

### *The Making of the New Forest*

THE publication of a new history of Hampshire reminds us that some attempt ought to be made to arrive at the facts as to the making of the New Forest. As the story runs, the death of William Rufus in the forest was said to be a judgment of heaven, because his father had driven out the inhabitants, ruined the churches, and reduced a flourishing district to a waste to make room for deer. So say all the annalists of the twelfth century, some with more rhetoric than others; and as to the devastation the general histories down to Mr. Freeman have followed them. But the local writers, Warner and Lewis and Mudie, Mr. Wise and Mr. Wilks, argue that this was a mistake or a calumny, for it does not agree with the Chronicle or with Domesday or with geology, nor does any annalist say a word under the Conqueror's own reign of such evictions.<sup>1</sup> They say that the barren soil, the Domesday names generally ending in -hurst, -wood, or -ley, the light assessment to geld in Edward's day, and the low average value of the ploughland prove that the New Forest district was always poor and thinly inhabited. They say, further, that churches were not destroyed; that only the woodland of each manor, not the arable, was taken for the forest; and that the inhabitants were left to plough their lands in peace: for the Chronicle is silent; there are no ruins to be found of churches or villages; Milford and Brockenhurst both had churches in 1086, while two others at Hordle and Boldre were built soon afterwards; forests were generally dotted, though not thickly, with hamlets; and Domesday expressly mentions a certain number of inhabitants still left in the New Forest. On some of this evidence we cannot build much. The soil of the forest is poor, but it varies, and for primitive farmers a light soil always had compensations. The names are woodland names, but that may point rather to late settlement than to the population in 1065-80. Other forests

<sup>1</sup> They seem to have half persuaded Mr. Round, but he admits 'some enforced migration' of the husbandmen. *Victoria Hist. of Hampshire*, i. 412; Gough's *Camden*, p. 129; Warner's *Hampshire*, i. (pt. 2), 37; Percival Lewis's *Historical Inquiry on Forest*, pp. 41, 167; Wise's *New Forest*, p. 20. Freeman's final views are given in the *Norman Conquest*, postscript to 2nd ed. of vol. iv. (1876), p. 858.

contained inhabitants, but this forest was distinguished above the others and may have had none.

For positive evidence we must depend upon Domesday, but the treatment of Domesday by the local historians is not satisfactory. Warner and Lewis, following Gough, tabulate the manors affected by the forest, showing the total assessment (they treat it as area) reduced<sup>2</sup> from 212½ hides to 72½, and the total value from 338*l.* to 133*l.*, a reduction in each case of about two-thirds, while in many manors both assessment and value entirely disappear. Then they quietly put these large reductions on one side, and working on individual entries, which tell us that in some places the woodland was absorbed in the forest and in others part of the arable or meadow was left outside it, they go on happily to argue that only woodland was taken for the forest and very little harm was done to any one. The two sections of their Domesday evidence do not hang together, and they make no real attempt to connect them, or to distinguish between total and partial afforestation, while Mr. Wise boldly ignores the figures altogether, saying merely that 'two-thirds of the district was afforested.' The question has more than a local interest, for it touches both the character of William and the character of our twelfth-century authorities, of whom some hard things have been said in this matter; let us see if it is not possible to get better evidence from Domesday by classifying the entries.

The district may be roughly treated as a square bounded on the west by the Avon, on the south and east by the coast and Southampton Water, and on the north by the county boundary. The Domesday map places the villages mainly on the outer edge of the square.<sup>3</sup> Some lie in the north-eastern corner.<sup>4</sup> In the north-western corner is a group of manors all called Truham, now Fritham. There is a village to every mile down the Avon from Fordingbridge to Thuinam (Christchurch), and a broad band of

<sup>2</sup> Lewis has 217 and 72½. This reduction was not all due to afforestation, for some of the T.R.E. hides were transferred to the Isle of Wight, e.g. 18 at Ringwood, and some released by favour, e.g. at Depedene and Mintestede, and probably also to Cola, the huntsman, at Langelie (50, b, 2, contrast another Langelie four places lower) and Adelingham, where 20 hogs can hardly cover 3 hides (50, a, 2).

