	200 roach
1240	6 (f)	Repairs recorded
1242	20 (f)	
1243	25	
1244	30 (f)	Repairs Recorded
1245	30 (f)	
1251	206	
1252	4 (f)	Repairs Recorded
1253	20	
1254	10 (f)	
1255	60+ (40f)	Repairs Recorded
1256	20 (f)	
1257	12 (f)	
1258	10 (f)	
1259	20 (f)	
1261	90	Repairs Recorded
1263	50	
1264	40 (20f)	
1270	10	
1271		Repairs Recorded
1272	12	

(f = female bream)

This table can, in all probability, by no means be taken to record the whole production, but it is significant to note that seven times in the 43 years between 1229 and 1272, repairs of a substantial nature were necessary. The map of Feckenham in 1591 suggests three ponds, while at Kenilworth, apart from rectangular stews or breeding tanks, the Great Mere must have formed a source of supply. ³⁵

c) The third group of references consists of grants of timber for the repair of fishponds, from the Royal Forests. For example, in 1236 the custodian of Gillingham Forest was ordered to give two good oaks for making two gutters (gutteras - pipes - channels ?) for a fishpond. In 1240 timber was taken from Feckenham Forest to repair the sluice (exclusas) of Feckenham pond, and in 1254 eight large trees (robora) were extracted from the King's wood of "Wercuode" together with thirty cartloads of thorns (spinarum) from "la Bers" for repairs to the same pond. ³⁶ In 1318 underwood was taken from woods in Feckenham to repair the sluices of the pond. These references reveal a highly organised series of royal stews, but also strongly suggest that maintenance costs for these pools would well be high.

It is impossible at the moment to assess the full extent of this domestic industry in the Midlands. It is clear that stimulus must have come from the inland location, for although there were links with the East coast ports, locally produced fish must have been infinitely preferable. ³⁷ Extents, surveys and bailiff's accounts indicate that most large and medium sized manors possessed a fishpond; at Wolvey, for example, in the period 29th September 1308 to 19th May 1309, the accounts of the keeper of the former Templar estates recorded "100s. received from the sale of fish

in the fishpond there." Some evidence exists to show that this activity was not confined to Arden; the fishpond at Atherstone on Stour has been mentioned, and a fine pond survives at Wormleighton in the Feldon, together with four tanks, while earthworks at Ladbroke, also in the Feldon, suggest the existence of a fishpond. An undated charter relating to Ladbroke (pre 1310 ?) records the confirmation of a grant of land "to improve the pond of (a) stew (vivarii)" (A.D. A4270).

The Feldon ponds might be expected to belong to the aristocracy, but a more extensive examination of the documentary evidence is necessary before any conclusions can be attempted. Many fishponds appear on the one inch Ordnance Survey map on the Warwickshire-Leicestershire border, for example at South Kilworth. It is tempting to consider these to be village ponds, but field work at Kilworth reveals a group of ponds associated with a fine moated site, clearly the manor house (SP/604815). Beresford and St. Joseph illustrate a number of fishpond sites,³⁸ but in all cases there are reasons to suggest that, in their present form at least, they are Tudor and are associated with manor houses. Ponds, like mills, would in the Feldon have been a seigniorial monopoly, and a true village fishpond is probably a rarity.

On the basis of the evidence cited above certain conclusions can be presented:

- i) By the early fourteenth century fishponds were present on certain manors in Western Arden in some numbers.
- ii) Although at first, in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, these ponds were a monopoly of the lords and their mesne tenants, it is clear that by the late thirteenth century many small-landowners, wealthy freeholders, were building their own ponds.

