

THE LATHE OF AYLESFORD IN 975.

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INTRODUCTION.

It chanced one day that the writer made a list of the manors which contributed to the upkeep of Rochester Bridge, as these are set out in the *Textus Roffensis*. It was noted that these places were not listed in any haphazard order but in the order of the Hundreds in which they were situated ; first of all those in one Hundred, then those in another, and so on. Since we have practically no record of the Hundreds of Kent, or of any other county, before 1086, and since the *Textus* list was clearly a hundred years or so older, it seemed worth while to follow up the clue. Hence this essay.

THE DOMESDAY LATHES AND HUNDREDS.

Our first comprehensive view of the administrative divisions of Saxon Kent is in the pages of the Domesday survey of 1086-7, although this was drawn up after twenty years of Norman influence. In it we find, in the first place, the Shire and the shire court meeting by custom at Pinnenden in mid-Kent. It was here, one supposes, that the Commissioners of the Conqueror came to receive those returns on which the Domesday Book was later based, and to add to them sworn evidence of the King's own rights in the county. Those who swore to these rights included " the men of the lathes of East Kent." These lathes were large subdivisions of the county, of which there were two in West Kent and five in the eastern division of the shire. In addition to these there was a small area freed from all call to other lathes, namely, the port of Sandwich which was a lathe and Hundred in itself (*V.C.H.*, iii., 261).

At a lower administrative level were the Hundreds, of which several were combined to make a lathe. Some of the

Hundreds were in turn split up into boroughs, which at a later date sometimes held their own courts. But the Hundreds, and not the lathes or boroughs, were the chief administrative sub-divisions of the county. Their courts were in direct relationship with those of the county, as is well shown in the Domesday dispute about Badlesmere. The men of the Hundred reported that this manor belonged to St. Augustine, while the tenant disputed this (*V.C.H.*, iii., 236). The shire court gave judgment that Badlesmere belonged to the Abbey in the time of King Edward and that the tenant's claim must be rejected (*V.C.H.*, iii., 246). This is an example of a case taken up from the Hundred to the shire court. The opposite procedure was also perfectly regular. As early as 1072 we have an example in the great case of Archbishop Lanfranc versus Bishop Odo concerning the stolen lands of the churches. A manuscript drawn up at the hearing of this case at Pinnenden has come down to us (Cotton, Aug. II. 36) and contains the words "Fecit archiepiscopus Lanfranchus alios clamores super episcopum et super Hugonem sed in hundretis debent diffiniri"—Archbishop Lanfranc made other claims on the Bishop and on Hugo but they ought to be settled in the Hundreds. This system of reference by the Hundred to the Shire and by the shire court to the Hundred seems to have been the normal procedure at the end of the Saxon period. It leaves no place for the intervention of any court of the lathe, nor have we any knowledge that courts were ever held for the great Domesday lathes of Kent. Nor do these lathes appear in our later history except as collecting areas for aids and subsidies, for the organization of the Militia, and for like purposes. It would seem that for certain purposes it was necessary for various Hundreds to act together but that these purposes were rarely if ever judicial or such as to require the holding of a lathe court. It is part of the purpose of this essay to show that the Hundreds of the Lathe of Aylesford were jointly responsible for the upkeep of Rochester Bridge, a burden too large for any single Hundred but yet not important enough to be a charge upon the whole county.

THE USE OF THE WORD LATHE.

We shall presently meet with two different areas for each of which we have no other name than "the lathe of Aylesford." This is unfortunate and makes it very necessary to seek for some idea as to what the Saxons meant when they used the word lathe. It appears first in a compound with the word *geoc* or *ioc*, meaning a yoke, the fourth part of a *suling*. Thus we have :

In A.D. 805.	An <i>geocled</i>	(B. 321).
In A.D. 811.	An <i>iocled</i>	(B. 332).
In A.D. 812.	An <i>ioclet</i>	(B. 341).

At a later period we have two latin forms of this compound :

In A.D. 875.	An <i>iocleta</i>	(B. 539).
In A.D. 946.	An <i>ivclaete</i>	(B. 813).