<sup>3</sup> This is best shown by Mr. Round's Domesday map in the *Victoria History*. The northern side of the figure is really much shorter than the southern. Except one Fawley, 41, b, 2, possibly duplicating 51, a, 1, and one Sway, 44, a, 1, the forest villages, which form Bovre, Rodedic, and (most of) Rodbridge hundred, are grouped on 51, a, b, overflowing backwards to 50, b. The Avon and other villages affected in Egheiete, Sirlei, and Fordingbridge hundreds (except Bistern and Crow, which were perhaps in Rodedic hundred) are given among the general lands of the king and others. See ff. 38-9; Avere, 44, b, 46, a, 1; Bichetone, Tibeslei, 46, a, 1; Ripley, 46, a, 2, 50, b, 1; Forde, 46, b, 2; Weringstone, 48, a, 2; Sopolie, 48, b, 2; Gerlei, 49, b, 1; Adelingham, 50, a, 2. Cantortune seems inserted at the end of 50, b, 2, because previously forgotten, or perhaps did not properly belong to Fordingbridge.

<sup>4</sup> Tatchbury, Netley, Testwood, Buckholt, Eling, Durley, Marchwood, Dibden.

villages about four miles wide along the south coast. It will be convenient to divide the last into two strips, calling those within two miles or so of the sea the coast villages and those further inland the Boldre-Fawley villages. The only Domesday villages not on the outer edge of the square are in a narrow strip running from Boldre northwards through the middle of the forest to Lyndhurst and Minstead. These we will call the middle or Lyndhurst villages.

In the middle of the forest, except in the Lyndhurst strip, there appear never to have been any villages. No Domesday names are to be found there, and if we examine the geological map we shall feel pretty certain that the ten or twelve unidentified manors lay, not in the middle, but like the known villages towards the outside. In the northern two-thirds of the district the surface is labelled 'Bagshot Beds.' In the southern third these are overlaid by 'Headon Beds.' These again are largely coated with gravel, which has however been cut through, wherever a brook runs down to the sea. On the Bagshot Beds we find no Domesday names, and we have proof that this is a matter of soil, not of position, for we find villages at Fritham and Netley in the north-west and north-east corners, where the Bagshot Beds are capped with other soil, and a projection of the Headon Beds runs up to Lyndhurst, with outlying patches at Minstead, which accounts for the narrow line of villages through the middle of the forest. Moreover the Domesday villages avoided other bad soil, for we find none on the big patch of gravel which reaches from the Beaulieu nearly to the Lymington River and includes Lymington or Beaulieu Heath. The site of nearly every known village not on the Avon was on the Headon Beds or the gravel, generally near a stream, and on the whole it is pretty clear that the middle of the forest, except the Lyndhurst strip, was always practically uninhabited.

The Avon villages and the coast villages and also Eling and Dibden on the east were affected by the afforestation only in part, probably the part which ran back furthest from the river and the sea. Of these villages we are told in Domesday that one, two, or three virgates or hides, or else the woodlands, were 'in the forest.' The entries are of this kind: 'A. holds Bermintune. It was assessed at 7 virgates. Now at 5 virgates, because the rest (or 'the woodland') is in the forest. There is land for 3 ploughs. One is in demesne, and 3 villeins and 3 bordiers have 2 ploughs. Value T.R.E. 40s. Now 20s. What the king has, 6s.' The assessments and valuations are reduced, but the villages remain with their villeins and ploughs, though not perhaps with quite so many as before or quite so flourishing. These villages were all on the outer edge. We may call the parts afforested the border forest, and these villages, as a whole, the border villages.

With the Boldre-Fawley villages, lying more inland, the Lyndhurst villages in the centre (except Brockenhurst), Fritham in the north-west, the north-eastern villages, and some dozen places which cannot now be found, it is different. These are described as being, except a few acres of meadow and an occasional ploughland, entirely in the forest.<sup>5</sup> Except for fragments left outside the forest at Minstead, Lyndhurst, and Fawley, the assessments of all these villages are wiped out, their values disappear, and no word is said in Domesday of any villein or bordier at work in them. The entries are of this type: 'B. held Childeest (Yaldhurst). It was assessed at 5 hides. Now it is' (or 'is wholly') 'in the forest, except 2 acres of meadow, which A. holds. There was land for 8 ploughs. The value was 8*l*.' What was the condi-

<sup>5</sup> The details T.R.E. of the villages in the main forest are as follows. The team lands starred are estimates, the D.B. figures being absent or referring to T.R.W. :-