- iii) The physical remains, together with medieval and post-medieval sources suggest that this involved the investment of considerable amounts of capital, but that the ponds amply repaid this by producing ~~22/22/~~ bream, tench, roach and pike for the table. It will be remembered that Chaucer's franklin had "many a breem and many a luce in stewe." Fifteenth century evidence reveals the existence of highly organised channels for obtaining stocks of breeding fish, and the organisation of the industry in the early fourteenth century was such as to suggest that these channels may well have existed by this date.
- iv) Material for the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries suggests
 - a) the need for careful arrangements in the construction of dams since this involved encroachment on another's land;
 - b) fish production organised on a commercial basis, raising a variety of fish, particularly bream, roach and tench, but also pike and eels;
 - c) finally, the profits from fish production were clearly sufficient and predictable enough to warrant both the investment of capital in the construction and maintenance of ponds, and the risking of a substantial sum of money on the leasing of a pond, with no absolute certainty of a return.

Two major problems must remain unanswered; firstly, how typical or atypical was Tanworth with its large quantity of ponds (Figure 49), and secondly, what were the markets for the fish produced? The answer to the first problem lies to a certain extent in the position of Tanworth in Western

Arden as a whole; it was unusual in that it was one of a number of manors where seigniorial policy permitted a large degree of freedom to develop; this inevitably had economic repercussions. The quantity of ponds in Tanworth is without doubt (Figure 36) to be associated with the emergence of a class of small-landowners and well-to-do peasants described in Chapter 6. Evidence available for Solihull and parts of Wotton Wawen suggests that they may be as numerous there, but on those manors more firmly under seigniorial control fewer ponds might be expected, and the Coleshill evidence suggests this generalisation to be valid, as does that for Baddesley Clinton.

Any discussion of the markets for the fish must at this stage necessarily be based on little evidence. Both the Tanworth acquittal of 1316 and the Lapworth agreement suggest the presence of a group of middlemen, and the name John le Fisscher of Warwick is evocative.³⁹ In all probability the major market was to be found amongst the local small lords and peasantry, men who could not afford their own ponds, and it is significant that of the four men owing money to de Sydenhale, two, Robert de Crowenhale and William Wodard are Tanworth men, and the John de Pesham involved in the Lapworth agreement was a Rowington quarry owner.⁴⁰

Finally, it would perhaps be a mistake to overemphasise the commercial aspects of fish production. The bulk of ponds were for producing fish for home use, but it is nevertheless clear that it was the practice to sell off periodically any surplus, the Bishop of Worcester was clearly doing this, and the item of income from the demesne fishponds recorded in the extents can only be interpreted in this light. The presence of this important domestic industry is a reflection of both the inland location, and the freer conditions prevailing in Arden.

Footnotes.

- 1) Vide M.W. Beresford and J.K.S. St. Joseph, Medieval England: an aerial survey (1958), and A.H. Allcroft, Earthwork of England (1908), Chapter XIV.
- 3) The Inquisitions post mortem are listed in Appendix IIB.
- 4) The translation of this charter is by no means easy, the critical phrase being "Licencian firmandi quodam stegnum", but both Mrs. E. Berry and Mrs. E. Gooder are of the opinion that the construction of a dam is implied.
- 5) Archer collection, Stratford upon Avon, T. a164, c.1300, where the "mill of Benetford" was mentioned. Benetford lay just below the dam of Betlesworth Great Pool.
- 6) Ibid, T.32, c.1204-20.
B.M. Add. Mss. 28024, 102r.
- 7) The normal word used in the charters for a fishpond is vivarium, which as Kosminsky pointed out (Studies, p. 47) is frequently misread vinarium, a vineyard. The term means "a place where live creatures are kept", and hence can also be applied to a park. The context, however, usually makes the meaning clear. The word "stagnum", meaning "a pond" seems also to be used to imply a fishpond.
- 8) In a number of medieval overflow channels the author has noticed a "terrace" feature, suggesting that some incision of the stream has taken place in the post-medieval period, a topic worthy of closer examination.
- 9) A.H. Oswald, "Interim Report on Excavations at Wesley Castle, 1955-60", Trans. Birmingham Archaeological Society, Vol. 78 (1962), pp. 61-85, where a general

description of the archaeological context of such a site is given.