Domesday Book has some similar compounds of "lathe," such as *Wiwarlet*, but the Winchester scribes commonly preferred the objectionable latinization "lest" and even went so far, in their ignorance of all Saxon custom, as to speak of the "Lest of *Wiwarlet*." This word *Lest* has unhappily obtained a more modern currency for which it is difficult to find excuse, in publications which it would be discourteous to specify. But the *Domesday Monachorum*, in which we see more clearly the Anglo-Saxon of the original Hundred returns has always *Wiwarlaed*, *Limwarlaed*, etc. (*V.C.H.*, iii., 262).

In the Saxon charters the word occurs but rarely except in the compound already mentioned. In 975 we have, as will appear later, the word "laethe" used of the Hundred of *Eythorne* and of the manor of *Aylesford*. At the same period we meet with "laeth" in reference to what is quite probably, but not certainly, the Hundred of *Bromley*. These are Kent charters but there is also a single example of the use of this word in a Somerset charter (Kemble, 897) in which "threo motlaethu" means three lathe moots, the right to hold them being conceded to the town or manor of *Taunton*.

In post-conquest documents we have the Lathe of Dymchurch, a court held for a part of Romney Marsh and primarily concerned with the maintainance of sea walls, etc., in the northern half of the marsh. It had also, however, the very unusual privilege of appointing magistrates for the area. It is possible also that the familiar Court Leet held for view of frank pledge and for other purposes would have been called a Court Lathe by the Saxons. In the case of Romney Marsh it is the court itself which is called a lathe but in the expression Court Leet the second word would necessarily apply to a district and not to a court. This sort of application is also seen in the case of the Lathe of Hastings, known as the Rape of Hastings in Domesday Book. In connection with this we find the following expressions :

Ledtschet (lathe shot or scot)—Cal. Doc. in France, 42.

Coram le Ledh, and

Coram Lede apud Setelescumbe, and

Multis aliis de Hundredes et del ledh—(Hist. MSS.

Penshurst, i., 34, 39).

In other counties the word Lathe, or one very similar, occurs with fair frequency, for example, an estate near Norwich is called the Lathes in 1428 (Norfolk Arch. Soc., xv., 116) and in *Norfolk Place Names* (W. Rye) are listed Lath Street in Saxlingham and Leaths near Burnham Overly. No doubt similar examples could be added from other counties, although one cannot be sure that all are of the same origin. We may deduce from the evidence already brought forward that (1) any district without regard to the particular purpose for which it formed a unit might be called a lathe, and (2) that this name might also be used only for the court held for a particular district, or (3) it might be used indifferently for either the district or the court. In the county of Kent alone the following were at one time or another designated lathes, (a) the yokes, (b) the Hundreds, (c) the court of Romney level, (d) the great Domesday sub-divisions of the county, and (e) the town of Sandwich. There could scarcely be clearer evidence that the word Lathe did not originally imply

any specific sort of unit but merely a territorial division, or the court of that division, in which one of the many processes of government or taxation was at the time exercised.

THE SCHEDULE OF CONTRIBUTORS TO ROCHESTER BRIDGE.

There were nine piers to Rochester bridge and the contributors were arranged in groups according to the pier or piers for which they were responsible. Each group had to provide one or more piers, to set in position the necessary uprights, and to plank a stated part of the footway of the bridge itself. One group took two piers, every other group took only one. There are thus eight groups of contributors for the nine piers.

This method of arrangement persists throughout the various versions and emendations of the original Saxon schedule, which is to be found in the *Textus Roffensis* but not in Hearn's edition thereof. The full Saxon form is given by Birch (*Cart. Sax.*, 1322) and by Lambarde (*Perambulation of Kent*, edition of 1826, p. 347). The latter gives a translation. Birch (1321) gives also a latin version from the *Textus*. In a register of Christ Church, Canterbury, of the time of Prior Henry of Eastry (1285-1331) there is a copy of an amended version which perhaps dates from rather before his time. This is now among the Cotton MSS. in the British Museum (Galba E.4, fol. 20). Miss Janet Becker in her *Rochester Bridge*, 1387-1856, deals splendidly with the later history of the bridge, and she quotes a schedule of contributors of the year 1343, by which time the pre-conquest system was breaking down and several of the contributory manors could not be identified.

The following translation of the Saxon schedule is based upon that of Lambarde, but on certain doubtful points Miss Dorothy Whitelock has kindly given her views.

This is the bridge work at Rochester

Here are named the lands, the men whereof shall work.

