

THE EVOLUTION OF THE HOLMESDALE.

NO. 3. THE MANOR OF SUNDRISH.¹

BY HERBERT W. KNOCKER, F.S.A.

Records. The following Manorial Records have survived :

A. **Lord Middleton's MSS.** Now in Sevenoaks Library.

1. c. 1258 et seq. A series of Rentals or Custumals.

The following are in the writer's hands :

B. **Loose rolls on parchment.**

2. 1394-1406. Court Rolls, 5 skins, "Sundrish".

3. 1411-1447. Reeves' Accounts, 16 skins, "Sundrish".

4. 1482-1493. Court Rolls, 8 skins, "Sundrish".

5. 1566-1588. Court Rolls, 13 skins, "Sundrish".

6. 1601-1760. Rentals and Estreat Rolls, 46 Rolls, "Sundrish Upland". Some of these are over nine feet in length.

7. 1647-1752. The like, 24 Rolls, "Sundrish Weald".

C. **Records on paper.**

8. 1502-1528. Steward's drafts of Rolls.

9. 1592-1626. The like.

10—12. 1729-1932. Court Rolls bound in three volumes.

The Manor Courts are still being held and entries in the last of the three volumes continue.

D. **A number of Title Deeds** of the Isley, Hyde and Amherst families and the usual Steward's waste consisting of administrative Manorial papers.

¹ Nos. 1 and 2 of this series will be found in *Arch. Cant.* vols. XXXI and XL.

It must be remembered that Sundrish lies within the Hundred of Codsheath and is or was held of the Honor or Manor of Otford. The Court Rolls of these other franchises contain some reference to Sundrish as do also the Subsidy Rolls and many other Records.

Scope. Some preliminary apology is due. The hope expressed in 1928 of an essay every year on one or other of the Kentish Manors within the writer's Stewardship has not been realised, but one suggestion then made shall be observed. This essay relates to the men of the Manor rather than the Lord. The Lord's title will not be traced.

Locality. Before commencing any analysis of the documents it will be well to state the writer's qualification and to indicate the geographical area under discussion and its name. The writer's connection with this Manor dates from about 1890, but the office of Steward had been previously held continuously since the year 1813 by members of the firm of solicitors at Sevenoaks, with which he became associated. Investigation has made it clear that Sundrish Manor extended from the boundary of Knockholt near the famous Beeches southwards to the Sussex border, a distance of nearly a dozen miles and that the Manor embraced the whole civil parish of Sundridge, much of Chiddingstone and part of Hever, thus covering an area of nearly eight thousand acres. It also became clear that the Sundrish holdings in Chiddingstone were not continuous but were interspersed with blocks of land from which no service was then due to Lord Amherst, nor probably had ever been due to his predecessors as Lords of Sundrish. As to the name, Domesday Book gives "Sundresse"; the Middleton Rentals prefer "Sunderesse"; the modern Manor records still keep the spelling "Sundrish", but the name of the Parish and village has for some time past been spelt "Sundridge". It will be convenient to retain Sundrish for the Manor throughout this essay, using Sundridge for the smaller area embraced by the Parish. As regards a Map—the diagram No. 5 opposite p. 18 in vol. XXXI should suffice to roughly indicate the

limits of the Manor. As to surviving landmarks, we may find included in Sundridge Place Farm the site of the Lord's Manor House with the Parish Church and Rectory adjoining. The site of the Pound and Cage may be traced just outside the Rectory gate.

Scheme. It is proposed to limit this paper to a glimpse of the Manor during three periods : First, the close of the 13th century, i.e. before the Black Death of 1349 ; secondly, the beginning of the 15th century being the period covered by the surviving Reeves' Accounts, and thirdly, the present time conveniently commencing with Lord Amherst's purchase in 1813. A short summary of the three periods under review will naturally include some reference to Domesday Book of 1086, but this is not to say that the scheme proposed will exhaust the material available. There is other essay matter for many special subjects including the Yoke as a unit of Communal aggregation and obligation and acknowledgment of free tenure with the Lord's right to enforce this as well as production of Title deeds at the Manor Court. There is also the question of the validity of recent Enclosure-grants of Manor Waste to be held by the customary tenure applicable to the older holdings of the Manor and no doubt many another point on which our Sundrish Rolls can furnish evidence.