- 10) Vide B.K. Roberts, "Moated Sites in Midland England", Trans. Birmingham Archaeological Society, Vol. 80, (1965), p. 29.
- 11) Vide A. Oswald and G.S. Taylor, "Durrance Moat, Upton Warren, Worcestershire", Trans. Birmingham Archaeological Society, Vol. 79 (1964), pp. 61-75.
- 12) V.C.H. Warwickshire, Vol. II, pp. 379-382, where it is stated that the Great Mere was 111 acres in extent. Vide A. Sorrell, Living History (1965), pp. 66-7, for an excellent reconstruction of this great castle.
- 13) I. Walton, The Complete Angler (1653), p. 270.
- 14) J. Mortimer, The Whole Art of Husbandry (1721), pp. 185-188.
- 15) Puddled clay has been worked, frequently by foot, with water until it is smooth and of homogeneous consistency. It was then spread upon the bottom of moats or pools to render them watertight.
- 16) Ex. inf. Mr. Muntz, Leosowes Farm, Tanworth.
- 17) M. Hollings, "The Red Book of Worcester", Worcester Historical Society (1934-50).
- 18) R.H. Hilton, "Ministers' Accounts of the Warwickshire Estates of the Duke of Clarence, 1479-80", Dugdale Society, Vol. XXI, (1952).
- 19) Tanks of this type are to be found in A.H. Allcroft, op.cit. A fine set of store tanks are to be found near Nuneaton, SK/355920. The author is indebted to Mr. S.C. Clark for showing him many fishponds in the Nuneaton area.

- 20) Vide supra. note 11.
- 21) Field-work, by the author and others, would seem to confirm that fishponds were more numerous in Arden than in the older settled zones.
- 22) J. Mortimer, op.cit.
- 23) Stratford Birthplace Library, Baddesley Account Rolls, Nos. 799-805.
- 24) The only "ghirford" listed in the Oxford Dictionary of English Place Names is in Norfolk, which seems hardly likely to be the one mentioned in the Baddesley accounts. The "Alston" may, however, be Alstone in Gloucestershire.
- 25) J. Mortimer, op.cit.
- 26) Gervase Markham, The Pleasures of Princes (1614) p. 36.
- 27) R. Vaughan, Most Approved and Long Experienced Water-Works (1610), p. 126. A most charming book, largely concerned with irrigating meadowland.
- 28) M. Hollings, op.cit.
- 29) Archer Collection, Stratford upon Avon, Solihull rentals, 1349.
- 30) P.R.O. Anct. Deeds. E.40/11597. The author is indebted to Mrs. E. Berry for helping him with the translation of this document.
- 31) I. Walton, op.cit. p. 142.
- 32) SP16/165690.
- 33) M. Hollings, op.cit.
- 34) Calendar of Close Rolls, Henry III Vols. I-XIV, Edward II Vols. II and IV.

- 35) The author is indebted to Mr. M. Stedman for the loan of a photostat of the 1591 map of Feckenham in the British Museum. The tanks at Kenilworth are marked on the 2½" O.S. map, SP27/283719.
- 36) These thorns may well have been used in a way comparable to the faggotts described by Walton, cited earlier in this chapter.
- 37) Many moated sites in the Midlands have produced traces of oysters, perhaps from Colchester, while as early as 1267 the Black Friars of Warwick were bringing herrings from Warwick (V.C.H. Warwickshire, Vol. II, p. 102).
- 38) op.cit.
- 39) P. Styles, in "Sir Simon Archer", Dugdale Society, Occasional Papers, No. 6 (1946) comments (p. 29) on a scrap of gossip which Dugdale obtained from Henry Ferrars of Baddesley Clinton, namely that Thomas Hawkins alias Fisher, who bought the Priory at Warwick early in Elizabeth's reign, received his second name because his father had sold fish in Warwick market !
- 40) L.F. Salzman, Building in England (1952), Appendix B, Document 77.

Part III. Conclusions and Retrospect.

CONCLUSIONS.