First the bishop of the city taketh on the end, to make the land pier ; and three rods to plank and

three supports to place, which is (by contributions) from Borcestealle and from Cucelestane and from Frinondesbyrig and from Stoce.

Then the second pier belongs to Gyllingeham and to Caetham, and one rod to plank and three supports to place.

Then the third pier again belongs to the bishop, and two rods and a half to plank and three supports to place (by contributions) from Heallingan and from Troteseliue and from Meallingan and from Flote and from Stane and from Pinindene and from Falchenham.

Then is the fourth pier the King's, and three rods and a half to plank and three supports to place (by contributions) from Aeglesforda and from all that laethe that lieth thereto and from Ufanhulle and from Aclea and from the Smalanlande and from Cusintune and from Dudeslande and from Gisleardeslande and from Wuldeham and from Burhham and from Acclesse [here a whole line is erased in the original] and from Horstede and from Fearnlege and from Caerstane and from Cealce and from Hennhystae and from Aedune.

Then is the fifth pier the archbishop's, belonging to Wroteham and to Maegthanstane and to Wohringabyran and to Netlestede and to the two Pecchams and to Haeselholte and to Maeranwyrthe and to Lillanburnan and to Swanatune and to Offaham and to Dictune and to Westerham, and four rods to plank and three supports to place.

Then is the sixth pier belonging to Holinganburnan and to all that laethe, and four rods to plank and four supports to place.

Then is the seventh and the eighth pier belonging to Howaran lande to work, and four rods and a half to plank and six supports to place.

Then is the ninth pier the Archbishop's, which is the land pier at the west end, belonging to Flyote and to his Cliue and to Hehham and to Denetune and to Melantune and to Hludesdune and to Meapeham and to Snodilande and to Berlingan and and to Peadleswyrthe and all the men of the dens, and four rods to plank and three supports to place.

There are certain obvious errors of the copyist in this, for example, a reduplicated "and" in the last paragraph, and "four supports" for "three supports" (which is the number in other versions) in the care of Hollingbourne. Hennhystae is certainly Hennhyrst and Caerstane should be Taerstane. But the greatest difficulty arises from the fact that a whole line of the *Textus Roffensis* has been erased and thus certain names have been lost. These names are fortunately preserved in the version of Galba E.4, which fails, however, to record the interest of the King, and of his ancient lathe of Aylesford, in the pier in question. There follows a translation from the latin of Galba E.4 :

The fourth pier requires three supports and the planking of three rods, and this the men of Borgham ought to do from six sulings, and of Woldeham with Robert Biset and his partners and with Robert Neue from three sulings, of Achle one suling, of Henherste half a suling, of Honden the quarter part of one suling, of Cusinton half a suling, of Boueheld half a suling, of Echles 25 acres, of Therstan one suling, of Farlegh one suling, of Lose one suling, of Lillinton two sulings, of Stokebere two sulings, of Gliselarde-lond, of Sinelond, of Dulelond, of Lichebundelond, of Horsted, of Chelke.

It is clear that the spelling of several places in the above is very corrupt but we have four names which are not in the Saxon schedule and which may well be those which were erased. These are Lose (Loose), Lillinton (Linton), Stokebere (Stockenbury in E. Peckham) and Lichebundelond (not identified).