Application. It must always be borne in mind that just as our modern records of Sundrish disclose a state of affairs very much the same as that presented by the modern Rolls of many another Manor in West Kent, so it may well be that these earlier records of Sundrish may present a picture of medieval social economy which was normal and as such applicable to the other Villes existing prior to the Black Death in West Kent. To what extent the Great Pestilence of 1349 actually disorganised land tenure in our County may be less clear. The writer has not yet traced any record of Sundrish proving a sudden heavy mortality either by accruer of many live heriots in 1349 or by many holdings escheating propter defectum sanguinis and being then

regranted on any new basis to a less number of holders than before. Further, no detailed analysis of the disappearance or survival of family surnames in Sundridge in and after 1349 has yet been attempted. Still less is the writer attempting the task of compiling a history of Sundridge Parish.

THE XIII CENTURY.

The Middleton MSS. To proceed with the Middleton MSS., the earliest Rent Rolls are for the most part undated and the stitching which now unites the membranes may be later than the date of compilation. The date of the first as well as the second is probably about 1258. The second is called a *Recognitio*, a *Recognisance* rather than a *Rental*, a record of an actual agreement between the Lord and his tenants as to their present and future obligations, the whole Court accepting for the whole Manor the return made by the twelve sworn Homagers.

In scope both records are probably limited to such part of the Manor as lies within the Sundrish Upland. One holding is described as lying in Chevening and one in Chiddingstone. But Chevening might conceivably be the sub-Manor of Chevening Place rather than the Parish if that sub-Manor then extended into Sundridge Parish. Quotations from the first rental are marked (a) those from the second (b).

Tenures. As regards the land and the tenures under which it was held several distinctions are recorded. The first and oldest classification may well be "Yokeland" and its opposite "Inland held by Inmen". There were Tenants in chief with, or without, Undermen and there were Tenants holding by deed, apparently opposed to those holding by custom.

Yokemen and Inmen. We read in (a)—"There are in the said ville nine Yokes and a half and half a virgate of land and each Yoke contains four virgates . . ."

As regards the difference between holders of Inland and of Yokeland, both owed works and cash payments, but it is

not clear that the Inman as such was included in the expression Tenant in Chief. He could hardly have had Undermen. As a holder of Inland he was probably paying dues heavier in proportion to the acreage held than the holder of Yoke-land. Both Rentals record—"When a Scutage shall happen (imposed presumably by the Crown or overlord on the Lord of the Manor) in the said Ville the Yokeland owes to discharge one half of it and the Inmen the other half." The Yokeland was the arable land. The Inmen holding Inland had probably evolved from the lowest Domesday class of Tenant. There is no suggestion in either Rental that they were serfs or that they were *ascripti glebae* (bound to the soil), but there is just one indication that their status may once have involved unlimited service to the Lord at his will, thus—"All the Inmen who are enfeoffed of demesne of the Lord without deeds owe to pick and store the apples of the Lord and to clear the corners of the Meadows of the Lord. And at the apple picking and storing they shall have food three times in the day but at the clearing of the corners of the Meadows they shall have nothing". (b.) Each of the two Rentals gives this in almost the same words. The holders of Inland are designated Inmen. Our Records do not give any one word describing the holders of the Yokeland. In logical sequence I suggest Yokemen and simultaneously I present to my fellow countrymen in general and to the Editors—hitherto misled—of the *New English Dictionary* in particular, a new discovery. This is nothing less than the true origin of the famous title which we all love, The Yeomen of Kent. I mean that the Yeomen of Kent are the Yoke-men of the Records of Sundrish and other Manors and that the two words are the same.

As regards Yokes, the *New English Dictionary* (Vol. X, Pt. II, 1928) gives appropriate references to Yokes in Kentish Manors such as Milton and quotes Hasted as suggesting that smaller Manors were frequently called Yokes. We learn that the Yoklet or Joclet is a small Manor or Farm but the Editor's statement that Yokel, though indicating a countryman is "of uncertain origin" might surely be

re-considered. Clown is quoted as a synonym for Yokel but the traditional association between Clown and Colonus is not noted.

As regards Inland, we are given appropriate quotations as early in date as 904 but Inman finds no place as yet in the Dictionary. It is sometimes assumed that Inland lay within the Village or close to the Lord's Manor House, as opposed to Outland lying on the fringes of the Manor. There seems no justification for this. The New English Dictionary gives the primitive meaning of Inn as a dwelling place. Inland may well be land so restricted in area that all of it was near the home and this home might be the Lord's Manor House but is it not probable that the home might be the Inman's home even though it stood on the very outskirts of the Manor? We may all agree that Inland had no place amongst the acre strips of the open arable fields.