Three principal stages of analysis can be used in this conclusion; first, from the systematic studies of the regional patterns of land-ownership, colonisation, manorial structure, population, settlement forms, field patterns and physical geography a number of specific conclusions can be formulated concerning the progress and nature of the colonising movement within Western Arden between the eleventh and mid-fourteenth centuries:

Chapters 1 and 2, in addition to providing a general background to the study, were orientated towards providing an explanatory description of certain early references to the Arden area, and suggest that in origin Arden was a remote wooded zone, largely by-passed by the main waves of Anglo-Saxon colonisation, but which was nevertheless, possibly as early as the eighth century, subdivided and appropriated to various lordships whose centres lay within the early settled regions. Thus, the administrative geography of Western Arden in the period 1086 - 1350 had developed as the result of a long history of settlement in which township, parish and manor had, as early as 1086, already become inextricably mixed, but whose boundaries contained within them relics of the former administrative systems.

Chapter 3 presented evidence which indicated that in the period 1086 - 1350, on at least some manors in Western Arden, a deliberate policy of encouraging colonists by offering waste land on very favourable terms was followed. How widespread was this policy can only be guessed, but in view of the fact that by the thirteenth century the ownership of the waste was undoubtedly vested in the lord of the manor, and that there is ample evidence to postulate within this period a vigorous expansion of settlement and improved and occupied land, not only upon those manors for which detailed material survives but all over Western Arden, it is reasonable to conclude that such policies were common. Nevertheless, the movement took a variety of forms, and sharp contrasts were visible between manors under lay and ecclesiastical control, and

manors on the plateau surfaces and in the valleys of the Blythe, Alne and Avon.

It was the presence of large reserves of waste land, settled with seigniorial encouragement, which resulted in a substantial increase in the population of Western Arden between 1086 and 1350, while the concessions lords were compelled to offer settlers led to the early development of a money economy and to the predominance of personal freedom. Such conditions were ideal for the appearance of a vigorous land market, and it was in areas such as Arden, where the processes of fragmentation, of agglomeration, and of exchange implied by a land market provided an opportunity for social mobility, that the enterprising peasant could look towards new horizons and new opportunities.

Chapters 5 and 6 examined a number of specific holdings in considerable detail so as to demonstrate the complexity underlying the generalisations of the previous two chapters. Chapter 5 discussed the upper crust of the "peasant" landowners, a group which merged easily with the small knightly tenants. These "small landowners" seem to have been largely limited to those manors where extensive reserves of waste were available, and where the lord of the manor permitted a land market to develop freely, with the result that certain families were able to expand by means of the piecemeal engrossing of small holdings to create sub-manors. These holdings were distinct in that they were not normally dependent upon a servile labour force, and must have comprised relatively compact farm units being worked at a profit by family and hired labour. The sources of the capital that these men were able to invest in land must for the moment remain a mystery. Significantly, these small landowners were not concerned with the creation of new land but expanded their holdings by the acquisition of viable units.

Chapter 6 comprised an examination of a sample group of peasant holdings from which a number of conclusions may be formulated; first, the importance of the common fields in the initial stages of colonisation; the new land was at first appurtenant to holdings within these, then, as the thirteenth century passed, and the new lands became viable, there was a movement away from the old nuclei of settlement. Secondly, as a result of the absorption of small holdings by the small landowners and wealthy peasantry there was a trend towards the creation of larger more

compact farm units, and the emergence of a stronger social and economic differentiation of the peasantry.

Chapter 7 discussed the various settlement forms within Western Arden, and suggested that the nucleations represented the primary settlements within the area, and were closely related to the areas of common field. It was concluded that in origin the primary settlements consisted initially of hamlets or small villages associated with a limited extent of common field land, the site frequently being on or adjacent to an extent of somewhat lighter soil. The Norman Conquest, with the resultant changes in political, economic and social circumstances, arrested the development of this particular form, and the period between 1086 and 1350 was characterised by the establishment of isolated farmsteads, frequently moated in the case of the small landowners and wealthier peasants, together with small hamlet settlements termed "greens" which represented the farms and cottages of small freemen and cottars clustered at a favourable point. There is also some evidence for urban colonisation in the form of three attempts to plant boroughs.