*Southern or Boldre-Fawley Villages.*

—	Hid.	Car.	s.	—	Hid.	Car.	s.
Fawley . . . . .	2	[4]*	60	Boldre . . . . .	2	4	60
" . . . . .	1 $\frac{3}{4}$	12	50	Boldreford . . . . .	1	[2]*	200 ?
Hardley . . . . .	$\frac{3}{4}$	2	30	Pilley (3) . . . . .	2	4 ?	55
Gatewood . . . . .	2	5	45	Batramsley . . . . .	2	5	60
Otterwood . . . . .	2 $\frac{1}{4}$	5	51	Yaldhurst . . . . .	5	8	160
Hartford . . . . .	1	4	25	Wootton . . . . .	1	2	40
'Roweste' ? . . . . .	1	2	15	Ossemley . . . . .	2	4 ?	60

*Villages not identified.*

—	Hid.	Car.	s.	—	Hid.	Car.	s.
Achelle (2) . . . . .	1 $\frac{3}{4}$	6 ?	90	Cocherlei . . . . .	$\frac{2}{1}$	2	60
Selive . . . . .	3	8	200	Oxelle . . . . .	2	4	40
Alwintune . . . . .	2	4	100	Wigarestun . . . . .	1	2	5 ?
Bile (2) . . . . .	2	4	80	Slacham . . . . .	$\frac{1}{2}$	1	25
Sanhest . . . . .	$\frac{1}{2}$	2	20	Nameless (2) . . . . .	$\frac{1}{4}$	2	27 $\frac{1}{2}$

*N.E. and N.W. Villages.*

—	Hid.	Car.	s.	—	Hid.	Car.	s.
Tatchbury . . . . .	2	[4]*	40	Buckholt . . . . .	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	6	100
Netley (2) . . . . .	$\frac{3}{4}$	3	31	Fritham (6) . . . . .	2 $\frac{1}{4}$	17	270
Testwood . . . . .	1	[2]*	40	Bedcot . . . . .	$\frac{1}{2}$	1	20

*Middle or Lyndhurst Villages.*

—	Hid.	Car.	s.	—	Hid.	Car.	s.
Minstead . . . . .	3 $\frac{1}{2}$	[7]*	160	Brockenhurst . . . . .	(see below)		
Lyndhurst . . . . .	2	[6]*	120	Brockley . . . . .	2	6	20 ?
Greatnam . . . . .	1	[2]*	40	Hinkelsley . . . . .	$\frac{1}{2}$	2	20

There was left in 1086: at Fawley, 1 virg. 1 car., 15s.; at Minstead, 2 virg. 1 car., 20s.; at Lyndhurst, 1 virg., 10s.; at Testwood,  $\frac{1}{4}$  virg., 3s; at Batramsley,  $\frac{1}{2}$  virg. The Brockenhurst entry is exceptional—T.R.E. 1 hid., T.R.W.  $\frac{1}{2}$  hid. In demesne 1 plough and 6 bordiers and 4 slaves with 2 $\frac{1}{2}$  ploughs. A church and woodland of 20 hogs. Value T.R.E. 40s. and afterwards and now 4*l*.

tion in 1065 of these villages, which were thus absorbed in what we may call the main forest? The Boldre-Fawley villages were spread over a strip more than ten miles long by two wide, say 12,000 to 15,000 acres. But from this we must deduct some 4,000 acres between the Beaulieu and Lymington Rivers, in which there were no villages, leaving about 10,000 acres. In these villages Domesday mentions some 60 ploughlands, which would represent, at only 100 acres apiece, about 6,000 acres of arable, more than half of the whole area. This is not a ridiculous proportion, which would be increased if any of the unidentified manors lay, as is probable, in this strip of country. The average value of a ploughland in Hants is over 20s. In many of the villages taken into the main forest the ploughlands were worth only 10s. to 15s., perhaps really a good bit less, for a considerable part of the T.R.E. valuations probably came from swine. Much of the land was therefore, as geology has told us, poor.