Tenants in Chief and Undermen. The precise status of the Tenant in Chief's Underman is not so clear. Probably he was a man to whom the Lord's Tenant in Chief had sub-ineffed part of his own holding. The Underman's oath of fealty would be made to the Tenant in Chief and not to the Lord of the Manor. The names of these Undermen or their successors in title may well be found in the Rentals of sub-Manors such as Chiddingstone-Cobham and Chiddingstone-Burgherst both of which are held of Sundrish. Possibly, but less likely, the Undermen were landless men associated with the Tenants in Chief on whose land they dwelt and for whom they laboured.

Tenants by Deed. The expression "who hold of the Lord by Deed (Charta)" occurs several times in these Rentals. An almost similar expression is found in modern Court Rolls where the freeholder may be described as "holding of the Lord of the Manor as of his said Manor by free deed . . ." or "freely". Both these expressions relate to modes of alienation, and indicate that a sale could, and can, be accomplished by private deed between the

parties without any formality of surrender or admittance by the rod although acknowledgment of Tenure by the Purchaser may be demanded. There is no suggestion in the modern Court Roll that the freeholder's original tenure must have been created by an express grant by the Lord by *his* deed defining the services due.

The same meaning may perhaps attach to the references in these early Rentals, which in no instance expressly state that the holding is of the Lord by the Lord's deed. On the other hand it may be that holding of the Lord by deed implied in 1258 an original enfeoffment by deed by the Lord and carried with it exemption from services expressly excluded and possibly only involved liability for services expressly reserved. The Tenants holding by deed seem to have been a privileged body. The services reserved to the Lord by any deed executed by him may well have been less onerous than the customary services and the Lord may have received valuable consideration for his original grant. Other land held of the Manor by Tenants in Chief may have been freehold but so modified by custom that the Lord's rights and possibly the Tenant's title, were evidenced or perfected only by entries in the Lord's Court Roll. There is no mention of any Tenant holding "by copy of Court Roll at the will of the Lord." The Rentals disclose several privileges enjoyed by the Landholder who could plead that he held "by deed".

The following indicates one difference—"From each Tenant in Chief in his tenure the said Henry (the Lord) ought to have one hen at Christmas, and five eggs at Easter as well from the Undermen as from Tenants in Chief except those who hold of the Lord by deed and except (five named tenants) and their Undermen who are quit therefrom by inquisition of the Court". (b.)

Further "No one of the Tenants of the Lord who does not hold of the Lord by deed is able to marry his daughter without licence of the Lord, but for obtaining that licence he shall not give to the Lord more than two shillings". (a.) The origin of this *Merchet* (marriage licence fee) was no doubt

a fine claimed by the Lord on his Tenant's daughter marrying a husband who might take her from the Manor and so deprive the Lord of her services. By 1258 the fine was limited in amount but was apparently payable even if the husband was then, and continued to be, a Tenant of the woman's own Lord.

Further "All the Tenants of the Lord except those who hold by deed and except those who dwell in the Parish of Chiddingstone owe one mowing in Autumn for the Bedrip (a customary Harvest work) of the Lord for one day and the said mowers shall eat at the Lord's cost twice in the day and at one meal they are to have meat and beer". (b.) Other privileges were exemption from contribution to the Archbishop's Farm, from the Christmas Hen and from Egg Rents at Easter, from Ordrichespunde, mentioned later, and from certain miller's malt tolls which are hard to understand.

Classes of Renders. As regards money payments; apparently the Lord or the Ville paid Sheriff's Gift. The yearly total of this is sevenpence farthing in (a) and sixpence in (b).

Miss Cam in "The Hundred and the Hundred Rolls," (published 1930) quotes a number of instances of this render mentioned in the Hundred Rolls with slightly varying description and suggests that the origin of the payment was pre-Norman. The first Rental (a) suggests that each of three yokes (being one-third of the nine) paid twopence to the Lord and more from the half yoke and half virgate. The second Rental (b) mentions only three yokes each paying twopence thus making sixpence in all. Further, it is recorded that "the whole community of the Court owes to the Lord as yearly aid for the acquittance of the Farm of the Lord Archbishop two Marks—between the feast of St. Michael and the feast of All Saints—at the Lord's will except those who hold of the Lord by Deed". (b.) The total Farm is not mentioned.

As regards rents in Kind—eight Tenants rendered five ploughshares between them (b), another a tripod (b) and

another four horseshoes (b). The Rentals also mention rents of one pound of pepper (a) and the third part of one pound of Cummin (b).

The Heriot is described as the best Beast with the alternative in default of Three shillings and sixpence (a, b). We read also that all the Tenants of the Lord owe suit to the Lord's Court from three weeks to three weeks (a, b), and to the Lord's Mill while the Tenants of Sundridge Parish apparently paid additional tolls but the miller might not take more than one thirty-second part of the malt (b).