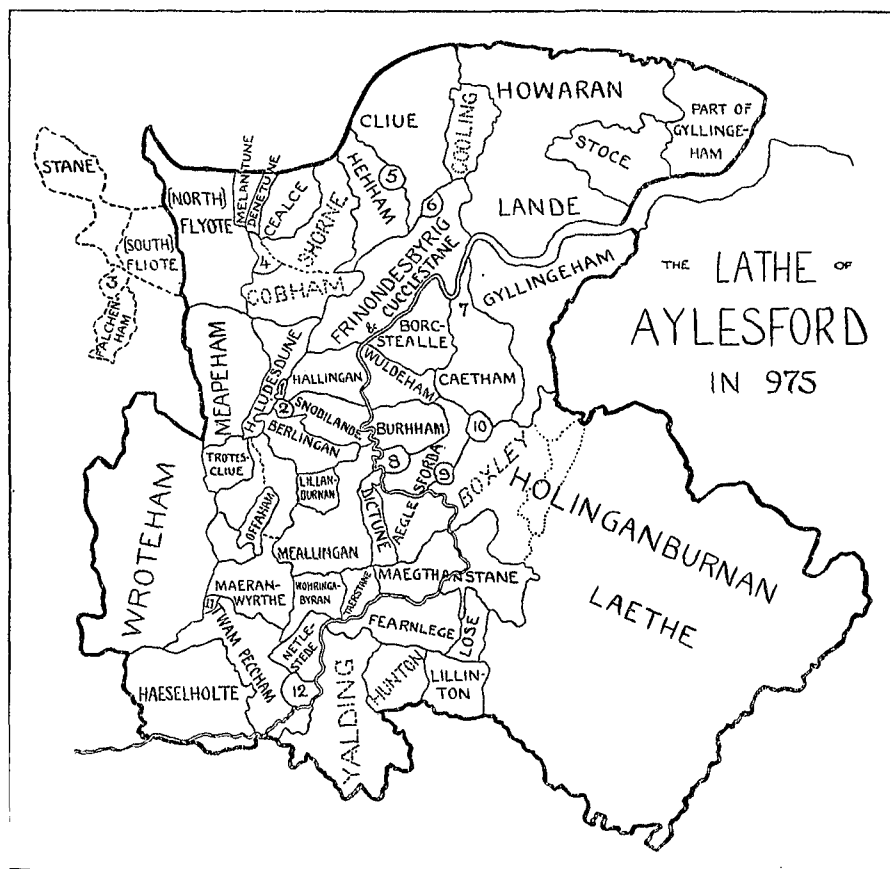
THE DATE OF THE SAXON SCHEDULE.

The date of its entry in the *Textus Roffensis* may well be about 1115, but even then the clerk was uncertain about some of the names which he copied and affords us no clue to the date of the original which he had before him. Wallenberg (*Kentish Place Names*, 302) makes the acute suggestion "about 975" and, since he was probably judging on etymological grounds, his view is entitled to all respect. It is borne out by the internal evidence. The first and third piers were repairable by the Bishop of Rochester and the charge was spread over certain named manors which belonged to him. One of these is Malling which he did not obtain until between 942 and 946 (B., 779). Another is Fawkham which came at last to the Bishop under the will of Byrhtic which Thorpe (p. 500) dates 950 and Birch (1132/33) "about 964." The possession of Fawkham was much debated, by violence and by action in the King's court and before the shire (B. 1296, etc.). It seems rash to suppose that it passed finally into the Bishop's hands before 973 at the earliest. Thus the schedule can hardly be much earlier than 975. Nor is it likely to be later than 995 in which year the King granted Wouldham to Rochester (Kemble, 688). In the schedule Wouldham still pays to the King's pier and not to those of the Bishop. We thus arrive at a date between 973 and 995. This fits in so well with Wallenberg's suggestion that we may well accept "about 975" as the date of the schedule which the Rochester clerk copied into the *Textus Roffensis* more than 100 years later.

THE MAP OF THESE LANDS.

The next step is to enter these lands on a map and it would be enormously tedious to specify how each identification had been arrived at. The majority of the places mentioned were manors which, as is usual in Kent, were coterminous with parishes which have maintained their names and boundaries ever since. Certain other places will be dealt with later as occasion requires; some remain unidentified. The map herewith shows all that are known

and it shows also the whole of the lathe of Aylesford as we know it from Domesday Book: containing all the bridge manors except (a) Westerham, which is far removed, with most of the lathe of Sutton intervening, and (b) a group of four contiguous manors of the Bishop of Rochester in



This map shows the places mentioned in the Saxon schedule, together with additional places from Galba E.4. The places indicated by numbers only are as follows: (1) Dudeslande, (2) Peadleswyrthe, (3) Pinindene, (4) Hennhystae, (5) Aclea, (6) Aedune, (7) Horstede, (8) Aecclesse, (9) Cusintune, (10) Ufanhyll, (11) Swanatune, (12) Stokebere. Three places have not yet been identified, Smalanlands, Gisleardeslande and Lichebundslond. It has not been possible to represent Westerham which is at a considerable distance from the other places named. In dotted letters are a few places not mentioned in the schedule.

Achestan Hundred immediately adjoining the lathe of Aylesford on the west. An explanation of these exceptions will be attempted presently. For the moment it is sufficient to show that the one link which satisfactorily accounts for these places and no others being charged with the work of Rochester Bridge is that provided by the fact that all are included in the Lathe of Aylesford, and together form that lathe.