What do we learn of the population? In the Avon villages Domesday gives on the average about four, and in the coast villages about three, villeins and bordiers to a working plough in 1086, and we may fairly assume that this proportion, which is about the average for England, held good in 1065 in the rest of the district. Now, allowing for gaps in the record, the villages absorbed by the main forest had altogether in 1065 some 150 ploughlands, so that, taking three men to a plough, these villages presumably contained, or might have contained, from 450 to 500 villeins and bordiers, giving, say, 2,000 men, women, and children as about the number at which we may probably estimate the agricultural population in 1065 of the district afterwards occupied by the main forest. This estimate allows nothing for slaves or personal retainers, or men working under the villeins; it only represents the occupiers of land, in whom alone, apart from churches and churchmen, the authorities or the chroniclers were likely to take much interest. The total may not seem large to us, but there were among these villages a score with four, six, or eight ploughlands, and we know from Domesday that a village with five ploughlands and twelve or fifteen families was a respectable village in the eleventh century in any county in England.

What happened to these five hundred families? We can infer nothing from the absence of ruins, for in this country the houses would certainly, and the Saxon churches very likely, be of wood. The villages of Edward's day stood, as we have seen, on the edges of the main forest or in the Lyndhurst strip, where any foundations or other earth-marks would be smothered by the signs of more modern habitation. As to the churches at Fording-bridge, Ringwood, Holdenhurst, Milton, Hordle, Fawley, and Eling, the forest only took part of these and other Avon and

coast manors ; in these villages much, if not most, of the population remained, and no doubt also the churches. A church was left in the main forest at Brockenhurst, but that seems in other ways an exceptional manor ; and we do not know the history of the church built later at Boldre, where enclosure began very early.

The annalists say that the inhabitants of the forest were driven out, and the statement seems, as to the main forest, to be confirmed by Domesday. In no manor, either on f. 51 or on f. 39, which is said to be 'wholly in the forest' or simply 'in the forest,' is mention made of any villein or bordier or of any value in 1086, and it is because the land was in the forest that there is no value. The very first entry on f. 51 runs thus : 'The king held and holds 1 hide in Achelie. Then it was assessed at 1 hide, now at nothing. T.R.E. and afterwards the value was 50s., now it is in the forest.' The bishop's entries which follow are similar. It is not merely because the land afforested passed from private hands to the king that the value in 1086 drops out, for it equally drops out at Achelie, which was held by the king before afforestation. As to the ploughlands the evidence is even stronger. Again and again in the main forest entries we have the unusual phrase 'there *was* land for b ploughs.' Surely there *is* in 1086 no land fit for ploughing.<sup>6</sup> It can hardly be argued that the ploughs and values were only gone from the record, not from the land, and that men or ploughs or values taken 'into the forest,' being no more available for taxation present or future, went altogether out of the Domesday world, for that does not agree with the compiler's practice in other forest entries on the same page. While for lands taken into the main forest no *valet* is given at all, in most of the partially afforested manors on f. 51 we read that the value of 'what the king has' (in the forest) is 6s., or 4s., or even 2s.

In the king's lands on f. 39 we hear something of the villeins. At Linhest, once two hides, 'there is nothing now but two bordiers' on one virgate. At Slacham, 'when Ralf de Limesi received it, there *were* three villeins with one plough ; it *was* worth 25s.' Surely the villeins are gone in 1086? Eight lines further the survey carefully records 1½ acre of meadow, yet there is no word of a villein. At Minstead and at Fawley, which have one ploughland apiece with some men and value in 1086, these plough-

<sup>6</sup> In Fordingbridge hundred, on f. 39, and in the first four entries (king and bishop) on f. 51 we have the common form 'terra est b car.' The compiler may well have hesitated to change it, for the actual land was still there. But after that out of thirty entries of land taken entirely into the forest twenty-six have either 'terra fuit' or simply 'terra b car.,' which is in Hants equally unusual. In four cases—Bocolt, Gatingeorde, one Truham, and Nutlei—the compiler slips back to 'terra est ;' but it is so easy to slip back to the common form. None of the translators mark these differences correctly.

lands, men, and values clearly represent, not the land taken into the forest, but that left outside it.