Finally Chapters 8 and 9 examined the economic basis of the movement using three stages of analysis; first, the general distribution of agricultural wealth as revealed by various valuations, ^{was investigated} from which it was concluded that although these did indicate the development of the area between 1086 and 1350, in detail the evidence was too variable to permit any but the most general conclusions; secondly, certain units of agricultural production were discussed, principally the demesne farms and the village field systems. The former exhibited great variations in size and character, tending to be larger on those manors, both lay and ecclesiastical, where freedom was more limited.

From an examination of the common fields it was concluded that the variations in the form and extent of these was a function of the period of colonisation; where common fields were early established they were likely to have persisted and even expanded during the later Middle Ages, finally being enclosed in the post-medieval period. In contrast, where late settlement took place, common fields took the form of small nuclear cores, in themselves relatively early established, and these were frequently subject to early enclosure. Once again the late eleventh

and early twelfth centuries seem to be the critical transition period prior to which communal clearing was normal, but after which the expansion of common arable only took place where it was already firmly established.

Finally, it was concluded that although the economy of the area was based upon subsistence grain husbandry within the common fields and several closes, in view of the large amounts of common pasture available it is not surprising that stock production may have formed an important source of profit for lord, small landowner, and peasant, a fact which may account for the relatively large amounts of capital available to the two latter groups, for as the final chapter demonstrated both groups were able and willing to invest some of this in a luxury domestic industry, fish production.

The second stage of analysis must attempt to explain what factors primarily control the regional variations of the features thus systematically examined. Three factors appear to be critical in explaining these regional variations in the character of the colonising movement;

- i). first, the physical potentialities of the area, factors which although not over-riding cannot be ignored, for example, ^{one recalls} the broad contrasts between the manors of the plateau surfaces of Western Arden, and those of the valleys to the north and south;
- ii). secondly, settlement history, the character and extent of the initial penetration, and the degree of development achieved by 1086, important because the century after this date seems to mark the critical transition period between two major facets of the colonisation. These two factors in combination influenced the amount of waste land which survived into the early thirteenth century. The development of this waste was in turn
- iii). powerfully affected by the third and final factor, the degree of manorialisation and the character of the lordship, lay or ecclesiastical, together with the policy of the lord towards a given manor, a factor which may exhibit both short and long term variations.

The final stage of analysis is to produce a synthesis of the cause and effect relationships within Western Arden that have been revealed by this study, and to demonstrate how the interaction of these three principle

factors gives rise to the varying character of the colonising movement within Western Arden. This synthesis is presented as the final conclusion to this thesis.

When using the varied and miscellaneous material of local history the reconstruction of sharply defined cross-sections across time is not a practical possibility, neither is the techniques of comparing two such cross-sections. In this study, the technique adopted has been to use the more general, more comprehensive evidence to establish datum lines, thin cross-sections, which serve as points of reference for a series of detailed systematic studies through time of various facets of the society, economy and landscape of the Middle Ages. The aim has been to present a detailed analysis of a selection of the available evidence, within a defined region and period of time, and unity has been given by the selection of a specific theme. Thus, while at no point has a deliberate, comprehensive reconstruction across time been attempted, by developing the evidence around a central focus, the theme of colonisation, it has proved possible to demonstrate both the nature and changing character of the medieval landscape, together with the associated economic organisations and social patterns, and the interaction of the systematic phenomena within the selected region.