Tenants at Ovenden. There was yet another distinction based on the precise locality of the holding. The exemption from the Autumn Bedrip enjoyed by the Men of Chiddingstone has already been noted. The Rentals suggest that there were two main areas of open arable land in both of which the Lord himself had either scattered acre strips or self-contained arable fields; and that one of these areas lay between Ovenden and the River Darent (the Water coming from Brasted) and the other between the River and Ide Hill (Edythehelle).

The Manor Tenants holding land at Ovenden (Oven') (possibly strips scattered in the open fields) who "have a whole plough team (carucā) owe to plough of Benerthe (service with plough or cart) and to harrow two acres of land in winter and one acre of land in Lent and to call for the seed for this at the door of the Granary. And he who has half a plough team owes to plough and to harrow half as much and he who has more or less for a plough team owes to plough and to harrow more or less according to the proportion of beasts which he has for a plough team. And for each acre in Lent he ought to have food once on one day for three men. And for two acres of land in winter he shall similarly have food on one day for three men and then they shall eat meat and they shall have two dishes as well in winter as at Easter" (a, b)—all presumably at the cost of the Lord.

Tenants at Ide Hill. "In like manner concerning ploughing all the Tenants of the Lord between Edythehelle

and the Water coming from Brasted ought to do (ploughing) except that in Lent they owe to plough and to harrow two acres and in winter only one acre. And if in Lent in order to do this work they need to cross the aforesaid Water they shall plough only one acre and a half and at this work they may have food as the others above mentioned." (a.)

Ordrichespunde. There is a third block of Tenants who may represent a geographical area, and who are described as the Tenants "who owe rent for ordrichespunde and do not hold of the Lord by Deed." (a, b.) These Tenants seem to be specially burdened. No explanation is given of the word itself. All this class "owe for one virgate of land for Gavelherthe, to plough in winter one rood of land and to harrow and to call for the seed at the door of the Lord's granary. And moreover they owe to mow in Autumn one rood and to bind and carry in. And also they owe to mow one acre of Gavelrip and to bind and to leave the corn standing (in shocks) in the field. And moreover they owe to reap one rood of meadow and to collect and to carry (the hay) into the (Lord's) grange. And he who has more or less than one whole virgate, more or less he owes to plough, to harrow, to mow, to carry, to reap and to collect according to the quantity of his holding". (a, b.)

As regards this money, this "Pound" called Ordriche-spunde, the total amount in the Rental (a) is three shillings and threepence farthing, and in (b) Three shillings and sixpence farthing. This total is divided up (in b) into some eighteen separate shares shown in conjunction with the same number of assessed quit rents. Of the eighteen shares, one is Sevenpence which may be one-sixth, four are Threepence half-penny which may be one-twelfth and five are One penny three farthings which may be a twenty-fourth part, of Three shillings and sixpence. And Three shillings and sixpence may be the correct total amount of the "Pound" to be paid by the men of the Manor. It is, however, clear that the payment of any part of the Three shillings and sixpence indicated a special class of Tenant or Tenement and

involved as mentioned above special praedial services unless the payor happened to hold his land by deed. The extracts given above cover all the praedial services due to the Lord. The whole can scarcely have been any great hardship to the men of the Manor. The Summary gives the total yearly ploughing, reaping and mowing on the Lord's lands by all three classes of Tenants at 8s. 3r. 20p. (a, b).

I have translated Carucã as ploughteam rather than plough or plough land. The sense seems to need this. The word *suling* is not used in these Rentals.

The Services of the Men of the Manor. The Middleton Rolls include a third Rental also undated in which we get details allocating to each Tenant his proportion of the Sheriff's Gift and of the praedial services. The numbers of hens and eggs owing by each Tenant are given in a separate Rental. As a specimen we will extract the first entry. "Gilbert Aunsel's heirs hold two-third parts of one virgate. They owe therefor yearly (Quit rent) 25d. at the four terms, to wit, at Michaelmas 6d., at Christmas 6½d., at Easter 6d. and at the Feast of St. John the Baptist 6½d. For Ordrichespunde 5½d., at August Gules the third part of a farthing; And they owe to plough for gaval six feet and to call for the seed at the door of the (Lord's) granary and to harrow and to mow six feet and to carry and six feet as extra service; And to reap seven feet, to collect and to toss (the hay) and as extra service to find one man in Autumn; And if it so happen that the same heirs have a whole plough team then they owe to plough three acres of land in Winter and Lent and to call for the seed for this at the door of the granary and to harrow; And they owe to plough for fallow in summer the third part of one acre, And, if they have horses, to do carrying service at the will of the Lord where they are wont so to do; And for Sheriff's gift they owe two-thirds of one farthing." I think that the third part of a farthing payable at August Gules (Aug. 1st) may be a contribution to the Common Fine of 12d. mentioned below. The Rental

giving details of Rent-Hens follows and is stated to be taken "before Christmas in the 47th year". This date may place both this and the detailed Rental in 1263.