The absence of T.R.W. valuations in the main forest is further emphasised by the changes from one formula to another. Let *f* represent the manors entirely 'in the forest,' and *c* the manors on the coast, afforested only in part. Let *t* stand for descriptions, such as 'there was land for 3 ploughs, the value was 40s.,' without any mention of villeins or T.R.W. value; let *x* represent descriptions of the type 'there is land for 4 ploughs, 3 villeins and 4 bordiers have 3 ploughs, value T.R.E. 40s., now 20s., *what the king has 6s.*;' and let *v* represent similar descriptions, but without the final clause in italics. Now let us take the lands of Earl Roger, which seem carefully described. The places succeed each other thus: *c c c f f c c c c c c c c*; the corresponding descriptions are *x x v t t x v x x x x x x*. Going on down the page we have manors *c c f f f c f* and descriptions *x x t t t t v t*. Wherever in successive entries there is here a change from partial to complete afforestation, or *vice versa*, there is a corresponding change in the description; *t* always corresponds to *f* and to *f* only. We may also particularly notice the number of cases (*x*) among the partially afforested manors in which a value is put on 'what the king has' in the forest. There is everything to justify the natural inference that the absence of any mention of men or of value in 1086 in a whole class, the whole of the main forest entries, does imply the actual absence in 1086 of any men or value. If the ploughs of thirty villages were working peacefully within the limits of the main forest, some of them in the very middle of it, why should a tradition of devastation attach to this forest and not to others? There is always a certain danger in drawing inferences from the silence of Domesday, and it may be possible to devise explanations which would in one way or another reconcile all these entries with the existence of a population in the main forest in 1086, for there is no positive statement in Domesday that any villeins were evicted. But we should hardly expect such a statement, and short of this the entries for the main forest, taken in a plain straightforward way, entirely agree with the tradition that the ground was cleared of its inhabitants.

The Domesday holdings which Mr. Wise cites as in the forest amount in the main forest to very little.<sup>7</sup> Most of his cases are

<sup>7</sup> Brockenhurst proves little except that the owner was a favoured person, which is confirmed by the four previous entries. Some of Mr. Wise's references (pp. 26-8) to D.B. are misleading. As proof that 'in the heart of the forest the villeins and bordiers still worked as before' he refers to Lyndhurst; but the entry (39, a, 1) says, 'There is nothing there now but two bordiers; value now 10s.; T.R.E. 6l.' He entirely misquotes Minstead, turning 'terra' into 'woods.' He says that Saulf still held land at Batramsley, and Aluric at Oxley, but it was in each case only four acres of meadow left out of two hides (51, b, 2).

partially afforested manors on the Avon or on the coast. Others are holdings of two, four, or six acres of meadow, specially excepted from the forest, which probably do not imply even one house. Others are held by foresters. Brockenhurst seems to have been a specially favoured spot; it had in 1086  $3\frac{1}{2}$  ploughs, villeins, 80s. value, and a church; but this only emphasises the absence of ploughs, men, and value in other entries. The other arable holdings embedded in the main forest are one virgate held by a forester at Lyndhurst out of two hides,  $\frac{1}{2}$  hide with four bordiers at Minstead out of  $3\frac{1}{2}$ ,  $\frac{1}{4}$  hide at Fawley out of  $3\frac{3}{4}$ , and  $\frac{1}{4}$  virgate at Testwood, of which all but Lyndhurst are on the outer edge. The value left in these villages was 48s. out of 21*l*. A forester also held  $\frac{1}{2}$  virgate at Batramsley. Excluding Brockenhurst and some scattered bits of meadow, Domesday gives in the main forest in 1086 only  $1\frac{1}{16}$  hide, 3 or 4 ploughlands, and 48s. out of 57 hides covering some 150 ploughlands, valued at 121*l*. There is nothing here to interfere with the previous evidence or with the conclusion that William did (with slight exceptions) clear off the villeins in the main forest and turn the arable into waste. On the contrary the mention of these holdings, and these only, in 1086 strongly supports such a conclusion. In 1065 Fawley and Minstead were good-sized villages; why is one ploughland, and one only, given to each in 1086, unless the rest was waste? What other sense can we attach to such phrases as this at Pistelei and a dozen other places on f. 51: 'Now it is in the forest, except 2 (or 4 or 6) acres of meadow, which A. holds'? If there was no change in the condition of lands taken into the forest, why are these scraps of meadow specially excepted? It cannot be merely that A. was a free tenant, for Domesday does not neglect villeins. The  $\frac{1}{2}$  virg. at Batramsley was not even held by the former owner, but by a forester; while at Lyndhurst, once valued at 6*l*., we have the positive statement of Domesday, 'There is there now nothing but two bordiers.'