The study is not only presented as an exercise in historical regional geography, in view of the special problems raised by the particular source material used, it is also presented as an exercise in methodology. On the one hand, an attempt has been made, within a defined area and period, to unite the techniques of historical mapping based upon relatively general but comprehensive documents, developed by Pelham and Darby, with the studies of settlement forms, field systems and landscape patterns of systematic human geography. The result is a complex pattern of generalisation and detail which probably contains within it something of the reality of the Middle Ages. On the other hand, a new techniques of analysing and utilising a particularly intractable form of documentary evidence has been devised, but this technique, as a consequence of the exceedingly detailed nature of this source material, only assumes significance to the historical geographer when viewed as part of the wider picture formulated from the more general evidence.

It is now necessary as a final stage of the analysis to attempt to gather together the threads of the investigation, and present a comprehensive view of the regional personality of Western Arden in the period 1086 to 1350. Such a view must strive to bring clarity and co-ordination into a discussion which in its detail has constantly had to reckon with obscurities, contradictions and gaps.

The eleventh to the early fourteenth centuries saw a transformation of the landscape of Western Arden. A gross increase in population numbers during this period resulted in pressure on land which led to the expansion of the cultivated area at the expense of the surviving woodland and waste. Two distinct phases of agricultural colonisation can be recognised; an early phase, characterised by communal organisation, common arable fields and nucleated settlements, and a later phase, characterised by individual enterprise, enclosure and dispersed farmsteads.

The early phase, discussed rather briefly in the introduction, and obliquely in later chapters, is not the principal focus of this study, but was vitally important in that it saw the establishment of nucleated settlements and common open fields in the Avon valley and Feldon of south Warwickshire, together with small nuclear areas of common field within Arden. The communal character of these settlements resulted in a community where collective outweighed individual farming, while another consequence of early settlement was that in those areas where it took place, social differentiation between the aristocratic landowner and the working peasant established itself most fully. Thus, within those parts of Arden where relatively early settlement took place nucleated settlements associated with common fields are found, together with the "classic" manor, an estate with a demesne or home farm worked to some degree by the labour services of villein tenants, who numerically formed the more important members of the community.

The later colonisation movement differed from this early expansion in that it lacked a co-operative character. As a result of the Norman Conquest seigniorial privilege had crystallised, so that by the late twelfth century the lord had asserted his right to the sole ownership of the waste, and although custom was at first able to limit his actions,

the waste became a source of manorial profit. Where a large territory lay open to settlement there was thus room for a definite seigniorial policy. Clearing became a matter of private initiative, encouraged by the lord, and the assarts and clearings, instead of being assimilated into the existing open field arrangements became holdings in severalty yielding a money rent payable by the individual colonist.

Unless there was grave pressure of population, manorial lords with a considerable amount of woodland and waste on their hands would almost certainly need to offer some inducement to settlers; they would in any case be fairly willing to make concessions, as some return upon the spare land at their disposal would be preferable to none. These concessions took the form of a less rigid application of the manorial regime, more especially the grant of free status with the liability to only a small rent either in money, kind, or both. Labour services, even when they were demanded, were, in contrast to the early settled zone of south Warwickshire, of small importance and trivial in nature, and it is probable that the lord himself benefitted from the reliable cash income derived from the rents paid by the colonists. The conditions of the settlers can at first have been by no means easy, but the lessening of the social and economic burdens made settlement an attractive proposition.

The results of these seigniorial concessions were twofold; directly, there was movement, both out from the old established nuclei within Arden, and into Arden from less favoured areas; indirectly, the freedom conceded to the settlers led to the full and open development of a vigorous land market in which both several, and, eventually, common field land were involved. Dealings in this land market produced fairly rapidly during the thirteenth century a "peasant aristocracy" within the manorial community, while the tendency towards sub-division as land changed hands went hand in hand with the opposite and even stronger tendency towards consolidation, particularly by the more enterprising individuals, with the result that the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries saw a steady increase in the size of peasant holdings as the smaller units were gradually amalgamated.