The services in some of the additional Rentals include the finding for the Lord of special labour, thus we read that the Heirs of Ralph Sacerste, who may have been the Sacristan, owed Rents 18½d. three hens, one medman, one dungman and one mower (b).

It is a little difficult to visualize the "6 feet" to be ploughed by Gilbert's Heirs and the similar areas to be ploughed by many other Tenants. Perhaps the best solution is to see here an arable field of the normal length of two hundred and twenty yards, "the furrow-long", in which lay acre strips of the Lord. If Gilbert's heirs owed to plough eight nine-inch furrows along the whole strip the obligation might perhaps be sufficiently clear to men of Sundrish Manor if the render were described as ploughing six feet. For how long they continued to do the work, is another matter. As we shall now see, the Reeves were by 1420 selling back to the Men of the Manor the services due by them at the actual market value or possibly at some value already prescribed or in process of prescription. And even before 1349 it may well be that, at Sundridge in West Kent, Tenants owing manual service could insist on compounding in money payments for the labour due from them.

For the most part these two Rentals mention only the names of the Tenants and their rents and, with half-a-dozen exceptions, the holdings are not given, unless we are to assume that personal names which include a geographical suffix show that the Tenants in question occupied the spot indicated by the added description. The Rental (b) gives some fifty-four separate yearly money quit rents payable by at least twice that number of persons. In many instances several parceners or heirs are stated to be jointly liable, a result doubtless of the rules of the Gavelkind Tenure under which the various properties were held. The totals of the quit rents given in the summaries are £6 7s. 10½d. in (a) and £6 16s. 1¾d. in Rental (b).

Manor Making. Some of the later Rentals show groups of Land holders under special headings, and the headings suggest or indicate that the Apuldrefeld family were buying up Rents and services from various sources. The inference is that Lords of sub-Manors held of Sundrish were selling rents due to themselves or alternatively that Lords of other Upland Manors in Kent were selling the services due from their own outlying Wealden areas to the Lord of Sundrish who was adding the payors en bloc to Sundrish Manor.

This might partly account for Sundrish Manor embracing so much of Chiddingstone Parish, but it is noticeable that there is no mention of Swine pannage nor of Danger nor of any distinctively Wealden renders such as might be expected.

THE XV CENTURY.

We now come to the surviving Reeves' accounts of 1411 to 1447. The preceding Court Rolls show clearly that Tenants were elected to the office of Reeve at the Manor Courts, once a year, probably in rotation and that when elected acceptance of the Office and Oath of Office were compulsory. In 1406 two Reeves were elected, probably the second was a vice Reeve and only acted if the first named became incapacitated. Both being then absent the entry concludes with the statement that the Court directed them to be distrained to accept the Office against the sitting of the next Court.

A Beadle for the Upland and a Beadle for the Weald were also elected, and they also being absent distress was ordered. As regards both Offices, men or women of position were apparently allowed to provide a deputy. The Roll of 1406 records a deputy sworn in lieu of the Tenant elected Beadle for the Weald. Sometimes the lands held by the Tenant elected are recorded but there is no indication as to whether only some particular lands were Reevewick and Beadlewick lands carrying liability to serve.

The subsequent Court Rolls are no more informing and the irregularity of the records suggests some irregularity of practice.

Before examining the Accounts it is well to remember what they really are and perhaps first of all what they are not. They are not those much fuller Ministers' Accounts whether of Bailiffs or Sergeants or other species of Estate Agents covering all details of a large enterprise. Our Reeves were none of these. They did not manage a large home farm for the Lord. There are no records of sales of live or dead stock from the Lord's farm, timber or underwood from the Lord's woods, or stone, bricks or tiles from the Lord's quarries or kilns. There is no record of building operations or repairs on the Lord's demesne.

Our Accountant at Sundrish is simply a Reeve elected for the year and accounting to the Lord for the rents and services due from the Men of the Manor. At the beginning he was probably a holder of Yoke land.