THE BISHOP'S PIERS.

It is evident from the wording of the Saxon schedule that the piers fall into three classes, (1) those supported by individuals, namely, the Bishop of Rochester and the King, (2) those supported by particular Hundreds, and (3) those said to belong to the Archbishop but supported by manors many of which were not in his possession. It might seem that the existence of these classes quite destroyed the hypothesis that it was the Lathe of Aylesford which was responsible for the bridge. It therefore becomes necessary to examine each class with a view to determining how it came into existence and why contributions from the whole lathe were collected in this manner. That the organization of these payments was quite exceptional may be deduced from the fact that a careful record has remained and has been thought worthy of entry in such important registers as Galba E.4 and the *Textus Roffensis*, in the latter of which it appears in both Anglo-Saxon and latin. It is assumed throughout this essay that the contributors supplied money rather than actual work but the truth may well be that some provided material, others cash and still others the labour of their hands.

The Bishop of Rochester was responsible for two piers, numbers one and three, the first being the land pier and approach where the bridge joined up with the city. According to the translation already offered this work was to be done "by contributions from Borcstealle, etc." The original Anglo-Saxon does not actually say this but merely, after reciting the amount of planking, etc., "This is from

Borestealle, etc." and this form of words distinguishes the entries relating to the piers of the Bishop and the King but occurs in no other class. The original writer of this schedule evidently intended to mark some distinction in the organization of work on these piers and Miss Whitelock does not disapprove the distinction imported by the words "by contributions from," which the writer has accordingly adopted. It is worth noting also that it is only in the same class that we find the amount of work recited *before* the names of the contributing manors. In the other two classes the manor names come first. This is further evidence of some intended distinction.

After these necessary if detailed comments, we can pass to consider the way in which the manors of the Bishop are grouped. In the lists which follow modern names are employed and after each manor is placed the name of the Hundred in which this manor is placed in Domesday Book.

The first pier was supported by :

Borstal	in the Hundred of Rochester.
Cuxton	Shamwell.
Frindsbury	Shamwell.
Stoke	Hoo.

The third pier was supported by :

Halling	in the Hundred of Shamwell.
Trotterscliffe	Larkfield.
Malling	Larkfield.
Southfleet	Ruxley.
Stone	Ruxley.
Pinden (in Horton)	Ruxley.
Fawkham	Ruxley.

Even if this list were unsupported by any other, the fact that these manors are listed in the order of the Hundreds in which they were situated would be sufficient proof that these Hundreds existed in 975. We have no evidence of this fact from any other source. It is certainly true that many historians have assumed that the Hundreds originated long before the tenth century, nor would the writer wish to dispute

this hypothesis, but it is something gained if we can look back from 975 instead of from 1086 as has hitherto been the case. It also gives some opportunity, as will appear later, of tracing the evolution of individual Hundreds before the conquest.

The above list gives rise to certain questions. The first is this : In what capacity did the bishop assume responsibility for two whole piers ? As a land owner his duties would seem to have been sufficiently met if he ensured that his manors paid their proper dues in the Hundreds in which they were situated. But the actual arrangement shows these manors relieved of contributions in the Hundreds (for one cannot suppose that they paid twice) and paying direct to the bishop. The obvious explanation is that the bishop was a very important person and was willing for the public good to take charge of two piers. In such circumstances the authorities of the lathe would naturally be willing to accept a good offer and deal direct with the bishop rather than with scattered manors responsible to different Hundred courts or reeves. Nor would the same authorities have any reason to complain if the bishop decided that he could properly charge all his manors, even those in another lathe, with the cost of his two piers. No doubt the arrangement was exceptional just as the bridge itself was exceptional but we seem to have before us in the Saxon schedule an excellent compromise between the normal machinery of the lathe and the method of contribution most likely to prove acceptable to its chief inhabitants.