If it be said that these villages cannot have been swept away in 1086, because some of them survive to the present day, the answer is that many have not survived, and that for the survival of the others Domesday appears to furnish a reason. Achelie, Sclive, Alwintune, Bile, Sanhest, Cocherlei, Oxelie, Roweste, Wigareston, Slacham are not identified,<sup>8</sup> or very doubtfully, by the joint efforts of

<sup>8</sup> There is a Rowdown and Rollstone (? Rowestedon) Farm near Fawley, an Oxley's Coppice near Otterwood, a Sandydown near Boldre, a Cockley Hill in Mr. Wise's map west of Eyworth. But these are only guesses. Bile, with 8 a. meadow, may also stand for an existing name. Sclive can hardly be, as Mr. Moody suggests, (High)cliff, separated from the main forest by Hubborn, Hinton, Bashley, and Milton. Perhaps it has lost a letter; can it be Setley or Shirley Holmes, near Boldre, or Shirley, in Ripley, which is spelt Schele in 1300 (Lewis, p. 176)? All these sites are similar in position and (except the last) in soil to the identified villages.



Mr. Moody and Mr. Round, though five of them had four or more ploughlands in 1065. Of those that can still be placed, Brockley with six ploughlands became a tithing of the originally much smaller Brockenhurst. Buckholt near Dibden is not on the map. Greatnam near Lyndhurst is a wood. Hinkelsley is only a house. Otterwood and Gatewood, near Exbury, with five ploughlands each, Yaldhurst (Childeest) near Lymington with eight, and Hartford near Beaulieu are only farms, perhaps comparatively modern, for none of them is mentioned in the claims of 1670. The names would be preserved by the natural features in which they originated, and there was always the chance of a forester's house. Wooton was only a farm in the uncorrected map of 1876. Only Minstead, Lyndhurst, Brockenhurst, Fawley, and Boldre are given by the map in anything but the smallest type. Of these the first four had something special to keep them alive, for in each of them there was a certain quantity of arable not taken into the forest, while at Boldre<sup>9</sup> enclosures appear to have been made very early. Domesday seems to carry the evidence even further. Of the identified manors four had arable, and Boldre, Pilley, Batramsley, Wooton, Yaldhurst, and Ossemley had pieces of meadow not taken into the forest. On the other hand, in the semi-extinct Buckholt, Hartford, Otterwood, Gatewood, Hinkelsley, and Greatnam, and in eight of the ten lost villages, absolutely nothing was left outside the forest. Hardley alone really survived without meadow. It certainly looks as if survival depended mainly on there being some scrap of land which was not 'in the forest,' to which the name could attach and on which a cottage or two could later be built, all land in the forest being absolutely cleared. Within the limits of the main forest the taxation of 1291 gives no church (besides Beaulieu) except at Fawley, which was early taken out of the forest, at Minstead with a chapel at Lyndhurst, and at Boldre with a chapel at Brockenhurst.

So far we have been dealing with the main forest; what happened in the border forest taken from the villages on the Avon and the coast and from Eling and Dibden is not very clear. The woodland (not implying trees) appears to have been taken, and with it a good many ploughlands and houses, either scattered in the woodland, as at Hordle and Thuinam,<sup>10</sup> or adjoining it, but Domesday does not enable us to say how many. The assessment of the border manors is reduced in all by some 50 hides, which on the analogy of other entries might represent, if it were all due to loss of arable, about 100 ploughlands and three times that number of families. But this estimate is too high, for some of the reduction was probably given

<sup>9</sup> Woodward's *Hist. of Hampshire*, iii. 44.

<sup>10</sup> In the woodland of Thuinam 'there were T.R.E. 5 villeins with 3 ploughs; it is valued at 12l. 10s.' In that of Hordel 'there were dwelling 6 men; it is worth 60s.'

as compensation for woodland.<sup>11</sup> In the border manors the actual villages, with a good part, generally the greater part, of the arable, seem to have been left out of the forest,<sup>12</sup> being in most, though perhaps not in all cases, left outside its outer limit.<sup>13</sup> Some three-quarters therefore of the inhabitants in the border villages were left in comparative peace, and probably retained rights of common over the parts afforested. There were sixty villeins and bordiers on the lands taken into the forest at Ringwood, Holdenhurst, Christchurch (Thuinam), Hordle, and Eling, and possibly there may have been in all as many as 150 to 250 families, or, say, 500 to 1,000 persons, on the lands absorbed in the border forest, but the fate of these families cannot be determined with any certainty from the Domesday evidence; <sup>14</sup> perhaps they were not all treated alike. The border forest is distinguished from the rest by the values given in Domesday to the land after afforestation, but we cannot tell how much of these values came from men and how much from pannage. Swine were certainly not here excluded. Some disturbance in the outskirts of the forest would not be objected to, for the foresters would like the deer kept well to the inside.