A Reeve's primary duty was to join the Manor plough, making up the communal team from its contributory factors and superintending its incessant labour on the Lord's arable acres. But that was not for long in Kent. By 1411 the obligatory labours of the Kentish Yokeman, possibly less onerous than in any other County, must have become largely a question of money payments and not heavy ones at that. We will consider two accounts as samples of the whole. In these several amounts end with "Halfpenny farthing and the sixth part of a farthing", or some similar expression. Fractions of a penny are disregarded in this essay.

If we look at the Account for the year ending at Michaelmas 8 Hen. V (1420) we find Lady Joan Clinton accounting by her Attorney John Bore, and we find her succeeded in 1421 by John Hasykerssh and his Attorney, John Medhurst. Both Accounts begin with an item for arrears left outstanding by John Knight, Reeve for 1418-19. Lady Joan got in £12 11s. 2d., and Medhurst's client collected 5s. 10d., of Knight's arrears as well as £10 13s. 8d., of Lady Joan's.

The suggestion is either that money was hard to come by or that Reeves took these things easily.

The next item in order is "Rents of Assize" or as we call them Quit rents. Each Account is debited with £30 13s. 0d. and this no doubt had been done for years—perhaps for centuries. It was the standard gross total annual value of the cash rents of Sundrish Manor irrespective of additions by way of new Rents or reductions on the ground of losses or mergers, but including a larger geographical area than Rentals (a) and (b).

This principle is found in most Ministers' accounts. The amount actually receivable might be quite different. It is strange that there are no New Rents in these Accounts. The inference is that no further wastes were being approved by the Tenants with the resulting new Rents accruing to the Lord.

The third item is "Customs sold". Nearly all the Hens and eggs and praedial services were being compounded for cash payments, being "sold back" to the Tenants as the expression goes. The items vary a little in the two Accounts. When the earlier gives the larger figures, these are quoted. The "Customs" include :

Half a cock, 1d.

187½ Hens at 3d. the hen.

205 Eggs at 6d. the hundred.

2 Ploughshares 3s.

1 Tripod 18d.

One pound of pepper 20d.

One pound of Cummin 4d.

11a. 3r. 5p. of Mowing Gavol at 14d. an acre.

3 acres of Byenerthe at 1s. each acre.

145½ Precations (Labour services) at 3d. each.

21½ Medmen (Mowers' services) at 1d. each.

2 Dongmen also at 1d. each.

Including an odd special item or so the Reeve debits himself with about £5 10s. 0d. for customs sold.

The Reeve's Accounts are endorsed with details of certain items. There are discrepancies but the details

confirm the only exceptions from the cash compositions. These in 1421 were the following items; one cock and twenty-seven hens delivered at the Lord's kitchen at Sundridge. 2a. 0r. 20p. 2 feet of Mowing Gavol and 2 Precations rendered to the Lord. All other Rents in kind and praedial Services are stated to be "sold".

The Pleas and Perquisites of the Manor Courts produce about £4 or £5. Bore's Account is debited with a gross total of £52 19s. 0d., and Medhurst's with £54 3s. 9d.

The first group of outgoings or deductions is for "Rents Resolute". The items are unvarying from year to year. We will set them out.

"Rents Resolute to the Court of Otford by the year £22 12s. 0d." This was the fixed "Farm" or Fee Farm Rent payable by the Lord of Sundrish to the Archbishop of Canterbury. At some date, possibly before 1086, the amount may have represented the full annual value of the Manor of Sundrish reserved to the Archbishop or previous Overlord on his original sub-infeoffment of Sundrish as a distinct Manor or Estate. The first Lord of Sundrish may have paid no purchase money or other consideration on his acquisition. In 1813 the figure is much higher.

"And paid to the Bailiff of the Liberty of Otford by the year for the Sheriff's Tourn, 20d." This is the Sheriff's Gift but is a considerable increase beyond the amount recorded in the earlier records.

"And in Rent Resolute to the Church of Sundridge for the tenement of Alan de Sundridge by the year 2s." The Lord must have acquired the property on which Alan had charged this charitable Rent Charge.

"And to the same Church for Romescot by the year 2d., and to the same Church for 1½ lbs. of wax by the year, 10d." These items explain themselves.

"And paid to the Court of Otford for remission of suit of Court there by the year, 12d. Total £22 17s. 8d."

This last item of 12d. was a Common Fine. Doubtless the men of Sundrish should have deputed a few of their number to attend the yearly Court and present this Common

Fine as the prescribed payment for the privilege of absence of the remaining men of Sundrish. The Court at Otford may have been the Archbishop's Manor Court or the Court for the Liberty of the Archbishop which may often have been convened at Otford. But Common Fines are much more usually payable by each Tithing or Borough in the Hundred, and the Archbishop may in 1420 have owned the Hundred Court of Codsheath and held it at Otford.