Within any one township the social, economic and tenurial patterns which had developed by the early fourteenth century, together with the

actual cultural landscape, were the result of four interconnected factors, the physical potentialities of the township, the history of settlement, the degree and character of the manorialisation, and the policy of individual lords. In those townships where in 1086 settlement was already relatively extensive, although severalties were created in the twelfth, thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, the movement had comparatively little effect upon the social structure of the population, and the existing field arrangements were sufficiently firmly established to persist, indeed the common arable may even have been extended by co-operative activity. However, it is clear that in some circumstances land taken from the waste in severalty was later sub-divided as the result of alienation by sale, lease and gift to produce a landscape feature which, when sub-divided on the basis of plough-strips, was indistinguishable in terms of form from the other culturae of the village open field system. In contrast, in those townships where settlement in 1086 was limited or virtually absent the colonising movement tended to produce a society that was dominated by freeholders, and field systems in which severalty and enclosure were the main features, and in which any open field core was gradually eliminated, or became only an insignificant part of the agrarian organisation. Without doubt these contrasts reflect situation, in the former case situation in the Blythe, Alne or Avon valleys, or in the latter case situation upon the plateau surfaces of central Arden.

In addition to these two broad contrasts, it is clear that a distinction must be made between the townships under ecclesiastical control and those under lay control, for it was only a manor under lay control which saw the full development of personal freedom and the rise of the small landowner class described in this essay.

The peculiarities of Western Arden were not only confined to settlement patterns, field systems, and tenurial and social arrangements, but also extended into the realm of the economy. Such evidence as is available suggests that the economy of the area was based on true mixed farming, and the agrarian arrangements which depended upon the several close, together with the abundant common pastures, had a flexibility that was absent from the areas dominated by the rigid routine of communal

cultivation. It is probable that the pastoral element of the economy was an important source of income at all levels of society, and this may account for the relatively large amounts of capital which were available for re-investment by the small landowners and peasantry in land or such luxuries as domestic fishponds.

RETROSPECT.

The formal conclusions provide no assessment of the value of the technique of charter analysis developed in this study, and at the risk of prolonging an already long thesis, a few comments must be made.

In practical terms a complex card index is probably the best way of dealing with a body of material such as the Archer charters, and, time consuming as this process is, if the whole collection could be dealt with in this way, charters, surveys, rentals, and court rolls, far more reliable results could be obtained. There is no substitute for a complete and comprehensive breakdown of all the material available before beginning a synthesis, and it seems to the author that results could be obtained more quickly by using a system of punched cards which could be sorted mechanically. This is an interesting field for investigation.

Such a process of analysis inevitably introduces methodological problems, and the author is convinced that this type of study must be approached retrospectively to obtain the best results; the immense value of the work on eighteenth century Warwickshire by D.J. Pannett has been amply demonstrated above. By working retrospectively it is, at least theoretically, possible to trace the landownership patterns appearing on the Tithe map back to their ultimate origins, and then use this study as a framework for examining the evolution of the cultural landscapes of the past. The author has done some tentative experiments with rental correlation diagrams, and the approach seems promising.

A second possibility lies in the introduction of more purely statistical methods of analysis, but a major difficulty seems to be the exceedingly variable character of the surviving sample.

This type of analysis raises two further questions; first, from the viewpoint of the historical geographer the picture produced is excessively detailed; secondly, there is the problem of the value of such work in the field of historical geography. Will it in fact produce results that are worthwhile in terms of the effort involved? In answer to the first problem, the author feels that there is a need for conclusions based upon work in depth, for only in this way can the

processes of social and economic change within a given area and landscape be fully understood. The present study illustrates the difficulty; it is long, exceedingly long, in spite of the fact that many facets of the period have been ignored, and many problems glossed over without evaluating all the evidence. Nevertheless, it is the author's view that had the detailed study of Tanworth not been made, parallel to the more general study of Western Arden, it would have been impossible to assess the heterogeneous source material used in the latter case. For example, the few charters from Solihull suggesting deliberate colonisation are only significant in the light of the Tanworth series.