The story which Domesday seems to tell us of the forest is this. William found in a corner of Hampshire 75,000 acres practically uninhabited. Woodland and moor stretched without a break from

<sup>11</sup> Lentune is reduced from 1 hide to  $\frac{1}{2}$ , 'because the woodland is in the forest.' In Avere (46, a, 1), Weringetone (48, a, 2), Sopelie (48, b, 2), Mildetune (50, b, 2), and William of Eu's manor on 51, a, 2, the number of hides 'in the forest' is less than the total reduction, leaving something to represent loss of woodland; but it seems to count for nothing at Avere (44, b, 1), Forde (46, b, 2), and Riple (46, a, 2; 50, b, 1).

<sup>12</sup> In a third of these manors, however, the hidage was reduced by about one-half, occasionally more.

<sup>13</sup> The woodland taken may in some cases have been detached from the village to which it belonged. Holeest (Holdenhurst) is two miles west of the Avon, and some coast villages seem cut off from the forest by other manors.

<sup>14</sup> On f. 39 in 4 hides afforested at Holeest 'there were dwelling T.R.E. 13 villeins, &c.; woodland for 129 hogs;' all which 'is appraised at 12*l.* 10s.' In 7 (? 3) hides at Ringwood 'there dwelled 14 villeins, &c.; woodland for 189 hogs;' all which 'is worth 7*l.* 10s. by tale.' Like entries at Thuinam and Hordle are quoted above in note 10. 'Erant' and 'manebant' suggest that the villeins were ejected, while 'appreciatur' and 'valet' point the other way. Possibly the tenses mean nothing, being merely statements of account to explain the difference between 1065-7 and 1086. In many cases (*e.g.* Ringwood and f. 51, *passim*) the value of 'what the king has' just makes up the difference between the valuations T.R.E. and T.R.W., but often it is not so. At Rocheford (46, a, 1) the woodland 'was worth 30s.,' but generally the value of lands afforested is given without a verb or by the possibly ambiguous 'val.' The scribe has great difficulty with his tenses in the forest; *e.g.* Ranulf Flambart 'ten[et]' 1 hide afforested in Bile (51, a, 2), and then immediately 'isdem R. tenuit' another hide in the same place. The sums given at Hordle and Ringwood might represent the hogs alone; for (50, b, 2; 51, b, 2) woodland of 10 hogs at Derleie stands for 7*s.*; of 20 hogs at Mildetune for 20*s.*; of 6 hogs at Esselei for 5*s.*; but at Edlinges (38, b, 2) 26*l.* is too much for 280 hogs, and (50, a, 2) 70*s.* at Adelingham for 20 hogs. The ploughlands will represent the arable of 1086, whether reduced, as at Fawley (41, b, 2) and Minstead, in the main forest, or left intact. The valuations 'post' seem in some cases to be after afforestation, *e.g.* Staneude (38, b, 2), Hordle, and Mintestede.

near the Avon between Fordingbridge and Ripley to Lyndhurst and Brockenhurst, and beyond Lyndhurst there was other moorland reaching down at one point to the Solent. Of these 75,000 acres he made a forest, if they were not a forest before. But he was not satisfied. To get more room or better feed for his deer he enlarged this forest by taking into it some twenty villages and a dozen hamlets, containing from 15,000 to 20,000 acres more than half arable, including not only the land of 20 ploughs in the middle of the forest running from Minstead to Brockenhurst and Hinkelsley, but also on the edges the land of some 20 ploughs round Fritham in the north-west corner, of some 15 ploughs at Buckholt, Testwood, Netley Marsh, and Tatchbury, in the north-east, of some 60 ploughs on the south between Wooton, Boldre, and Fawley, and of some 35 ploughs in villages now lost, but which probably lay mainly in the south. We cannot tell if these additions date from the time when he first used as a forest the 75,000 uninhabited acres, or if they were made later, but from these 150 ploughlands he cleared off the population, amounting to some 500 families, or about 2,000 men, women, and children. He thus formed what we have called the main forest, the limits of which corresponded roughly to the outer boundary of the present forest. Whether there was or was not an earlier Saxon forest in the centre of the district, these extensions seem well described by the continuator of William of Jumièges, who says that William 'destroyed many villages and churches to enlarge the forest.'<sup>15</sup> To protect the deer there were further annexed on the borders of this main forest other 10,000 to 20,000 acres, mainly woodland, but including probably 500 to 1,000 inhabitants, whose fate is doubtful.<sup>16</sup>