The next group of outgoings "Decay of Rents" covers rents no longer receivable by the Reeve and the reason is nearly always because the property out of which such rents were payable had become vested in the Lord by escheat, purchase or otherwise, or sometimes because the land lay waste. On this head Bore and Medhurst each claimed total deductions of 43s. 5d., and some items had clearly been first deducted very many years before, so long indeed that the identity of the lands may have been lost.

The next item is the wages of the Accountant, 26s. 8d. This suggests that though the Reeve may have served by a Deputy the Accounts were prepared by a professional man and that Bore and Medhurst may have been legal Practitioners.

The Accounts continue with

"the fee of John Wells Steward of the Court for this year 10s. and to the same for parchment bought for the Court Rolls and the cost of writing the same and the accounts for this year 16d. And to the same for making up this Account for this year, 2s. Total 13s. 4d."

The 1420 account saves fourpence on the parchment. Perhaps it was a smaller skin—all the Court Rolls for the period of these Reeves' accounts are now missing.

Both Accounts conclude with items for sums paid to or on account of the Lord. Bore admits that Lady Joan Clynton still owed £13 4s. 7d.

Both accounts include animals seized as live Heriots, probably sold back to their own stables, thus "a little ox sold, &c., 5s." or the animals are recorded as having been delivered by the Reeve to the Lord.

THE XIX CENTURY.

The modern description of the Manor may well be taken from the printed Auction Sale Particulars of 1812, now before me, when the Manor passed from the Hyde to the Amherst family. The property then offered for sale is described as the Manor House called "Sundrish Place" and 354 acres of land together with "the Ancient Paramount Manor of Sundrish, Ranging over several Mesne Manors, and a Country of nearly Fifty Miles in circumference, together with its Royalties, valuable Herriotts, Chief, Quit, Fee Farm and Other Rents, and Services, Courts, and Perquisites of Courts, Rights of Fishery and Sporting of every Denomination. . . There are about Two Hundred Tenants within, and who owe Suit and Service to the said Manor, many of them of the greatest Respectability".

The waste lands at Ide Hill and Goathurst Common were stated to then contain about seventy acres. Nearly all this has since been gradually enclosed by making small grants at successive Manor Courts.

The Manor was hardly a paramount Manor but so appears in the subsequent Conveyance of 1813 which states that the Manors of Chiddingstone, Hever and several other Mesne Manors or parts thereof were holden of it. The Income from the yearly quit rents is given in this Deed at £38 17s. 6d. The property included two pews in Sundrish Church.

It is stated in the Particulars that the Estate formed "Part of the Ancient Demesnes of the Family of the Hydes and whereon they resided in a Noble Stone Built Edifice, recently demolished, but of which the Cottage, Barn, Stables and external Offices, are the only existing Relics".

The description of the Lord's demesne in the Deed of 1813 includes a reference to "the Land lying next the Manor House heretofore enclosed with a pale fence and commonly called Sundrish Park containing about two hundred and forty-six acres more or less".

The meadow land is stated in the Particulars to be worth at least £6 an acre. The Purchaser is required to pay half the Sales Duty at 7d. in the £1. The purchase money was

£20,847 10s. 0d. The actual Conveyance states that the property was subject to a Fee Farm Rent of £32 12s. 0d. To redeem this and a further £2 11s. 4d. a capital sum of £704 was paid in 1819. It will be long before the Estate is likely to be sold again at this figure.

When we come to consider the Manor Courts, it may be noted that the Rolls of Richard the Second's time, 1394, show one Court "Sundrish" with no record as to the actual Homage sworn. As early as 1406 the Court is still "Sundrish" but the entries are grouped under marginal headings—"Weald" and "Upland"—suggesting that a separate Homage was even then being sworn for each of the two areas.

In 1483-5 the Court was sitting half-a-dozen times in the year. A few marginal titles introduce the word "Chiddingstone" as well as "Sundrish" suggesting that a Court was beginning at this period to be held in the Weald for the Wealden Tenants.

From 1556-1588 we get separate Homages, as many Tenants as nineteen being sworn for the Upland and six for the Weald in 1556, with distinct presentments by each Homage though both classes of Tenant attended the one Court. From 1627 to 1728 the Rolls are missing. By 1729 separate Courts were being held at differing dates for the Manor of Sundrish Upland and the Manor of Sundrish Weald precisely as if there had always been two Manors and this practice still continues. Similarly in 1729 "The Court Baron" supersedes the earlier style of "The Court". The dividing line between Upland and Weald runs East and West sufficiently far to the South to include within the Sundrish Upland the Furnace House and the Ivy House Farms lying in Chiddingstone Parish. It may have proved convenient for the men of Chiddingstone to attend a Court nearer their homes, otherwise the creation of an additional Manor seems unjustified. There is no record of any Court Leet jurisdiction.