The second problem introduces wider horizons, A detailed study opens many fields of investigation, and historical geography is but one facet of a wider picture and wider problems; for example, it would be valuable to study the present soils of Tanworth parish in relation to the history of occupation, and so assess the influence of man as a pedogenic factor within the Arden area; an examination of the old land surfaces to be found beneath dated earthworks, moated sites, dams and hedgebanks could reveal much about vegetation history in the Middle Ages; a detailed examination of the relationship between the character of rents and holdings could throw much light upon the significance of variations in the incidence of service on land; and finally, the possibility of detailed researches on settlement sites using both archaeological and geographical techniques becomes practicable.

In short, the method seems applicable to a long term project involving team work, and should, to obtain the maximum results, be linked with archaeological, biogeographical, and pure historical research.

BIBLIOGRAPHY.

This bibliography classifies the primary manuscript and printed sources which have been used in this study. The details of the secondary authorities consulted are in the footnotes at the end of each chapter.

The Archer Collection in the Birthplace Library at Stratford upon Avon must stand in a class of its own, and no attempt will be made to list each item separately as details have already been given in the Introduction and the footnotes.

1. Charters.

Page 32 of the Introduction lists the four major collections of charters used in addition to the Archer material. The following sources have also been utilised:

F.C. Wellstood (ed.), "Warwickshire Feet of Fines, 1195-1284", Dugdale Society, Vol. XI (1932).

E. Stokes and L. Drucker (eds.), "Warwickshire Feet of Fines, 1234-1345", Dugdale Society, Vol. XV (1939).

J.H. Bloom, Notes relating to the Hundred of Barlichway, chiefly from private documents, Birmingham Reference Library, No. 190303.

Ibid, Hemlingford Hundred, No. 185955.

The de Beauchamp Cartulary, British Museum, Additional Ms. 28.024.

Dugdale, Sir William, Monasticon Anglicanum, ed. Caley J, Ellis H, and Bandinel B. (1317 - 1330).

2. Extents and Surveys.

Inquisitions post mortem, Public Record Office, listed in Appendix II B.

M. Hollings (ed), "The Red Book of Worcester", Worcestershire Historical Society, (1934 - 1950).

B. Lees (ed) "Records of the Templars in England", British Academy, Vol. IX (1935).

L.B. Larking "The Knights Hospitaller in England", Camden Society, Vol. LXV (1857).

3. Taxation Lists.

S. Ayscough and Caley J. Taxatio Ecclesiastica Angliae et Walliae

et Walliae Auctotitate Papae Nicholai IV. circe 1291, Record Commission (1802).

G. Vanderzee (ed.), Nonarum Inquisitiones in Curia Scaccarii, Record Commission (1802).

W. Carter and E.A. Foy, "The Warwickshire Lay Subsidy Roll of 1327", Midland Record Society, Vols. I - VI, Supplement (1899).

Anonymous, Historical Records of the City of Coventry, Vol I (c.1339-40), Birmingham Reference Library 297838.

4. Miscellaneous.

Victoria County History for Warwickshire - all vols. (Volume I contains the Domesday account.)

H. Hall, The Red Book of the EXchequer, Rolls Series, Vol. 99.

Bodleian Library, Mss. Top. Warwickshire, c1, c2, d1, and d2.

J. Ryland, Records of Rowington, 2 vols., (1896), "Row Rec."

J. Ryland, Records of Wroxall Abbey and Manor, (1903), "Row Wrox."

R.H. Hilton (ed), "Minister's Accounts of the Warwickshire Estates of the Duke of Clarence, 1479-80", Dugdale Society, Vol. XXI (1952).

Calendar of Charter Rolls (1903 -27), 6 vols.

Calendar of Close Rolls (1900-1938), various volumes.

The Book of Fees, 3 vols. (1921-31).

Wellstood Manuscripts, Stratford upon Avon, Birthplace Library.

E.G. Wheeler Galton, Claverdon (1934), Warwick County Record Office, Typescript and Manuscript copy.

Public Record Office, Rentals and Surveys, No. 697 (Wroxall).

Sir William Dugdale, The Antiquities of Warwickshire, ed. Thomas (1730).