A second question involves the four manors in Ruxley Hundred, known as the Hundred of Achestan in 1086. This Hundred was always in the lathe of Sutton-at-Hone according to the evidence of Domesday Book and later documents. How then does it come that Ruxley manors are paying in Aylesford lathe ? or must we assume that the inclusion of these manors in the list of contributors destroys the hypothesis that the bridge work was charged upon Aylesford lathe as such ? The answer must to a large extent be a matter of opinion, nor is it the purpose of this essay to force any conclusion which the facts do not justify. The fact that the

greater part of Ruxley Hundred is not included seems to negative the possibility that this Hundred has moved into another lathe since 975, and equally to forbid the inference that Ruxley Hundred as such was thought chargeable to the bridge work. We are left with the Bishop as the sole connecting link between Ruxley Hundred and Rochester Bridge, and the writer concludes, as already suggested, that the bishop at his own will and for his own purposes spread over all his manors the charge which the lathe of Aylesford had laid only upon himself.

THE HUNDRED PIERS.

Four of the nine piers appear to have been provided by Hundreds acting as such. Of these the second pier is said to belong to Gillingham and Chatham. These two places make up the Hundred of Chatham of 1086.

Similarly the seventh and eighth piers belonged to Howaran lande, that is, the manor and Hundred of Hoo, which covered almost the same area. In these cases there is only strong presumptive evidence that it is the Hundred and not the manor or manors which is considered liable for repair of the bridge. But in a third instance, which is comparable to the others in that a place and not a person is charged, there is no doubt that the Hundred is intended. This is the case of the sixth pier which belonged to Holvinganburnan “& to eallan tham laethe”—and to all that lathe. What then was the lathe of Hollingbourne? The Galba E.4 record is reasonably explicit. It states that the sixth pier pertains to the “Hundred of Heyhorne” and follows this up by reciting the different manors in this Hundred. Of these Hollingbourne is the chief and it is in Hollingbourne that we find that Eyhorn Street which gave the later name to the Hundred. There is thus no doubt that the Hundred of Eyhorn was known in 975 as the lathe of Hollingbourne. It has further to be noted that Galba E.4 does not describe the contents of the Hundred as they were when Galba E.4 was written, or even as they were in Domesday Book, but goes back to some anterior period which is presumably that

of the Rochester schedule. Between 975 and 1086 Boxley and Detling had been detached from the Hundred of Eyhorn (or lathe of Hollingbourne) and added to the Hundred of Maidstone which was apparently of new formation. The schedule of 1343 (*Roch. Bdge.*, p. 2) says that "Holyngbourne and Eyhorne ought to make the sixth pier" and this is the same wording as that of the Saxon list except that "Eyhorne" takes the place of "all that lathe."

We have now three separate paragraphs in which the charge of one or more piers is laid on a place and not on a person. All the others are charged on persons. And in each of these three cases the land so charged is of the same area as a Domesday Hundred. In one case it is quite certainly the Hundred which was responsible, in the others it is so probable as to amount almost to certainty.

THE KING'S PIER.

The lands answerable for the cost of this pier are set out in the following list :

<i>Place.</i>	<i>Domesday Hundred.</i>	<i>Modern Name and Parish.</i>
Aeglesforda	Larkfield	Aylesford.
Ufan hylle	—	Overhill farm in Boxley.
Aclea	Shamwell	Oakleigh in Higham.
Smalanlande	—	Not identified.
Cusintune	—	Cozenton in Aylesford.
Dudeslande	—	Dode in Luddesdown, formerly an independent parish.
Gisleardeslande	—	Not identified.
Wuldeham	Larkfield	Wouldham.
Burhham	Larkfield	Burham.
Aecclesse	Larkfield	Eccles in Aylesford.
Horstede	—	Horsted manor in Chatham.
Caerstane	Twiford	Teston.
Cealce	Shamwell	Chalk.
Hennhystae	—	Henhurst manor in Cobham.
Aedune	Shamwell	Hoden manor in Frindsbury.

(The following are erased in the *Textus* and supplied from Galba E.4) :

<i>Place.</i>	<i>Domesday Hundred.</i>	<i>Modern Name and Parish.</i>
Lose	—	Loose.
Lillinton	—	Linton.
Stokebere	Littlefield	Stockenbury in East Peck- ham.
Lichebundelond	—	Not identified.

No less than ten of the above manors do not occur in Domesday Book although several of them are well known from subsequent records. If the names of the Hundreds in which these were later to be found are added, they do not alter the fact that these names are entered in order of Hundreds with only two exceptions. The first is Aylesford which is separated from other manors in Larkfield Hundred by virtue of its position at the head of the list, a very proper position for ancient demesne of the King. The other is Aclea, which is quite out of place for no apparent reason, perhaps from mere carelessness. The significance of the arrangement by Hundreds is not affected by these two exceptions.