As regards the administration of the Manor as the writer succeeded to it, there is no distinction of Tenures or services,

nor any trace of any Tenure by copy of Court Roll. All the tenants are recorded as Freeholders, Tenants in Chief of the Lord holding freely, by free deed. All hold by Fealty Suit of Court, Heriot, Relief and Quit Rent. The Oath of Fealty is not enforced. The Courts are now held at varying intervals of a few years or so. The Heriot is the best living animal wherever situate belonging to the outgoing Tenant and is due on death or alienation—one Heriot being claimed for each holding separately assessed to quit rent. In default of a living animal a dead heriot of three shillings and sixpence is payable. The Relief is similarly due from the incoming Tenant and is one year's quit Rent. The Quit Rent may represent about twopence per acre but much more for recent grants of waste near Goathurst Common. Some of the latter were expressly granted for garden ground only and are so restricted, building and quarrying being forbidden. Other services formerly due are not now rendered. These may have been expressly remitted by the Lord but were more probably lost by the Steward's neglect. The New Acts operating after 1925 have hardly touched a Manor such as Sundrish. Suit of Court remains as well as acknowledgment of Free Tenure by the incoming Tenant to perfect his title as against the Lord.

Can we now with these records to help us reconstruct any sort of picture of the Manor of Sundrish. If we begin with the Exchequer Domesday of 1086 we learn that the Manor answered for one Suling and a half, a low assessment as the Lord had and presumably needed three plough teams. The record discloses three classes of Men in 1086, Villans, Bordars and Slaves as against the two main classes of 1258, viz. the Tenants in Chief (with their Undermen) holding normally the arable Yokeland and the Inmen holding the Inland on the Lord's demesne.

By 1258 the Servi, Slaves, Serfs—call them what you will, had won through to an improved status; the Villani, the Yeomen of the Ville, may have suffered some reduction as compared with pre-conquest status, but both classes as well as the Bordarii had retained or secured

permanency of Tenure in return for services very precisely defined.

The population may by 1258 have doubled and by 1420 if not by 1258 the subdivision of holdings and the services arising thereout must have rendered the acceptance of a cash composition almost a matter of necessity.

As regards the state of the Manor itself. The great woods to the North may well have hung far down the Chalk hill from Cudham and Knockholt, while from the Pilgrims' road Southward to the 200 foot contour by the Darenth may well have been nearly all common arable fields, unfenced except while the crop was growing.

By the River side we may look for the common meadow including the eight enclosed acres of Domesday Book. South of the Main road at least to the 450 foot contour line we may look for more arable around the Lord's Hall and Church and it is possible that in 1086 the Village had more houses near the Church than it now has.

For the rest, in 1086 we may look for the great woods extending Southwards into the Wealden forest and in these woods roamed the swine which then produced yearly as many as sixty rent-hogs to the Lord of Sundrish. And steadily, as the centuries passed, at Ovenden, Dryhill and Norman Street in the Holmesdale and in the great Woods below Ide Hill grew up those homesteads some of which at a later date themselves acquired the status of sub-Manors. The Rentals of 1258 suggest that Ovenden, Henden, Somerden, Boreplace, Waterlake and others were then occupied agricultural centres held of Sundrish Manor, nor is there any reason to exclude their pre-Norman existence unless it be that the limits of the population recorded in Domesday Book will not suffice, with allowance for all omissions, to provide inhabitants.

A Church and three and a half Mills are duly recorded in 1086.

As regards the Common Fields, those followers of Elton who disclaim such things for Kent may note those Rentals among the Middleton MSS. which give descriptions

of holdings. The following are examples: "One acre in Longfurlong", "One acre in the Glebeland", "One acre in the Whiteland", "Half-an-acre in La Redeme in Oveney", "One acre of land lying in La Fryeborghe", "One acre of land lying in the West Field", "Two acres lying in the West Field".

It is difficult to read these descriptions and similar expressions in other records and deny that at some time at least there were extensive open Fields in our Kentish Manors wherein scattered unfenced acre strips were held by distinct individual owners.

In conclusion I wish to thank Dr. Gordon Ward of Sevenoaks, for procuring and placing at my disposal the Middleton MSS. and for his useful criticisms, and both him and Mr. Bernard F. Davis of Bromley, for help in translation.