We have two other accounts which look more or less independent. Florence says that in this district, which before *incolis . . . et ecclesiis nitebat uberrime*, the men were driven out, the churches destroyed, and game only left. The force of a base Latin superlative is rather doubtful; to call the villages afforested rich would be strong, but the writer may perhaps have meant no more than 'full of men, churches, and produce,' which is no great exaggeration, if we apply it, as we have seen that it ought to be applied, not to the 75,000 uninhabited acres, but to the inhabited 20,000 acres of extension.

Orderic ought, as to the bare fact of devastation, to be a good

<sup>15</sup> *Multas villas et ecclesias propter eandem forestam amplificandam in circuitu ipsius destruxerat.* Twenty villages may well have had a dozen churches.

<sup>16</sup> The forest was later extended right up to the shore and the Avon stream (perambulation 8 Ed. I, Lewis, p. 173). But in the perambulation of 29 Ed. I all the border villages were thrown out again, and with them apparently those parts of them which had been taken by William to make the border forest. The outer boundary of the present forest takes in 92,000 acres (Lewis, p. 64), but Tatchbury, Netley and Fawley are now outside it.

witness, for in 1080-5 he was a boy in the household of Earl Roger, who had a dozen manors partly, and two wholly afforested. Of the details or extent of the devastation he would then know nothing, for he was only ten when he left England in 1085. He tells the tale with much more rhetoric; calls the district *populosa regio*; talks of careful cultivation by a *copiosa plebs*, who supplied Winchester with agricultural produce (*campestri ubertate*, perhaps pork<sup>17</sup>); and says that 'more than sixty parishes' were wasted. Apparently he, or his informant, does not distinguish between total and partial afforestation, and is counting the names, about sixty, entered in Domesday under the heading 'In Nova Foresta et circa eam.' He may have got his details from Winchester, but the story has decidedly grown. There is no phrase in Florence, and perhaps none in Orderic or the later annalists, which cannot in some way be interpreted so as to agree fairly with Domesday<sup>18</sup>—it is not clear that they gave any thought to the exact position of the wasted villages—but the general tone suggests that they took all the 95,000 acres afforested to have been inhabited, and the moderns have developed the suggestion freely. Against this the local historians are quite right to protest that the whole forest can never have been covered with villages. But the clearances, though limited, seem real enough, and by a mapless generation wasted villages along the north side and along the south side and through the middle of the forest might easily be taken to represent the district as a whole. Apparently the evictions were not, in the opinion of the annalists, so large, compared with the devastation caused by the Conquest in other parts, as to call for mention in summing up William's reign and character; but there was more than enough for men to say that his son's death in the forest was a judgment from heaven, a story which would specially appeal to the medieval historian. Too much stress has been laid on the silence of the Chronicle; a reference to these evictions would no doubt have fitted well with what it says of William's passion for hunting,<sup>19</sup> but the edition on which we depend for these years comes from Peterborough, and the compiler may have been thinking of forest grievances nearer home.

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<sup>17</sup> In 1220 there is talk of sending hogs from Bramshaw to the 'larderium' at Winchester (Woodward's *Hampshire*, iii. 39).

<sup>18</sup> William Rufus was by tradition killed between Minstead and Fritham. Perhaps even the churches said to be destroyed—thirty-six by Walter Mapes and twenty-two by Knighton—had their ultimate source in Domesday. It would be quite possible to count those manors on f. 51, a, b, which were taken entirely into the forest as thirty-six, and the larger ones as twenty-two.

<sup>19</sup> 'He set mickle deer frith and laid a law therewith that whosoever struck hart or hind should be blinded.' There seems no need to apply this with Mr. Freeman specially to the New Forest; the whole passage is in general terms. The Chronicle, Florence, and Orderic are all quoted at length in Freeman, 2nd ed. (1876), iv. 841, n. SS. Quotations from other writers are collected in Gough's *Camden*, i. 129.