It seems probable that the position of the King in relation to these manors was precisely similar to that of the Bishop in relation to the ecclesiastical manors. But the King did not charge any manors outside the boundaries of the lathe of Aylesford.

But the chief interest of this list is in the fact that it is headed by Aylesford and not by Aylesford alone but by "Aeglesforda & of ellan tham laethe the thaer to lith"—Aylesford and all that lathe that lieth thereto, that is, belongeth thereto. Aylesford was by far the most important place in the Hundred of Larkfield although it did not include Larkfield itself, the meeting place of the Hundred. But Larkfield Hundred cannot have been the lathe belonging to Aylesford since it includes many important manors, e.g. Wouldham and Burham, which are separately specified.

This would not have been necessary if the whole Hundred had already been included, just as it was not necessary to specify every manor in the Hundreds of Hoo or Eyhorn which maintained other piers. What then was the lathe which belonged to Aylesford? It is possible that a clue is to be found in so late a record as Hasted's *History of Kent* in which (iv., 398) it is recorded that Aylesford was exempt from the jurisdiction of the constables of Larkfield Hundred, which means that the manor of Aylesford had the rights of a Hundred in itself, just as certain other manors are recorded to have had in 1086, e.g. Brook and Adisham (*V.C.H.*, iii., 261/2). Aylesford was a royal manor and extended over part of Yalding parish. It had dens in Horsmonden and Brenchley (Furley, *Weald of Kent*, ii., 2, pages 702/28). It would presumably have hundredal jurisdiction over all these. It would seem that the lathe belonging to Aylesford was the hundredal jurisdiction over the whole area of the manor. This feature of manorial organization is usually described in Domesday Book by the words "This manor is (or 'has') a Hundred in itself".

This explanation of the nature of the lathe which belonged to Aylesford explains all the facts, and harmonizes with the explanation of the lathe of Hollingbourne as the Hundred of Eyhorn. It is quite true that we are obliged to believe that the men of Kent in 975 did not use the word Hundred and this is a fact of no little importance. But it is a fact that we cannot escape—a fact of which the many implications cannot now be discussed here.

THE ARCHBISHOP'S PIERS.

We come lastly to certain piers which stand, as regards contributions, midway between the two previous classes. They are not supported by the manors of a particular owner but neither are they the direct concern of a particular Hundred. So far as one can understand the intention of the wording of the schedule, several manors were concerned with each of these piers, in fact, the remaining manors and Hundreds of the lathe of Aylesford. But the Archbishop

seems to have collected or organized their contributions. Thus the piers are said to be the Archbishop's but at the same time to "belong to" various manors, etc. Many of the latter were never church manors.

It need cause no surprise that the Archbishop should appear in the guise of a collector or organizer of work in Aylesford Lathe. At this time he enjoyed that useful perquisite, the "third penny" of the Shire. This was one in every three pennies derived from the proceeds of the county court. At a later period of our history the Earls of Kent—from Godwin onwards—enjoyed this emolument (see Cotton Aug. II. 36 and endorsement) but in 975 it belonged to the Archbishop. It was a customary fee granted by the King for the maintenance of the judicial and administrative machinery of the county and it is therefore not surprising to see the Archbishop managing this machinery. The contributing manors were—to the fifth pier :

<i>Place.</i>	<i>Domesday Hundred.</i>	<i>Modern Name and Parish.</i>
Wroteham	Wroteham	Wrotham (hundred).
Maegthanstane	Maidstone	Maidstone.
Wohringabyran	Twiford	Wateringbury.
Netlestede	Twiford	Netlestead.
Two Pecchams	Littlefield	E. and W. Peckham.
Haeselholte	Littlefield	Hadlow.
Maeranwyrthe	Littlefield	Mereworth.
Lillanburnan	Larkfield	Leybourne.
Swanatune	—	Swanton in Mereworth.
Offaham	Larkfield	Offham.
Dictune	Larkfield	Ditton.
Westerham	Westerham	Westerham (hundred).

