

An Index of modern place-names enables the reader to correlate the settlements listed. Ostensibly the volumes are easy to use. However, there are pitfalls. As ‘Tenant-in-Chief’, William practised divide and rule, granting scattered and often partitioned settlements to nobles, ecclesiastics and officials, so that any dissident would lack a power-base. The information is listed as he required it, that is to say, under each landholder and based on the returns submitted by each of the administrative divisions, known as hundreds, in which that individual’s landholdings lay. Fortunately for historians, hundreds continued to be used for a few taxation purposes until the 19th century and some 18th-century printed maps mark the hundred boundaries clearly

Place-names

Most of the settlements have names that have been identified without difficulty. It is a challenge for the reader to see which of the old spellings on Figure 2 can be identified without looking at the solution provided by Figure 3. A few settlements have been ‘lost’, i.e. are unlocated. Culeslea lay south of Hollesley. It was an outlier of Alderton and is shown at the bottom of the map. Laneburh is noted by the Phillimore editors (sub 6,151) as ‘Lost in Sutton.’ However, it occurs as an old name of the river Tang and there are parcels of a Tenement Laneborough listed by Radulph Agas under ‘Tangham in Boiton’. Since the 18th century this bulge of Boyton parish has been known as Little Scotland, a reference to the widow of Scotland’s premier duke, on whose estate it lay.

Staverton as a settlement has disappeared, although the group of cottages at Friday Street lie not far from the site of Staverton Hall which was burnt down in 1381 during the Peasants’ Revolt. Another recently identified settlement is Carlton. The Phillimore editors had a difficulty with the two entries with this name and noted: ‘6,69 CARLTON. At 3.94 this was assigned to Plomesgate Hundred, but the present entry appears to belong to Bishop’s Hundred through its association with the neighbouring Kelsale, a detached part of Bishop’s Hundred.’ Its relocation to the southern part of the parish of Butley, taking in a small part of Capel St Andrew, resulted from the realisation that the major portion of Butley, including Butley Priory, the hamlets of High and Low Corner and Burrow Hill, all lay in Plomesgate Hundred, and were apparently not listed in the Domesday Survey. Such an omission was inconceivable; for the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle asserted, ‘there was no single hide nor virgate of land... which was there left out’. As was described on page 87 in ‘Untold Tales from the Suffolk Sandlings’, a search for an explanation of the name Carlton Mill in Butley manorial documents led to Plomesgate Hundred. Realisation then dawned that the missing major part of Butley was none other than the Domesday manor of Carlton, granted to Hamo by King William’s son-in-law, Count Alan of Brittany.

The major landholders

The area selected for the map contained 14 settlements divided into 87 parcels granted to the Abbey of Ely, Count Alan and four other men. They might choose to occupy a particular manor themselves, but for the most part granted their holdings to sub-tenants to farm. Robert Malet was Sheriff of Suffolk at some time between 1066 and 1086. His holdings in the county were later known as the Honour of Eye. Malet’s late father had been a close friend of the King and Robert was by far the largest landholder in our area. He held 581 acres in Staverton and an even larger manor of 780 acres at Hollesley. His mother held 202 acres nearby at Culeslea, while to the north his son Humphrey was farming on his own account 250 acres in Boyton.

Although the largest landholder in Suffolk, Count Alan had only a third of Malet’s acreage in this part of the Sandlings. He possessed the whole of Chillesford, and in Wantisden he kept 60 acres for his own use, but his main holding was the 182 acres of Carlton adjacent to his 42 acres in Butley. Roger Bigot, ancestor of the Bigot earls of Norfolk, became Sheriff of both Suffolk and Norfolk in 1086. He was the 7th largest landowner in the county, but held only small acreages in Wantisden, Capel and Rendlesham. Roger of Poytton, younger son of the Earl of Shrewsbury, at this time was supporting William’s rebellious younger son, Robert of Normandy, and all his lands were to be confiscated, including his 32 acres in Butley and 40 acres in Wantisden. Hervey took his name from Bourges in central France and was granted a number of manors in Suffolk. He held 66 acres in Sutton and 72 acres in Rendlesham. The powerful Abbey of Ely, listed as ‘St