Those contributing to the ninth pier were :

Flyote	Tollentrough	Northfleet.
Clive	Shamwell	Cliff-at-Hoo.
Hehham	Shamwell	Higham.
Denetune	Shamwell	Denton by Gravesend.
Melantune	Tollentrough	Milton by Gravesend.

<i>Place.</i>	<i>Domesday Hundred.</i>	<i>Modern Name and Parish.</i>
Hludesdune	Tollentrough	Luddesdown.
Meapeham	Tollentrough	Meopham.
Snodilande	Larkfield	Snodland.
Berlingan	Larkfield	Birling.
Peadleswyrthe	Larkfield	Paddlesworth.

These manors are arranged, in the original, in order of Hundreds, with the exception of Northfleet. This was a manor of the Archbishop and the most important place in Tollentrough Hundred. One suspects that it came first because of this pre-eminence. There is one other irregularity in this list, that is, the inclusion of Westerham which has always been considered to be in the lathe of Sutton-at-Hone, and is on the side of that lathe remote from Aylesford. This instance is not comparable to the irregularity condoned by the Bishop of Rochester when he charged certain manors in Sutton Lathe, because he charged all his manors in the shire. The Archbishop had many manors in the lathe of Sutton, none of which appear in this list, while Westerham is not known to have belonged to the Archbishop at this or any other time. One can only surmise that it was in 975 considered to be an outlying part of some manor within the lathe of Aylesford, and so became chargeable with the bridge work. There is no direct evidence either for or against this hypothesis.

SUMMARY.

Somewhere about the year 975 the actual re-building or the regular maintenance of Rochester Bridge was a duty charged upon the Lathe of Aylesford. It was difficult to apportion the work evenly upon the Hundreds in that lathe and a compromise was adopted. Of the nine piers it was possible to allot four to actual Hundreds, the Hundred of Hoo taking two of them, Chatham one and Eyhorn one. Chatham Hundred being of smaller rateable value than the others was given only one rod to plank, most of the other

contributors having three rods. This disposed of four piers. Of the remaining five the Bishop of Rochester accepted the responsibility for two, spreading this responsibility over all the manors belonging to his church although some of these were not in Aylesford lathe. The king took one pier charging it upon the royal manor of Aylesford and various other manors in the lathe which can be assumed to have been in the King's hands at the time. There then remained two piers to be shared amongst several hundreds, most of which had already been depleted by the diversion of the contributions of some of their constituent manors to the maintenance of the Bishop's or King's piers. The organization of the bridge work of these remaining hundreds fell into the hands of the Archbishop in his civil capacity as sheriff.

The whole arrangement was evidently exceptional and was carefully recorded both at Rochester and Canterbury. It survived the Norman conquest and was being enforced as late as 1340 (*Medieval Public Works*, Selden Soc., i., 203) but by this time many of the contributing manors were no longer identifiable and the conception of a duty laid upon the whole lathe had been forgotten.

A detailed study of the Saxon schedule demonstrates :

- (1) That the lathe of Aylesford was an administrative unit in 975, although it may not have been known as a lathe.
- (2) That the constituent hundreds of that lathe were all in being, with the possible exception of that of Maidstone which, if it existed, was smaller than is recorded in 1086.
- (3) That these hundreds were called lathes, although it is not apparent that this word had any greater significance than such words as "division" or "section."

COMMENTARY.

The mere demonstration that the Lathe of Aylesford and its constituent Hundreds existed in 975 is perhaps of

less interest than the great additional importance which it lends to the Saxon schedule. Hitherto this has seemed no more than a list of manors chosen, by some method unknown, to contribute towards the bridge work. Now it appears in the light of a detailed survey of the lathe one hundred years before Domesday Book, with which it obviously invites comparison. It is detailed in the sense that as far as we know the whole lathe is included. Certain Domesday manors are not mentioned, for example, those of East and West Barming. We must assume that in 975 these manors had not reached an independent status, and we must endeavour to discover under what greater manor they are included. On the other hand, the schedule names as independent manors places unknown to the Domesday scribes, for example, Ufanhyll and Dudeslande, and we ought to be able to discover how these lost their independence. Moreover, the schedule antedates those Danish wars in which the house of Godwin gained so great a position among land holders in Kent, "by violence," as the scribes of Rochester and the writers of Domesday Book are careful to inform us. There is material here for several essays but to embark upon it now would be an unwarrantable extension of an article already long enough.